

7/43

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

A monthly Bulletin devoted to matters of interest to
The Sydney Bushwalker, 5 Hamilton Street, Sydney

No.103

J U L Y, 1943.

Price 4d.

Editor: Clare Kinsella
Asst. Ed. Grace Jolly
Manager: Alex Colley

Production: Yvonne Rolfe
Assistant: Alice Wyborn
Subscriptions: Marie Kinsella.

C O N T E N T S

	Page
Index	1
Geehi	2
Fruit Picking & Tasmanian Holiday	5
Stranger than Fiction	7
Gossip	10
Letters from Lads	12
Why Not Cut Down Trees	13
Federation Notes	14
Our Own Meeting	14
The Social Committee	15
Goodman's Advt.	15
What Paddy Says	16

Would you like to adopt a Soldier, a W.A.A.F., a Sailor, an A.W.A.S. or a lad who flies the skies?

As you know the book shortage and the photographic shortage are daily becoming more acute and the Services Committee is hard pressed to provide "mental comforts" for the men and women of the Services. With the best intentions in the world many people forget to bring their reading matter and photographs to the club for this hard-working committee to post away.

Here is a proposal. A list is being prepared of members who are at battle-stations and you are asked to adopt one, and GUARANTEE to supply him or her with reading matter or photographs each fortnight or month or more often if you wish.

You may find certain books or magazines hard to procure but there is for instance that excellent publication "Walkabout", a most popular one for the troops, but unfortunately donations of these are all too few. The cost would be 1/- on the first of each month, would you be willing to pay it?

Again and again the Services Committee has received letters of thanks for photographs that bring back to these people far away, memories of Coast-land and mountains where you are still free to roam.

The list will be available in the club room. Come soon and adopt your chosen one or if you are not able to come in, write at once.

EDITOR.

G E E M I

By Dorothy Hasluck.

Near Nimmitibel in N.S.W. there is a sign post which says "To Tom Groggin" inspiring Mary Lang to write the following poem:-

It was so long ago. Surely the fathers of these old st here
 Were children when I lived. I built a house
 And made a fence and ploughed a field. To-day
 A name is all of me that lingers here;
 And still the proud trees stare into the creek,
 And still the bright wild mustard holds its ranks
 And shakes its twisted banners in the grass.
 All, all things have forgotten me; and I
 I am so old; so old I have forgotten
 If ever I knew stranger things, for now
 I only know I built a little house
 And made a fence and ploughed a virgin field.

So on a very windy morning we set off from Seaman's hut for Tom Groggin's. Tom-b-roggin, it really is, meaning water spider.

In the teeth of a howling gale we made our way to the South Ran's Head, hardly able to keep our feet against the blast. For once I felt more kindly towards my pack, as I am sure that it was only with its help that I remained anchored to the ground. Very glad were we when the track dropped and we were in comparative calm. At lunch time we arrived at a very charming spot beside a creek and backed by a grove of trees; most pleasant after the barren slopes with patches of frost-blasted spectre-like gums, from which we had just descended. Fate here stepped in. The jade, deciding that things were going far too easily, led us down the garden path, in the shape of a track taken by mistake by a stockman a few days previously. By the time the mistake was discovered, we decided it was too far to go back, so emerging on to a saddle, we held a council of war, scouted around and finally decided on a ridge which we hoped might lead us in the way in which we should go. On entering a belt of trees we were greeted by a burst of derisive laughter from a number of kookaburras.. When I wasn't dropping down a hole in a thicket of brambles, I was catching my foot on rocks hidden in the long grass, missing my balance and nearly taking a somewhat premature dive into the creek. However we were soon bathing our frayed legs and tempers and sunning ourselves on the warm rocks which soon restored to us a sense of well-being.

It was a delightful spot to camp, the creek taking a big horseshoe bend, enclosing a grassy flat from which numbers of gums reared their stately heads. We rose at the crack of dawn, and while prowling round in the dark, for some or other, I think every one of us walked into the water buckets..Edna, I think it was, distinguished herself by putting her foot into one, an extremely chilly proceeding.

Ray and Grace having spied out the ridge they thought might take us on our way, hopefully led us forth and before long we struck a well-defined stock route, which seemed very probably the one which we should have been on all the time. Rejoicing, we went on, there being a cold wind which was not conducive to lingering. After some hours we began to drop very much, the ridge widening out into beautiful parklike grassy flats. Numbers of the

loveliest gums marched in stately files right to the Snowy Creek, on the banks of which were the remnants of the hut formerly owned by Banjo Patterson's "Man from Snowy River". At this juncture it seemed to me to be the time and place to recite the poem, but alas for our ignorance, not one of us knew it!

