

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

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C O N T E N T S

	<u>Page</u>
Index	1
Ski-ing, 1942	2
Sleeping Bag	6
Civilization	7
I Spy	7
March Flowers	8
Music in Melbourne	9
Movements of Superior Planets	10
Blue Mountain National Park	11
Snake Bite	11
Our Own Meeting	12
Federation News	12
Social Calendar	13
Goodman's Advt	13
What Paddy Says	14
Klister	2
"Uli"	6
Dot English	7
Ray Birt	8
M. Bacon	9
Canopus	10
Abores Australis	11
"Angry Reader"	11

T E A - T R E E

By Brian Urepont.

This is tea-tree country, still stand clumps
Of these white-lady trees, circumspect and quieter
In land or sea-wind than the gums,
A fitful sigh will start gums singing,
Their leaves are bold and shaped to take the wind,
And stiff to chatter it; but the tea-trees' spear-shaft leaves
Stand slim and straight; in adult growth, edge to the wind,
And the listener hears only the swift cutting of a gale
In aerial slivers; the leaves of young tea-trees
Hang too limply-watery to be resonant, not yet
Their holes make paper for wind's vagrant tearing,
Only from their elders the listener hears
A flapping Chinese music of fat hands' clapping
The thin white singing of an Orient dream,
May hear the sensuous rustle
Of heavy silks and the creak of cottons
Audience to the tea-trees.

Alan thought of it first and we voted and we voted it an AI idea. The hotel at Kosciusko and The Chalet were closed "for the duration" and those hardened skiers who wished to have their usual holiday on the snow had to think out some new ideas.. And so.....

After several weeks of discussion, planning, writing and phoning; eight sons of the snows with rucksacks and skis foregathered at Central one night during last August. The skis, snow clothes and rucksacks excited considerable comment; particularly from small boys with a wealth of rude remarks, as we made our way to the Cooma Mail platform.

Anticipating a strenuous morrow the party had booked sleepers; so, after finding our bunks, stowing our impedimenta (with special care to the skis), seeing ourselves off and repairing minor defects in the gear of one late member, we retired for a good sleep.

The guard called us toward 7 a.m. A glimpse through the window showed that we were speeding along through the rolling, treeless country about Bredbo, with occasional glimpses of the Murrumbidgee River winding along the eastern foot of the ranges. The day was half cloudy with a keen, very keen, westerly, wind scurrying the clouds along and bending the long tableland grasses before it. Although somewhat bleak it was a pretty scene and as we dressed in our warm snow clothes we warmed to that spirit of happiness and adventure that only a winter alpine holiday can induce.

The light of the rising sun streamed through the window as we packed rucksacks and discussed details of arrangements to collect our provisions.

On arrival at Cooma we had breakfast at the station and, after booking our return passage and arranging some transport details, walked down to the township. There we purchased some four hundred pounds of provisions and amid much fun and excitement had it loaded onto the bus going to Berridale which was the furthest point to which we could obtain organised transport.

The trip to Berridale was accompanied by the same spirit (only a lesser quantity) that pervaded the old Kosciusko tourist buses. There was the usual expectant climb out of Cooma and the whoops of joy when, at the four mile, the beautiful white capped Snowy Mountains came into view. It is at this point, I think, that even the most taciturn visitor to the snow becomes sociable. It is certainly where the snow bug gives a whale of a bite!

Pretty glimpses of the mountains are obtained throughout the trip.

At Berridale our equipment and pantry were deposited in front of the pub and we set off to find a chap who had to take some supplies into Eastbourne and bring out some produce. When he saw our outfit he "thought" he could give us a lift, so we and our gear were stowed among his supplies. It was then that six C.M.W's. made their appearance and said they were going our way and could they? Could they? Well they did; but we still don't know how! That vehicle must have been well worth the photo no one thought to take! We pulled a tarpaulin over ourselves to keep out the keen wind which, notwithstanding several rums at Berridale, still persisted in being very cold.

After a rare trip, we and our gear were dropped on the eastern bank of the Gungarlin River near Snowy Plains and the "vehicle" went off to drop the C.M.W. folk near their destination. It transpired that they were going to spend a week or so in Bulman's Hut up along the Gungarlin River and have some skiing on nearby drifts. That several of them were on their first skiing trip made it impracticable to invite them to join us as it was felt that only experienced skiers would be able to make our objective under the conditions we expected to face. So we wished them "good skiing" and then settled down to solve our new problems.

