

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER.

A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to the Sydney
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Paddy sails for England on January 25th.

On JANUARY 22ND

Saturday night

the Club will hold a

BON VOYAGE PARTY

to PADDY and FAMILY

at THE HARVEY'S.

ALL JOIN THE FUN!!

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Nominal Charge for Supper.

AT OUR MONTHLY MEETING.

The meeting was called to order and the President opened proceedings by pinning the Club badge on the frock of a fair new member. Welcome to the S.B.W., Joan, and may you have many pleasant trips with us.

Suggestions were invited for a site for the next Annual Reunion. Malcolm pointed out that this is always chosen at the January meeting so please everybody come along with your suggestions to the next meeting.

Jack Gentle, organiser of the Children's Christmas Treat, moved that the Club supply ice-cream for the young. Alex disagreed saying that although ice-cream was a good thing, it could be consumed by children any day of the week, and to take it along to the bush party might prove more nuisance than it was worth. Kevin Ardill deplored this what could be construed as 'stingy' outlook and offered to supply free all the ginger beer the children could consume. His offer was accepted with cheers by all the grown-up 'children' present.

Dormie moved that we set about hiring a hall for the holding of our Annual General Meeting, so it may be held on a Friday night, as previously, on the grounds that members like to go straight from the Annual Meeting to the Reunion. Members, however, voiced their disapproval of changing the night from a Wednesday, when the present hall would be available, and no extra cost incurred, and the motion was lost.

Frank Rigby then wanted to know what had happened to the New Room Sub-Committee. Were they looking for new quarters for us or had they died a natural death? Amidst a deal of hushing and shooshing Frank was told not to shout, the President lowered his voice and whispered that something was still being done in the matter and we might discuss it at some future date - not now.

Now the subject of Paddy's Farewell Party on January 22nd came up. Concern was voiced by one member as to whether the Harvey's house had bendable, expandable, unbreakable rubber walls, adequate to contain the vast crowd of well-wishers who would be bound to come. It was pointed out that the party was to be held in the illimitable great outdoors and those who couldn't fit into the Harvey's backyard could presumably overflow into the street. It was moved by Malcolm McGregor that a letter of thanks be sent to Brian and Jean thanking them for their kindness in placing their home, or rather the great outdoors surrounding it, at the disposal of the Club for this function.

To Len Fall's query, "What is being done about the proposed race track on Narrow Neck?" the President said that enquiries were being made by our representative. The area has already been set aside as a Recreation Reserve, which might preclude the construction of a race track. It was moved by David Ingram that we write to the Water Board asking just what areas are referred to in their new camping restrictions in Burragorang Valley. Kevin brought to our notice the strange fact that the Underwater Swim at our Swimming Carnival has always been won by a past or present President, and invited us all to come along with the lure that we might see a past or present President drown. On this pleasant note the Meeting closed. -D.B.

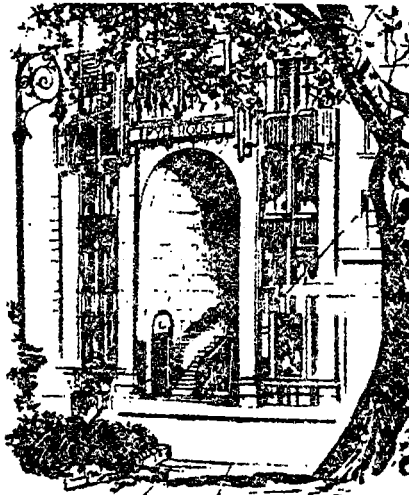
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THE HARD WAY.

- Jim Brown.

Among the things I like to ponder when in a "vacant or a pensive mood" are the respective merits of starting a walking career as a freelance, or as the attachment of an organised club. Since no one has ever been able to do both, there will probably never be an authoritative answer, but I'd be inclined to say that the freelance performer learns a great deal about practical bush "navigation" (or else becomes a liability on Search and Rescue), which the club member may miss. On the other hand the club man is in a healthy position to learn camping clues from his fellows, while the outsider suffers from his ignorance of gear and technique. Then the freelance can travel at a speed comfortable to himself: the club beginner must manage somehow to keep up with a party of adept walkers who have learned all the tricks about placing their feet, adjusting balance to compensate for packs, and going through scrub without too much anguish.

All in all, I believe I'd plump for the freelance as doing it the hard way. But perhaps that is because I started walking that way.....

After a number of day trips, growing more and more ambitious, we made plans to walk from Wentworth Falls to Picton, via Kedumba, Cox Junction, Burragorang and Oakdale, on an Australia Day weekend. Bill worked on Saturday mornings, so we couldn't start before the 12.16 train (I'm speaking of 1938, when there was a 12.16): it was high summer, the distance was about 60-65 miles, and it was all new ground to us, but the confidence of ignorance is unbelievable. Our gear was a dubious collection. We had no sleeping bags, which didn't matter in January: we had groundsheets, too many clothes, too much food ... and a Paddy-made tent which we couldn't push into our crowded military type packs, and took it in turn to carry by hand. Saturday night found us at the foot of Kedumba Pass, drinking great draughts of unboiled water from the Creek (no one had told us of its antecedents!) and trying to pitch the tent.