Soon we reached the Murray, winding its way through grassy flats, our ridge having brought us to our goal in about four hours of continuous descent. After about half-an-hour's walking, during which we consumed quantities of blackberries, we spied a hut across the river which said to us "Tom Groggin's". So with one accord we forded the icy waters and proceeded to make its acquaintance and that of its occupants Leo Byett and Ken Nankervis who were shoeing a horse. They said they couldn't continue the job as our presence cramped their style in regard to swearing, so they asked us to come into the hut, have our lunch and listen to the wireless. We, of course, had eaten our food but did not say no to junket and blackberries. I could have eaten the whole dishful but being a lady, I just helped us all to modest quantities. On hearing that we were going back via Hannell's Ridge, they thought we were taking on more than we realised, and I am sure, privately thought we would be taking all day over it. They were also very emphatic in their warnings to beware of fogs in crossing the range, saying that they would be unable to find the themselves in such weather. We thoroughly enjoyed our lunch and their kind hospitality; one will go a long way before finding a finer type of men than those of the Mountains. I have found it just the same in the mountains of New Zealand. Deciding to proceed a few more miles that day, we bade adieu to our friends, in spite of a pressing invitation to stay and cook for 24 men.

Having been told there was a swing bridge, we approached the contraption and what an approach! Just a tangle of brambles which grasped every portion of one's anatomy as one scrambled up to its slatted flooring. Don't misunderstand me. It was not all slats, slats and gaps (large gaps) was the construction. I did a cake walk across with one hand grasping the fencing wire that did duty as a rail and the other grasping my plate loaded with mugs and containers, and as the swing became more violent, expected to see them hurtling into the depths below.

The track to Gechi led us through the same delightful parklands filling one with the desire to linger, and rebellion at having to proceed. We now found we had an addition to the party in the shape of one of the dogs and to our consternation nothing we could do could make him go back. We would think we had been successful, then would turn round to find an enquiring head with a very determined expression on its face appearing round the corner. He had decided to join the party and join it he would by hook or by crook. However we thought when no food was forthcoming he would depart, but never were people more mistaken, he just sat at a respectful distance while we had our meal. There was no food for him for we had made the startling discovery that we had lost the macaroni and soup meal, this in addition to being short of sugar and butter. Still we had hopes that he would return to the bosom of his family as we slept, but alas, in the early hours of the morning we were awakened by a series of short, sharp barks. I concluded resignedly that he was catching his breakfast. Grace, noble soul, volunteered to take the hound back, adding 8 miles to the 12 to Gechi Flats.

Arriving at the flats, we were delighted with the situation, all three

rivers, Gechi, Swampy Plains and Bridges, coming in at this point. The whole was enclosed in a circle of ranges and ridges; Hannel's, our objective, rising up to the majestic looking Townshend. One cannot help but feel that the general opinion is right, that Townshend was the mountain climbed, by Strezlecki. We climbed from Gechi, and from there, Kosciusko, besides being a more insignificant mountain, is not visible.

After having viewed the Gechi hut, we crossed another of those delectable bridges and came back to the Gechi, to find Grace had arrived with a tale of woe re the hound's delinquencies. She had had to rescue it from a thick tangle of blackberries into which it had landed after swimming the river.

As we were resting from our labours, having pitched the tents and gathered bedding etc., we enjoyed the most beautiful sunset; the sky shading from saffron pink to mauve; the moon rising wraith-like over a bushclad ridge, suffused in a sea of pink mist. It was the exquisite delicacy that entranced one, like a beautiful impressionistic painting.

Next morning we commenced the ascent of the celebrated Hannel's Ridge. We soon gained height and the ridge being fairly narrow, we had glimpses of the valleys on both sides. Looking back we had a delightful picture of the sun rising from the mist-filled depths and later on to our right, a gully came into view. A mauve mist, like a transparent veil hung over its deep recesses and narrow clefts, with here and there shafts of sunlight piercing the mist like golden and jewelled daggers. I think we were all so much ensnared by its loveliness, that, in spite of the decided coolness of the air, we stood rooted to the spot, hardly able to tear ourselves away. Having mounted the 5600 feet as on wings, (4 hours being our winged flight), we arrived at Leo Byett's camp. Here was the first water we had struck in the whole climb, so we decided to lunch and enjoy the marvellous panorama spread out before us.

In the distance was the sunlit Murray Valley, the Murray Gate, and Mount Buffalo. Beyond spread range upon range as far as the eye could see. One felt a veritable God enthroned on high and monarch of all one surveyed.

We had just finished lunch when Ken rode up on mustering bent, and was very surprised to find we had arrived already. The motley array of garments which Ray had on the trees to dry, together with the tents and other miscellaneous articles, I am sure afforded him a great deal of amusement. It certainly looked as if we were settled there for the day. After two hours basking in the sun, we wound our way round Townshend to the Wilkinson Valley. Here the creek winds in serpentine turns through the flower-strewn flats. Once more we met out mustering friends who decided we would be very useful to them, as we could walk nearly as fast as the horses. I seriously thought of taking on the job as being more restful than the business world at the present time. Far from the madding crowd etc.

