

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

A monthly Bulletin of matters of interest to the Sydney
Bush Walkers, C/- Ingersoll Hall, 256 Crown St., Sydney.

No. ~~152~~ 153

AUGUST, 1947

Price 6d.

Subscriptions ~~Sept.-Jan 2/6.~~ Postage 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.

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EDITORIAL

Cold Cheer for the Skier

To have a snow holiday these days you need plenty of luck and money. The luck is required for the accommodation ballot. The money is to pay for the accommodation if you get it, and to buy equipment. Accommodation plus fares will cost at least £1 a day. Reliable equipment will cost at least £20 for the bare essentials. You might consider this cost to be spread over a number of ski trips, but then you must be lucky again, or you might never have another chance to use your gear.

There is little prospect of more hostels or huts being built. Such structures should come near the bottom of the list of building priorities - after the homeless have been housed, the

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slums replaced, the immigrants housed and enough schools and hospitals erected. This may be 10 years, 20 years, sometime or never. It will almost certainly be several years before skiing huts can be erected without arousing well-justified protests from the legion of the homeless.

How to fit bushwalkers into the limited accommodation is the problem facing the S.B.W. Skiing sub-committee. We wish them luck.

SOCIAL COMMITTEE NOTES

The social activities for the month of July began with a theatre party to "Clutterbuck" at the Minerva. We occupied thirty seats, and judging by the laughter that issued from the S.B.W. section of the audience, we all enjoyed it.

The dance at Pakie's on Tuesday 15th was another social success. We would like to see more at these dances. Ladies, don't be bashful! There are no wallflowers at our dances. Nobody could possibly sit in a corner when our good host, Mr. Robin McDougall, plays his carefully selected records. If you like good coffee, Pakie's is the place to get it. There is no limit to the number of cups. So how about it? See you at the next dance?

We have to thank Tom Moppett and his friends for the excellent entertainment on the 18th., when instructional films on the art of skiing were shown to a packed house. It looked easy, didn't it? Ever tried to do it?

Fellow morons, do you remember the debate on the 25th? You shouldn't, you know, for Allan Hardie and his crew said the absence of memory was a characteristic of a moron. The arguments by both sides were most entertaining, and the result - a foregone conclusion - most bushwalkers are morons.

So much for July. There are bigger and brighter things to come in the month of August. Kevin Ardill is busy preparing a quiz session for the 15th., Ira Butler will be entertaining us with coloured films of "Australia and Abroad" on the 22nd. There will be another dance on the 29th., this time at the club room. Do come!

I hear tell that Joan Savage is busy again producing some good one act plays. The gala night is set for some time in October. We'll be coming round with the tickets soon. Nice work Joan!

AT OUR JULY MEETING

The President was in the chair and there were about 60 members present.

Seven new members were welcomed - Irene Jeanes, Jack Wren, Jim Brown, Bruce McInnes, Stan Madden, Roy Cunningham and Kevin Deane.

It was resolved to delete the words "for the Club" from the deed of trust for lot 7 North Era.

It was announced that Phil Hall had resigned, owing to ill-health, from the office of Walks Secretary. His successor will be elected at the Half Yearly Meeting.

The remainder of the meeting was taken up with Federation business. Club policy regarding the Federation was re-affirmed. The Club's policy on advertising was also reaffirmed by a narrow margin, being opposed by some of the newer members. It was decided to vote against the affiliation of the Adelaide Bush Walkers with the Federation, because of the practical difficulties involved and because of alleged differences in conservation policy. A proposal for a Commonwealth Federation was referred to the N.S.W. Federation for consideration. The Federation is to be requested to protest against the cutting of timber in Mark Morton Reserve. Dorothy Lawry has drafted a letter to give effect to this motion. The proposal for a war memorial in the form of a brass plate on Splendour Rock was revived by Brian Harvey and it was resolved to bring the matter again before the Federation.

The meeting closed at 10.35 p.m.

NOTES ON WALKS

Bill Carter's walk - Marulan-Cow Hole-Shoalhaven River-Goulburn, scheduled for July 25th., has changed place with Leon Blumer's walk and will now be done on Sept. 26-27-28. The number of starters will be limited to eight because the truck to be hired will not take more.

Dave Ingram advises an alteration of train time for his Parramatta-Cattai Creek-Nelson-Rouse Hill walk on Aug. 24th. The train by which the party will travel is the 8.30 a.m. for Liverpool from Central electric platform. It will be necessary to change at GRANVILLE FOR PARRAMATTA and change at PARRAMATTA for the 9.15 a.m. KELLYVILLE bus (Route no. 200).

The train time for Ruby Clark's Sunday walk - Duffy's Siding-Mount Bowen-Bellbird Creek- Kemsley's Siding on Sept 7th. is not shown on the programme. It will be the 9.0 a.m. Kurrajong train from Central. Tickets to Duffy's siding or Kurrajong. Starters are asked to please contact the leader after changing into the Kurrajong train at Richmond

(This column is open to any walks leader. Use it to give members the information they want and at the same time save yourself repeated explanations.)