I was for swinging the tent between two trees, but Bill, who had made the hiring, had been told that two loose sticks was the correct drill. He did, however, share my doubt about the little skewers of wire... they would never hold the thing up. We broke up several of the fireplaces of stones and made cairns, mounting the poles upright in the middle of the rocks, then proceeded to tie the ridge cord of the tent to them. Of course, the sticks were too far apart, so we broke up one cairn and moved it in, and then the pole fell down just so soon as we tied the tent to it and left off holding it up. After expenditure of much time and effort, we had a draped structure which would have been demolished by a decent puff of wind, and all we had to do was pin out the sides. As quickly as we drew out one side, the tent would fall over on that flank, scattering the cairns. Presently we devised the system of pegging simultaneously on opposite sides and, apart from the collapse of one pole during the operation, we succeeded. It had taken us from 6 p.m. until 7.30. Happily there was no wind that night. Of course, we'd never heard about pegging tent to ground first.

There is no pleasure in recalling the two days which followed, while we staggered on skinned feet as far as Central Burragorang, and there joined a bus. We were often violently sick from the noxious Kedumba water. I came to the momentous decision that I was done with tents. This coloured a great deal of my later freelancing: in fact, I didn't learn to put up a walker's tent until 1946, when I joined the Club. Silly? Yes, but it had taken two of us $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours to put up a tent - how long would it need when I went alone, as I often did?

During that tentless era, I struck quite a few hard times. I was lucky in one respect - the years 1938-39-40-41 were droughty, and it seldom rained on me. On one occasion when it did, I packed my traps in a feverish hurry in the beginnings of a shower, and started off at 1.30 a.m. along the track looking for an overhang, while lightnings flickered behind Mouin and Warrigal. After half an hour the rain stopped, a few stars winked in the south-west, and I curled up under a large gum tree, just off the Megalong Valley road. The root system made a series of abrupt ridges under my side, but somehow I actually slept there an hour or two.

There was the time, too, when I set out for my first trip to Kanangra. The new road had been pushed as far as Morong Creek, where

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there were tents for the construction gangs. I arrived at 7.30 p.m. on Good Friday, solo, tentless, without a sleeping bag, having walked out from Jenolan Caves during the afternoon. The deserted tents looked inviting, especially the one with the wire mattress in it, and after a bite of chocolate and biscuit, I put on all my clothes, wrapped the groundsheet around me, and turned in on the bed. At that time I was still warm from walking, but as the chill of 4,000-ft. crept into the Easter-tide air, and little cold draughts blew up through the griddle of my mattress....my hat, was it bleak! The wires creaked under my writhing body, the full moon silvered the road-works and the dewy grasses outside, until, at about 4 a.m. I could endure no more, and pushed on towards the Walls.

The next night I spent on Hughes Ridge, overtaken by darkness on the way down. It was much warmer on the ground, but the slope so acute that I spent the night waking, climbing back to my groundsheet, carrying that up to where my pack rested - then settling down again.

Presently I grew cunning and knew most of the abandoned shanties and good caves, especially those nifty little one-man caves, lying near the main tracks on the Blue Mountains. Even now, I don't despise a decent sandstone overhang on a stormy night. The great blow fell on my first post-war trip out along King's Tableland, where we regularly staged at the old shanty at Nott's Swamp. This time, as we dropped down the ruinous road (1946, remember) into the Swamp, we

realised that the hut had gone - burned in a bushfire several years before as far as we could judge. The night threatened storm, and we knew of no cave for several miles (with a hut, who had bothered to look for caves?). There was, however, a tank - a large cylindrical one, at least six feet deep - lying on its side, with its open end in a sheltered direction. My ribs and hips, accustomed to the modified luxury of stretchers, ached when I thought of those corrugations, so we spread some grasses in the "sanctuary" as we dubbed it: we drew water from the rock pools in the creek bed just below (and found in the morning that you couldn't dredge up a cup of water without a generous quota of tadpoles), and spent a grim night crowded together on the curving hillocks of iron.

Only a month later, on my second post-war walk, I spent my last tent-less night, huddled under a groundsheet at the foot of Starlight's Track. It was sweltering hot in the sleeping bag, the casuarinas above broke the rain only a little, and thunderbolts snarled and crackled between the Nattai Valley walls. After this particular spasm of misery I invested in a tent, and resolutely pitched it between two trees until I learned better.

One other particular form of strife plagued my early walking - the bilious water of Kedumba Creek. Naturally, I hadn't ascribed my sickness of our first overnight trip to such exquisitely cool, clear water. So, next trip that way, coming up from the Cox, I lunched on Sunday at Kedumba Crossing. Apart from sunburn, legs lacerated by lawyer vines, blisters on six toes and a broken watch, I was still in good walking order, but as I mounted the Pass I seemed unconscionably thirsty, and took frequent sips from the billy I carried: and I was decidedly queasy. Near the top two chaps leading horses, and pounding along in the heat at great pace, overtook me, and asked if I knew where they could get a drink. I offered them the rest of my billy, then limped drearily on and up. Near the Q.V. Homes I passed them, prostrate and green, lying by the trail. My generosity and their own exertion had done the trick. Very, very late I dragged into Wentworth Falls, to travel in an empty box compartment on the train, thankful there was no one to witness my misery, or stand between me and the lift-up seat.

I think I rumbled Kedumba Creek after that - I know the next time I came that way I was determined to dodge Kedumba water. It was a hottish March day, the Kowmung and Cox a series of puddles, with dead cattle lying along the banks, and the first running water I struck was just above Harris Humpy. It was my first time along this part of the Cox, and how was I to know that Kedumba crept quietly out of a tiny gully and made the river flow for a few yards? This time, carrying my billy of "Cox River" water I was ill long before I reached Maxwell's old farm.

