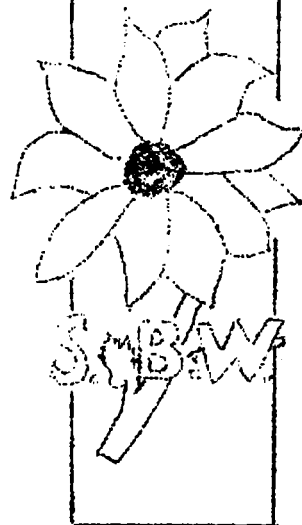


No. 14

Brenda White.

AUGUST 1933



"THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER"

A Journal devoted to matters of interest to Members of
the Sydney Bush Walkers, Sydney, New South Wales.

No. 14.

August 1933.

Publishing Committee:

Misses Brenda White, (Editor), Marjorie Hill,
Dorothy Lawry, Rene Browne and Mr. Myles Dunphy.

EDITORIAL

Attached to the 5th. Annual Report was a list of Members at 28.2.33.
Since then we are pleased to welcome to the Club the following new Members:-

Dave Kernohan,	Thelma Dibley,	Iris Rockstro (Roxy),
Jack Bolton,	Mavis Dibley,	Les Douglas, and
Frank Whiddon,	Jean Turnbull,	Arthur Webber (Pinkie).

Owing to limited space, several interesting contributions have to be held
over till next issue, but acknowledgment is tendered to Chas. Pryde and Norm
Rodd, with the hope that they will not mind.

We also have an enjoyable article "Filming Mount Wellington" which Mary
Harrison sent over from Tasmania for the next "slim edition" -
Many thanks, Mary.

Brenda White.

"THE COX AND OTHER PLACES"

Being a tale of the peregrinations of She, Me and They.

By Walter J. Roots.

Came Saturday, and so to the Caves Express with Wife, Imps and baggage
sufficient to please the heart of any Porter. We were bound for the Cox, all of
us filled with the thrill of the great unknown and prayers to the Weather god.
To Blackheath anon and thence by car down Megalong to the Hill o'erlooking Galong.
Here we paused awhile to consider deeply. Three packs we had, each of them
bulging nigh to busting, 69, 40 and 36 lbs. they were, and also an imp of 27 lbs.
who perforce must ride upon the "camel's hump." Plenty of food for thought here
you will agree!

We took the lightest two and the babes and ambled down the hill; Pa plucked
up energy later on and returned for the other pill. And so in time we came to
the first camp - the homestead on Galong Creek.

Good friend Carlon made us welcome and next morn loaded all our heavy gear upon a wily mare - one "Baydgee" - who used all her ingenuity in vain endeavour to wipe it off upon each tree and rock. The larger imp took kindly to the nag and proudly sat upon the load, whilst the smaller imp played gleefully at ducks and drakes - with daddy's hair.

And so we journeyed down Breakfast Creek, that rugged home of a raging torrent (this is when it do rain), along sideling tracks, over boulders, fallen trees and just plain rocks unto the Cox. Tired were we and not a little hungry, so we plied ourselves forthwith to eating down the load. Then for me, a whiff of "Lady Nicotine" - and reverie.

What a place this was in which to dream! Silver moon touching all about with mystic light, twinkling stars that peeped through notwithstanding; a gurgling stream and sighing Breeze adding music to the night; Ah! surely this repaid all our efforts.

Up with the flies, swim, eat, pack and away to Konangaroo! The meanderings of the crystal brook made many crossings necessary and each crossing opened up new vistas all appealing, fresh and different from those behind. Before us we chased the dreamy cattle, which viewed us with lazy, inquisitive or reproachful eyes, according to their individual reaction to man's disturbing presence. Ever and anon, with a flurry of wings, a flock of ducks would take the air, evidently they knew of the danger attendant on proximity to cattle with two legs. We reached our destination as the shadows started creeping up the eastern slopes, and glad were we to pitch our tent and fill two little tummies - and our own!

Our camp was in a clump of Apple gums and turpentine, and just so far from water. Along the creek dark green Casuarinas grew in stately phalanx, and served to house the choir which sang for us so long as daylight lasted, for Bird-life was there in quantity unlimited, and gleefully they seemed to welcome us. A camp site more perfect in its setting would indeed be hard to find. In the morn we must return the wily "Baydgee"; so when the Jackass called us, we woke and out of bed. Then some "Stodge" and bacon, astride the mare and away, leaving wife, imps and packs behind; fourteen miles to Carlon's, but miles were nothing to me just then. Mrs. Carlon knew of the "Ourangutans" and so placed food for my consumption. Our prestige we must hold at any cost, so every scrap I ate, though belt and buttons scarce could stand the strain. Up then, (though 'twas mortal agony to stand) twenty to two, must be "home" by dark. At first a stagger, then a walk, but later, ah! OURANGUTANG! from rock to rock, crag to crag and precipice to precipice. Home to wife and imps at 5.35 much to their surprise and my very great content.

Now followed charming days of blissful idleness and perfect rest - that is if we forget the imps most mischievous, who fain would do all things that good imps simply shouldn't. To the creek we went right often in search of coolness, and only there we found it. The "Weather god" had answered well our prayers and given us fine days, albeit mighty hot. The imps bathed "au naturel" and what enchanting pictures they did make; - touselled hair atop of ruddy faces, sparkling eyes alive for "divilment", gleaming skin stretched o'er tummies rotund and all of this upon such chubby legs. Happy voices told of the joy of living, gladdening Her heart, and also mine.

An eel we caught, full three feet six of wriggles, but mighty good was he when boiled and fried. Came from a clan of fighters this one, and half an hour's good battle he gave to me. All too soon came time for leaving and with many a sorrowful sigh we left our campsite rare. Packs still were mighty hefty, we had yet a week to go, and this time no packhorse. This bit was far too tough to

offer much enjoyment, so we'll draw the veil and endeavour to forget.

Back once more with good friends Carlon, and thanks to their hospitality, eating well of meat and vegetables (fresh ones), fruit and milk and other good things too. Lazing round or picking apples, pumping water from the Creek and sometimes lying in it, chasing imps from where we stored the peaches and yarning round the cosy kitchen fire. This was how we made the days fly and built up memories to cherish later on.