11 ELVE MILES, EASY.

By "Tess".

That's what it was marked in the Walks Programme, but the Leader, a kindly conscientious soul, wanted to make quite sure, and arranged a "reccy".

Would I go too? Of course I would. A nice quiet trip would be just the thing after a trying week. There were to be five of us. Three M. and Two W., the second W. to join the party at "____" station.

Saturday morning dawned bright and clear with pouring rain, and my faith in the M. who said "It never rains on my walks, kid" was a little shaken, but, I went.

The next jolt came at "____" station. No second W! By this time, maps had been produced, and studied. I began to think second W. must have had the right idea and a map! Various reassuring noises were made, such as "____ sure to turn up somewhere" and "____ probably hitched a lift" but by now, I was losing faith.

Once the launch left "____" and it was too late to turn back, my worst fears were realised. I was the one W. to three M. Now don't misunderstand me, I'm not exactly the bashful type, but I am a weak walker. However, the 12 miles, easy, was used as the proverbial carrot, and in any case, the M. had the tent.

We ignored a perfectly good track and scrambled up a gully to a ridge overlooking "____" where, to our leader's chagrin, we found a track, and I began to feel happier. It was a difficult track to follow, as all the arrows had been painted back to front. This completely fooled the leader, though he hid his dismay with a care-free laugh or so, (Rather hollow, I thought) just to keep me from panicking. We stopped frequently to check our position, but having five compasses, four and a half maps, one protractor, and one pencil between us, it was a little difficult to work out something to suit all concerned.

There was a debate as to whether we should camp in a land flowing with milk and honey, or, more accurately, water and sunshine milk tins, but as usual, the verdict was "Bash on, Regardless" and being the lone W. I resaddled with a sigh.

From now on, things improved. There was no track to follow, and consequently, none to lose, and we made camp in a sheltered spot just above "____".

In all fairness, I must admit I was well looked after. It's not often a solitary W. has her supper cooked by 3 M. and is fed "Rice Pudding as Mother makes it" made by a Master Hand. As we sat round the fire, I began to think that it was not such a bad walk after all. Incidentally, gentle reader, don't ever be misled into thinking that men don't gossip. It was a rare pleasure to listen to three M.

discussing W. in general and particular. It reminded me of many a cosy knitting bee among my own sex.

After a good ten hours sleep we awoke to prepare for an early start at 10.00 a.m., and at 10.30 a.m., heard the familiar call, "Moving off 30 minutes ago!" Then began the real business of the trip. I will not harrow the reader with a detailed description. We walked by compass in a series of S bends, or concentric circles through tenacious scrub, we saw, and of course avoided, a perfectly good track, and saw, and followed a perfectly horrible power line. We struck a main road, which seemed to worry the leader a little, but doubtless it had been made since the map was printed.

At lunch time we camped amid rocks covered with Aboriginal carvings. I would not have noticed them, but the three M. assiduously pointed out various scrawls of undoubted abo. origin. One in particular interested me. It was shaped like a broad arrow and drawn immediately below the power line. It seemed to indicate a high standard of culture.

Soon after this I lost all interest in the surrounding country, and we staggered onto a road for the last lap of three miles into "_____". There our Leader left us. He wanted to follow the power line to find a shorter route for the official trip, and arranged a rendezvous at a certain cross-roads. We reached the meeting place, but no Leader. We left little notes for him with heavy hearts, picturing him lying in a tangled heap, having fallen off the power line, or wandering for days in the wilds of "_____".

We were hurrying on to reach help and contact the Search and Rescue, when we spied a khaki-clad figure on the skyline. Yes, it was the Leader. He had "hitched" the last lap!

There is no more to be said. Names and places have been omitted, for I have been threatened with dreadful things if I warn off the unsuspecting Prospectives. The only hint I dare give is:- "It's down on the programme as 12 miles, easy."

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SOIL AND CIVILIZATION.

A book of great earnestness and depth by ELYNE MITCHELL.

By Allen Strom.

To all Australians, this book carries a deep meaning: a patriotic plea for preservation, for commonsense to replace man's thoughtlessness and greed; for a true Australian Spirit to replace the conventional, superficial and sophisticated urban complacency. To all who are guardians (and that is all of us) of the rising generations, there is, however, a far more arresting and disquietening fact to face -- can the drift to cities, the desecration of

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forests and the erosions of the plain lands go on and on and we do nothing? Shall our children grow to know Australia to be desert like the lands of Babylon -- a city and a land that was once verdant and rich and timbered?