There are other cases I could quote to prove that the freelance does it the hard way. There was the horrible trip down the Grose with a game leg, and the camp on a steep bank of wet sand. There was the night lying on splintery logs in one of the old shanties near Budthingeroo on Kanangra Road - with a badly sunburned back, too. There was the time I couldn't find the pass up Burnt Flat Creek from the Wollondilly and had to slug it out thirty miles along the Wombeyan

GO LIGHTWEIGHT
ON YOUR SUMMER HOLIDAY TRIP WITH
V E G E T A R I A N F O O D S .

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ALSO PRESENTATION PLASTIC BOXES OF MUSCATELS AND ALMONDS

FROM

T H E S A N I T A R I U M H E A L T H F O O D S H O P ,
13 H U N T E R S T R E E T , S Y D N E Y .

Caves road on a broiling February day: and the time my sneakers packed up and developed holes in the soles on the second day of an eight-day trip.....

In fact, come to think of it..... it's a wonder I survived long enough to join a walking club at all.

DESTINATION UNKNOWN.

- Len Scotland.

It was the 6-Hour weekend at Albina Lodge. Only three of us were there at the time and Richard asked me if I would like to "make a trip". We left the hut rather late in the morning, about 10 o'clock, poor visibility, and cleaning and tidying of the hut causing the delay. Richard would not tell me the destination: sorry, it was a surprise. We headed north on a climbing traverse under the brow of Northcote to the Northcote-Lee saddle, then behind Lee and up over Carruthers. We ran down towards Sunshine, then continued northwards keeping well up near the tops. Finally our leader came to the spot he intended going over and we all made a beautiful zig-zagging run down a spur between Carruthers and Anderson which brought us to a lunch spot looking up towards Sentinal Peak. Now I knew the objective, but I thought it was rather late to be making the attempt. We lunched in the warm sunshine on a spot free of snow and gave up the idea of climbing and

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running the Sentinel because it was too late.

After lunch Richard decided to climb "some" of the peak, say as far as the saddle, so off we set down narrow snow tongues on the side of the ridge - down to the creek dividing us from our objective. It was late in the season and the creek was fast flowing and mostly open. We managed to cross on a snow bridge, and donning skins we started our climb - 1,000 ft. measured by altimeter. The snow this year had fallen "all at once" instead of the more usual falls followed by consolidating frosts. Consequently, although my skins gripped the top layers of snow, these were not cohering to the under layers of snow, and I managed to climb only with the greatest of effort, having to use both sticks all the time. If I let up for a moment I would slide back, even though I was taking as shallow a traverse as possible on such a steep slope. Richard and his wife did not have as much difficulty as I did, which I think was due to their weighing only 8 stone compared with my 12½. Time and time again I made a resolve to stop at the end of the traverse and give it up, but each time I turned and started a new traverse saying "only as far as the saddle" for hadn't Richard said we would only go that far, due to the lateness of the hour.

At last we reached the saddle and had a short rest but now, instead of going down, he made up along the ridge! The snow was different here, affording a good grip, which was just as well as the ridge is no more than 2-ft. wide with an almost sheer drop on the north side, and the steep slope we had just climbed to the south. Soon the ridge became too steep to climb with skis straight ahead, so we herringboned with tips over each side, later changing to side stepping, ~~only~~ the centre 2-ft. of the skis being on the snow, the heels and tips hanging in space. So we reached the top, which seemed to me about 10-ft. across. Richard took a photo of us at the cairn.

There was a strong wind blowing so we soon made ready for the run down. I suggested we return the way we had come up, but Richard indicated the steepest slope and said "We go down there". Before we started I felt as though I would be embarking on my first parachute jump, but once started I was alright. Richard, Trudy, then myself went over the edge and made a beautiful 70-ft. side-slip traverse, then round into cristies, zig-zagging back and forth across the slope. I was enjoying the run and had passed Trudy and was up near Richard when I saw the snow on the slope near him start to slide after him. I called out a warning, but as he made a turn the snow ran over his skis and it kept pouring in from all around and carrying him down at a rapid rate. I had managed to pull up, and was horrified to see Richard rapidly growing smaller as he disappeared down the slope. The snow kept pouring into the gully with a rattling, hissing sound, and eating its way up the slope we had already run for about 300-ft. I looked at it towering above us, expecting the lot to come down and engulf all three of us, whisking us off, indeed to Destination Unknown. I turned round as Trudy stopped, and she looked her concern as she asked "What happened"? I pretended to be very matter of fact as I told her the snow had held Richard's skis and taken them down, but I had visions of him being swept into the creek with tons of snow on top of him.

IF YOU ARE GOING PLACES
CONTACT

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SUITABLE POINTS BY ARRANGEMENT.

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TELEPHONE 60, KATOOMBA.

Gradually the hissing noise subsided and we saw the snow had gone down in level about 12 inches over quite a large area of the slope. The edge was within inches of my ski.

By this time Richard had disappeared round a curve in the gully, but he now came into view again on the slope we had climbed, his skis still imprisoned in the heavy snow. Trudy was all for running down to him, now that the slide had stopped, but I thought if we went on it we were likely to start another slide, so we took a horizontal track across the slope to the next gully which we had climbed earlier.

Running down this gully we had a further unusual incident; some snow disturbed on one of the turns rapidly built up into a large snow ball which, but for a timely warning, would have knocked Trudy over. We were hurrying in case Richard needed help, and we had to dodge the snow ball as well as each other as we sped down the rest of the slope.