Once more we took the trail up Megalong and camped the night on the creek near Kirby's farm. The sky was dark with rolling clouds of mist and it seemed that at last we would have to face a wetting. The morning sky was even more uninviting, but at least it hid the climb we had to do. Up Nelly's Glen, full 2,000 feet of damp and foggy climbing, with packs that would make the stoutest hearted shudder twice. So to Katoomba in rare dishevelment, but thanks to the mist, almost unseen.

Thus ended a trip most memorable, blessed with good weather, endowed with wonderful hospitality by the bushfolk, and enriched by the companionship of the three best cobbler men could have.

"THE RISE AND DECLINE OF THE BUSHWALKERS"?

"The jealous trout, that low did lie,
Rose at a well-dissembled fly."

Even though the hook is rather obvious, as a true-blue Bush Walker I cannot decline to rise to the fly cast by "Historica" in the last issue of "The Sydney Bushwalker."

Though the "Bushwakker" story "lends an air of artistic verisimilitude to an otherwise bald and unconvincing narrative", I can only pity "Historica" since her friends, or her health, or her tastes, or something, prevent her from associating with the real Bush Walkers when she so much wants to do so. Let her, however, continue hopefully in the company of the Era-hunters so that in the fulness of time (though consuming much juicy steak and other good food with them, and sharing their sports and rambles) she may at last manage to pass the necessary tests and become a real Bush Walker herself.

We may not brag as much now as we used to - it is so difficult these days to find anything tough enough to brag about to other bush walkers, while "non-serious hikers" and the ignorant public are only interested in mileages! Yet there are still ways by which a hiker can tell a bushwalker at sight, in fact one hiker told me one of us only a few months ago that there are three unmistakable signs by which we are known -- our khaki shorts, our very large packs, and our tails! ? "Yes, all you ever see of the Bush Walkers is their tails disappearing in the distance."!!

By the way, it is no wonder the Bush Walkers carry such large packs! It is recorded that on a recent Sunday evening one member ate eight sausages as part of his tea. Not every one can "live on the country" as successfully as that doughty huntress who caught a wild duck with her hands, and her hat! Few of us could, or would, go "farming" and buy milk and cream every night for a fortnight with the same sixpence! But I grow garrulous!!

Just one word of warning, though, to "Historica", if she wants ever to become the peer of the real walkers, she needs to beware of sundry freaks that

camouflage the activities of the Club. If she aspires ever to rockhop through the deep ravines or clamber to the tops of the mountains, let her particularly beware of the vegetarians, for -----

"THE VORACIOUS VEGETARIAN"

"The snail's a vegetarian, he doesn't care for meat,
But oh, the lots and lots of food these lettuce-lovers eat!
Where you and I would be content with one nice juicy chop,
The vegetarian requires three-quarters of a crop.
We go to bed at ten o'clock; the snail sits up all night,
Indulging uninvited his voracious appetite;
Instead of gnawing at a bone, as dogs are glad to do,
He'll eat a row of peas and beans and all your seedlings, too.
The dog or cat is cheap to feed, an economic pet,
And dogs may easily be trained, are versed in etiquette;
But vegetarianism is a very different tale,
And none may curb the greed or mend the manners of the snail."

Ruth M. Bedford.

Obviously, Miss Bedford had made a careful study of the snail before she contributed this poem to the "Herald", and from our own observations of vegetarians we had reached the same conclusions. Since one juicy chop equals three-quarters of a crop, what is the equivalent of eight sausages? And how could a vegetarian Bush Walker carry enough food for a week? Some of them have tried it, we know, "but they got so very thin" - - - And how they can eat the stuff they do, beats me. A real Bush Walker would prefer to chew tin! Yes, indeed! We put this on record in one of our oldest songs -

"And when they gave him nut-meat,
He almost ate the tin."

Geographica.

THE ROOF OF AUSTRALIA.

Seated around a breakfast table at the Chalet, Charlotte Pass, recently a party of ten adventurous men and four not so adventurous girls discussed plans for the day. From the experiences of the previous evening, related by some of the party, it was soon decided that to remain on the slopes about the Chalet, as had been the original intention, was out of the question, as very frozen, bumpy snow holds no pleasure even for expert skiers, and for the comparative novices who made up most of the party, it meant only busters and bruises galore.

The girls reached an early decision to have a restful day - write a few letters and perhaps try the snow later on. We men, after much discussion, decided on the Summit as the day's objective, and, taking small packets of lunch, we shouldered skis and set off for the climb up Charlotte Pass. Having traversed the previous day some seven miles of glorious snow-covered country and expecting much the same on the way to the Summit, we were quite unprepared for the magnificent and awe-inspiring splendour of the view before us on reaching the top of the Pass. Directly below flowed the Snowy River, only a few miles from its source, singing merrily along over granite boulders to be joined by many other snow-fed streams and so make the broad placid stream seen at Jindabyne. Beyond the river rose spur after glistening spur of virgin snow, all rising to buttress

the Main Range. From this rose peaks of all shapes and sizes, culminating in majestic Townsend and the smug bulk of Kosciusko itself. On the slopes directly in contact with the sun's rays the snow had commenced to thaw and gleamed like fire.

After taking our fill of the view we put on our ski and set off down the frozen slope to the road. It was hard going, for rocks and scrub showing through the snow made straight running impossible, and we had to edge down very carefully. We kept on the road for a short distance and then set off down a slope to the Snowy, and having crossed, our way led over many steep hills and granite outcrops. Seaman's Hut was reached for an early lunch, and we soon had a fire going and a billy of ice on for tea. However, we gave up hope of having tea, for after an hour on a blazing fire the ice had only half melted, and what water was there was still ice-cold. They make tough ice on the Australian Alps. The snow, after leaving Seaman's, was even harder than any we had experienced, and added to the fact that the track led round the side of a mountain with glassy slopes falling steeply away to a great depth, made the going slow and hazardous. Four members of the party left skis almost as soon as they left Seaman's, but the rest of us stuck to them until we were about half a mile from the Summit where we too abandoned them. The last few hundred feet were very steep on the protected side of the mountain, the snow was deep and soft though it had a thin coating of ice which cracked as we walked on it.

Once on the top near the old and battered trig station, we all experienced that wonderful feeling of something worth-while accomplished, for not only were we on the very tip top of Australia, but we were the first party to the Summit this season. Truly the right party for a Bushwalker and a Barger to be with.