To bushwalkers Elyne Mitchell can come closer and be understood in a manner which comes of intimate knowledge of the wind and the rain and the majesty of mountain peak. She has more for us than a warning and a plea. "Soil and Civilization" presents a philosophy and a belief: a philosophy gleaned from the history of ancient civilizations, and a belief in the mystic affinity of a people with the soil and the seasons that are their life. She shows how through ages the good life has been lived only by peoples who have retained their contact with the earth; how civilizations have waned and died through their failure to cherish the soil. She warns Australians of the dangers they have incurred in plundering their land, and points the way to a restoration of the balance between plant and animal life on which future harmony and prosperity must depend. Even if we cannot leave our city, even though our walk of life is vital to the nation, we as bushwalkers must spread the feeling that is expressed in ----

"We could awaken and focus our eyes beyond the confines of the city. A wholeness of wisdom can come through experiencing all of life -- the death and rebirth of creation; the season's roll, storm and sun; the discipline of exhausting effort in burning sun --- and freezing cold ---; the companionableness around a camp-fire in the mountains' tall timbers; quiet evenings with books, weaving the poetry and the thoughts into the pattern of one's own life. A people who go towards life seeking this wisdom, integrating all their experience, would not be ravishers of the soil, for they would know that the earth is part of themselves."

It is in the simple things of life that we find the most lasting pleasures; the soul-enriching experiences of leaving a real mark upon the world and our fellow men. Somewhere I have read: "the bush has given us much -- we owe it much in return". Perhaps the best that we can give is to learn to know the bush, its way of living and the moods of the things of the wild. No bushwalker is worth his salt if his walking is sheer careless filling of spare time; there must be a philosophy and a purpose behind his re-creation.

I have maintained (and not without considerable opposition) for many years that bushwalking should mean more than it does -- not only to the general public but the bushwalkers themselves. The inadequacies of my poor expression have been overcome in this truly important work. Even if bushwalkers buy the book only to read of a new approach, the outlay will be worth while.

"Soil and Civilization" by Elyne Mitchell (Angus and Robertson Ltd.) My copy from the Grahame Book Co., price 4/6d.

DIARY OF A DEMENTED Man.By Ray Kirkby.

The first morning I look through my hotel window, which, with the room also, is on the third floor, and spy a range of hills staring me right in the face. They are brown and peppered with trees. I discover that the hotel has a flat roof and eagerly scan the surrounding country. There are low mountain ranges all round with lulling curves. Sheep country. But on the flats the wheat is up and the recent rain has pepped its greenness; the Winter pinks and blues are soft, the last few leaves of the willows add a dash of yellow and still that wandering line of the hills causes the spirit to trip along its tops.

To maps! To maps! These innocent hills are shown and identified and now to see behind their screen. Behind this low range lie the Moonbis -- why, only 15 miles away. The Nandewars are only 80 miles away and there's Bank Holiday. I didn't think that I could possibly see the Nandewars for years. What's up this way? Nundle. I think I have vaguely heard of it before. Under the Great Dividing Range -- Hanging Rock, that sounds interesting -- the Barnard River rises here and the Hunter, and the Peel, too.

I'll try the railways first. I study the boards on the platform attentively. I read them upwards, downwards, crosswards. I acquire, on account of their position, a tilt of the head which gives me the appearance of constantly having my eyes fixed on Mt. Everest. I find that a train leaves the town at 5 p.m. on Saturday which may be of some use but no other train conceivably can be of any use and that there are no trains at all on Sunday.

I begin to spot buses. There is one marked "Manilla". I run back to the map. Manilla. Namoi River -- it would be nice to see it -- rather pleasant-looking peaky thing not far from town. I decide something might come of that. Exciting news. There is a bus to Nundle. And a mail car. Idiot, I am, I haven't remembered to examine the mail car position.

"When do they run?", I ask the man at the Post Office hopefully. They run everywhere, they do everything, they show you round, they treat you like honoured guests, they pick up the letters, they deliver the letters -- the angels, the angels ---- but not on Saturday afternoon or Sunday.

Back to buses. There is a Nundle Bus, too. There is an Armidale Bus too. There is also a Gunnedah Bus. And just to let you see that I am interested in the welfare of the whole community, I must add that there is also a North Tamworth Bus and a West Tamworth Bus. As the vital Nundle and Gunnedah buses are primarily for school children they, of course, do not run on Saturday or Sunday. However if I could get to Nundle I could get back on Monday morning in time for school, I mean work. (I must find out if the North Tam. bus and

the West Tam. bus connect in case I want to go from North to West very hurriedly.) The Armidale bus which leaves at 7 a.m. Sunday might be of some use but merely duplicates the only rail service which is of any use.