Richard was O.K. except for a slight strain to his ankles caused by trying to wrench his skis from under the heavy snow whilst being carried down. He had "lost" 500-ft. of the descent in his avalanche trip. We ran the rest of the slope, crossed the snow bridge again, and after a long slug we reached the hut again at 6 p.m.

Later I ventured the opinion that the slope was not skiable because of the unusual snow conditions, but Richard said it would always be dangerous whatever the conditions. Richard is from Europe, and a one time champion skier. On earlier trips he had shown his surprise at the steep slopes we could go on in Australia without causing avalanches, and had given several reasons, some of which were the cover of vegetation, the rocky nature of the slope, and the

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lighter falls of snow. It has often been written and said "There are no avalanches in Australia", and many a time when on a steep slope I had taken comfort in this authority.

Last year we again had very heavy falls of snow, and I saw many snow slides which were heavy enough to bury a skier. Also last year Frank Leyden saw the result of an avalanche which was big enough to wipe out a hut full of people. It had come down in the night off Mueller's Peak and the blocks of snow were each as big as the hut. I shudder to think that some of us had wanted to build the hut on that very spot but Fate, in the shape of the architect, had said No, as there were too many loose rocks about, one of which might fall and hit the hut.

FEDERATION NOTES FOR NOVEMBER.

- Allen A. Strom,

After appropriate investigation and upon the recommendation of the President, it was agreed to admit THE BONDI WANDERER'S to membership of the Federation.

A screed has been prepared outlining the working procedure of the SEARCH AND RESCUE SECTION. This will be sent out to the Police, Air Force, Army and the Police Intelligence Rescue Squad. It was also agreed to forward copies to the Clubs.

BUSHFIRE FIGHTING IN THE ROYAL NATIONAL PARK: The list of volunteers now has sixty odd names. These will be handed over to the Sutherland Shire Bushfire Fighting Brigade Authorities. Further volunteers are still welcome. Ring Paul Barnes, UB1351.

RACING TRACK ON NARROW NECK: Following presentation of a cutting from "The Sydney Morning Herald" on this topic, it was agreed to protest to the City of Blue Mountains Council. Affiliated Clubs and interested individuals were asked to add their protest in order to impress the Council.

REPRINT OF SULMAN'S "WILDFLOWERS OF N.S.W.": It was agreed that we should ask Angus and Robertson's to make this reprint.

A CONVENER FOR THE SOCIAL COMMITTEE is still urgently required. Please see if you can get a volunteer.

COURIDJAH RAILWAY STATION: It was agreed that we should ask the Department of Railways to replace the Water Tank at Couridjah Station.

NATIONAL PARKS IN U.S.A.: A recent letter received has shown that no National Park in America may be disturbed without Congressional approval. Since 1916 no appeal to Congress has been successful. Copies of legislation from U.S.A. and New Zealand are being collected in preparation for a draft of an Act to be presented to the New South Wales Parliament. Such an Act would cover the establishment of a National Parks Authority, the provision of funds and security of land tenure.

BOUDDI NATURAL PARK: It is now reported that Scott's Portion (of about 200 acres) has been added to the Park. This covers a number of creeks draining into Maitland Bay and also covers the main range between Maitland Bay and Little Creek. The Gosford Shire has in a letter to the Department of Lands supported the Trust's plan for the resumption of the greater portion of two other blocks on the Scenic Highway behind Maitland Bay.

SCIENTIFIC STAFF FOR THE FAUNA PROTECTION PANEL: The Fauna Protection Panel has asked for the appointment of a Biologist to assist with investigation of Faunal matters.

COLOUR TRANSPARENCIES ABOUT CONSERVATIONAL MATTERS: A Series of Colour Transparencies have been built up by the Secretary of the Conservation Bureau showing areas of interest in our Conservation Projects. Persons who would care to arrange showings of these in order to interest as many people as possible in our proposals for reservations should contact A. Strom at WB2528.

THE RIDGEWALKERS.

- Geof Wagg.

Now to me a ridge is a fine and wonderful thing. To the owner of an experienced gaze a ridge appears as a high road to anywhere he wants to go; the heights or the depths. When I was a prospective I never failed to admire the leader who could stand in the middle of a noncommittal patch of scrub and announce with encouraging certainty "The saddle's over there", and so it nearly always was.

Yet I think the place where I really came to appreciate ridges was in Tasmania. They don't have them there you see, and so the unfortunate Tasmanian walkers must perforce wallow through seas of button grass to their beloved mountains instead of marching dry shod along some convenient ridge.

And so it was that as the four of us returned from Tasmania still glowing with the enjoyment of our carefree days, yet remembering our yearning for a dry ridge, we sort of promised ourselves that this Winter we'd go out past Jenolan on the Kanangra road to hunt the ridges where they lurk among the sally bush and chase them out along their long, strong, bastions until they dropped exhausted to the Cox.

Our first real ridge trip was on the third weekend in July when Dot, Grace, Don Newis, Neil Monteith, Snow and myself burnt midnight oil out along the Kanangra Road beneath a sky of frosty stars to snuggle finally into the shelter of the verandah on the new hut at Cunningham's Clearing. This cosy spot we knew of old. Our objective was Guouogang thence Queahgong, Jenolan and the long ridge that drops at Breakfast Creek. I had been that way before with Ross, so that was probably why the rest of the party waited for me that morning. This is a lamentable fact but I might as well admit now that despite early rising and good intentions I was always last ready in the mornings. Dot seems to be able to do anything she's going to do in

five minutes. Grace, Don and Snow all manage to be prompt: Neil, in spite of the amazing variety and quantity of his food, is on time, but I, alas no. And when at last I am packed up and ready to leave, someone points out the billy and the tin of milk and the dishcloth which I have inadvertantly left out. However, even after waiting for me, the party managed to be away slightly after seven, while the troupe of Rovers camped just down the paddock still snored in their tents. The morning was delectably clear and as the crisp, frosted grass crunched under our feet we felt it was a fine thing to be abroad and wakeful while others slept.