The view from the Summit, though not so inspiring as that from Charlotte Pass, was wonderfully extensive, and the snow-tipped ridge of Mount Buffalo seemed only a stone's throw away W.S.W., while directly to the West were mist filled valleys as far as the eye could reach. The southern view showed a vast expanse of rugged mountains stretching far down into Victoria, and to the north was Townsend and the wonderful snow-covered Main Range.

Although the view was one that we could have watched for hours, the bitter wind soon made us turn and hurry down the mountainside towards home. As we went we looked at the steep, glistening slopes and wished we had the nerve and experience to negotiate them, and felt that Dr. Schlink of the Ski Club was right when he said at the opening of the Chalet: "Although I have skied in many countries, including Norway and Switzerland, the snow slopes of Mount Kosciusko offer greater opportunities to both expert and novice skiers than anywhere else in the world."

Richard J. Croker.

LYRE-TALES & OTHER TALES.

By M. Bacon.

An old Chinese proverb says:-

"A single conversation across the table with
a wise man is worth a month of study of books."

Bearing this in mind, two enthusiasts and one wise man went down to the Scientists' Cabin in National Park for bird observation on May 20th. 1933. The day was cloudy and light showers fell at times. Several species of Honeyeaters were noted on the way down, and close to Lady Carrington Drive we stopped and

listened to the deep-throated song of the Lyretail. We then decided to go straight to the Zoological Society's cabin to put our packs down and then follow the singer. The Lyretail proved very elusive. We trailed through the lush undergrowth and scrub, but could not catch a glimpse of the songster. We next walked along the Drive to the Upper Causeway, waded through the icy waters, climbed the Bola Creek ridge, and clambered round the rocky escarpment -- the haunt of Menura, the Lyrebird.

We had gone a considerable distance when we discovered a sandstone cave with much honeycomb weathering in the roof. Some dry leaves indicated the entrance to the home of a Yellow-footed Pouched-Mouse, cunningly concealed in a wind-worn cranny in the "honeycomb". A stick was procured, and we prodded the nest vigorously in the hope that the owner might come out for inspection. Upon repeated inquiry, however, we discovered that he was not at home.

Upon leaving the cave we noted a few sticks protruding over a ridge, and, manoeuvring around, saw that it was a partly built Lyrebird's nest. We were highly excited at finding this so early in the season (May 20th.) and hurried away from the spot, hoping that we had not left too much "human smell". Lyretails have a habit of not returning to their partially constructed nests if they have been interfered with; even the smell of a human is said to be often sufficient to make them change their nesting site.

We clambered down the escarpment again, when we came upon an old Lyretail's nest within a few yards of the one examined previously. This nest was wedged in a little crevice, and was right out of the way of all natural enemies save winged ones. It was about two feet across the base, and was made of sticks laid lightly on the rock for a base, with smaller sticks, moss, bark and palm-fibre built into a rough semi-domed nest, lined with shredded bark and dry mosses. Peering into this nest, we made careful note of its composition, knowing that there was no harm in leaving "human smell" near a deserted nest. About six feet away we caught sight of yet another nest; this, too, being still in the course of construction. This seemed too good to be true; the finding of three Lyretail's nests within a few yards of each other. And again on a couple of rocky shelves some twigs had been placed, in all probability by some of the young Lyretails playing at house-building; the few twigs in each case being right away from the trees and well within a cave. Their occurrence, therefore, was not accidental. As night was approaching, we then slid down the slope to the Drive and walked back to the Cabin, arriving there well after dark.

Having dined, we had a little mental food in the discussion of Charles Darwin and his theories, and agreed upon the difference between "man being descended from apes" and "man and ape having a common ancestor."

At about ten o'clock we went out to look for nocturnal creatures. Following Waterfall Creek for some distance, we came across a disused Yellow-throated Scrub-Wrens' nest hanging from a Lillypilly over the middle of the stream. We climbed the hillside in the dark and "Jock" found a Sugar Squirrel in a turpentine tree. Later we chased a Ringtail through the timber but could not get a good look at him. The nocturnal climbing ended at midnight, when we turned into bed, but were up again at 2 a.m. for more scientific (?) investigation. A specimen of *Rattus assimilis* had arrived and was running about the table above our heads. This is an Australian counterpart of the European *Rattus rattus* (common "ship-rat") and is again different from the Norwegian rodent ("Sewer-rat") which also has been introduced into Australia. We inspected our visitor and then evicted him, after which we slept for the remainder of the night.

Frank Whiddon was up early in the morning and went up the hillside in the hope

of seeing the Satin Bower-bird at its playground. The damp weather had apparently discouraged the "Satin" (or was it Frank?) and the feathered aesthete was not in attendance. Frank next followed a Lyrebird but could not catch sight of it either. (Lyretails are evidently exclusive!) Frank returned to the Cabin and the trio then went on a photographic expedition, the first picture being of a giant turpentine about fifty yards from the Cabin; a tree which is said to be the largest turpentine still remaining unscathed in the Park.

We then again visited the bower, but the owner was unfortunately still away. We photographed the bower whilst the Bower-bird was absent. The bowers and playgrounds built by Australian Bower-Birds are unique among avian structures. A small platform of twigs is first built into the ground by the male "Satin-Bird", on either side of which is built a thick wall of twigs which slope inwards towards the tops, frequently forming a complete arch. These walls are about nine inches high, and through them the birds dance and play. The playground is usually at one entrance of the bower; it is a flat platform of twigs and dry grasses about eighteen inches in diameter, upon which is placed blue feathers, glass, china, berries and fragments of blue paper and rag. Snail shells, cicada-cases, spider- and snake-skins and leaves are also much prized by these cultured birds.

Freshly picked flowers showed that the bird had been at the bower that morning. The Satin Bower-bird also paints his bower! This is done by chewing up small pieces of charcoal, mixing it with saliva, and then wiping its bill against the inner sticks of the bower. A small plug or "stopper" made of dry angophora bark is used to prevent the "paint" from running from the tip of the bill. The discarded "stoppers" are often found, oozing with the black liquid, on the floor of the bower.