Whilst unloading, it had begun to snow lightly - big flaky stuff - so our first job was to protect our provisions. Then we turned our attention to the problem of crossing the swollen river that lay before us.

We had arranged with a friend to have a couple of pack horses at Snowy Plains House, so two of the party waded across the river fully clothed - it was up to their waists (and we understand rather cold) - and set out to walk the mile or two to the horses. (It is common practice in the snow country for skiers to walk fully clad through streams, it being claimed that the clothing gives greater protection from the extreme cold; but the writer considers it better to strip as far as necessary and put the dry clothes and footwear on again on the other side. Crossing streams above waist deep, however, should be considered only as a last and desperate resort since the shock of the cold above waist level may have serious consequences).

In due course the horses arrived and we used them to ferry us across and then to bring our provisions along.

Snowy Plains House is an old dwelling in a bad state of repair but has a large kitchen, a bedroom and a verandah which are quite habitable. It is located on a shelf on an eastern hillside and commands a beautiful view of the Snowy Plains and the Gungarlin River and is supplied with fresh water from Teddy's Creek nearby. The place belongs to Bill Napthali.

No one was in residence and it was around 4 p.m. and we were cold, wet and hungry (having had no lunch) we decided to stay the night. So we built a large fire in the big open fireplace in the kitchen, brought in a good supply of wood and water, unloaded the horses and put them in the corral and then set to work to prepare tea. This consisted of soup, a big stew, heaps of toast and two huge billies of good coffee. And did we enjoy it?

After tea we lounged around the fire and told yarns of pioneering days of the district.

There was a charm about the snug old fireplace which, with the sound of the wind outside, slowly wore its spell about us until drowsy warm we slipped into our sleeping bags and slept until morning.

We were up at daylight and during breakfast watched the sunrise. The clouds and wind of yesterday were gone leaving a clear, blue sky. The frosty air was like crystal and the rising sun's rays steeped everything in liquid gold. It was good to be alive!

We tidied the hut and packed up and at 7 a.m. set out in the crisp morning up the trail at the back of the hut, our big ski boots crunching the frosty

grass and the little frozen puddles left by the snow and sleet of the previous day.

The altitude at Snowy Plains House is 4,400 feet. For a mile and a half our way led along the heathered banks of Teddy's Creek which were indescribably pretty in the early morning sunshine. Patches of snow in sheltered positions and the delicate tracery of frost and frozen soaks helped to make this part of the trip a veritable fairyland.

Just beyond Collin's Creek junction, at an altitude of 4,600 ft. we crossed Teddy's Creek again and commenced to climb to Brassy Gap. The way now followed an old snow covered bullock track through trees until, at 4,750 ft. after passing through some sliprails, it crossed a small open plain. We paused to drink at a rill and then entered the timber on the western side of the clearing. From this point to the Gap at 5,450 ft. it constant climbing along a snow covered track, through tall timber. Some writers have exaggerated the severity of this climb. Anyone in ordinary physical condition, however, should not find it difficult even if carrying a heavy rucksack and skis.

The view from the Gap, which we reached at 9 a.m. is magnificent. Away to the east lie the rolling blue hills of the pretty Monaro, while to the westward rises the dazzling beauty of the Snowy Mountains. It is indeed beautiful sight and even the most prosaic is ready to pause awhile in admiration.

The snow was now deep enough to make further progress difficult without ski, so we kicked our feet into the toe irons, snapped the heel clips and launched us off down the other side.

For a couple of miles we skied down a valley to the Burrungubugge River near its junction with Dead Horse Creek. Just across the river is Kidman's Hut, a corrugated iron, single roomed, unlined, earthfloored shelter, not altogether a very desirable place in which to pass a winter night. This, however, is just what a party of four tough "physical fitness" laddies had done. They were packing up as we arrived at about 10 a.m. so we used their fire to make some tea and chatted with them while we drank it.

They had come in the previous afternoon and had brought their provisions on a sledge. Darkness set in before they reached the hut and the sledge over running on a slope had struck a partly covered log in the dark and broken the front upturns of both runners. It was now being recommissioned with the spare aluminium tips. (Another accident shortly afterwards caused them to abandon the sledge and ski their provisions in the rucksack like us).