Well, what's left? Papers. A kind soul on the 'phone tells me all about the papers. I could leave on Sunday morning and go hundreds and hundreds of miles. I could traverse the State, but how would I get back? The local papers are whisked around the countryside on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The daily paper seems to drop from the skies quite literally. Why don't people read Sunday papers all the week as well? Why doesn't the "Herald" come out on Sunday? Why have I got to work all the week and on Saturday morning too and twice as hard at that? Why shouldn't these ill-educated brats of kids go to school all the weekend - it might put some sense into their heads? And these poor country people who are badly enough isolated, Heaven only knows, should have their mail delivered every day.

Anyway, I shall walk up the hill which stares at me from my hotel window. But the people look in amazement, "He is walking," they say to each other. "Yes," they all say, "he is walking." "Yes, walking." I shall look at the hills from my hotel window. But they look up and say, "He is looking at something from his hotel window." The crowd gathers. "He is looking," they say, "at a flying saucer." "He is looking from his hotel window at a flying saucer."

I pull down the window. I pull down the blind. I shall drink myself to death behind my hotel door.

BUDAWANG AND CURROCKBILLY.

PART I.

By Prolix.

Anzac Weekend, 1947. Programme perused some weeks before and a walk led by Frank Leyden noted for further action. The schedule was: Nowra, Wog Wog Mountain, Currockbilly Mountain, Budawang Range, Budawang Mountain, Nowra. This seemed a somewhat speedy programme so we decided to avail ourselves of the transport facilities but to do the trip in a leisurely manner as part of our annual holidays -- Sunday till following Saturday.

Frank was most accommodating in the matter of transport, as was the bus in which we travelled from Nowra -- it being the one scheduled to take his party back on the Sunday and thus went out with Prolixia and myself as only passengers.

It was a very pleasant trip. We were shown the Tianjara Falls, on the Sassafras Mountains, dropping from the road level into a huge gorge hundreds of feet below, walled all around with perpendicular sandstone cliffs. It looks just as though the whole

valley had dropped, en masse, to its present depth, hemming itself in with precipitous walls.

We passed through Nerriga and by the "Wog Wog" turn-off, along which the other party had started, and on to Braidwood, where we lunched. About eight miles out from Braidwood, at the Mongarlowe turn-off, on the road over Clyde Mountain, we met the Leyden crowd and swapped the bus. Glimpses of the Budawang Mountain and ranges during the last few miles excited our interest and by various members of the party we were assured of grand views. Armed with helpful hints from their experience we bade the others farewell and headed north along the old Mongarlowe road to establish camp on a creek about a mile further on.

It was quite early afternoon so we decided to scout around in the direction of Budawang Mountain, looming over us to the East. Nearby was an eucalyptus still on a farm property.

These stills were a very noticeable feature of this part of the country. Several were passed on the road at creek crossings and also on farm properties. The trees here are particularly suited to the industry and suffer accordingly, although we were told that, where properly managed, they were cropped annually for the oil. Unfortunately, most trees we saw in this area were either ringbarked - some beautiful specimens too - or ruthlessly slaughtered by the acre in the sapling stage.

Our observations on the obvious ignorance of the locals of their responsibilities to the soil from both the erosion and national aspect, particularly when considering the meagreness of top-soil available, offer sufficient material for a separate article. To say the least it is distressing to pass through country showing so much evidence of man's carelessness, and blindness to the resultant damage.

However I digress. Our scouting took us through the farm and to a fair-sized creek - the Mongarlowe - flowing north. Next morning, bright and early, we crossed it and made our way over more property to the fringe of the wooded slopes. Ahead through tall trees was a deep gorge. We veered left and followed a steep timber track down to Budawang Creek, flowing south. This, we were told, goes over a fair sized falls. The track petered out shortly after meeting the creek, so we climbed up the far side and eventually located another timber track, very overgrown, at the south end, which we followed for about a mile.

From this point, where we seemed to be going too far south, we turned upward on a likely-looking spur; this, we hoped, would correspond to a certain hump-shaped ridge which had appeared from the farm to be the most suitable way up. Fortunately this proved to be a correct decision, and, after a steep climb through scrub wattle, we arrived at the bald grassy top of Budawang Mountain. There is a trig on top, at which we lunched. Water was obtained in a creek source among the trees to the east side.

The scenery was wonderful - a complete cyclorama with the ocean and coastline to the East, and, to the south the coast and southern ranges. Blue transparent ranges lay in the far West with the wide farmland plateau separating us. Northward lay the craggy mass of Currockbilly and the Clyde River country; Pigeon House and the dissected plateaux forming a background.

We found some difficulty in re-locating the timber track and this time stayed on it instead of dropping down to our previous crossing. It became more and more distinct, finally opening out at a crossing of the creek, well above the previously mentioned crossing, and showing pink granitic rock outcrops through which the creek poured. This was at the edge of a green paddock at which the track disappeared. We crossed and found our way through a belt of timber and back to our camp at dusk.