We left this interesting spot and returned to the Cabin for breakfast. After breakfasting, we again waded across the Hacking, and then followed the Drive to Bola Creek. Crossing the creek, we next climbed the eastern ridge where we continued our search for Lyretails' nests, but were not rewarded with even so much as a few sticks. However, in one cave we came across two nests of the little Yellow-footed Pouched-Mouse. Nearby we found the bones of a Ringtailed Possum. Upon inquiry as to why "Jock" Marshall was so certain it was a Ringtail and not a Brushy-tailed Possum or other small animal, he pointed to the jaw-bones. These had several small teeth and then a much larger tooth sticking out in front almost parallel with the jaw-bone. This is almost straight in the case of the Ringtail, whereas in the "Silver-grey" or "Brushy-tail" there is a distinct bend in the jaw, and there is also a very large premolar. He identified the bones as being marsupial at first glance and then came down to species by the examination of the teeth. Dentition is always of paramount importance in the identification and study of mammals.

We clambered further around the escarpment, but without much reward. Striking up into the heath lands, we saw many Tawny-crowned and White-bearded Honeyeaters, as well as several varieties of Tits or Thornbills. We followed a picturesque heathy ridge out nearly to the coast, and, as it commenced to rain, travelled by track along to the Garie road. We then observed a specimen of Australia's only native slug; a variously coloured beast which is often found in the bush during damp spells. We got back to the Cabin about four o'clock, dried ourselves, had a meal, and then returned to Waterfall.

Such little jaunts with experienced nature observers help one to appreciate to a much greater extent the country through which one is walking. It makes an outing not only full of vigorous exercise, but full of interest as well. It sharpens one's powers of observation and keeps one keenly alert to all the interesting phases of nature.

THE MAN WHO FORGETS HIS CAMPING GEAR.

He is not a careless chap. On the contrary he is a very methodical fellow. The sort of man, who, when camping, always washes the dishes and his teeth before turning in and folds all his spare clothes before turning out - the light. He always carries a dish cloth and tea towel, and two plates so that he needn't eat his stewed apricots off the same plate as his steak and onions.

He carries spare bootlaces, batteries, axe handle, watertight match box and all his tucker in ration bags carefully labelled.

How then does so perfect a camper come to forget his gear?

It's like this, being such a particular fellow he wanted the very best possible gear and so, of course, he went round to Paddy Pallin's place and bit by bit he got together a very effective camping kit.

His tent holds two in comfort (he likes company so long as it - the company we mean - is not too untidy). It - we mean the tent - has little pockets in the walls in which odds and ends may be stowed, and it has fittings for a mosquito net which he uses in summer. His rucksack - need we say it? - is a "Paddymade" steel frame one, chrome leather fitted. His cape groundsheet is immaculate - but we are digressing ---

As we said before, he forgets his camping gear - because he has learnt that he can trust Paddy's stuff under all conditions and being a great believer in the conservation of energy, he just puts out of his mind those things he has no need to worry about, but of course he always takes his kit with him and never leaves a thing behind - he keeps a list in a little book.

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312 George Street,
(Over Hallam's -
opposite Wynyard).
SYDNEY.

Phone - B.3101.

THAT WARRAGAMBA RIVER

(By Barney.)

As I think of the "holiday" week-end of June 2, 3, and 4, I immediately become conscious of an overmastering urge to tear paper and rush round in small circles, biting kerbstones.

How it came about that I was deluded into the belief that a trip down the Warragamba River was something to be much desired, I cannot understand, but the fact remains that I was so deluded, and I am making details of the journey available to all in the interests of public safety. Our young members must be protected from these designing females of great experience who, simply for the sake of leading expeditions into the interior, wantonly sacrifice all home comforts including hot water bottles, gin, and marmalade for breakfast, and cause young and zealous members the most rigorous privations and hardships.

We left Sydney on Friday night and as the railway clock struck ten past nine to the minute, the "crowd" with Auntie in charge, burst out of the train at Wentworth Falls and wended its way to the precincts of a certain well-known habitat wherein rumour has it that Auntie's favourite old song which starts "We are Three J---" was born, nurtured, and given freely to the world.

We were, reading from left to right; first of all, Auntie, a lady with an Alto voice, and a penchant for chocolate "cake". The man sized smile with a large hat on top happens to be the Duck-hunter, while the sweet young thing with the pensive expression of one who smells steak and onions at the front door, is our newest and cutest Foxpaw; ladies and gentlemen: Miss Rextro, often called Roxy - and a lot of other things too.

A little bit farther round is what at first might be taken for an accident; close inspection however, will disclose none other than Frank Whiddon. By his side gapes a large hole - oh! pardon me, it's shut again. Yes, it's Keith and he's still eating; if he stops he gets stomach ache in the small of his back. Lastly comes Mr. D. Witt (no relation to the pills), a surveyor of note, who usually found the track when all seemed lost. Unfortunately, however, there wasn't always supposed to be a track at all, and Wallabies have such a stupid habit of rushing about anywhere - hence tracks going to and from and there and here, and much profanity.

Well, night had fallen a long while when we made camp, but as usual it was day that broke next morning - a day of sun and bulging calves and grunts and groans and frequent "snacks". I will not dwell upon the joys (?) of negotiating the Goat Track, or how D.W. and I, with Auntie and Roxy, made a short cut with the usual results. Suffice to say that our day was on much the same lines as our stock pattern, which is to say that "we dive out of bed, and with frantic haste, cook and eat a breakfast of about eight courses, wash up - oh! why do I always get the porridge billy? - and then spend the rest of the day charging across the landscape in order to sink down exhausted in the dark to cook a huge tea, which is then slept off before daylight, thus giving us enough energy to dive out of bed, and with frantic haste, cook and eat a breakfast of about ----" but why go on? The whole thing's a vicious circle. I'm still wondering why we do it.

We slept near McMahon's on the Cox River on Saturday night (bath night) and by lunch time next day were at the junction of the Warragamba River. What fun!! The "sun" simply teemed down; there was water everywhere and very often it was not so much a question of "walking" but of floating through the undergrowth and keeping one's head above water. For the first four miles the going was good, with a winding path along the river bank on the western side, giving many a dip and curve round tributary gullies, and the river flowing smoothly by on its undeviating course.

We breathed water, slopped through water, pushed it aside at every step, and caused a small deluge at every contact with shrub or bush. Then the "rough" started, and things were only middling; the path wandered off and lost itself, and the bank and vicinity became so steep and overgrown that two or three extra arms, a couple of tails, and a buzz saw located in the forehead, would have been a decided advantage to all of us. Further away from the water the undergrowth was worse, and when I ventured away I got into such an awful tangle amongst huge creepers, lawyer vines and nettles, that I decided that discretion was the better part of valour. Anyway a quarter of an hour for 100 yards was no good when I could do nearly twice that distance near the water, so I came back.