Now the main land mark between Cunningham's and Guouogang is a large clearing, and as already mentioned, I'd been there before, but in spite of this I led the party on a circumnavigation of the said clearing, or the west and south sides, and would have continued to do the same to the east and probably north sides if I hadn't been fortunate enough to catch a glimpse of the object of our search between the trees. Being quite exhausted with shock at having finally located the clearing I resigned the leadership to Dot and Snow who made a much better job of it. We left the clearing with Whalan's Creek on the north side; we skirted gullies, crossed ridges and climbed up for a view. "Ah! There's Guouogang! -- or is it over there?" "Let's hope not". "No, this is it I'm sure". "Then that must be the ridge we want". "Oh, well, we'll try it anyway." We followed our ridge until it seemed in danger of being swallowed up in small scrub and futile gullies, so Dot climbed a tree and told us "Guouogang straight ahead". Away we went and sure enough there was the long hot ridge of sally bush crawling to the summit on the east side.

The sun was now shining with full geniality and the water was dripping from the bucket I'd been carrying since we left Whalan's Creek, down my legs and filling up my boots. "I've had this water carrying!" I said at last. "Better put it in something that doesn't leak", someone suggested. "You can put it in me if you like", said Snow, who was beginning to feel thirsty.

We toiled up the ridge cursing the sally scrub that whips and drags and scratches and gets thicker every year. As we turned an elbow near the top we came to the place where you can see above the scrub and across the south side of Guouogang to the steep rock walls of sheer Paralizer that climb out of Kanangra River. These were particularly interesting to us because the next week about this time we hoped to be somewhere above them.

We pushed on towards the top and by dint of much searching found the trig nestling amid the sally. It's very important to find the trig, of course, because it's only by climbing this that you get any sort of a view. As it was just on lunch time we had lunch here and I, with great pleasure, boiled the water I'd been carrying so long and made some tea. We took an hour over this and then we were away down over the low saddle and up to Queahgong. As we sat here taking in the view along came the Rovers who we'd felt sure must have got in front of us while we were beating around the clearing. They went off down Queahgong Buttress saying they intended to camp at Mobb's Swamp but we were pretty certain that they wouldn't make it as some of them were trailing badly.

It was a glorious afternoon for the ridges. The sun glowed warmly and a cool breeze dried our sweat while we stood astride the narrow line of eroding rock with the purple, blue of bottomless Mumbadah on our left hand and on our right the long arm of Guocuogang Buttress thrown out to grasp Kanangaroo.

We dropped down again then up and up to Jenolan where I told everybody about how this couldn't be Jenolan because I could remember Jenolan being a lot further than this and then, suddenly there we were, looking down the last mile or so of ridge, where Scrubber's Hump lays down beside the Cox at Breakfast Creek.

Darkness drew on as we dropped down, down to the Cox (how could it be so far) until in the very last of the light we made Breakfast Creek and well earned rest.

The following weekend found us encamped once more by the Kanangra road, this time at Morong Creek. In spite of a wetting we got on the previous Saturday night we were still braving the elements in light weight fashion without a tent. The whole, cold party being the ever faithful Snow and Neil, infamous Jim Holloway and I, snuggled between ground sheets on the frosty ground.

The morning dawned fine and frosty so we were up with the light to start a conflagration and warm the atmosphere a little. Shortly after seven we were crunching along the frozen surface of Kanangra road to the place about a mile back from the camp where it crossed our ridge, or what goes for a ridge around this area. We chose our starting point with great care and this paid off because we managed to find the ridge first go, although of course we weren't sure of this for a long time. After chasing it for a mile or so it petered out into a swamp (or possibly took an inconspicuous turn that we failed to notice) so we did five minutes map reading and head scratching until someone pointed out a sharp conical peak that could be seen about half a mile off through the trees. "Ah, undoubtedly Thurat Trig; our troubles are over". Eager to get our first good look at the back part of the Paralizer Ridge we tore through the tender young sally scrub to the top of this and were just shaking hands all round when Neil who had been muttering incantations over his map and compass for some minutes broke the sad news. Thurat Trig was over the way across the thousand foot deep cleft of Thurat creek. We were feeling so fit that morning it seemed nothing could stop us so over the side we went among the scrub and loose boulders, glissading on bare rock creek beds.

We caught our breath at the bottom then started up the other side, very steep at first but leaning back more towards the top. Although it was accidental this route was more direct than our intended one via Thurat Trig and put us well on the Paralizer ridge by 10 o'clock. This main ridge has been burnt out recently and is pretty clear so we could really tear along. Also it is comparatively flat being only a succession of low rocky humps which make it difficult to judge just when you're on top of your mountain. This was most upsetting because we had planned to have lunch on top. Eventually however we topped a hump bearing a modest cairn of stones where we found an old milk tin containing priceless documents on

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anything from toilet paper to receipts. Ours was written on a bank withdrawal form.

