

## THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

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

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### EDITORIAL

#### Club Meetings

Every month since the Club began there has been a meeting of members. In the early days many of the members were experienced speakers well versed in the rules of debate. They were individualists who firmly believed in the practice of free speech and were very earnest in their task of establishing Sydney's first mixed recreational walking club. Consequently the debates were often intense, though by no means lacking in humour. Many meetings were spent in deciding the name of the Club and in discussing the constitution. Sometimes things got too serious. On one famous occasion the meeting was divided into the "ayes" on one side of the room and the "noes" on the other in order to satisfy everyone that the count was correct. Then there was the famous hatchet-burying ceremony at a subsequent reunion. Since these early days our meetings have passed through many phases according to the leading lights of the time and, in particular, the Club Officers. At their lowest ebb many have wondered why we ever bother with it all. At their best they are full of interesting discussion and sparkling with humour.



Perhaps it is the long experience of members in the conduct of meetings, or perhaps it is the personalities of the people taking the leading parts, but, let it be said forthwith, you will not find better conducted meetings anywhere. You may find more experienced speakers, or stricter rules of debate, but you will go far to find more purposeful discussion with less waste of time.

Members may not realise it, but the experience they have in our meetings is one of the most useful things they find in the S.B.W. Anybody who looks for something better than a vegetable existence is almost certain to find himself attending meetings of some sort - whether it be a sporting club, a trade union, a scientific society, or any other interest which brings people together. A lot of people go right through life afraid to speak in public. Many of the S.B.W. members are in this class, but at least they have a perfect opportunity to learn. For an inexperienced speaker to get up and address a large meeting takes quite a little courage. What he is afraid of above all is ridicule. But any member can get up in an S.B.W. meeting, knowing that he is among friends who will be very tolerant towards one who is new to the game. When a person has made the effort once - got up, said something, sat down again and found himself unscathed - the next effort will be much easier. In making the maiden effort it is a good idea to be sure of the exact words to start with. Once over this hurdle the rest is usually easy. But it is not necessary to say much - two or three sentences are enough. It is given to few to be able to keep the interest of an audience for long. For the rest it is best to be brief rather than boring.

Among the speakers we have a fairly representative sample of the types of speakers you find at all meetings. There are a few of those rare souls who combine wit and wisdom, some who have a theme song and take advantage of a ready made audience, some who try us with excessive detail, and a few, unfortunately, who contribute nothing to the debate but merely give long-winded voice to ill-considered opinions.

Sometimes the debate degenerates into repetition of well worn arguments or gets side-tracked into a mass of unnecessary detail. Must the meeting endure this sort of thing? Must it listen to verbose repetitions? The answer is no. The suffering audience has a battery of protective devices which it can invoke as soon as it gets bored. It can, at the outset, limit speeches to a certain period - say, five or ten minutes. It can move the "gag", i.e., "that the motion be now put". This motion often invokes cries of protest at the "stifling" of discussion, but surely it is more democratic to stop a debate at the wish of the meeting than to force everyone to listen to a discussion in which they have no interest. As soon as the speaker gets off the rails anyone can call attention to the words of the motion. Then there are interjections; which are allowed in "Parliamentary Procedure". Very often the Chairman will allow deviations and infringements of the rules if he thinks this falls in with the wishes of the audience. But anyone can insist on a "point of order" and if it is a correct point the Chairman must



comply. One of the worst offences, and one which is commonest in the most experienced speakers, is that of speaking twice to the same motion. Some laxity might be shown towards the inexperienced in the enforcement of this rule, but there is no excuse for the old hands. The windbag can be stopped at any time - drastic step this, but sometimes justified - by a motion that he "be no longer heard". Repetition in discussion can be stopped if it can be shown that a previous motion on the books has decided the point at issue.

Unless the meeting uses its powers the Chairman must let everyone speak just as long as they want to so long as there is a motion on the books and the speaker is keeping to the subject. He cannot choose the subject of debate, nor arbitrarily limit the length of speeches. His function is to give effect to the wishes of the majority of the audience. If they suffer in silence he must suffer with them. The real conduct of the meeting is in the hands of the people present. If they put up with anything they don't like they have only themselves to blame.