Hour after hour I stumbled on, caked with mud, wringing wet, and full of venom for everything and everyone, while D.W. surged on in my wake, giving vent to such a stream of invective that in spite of myself, I began to feel quite cheerful, and when he became temporarily incapacitated at full length between two rocks, in a bed of mud and grass, I sniggered loudly, albeit I helped him up as his ears were the only parts of his anatomy which showed signs of animation: What he said is of no consequence whatever.

A few minutes later it was my turn to come into closer contact with Mother Earth, which I did when a sloppy section of the bank gave way and subsided with a "scludshp" into the river, sliding not ungracefully (so I was told) on the side of my face with my pack on top (this was to make it harder), the while I frantically clutched at every stinging nettle and lawyer vine within ten yards.

It was soon after D.W. had finished "larfing" that we essayed to cross that blank blank river, and twenty minutes' submarine act actually saw us on the other side, very hungry, very wet, very tired, and very everything else but pleased and thirsty. Before morning we had cooked and eaten tea and slept a little. Monday was tolerably fine and the four miles to Monkey Creek were negotiated in fine style, shorts, and great weariness. Then, after a well-earned lunch had been surrounded and engulfed, Auntie and her charges in various stages of exhaustion, agitation, perambulation, exhilaration and stagnation, gazed pensively at the track which zig-zagged up the hills into Silverdale.

"On, Stanley, on!!" After the Warragamba we simply flowed up that track like water down a drain, and in four hours were in the 'bus heading for Emu Plains. As a refuge in which to spend a quiet week-end, the Warragamba River is an utter washout, but as a cure for those troubled with St. Vitus' Dance, I can thoroughly recommend it. No one who had been through there would possess enough superfluous energy to make the slightest unnecessary movement for at least six months after.

A TRAMP IN THE FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY.

There is always a fascination in going into completely new country about which you can obtain no information beforehand, especially when it contains mountains over 6000 feet high. It was this that took us to the heaving mass of rolling mountains that you pass as you drive from Canberra to Cooma.

There ^{were} three in the party, Donnee, who lives at Canberra and providentially runs a car, Dorothea and myself, and we all saw eye to eye on the desirability of going to bed early, of getting up before dawn, of wasting no amount of precious daylight on cooking and as little as possible in eating, of expending no energy on carrying superfluous gear in heavy packs, and generally of the necessity of reaching our objective, the summit of the rather remote Mount Bimberi, in the short three days we had at our disposal.

Donnee met us at Canberra Station about 6 a.m. on the Saturday and drove us out to Tidbinbilla about forty miles distant. Here the car was parked under a tree in faith and hope that no one would drive off with it before our return. Then we set off on foot up the bridle track to the head of the Tidbinbilla Creek, firstly through open sheep country and then through bushland. It was a cold bleak morning with heavy mist and cloud which did not lift till midday, so there was no view as we crossed the col and dropped down on the other side to the Cottar River up whose valley we proposed to make our way.

The Cottar is a delightful swift-flowing stream rushing along over a clear, stony bed. It was then snow-fed and icy cold, but seldom more than half way over the knees and therefore easily fordable. We had hoped to find a track of a sort along the river, but all signs of any track ended when we reached the valley, so we had no alternative but to set off without. Following the banks of the Cottar does not present any of the difficulties met with on such a stream as the Geehi Creek at Kosciusko, but neither does one meet the long, pleasant, easy stretches of such a river as the Shoalhaven. The country is just ordinarily rough and the valley V shaped, so that at every bend of the river it is necessary either to climb over the steep spur of the hill or else ford the water. To begin with, we climbed the hills, but later in the day we started fording the river, and on the whole found this the better proposition. But the absence of a track upset our calculations completely and the Bimberi began to fade into the misty future of things hoped for, but not realised.

Just as darkness fell, we crossed the Kangaroo Creek down whose valley comes another track that continues on up the Cottar River. We made camp on the river flats here under the shade of straggling blue gums. There was a sharp frost in the night, but we nevertheless arose at 4.45 a.m.. We were not the least little bit thrilled to find that the track started by crossing the icy waters of the river. With frost on the ground and wet boots and wet knickerbockers, it was some hours before we got any feeling into our frozen feet. But the track was fairly distinct and the Bimberi began to grow out of the misty future into the nearer possibility of the present. After two and a half hours of wading and rewading the river and following the track, we finally left our camping things on a grassy flat where the river completely redoubled on its tracks and flowed along two sides of a meadow scarcely more than a few yards wide.

By now the valley of the Cottar had widened out. Generally, there were grassy flats, and even when the hillsides were tree-covered, their slopes were gently undulating. About eleven we reached the old Cottar Homestead now occupied by a Government official, whose duty it is to preserve the purity of the Canberra Water Supply. For the first time we realised that we had been trespassing the whole time on the Cottar Catchment area and that we were liable to be shot at dawn. However, instead of shooting us, the officer in charge entertained us to morning tea with potatoes, damper, meat and jam, told us the easiest way up the Bimberi and the way back via the Kangaroo Creek.

We left the homestead with light hearts feeling that the Bimberi was already in our pockets. In point of fact, it was a two and a half hours' climb up the spur of the hill facing before we reached the snowy upland on top. The rise is very gentle and we passed through the usual change from tall trees to straggly snow gums and snow grass. There seemed to be none of the subalpine flora that you meet on Kosciusko, but to make up for this the mountain is true to name; it does go up and come down again on the other side. There was possibly a foot of snow on the summit and a bitter wind blew through us as we stood on the cairn, studied the map, took photographs and generally admired the view. It was, I think, the most interesting view I have seen in Australia. We could pick out,

not only Kosciusko and Jagungal with Kiandra near to, but also the really peaky mountains above Tumut and the interesting Tindery Range above Michelago, while close at hand were the other snow-speckled 6000 foot heights of the Federal Territory.

After shivering with frozen feet for about three quarters of an hour, we came down by a spur which took us further down the Cottar River and nearer our camping spot, which we reached just before dark. We were all sleeping the sleep of contentment before 8.30 p.m. and ready for an early rise for what we thought would be the easiest day of all.

