

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to the Sydney
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AT OUR FEBRUARY MEETING

- A.C.

The meeting commenced at 8.30 with the President in the Chair, and about 50 members present.

Malcolm McGregor said that as he was unable to carry on as Re-union Committee convenor, the Committee had appointed Jack Wren to do the job, with the meeting's approval. This was forthcoming.

The Treasurer's monthly report revealed that sale of tickets for the Christmas Party had yielded £75/4/-. Tickets had cost £2/6/- to print, the hall £65/1/- and the band £13/13/- (total £81). We were, therefore, only £5/16/- down on this enjoyable event.

Malcolm McGregor reported that the book of Club Operas, which involved about 12,000 pages of duplicating work, was progressing. The estimated cost was about £20, and selling price would be about 4/6 to 5/- a copy.

A letter from the Mines Dept. stated that the application to mine rutile in the southern part of Bouddi Park had not yet been dealt with, but that it was the practice to insist on the progressive mining and restoration of an area, and to require a substantial deposit as a guarantee that the special conditions of the permit were fulfilled.

Heather Joyce said that the R.S.L. Hall was not available for our next Christmas Party on any Friday later than Dec. 7th. The meeting decided that this date would suit.

The President, in accord with the practice of recent years, announced that two officers, the Treasurer and himself, did not intend to stand for re-election this year.

At the conclusion of the meeting Heather Joyce complained, on behalf of the members in the back seats, that they couldn't hear properly what went on in front. The President, in reply, drew attention to the hiatus which exists between the front and back rows of members, and suggested that the trouble might be overcome if those in the back occupied the vacant spaces in the rows of seats in front of them.

THE MAN WHO WANTS TO BE ALONE. Mr. J. Bresnahan, of Joadja, intends to leave no stone unturned to preserve his state of splendid isolation. A few weeks ago Mr. Bresnahan emphasised in a newspaper circulating in the Berrima district that Joadja is private land. His notice said: "Owing to wanton acts of vandalism a continued disregard of conspicuous notices, plus a blatant disregard of my privacy, I am obliged to advise those it may concern that Joadja Valley is closed to the public." The notice said Mr. Bresnahan was cancelling all previous permission to enter the valley.

Lucky, lucky Mrs. Brown, to have the nine drenched and sodden survivors from the Lovaduckling expedition drop into her living room at Katoomba last week-end. An! My! Didn't the sodden ones appreciate the hot shower and the change into dry clothes and the opportunity to heat up their five tins of stew on her kitchen fire, and eat it at a proper table, sitting on a proper chair! There's no doubt Snow chose the right kind of mother for a Bushwalker.

SEE YOU ALL AT THE REUNION. This year's campfire entertainment promises to outshine all others. Ask McGregor. Should floods prevent our getting to Woods Creek an alternative site will be selected. If in doubt ring Malcolm McGregor JX1400 or MW2484, or Grace Aird FU2749 or Dot Butler JW2208.

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APPLICATION.

DRIPPING WITH JEWELS (AH-HEM)

- Keith Renwick

Dec. 23rd saw three bods trying to force their poor bodies into what remained of the room in the wee Renault stacked to the roof with camping and prospecting gear for ten days. We were off to an early start on a trip north to the New England Tableland with the Lapidary Club of N.S.W. This Club is concerned with the finding and cutting of precious and semi-precious stones, and I had recently joined up with the idea of finding a new twist on Bushwalking. Two members of the Newcastle Tech. College Bushwalkers also came up by train later to join the party, which at one stage numbered 33.

The journey north to Murrurundi was uneventful save for a minute crack in the rotor of the distributor which stopped the car and gave us some thought for a while.

We had been told there was a turkey farm just past Murrurundi with a good campsite nearby, but having gone 19 miles we concluded we had passed it and pulled in at the side of the road for the night. Next morning we had gone only a mile when we struck the turkey farm.

4.

After getting supplies at Tamworth and Armidale we turned off at Guyra and headed north-east to Oban and eventually to Backwater. Just east from this place are all the old tin mines which have been out of operation for many years and now only the tailings are left. This was our first scene of operations, and just by looking over the piles of stones we came across pieces of clear quartz and smoky quartz (cairngorm) and jet black tourmaline.

We stayed here only a short time, and next day went down the side of the ridge - by car - to the Oban River where our main camp was to be. We found a good spot and set up camp. I was very surprised at the appearance of the country. Expecting more open grasslands, I was pleased to find it quite thickly covered with open gum forest, and the Oban a pleasant meandering stream with numerous gravel banks. It was in these that we were going to "pan."

It was now Christmas Day, and by arrangement with the Newcastle bods, four of us were to have a baked chicken and baked veg. Christmas dinner. To keep it cool during the day we put our chicken and butter and meat in a large panning dish, covered it with wet gauze and put it in a shady spot in the river. Someone caught a dog making off with the chicken, which we retrieved with the loss of only one leg (the chicken's, that is), but we got down to the river to find the brute had also got off with (and probably buried) 10 sausages, 2 lbs. mince, and 17/- worth of ham.

Well, now to the panning. It took quite a while to learn how to move the dish correctly so you were left with the heavier gemstones in the bottom and didn't wash them out with the dirt. But the presence of black ilmanite sands and stones greatly facilitated operations as, also being heavy, you could watch how you were going by only washing the yellow sand over the edge and keeping the black in the pan. When you were left with this it was amazing what turned up; sapphires (blue), spinel ruby (dark red), topaz (clear), garnet (light red) - mainly like grains of sand, but occasionally you would strike a good one, and less frequently a cuttable gem. In spite of this it was amazing how much everyone found. Some who were only after the big ones used sieves with good success. We also found banded agates, chalcedony and jasper.