Once more making our adieus, we took a short cut down the Snowy, back to Foreman's hut to a scrumptious dinner of tongues, asparagus and tinned fruit, most delectable after a week of dried food. "How have the mighty fallen! Can this be the woman who takes no interest in food?"

The next day, Sunday, we had a rest day; washing, getting in wood, making dampers etc. But disaster overtook us in the shape of grass-hoppers. Never have I seen such voracious appetites. I had formerly been delighted

with them in their jade-green coats, hopping about like little gnomes, but when I surveyed the remains of my pyjamas and Sheila's Lily of the Valley underwear, my feelings underwent a decided metamorphosis. I think that jade, Fate, was once more at work, for the dampers were not a howling success owing to Edna mistaking plain flour for self-raising. However, it being Lent, I thought the unleavened bread most appropriate.

Thus ended our first week with its joys, beauties and humour, all to be enjoyed over and over again by us all, more fully and more richly, in retrospect.

- - - - -

FRUIT PICKING AT MILDURA and HOLIDAY IN TASMANIA

Dot English.

Having finished my allotted span at the Munitions Laboratory, and as there was an urgent call being made just at that time for volunteers to bring in the grape harvest at Mildura, and some thousands of pickers were required if the harvest was not to be lost, I entered my name with the Harvest Labour Bureau and was right smartly and without further delay allotted to Redcliffs, up in the Murray River Irrigation area, 350 miles from Melbourne.

A special "Pickers" train took us up - a 12 hours journey - and there was a strange and motley collection of pickers in every type of garb imaginable, mostly fairly juvenile, and all in great spirits - just like a holiday train, boys and girls calling out to each other, laughter and songs and ukeleyles(?) (fancy not being able to spell that common menace!). When we all surged out at our destination you would have thought it was polling day at some busy metropolis. Men sat at tables along the street outside the station calling out names and allotting numbers, with queues of people lined in ~~sketchy~~ rows up and down the street. Growers pushed their way through the milling throng uttering unintelligible calls, and railway hands and officials directed enquiring pickers to Mr. This or Mr. That fast vanishing in the seething mob. However the organization was pretty good, and by the time I had located a Station master, who located Mr. Jacobs (my "grower"), who located me, order seemed to be emerging from chaos and various cars and lorries etc. were moving off with their full tally of pickers collected.

The Jacobs household consisted of Dad Jacobs and Mum and two charming and talented daughters 18 and 20 years of age. I was boarded at their house, two other young lasses were boarded next door, a young married couple and brother put up a tent in the vineyard, and several men had shacks down by the river. We worked from 8 a.m. to 5.15 p.m. and the sun shone strongly all day on the bright red earth and I sat under the vines and picked purple currants for a week at the rate of 100 or so buckets a day (the bucket is really a flat tin which holds about 20 to 25 lbs. of fruit) at £1 per hundred, and the next week golden sultanas at the rate of 200 tins a day. Before we got enough men on the job to do the heavy lifting I assisted Pa with the loading. Daughter Barbara drove the tractor towing a long wide dray, and up and down the vine rows we dashed, Pa and I running on opposite sides and stacking the filled tins on the dray. Then we'd lumber off with

our load to the racks, the tractor and its loosely attached purple hind-quarters looking like a not-too-well-organized huge insect. Here we'd empty the fruit out onto a wide flat tray, and Pa with a smart sudden jerk would spread the grapes out over the wire mesh racks. Then we'd load the empties back on the dray and Barbara would run us down the unpicked rows while Pa and I threw out bundles of tins at regular intervals under the vines. By the time we'd loaded and tipped and re-stacked and hurled the tins forth again - several hundred tins up to 25 lbs. weight each - we sure knew we'd been working. I was there about 3 weeks, at the end of which time I banked a cheque for \$20 and sang the praises of piece-work which allowed an energetic person like myself to reap the reward of extra work.

Returning to Melbourne I found that a party from the Munitions Lab. with whom I had been discussing the possibility of taking our annual holidays in Tasmania, had finalised arrangements, so I booked my passage too and had a hectic rush buying provisions for a fortnight's holiday in the wilds, then away we sailed.

The Tourist Bureau had told us that there was no chance of getting transport to the Cradle Mountain Reserve (our destination) so we took bikes with us. The crossing is by night, and we arrived early next morning. With 50 lb. packs balanced on the handlebars we made a pretty rough journey over terrific 5th grade roads, through first a hail storm which later developed into a snowstorm - and us with no gloves! O dearo dearo dearo! We took the best part of two days to do what the service car does in an afternoon, and when we were only a couple of miles from our destination (what irony!) we met the service car and the driver told us that of course it was still running, what nonsense! and he didn't know what was biting the Tourist Bureau people.