The physical fitness lads were starting on a two weeks survey for positions for youth hostels to be built in the snow country - apres le guerre. They proposed to make their headquarters at Mawson's Hut (elevation 6000 ft) over on the Valentine River about four miles away.

By dint of great effort and ability on the part of the pack horse driver (and the horses) all our provisions were brought into Kidman's Hut and depoted there until we had taken our personal effects plus ten pounds of provisions per man through to our objective - Alpine Hut - about two or three miles away.

At about 11 a.m. the horses left on their return journey while we climbed the rise at the back of Kidman's (which hut, by the way, is 4,950 ft. above sea level) and set a course up McDonnell's Creek. A mile or so further on we

turned south just beyond a notice above the diggings advising such action and, after about a mile of slightly uphill skiing in which three ridges are crossed, we reached Alpine Hut about midday.

After a rough meal half the party started back to Kidman's with empty rucksacks to commence the job of skiing in the 400 lbs of provisions. While loads as high as 95 lbs are reported to have been skied on, in days gone by, by supermen, I think 55 lbs was about the best effort on this trip. The writer, being fond of comfort, found 40 lbs more than satisfying and thinks 30 lbs is about the limit for really comfortable skiing. During the afternoon approximately 200 lbs of provisions were brought in.

The other half of the party busied itself putting the hut into habitable order, bringing in wood, lighting the fires and getting the water running in the supply pipe and in preparing a really satisfying meal for tea. It was a warm, bright and cheerful home that night while the wind whistled over the deep snow outside, for within was warmed by a great range and a Canadian stove and gloria lamps brightened the hut like electricity.

Alpine Hut is a large, well built, corrugated iron building, floored and lined, and is located in a clearing at the eastern foot of the dividing range. It is 5,550 ft. above sea level and is in the region of continuous winter snow. The range rises almost a thousand feet just behind the hut and there are excellent ski runs of all types and slopes which finish almost at the hut door. The hut itself contains a large kitchen, two eight bunk dormitories one four bunk dormitory and a shower recess, a pantry, a ski lobby and a store room. It is well furnished and is heated by a Canadian stove in each eight bunk dormitory. On the kitchen wall is a veritable art gallery of snow pictures of other lands, caricatures of visitors to the hut and witty (more or less respectable) clippings from books and papers.

We enjoyed a very happy fortnight at the Alpine Hut. Some days we spent touring to points of interest about the range such as Mawson's Hut, Jagungal, The Kerries, Tin Hut etc. etc. For several days we had a severe blizzard and could not go far afield but just played around practising turns and deep snow technique on the nearby wood runs. But such blizzard days were indescribably beautiful with the thick snow falling and the trees and hut like Christmas Cards come to life. For several days and nights the snow fell so thickly that each morning we had to dig our way out of the hut. On top of the range the wind was terrific, and we could not see more than fifty yards while down in the sheltered timber there would be little more than an ordinary wing. At night the wind would howl and moan and shake our snug home. But who cared as we sang around the stove or snuggled in our warm bunks.

And on the blizzardless days when the sun shone and the skies were blue we sallied forth with lunch in our knapsacks to roam over the beautiful white mountains, to leave our ski trails down many slopes, to climb the highest ridges, and to pause wrapped in awe at the majesty and splendour of the scenes before us, to feel the keen bracing wind on our faces, the joy of life and vigor in our veins, the freedom like the wind and all wind things, the rush of the cold mountain air past us as we speed down the mountain side

with the snow spray rising from our skis, the hilltops bathed in the golden flush of the sunset, the deepening blue shadows, the rattle of skis on the freezing snow in the last run of the day, the bright warmth and comfort of the hut, hot food, yarns around the fireside and -- a snug bunk.

I am sometimes asked "What is the attraction?" Yes, what is it? Perhaps it is the wail of the banshees on blizzard nights, or maybe it is Joe's cooking. A good cook, Joe!