Everyone found enough to make him happy during the few days we were here, but we had to be off on Friday morning, 30th Dec., for Nundle out east of Tamworth. We actually go past here to Hanging Rock on the Mt. Royal Range, which is the next range up from Barrington Tops, and has similar deep-cut rain-forest covered gorges. The camping ground here is really beautiful, situated on grassy banks beside an artificial lake formed in the old days when this was a thriving gold-mining town. We were fortunate to run into a local chap who had done quite a lot of prospecting in the district, and it was no time before we were whipped along a side road for about 4 miles to where the zircons lay. These we just panned out of hollows in the dark red dirt gutter at the side of the road. They are a honey-coloured transparent stone. After about half an hour at this spot we went back along the road and down the ridge to where two quartz-crystal mines had been. These, a few

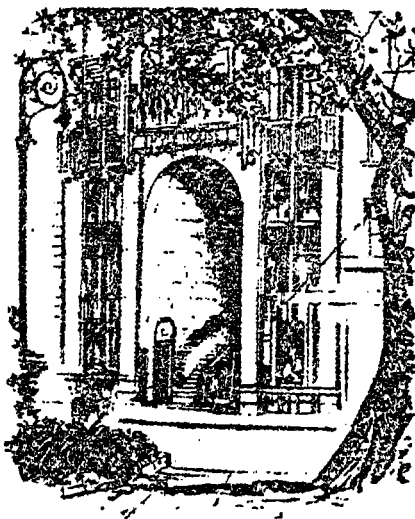
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years ago, had been the source of the piezo-electric crystals used to control radio transmitters, but the mines, having been abandoned, had now fallen in. Nevertheless, lying around on the waste heaps were dozens of small hexagonal quartz crystals in clear and green.

It is truly amazing what lies just below the surface of the earth if you only know where to look for it. We spent the afternoon gold-panning with some small measure of success, and next day returned to Sydney.

MEET THE DEPUTY MAYOR OF MANLY. As Bert Whillier was proudly watching daughter Lynette taking part in a swimming display at the Manly Pool, an official approached and asked would he like to come and be introduced to the Deputy Mayor of Manly. Bert, who usually associates Mayors with Corporations, went over expecting to be confronted by a large gentleman with a corporation, and was astounded to find it was our friend Bill MacKosker(!!!), looking as powerful and athletic as in the old days when he pounded over the mountain trails with the Tigers.

GOLD DEPOSITS IN THE FISH RIVER

You can see by this
that the Editor
disapproves of
anonymity.

- By "Anonymous"
(alias Henry Ford,
alias Arnold Ford - or
just A. Ford for short.
Or what's wrong with "Tin Lizzy"?

Six disconsolate bods assembled at Central at 6 p.m. It was Friday, January 20th, and they constituted the gold-dredging expedition to the Fish River. Up till a few hours before, ideal conditions had prevailed. Then torrents had fallen, and it was still raining heavily and much more of the same was promised for the week-end. Nevertheless, however, they would not turn back now, so they queued up and each bought a return ticket to Tarana. Once they were on their way their spirits soon improved, but the sole occupant of the train compartment they selected did not seem to appreciate their company. No matter how telling the story, how wise the crack, or how funny their frivolity, he neither blushed, smiled or moved a muscle of his poker face, and long before he reached his destination he left them to it and went to stand alone in the corridor near the door. How hard are some people to get on with.

At Blackheath they detrained, and after checking on time tables went in search of a taxi to take them to Hampton and out along the Old Bathurst Road to within sight, if possible, of the Fish River. For nearly half an hour they waited until, just as the next train could be heard coming up from Meadlow Bath and they were about to give up, the taxi arrived. "How much?" asked the leader, as the train was pulling into the station. The driver was not in a hurry, and not realising the urgency of the situation he thought for a while in silence. Then he said, "Oh, about 25 bob each." The next moment they were gone, racing like mad elephants for that train. Fortunately the train was in no great hurry either, and it waited whilst they came, one, two and three and four, and yes, five and six. But they made it! If they had had time to be polite and to explain they would no doubt have said something like this to the taxi driver: "Brother, we have to find it before we give it away, and anyway, some of our profits are for ourselves - not all for you."

At Mt. Victoria they de-trained, and after another wait of about half an hour along came the Coonamble Mail whose passengers didn't care whether the gold-diggers lived or died. Nevertheless however they all got seats, although three sat on the floor in the corridor. The next two hours were tiring and tedious, but were over at last.

At Tarana they de-trained. It was about 12.30 a.m. Sat. The driver of the only vehicle at the station that looked like a taxi said he was on his way to Oberon and would like to drive them to their destination only he was not making a return trip. There was no alternative but to walk it, so on they went. The rain had

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stopped but the ground oozed water, and there was every evidence of what had recently fallen. Out along the road they found a suitable spot and decided to camp for the night. By the time the tents were up and the bags were down and the bods were in, the stars were out. The most tardy had his lights out by 1.45 a.m.

The morning broke fine and clear. They could not see the bottoms of the billies when they filled them from a nearby creek. Nevertheless however when they were boiled and tea and/or coffee was added they could not tell the difference between the result and the real stuff, and with the addition of milk and sugar they could not even taste the mud. Remembering that they were in a grave bushfire danger area, some of the bods built their fires in the gutter and ate their breakfast in the same. Some of the others remarked that they seemed to be quite at home - in the gutter. Nevertheless however it was a glorious day, and at 9 a.m. they were on their way with great expectations. And then came the white ants.

The leaders, being the keen geologists they were, had to examine with the naked eye every distant ridge and rock, and what was more to the point, had to examine with the said n.e., assisted by a magnifying glass, every lump of quartz, grain of sand and piece of rock or stone that they passed. Thus it often became a party without a leader. On one or two of these occasions the leaders became so much in arrears that the party thought they must have been magnetised up into the ridge, or turned off the road to take a short

cut over the ridge to reach the river sooner. On another of these occasions the advance party met one of the locals on a white horse and he gave them a vivid description of the cloud burst that had descended on the district just before they had. If they had come to fish he could have put them on to a creek where the trout were just waiting to be caught, only they could not wait when the rain washed them out. When he discovered where the travellers had come from he told them about the 8 snakes he had caught that week, and warned them of the many more that were waiting to catch City suckers like them.

It was just about this time that two of the advance party came upon silver and copper (a two-bob and one halfpenny respectively), and they were just about to commence digging in the centre of the road for more when the leaders arrived and forced them on.

At last they reached the river! It was about 11 a.m.! But what did the party find? Not a drought-stricken naked river bed in which to poke and pry and pan, but a rushing, tearing, teasing torrent, protecting in its bosom the treasure which they had come so far to discover and to gather. Well, there it was, and there was not much they could do about it. Perhaps it was just as well, after all, that they had not treated themselves to a long expensive taxi trip, only to meet this damn disappointing spectacle. Anyhow, they would set up a base camp and commence operations. The site selected was beside a field in which grazed some cattle, including one or two bulls, with but a flood-wrecked fence between. Nevertheless they must have been well fed or better behaved than the Era type, for they never went near the tents.