We eventually reached Waldheim, the guest house at the Northern end of the Reserve, and thawed out in front of a big log fire. A large stew and a warm bed and life once more assumed a rosy hue. We awoke to find all the mountains and highlands covered white (and this March, and Australia! - incredible!). The huts are spaced through the Reserve at 1-day stages (anything from 8 to 15 miles) and the track goes through rugged mountainous country, peaks and lakes and innumerable tarns, swampy button-grass plains, birch forests and pine forests filled with thousands of wallabies and wombats and almost millions of possums at night. This is the most marvellous mountainous spot in Australia. I had no idea we could turn on such New Zealand-like scenery. We walked 150 miles and climbed 10 first-class peaks in as many days. They are only 6 thousand footers, but one forgets they are not so high as the Mt. Cook giants and enjoys them just as much. We had snow the first day, and then a fortnight of perfect sunny days, so once again the good weather gods smiled on me. And once again, just to keep up the old tradition, we managed to get ourselves benighted while completing a successful traverse of four 5,000 ft. peaks. One of the party was quite new to mountaineering and so somewhat slow on the rough stuff, so the final burst of speed which would have just got us back to the hut by dark had to be foregone and we spent a pretty cold night, first sliding and crawling and falling down through a mountainside of dwarf beech (or birch) in the dark, then through dense almost impenetrable wet forest along the valley floor

until they called a halt; so I bedded the party down on a spot of dry ground and covered them with dry dead palm leaves, then crawled into the pile myself and shivered and dozed and woke and slapped ourselves and each other, and changed our positions and sang all the songs we knew, beating a tattoo meanwhile on the back of whoever happened to be in front of us, while the river gurgled and rushed and crept through the dark tangle of trees and vines, and the glow-worms turned on their cold ineffectual fires in all the crannies and crevasses in the moss.

An hour or so before dawn I'd had quite enough of inactivity (I'd always much prefer to go on through pitch dark grizzly ways rather than indulge in spineless inaction), so I voted that we get going again and warm up. I might say we had set out in nothing but shorts and shirts and boots, and crawling through the dwarf beech had torn our clothing to ribbons, so for all practical purposes we might just as well be naked. Anyhow, not to prolong the agony any further, at last the dawn arrived, and was just as welcome and miraculous as the time on Mt. Cook after picking our way down the thousand feet of rock face and negotiating the maze of crevasses in the dark. Half an hour more saw us at the hut. We put on billies of water and had hot baths and a big stew, then slept till mid-day and felt not a whit the worse for the night's outing. In the afternoon we passed on to the next hut, and so on hut by hut we retraced our steps north and eventually back to Melbourne. I slept in a life-boat coming back, and there was a tense moment when I awoke in the pitch dark and found our boat had cut off its engines and was drifting in a most disconcerting manner around in a circle. Then a light loomed out of the darkness, and our boat ran up a signal and I discovered to my relief that we were just entering Port Phillip Bay. It gave one a strange feeling to think such things were going on in mid-ocean..

- - - - -
STRANGER THAN FICTION

by "Ubi".

Rationing and lack of various commodities have caused us inconvenience and irritation but should we be forbidden to discuss and argue life would be for some appalling. And quite unrecognisable. To prove this let me take a concrete example. There will, of course, be nothing concrete about it - it will resemble more a jelly on the top of Mouin in a heat wave. However, you understand my meaning I hope so that we may begin with a feeling of having our feet firmly planted on the ground before we enter this Lunar Park of giddiness and vertigo.

For those who can read between the lines there are several lessons to be learnt including -

- (1) (a) Democracy will always get THERE
 (b) and possibly back again..
- (2) We are therefore fighting for the RITHT THING.

(4) All's well that ends well.

It would be impolitic for me to disclose (3) - the scene of the events to be described - as they were too much like a rehearsal for the Second Front. In addition to the above there is some interesting news for those who think that in a democracy the majority rules and its verdict is final.

One would imagine that Bushwalkers wanting to go walking would just go; but no! that would be too easy for people looking for the SIMPLE LIFE. Besides, how could one appreciate the SIMPLE LIFE if one had had a peaceful environment in town? How would one know that "silence reigned supreme" or that "the birds supplied a symphony of song" unless one had a yelling, screaming pack of hounds around with which to compare these blessings?