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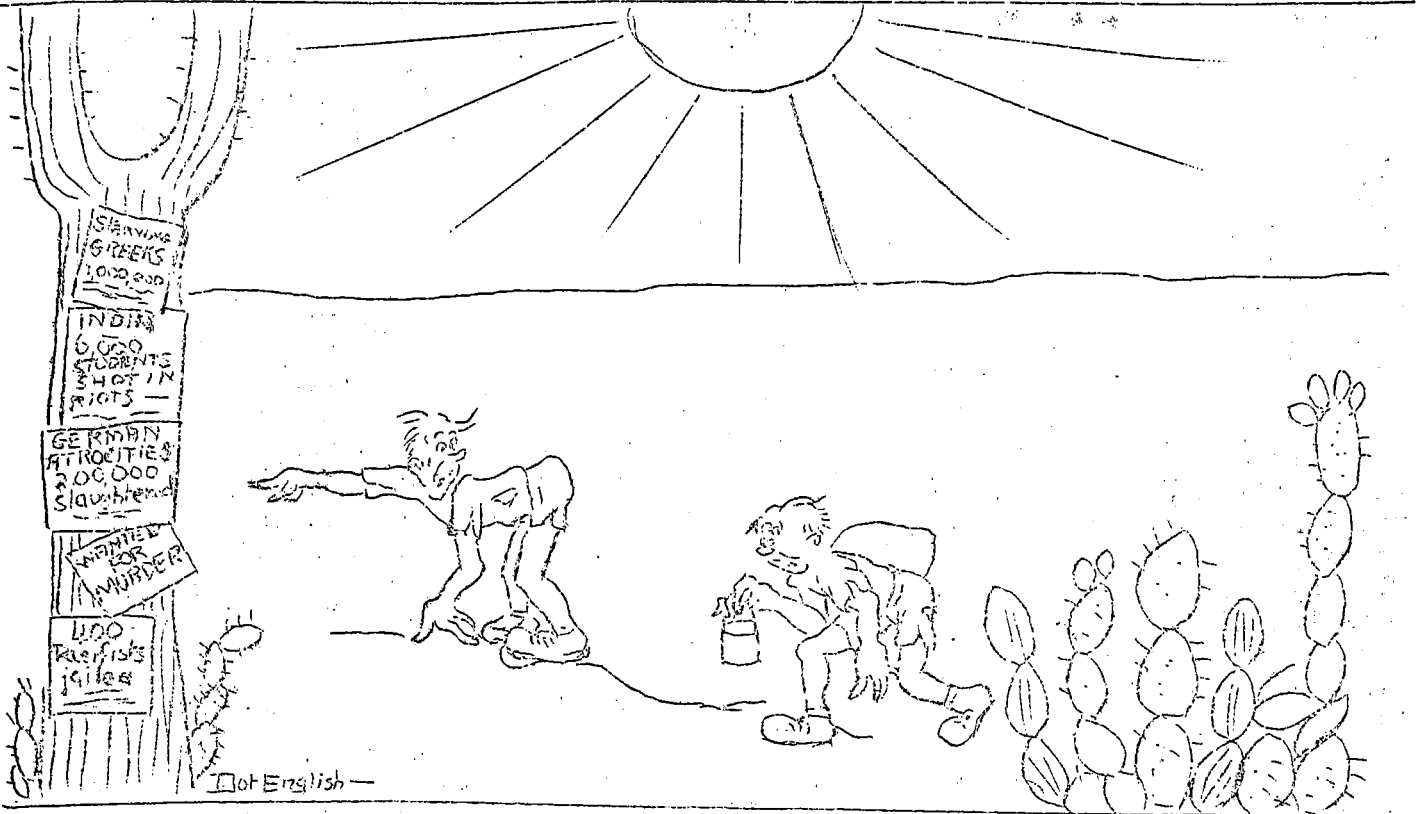
SLEEPING BAG

by "Ubi."

In the Winter "Tuggie" wears in camp a coat of very great thickness - like a built-in sleeping-bag. The size of Dorman's tent is, of course, proverbial. My thanks are due to Keats for having gone before and provided a medium for expression.

Much have I travelled with the strong and bold
 To many frantic spots and low dives been
 And seen, alas, what I should ne'er have seen
 As unaware 'round corners I have strolled.
 Once of a white expanse had I been told
 That axe-girt Dorman rules as his demesne
 But nothing of life's wonders did I glean
 Till I saw "Tuggie" dressed up for the cold.
 Then felt I like one who buys Railway Pies
 And tastes the grisly pottage they contain
 Or like John Public when with mazed eyes
 And clutching nervously the counterpane
 (His spouse's coupon-spending none too wise)
 He spied her massive, uncorsetted frame."

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"Look! Look! Civilization at last!"

I SPY

Several of our Naval and Military lads have been visiting the Club room lately; the latest Army visitors being Bill Whitney and Irving Calnan. They are both looking extremely well although they are apparently still unattached.