After lunch, operations began. The one lady in the party wore dark glasses, no doubt to protect her eyes from the glitter of the gold nuggets she hoped to find. The experts brought out their pans and shovels and picks and cleaned out crevices and cracks and all sorts of odd places where the precious gold might have fallen and might be lurking, and panned and panned and panned. One of the party who had no pan produced a sandwich tin, and when he saw how it was done, did exactly the same with exactly the same result. Nevertheless however he did not possess the same enduring enthusiasm that the others displayed, and found it more pleasant to sit in the sun and wait for the rest to locate it. After a long time they all returned to base camp. That is, all except Howard who would not let it go. While waiting for him to return Frank said, "Won't it be a blow if Howard comes back with a pan of gold nuggets?" But Henry said, "We can take it!" When Howard came back he had in a small glass tube three gold specks which could be seen without the aid of the magnifying glass. Nevertheless however, they did not take it.

As evening came down, a great cloud came up on the other side of the Great Dividing Range. It was beautiful to behold as it was lit with the glow of sunset. Afterwards it looked grey, and then dark and ominous as it gathered strength and size, and those who had faith in the weather prophets dug trenches around their tents (the camp was on the side of a steep ridge), but those who hadn't didn't.

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FROM

THE SANITARIUM HEALTH FOOD SHOP

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Sunday came, and although no rain had fallen, the clouds were very low and threatening. Nevertheless however a strong breeze was blowing, and by the afternoon it was quite fine again. The river had risen about 4 inches on Sunday afternoon, and although it had fallen again by Sunday it was still the same muddy, madly rushing torrent of the previous day. After breakfast the party went up the river to try their luck, and after dinner they moved down the river to have a last try. Unfortunately the result was always the same. About 3 p.m. the river was left behind as the party climbed a hill up on to the road and returned to Tarana, thus completing a circuit of the ridge of which Even's Crown is the highest point. Afternoon tea was had on the banks of Solitary Creek whilst waiting for the train to come at 5.53 p.m.

The result of the trip was not up to expectations. Nevertheless however it was thoroughly enjoyed by all, and before the train reached Central the leaders were heard to be planning another attack on the Fish River when the floods had subsided and the bed was bare and beckoning for its pot-holes to be panned.

ALL YOU ATHLETES, PREPARE! Bill Henley is taking a javelin and a couple of shots (or are they putts?) to the Re-union, and will officiate at Shot Putt, Javelin Throwing and Broad Jump contents. You've got exactly three days to get into training.

GRAPPLING WITH THE GRAMPPIANS

- Brian G. Harvey.

It appeared to be some time since any representative of the S.B.W. had ventured into the wilds of Western Victoria to sample the Grampians, and so, lured on by our friend Margaret of Melbourne, who had the necessary transport in the shape of an A30, and by a glowing illustrated brochure put out by the Victorian Tourist Bureau, we duly arrived in the "Spirit of Progress" one cold and gusty day last August to be greeted with the news that floods out Horsham way had cut off road communications. We were not surprised, for the Murray at Albury was miles wide, and temporary lakes dotted the landscape from there to Melbourne. A bright spot had been the miles of Golden Wattles contrasting against the emerald green paddocks.

We three finally took off 48 hours later in the A30, and camped the first night at the "Royal George" at Ballarat - a fine old-fashioned hostelry, where our attention was drawn to the availability of the famous "Ballarat Bitter." The town lived up to its cold and windy reputation, but nevertheless we braved the local sights next morning, including a look at lake Wendouree where the rowing events of the forthcoming Games will be held. I hope they have an ice-breaker!

Rain commenced with lunch at Ararat, but pressing on regardless through Stawell and sundry sheets of water over the road, we pulled into Hall's Gap, the Grampians' village, which boasts the usual general store, P.O. and pub, and a smatter of guest-houses. We proceeded another eight miles through drizzle and obscuring mist to Wartook, our destination, which we hit about 5 p.m., having seen practically nothing since Ararat but wagging wind-screen wipers.

Later on, when we visited Stawell on a fine day, we found that the first good view of the Mountains is obtained from the lookout at this smart little town, which lies 145 miles west of the City-on-the-Yarra. Rising sharply from the plains, the saw-tooth skyline of the Grampians is certainly spectacular, occupying about 40 miles of the western horizon, from Mt. Difficult in the North to Mt. Abrupt at the distant blue-tinted Southern tip of the jagged outline.

However, one must not be led to believe that the Grampians are a range with a backbone like the Gangerang, but rather they constitute a giant uplift from the plains, being roughly oval in formation, running North-South, the outside edge of the oval being almost perpendicular, with slopes running down towards its centre to a wide flat valley - the Victoria Valley. The Southern end of the valley is open to and continuous with the plains outside, whilst another break occurs similarly in the Western wall, isolating the South-Western section into the Victoria Range. The upper third of the flat centre is elevated some hundreds of feet above the rest of the valley, and contains the Wartook Reservoir which is the source of the West-flowing McKenzie River upon whose

banks was situated the cottage we had rented. The lower valley boasts two closely-lying lakes, partly artificial, being the water-supply for some of the towns on the plains. The slopes running back from the cliff edges would be 30/35 degrees and vary from bare rock to low trees, exposing in some places the longest solid rock slopes I am sure one is likely to see anywhere in Australia. The sheer rock-faces would be a delight for contemplation by the rock-climbers, but I doubt if their crumbling ancient sandstone would be safe. The weather-beaten serrations and overhangs present a most rugged appearance, especially from below, but are practically all a uniform drab colour. There are two uplifts facing the East, one behind the other, with a narrow flat valley between which rises to a point equi-distant from either end to form a watershed for two creeks - one running North and the other, naturally, South. Parallel to the creeks is a road commencing at Hall's Gap and leading South down this rift, with the long slopes of the first range on one's left hand, and cliff faces of the second range on the right. The road continues thus for about 28 miles and then climbs over a low pass into the inside valley, to emerge at the Southern end on to the plains, between Mt. Abrupt and Mt. Sturgeon. The change from mountain scenery to sheep country in the few minutes taken to go through the pass is truly remarkable. Mt. Sturgeon is an island uplift like a huge fullstop appended below the Southern fringe of this rocky convulsion of Nature. It is not unlike Castle Hill at Townsville. Its cliff-face frowns down on the town of Dunkeld, with a long slope on the distant side. A nice Sunday afternoon climb to the top for the locals.