We were up again by 5 a.m., but things did not go well on this our last day. We missed the track crossing once, probably because the subconscious is apt to overlook icy river-fords when there is any excuse for doing so, especially on a frosty morning, and we took three and a half hours to do what had taken us only two and a half the day before. Then we failed to find the commencement of the track up the Kangaroo Creek, and wasted another hour in contouring round the hillsides above it. The moral of this latter mishap is, don't take maps as gospel truth in Australia. In England they may be accurate in every detail. In Australia they are often guess work. Eventually we dropped down to the creek bed and were lucky enough to pick up the track on one of the few occasions when it did actually follow the creek. We stopped for a quarter of an hour to have lunch, but by now we were all resigning ourselves to spending another night out, and already we were enquiring the cost of 'phone calls to Sydney, and wondering which appointments for the Tuesday we could put off and which we could not. Our spirits were not enlivened when we met a packhorse team, whose leader informed us there were another three or four miles to the head of the pass, that we had not a ghostly hope of making Tidbinbilla that night, and that we had much better camp this side of the pass.

However, there was still just a hope, so we pressed on, and made the top of the pass in half the distance indicated. Then we wasted another half an hour in again too slavishly following the map, which said the track was on the left bank of the Gibraltar Creek on the other side. As a matter of fact, it followed the right bank for well over a mile. We also wasted time in stalking a wombat with the camera, and altogether the Canberra train seemed already as if it were leaving the Station without us. Eventually we let the wombat go, and trusting to common sense instead of the map, picked up the track and followed it until common sense, and not the map, told us when to leave it and make for a gap between the hills on the left. Commonsense or luck was successful and we struck the Tidbinbilla valley exactly ^{where} we had parked the car. We had time for a hurried tea before we motored into Canberra with an hour to spare for the train - and only one regret, that we could not inform the packhorse team of our arrival!

Marie B. Byles.

"BARRINGTON TOPS"

by Jean Austen.

Now where were we? Oh yes, we have just slithered and run down the 4,000 odd feet from Mt. Barrington to Stewart's Brook.

Just at the top of the Brook is a gate. Camped near this gate was a man who remembered me from my trip with the boys, we had met him on the other arm of the brook. He has been out for about 9 months trapping rabbits. He said he was glad to see we had not got lost last time.

Stewart's Brook just here is a dainty place, everything seems so soft and delicate, the stream nestles close in to the side of the mountain. The valley is not wide at any place.

We moved on past our old camp site, the marks of the cooking and camp fires were still there. About a mile down the river we came upon a dreadful looking old bull, he was tremendous and stood right on the middle of the track staring at us. We thought it better to keep out of the way, and carefully climbed a barbed wire fence into a small paddock; and horror! as we came level with the bull we found that there was no wire fence at all. No wonder he had a queer look in his eye as we moved by, sidewise like crabs. Oh dear, the relief when we were safely across on the other side of the river. You never can tell with bulls.

The weather was looking bad again and we decided we would camp early as there is not much wood near the river and we needed the daylight to get some in. We passed Collison's farm where there are two tremendous Fig trees on the river bank. I have gorged myself here on several occasions, but unfortunately it is not fig time in September. It looked very like rain and seemed late enough for an early camp, so we halted at a lucerne shed, all that remains of a farmhouse about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from Collison's. We made ourselves very much at home in a place that was once the Blacksmith's Department. The remains of a forge and a huge bellows were still there. We scraped and pushed and tugged all sorts of things about and finally made a comfortable kitchen with the fire on the floor. At least we had a roof and some boxes to sit on. Anice went back and purchased some milk and eggs. I was shocked when I found they had taken payment, as we have always had an overwhelming supply of food from the farmers for a smile. I think Anice must be lacking in something of which Mouldy has a very large supply. These people are really very nice and have given us apples since. We had a good meal. My head was pretty right by now and we turned in upon the lucerne and slept a good sleep.

We were not feeling energetic next morning, so when we came to the junction of the North and South arms of Stewart's Brook and found camped there a very charming man who had been there for six months prospecting for gold, and who was willing and eager for us to dally, we dallied with Mr. Buffier.

We allowed ourselves to be persuaded to use his camp table and writing materials while we wrote to our respective husbands. He assured^{us} he would get us to the P.O. in time for the mail. Our letters finished, we set off in the blue Sports Roadster for the P.O., about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles down the river. We arrived in time to see the mail man disappearing in the distance.

We wired to Ernie also to Dick Hancock on the Allyn to say we had safely traversed the Tops. However, when Ernie's wire arrived, its context was entirely changed. I had sent: "Snow rain hail and wind all O.K." He received it thus: "No rain hail and wind all O.K." and was entirely satisfied.

We spent several hours dashing about the village with Mr. Buffier trying to get cream and buying groceries. He took us across the river to a farm where we collected a bathing costume (his) full of oranges and mandarins. He had been in the district so long that he was now regarded as a "local". We returned to the junction for lunch. We contributed tinned pears and some cheese, Mr. Buffier supplied the bread, butter and honey. He filled out honey tin and gave us some bread. His old partner turned up about this time, an old prospector who was

much tickled at our attire and the fact that we travelled and camped alone without men. He did his best to scare us by telling tales of men being attacked and devoured by packs of dingoes, and about a time when he saw 50 snakes come out of one hole in a tree. They sharpened and duly admired our tomahawk and tried hard to make us camp with them for the night, but about 4.30 we pushed on up the river for a mile or so and camped on a lovely spot by the river, plenty of wood and a large grassy flat close to the water. We enjoyed the stay at the men's camp and laughed muchly over it that night by our fire. During the night we heard some dingoes howling on the mountains and we giggled a bit.

Next day, feeling very fit, we set off up the river over about 5 crossings to the last house, Mr. Jim Rose. He told us it was about 9 o'clock. I mentioned to him that we had somehow missed his directions last time and did not find the right track until ready to descend on the Mount Royal ridge.

We received careful instructions to turn up by the side of the second creek after a certain dog fence. Yes, I remembered that. Well, we must be careful after we have turned up that creek. We said goodbye and started off. About a mile up is the dog fence, then we watched for the second creek and were agreed that this was the one. So we went up what looked like a track which I had followed with the boys. Well, I have been there since and find that the right track is not up the second creek, but up the first big creek, and this said creek is as big as the main stream. So when is a creek not a creek?