Now it would have been too, too simple if there had been only seven to fit into the seven-seater car. There were eleven - an excellent gambit, don't you think? We sense a battle. A few preliminary rounds among the "heads" fail to deter anyone so a solution must be sought. In the Club that night a collection of really beautiful paintings of wildflowers is being displayed, ranged on tables in the centre of the room. Around these tables, heedless of the exhibition, a group of people like a blob of bacilli in the blood stream is circulating. They are engaged in fierce controversy. Now and then an interested observer will hover near, judge the position, perhaps have a skirmish and then retire for long range scrutiny. Maps are waving in the air; maps are being draped on walls and are being drawn in space. Suggestions are made, pounced upon, ridiculed and torn to shreds. At length everyone agrees that trip "A" - the subject of this discussion - must be abandoned. Then trips "B", "C", "D" and so on through the alphabet followed by the Greek alphabet are also abandoned. Such novelties as finishing a trip by suburban tram followed by an inspection of the steel-works fail to appeal and even the economy of a season ticket (or was it just one big, happy family ticket?) on the tram does not find one responsive soul.

Unfortunately the room stewards are trying to enforce the Early Closing Act so a decision seems imperative. Vive Democracy, we shall vote! All those in favour of trip "B"? It wins, folk.

But, yearning after the original venture, everyone cherishes resentment in his heart and, as we collect our hats, the whole structure is undermined, at the door one begins to wonder where one is going, at the corner of the street no-one knows where anyone is going. The fact that Sunday is untouched seems to be just asking to have the matter thrashed out further, so we decide upon a Sunday walk and seek people out in various parts of George Street and the restaurants contiguous thereto to apprise them of the rendez-vous.

Sunday - day of rest - quite true, perhaps, some time before dawn. Up hill and down dale every conceivable plan to implement trip "A" is worried like a fox by hounds. There is no need to count the number of plans mooted

and contributed one just does it by a combination of permutations and the human ingenuity is staggering.

By lunch, triumph! oddsboddikins ! eureka ! a decision is reached. We shall follow plan Axb if Y is suitable, B and C willing and provided three men are prepared to walk the twenty five miles of road. We eat lunch with satisfaction and pride because of the finality of pain $AxbY?B+C?3men \times 25miles$.

It is now all plain sailing - only the food to be arranged - who likes this and that, what shall be eaten when and by whom, who will carry what and what will be bought and by whom. Where trip "A" was debated up hill and down dale food is now discussed down dale and up hill as we retrace our steps to the station. The amount of porridge to be taken is settled with a nonchalance worthy of a minor affair and we seem almost indifferent as to whether the eggs should be white or brown. Decision after decision is made in double quick time as we make our way to Heathcote Station, on Heathcote Station we made definite strides, in the train to Sutherland we begin to peep through the chaos, on Sutherland Station the food list takes on a little shape, there is a suggestion of the dawn in the train to Hurstville, on the latter station a number of knotty problems are solved and in the train to Kogarah, as we pass Carlton at 7.20 p.m. the last crumb is classified, tabbed and pigeon-holed. The really, truly final step in the plan is making a phone call from Kogarah so actually, as will be verified by consulting a railway guide, one station is regrettably wasted.

Do you now think that every detail was irrevocably settled and that the trip was performed with the closest co-operation?

Poor innocent ! Read next month's thrilling fluctuations, breath-taking epic of argument, drama of vacillation.

- - - - -

SOMETHING FOR ... NOTHING

Anyone who is interested in the stars may pick out the constellations described in previous issues of the magazine by referring to the same month of the year before. The stars are in the same place at the same time every year and will continue to be in the same place at the same time as long as your magazine hangs together and can be read.

"CANOPUS".

- - - - -

MORE GOSSIP

The Social Committee put on a very nice dance for us on Friday the 18th June in the Club room. Members were asked to come dressed in the sleeping wear they affected when camping out. Fortunately, it was a cold night and winter sleeping wear was predominant, so the Social Committee's flag is still flying. No doubt many of us would rather not be seen outside a sleeping bag in the assortment of clothes that we feel is very necessary to our comfort, but others with no respect for anyones illusions felt differently and these strong minded folk came along and gave an enlightening demonstration of how to keep warm.

An exceedingly well turraed leg was displayed to great advantage by Grace Edgecombe who chose a pair of Gents Natty underpants. Reg Alder's rig-out was more decorative than warming (other than to the eye). One of Hilma's nightgowns didn't disguise him in the least, but perhaps Hilma was just showing us that she married an angel.

Walt Disney must have seen Ray Kirkby camping out some time, and based his famous Mickey Mouse on the spectacle thus displayed. He (Ray) still looked cold in spite of his long woollen stockings and two quite inadequate safety pins, and seemed to need a little more packing. Berlei's might have a better idea for you Ray, than safety pins, something with a little more "give" in it.

We felt quite concerned for the girl who constricted her nether limbs with a cardigan. May she never develop somnambulistic tendencies, at least we hope we may be there when she does.

Arthur Gilroy, timing it very nicely made a late entrance very effectively, in a white night shirt. Luckily ----- was not there otherwise, who knows, one look, and another beautiful would-be friendship spoilt.