The highest point in the Grampians is Mount William, which lies in the centre of the most Easterly uplift, which range is called after the peak, rising to 3,827 feet. A sign-post on the road just traversed points the way to a long well-graded track up Mt. William's sloping back, but owing to distance from, inclement weather and shortened time, we didn't take it on. However, there is a good campsite at the sign-post. After subtracting the elevation of the surrounding country (probably 1,000 ft.), it would be a good Sunday walk for the next Walks Programme. Similarly Mt. Abrupt (2,724 ft.) may be climbed from where the road emerges near Dunkeld, commencing with an incongruous approach through a rubbish-dump, but one requires a sketch map as the way is tricky. From here one can obtain a view right along the whole Eastern face of the range for about 30 miles, I should say. It would be preferable to visit selected points by car rather than endeavour to walk between them as the way along the scalloped cliff-edges is impracticable.

It is unfortunate that most views from the perimeter of the Grampians are over a sea of endless plains cleared for sheep and cattle running, and are therefore somewhat monotonous no matter what peak they might be seen from. However, on the road from Hall's Gap which runs about due West through the Grampians, there are some look-outs with good views of fairly undisturbed areas, backed by the saw-tooth peaks on the sky-line. The upper parts of the McKenzie River have some fine waterfalls close to the road which follows the river down to the plain towards Horsham, and on this

road was the cottage we had rented from a Mr. Zumstein. We were glad of an iron roof and a roaring fireplace as the ground was wet everywhere, and there were biting winds and frosts. I am sure I was the only one wearing shorts (in the traditional S.B.W. manner) in the immediate 500 square miles. Mr. Zunstein is Swiss, and much to our surprise, Mrs. Zumstein has a broad Scottish accent you could hang your hat on, being of the Mackay Clan (Where are you, McGregor? Anyone desiring to book a cottage should write to Mr. Zumstein, Wartook via Horsham. His domain abounds with birds, and we counted 17 'roos in his orchard one evening.

In spite of the brightly-coloured words and illustrations in the Victorian Tourist Bureau pamphlet, the wild flowers in the area do not measure up to those of our coastal sandstone belts. We were perhaps a little early, but the tall plants like our Eriostemon were completely absent. However, the Golden Wattles, and the red and pink heaths were a delight and made colourful subjects or foregrounds for the Kodachromes.

Given three full days and a car, and, of course, sunshine thrown in, I think one could see and visit most things worth while, but I certainly would hesitate to recommend a visit to Victoria solely to see the Grampians. On the other hand, if one were motor-ing from Melbourne to Adelaide, they should not be missed. The best approach, I think, would be from the Southern end, via Dunkeld, then through from Hall's Gap to Horsham, which should take in the best of the impressions without hardly leaving the car. There are plenty of comfortable official and unofficial campsites - this should have a wide appeal to our Motorised Section. Accurate walking maps of the mountain system just don't exist. I'm told by the Victorian walking authorities - another job for their Mapping Section!

To conclude our trip, we went down the coast through towns with the homely names of Penshurst, Mortlake and Camperdown, staying the night at Colac, then on next day via Beech Forest and Wild Dog Creek to emerge at Apollo Bay for lunch. From here towards Melbourne the road follows the coast for 60 miles or so, and is one of the sights one should not miss, though I believe back the other way towards South Australia is much more breathtaking and a feast for the Kodachrome boys.

There's certainly lots of Western Victoria one should see, and to wind up I can only repeat the lilting refrain from one of our operas:

For years now we have walkers been;
We've wandered wide and far.
The roughest country we have seen,
WHILST SITTING IN A CAR !!

(With acknowledgement to the Victorian Mountain Tramping Club for information.)

FEDERATION REPORT - FEBRUARY

Allen A. Strom.

ASSISTANCE OF ARMY IN BUSHFIRES: The Federation will write to the Minister for the Army asking that Army personnel be made available for bushfire fighting in Reserves, even though life and property may not be immediately endangered.

THE MURGAMARRA TRUST would like to hear from any member of the public who would care to volunteer for bushfire fighting in the Reserve. Write to the Secty. of the Trust, Box 2770, G.P.O.

The Wildlife Survey Section of the C.S.I.R.O. is conducting a MARSUPIAL SURVEY of New South Wales. It is an attempt to determine numbers and distribution of Species, a very important type of information in Preservation work. Bushwalkers, who are in a very good position to help, should contact, if they wish to assist, Mr. Basil J. Marlow, P.O. Box 109, Canberra, A.C.T.

A Practice SEARCH AND RESCUE is set down for April 14/15 in the Wheeny Creek area. More information will be available for Club Contact Men, later. The S. & R. was alerted for two parties overdue from the week-end Feb. 18/19, but both parties made contact points before the searches were commenced.

The S & R Section proposes to produce a TASMANIAN BROCHURE for intending Walkers and Trippers in Tasmania. It will attempt to eliminate the dangers encountered by people travelling south unprepared for the rigid conditions that often persist in Tasmania.

MINING IN RESERVES: A deputation met the Under Secretary for Mines on this subject recently, in an attempt to...

1. prevent mining in some reserves altogether,
2. streamline discussion between the Dept., the Trust of the Reserve, and the Mining Principals.

The Under Sec. treated the matter cordially, and we await results.

NATIONAL PARKS ACT: After a conference with the Under Sec., Dept. of Lands, it now seems certain that we will be able to get our proposals to the Ministerial level.

RIFLE RANGE NEAR WARRAH SANCTUARY: The Minister for Lands has refused to Commonwealth the necessary lease for the establishment of this.

FEDERATION RE-UNION: To take place at Euroka Clearing on March 16/17th. The S.B.W. has been given the responsibility of preparing the supper. Each Club is asked to prepare an item for the Campfire.

PANORAMA POINT (KURRIJONG HEIGHTS): Following reports that the Lookout and the property thereabouts were up for sale, it was Federation ask the National Trust to organise an approach to the Government to have a small area about the Lookout resumed and set aside as a Reserve for the Preservation of Scenic Beauty, preliminary to the establishment of a National Monument at some later date.

14.

THE KAMERUKA CLUB asked permission of the Federation to establish a memorial to the late President of that Club, in the form of a fixed chain and a plaque on the chimney leading down from Splendour Rock on to the Spotted Dog Range below. It was resolved that the matter should be taken back to the Clubs.

Mr. Paddy Pallin has drawn the attention of the Federation to the rapid decline in the number of new people becoming interested in Bushwalking. He has been invited to address Federation on the matter at its meeting in March.

BATTLES WON AND LOST

The S.B.W. versus Tasmania. Round One.

- Digby.

It was the perfect sunrise at Frenchman's Cap that trapped me. Tasmania had suddenly given us her glorious best - our trip had reached its climax. In that rare moment was born the inspiration to write an article. It came gushing out of me; and then, alas, I knew I had passed the point of no return - they would never relent until it was in print. Bear with me, then, while I sift those happy memories and try to begin at the beginning.