As it was only 11.30 we decided to go downstairs for lunch. So down we went, down that best of ridges, Paralizer East Buttress, all the way getting glorious views of Guouogang, Kanangra River and the Dogs. Rough and broken as this ridge is it's very steepness makes it a rapid one to travel as anything slower than a vigorous stumble is impossible. Soon we came to the place where you can hear the calling water below you on either hand and here we dropped off the ridge to our left and down the open ridge side we ran with the river junction clear in view. We ran with our packs bumping on our backs and the sweat running off our noses. Suddenly there we were on the green flats, with swift clear river and the glorious feeling of icy water closing over our perspiring bodies. We'd had a busy morning.

Lunch took us an hour and ten minutes that day (because of the swim) but we managed to get down the Kanangra to Kanangaroo by 3 o'clock. We thought of camping here but decided we might as well push on to Mobb's Swamp with Holloway protesting that he'd only agree if someone came out with him the next morning to see the sunrise from Splendour Rock. We didn't walk to the end of Yellow Dog ridge but crossed right at the junction and climbed straight up the side, which was probably quicker but, as we found, required much more effort. Yellow Dog wore us down with hump after hump and our feet plodded slower and slower. Then as the red sunset stained the West, Dingo reared before us. Snow was still sound in wind and limb and Holloway, though trailing the field, was going well enough, but Neil and I didn't think we'd make it. Of course we did struggle to the top, all four of us, and along the plateau and at six o'clock as the last streak of red disappeared below the purple hills we literally dropped into Mobb's Swamp, eleven hours after leaving Morong Creek.

The last big ridge we walked together was Kanangra to Cloudmaker and Tiwilla then Kowmung, the Cox, Cedar Creek, etc. We were going up White Dog; but on the Friday night train we met the Pegram party off to Mt. Cookem, and got talking to Arne who was with the Admiral when he did the same trip. Moved by some foolhardy bravado we said "We'll see you at the Cox on Saturday night", and Arne's gentle scepticism was just enough to spur us on.

In the cave at Kanangra that night it was the same trusty crew that chased Guouogang except that Dot was missing. Early in the September morning we were astir and were easily away by seven, myself of course being last. The Walls and Thurat Spires looked splendid in that early light and for Grace, Don and Neil it was a first view. Down Gentle's Pass and under Craft's Walls we made our way with Donald nursing an ankle injured on the ski tow at Kosci. In Gabes Gap we nestled and tied up the weak ankle, then over High and High and Mighty where Snow and I studied the map. "Ah", we said nodding sagely "we sidle round Stormbreaker". So we immediately sidled round Mighty instead and struggled, cursing, back on to the track only to find the sidle still to be done. We paid our respects to the four and then topped Cloudmaker at 10.30.

"Most encouraging", I said, "it looks like lunch on the Kowmung; but I don't think anyone believed me. We pushed down to Tiwilla and slogged out along its flat buttress. At one spot Snow peered over down into Tiwilla Creek. "Hundred Man cave down there", he said, "water and everything. Beaut spot for lunch."

"Lunch on the Kowmung" we said sternly and Snow reluctantly came away. At the end of the Buttress we lost a bit of time finding the way down to the ridge but find it we did and then after a false start we even found the right ridge, but it was getting later all the time - 12.30, 1.0, 1.30, 2.0. Three o'clock it was when we sighted the Kowmung; was ever water so cool or grass so green. We were just enjoying lunch when on glancing behind we saw an enormous black storm cloud eyeing over the shoulder of Cloudmaker. Rapidly we grabbed lunch and dived with it under the groundsheets as the first barrage of raindrops pelted down on us. It only lasted about ten minutes and soon we could hear it rumbling and grumbling up the river giving Hell to the boys on the Cox.

It seemed ridiculous to be setting off at 4.50 to walk six miles or so to the Cox, especially when there were delightful camp sights on every hand, but this we did and as soon as we'd got the rigor mortis beaten, made good time too. When we came to the canyon section at the mouth Neil thoughtfully filled his pockets with dried apricots so that they could be soaking and ready for tea. Darkness loomed over us as we entered the canyon and at every campsite the brakes were automatically applied because we'd think "This might be our last chance of a comfortable night". However, Grace prodded us along now, and when a girl wants to go on it's dreadfully hard for boys to give in. Then quite suddenly the canyon dissolved into open banks with casuarinas and fires winking in the dark.

We heard Pegram's contented "Oont! Oont!" as he crouched over his steak and Arne's soft "Ah, so you have made it. Well done!" and we felt we were home.

DROWNING DOWN THE KOWMUNG or TWO LIVES WITH THE ONE ROPE.

- Dot Butler.

We had looked forward to this trip for months. We were going to swim the Upper Kowmung, and great was the preparation therefor. The twelve members of the party had small waterproof bags to safeguard sleeping bags and such food as wasn't in tins, and larger waterproof bags to take the whole contents of the pack, and finally all leaks had been repaired in groundsheets which were to be a third line of defence, wrapped round the outside of the pack and tied at the top.

We made camp about midnight Friday at our usual spot in the clearing by Morong Creek, and next morning followed the creek down about five miles to the Kowmung. The enormous amount of water hurtling over the 1,200 ft. Morong Falls was indication of how much rain we had

had the previous week, and of course the Kowmung was going to be flooded. Whether it was going to be too flooded for swimming yet remained to be seen.

About 10.30 all the party had assembled on the near side of the Kowmung, just by the Falls, and a great urge came upon Colin, the Leader, to cross over to the other side where rumour had it there was a nice patch of sand on which to have lunch.