The track we took, of course, was wrong and led us up, and up and up to a cattle camp. When we were half way up it came on to rain and simply poured down and we found ourselves scrambling and plunging through swamps and bush in the same manner, only worse, as I had done with the boys. By this time I had decided that this ridge was absolutely wrong and resolved to strike out in a general direction for the point where the track crosses the ridge for Mt. Royal. It rained and rained and we had lovely views of dense clouds and sheets of rain sweeping down the valley.

Anice was developing a sore throat and was feeling queer. We struggled for miles along the side of the mountains waiting to come upon a certain gate on the correct track; finally, wet and scratched and pretty cold, we arrived at the gate. We set out to the accompaniment of peals of thunder and flashing lightning, along the track for about a mile, and I decided I did not like its direction as it was heading down the mountain where I guessed a certain man had his cattle running. We turned back keeping our eyes open for any branch track we may have missed in the rain. But no track, only rain. Anice by this time had hardly any voice and was feeling pretty awful. She disturbed my peace of mind by telling me she once had a bad illness that began in this same manner. However, we swore a bit at the rain when we were trying vainly to consult the map under a hollow log. I finally decided, to the devil with map and the compass, also the track, and decided to stick to the ridge and wait until we met the trail which I knew crosses over and down to the brush. This we eventually did and from one high point we had a glimpse of the Paterson Valley bathed in the sunshine, then it was shut off again like a picture on a screen. We were cheerful again and laughed and I tried some more opera, but poor Anice was pretty sick, but cheerful. We slithered and slid and set on down this tremendously steep mountain which rises straight out of the brush. At the bottom, on the edge of the brush, we crouched and had our lunch and warmed our wet tails. Anice burnt her sou'wester - she is now hatless as she carried no sun hat.

A speedy lunch, and down into the brush, on this dark, wet afternoon it seemed like descending into the underworld. Everything was dark and shiny and dripping. We did not get the actual rain as the jungle is so thick, the water comes down the tree trunks in perpendicular rivers and it flops in large drops from the branches and ferns overhead; we were walking up to our ankles in muddy water or watery mud. For a long time we exclaimed at the beauty and lavishness and profusion of the ferns and orchids, but soon tired, for, to look up at the glorious canopy was to be rewarded with a smack in the eye from the said canopy with a blob of water, also the wind and thunder were a bit terrifying and I was wondering if we could do the 8 miles of brush and get down another 3 miles to Jolliffe's place in case Anice was really ill. I had visions of pneumonia and corpses. Heavens! what would her husband say to me?

This 8 miles had 32 crossings and as the rain was falling pretty steadily I was disturbed in case they should rise higher than we should care to risk crossing. At one crossing we stopped and crouched under a tree, each peeping out at some tall trees doing frantic contortions in the wind and lightning on a clearing we had to cross. Anice looked so tiny and forlorn and wet that I roared with laughter and she joined in, saying I looked like some funny old witch from the underworld. We plunged into the stream feeling better but mighty sorry to have to cross that half cleared space where trees might flop on us at any moment. The jungle felt a sort of protection, which of course, was false. By and by it began to get dark and we thought it was a fresh lot of clouds, but to our horror it was not dark with storm but dark with dark night. The rain was easing but it was still very windy, I hoped the wind would blow the rain away. But here we were in the thick of this awful place with goodness knows how many treacherous crossings to be made before we could find a spot to even stand up in comfort for the night. Suddenly, after a crossing, I saw in the dim light where an animal track seemed to lead up a steep bank. We decided to try it as anything was surely better than where we were. We were fortunate, the track led out on to the bottom of a steep ridge and we decided to camp. Anice quickly unpacked the billies and went back for water while I frantically gathered any pieces of wood I could see for a fire, then proceeded to put up the tent. We would have a glorious slope, but it was a spot out of the jungle and that was all that mattered. I had the tent up and was getting worried about Anice as it was now quite dark, real black dark too. I called and she answered from close to me, I could not see her. It seems she had been coming up with the billies and had slipped in the dark and spilt them and gone back, also could not find the way up again.

The next job was a fire for some coffee, and while Anice arranged our beds I started. To start sounds funny perhaps, because one usually just makes a fire, there is no start or finish. But the start and finish were so far apart this time, that at this point I must only say I started. I have no idea how long I was, but it became the only thing in the world to me. Anice called out to come to bed and not bother about the coffee or food or anything. But I think I would have stayed all night without knowing. I burnt a small length of candle, some paper, all we had, a small map and even a Bushell's Tea label, think of that! I was on my knees with my tail in the wind, blowing like a grampus - don't know what a grampus is but I believe they blow. The trees had that horrible lumpy hard bark and there was no undergrowth, and everything on the ground was saturated. However, I finally got a fire and made some coffee and we had it with some date cake and lots and lots of honey - honey for energy. Before retiring I had another go at the fire and stood all the wood I could find around

the little blaze to dry it off a bit for the morning.

During the night the wind dropped and the rain stopped and I heard a fox barking. Next morning Anice showed no improvement and had a dreadful heaviness in all her limbs. We were depressed with the sombre atmosphere of the jungle and did not wait for much breakfast, but decided to hurry down to the Paterson where we know we had friends and where Anice could be given attention if necessary. More crossings. After about an hour's walk we met two men camped in a bark hut on some open cattle country. They were surprised to see us and were rather disappointed, I think, that we had not perished in yesterday's storms. They told us Keleghear's (our friends) had gone and the place would be empty. However, they offered us tea and invited us to some Wallaby steak, but one glance at the dreadful bloody carcass was enough. We did not like these men so refused their hospitality and went on.