In the first place there were six, a good, rational even number - three boys and three girls. I suspect that I was invited later to sway the balance of power, but having little power and a doubtful balance, this worthy plan was doomed at the outset. As Geof explained it, his general plan was to spend a leisurely eight days in the Cradle Mt. Reserve, a couple in Queenstown to recuperate (?), and then on to Frenchman's Cap for a further five days. In theory, at least, it sounded terrific and my enthusiasm mounted. It would be a real eye-opener, if we were only lucky with the weather.....

The last drizzling hours of 1955 were running out when we set foot in Launceston - a typical Tasmanian welcome, of course. No.1 objective was Devonport from which point it was reasoned we might reach Waldheim by methods various. (I now know there are only two ways of reaching Waldheim - walking or paying). Our bus disgorged us into a dripping wet Devonport which did not exactly overflow with alluring campsites. We needed no persuasion when Geof discovered two unlocked compartments in a carriage at the local station. We were soon stowed safely inside, Grace, Joan and Bev. in the one (the leaking one, they winged), while Geof, Don, Brian and I packed somehow into the other. The outside world prepared to welcome the arrival of 1956 but we cared not, for we were on the brink of greater things.....

Our guilt complex was such that we found ourselves out on the empty streets in the early dawn of New Year's Day when most orthodox

folk were just going to bed. Motorists were as scarce as hens' teeth, so we just kept bashing it out, that is, all except Grace and Bev. who bagged the only eligible car for miles. Of course, the girls had no real trouble at all, but not even my new hat politely raised, coupled with a distinctive bow, could bring results. Suffice it to say that we dribbled into Sheffield in bits and pieces, ready and willing to hire two cars to take us on. By this time the overcast had grudgingly yielded to patches of blue and our spirits soared. We had reckoned, however, without the Reserve's own private "Hughie", and when we finally rolled into Waldheim the skies had opened wide again and our visibility was exactly nil. An all-providing Ranger (Mac) offered us the Picnic Hut for the night for the modest fee of 2/- apiece; it was a fine port in any storm.

Geof and Don soon staggered in with a monstrous case - it was the Tucker Box sent up from Hobart; and when it was unpacked a veritable mountain of food overflowed a good-sized picnic table. The mathematicians struggled with their figures, the lesser lights with their tin-openers and other paraphernalia until the whole had been divided into two unequal lots. We were food partying four and three, so you can imagine the fun and games in calculating $\frac{4}{7}$ ths of 5 salamis and the like. Finally the parts were reduced to individual loads and then came the shocker - 16 lbs. a head! But at mealtimes it was worth every ounce; we ate like kings. As I pondered the mountain of flour in my heap, a great taste for dampers suddenly came upon me - bigger and better dampers, and oftener than the Diet Chart said we ought to have them.

The next day dawned with Hughie still working overtime. Did he never take a holiday here? We sought in vain for a glimpse of Cradle Mt. Now and then Little Horn would momentarily shed its cloak just to tantalise us. Eventually Geof decided that we should spend our spare day here in the hope of some improvement. We all heartily agreed.

<u>Score:-</u>	Tasmania 1
	S.B.W. Nil.

Mac transferred us to a fine hut at the back of the Chalet, tariff 5/- per night, but, mark you, with stretchers, hurricane lamps and all mod. cons. We moved in as the previous weather-bound tenants, a party of Y.H.A. campers, ventured out into the murk. We wished them luck and meant it. In the afternoon the outlook brightened a trifle and we longed for action. Geof led off on a jaunt to Hansen's Peak, to test our gear and receive our first small ration of scenery, notably Little Horn and Dove Lake. We saw enough to whet our appetites for the rest of that hidden grandeur. I might also add, we were suitably introduced to the General State of Things à la Reserve - squelchy ooze up to our knees, water, mud and slosh in all directions; but it was fun - at this stage!

The Great Doubt had reared its ugly head - was the flour supply plain or self-raising? We would make a damper, Geof said, and pray that it was S.R. Nobody would risk his reputation on such a venture, so our fearless leader was left to practice what he preached. Despite elaborate precautions, the final product was

flatter than last year's beer and soggier than the button-grass plains. Calamity of calamities! If we could only procure some baking powder? Ah, yes, Mac is a grand sport, and so is Mac's wife. She came good with the leavening and we were saved.

A disturbing incident occurred that night. The boys were actually tossed out of their cosy quarters so that the girls could partake of a hot billy bath or some such nonsense. Baths in this sort of weather, and only two days out anyway! We couldn't stand for this! As we exiles ruminated in our bleak Siberia, we decided that we must put our foot down firmly and show them who held the balance of power. The factional fight which followed, although a ton of boisterous fun, unfortunately was far from decisive. How Brian continued to sleep through the mêlée was a source of wonder. Perhaps that was our weakness.

Tuesday, Jan. 3rd. It was high time we shook our heels of Waldheim, come hail, rain or snow. Well, we could still count on the rain, and before long we were to cop the lot. Our plan was to reach Windemere Hut and meet up with Monsieur Ingram's party, climbing Cradle and possibly Barn Bluff en rout:.

<u>Score:-</u>	Tasmania 2
	S.B.W. Nil.

The murk was immense. Those two mountains could quite easily not have been there, except for Geof who had once come through in good weather, and who kept torturing us with things like "you usually start the climb from there", or "you get the first sight of Barn Bluff here". As we climbed up round Crater Lake, the blizzard struck - sleet at first and then snow, driven at us with all the fury only the Reserve can muster. The icy gale ripped through us, and we no longer cared for peaks and lakes, but only for the shelter of Kitchen Hut. Said hut soon loomed up like a ghostly spectre through the snowstorm, but the West Point couldn't have been more attractive. We fell into it, and were immediately cold and hungry. Only one thing would restore us - a piping hot brew of cocoa. Aha, we've found fuel! Here's our recipe for cocoa in Kitchen Hut:

Take one only piece of timber, calorific value minus one, approx. 24"x 3" x $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Split carefuller with machete, save all shavings. Collect two large billies of water, wait until ice melts and support solidly (i.e. distinctly foolproof) over low fire, started with half a box of matches. Fan fire constantly - don't waste a calorie - and start wondering how Dot Butler got down chimney. By the time answer comes second billy will have boiled the last glowing ember. (If this doesn't happen, folk, you will be just a shade unluckier than we were). Result: Seven bods beaming big, glowing with inner warmth and looking for more punishment.