We hope the committee was pleased with the large attendance. The orchestra was most generous and played everything except the one thing that seemed to us to be most appropriate for the occasion, or perhaps they had never heard of it, "I wonder How I Look When I'm Asleep". Anyway, now most of us know. Makes you think, don't it.

Someone mentioned to us the other night that quite a few male members are sporting growths on their upper lips. We investigated and it was so, some of course are more prolific than others. Is it a secret sign?

It is rumoured of one of newer brides that she has the domesticity craze so badly that her husband has to drag her into the club on Friday nights. She then sits in corners, dreaming no doubt of nutmeg and disters.

Betty Fryde dropped in to tell us that she is not in Adelaide as we said. We are rather unfortunate with Betty, we always station her in the wrong places. It is her move now, we have done our best for her.

Another junior Bushwalker to ass to the long list. Mrs. Mitchell, to us, Muriel Hall, has a daughter.

LETTERS FROM THE LADS AND LASSES.

Letters were received this month from the following members on the Services Committee's list:-

R. Huntley Tucker	George Archer (P.O.W. Germany)
J. W. Edwards	Rory Lofts
Bruce Simpson	Jack Parkinson
Peter Allen	W. Spedding
Bill Burke	Les Douglas
Betty Isaacs.	Rita Stanford.

RORY LOFTS. (up Queensland way). Dear S.B.Ws. I was very pleased to receive the May issue of the S.B.W. today. Its good to get a breath of the old fellowship of the bush which seems to come with each issue. Although my whereabouts are all shrouded in mystery, I can talk of some things without fear of the razor blade. I find this one of the most interesting places I have been in from a walker's point of view at least. I spend three or four days a week wandering round the hills or through the bush and what bush - beautiful big trees, not the kinds we are used to round Sydney, in fact one seldom sees a eucalypt and never in the heavy country, there everything is dark green hanging with vines, hundreds of beautiful elkhorns and staghorns and bird nest ferns. The birds are also interesting, many of our old friends and many new ones. One of the old ones is the whip bird but here he finishes off his call rather differently. We have a chap who knows a fair bit about birds in our section and I often go out with him and have a very pleasant time. Bernard O'Reilly and he are great cobbers and take to the bush on most Sunday afternoons. Our local brook is just the last thing in canoeing rivers. I'm just hanging on till the end of this show, then a canoe and about a fortnight's holiday. One could have a wonderful time. There are a few rapids here and there that are a bit fast but there is always a way round. The scenery would be very varied too, from the little I have seen of it, and the camping spots are everywhere, to say nothing of the fact that the train will take you right to the river in several places so you can get out at any of half a dozen places according to the time one has to spend.

I introduced our chaps to the ground sheet method of crossing streams one day, but only one chap was game to risk it, the others preferred to cross the river where they thought they could wade, the result was the three of them got washed off their feet wetting all their gear including rifle, glasses and compass and the rest got wet to the waist while the other chap and I crosses easily and had dry equipment when we got there. So much for doubting Thomas, we bush-walkers can teach the army lots.

I spend a lot of my time teaching mapping and thought the article by "Klister" very good, I will be able to use it in my lectures. I wish I could just let myself go and describe this country as it really is but unfortunately that can't be done and whatever one wants to say one soon finds the word STOP in big letters.

LES DOUGLAS. Port Moresby. I was more than pleased to get your letter - pleased also to see such a healthy list of war-like spirits from the club and know that to date they're all still whole and hearty - if in some cases suffering in duration vile. It would be marvellous to meet some of the gang - so if they know they're headed this way-well, I'm easily found and fairly well known in this Naval Depot and we'll do a spot of "punishing" - or as our Yankee allies have it "shooting the breeze".

My work up here is very interesting - although naturally I can't tell you

much about it - except that it keeps me in the open all day - mostly tossing on a ruffled - but often beautiful - surface of Moresby Bay - hence I'm gradually achieving a dark mahogany tan about the face, arms and knees - Wal will be disappointed to know that as yet I've not tried out the fishing as my gear hasn't arrived - but I will - and then I'll be able to spin some "dits" about the ones that got away. I've achieved one trip into the hills - Roun Falls on the Lologi River naturally we had only a few hours to do the trip - so bagged a truck - four of us - and shoved big cane arm chairs in the back and away - we created much comment and laughter from the tough A.I.F. whom we passed en route but the comfort we achieved made up for the "hoys" we stopped and the road isn't so good that you could overlook the more than occasional holes and bumps. The falls were worth any trouble to get there and the river was running strongly so the volume of water that pitched over a 350 foot drop was tremendous, the air was full of spray and you used sign language to convey your thoughts owing to the noise - we had a climb of about a mile from the truck - so that when we returned we were more than ready to sample the hospitality of the A.C.F. who have a hut on the road - quite a good Sunday afternoon's effort (This, by the way is our only time of relaxation) and we returned home two hours late - I must see them again, as there's lots of things I would like to do - such as climb to the other side of the river - take photos etc. etc. but one can't squeeze all these into one afternoon - and I'm NOT coming back after the war.