We followed the river down a short distance till we came to a block-up of huge chunks of rock round which the yellow water churned and rushed with bombora-like ferocity. Nobody seemed terribly keen to take the first step. Jean Aird had just joined us, displaying a large area of skin grazed from thigh to ankle; she had come down the final precipice a little more hurriedly than she intended. Everyone gathered round to give sympathy and advice, and as there was now no question of pushing on the party settled down for morning tea.

Flat on my back on a nice hot rock, lulled by the roar of many waters, out of the corner of my eye I see Colin with a look of purpose on his face, eyeing off the distance between Scylla and Charybdis downstream. He is wearing rubber-soled sneakers! I'd better go down so I can watch him drown, or throw him a lifebuoy, or scream for help or something. With a firm grip on a wall of rock he stepped into the rushing water, barely shin deep, and was nearly torn off his feet. Just below a cauldron of yellow water boiled and foamed and looked a real proper nasty job. If you landed in that you'd be no better than diced frog in five seconds. "Hell", says I, "rubber soles! Horror!" "Yes", says Colin, "they're not so good. You have a try while I hold your hand". In bare feet, and with a cast iron hand-rail formed by the Putt strong right arm, it was possible to stand against the tearing rush of water and I clambered onto the rock. And in the heat of inspiration Colin retained his grip and I pulled him over too. So far so good. We were now irrevocably embarked, and nobody knew what drama was being enacted some twenty yards downstream, nor could they have heard us if we had shouted. In bare feet it was just possible to jump from rock to slimy rock above the foaming flood and reach the other side, but it would have been suicidal in rubber sneakers, and Colin on his precipitous rib of rock couldn't very well take off his footwear. So I came back to where Colin was perched and he suggested I hold his hand again and get back the way I had come. But O Dear No! This time it wouldn't work! Colin had no rock wall to steady him now, only thin empty air, and the yellow boiling cauldron below looked just as nasty a job, only more so. What was to be done? I skipped back to the other side and went further down to look for another crossing, and luckily found one. Meanwhile Russell had come prospecting downstream, saw Colin's plight, and the alarm was raised. He found a great fallen tree which he picked up on his shoulder and brought over. It was to act as a bridge, but unfortunately although one end could be anchored near the shore, there was nothing to hold the other end and the current just washed it downstream. The next rescue method attempted was a long thin live sapling held upstream on the bank and pointing down towards the castaway. Colin took a handful of the end twigs and gave a pull to test its strength, and behold they broke away in his hand. My, my! Is he to stay there for ever till the crows come down and peck out his eyes? But here comes Sir

Launcelot to the rescue. Don, who has just been informed of his Leader's plight, remembers he has a rope in his pack. How fortunate he didn't take any notice of Colin's instructions not to bother bringing rope. It's hardly as thick as a piece of window cord, but it is hurled valiently out to the stricken captain and he is dragged to safety. Three cheers for Don and his rope... Hip.Hip.Hooray!!

All right. Now we agree it's this side of the river for us after all, and have dinner among the rocks before pushing on. We can't keep on river level for more than a couple of hundred yards, but have to climb up the steep ribs and buttresses and sidle around through the low scrub, the blackthorn and the mountain holly. The going is scratchy and uninspiring and hot and not so hot, if you can make anything of that paradox. It doesn't take a great deal of urging to persuade our Leader that life could be more pleasant at a lower level, where at least we could get a glimpse of the river we had come so far to see.

By this time we had passed Morong Deep, and expected a bit of flatter going on the river bank, so we made down a small side gully and reached a nice broad fairly quiet expanse of water. Ha! This is where I swim and have a cool off. All the perishable goods are already in their little plastic bags, so I wrap the groundsheet round the pack, tie it at the top with a piece of pyjama cord, and embark before anyone has time to say me nay, although I did hear Colin making what might be called dubious comments, on the bank.

The first pool was cats-meat! A nice quiet backwater. The pack floated gently along, riding high and dry, and I paddled gently behind it holding it with one hand, and all was fine and dandy. Meanwhile the rest of the party walked along the edge, not yet quite convinced that theirs was a watery destiny. That was so easy we shall continue. To get into the next pool it was necessary to skirt round a big rock, and thus, unfortunately, I got into the mill race. The pack turned over and the groundsheet filled with water in a matter of seconds. The river took a lunatic's grip on the pack and tore off with maniacal speed, and it was a case of if you don't want to lose your pack you just hold on and go with it. I hugged the pack to my bosom and away we tore, over the first small waterfall. "This is rather fun", thought I (I could still think at that stage), speeding along down stream and not being able to do a thing about it. After the second waterfall and a period of dizzy immersion in the yellow flood it didn't seem so funny, but I still kept hold of my pack. As I shot towards the next waterfall I thought "Let's hope someone is rushing down to rescue me, otherwise I shall have to let go my pack and rescue myself". After the third and highest waterfall, with the breath by now just about battered out of my lungs, and a much longer period of submersion in the whirling pool, things began to look somewhat serious. Ahead the millrace was cleft in two by a black jagged rock. I made an effort and pushed my pack one side of it, still retaining my grip, while I hurtled the other side of it, and luckily here I stuck, unable to lift a finger to help myself, just doing a Holland - in other words, waiting to be rescued. And now along the bank comes Don, wearing a puzzled expression. "She's grinning. Is she having fun, or does she need help?" Little did he know the grin was just window dressing. "Get out your rope Don, and take my pack". So Don got out his life-