As we passed the foot of Cradle the clouds parted for an instant as though in mockery, to reveal the towering, jagged peaks. Then all was lost again. We pushed on regardless to the Cradle Cirque, from where, Geof said, the whole squad of Reserve giants would parade on a fine day. Today they had been swallowed up in a

great grey maw, but our imaginations were not found wanting. As the day wore on, the blizzards, the morass of the button grass plains and our heavy packs had left their mark. Those last miles had the genuine bushwalker stamp on them, and it was with relief that we gained our goal, there to be rewarded by reunion with our north-bound friends and handfuls of incomparable scroggin. We settled in to make the hut a S.B.W. monopoly and celebrated the occasion with Xmas Cake, carried by Geof with admirable tenacity of purpose.

The next morning there was a hint of better weather in the air, and we set off early, farewelled by Monsieur's party with all best wishes. A mile or so out the track climbs to a saddle and here we were held spellbound by our first sight of the Ossa group. At last! It seemed a curtain had been raised. The photographers, chained up for so long, went wild with joy! Shutters clicked incessantly, foreground interest (human variety) was arranged and re-arranged like so much stage scenery, while the swirling mists uncovered now one peak, now another. There was Oakleigh, Pelion East, Thetis, Achilles, and Pelion West. Only the mighty Ossa still guarded her secrets with the jealousy of a veiled maiden. We were given ten brief moments, then the show was over. Another ten, and things had returned to normal. A new blizzard was upon us. It raged for an hour while we pressed on, heads down, hands tucked beneath our sweaters. We stopped for lunch during a sunny spell, and literally fell upon the delectables - damper, biscuits and a vast array of spreads. There were so many that you could use up all your damper-biscuit ration without trying each and every one; it was frustrating. The issue was further complicated by the activities of certain salesmen who insisted on persuading you to try the particular brand they happened to be humping. What a contrast to four days later, when, I remember, some super-optimist would try scraping out the vegemite tin for the umpteenth time.

With the weather now definitely on the mend, we waltzed into Pelion Hut to find our old friends the Y.H.A. party occupying the better half. If Pelion Hut has accommodation for 16-20 bods, as advertised along the track, then I am Micky Mouse. Nevertheless, it's a fine new hut and only reasonably congested with seven in a half-section. Anyway, I would rather have walkers crawling all over me than leeches. Talking about these hordes reminds me that we had hardly de-leech-ed before an insidious female revolt broke out - the boys must have a bath! They even hinted we were beginning to smell! How silly! Our pride was hurt. We would have a cold bath, then, just to show 'em what we were made of! So, putting on a bold front but with trepidation in our hearts, we advanced on the local creek. Denuded and shivering, and pondering the icy stream, the idea seemed more absurd than ever, but we had committed ourselves. The ensuing screams, I believe, were heard at Lake St. Clair. The agony was supreme, but we were able to go back with that air of superiority - no billy baths for us (worse luck!)

I woke up that night with a strange hot feeling in my feet. I had a blood bath on my hands, or rather, feet. A distinctly distended leech had been holding a party inside Geof's bed socks (which I was wearing). I was furious (so was Geof). Later on I had a hideous nightmare in which enormous leeches the size of pythons

were pinning me down while their comrades prepared to feast off me like vampires.

Thursday, Jan. 5th, was our "rest" day at Pelion. It is notable mainly for the abortive attempt on Mt. Oakleigh, the Prize Damper, and for the turn in the tide of our affairs. The weather had improved to a few odd showers and a goodly lot of blue sky. We started off with two light packs and seven much lighter hearts. The approach to Oakleigh, though, proved a real map and compass job, and after a couple of hours of exploration we had still failed to find a negotiable route through the thick timber which barred our way to the mountain proper. Recollections of lesser walkers taking 90 minutes from hut to summit, and similar references in the hut book, cut us to the quick. Something had gone wrong. We retraced our steps and were almost home again when the SIGN was discovered. It pointed to the orthodox route, a good walking track, leading straight to the mountain. We could have chewed chunks out of it, so great was our frustration. In defence, the tracks are not at all clear in the vicinity of the hut, and we had by-passed it in the morning by no more than twenty yards.

<u>Score:-</u>	Tasmania	3
	S.B.W.	Nil

However, in our ramblings we had gained some fine views of the surrounding peaks, including Cradle Mt. and Barn Bluff, now well to the north. Ossa alone was still brewing its own illicit weather and simply refused to come out of hiding. That would be for another day, we promised ourselves.

Geof conceived the brilliant thought of a fire out in the open for our evening meal. It was a revolutionary idea and a mighty one, no furious fire fanning, no congestion - we revelled in it. This may sound strange for S.B.Ws., but it's easy to develop a "hut compl in the Reserve, especially in uncertain weather. This event was undoubtedly the turning point in our destinies. After tea came Damper Time. With infinite care Bev uncovered her latest creation. We goggled; it was colossal - a thing of beauty, baked golden brown all over, perfectly proportioned from every angle and risen like a sea sponge. I made a speech and decorated her with the aluminium medallion (my plate) for damper-making. From that day on there was always great competition to make the damper. It became a ritual, full of speculation and excitement. After the thing was mixed and lidded up the favoured one would reverently place it in the coals and we would all hover round and wait, expectancy in every breath. Then the crucial moment when its creator triumphantly pronounced it done. There were numerous formulas for determining the end point, the stat of general tension and the maker's personality being most important. And when the lid was taken off - well, sometimes it was an anti-climax. Dampers are like people - there are not two the same; and although we tried very hard, we just couldn't quite match the Price perfection.

We bedded down early that night, for we had great hopes for the morrow. It just had to be fine! We were going to climb Ossa or bust

(For next gripping instalment, buy your April issue early.)

THE WETTEST JOURNEY IN THE WORLD

- Dot Butler

How well known to Bushwalkers the summer trip - the silent sun-baked ridges under the hard blue-white February sky; the pitiless inescapable sun; the hot eucalyptus-scented bush; tinder-dry sticks of dead wood; stagnant pot-holes of water in the dried creek beds; streams of perspiration trickling down dusty limbs. Well, you can forget all that for the next few pages. This is a journey into a new world.

The trip was thought up by Colin, to know whom is a liberal education. If he had never been born it would have been necessary to invent him. The wildly exciting schemes that have their genesis in the Putt mind leave the brain of ordinary mortals reeling. When backed up by enthusiasts like Stitt and Garth, whose curves of adventure swoop up like a brace of departing jets, the result is terrific. When further supported by Snow and the Admiral and a few more of us, it's a case of when an irresistible force meets an immovable object, Heaven help the immovable object!