At this stage a warning may be useful to those who follow. Budawang Creek, which we crossed flowing south, descends rapidly into a deep gorge separating the plateau from the mountain. This same creek, which also crosses the pink rocks, starts right up in the saddle on Budawang Mountain and falls rapidly into a deep gash to the left as you ascend the spur. No suggestion of this creek and its doings is apparent from the road and farm. When descending from the top, keep to the left of Budawang's crest. Also the upper or southerly end of the timber track on the slopes, and likewise the mountain sides, are thickly covered with wattle-like scrub or saplings growing closely together. Those on the mountain side are smaller and it is helpful to twig your way up.

(This space was reserved for the map mentioned in "Prolix's" article. It is regretted that both the original map and the stencil were lost in the post between July 29th and 31st - too late to ask "Prolix" for another map or to do it on a stencil. However we hope to include it in next month's magazine. The area described is a new and interesting one, and, as there is no satisfactory printed map, we want to publish this one so that bushwalkers can refer to it - Ed.)

Summarising (see sketch), the best approach would be up via the timber track and upper rocky crossing by which we returned. If approaching from our campsite via the farm then bear left to avoid the lower gorge. The rocky creek crossing at the paddock could be regarded as a flat or step in the descent of the same creek.

The range between Budawang and Currockbilly Mountains appears inviting as a means of access to the latter, going north apparently in easy undulations. A similar idea suggests itself from the road, at this end of the range. However, don't. There is a deep gap between the two mountains just south of Currockbilly which would take some negotiating.

We kept to the road the following day and just outside Mongarlowe turned right along a good country road going in the direction of Currockbilly Mountain. This road wound up over a rise and down on to the flatter plateau of grassy holdings with scattered belts of trees. The road faded out here and we followed roads and tracks through paddocks and gates. One of these properties, about half way to Currockbilly, is outstanding - set in rolling country with crystal clear water flowing through it, and the greenest lush grass of any we saw. It was a picture, with the homestead nestling in a glorious spot on the leeward side of a higher portion of the land, facing north with an uninterrupted view of the ranges and yet sheltered from the south - truly an oasis in comparison with the holdings passed earlier in the trip. Here we gathered a particularly good harvest of mushrooms, which food we had had to garnish almost every evening meal.

(to be continued)

DEBERT WALKS AGAIN

Yes, he was seen, and heard, at the Club rooms on last meeting night, complete with pack and on his way to Bungonia. And, in case anyone didn't hear his conversation with the Bean, he has paid his sub.

The Bean knows better - he gets there without walking and gets paid for it. As photographer for "Walkabout" and the "National Geographic" he is going places. In a fortnight he starts for Central Australia, thus achieving his heart's desire. Incidentally, should he see these pages, we would remind him not to forget the S.B.W. magazine during his travels.

We saw Frank Whiddon recently. While on his way to work on his land at Church Point he was unlucky enough to pick the bus that overturned. He emerged in one piece, but frayed, though he recovered in a couple of weeks.

Mr. E. Caines Phillips (R.C.C.) advises that a map of the Tumut and Murrumbidgee Rivers (Blowering to Gundagai section) is now available.

WALKING FOR THE MILLIONS.

By "Skip".

It's a bit late now to apologise, but it was all my fault if a recent Working Bee at Garrawarra was deprived of the best in society and the working classes. For one Gweneth Roots, having nobly undertaken to take under her wing a collection, rather heterogeneous, of University Bushwalkers along with any S.B.W.'s who had nothing better to do, was to be found, now and again, in the forefront of three clubs which all ended up at the same place even if they didn't mean to.

I arrived at Katoomba in time to have a cup of coffee with what turned out to be the second half of the first batch. But no sooner was the Bod projected into the night air than it was about faced, and refuelled with the third instalment. From which you will be gaining the impression of a vast multitude about to clutter up the countryside.

The miscellanae coagulated for the first time on Saturday morning in Medlow Gap, and an examination of a photo taken because the photographer had a vague feeling that it would probably be his only chance reveals 30? bushwalkers. Owing to weather conditions and other circumstances beyond our control we would give this a margin of + or - 1.

The gathering was rent in the ration 1:10 when Jenny and a couple of the boys decided to climb Mouin with a brutal frontal assault instead of taking the more usual route around the sides to Wombat Parade. This gained nobody anything as the party was stretched out in its entirety once more beside the coal seam.

We come next to the pleasant occupation of eating lunch on the slopes of Mt. Warrigal. Firmly ensconced on a piece of pebbly Upper Marine Sandstone, just to distinguish it from Hawkesbury Sandstone, the last crumbs fall with the first raindrops. So heigh-ho for Splendour Rock where the mist flirted with our eyebrows and the fossil collection was increased somewhat. The rain was now light and unrelenting which might have had something to do with the party pursuing Brindle instead of Yellow Dog. The rest of this part of the trek was a miserable affair.