saving rope for the second time that day and threw an end across and I tied on my pack. By this time I had recovered enough breath to drag myself out of the water on to the rock, and Don was able to pull my pack over to safety without dislodging me. He then threw the rope's end over again and I tied it around my waist. Then I looked at slightly built Don standing on his rock with Tine, and at the racing maelstrom between them and me, and decided it would be better to wait till some more robust type should come along the bank, otherwise there was a more than 50-50 chance I would pull Don in and we would both go hurtling downstream to destruction, leaving Tine 'to wander forlorn of Don, once her playmate on the hills'. So I crouched on my rock like a bedraggled water spaniel, while Don stood on his holding the other end of the lead, till at length Colin appeared and dragged the waterlogged body to safety. Three cheers for the rescue team! Hip. Hip.Hooray! I tipped the water out of my pack and spread out the wet things to dry. It was Don's rope which saved my life. "Three cheers for Don and his rope! Hip..Hip..Hooray!" And I dried myself and surveyed my bruises and tried to rub some warmth into my cold arms. Wasn't it lucky Don brought a rope. "Three cheers for Don and his rope!" "Hey, we've already had that", said Geof. "We have, eh? Oh yes, so we have. Anyhow, three cheers for Don... Stop me, I'm getting hysterical!"

KOSCIUSKO INVASION.
PART II.

- Ross Laird.

George and Judy were at that moment down at the Hotel collecting their boards. Doug and Ross had their own skis, so Don and David set off to hitch back down to the Hotel just as George arrived back at the hut. The boys had luck both ways in their hitching, and in little over half an hour they were back complete with all their gear and by this time ravished with hunger. Lunch was voted the order of the day and was partaken of quick smart. The folk with their hired skis then proceeded to scrape off the accumulation of waxes that had been rubbed on by previous users, and when all was ready they set out for what was, in most cases, their first afternoon on skis. Before leaving they said goodbye to Pat, Ian, Garth and Bob who, with the help of Johnnie Abbottsmith's snowmobile, were moving up to a set of empty S.M.A. barracks at Spencer's Creek, about five miles further up the mountain. Rather ironical that they should move out just as the four boys moved in.

Just imagine that first afternoon. It was a beautiful day, warm but not too hot, with kodachromatic clouds in the sky, snow on the ranges around Smiggins, skiers, good and bad, on most of the skiable slopes surrounding that little settlement - and S.B.W.'s. The thrills and spills, prangs and bangs, cheers, laughter and general merrymaking was really something that had to be seen to be appreciated. A good solid afternoon's ski-ing and the crowd was beginning to realise that it was possible to ski from the top of a not-too-steep hill to the bottom without falling over in the process, but empty stomachs, cool winds and icy snows soon made them head for

the hut. That night real chaos reigned supreme as fifteen bods prepared to settle in for the night. It was discovered, unfortunately too late, that the elbow joint of the pipe that carried the smoke from the old steel room-heater to the outer regions of the hut was missing. Smoke poured into the hut. For a few minutes people tried to ignore it, but as it gradually grew worse it was found that the only way to obtain fresh air was to go outside for it, and oh boy, was it fresh! In the meantime a hessian bag was wrapped round the missing joint until something more suitable was found. For a few minutes things settled down again until the heat of the smoke sent the bag up in flames creating a shocking smell that sent all the inmates of the hut rushing for the doors and windows. In the middle of all this confusion in walked the secretary of the Ski Hut, Bernie. He stood and gaped for a few minutes, and before he too was overcome he asked for the person in charge. Dot was sought after, found, and duly introduced, but the conversation was of a very foreshortened nature as Dot could only stand in front of the poor chap weeping and wiping tears from her reddened eyes. Bernie fled at his earliest opportunity - lucky thing - and it was conveyed to the company of the hut on the following weekend by Jean Schoen that owing to their trials and tribulations with the stove they could have the hut for 3/6d. per person per night instead of the aforementioned sum. That same night Judy, Dot, Rona, Don and Ross all retired to the front seat of Bert's truck and there, wrapped in an eiderdown they sang away the hours whilst the hut belched forth its stinking smoke, and Bert effected repairs to the heater. It wasn't long before Doug joined them, and finding that all available space was taken up he rolled himself into Donnie's unzipped sleeping bag and stood on the running board of the truck, stuck his head, shoulders, and as much else of his anatomy as was possible through the window and proceeded to sing songs he had learnt on his recent trip through England, Europe and Canada. A few minutes before the hut lights were due to be switched off, by a switch operated from Johnnie's ski tow, the truck dwellers repaired to bed, and so ended the first day with the full crowd at Kosciusko.

Sunday was scheduled for the N.S.W. Langlaugh and Ski Jump Championships at Perisher, so after breakfast all the gear, along with the lunch and the kiddies, were piled into the truck and away went the crowd for a morning's ski-ing and an afternoon's entertainment. Although the jumps were not very long (judged by record standards), they were very beautifully executed. The longest jump, 28 metres, was recorded by K. Grumsurd of N.S.W. whole wife Yerva some of you might remember as she was once a prospective of this club. That afternoon Bert, Eric and young Richard climbed Perisher whilst the jumps were in progress. The next couple of days were spent ski-ing up round the C.S.I.R.O. hut where our crowd were given a wonderful welcome and plied with cups of coffee as soon as they went near the place. Monday afternoon, after a typical picnic lunch beneath the snow gums, saw most of the crowd climbing Mt. Perisher for the wonderful view over to the Main Range, and then for an exhilarating run back down to the truck.

(TO BE CONTINUED..)

Best wishes to Molly Gallard and Bill Rodgers, married at Christ Church, Bexley, on 25th November. Their new address will be Killara.



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