The planned trip was to be from Katoomba across Narrow Neck to a cave near Coral Swamp where we would camp Friday night, then down Taro's Ladder and Black Dog Ridge to the Cox. Here Ulysses Putt and his mariners would construct a couple of rafts and then "fare forth over the wine dark sea", as Homer tells us, to Harry's Humpy... "if there is enough water in the Cox to float the rafts," said Colin.

The previous week Ulysses and his crew combed the auto-wreckers' dumps for discarded lorry inner-tubes, and became the owners of great whopping tubes, some of which looked like cross-sections of a sperm whale.

Three cars and Garth's fadeless wonderbike were to meet at Penrith Telephone Exchange, and proceed in convoy to Katoomba, while Colin, Keith, The Admiral and myself were to go by train. As we four left Central the sky-written intentions of the weather bore out the Meteorological Bureau's forecast of scattered rain and thunderstorms - a rank understatement! twenty inches of rain in the week-end is not adequately described by the expression "scattered rain."

After a leisurely trip up, what time the weather worsened and Colin mended punctures, we reached Katoomba and emerged loaded down with the usual gear plus rope and inner tubes and watertight tins in a paper parcel, and Colin with an axe handle poking through the top of his pack and a life jacket and a home-made bellows whose vital part was a tin labelled "Lactogol, for Nursing Mothers", and Keith with five pairs of socks and much camera gear besides his three tyres.

In driving rain we piled ourselves and packs into a waiting taxi and so out to the shelter shed at Narrow Neck. As there was no one to white-ant the white ants, the suggestion that we camp in the shelter shed for the night instead of dragging out to Coral Swamp met with unanimous approval. We laid out our inner tubes on the floor and seats, laid ourselves in our sleeping bags on top of them, and by 10 o'clock were asleep. From time to time during the night we would be wakened by a heavy sighing proceeding from the Anderson couch. "Gee, the Admiral's not taking it too well," we thought, but discover

ed in the morning that the sighing proceeded from the valve of his tube as he changed his position in sleep. At midnight voices of new arrivals woke us up, but it was not Snow and party but a couple of Rover scouts who bedded down on the concrete alongside us. All night long the rain drummed on the roof. About 5 a.m. a faint lightening of the sky colour indicated dawn was at hand, so we stowed our gear into our packs and hit the trail immediately; we would make a fire and cook breakfast at Coral Swamp where the other more intrepid bods would have camped for the night. We plunged through the wet bushes behind the shelter shed and so down to the track in falling rain.

In the partial shelter of the trees at Coral Swamp we stop for breakfast. Our leader hands us a box of matches and a stub of candle and says, "You get a fire going while I chop down some wood,"..and the mind takes a photograph, which will remain when all paper has perished, of a figure dimmed by mist chopping away with clean, powerful strokes, and a couple of others in the slanting rain crouched over a lighted candle-end building a delicate little pagoda of sticks above it. The tree crashes to the ground, the trembling skeleton of a damp twig burns in our embryo fire - and the shutter snaps. What need is there for a paper print when the scene is photographed on the mind for all time?

We soon had a good hot fire. Breakfast disposed of we went up to the cave, but there was no sign of its having been used by the others, so we wrote a message in the wet sand and departed - through watery wastes of swampland where button-grass waved its long tassel-tipped stalks in our faces, out to the open heath land. There was something sinister about the hooded figures flitting through the wild weather. "Listen," said the Admiral confidentially during one of our periodic stops while we waited for Keith to catch up, "I don't want to insult you other two, but I feel like one of Macbeth's witches on their blasted heath." "Double, double, toil and trouble" moaned the voice of the storm. When Keith caught up we relieved him of his three tubes and from then on he kept up.

All the wise green growing things were rioting enthusiastically in the wet; the rocky crags on our right looked like indistinct paintings through the veil of white rain as they dropped away into misty nothingness below. Glen Raphael pool was running abanker as we skirted round it, then out past the shelter cave and down Taro's Ladder to reach Black Dog track. While we kept moving the leeches didn't bother us much, but if we stopped for a moment they would be seen wavering sightlessly but unerringly towards us - small brown and larger reddish striped ones, and all crazy for blood.

By lunch time we were at the cave on Black Dog track about a quarter hour from the Cox. The rain still pelted down. The old hills held their breath and cowered under the deluge. Here we decided to wait in case the others were coming, and have lunch. We had heard a shout earlier, but as we got no reply to our answering chorus we presumed it was our two Rover friends of the previous night.

While the Admiral finished eating and Colin mended the last punctures, Keith and I excavated sleeping platforms for 4 in a huge heap of powder-fine sand in the adjoining cave. Then, leaving our

gear in the cave where we planned to spend the night, we took tubes and rope and axe and sped down the track to the Cox where we would make our raft for the morrow's adventure. How flooded would the Cox be? we wondered. We soon knew. We found ourselves gazing on a great turbulent brown sea, our ears dulled by the unending roar of the flood, and sitting in the mud of the foam-lapped bank what should startlingly meet our eyes but five packs and the sodden remnants of various lunches...but not a sign of their owners. It passed through our minds that they might have been swept away in a body, but a search a hundred yards further down at the junction of Black Dog crk revealed our amphibians hard at it. Their raft was rapidly taking shape. Garth and Pete were tying tubes on to the wooden framework. Watching them was Snow, draped in his red-white-and-blue groundsheet and looking like a rather dissolute Lady Britannia who has been out all night in the rain. Stan was eying the Cox with a gleam in his eye, but also thinking of his new infant due shortly and wondering if he ought to risk leaving the poor little blighter an orphan, and the inscrutable Dalai Lama, seated all wet on a wet log, brooded over Things in General and ruminated on Life's Simple Pleasures. We learnt that they had spent the night at Snow's place at Katoomba, all snug and dry on the floor, then had belted out along Narrow Neck and passed us as we lunched in our cave. It was Stan's shout we had heard. Their raft was just about completed and they were all for embarking for Harry's Humpy that afternoon.