There was however, if you care for the niceties of the business, what the historians would call a fair balance of power. Out in front breaking the trail were the heavy footed tigers, followed in the middle by the inevitable flock of sheep or goats (herd, not flocks) (goats that is), whilst the weary of limb straggled behind on a well made track like Good King Wenceslaus' Page. Eventually momentum carried the track on into the Cox out of which we staggered onto the opposite bank.

I've seen camps and camps, but this was the nearest I've seen to a Reunion in the Rain. The two end tents were about 1/5 mile apart - honest - and you should have seen the firelighting, varying from one effort that put the weather to shame to the one the weather put to

shame. Some ate cold, some ate luke-warm, and none ate hot.

Fortunately the morning was a brighter, greener thing, but because of the immensities of the population per square foot, who got off first is rather doubtful, although yours truly claims the priveledge of being last, catching up with the tail end of the mob half way up Breakfast Creek. This rearguard plodded up Carlon's Creek and were quite amazed when they reached Carlon's, mainly because they did, but partly because the time was of the order of 2 p.m.

The inner man must needs be satisfied, and hungry moans were stifled with the aid of Mrs. Carlon's scones. Sun was taken, and the party grew by four men. This caused no rejoicing or amazement as people seemed to be scattered liberally all about. The sun was getting lower in the sky, as the sun has a habit of doing around that time of day, and thoughts of home became more frequent, said home being a h..l of a long way off.

So we headed towards Megalong and the Six Foot Track at a high speed. Apart from some photographic holdups, the walk down to said track developed into a contest with first one and then the other in front. It may be mentioned here of figures that the tall triumphed on the downhill stages whereas the short excelled in the ascent. The medium stayed, obviously in the middle.

The Six Foot Track has changed little in five years I find, although in the approaching gloom I saw little of it. One, Shirley, intent on loosing us at the outset, led a bevy of unsuspecting males across a small sapling over a body of cold water, and then after a little persuasion led them back again. Yours truly tried a preliminary diversion along a promision looking side road, thinking Nellie's Glen to be a little closer than it was.

Now I might hasten to point out that since the first paragraph, no mention has been made of that Scion of Leaders, Miss Gweneth Roots. We were informed at Carlon's that Miss Roots had left an hour before we arrived so that even yours truly abandoned all hopes of seeing her again, maybe for ever. (I haven't yet - 3.4.47)

The rearguard turned off up the Devil's Hole track as all got dark. The moon shone, but on the other side of the valley, and occasional kicks in the teeth were the only indication that someone ahead of you had ascended abruptly. In Devil's Hole there wasn't anything to be seen of the moon anywhere, but when a drop of water came out of the darkness and lodged in the right ear it was indirectly proved that the Queen of the Night had succumbed to the clouds.

Once on top, the rain meant nothing, and velocities, fossils, and blondes were forgotten in the rush for the last train.

Follow the Leader? Huh!

CROOK'S TOUR.

By "Streak".

Having heard many a tale of the superb view to be had from Pigeon House Mountain, I decided to wend my way southward with a party of travellers and see for myself. The transport for this trip was nothing so common as N.S.W.G.R. rolling stock, but a utility truck, or so the leader informed me.

This truck was scheduled to pick me up at home, (this extra service costing me no more) at 7.15 p.m. on Friday evening, and the remainder of the party at Sydenham Station at 7.30 p.m. At 7.30 p.m. I abandoned my place at the front gate and went back inside to answer the 'phone. It was, sure enough, the Leader ringing to inform me that the truck had been delayed, and that he would collect the party in the family auto. In due course a sedan car laden with rucksacks arrived and transported me to the Wilkin's Household to wait for the truck. A distinguished gathering this, our Leader, Russ Wilkins, Dormie with standard equipment, Bill Kinley with his famous Sausage, Allan, Bernie and friend, "talking" rapidly and developing corns in their hands, all anxiously awaiting our chauffeur with the all important truck.

At 10 p.m. the irrepressable Bob Bright arrived with Norma Philps and the truck. Here I must pause to explain that this amazing conveyance was a dehydrated army version of a utility, having 10 H.P. beneath its bonnet, one for each member of the party, but later in the evening our numbers were heard to say, under their breaths, "A horse, a horse, my kingdom for a horse."

However, away at 10.15 p.m. and southward-ho we went, rolling happily along, until about a mile this side of Bulli Pass a loud explosion rent the air, and besides much drunken swaying our chariot now began to list rapidly to starboard. On examination, the tyre and tube on the back wheel had developed a large hole, and this (for the benefit of those not conversant with the ways of trucks and of course not privileged to ride in same) is known as a B..... Blowout. This offending wheel was removed with a wheel brace which we had but a closer examination of the tool box failed to reveal either tyre levers or a puncture outfit. This was of no consequence for reposing on the tailboard was a spare wheel which was put on in great haste, and having repacked the passengers we proceeded. At least half a mile further on that old list developed once more, and once more we abandoned ship to find the spare tyre flat, "only on one side" as one wit was heard to remark, but never the less - flat. A closer look revealed a large split in the wall, and those cwning watches unanimously agreed that it was 1 a.m.