The Navy, represented by John Glover, looked in on us last Friday night. John has been with the British Navy. Been with them some time too, judging by the very tony accent. Don't they inoculate them before they go abroad?

It is not our place to give advice on this page, (we would have no gossip if we did) but may we pass a suggestion on to the two adolescents who are so wrapped up in each other that they ALWAYS miss the LAST boat. You can't expect the family to LIKE getting up out of bed to go and meet you with the car. Remember. It is a long worm that has no turning.

MARCH FLOWERS

Ray Birt.

"To me that meanest flower that grows, can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears"

Many of the so called flowers can now take their place among the aristocrats. The nasturtium once scorned, is now a real artists flower featuring in many a still life painting also the prolific wattles we see about us every day are apt to be overlooked. At the present time the Acacia Linifolia is in full bloom with its beautiful creamy balls of perfect flowers forming delicate and feathery sprays. It derives its name from its fine flax like leaves. It is particularly beautiful along the Era track from Maynards to the Jungle track, at this time of the year Persoonia Pinifolia (Pine Leaf Geebung). The Persoonia's were named after C.H. Persoon a distinguished botanist. The Pinifolia variety usually grows from 8 to 10 ft. high with pine like foliage and yellow flowers which crowd together at the tops of the branches. The corolla is erect and slightly hairy with 4 stamens attached to the middle of the deciduous petals. The short straight pistil does not ripen until the petals have fallen. The berry like fruits, when ripe are a purple colour and are often so crowded that they cause the branches to hang vertically. Depodium Punctatum (Hyacinth Orchid). The very attractive orchid has a robust fleshy stem - leafless, but with sheathing bracts at the base often redish and purple. Typical colour of the blooms are pink, blotched or spotted with maroon, but very variable in this respect - the flowers may be maroon with pink spots; wholly red; wholly pink or almost mauve. The sepals, petals and labellum are almost equal, measuring from $\frac{1}{4}$ to 1 inch long. The roots are very thick and succulent.

Helichrysum Lucidum (Everlasting). From the Greek Helios - the sun-Chrysos (gold) was named from the brilliant yellow colouring of the species which are popularly known as Everlastings from the never fading, often petal-like and shining membranous bracts of the involucre. The tubular florets are always yellow but the large bracts are white, yellow, brown or pink. The heads are large and usually with a semi-globular involucre from 1 to nearly 2 inches in diameter, the outer bracts being short and sessile and the inner gradually longer radiating and stalked. The numerous tubular florets are only half as long as the bracts and those in the outer row are thread like and have only a pistil. The united anthers have fine tails on the lower end and ripen before the pistil. The style grows up through the anther tube and pushes the pollen up and out for distribution, after which the cylindrical style lobes unfold and are ready to receive pollen.

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A baldy old Blighter named Cotter
As a lover grows hotter and hotter
He said "Such inspiration
Evokes perspiration
I really must carry a blotter!"

MUSIC IN MELBOURNE

How often have you talked of a Symphony Orchestra under the Gum Tree? No harsh walls to echo, no sombre back cloth, no still but oft breathed air, and no roof to shut out the sky?

Yesterday in Melbourne was realisation. The lovely lawns around the lake were filled with people - all sitting and waiting. Flat open clumps of water lilies floated on the water. Tall spires of green hedged the far view, green shrubs softened the Island and greener lawns stretched into velvety distance. Over all was peace.

"Swan Lake" in the perfect setting, and how different it all did seem. Is realism better than suggestion? It all depends on how real is the realism or how suggestive is the suggestion.

During the opening bars, two ducks nosed among the lily leaves then glided on to be lost in tall grasses. Wind ripples came along the water, playful gusts scampering back and forth. Then a regal Black Swan paddled by, paused to look, then floated on curving and dipping its neck and turning from side to side just to know that all had seen it.

A yellow oak leaf fluttered quietly down, almost tossed by the notes of music so quietly did it hover, and then join others on the lawn.

As if arranged, at the Dance of the Four Swans, a duck with four young paddled by. A graceful Palm dipped and swayed its arms.

The breeze brought the music a little nearer, and then a little further off. A group of basket willows with their feet in the lake swayed and bent and showed their silver leaves.

The music finished. A duck had moved in and completed her preening before continuing on and closing the whole scene. "Swan Lake" was over.