#### AT OUR AUGUST MEETING.

Reported by Jim Brown.

The August meeting strongly resembled the July meeting and the burial of Sir John Moore at Corunna, all having been held by "lanthorn dimly burning". About 45 members were present, and no new recruits were welcomed.

The minutes having revived the decision to send visitors to the Bushcraft Association's Waterfall camp, Allan Hardie told the meeting that the visit had been arranged for the following day. It was announced that Era had been definitely ascertained as an open space parkland, and the form of objection to its reclassification as a Rural Area had been withdrawn. In the correspondence was a statement of our views on Era and its preservation, which had been sent to the County of Cumberland Council.

Relating to Era, which speedily became the bone of contention of the August meeting, a letter from Alex Colley was read: Alex, in absentia in the Wolgan hinterland, resolutely said we should not establish any time limit for our negotiations with the Lands Dept. Marie Byles objected strongly to this counsel. She regretted that we had lost our chance - for it seemed certain that we had - of a resumption through National Fitness Council, but a personal appeal to Gordon Young had raised a small hope that National Fitness may stay its hand until after the meeting, and a definite decision to support resumption by the Minister for Education may yet save the day.

Myles Dunphy reported at length on the deputation to the Under Secretary for Lands on 29th July. The meeting had been attended by 20 representatives, including delegates from the Federation and eight



of the affiliated Walking Clubs. The deputation had pointed out that the approach was a continuation of the Garrawarra petitions of sixteen years ago, and that the objective was resumption of the whole 350 acres of alienated land and its addition to Garawarra Park. The Under Secretary had heard them at length, assured them of sympathetic attention, and stated that their case would be placed before the Minister.

As a rider to his report Myles added that he had heard from Frank Adams of the Rucsac Club, who was bitterly opposed to resumption in any form, that the shack owners had not been consulted, that they would fight to hold their tenancies, and implied that the Rucsac Club was not committed by the statements of Federation delegates to the Minister for Lands.

Marie Byles continued the Era debate with a history of the efforts to have the area resumed: she related how the resumption had been budgeted for in 1944, 1945 and 1946, but each time the ideal had not been realised. About that date (1946) the Recreational Areas Committee of National Fitness became interested, primarily with the object of assisting the Bushwalkers. The Federation had written to the Minister for Education supporting a resumption through the Recreational Areas Committee. Marie doubted whether the County Council, or the Lands Department, would be prepared to cause hardship to the shack owners, and moved that we write to Gordon Young, advising him that our deputation to the Under Secretary for Lands had brought no concrete results, and we therefore hoped that he would forgive our vacillating tendency, and continue with his project for Era resumption.

Allan Hardie promptly gave his support. He was glad, he said, to see Marie Byles and Myles Dunphy present at the one time, so that we may hear both sides of the case presented at the one meeting. This would "apply the acid bath to the nigger in the woodpile". He now revealed that National Fitness was Australia's Secret Weapon, devised as a democratic answer to the Youth Leagues of Hitler's Germany; this was our way of keeping the young people fit, of making our cannon fodder tough and resilient. More, National Fitness was a body with kindred ideals to Bushwalkers, and we should welcome this chance of co-operation with them.

Paddy Pallin was present and lent his voice to the cause. He was afraid, he told us, that the National Fitness Council had resolved against further consideration of Era, and so before we abandoned dealing with the Lands Department, we should check whether money was available through the Minister for Education. If so, we should definitely co-operate with the National Fitness. If National Fitness were no longer interested, then we were best advised to say with our Lands Department project, for the Recreational Areas Committee would not support another Era resumption plan for quite a time.

Myles Dunphy answered with some doubt about the future of Era in the hands of National Fitness, and observed that the control of the area would be in the hands of that Council's Trustees. Bush-



walkers would have little say in its management, and the policy of that management may change over a period of time. He opposed the motion strongly; we should not change our minds, but should persevere with the approach to the Minister for Lands.

Herb. Morris supported Myles, and was developing his argument along similar lines, when the gag was applied. The motion was put and lost.

In the brief ensuing business, Jo, and Herb. Morris were elected Federation Re-union camp delegates, and Arthur Gilroy as a Trustee for Garawarra Park.