Now, this splitting up of the party was not a good thing, and we rapidly marshalled all our arguments against it. The most important, of course, was that we would be denied the pleasure of their company on the perilous trip, but we thought up a lot of herrings to throw across the trail before we admitted it, namely that Harry's Humpy had no roof on it, and the corrugated iron walls had also been removed by the timber cutters - in fact there was no Harry's Humpy to offer them shelter for the night when they arrived without tents, wet and half drowned, if not quite. We also pointed out the dangers of going it alone amidst the snags and rapids and flotsam of dead trees and cows and inflated wombats. We painted a glowing picture of our nice snug ten-man sleeping cave, and the cooking annex with its beaut big fire reflecting heat off the walls; they could dry out everything and enjoy life tomorrow. After expending a great deal of verbal froth and them still not convinced, the brilliant thought occurred that Colin was the leader and ought to be consulted. Colin thought THEY SHOULD ALL KEEP TOGETHER, and the day was won. Just as simple as that.

During all this time we were occupied in inflating our half dozen tubes. The bellows didn't work and Garth hadn't brought a pump, so it was a case of blow, bullies, blow! We lay with our rubber pythons on the drenched sand as the rain poured down, looking wet and slug-like and antedeluvian, and BLEW and BLEW and blew...

Well, the first raft was now finished and they must at least test it out. It was launched forthwith. Peter leapt aboard with a long pole, and the raft remained above water. Then Garth leapt on, and it submerged a few inches, but as soon as it got into the rush of the Black Dog Creek effluent off it went in fine style, our two heros receding into the distance looking like a couple of coolies in a flooded rice field. They poled down in the relatively calm

water near the bank, then got ashore and dragged their craft back towards their starting point, but there they were still separated from us by Black Dog Creek which was rising rapidly all the time.

Colin, meanwhile, was at work on the other raft, and had cut up most of the rope to tie its framework together. But we borrowed what was left of it, extending it with a few yards of sashcord, and flung an end over the creek so Pete and Garth could tie the raft to it and we could pull it over. Garth got aboard as passenger and we started pulling, but of course the cord snapped and away shot the raft, turning over and tipping Garth off underneath. We watched till he emerged, and he managed to swim to the bank with it.

But now Colin demanded the return of his rope so he could finish his job, so our two adventurers pulled their raft well up the hillside and came back with the rope, hoping to negotiate a way over the creek without the raft. A hundred yards up the creek a fallen tree spanned the stream, but it was slimy and precarious and if they had fallen off they would have been dashed to pieces over the waterfall below, so it was a case of fording the creek after all. At our feet lay a long sapling which we hoisted over the water to make a handrail, and while four braced it against a tree on our side and Pete held it on the other side, Garth plunged into the flood and came across hand over hand. We thought we were going to lose him when he got to the middle, and Colin dashed out into the water to give him a helping hand, and with something of relief we welcomed him on to our bank. Peter followed, and there we were all together again. It was now about 5 o'clock, so we stuck a row of sticks in the mud so we could measure how the water rose or fell by the morning, then headed up the track to the cave, the other party complaining bitterly at having to carry their packs up the hill again when they had already carried them down.

The congestion was more than somewhat as the five new arrivals strove to dry out their gear round the cooking fire, so I added my meat to someone else's stew and adjourned to the adjoining cave to enlarge the sleeping platforms to take another five. I returned to our cooking cave to hear the leader castigating a grinning Stitt. "Damme," says our forthright leader, "He borrows my billy and returns it dirty - well, with not enough of his lousy stew in it for it to be anything but a damned insult." Pete protested in vain that the murk stuck to the bottom of the billy was Colin's share of the stew. With the dinner debris cleaned up a bit and wet clothes hung up on rocks, we headed next door for bed.

It looked really wonderful when they were all in - something like the Western District's exhibit at the Royal Easter Show, or like the descending layers of Hell in Dante's Inferno. On the top tier was Colin resembling a somewhat badly erected A tent as his ledge was only 5 ft. long and he had to bend at the knees. The next tier was occupied by Garth, Pete, Dot, Snow and Keith, who were all right while they slept diagonally but found their legs dangling over outer space and unsupported from the knees down if they got themselves across the 4 ft. wide platform. Rather precariously placed on the next level down the Dalai Lama and Stan lay coiled up

in a state of apprehension, expecting stones or sand or bodies to come rolling down from the upper strata and land woomph on their stomachs. In the lowest depths of Hell (if we accept the second simile) was the Admiral, quite oblivious of the honour we had bestowed upon him by giving him as a mattress a heap of the only dry leaves in the place. But despite everything we slept soft and warm in our talcum-dust wallows, lulled to sleep by the thousand voices of the storm.

First light showed a boistrous morning. "I think," said Colin, looking out at the wildly tossing rain-drenched branches, "I think the Cox will be up further," and his words were underlined and emphasised by the sound of steady pouring rain, the boom of Black Dog Creek heard above the roaring wind, and the sight of great foaming ribbons of cataracts pouring down the sides of Red Dog and shooting out in a wide arc off Tiwilla.

"Time to get up," said the leader, but the party found it snugger to burrow abed, lapped in eiderdown to the eyebrows, than to leap out into the cold and wet. But Colin is made of the stern stuff reserved for the manufacture of heros, and he rolled out of the warm wet bit of filter cloth he flatters by the name of blanket sleeping-bag and got the fire going. It was an easy matter to rouse the others by merely rolling them down the slope on to the long-suffering Dalai Lama and Stan, although it took two of us to dislodge Garth who dug in like an echidna.

8 a.m. saw most of us setting off for the river again. The Admiral and Keith stayed back at the cave to keep the fire warm. We found the flood had risen and completely washed away our measuring sticks, in fact the small stretch of beach where the first raft had been constructed was now well under water. The Cox rushed along with great pressure waves leaping from its surface. Garth was in his element. With sundry millions of people in Eastern Australia saying "Damn the rain!", here at least was one who was happy about it. He stood regarding it with a rapt expression on his face. "What's Garth up to?" we wondered. "Don't interrupt him," said the Dalai Lama, "He's working out the square root of 7." After a lengthy multiplication our hydrologist was able to tell us in cu.secs. how much water was belting down the Cox. Another little calculation produced us the depth of the river (40 ft.), and a pacing along the bank taking sightings on a rock on the other side gave us the width of the yellow flood (about 250 ft.). We thought back to the time we had strolled through it on the last 85-miler, scarcely wet above the ankles.

Despite an ominous grinding of hidden boulders rumbling down the rocky creek bed, Pete insisted he must swim Black Dog Creek, now much wider than yesterday, and put his raft in a safer hiding place for future use. He did too, clad in snorkel, mask and flippers, and returned the same way safe and sound. Then we hid Colin's raft too, retrieved the Dalai Lama's lunch which he had left on the previous day, and tramped off up the hill to the cave. We will come back again some day soon and finish the trip, and that part of the story will be Part 2.



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