Our only course was to buy a new tyre at Wollongong next morning, and it was decided that Bob and I should go down and transact this business. A rather chill wind was whistling across the tops, and when a large truck, heading south, stopped to see what was doing, we grabbed sleeping bags and, with a cheery wave, climbed aboard

leaving eight forlorn people standing dejectedly by the "wreck".

Wollongong at 2 a.m. is inclined to be deserted, and hence when we saw a light we made for it and found a all-night garage which actually happened to have a tyre which, we were informed, we could purchase at 7 a.m. Accommodation was our next problem but this was easily solved by a visit to the local constabulary. Trying to look as respectable as possible we entered and faced the portly sergeant, who, after having stared at us in a surprised manner, demanded in a loud voice, "Where have you two absconded from". After having heard our sad story he became very sympathetic, but would not hear of our sleeping in the cells. He led us to another office, our room for the evening (or morning) and some little time later returned with an armful of blankets for us to sleep on. He was highly amused as he watched us draw on our sleeping bags and even called another policeman to see what he insisted looked like a couple of mermaids. When we were settled, and having enquired what time we wished to be awakened, they withdrew, putting out the light and closing the door. Only my better judgment prevented me from asking for breakfast in bed.

It was with great regret that we arose in the morning (those who slept on top please note) and having thanked the officer of the watch, we proceeded to buy tyre, puncture outfit and levers and began our hitch hiking activities. Much thumbing produced a car to Bulli and back to the truck.

Repairs were effected and at 10 a.m. we were once more on our way. At Wollongong once more we stopped to flow more air into the offending tube, and this process having been completed we heard a loud hissing sound. Now as there are no snakes in the middle of the town we all came to the one conclusion, the tyre was once more removed and tube mended at the garage. This was the last time we had any trouble, except when yours truly went for a bucket of water at midnight to put out a campfire and fell in the creek.

Down the coast we toured, to Shell Harbour and explored the wreck, then on to Kiama, and at last Milton at dusk. With many sighs of relief we made camp at the farm, and on Sunday morning set off for Pidgeon House and a very fine and clear view from the top. On the way back to camp a large cow's skull was discovered and carried back to camp. This perfectly sunbleached specimen was mounted with much ceremony on the radiator of the truck and travelled home to be preserved as a memorial of this notable expedition.

Monday morning saw us off the Ulladulla, and then back to Nowra for lunch and to view the Grand Prix motor races in the afternoon. Then at last, as the sun sank slowly in the west and a howling gale blew from the inland, we wended our way back through the Kangaroo Valley and home with many pleasant memories of punctures and blowouts, dusk and bumpy roads, and a certain individual who continually told us how easy it was to break an axle, and above all, memories of our conveyance, that amazing little truck which pulled an enormous load over all sorts of terrain. May she so many more thousand miles.

CLUB DEBATE - "THAT MOST BUSHWALKERS ARE MORONS."

The leader of the Government, Mr. Allan Hardie, got straight down to business. Working from the bottom up he had soon explained the fundamentals of physiological psychology. Man differed from the animals in that he possessed a brain capable of learning by experience. Unlike the dog, which, possessing only reflex sensory motor arcs, "sniffed its way through life," man could use his brain to reason out situations. But not all men could do this. In some the thyroid gland which takes over from the thymus gland as man passes out of infancy, did not develop, and consequently the brain did not develop beyond the animal level. Such people were morons. They could neither benefit from experience nor control their impulses. But, we wondered, why do bushwalkers come into this class? However we felt that the Hardie build-up would be surmounted by a logical masterpiece and were not disappointed. The proof of the argument was on the walks programme. Because bushwalkers had no power of thought or memory they had to be reminded on every programme to do the most elementary things, such as to take first aid kit, torch, compass and matches. Anyone but a moron would have enough sense to do these things without being constantly reminded. Further, bushwalkers could not control their impulses, as was proved by the committee's disapproval of co-tenting. It was unfortunate that, at this most interesting stage of his argument Mr. Hardie's time was up.

Clem Hallstrom then opened the case for the Opposition, and hopes rose that he would find an answer to the devastating logic of the Government. The bush, he said, appealed to the mentality of the bushwalker, thus proving that they had a mentality. Morons could not be contented looking at trees, birds, cobwebs, insects, etc., or even the human face, which was no less interesting than the trees. (It depends on the face, of course). Developing this theme, he went on to describe the varied interests of topography, geology, astronomy, etc. which appeal to the walker. The instructions on the walks programme were only for prospectives who were more or less weak in some respects (though he did not go as far as to say they were morons.) However their verbal fluency and thinking powers were soon enhanced in the company of bushwalkers.