Down over the grazing country of the Jolliffe cattle. This is a delightful valley where the Boonabilla or Mount Royal Creek runs down to meet the Paterson R. There we met a large herd of cattle who came to inspect us. I had gone ahead of Anice to prepare a fire and some food at Jolliffe's old place. I used all the bullocky language I could remember and shoo-ed them away, and crept fearfully along with the brutes staring at me from the foot hills. When opposite the old grave yard I heard shrieks and yells from behind me and realised that the cattle had evidently come down again to see Anice. I thought by the sounds that she was being trampled or gored to death as I had turned a bend in the valley. I dropped my pack and raced back to find Anice staggering along weakly, but on coming up with her found that she was only weak with laughter. She shrieked and cooee-ed so violently that the cattle took fright and made off up the mountain side. This had evidently done her the world of good, as from then on she recovered her energy and was unwilling to stop at Jolliffe's. So after consuming a few oranges and admiring the Paterson Valley in its soft loveliness and trying to conjure up the vision of hardships endured by the pioneers who came here when it was all brush, we moved on down the Paterson and came to Caperero's where we met Mr. Jim Jolliffe with his bullock team. He was pleased and amused to see us travelling alone. They have started taking timber out of the brush and he and his son Norman are constructing a mill at the old homestead. Here we also met Peter Caperero, digging in his farm. Peter is a very handsome young man of about 29. His father was an Italian who came to the Paterson many years ago and married one of the Jolliffe girls, sister to Mr. Jim. In Italian fashion, he built his house on the rockiest and most unfertile piece of land and left the best flats for the cultivation of grapes which he was growing for wine. He tried this industry for some years but failed to make a fortune. The huge vats etc. are still there to be seen. The house is built on a long rocky spur which runs out into the river, having a sheer cliff on one side and a very steep bank on the other. The bank is planted with orange trees and from the opposite side of the river the effect is most picturesque.

Peter's wife was calling him to lunch and after he had assured us that their neighbours Keith & Bertha Keleghear had not gone away, he climbed up the steep cliff path towards the house. Apparently there was a consultation for as we were wending our way across the river, Peter called to us an invitation to lunch, which we gladly accepted and climbed after him up the cliff. I had seen Peter before though we were not acquainted, and had not seen his wife. They of course, knew all about the Austens, those queer "walking people."

We were sincerely grateful for the meal and were also interested to see the rambling old house. The architect, apparently, had no thought or consideration for the convenience of the family, particularly the housekeeper. Every section of the household is separate and it is necessary to face all weathers to go from the kitchen to the pantry and eating room, or to the bedrooms and sitting room, which are further away still.

However, we had a wonderful meal, and you should have seen Anice putting away large slabs of corned beef and her vegetarian principles at the one mouthful. The beef was accompanied by Swedes and Potatoes and followed by Gramma pie and cream. As I said before, we were truly grateful.

(Further developments next issue.) Editor.

THE FORMATION AND RISE OF THE BUSHWALKERS.

By Scientifica.

The present members of the Sydney Bushwalkers are the subject of very much adverse criticism and most of this, sad to relate, from the earlier members of the club. The reason for this, no doubt, is that these older members rarely walk now and even in the club room, do not mix with the newer members whom they criticise. Those older members, who are still ardent walkers, know that even if cooking and camping are great topics of conversation, the solid and invigorating walking takes place just as before. The medium and newer members of the club have a great respect for the founders and original members of the Sydney Bushwalkers, and realise that many of the most pleasant trips have only been made possible by the pioneering efforts of that noble band. It is true that very much less of that pioneering goes on these days, but only because most of the country within possible access has been exploited earlier.

If, as Historica relates, the Bushwalkers have stopped howling "Bushwakker, Bushwakker" about the place, so much the better - it shows a decided improvement. Quite enough howling is provided by the hikers. And as for beating our chests and proclaiming our great deeds - in the old days a long and hard trip was so novel that each detail was news. Nowadays, these trips have become so universal that no one bothers to loudly boast of them.

SOCIAL NOTES.

We have had yet another talk on the ever popular Great Barrier Reef, this time by Mr. O'Sullivan. We all felt that we were revisiting familiar scenes, although a number of us have, as yet, not been able to get that far, although we are living in hopes.

Our long promised lecture on Snake Bite materialised on June 23rd., when Mr. Kinghorn came along and interested members with his amusing tales and the very fine slides which he brought with him.

On the 30th. June, Mr. A.J. (Jock) Marshall came along and told us some

interesting facts about the furred animals of Australia. He also brought some exhibits of Birds ~~and~~ etc. from the Museum. We are always pleased to see Jock because we know he will always have something interesting to tell us.

July 1st. and 2nd. were the dates chosen to hold the Fourth Annual Field Sports Day. Although the weather was very dull, the same cannot be said about the 60 odd people who turned up to take part in the carnival. The events were keenly contested and some of them were extremely spectacular.

July 21st. The Roseville Debating Society came along to tell us a lot of things we do not know about the National Park. It was the occasion of an Exhibition Debate. Some of the speeches were very interesting and most members enjoyed the evening exceedingly. At dinner, the same night, Miss Ernestine Anderson gave an informal chat on the youth Hostels of Germany - her experiences were both interesting and amusing.

July 28th. we presented a 3-Act Play, the first one to be presented by The Sydney Bushwalkers either in their Club Room, or elsewhere. The producer, Miss Cora Dumphy, deserves every credit for an undoubted success. The performance reflected the amount of work which had been put into its production. The same may be also said of those taking part. Also the scenes and setting of same was deserving of praise, as they were all very effective and the transformations were made in remarkably quick time.

July 27th. was the evening on which was held The First Annual Bush Walkers' Ball. Those who were there say they have never in their memory had such a thoroughly enjoyable night even in the heights of their imagination. The table decorations were most unique, and also there were special decorations in the Ball-room depicting a Campfire scene, with Rucksack, Sleeping Bag and Camp-fire complete, also stuffed birds were hung around the walls. The Hikers' Club of Sydney presented a very pretty ballet which was well received, and the Sydney Bush Walkers presented 6 lovely Debutantes to the President of the Federation. They were the admiration of the Ball-room, and the Sydney Bush Walkers are to be congratulated on their Young Lady Members. Their complexions were the envy of all.

Members are asked to note that there will be another Club Dance on August 16th. (Wednesday) at the Arts Club, at 8 p.m. sharp, subscription 3/6d. at Supper. Come along and have a good time, "don't we all"?

Please give the Social Secretary all the help and assistance you can for the 6th. Annual Concert. It becomes increasingly necessary to get new talent and new ideas every year, if possible.

R.D. Browne,
Soc. Secretary.

STOP PRESS

One of the most interesting sights on the Blue Mtns. last week end was the return of Peter Page's official Bank Holiday Trip. Rene Dagmar, reigning chief of the Foxpaws, was welcomed into Blackheath by a committee of two (dogs) - the whole town was in great excitement, for never before had they seen such a sight. She had a nephew on either side, and a segmented train of "orange certificates", which the uninitiated might have mistaken for three quarters of a yard of Cocktail Frankfurts.

Ed.