BILL BURKE. Up Queensland way. I won't enlarge on the heartbreak that leaving the fair city of Sydney occasioned. Sufficient to say that there was much wailing and gnashing of teeth. That is, until the train started to move. The cobbler is a bit like myself; hasn't a care in the world and being travel minded after three years of wandering the prospect of peering over the next hill caused our spirits to soar. The first day passed right speedily, all gorging on the plentiful supply of food that had been showered upon us. My only regret was that as best part of the trip was done by night I was unable to view the North Coast. Managed to snatch a brief but illuminating half day in that "busy little frontier town". We all woke up the following morning eager to renew our acquaintanceship but also we had to place our glad rags at the bottom of the pack and move on to greener fields. Quite a pretty little place; much nicer than Sydney I thought, but perhaps I was influenced by the proximity of the surrounding bushlands. Twenty minutes, by tram, from the heart of the city to a cool shady, clear running stream is, to my mind, ideal, apart from the general appearance of cleanliness and the congenial surroundings, the people impressed me as much more friendly than those down south. Apparently it is quite the accepted thing to have a yarn with a fellow tram traveller. I had quite a pleasant chat with the lass sitting alongside me. Thought perhaps that I was lucky but the others all had a similar experience. Imagine the look if one tried to start a conversation in a Sydney tram, especially if the person concerned was a pretty little miss. I missed out on a spot more leave, but my usual luck held when we reached the station; three of us managed to reserve a first class sleeping compartment to ourselves, for the next three nights we absolutely wallowed in luxury. The miles slipped by over bridges, through culverts, by swamp and forest and plain the train rattled on. Cattle browsed contentedly on the plain; an occasional herd drifting along under the care of a sleepy looking drover, followed by his equally sleepy packhorse. Ibis, brolga, cranes and innumerable smaller birds turned the swamps into a panorama of beauty. Lonely farmhouses, fire blackened paddocks with isolated trees standing as lovely sentinels; the Australia one reads and dreams about. Further north and the tropics began to take hold. The dark rippling green of the cane fields, grey green pineapple plantations, bananas, paw paws and isolated patches of dank, ominous, seemingly impenetrable rain forests...

WHY NOT CUT DOWN TREES?

By Arbores Australis.

Of course bushwalkers never do cut down trees for the obvious reason that they would be ostracised from bushwalking society if they did. But why this strong feeling in the bush-walking world against little boys with tomahawks who slash the young saplings and rejoice at the glorious crash if they can bring a bigger tree down with their small hands? Why our horror because a letter in the paper tells us that a timber mill is going into a forest at Mount Wilson?

If we have ever thought about it the first reason that has flashed through our minds as to why we should not cut trees, is just that the trees are lovely and we don't want to see the beauty taken away from our land. And that alone would be ample reason for not cutting trees. Too often in this materialistic age we forget that beauty is an end in itself, and in some cases far more important than material wealth. I once read of a poor peasant in China who had a beautiful maple tree growing near his cottage. The maple provides a wood very suitable for making wooden bowls (I think it is). A merchant offered him a high price for the tree, but he refused it, preferring beauty to money. Perhaps the world might be a happier place today if more people had preferred beauty to the mad scramble for material wealth, which, whatever it brings, does not bring happiness.

In the same class as the preservation of beauty is the preservation of the unique fauna and flora of our land, a fauna and flora found nowhere else in the world, and which rapidly disappears once the forest protection is removed. Why preserve the fauna and flora? Because like beauty it is one of those spiritual values without which mankind would probably perish.

However, I need not enter into a philosophical discussion with bushwalkers who are already more than convinced.

But this is a materialistic age, and there are plenty of materialistic reasons also for not cutting down trees.

When we cut trees along river banks and on steep hill-slopes we remove the tangle of little roots and the undergrowth (which will grow only under trees) that hold the soil in position and also hold the rain like a sponge. This means that when the rains come they wash the soil away causing bad soil erosion, and the water itself also runs off rapidly for it is no longer held back by the sponge of the tiny roots. In country cleared on the steep slopes and along river banks, you will find that the streams and rivers tend to be higher during heavy rains and lower in dry periods than in country that has not been cleared. And the object of the recently instituted Soil Erosion Board is to prevent tree-cutting in such places. Have you ever stopped to consider why Middle Harbour is so much less muddy than Lane Cove. The answer is that the headwaters of Middle Harbour are still bush clad. The headwaters of Lane Cove are very largely cultivated and therefore cleared. That muddiness is a sign of soil erosion, and of rapidly drying up streamlets. Have you noticed how a dependable streamlet of ten years ago (like that of North Era) has ceased to run except after rain. Think back and remember that bush fires have swept through the catchment area very often or cattle or man have trampled it down. This means that the undergrowth has never properly regrown, and the sponge of the roots which held the moisture that formed your streamlet, has gone. The cutting down of trees has exactly the same effect as bush fires, cattle and crowds of people.