For the opening bars of Gounod's "Ave Maria", a bird rose from behind a tree and scared heavenward. The long prelude was gloriously played, and then Thea Phillips sang to the accompaniment of a flock of white birds wheeling overhead then on skywards.

Melbourne still has its sense of humour, for although the day was cool and dull, Thea sang joyously of "One Fine Day"; Bob and Charlie Savage wondered with me just what WOULD have happened if it HAD rained!

We were all rather intrigued by the way the Conductors music was prevented from having its pages blown over. A girl with arms outstretched like Bertram Mackenell's "Circe" held them down.

But what of the small dog that spent most of his time removing a flea, chasing it from spot to spot and not even keeping time with Eric Coats "London Suite"? However the girl in the blue hat holding the Conductors Music did. She nodded her hat to every beat of its vigorous rhythm.

All the while the scarlet Hibiscus were reflected in the lake and the amplifiers nestled in the oak and pine trees.

This was the first of a series of Open Air Concerts to provide Music for the People by the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music with the active co-operation of the Melbourne City Council. The proceeds of the collection went to swell the Merchant Navy fund - Well done Melbourne!

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THE MOVEMENTS OF THE SUPERIOR PLANETS

by "Canopus"

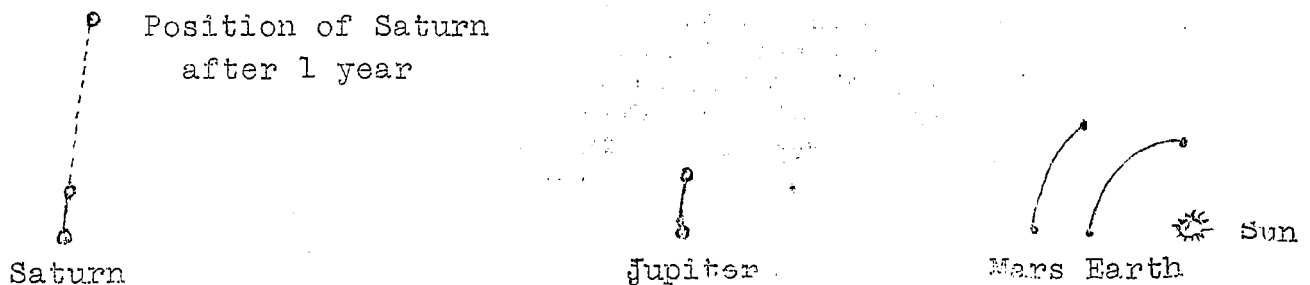
The planets are often known as the "wanderers", because they are continually moving amongst the other stars. They move through a series of constellations known as the "Zodiac", which form a girdle around the earth. By means of these constellations we can roughly describe the position of any planet. At the present time Saturn is in Taurus and Jupiter in Gemini.

The planets which are further from the sun than we are known as the superior planets. Every year they move further towards the East. But for a large part of the time we are observing them they appear to move from East to West. The diagram below will give you the explanation of this "retrogression". In the diagram these planets are assumed to be in a position they never have been in and never will be in. They are in a row, lined up for a race around the sun. But the handicapping is not fair. The outer planets have much further to go and at the same time move more slowly. The arcs shown in the diagram show how far each planet would move in three months. Actually we are moving faster than the superior planets, and during the time we are both moving in approximately the same direction, they appear, against the background of fixed stars, to be moving backwards.

The fixed stars are thousands, often millions of times further away than the planets. After a year we will have come back to the same position, but the planets will have moved on against the background of fixed stars.

PLANET	PERIOD OF REVOLUTION YEARS	SPEED IN ORBIT MILES PER SEC.
EARTH	1.00	18.5
MARS	1.88	15.0
JUPITER	11.86	8.1
SATURN	29.46	6.0

In the diagram below the relative distances of the planets from the sun are approximately correct, but the sizes of the sun and planets enormously exaggerated.



THE BLUE MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK.

Abores Australis

Many will remember the scheme for a Blue Mountains National Park prepared by Myles Dunphy and the N.P.P.A.C. a long time ago.

What has happened to it?

Enquiry at the Lands Department shows that it has not been altogether shelved, that, on the contrary, it has recently been taken down and dusted and is proceeding.