Alan Wyborn read a resume of the meetings of the Forestry Advisory Council, but at about 10 p.m. the lamps faded into sullen smoky darkness, and the Bone was put into its cupboard for another month.

#### ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE FORESTRY ADVISORY COUNCIL.

At the fourth annual conference of the F.A.C., held on 19th and 20th July, the second motion on the agenda, moved by Alan Wyborn, was "That the support of the F.A.C. be requested for the resumption of 350 acres of privately owned land between National Park and Garawarra Park, and its addition to Garawarra Park". The motion was carried. Next on the list was another S.B.W. motion - "That the support of the F.A.C. be sought for the resumption of Lots 14 and 15, Narrow Neck Peninsula as an area for public recreation and as a roadless area". This motion was also moved by Alan Wyborn and was agreed to, except that the roadless area was questioned, and it was decided that the F.A.C. should approach the Katoomba Council to discuss its advisability.

Another motion of interest to Bushwalkers was "That steps be taken (a) to inform the public of the enormous losses both personal and national, caused by the present methods of allowing fires to be used for clearing purposes... and (b) to urge upon the authorities the adoption of a procedure which will obviate such unjustifiable waste". This was also carried. Attention was also drawn to the damage done to forest litter and humus by slow autumn fires.

Apart from the motions inspired by the S.B.W. there was a resolution passed which stated that "In view of the fact that our forests and bushlands are a vital moral and national asset, the Government be urged to set aside considerable areas free from all exploitation as national reserves, the said reserves to be closed sanctuaries for our unique flora and fauna. That in view of the opening up of many forested districts for timber getting, the above resolution is one of particular urgency". Several other specific projects were urged, including a sanctuary in the Delegate district, a national Botanic Garden at Warrah Reserve, a National Park on the Blue Mountains and the reservation of the Hawkesbury River from Windsor to the seaboard.



Mr. R.F. Boyer, Chairman of the A.B.C., expressed some interesting and practical views in his address to the Conference. He said "..... I speak, not as Chairman of the Broadcasting Commission ..... but as one who has lived almost all his life in the West, as one of the army of graziers about whom hard things have been said and who have in their lifetime destroyed a considerable amount of timber. We should think twice before changing some of our finest beauties. One can get no greater thrill than to see untouched primitive beauty in its most glorious form. My greatest thrill when I first went to the far West was in entering country that had never been occupied. An area of 150 square miles had never had an axe in it and was as God had left it. I was at heart conservative - I hated to think of roads being run through it or stock being placed upon it, of its being shaped by the hand of man. Yet I have learned, and all who tackle the forestry problem must learn, that radicalism and change must go hand in hand with conservation ..... The idea is not merely to retain tracts of land but the establishment of national parks so that those who come after us can see what the country looked like before man put his hand to it..... This is our country and we have much to learn about it. We must do more in the preparation of the land for the growth of food. We cannot afford to keep large tracts of food land covered with timber, simply because it is timber. It must be measured with the problem of the world's need of food. We have an international obligation in the production of food that we must, at our peril, achieve. These matters, in good faith and good will, must be considered in their relation to the whole problem of conservation and reforestation. There is no greater pleasure to me, nothing more aesthetically appealing, than to be lost in a great forest midst all the primeval beauty that takes one back into the dim recesses of the past. The first task of the soil and conservation experts in this country is to see that timber is retained in areas where it is of economic value and productive of primeval beauty for posterity....."

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Mr. E. Gaines Phillips, Convenor of the Mapping Section of the River Canoe Club, advises that Map No 48, of the Bellinger River (Brinerville to Urunga - including Back Creek and a short section of the South Arm of the Bellinger) has now been completed and is available for perusal by those interested.



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CLINTON VALLEY - NEW ZEALAND

by Laurie Rayner

Winning photograph at our Annual Exhibition

The judge, Mr. Eade, described this photograph as excellently turned out and technically faultless. The tonal quality was true without and the arrangement plain. There was a nice dark area in the front, while the mountains beyond and in the background gave a three dimensional effect. The white patch of snow in the middle foreground was a little too obvious and might have been lowered in tone. The interest of the photograph centred on the mountain at the back





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