So much for why you should not as a rule cut down trees. Of course there are always exceptions. But prima facie a tree should not be cut, and if a person wants to cut it, the onus lies on him to give a good reason why.

Next month we shall discuss why trees and forests should be cultivated.

FEDERATION NOTES

The proposal for reservation of Kariong Peninsula, Hawkesbury River, has been revived by the Federation and is being looked into by the District Surveyor.

The National Fitness Council has dropped the proposal for a Fitness Camp at Jibbon Head, Port Hacking, but is requesting the reservation of the North head of Jervis Bay.

It was decided that the rental of the Era lands was too high for the Federation to take the risk of a lease without abandoning its principals and becoming landlord to the shack owners.

The letter to the Dept. of Mines about the shale mine below Diamond Falls brought a reply with a plan of about three mining leases between the Katoomba Golf Links and the First Narrow Neck. It was decided to write to the Katoomba Municipal Council, Katoomba Tourist Bureau, Dept. of Mines and Committee of Economic Welfare urging that all possible control be exercised to see that any mining operations on these leases were carried out in a way to cause a minimum of destruction to the beauty of the area.

The Recreational Areas Committee of the National Fitness Council is making efforts to secure two small areas near Narrabeen as reserves in connection with hiking.

A building is being erected at Little Marley on a permissive occupancy in front of the Hostel. The Youth Hostels Association is asking that no road be allowed within 50 yards of the hostel, and no camping within 80 yards of it. It was decided to write to the National Park Trust and to the Youth Hostels Association asking that the road be closed right back to the Bundeena Road, and that the suggestion about camping be scrapped, as 80 yards from the hostel would take in the whole camping area at Little Marley.

The expenditure of the Legacy of £90 from Arnold Rae was discussed. Inquiries are being made about leasing Block 7 at North North Era and also about land at the junction of Long Angle Gully and Fitzgerald Creek.

AT OUR OWN MEETING

Two new members, Russell Wilkins and Vic Bolton were welcomed by the President. After some discussion it was resolved that the Club disapproved of any restriction on camping at Little Marley (see Federation notes). The President informed us, with deep regret, that Norm Saill has been killed in action in New Guinea. The proposed shale retort on Narrow Neck was discussed. Norrie Macdonald and Frank Freeguard, who were on leave from the Army, thought that any restriction on the location of the proposed retort might be detrimental to the war effort. Stan Martin pointed out that shale oil could only be used for civilian purposes. Marie Byles thought that the war was too often made an excuse for despoiling natural features. It was eventually resolved that the Club disapproved of any interference with the rock escarpment forming the Narrow Neck Peninsula. Phyl White, owing to the illness of her father, tendered her resignation from the Committee. Elsa Isaacs was elected in her place.

SOCIAL EVENTS FOR YOUR CALENDAR

JULY	7th	7.45 p.m.	Skating night at the Glaciarium
JULY	23rd	8 p.m.	Lecture by Palmer Kent: "The Real Facts Behind the Malayan Campaign".
JULY	30th	8 p.m.	Clubroom Dance: Novelty and Supper - Dancing 8 - 11.
AUGUST	20th	8 p.m.	"Old Tails" retold again by Messrs. Alder & McGregor, with an "all star" casts.
AUGUST	27th	8 p.m.	Clubroom Party.

- - - - -

Y O U R O P T O M E T R I S T

F. GOODMAN, M.I.O.
Optometrist and Optician
20 Hunter Street,
SYDNEY

Tel. B3438

Modern methods of eye examination and eye training
Careful Spectacle fitting.

- - - - -

Fixing an appointment will facilitate the reservation of time
for giving you proper attention, but should you be unable to
ring us beforehand, your visit will be welcome at any time
you may choose to call.

SLEEPING BAGS AND STEEL FRAME RUCKSACKS

Paddy is pleased to announce that he will have a few down sleeping bags available on July 15th. These bags are filled with nearly pure down, but if you feel a few feathers in them please don't be cross. Things aren't what they used to be. Nevertheless they will pack about as small as the old time bags and weigh about the same.

Price £3/9/6 for 5'10" bag. 2/- for every additional 2".

There will also be a few steel frame rucksacks on the same date. Price £2/19/10.

PLEASE NOTE:

No previous orders can be taken.

No phone orders.

Regret these rules. We try to be democratic and ensure the greatest good for the greatest number.

PADDY PALLIN

Camp Gear for Walkers

'Phone B3101.

327 George Street

SYDNEY