Early this year the Federation had a deputation about setting aside certain specific reserves some of them in the Blue Mountains. Later in the year the Blue Mountains Shire wrote to the Minister also asking for a deputation about the matter. The Minister said a deputation was not necessary because he had the matter wholly at heart; the lands, he said, had been definitely earmarked and would not be alienated, although the shortage of man power in the form of surveyors would prevent the matter from being completed during the war. Finally there was the protest about the cutting of timber in the Mount Wilson District. This was the last straw that broke the camel's back. The papers were got out and handed to a surveyor who was told to report about the matter and see about its relationship to the Blue Mountains National Park scheme.

We feel a little sorry for the surveyor who has to report, for the file by this time is very very big. But for the rest of us all has happened for the best. The Blue Mountains National Park has not been shelved. The ground was well prepared by Myles and the seed was sown by the N.P.P.A.C. but each time someone has come along and watered it, the plant has grown. Some day the seed will bear fruit, but strangers will reap the harvest and probably get the credit. But what does credit matter? All that matters is that some day the Blue Mountains National Park will be a fact.

SNAKE BITE

"Angry Reader".

"Angry Reader" writes: "I note with alarm and apprehension that "Canopus", whose articles have already spoilt much valuable paper, got into the comic strips a little while ago. (This must refer to star diagrams - Ed.) Now he is branching into, or onto, snakes. Can't you do something to stop it? Can't this anonymous astronomer be kept to his "astronomical phenomena"?"

We have no idea which angry reader wrote this scurrilous note. But we have assured him that the only remedy is to write something himself.

AT OUR OWN MEETING

Four new members were welcomed into the Club. They were Dorothy Brigden, Sheila Garrad, Colin Lloyd and Malcolm McGregor.

We learnt that Enid and Alan Rigby are to be congratulated on the birth of a son.

Renee Brown read a letter of thanks from Miss Rivett of the Children's Library Movement for the Annual Christmas treat. Miss Rivett said that the treat was one of the big things in the children's lives.

Marie Byles said that arrangements had already been made for Hostels in Cambewarra-Robertson area, which would enable Hostel users to do a number of good walks in that area.

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FEDERATION NOTES

After a discussion with Tom Herbert, Secretary of the Garrawarra Park Trust it was decided to find out whether there was any possibility of adding an extra area to the park. The extra area is part of Byrne's Estate and its acquisition would permit the erection of a fence down the ridge on the Southern side of the park. The question of shacks was also discussed.

Conservation Bureau's report on suggested Roadless Areas to be recommended to the Recreational Areas Sub-Committee of the National Fitness Council was considered in detail and endorsed.

The motion for the alteration of the Constitution by reducing the quorum from 7 to 5 delegates was lost.

Miss Dorothy Song's resignation, for medical reasons, from the position of Honorary Secretary, was accepted with regret and appreciation expressed for all Miss Song's work.

Miss Ruth Schleicher asked the Federation for support in the protest against the proposed timber cutting at Mt. Wilson.

The whole Blue Mountains National Park scheme submitted some years ago by the N.P.P.A.C. and the Federation has been revived; as a first step, the authorities are having the areas asked for by last year's deputation to the Minister for Lands reported on by a surveyor with a view to dedication after the war (see other article in this issue).

Mr. Arnold Rae, of the C.M.W. left a legacy to the Conservation Bureau of the Federation. A letter of appreciation was sent to his parents.

- - - - -

A willowy woman called Dunk
Was found in a terrible funk
And the cause of dismay
Was the fact, so they say
That her last pair of coupons had shrunk.

DATES OF IMPORTANCE
FOR YOUR
S O C I A L P R O G R A M M E

- MARCH 13/14th OUR RE-UNION at "MOORABINDA" on Heathcote Creek.
- 19th at 8 p.m. MR. MICHAEL TERRY - authority on matters Central Australian will tell us why "THERE IS ADVENTURE in CENTRAL AUSTRALIA".
(He has had to go to Queensland but hoped to be back before this date).
- 26th at 8 p.m. "OLD TAILS RETOLD" - a gala night, by Reg. Alder and other photographers to musical accompaniment.
- APRIL 10th at 7.30 p.m. FOURTH WATER COLOUR EXHIBITION OF AUSTRALIAN WILDFLOWERS.
- 30th at 8 p.m. Illustrated Lecture by MARIE BYLES "MOUNTAIN GLIMPSES ROUND THE WORLD".

=====

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creatures that crawl, fly, or run are
his FRIENDS instead of his prey.
--- He picks few flowers and never
pulls them up by the roots--- He
never chops down a tree unless he
has a mighty good reason for doing it."

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