Hopes were dashed again by the unanswerable arguments of Dot Butler, who, not having the memory of Messrs. Hardie and Hallstrom, confessed herself a complete moron and pulled out her notes. The Oxford and Cambridge dictionary, she said, defined a moron as being a person satisfied with monotonous pursuits too simple to satisfy an intelligent person. What could be more monotonous than walking which was a matter of putting one foot after another for perhaps eleven hours a day - looking at the ground all the time, or, if you had time to look elsewhere, seeing just gum trees and more gum trees. Then note our Club rooms - known as the Rat. house since we moved in. Look at the names of members - Batty, Ar-dill, Moron-ey, Roots

(not even animal, but vegetable and below ground - very low) and other vegetation such as Rose and Bean - inanimate objects such as Morris, Barnes, Banks, Chambers, Lawrie which must come from lowrie - a talkative bird, Croker - surely a sort of frog. Take our President - more intelligent than most - Moppett - which means a kind of rag doll and Shakespeare's lines thereon "My pretty mpppet, how I envy thee thy brainless joys, thy calm simplicity." Then there was Blumer (probably nylon - therefore vegetable). Though we stood condemned from our membership list Dot rubbed it in further by proving, with a wealth of large figures, that after deducting from the population the hospital patients, out-patients and a whole lot of other people who couldn't possibly be bushwalkers, the remainder, from whom came the bushwalkers, must be nearly all morons.

Dorothy Lawry (Opposition) had consulted the Oxford Dictionary and the Child Guidance clinic and discovered that a moron was an adult whose mental development had been arrested at an age between seven and ten. They were distinguished by deficiency of reason and judgement. Bushwalkers, however, displayed these qualities far more than the average person, as evidenced by their conservation efforts. Dot Butler had forgotten that simple things were also studied by scientists and that our members included such names as Noble.

Laurie Rayner, addressing his remarks to "Mr. Chairman and fellow morons" said he too had consulted a dictionary and found morons were distinguished by sluggishness and dullness. Sluggishness was obvious every time bushwalkers were called out of bed early, while to find dullness one had only to look at the people who went on walks and hear their conversation - mostly on food and rest and shelter. If they were not morons they could, of course, have much better food and shelter at home. Or they would go by car and do it in comfort. They had to be led and supervised as they could not think for themselves. Despite the dullness of their pastime they never learnt from experience same tracks, same company, same mistakes over and over again. They delighted in empty minds and empty spaces and took childish pleasure in train travel and the like.

We felt a bit better when Wal Roots addressed "Mr. Chairman and our most intelligent audience". He complimented the selectors of the teams on picking the most intelligent club members to oppose the champions of the morons. It was however, unfortunate, that the thymus gland of the Leader of the Government had not died in infancy. Talking of the lowly dog "sniffing its way through life" who had ever seen a tribe of bushwalkers running round sniffing? In morons sexual development did not take place, but nobody who had seen the numerous offsprings of bushwalkers at a reunion would say this of them. He then referred to some of the more intelligent club members and asked whether such people would associate with morons. We regret to say that none of the magazine staff were mentioned here.

This concluded the debate, and, when the issue was put to the vote, our fears were confirmed. The Government won, and this, despite the fact that it included two self-confessed morons. Bill Henley, in moving a vote of thanks to the speakers, rocked us further by quoting an expert who had said that there was no such thing as a normal person - normality was a standard which doesn't exist. After the debate, looking round at the carefree faces in the Club room, we suddenly recalled a quotation made by Dot Butler: "There goes a happy moron, he doesn't give a damn. I wish I were a moron - my God, perhaps I am." Laughing inanely we made our way home to pack for the next walk.

"A LITTLE GIRL TOLD ME."

By Fritzie.

Sometimes when I'm playing in the garden
 Lots of people come and talk to me.
 One day, Kargie came, a long time ago,
 He's small, not big like our great big tree;
 I think he came down from that rock up there,
 I've seen hiding places for a toad.
 Kargie pulled the cork out of the bird bath
 And the poor birds couldn't have a drink.
 I don't like cats, they chase away our birds,
 Black kittens aren't quite so bad I think.
 One day a big cat sat in the garden
 And watched a snake, such a pretty snake,
 But I chased the cat away very soon
 And the snake sat up and said, "Hullo";
 That was when I was a tiny baby,
 Just when I came down from the fairies.
 Now I'm big and I have all my dollies,
 But some days we find lovely beetles
 And the dollies love to watch them flying;
 We don't hurt them 'cause we think they're sweet.
 When Daddie shakes the tree they tumble down
 Shiny and bright with flippety wings.
 Last week we had a bonfire and crackers,
 Lovely green stars and fizzy rockets,
 I liked the stars better than the rockets.
 Mummie says we'll have lots more some day.
 It's time I put my dollies all to bed,
 They must sleep a lot when they are small,
 And when they're big like me I've promised them
 A bonfire, green stars and everything.
