

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to the Sydney
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AT OUR TWENTY-FIRST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - MARCH, 1956.

A.G.Colley

The meeting commenced at 8.10 p.m. with the President, Jim Brown, in the chair and over 70 members present.

The Meeting opened with a welcome to a new member, Dr. Bob Bink.

Apologies were received from Dorothy Hasluck, Win MaKenzie, and Marion Ellis.

Next on the agenda was the presentation of prizes for the swimming carnival. The President announced, however, that the swimming carnival had been abandoned because of a superfluity of water. Though Bill Henley, who was present, claimed to have come first in all events, his claim lapsed for want of a seconder.

In correspondence the Minister for Lands informed that he had refused permission for a rifle range in the Kariong Reserve. The Annual Report and the annual financial statement were adopted. The annual subscription was fixed at the same rate as last year, i.e. £1 p.a. for those over 21, 15/- for those under 21, and 30/- for married couples.

Next, standing orders were suspended while the election of Club Officers proceeded. Wal Roots, Malcolm McGregor, Tom Moppett, Paddy

Pallin and John White were appointed scrutineers, and Edna Stretton writer of names on the board.

The Social Secretary reported that the R.S.L. Hall had been booked for the Christmas Party on Dec. 7th.

The Report of the Parks and Playgrounds Movement said that opinion was divided on the question of a site for the Opera House. Mr. Hum's opinion was that two acres was not enough, and it would be better to clear a slum area in Chippendale and place the Opera House there. It was reported that housing schemes were contemplated on the land taken from National Park.

Malcolm McGregor reported that his sister, Mary McGregor, had painted a water colour, designed to attract members, for display in the advertising casement made available by Paddy Pallin at Town Hall. A vote of thanks to Mary McGregor was carried by acclamation.

Mouldy Harrison drew attention to the fact that the thirtieth anniversary of the Club's foundation would take place in October next year, and asked whether any celebration was contemplated. This initiated a long discussion. Some thought that the more parties the better. Others expressed the opinion that it was better to have smaller parties which wouldn't draw on Club funds. Malcolm McGregor pointed out that the 21st birthday party cost the Club £30 and the 25th, £60. Tom Moppett thought that the 25th came too soon after the 21st. A bush party would be much easier to arrange. Eventually the question was referred to the Committee, which is to report to the half yearly meeting.

While these matters were being discussed the following officers were elected:-

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| PRESIDENT: | Brian Harvey |
| VICE PRESIDENTS: | Malcolm McGregor, Alex Colley |
| SECRETARY: | Sheila Binns |
| TREASURER: | Jim Brown |
| MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: | Grace Aird |
| WALKS SECRETARY: | Geof Wagg |
| SOCIAL SECRETARY: | Heather Joyce |
| CONSERVATION SECRETARY: | Tom Moppett |
| EDITOR: | Dot Butler |
| COMMITTEE MEMBERS: | Yvonne Renwick, Jean Wilson, George Grey, Brian Anderson, Jean Golding, Allen Strom Paul Barnes, Tom Kenny-Royal |
| FEDERATION DELEGATES:- | Brian Harvey, John White |
| SUBSTITUTE FEDERATION DELEGATES: | Hilda Stoddart |
| PARKS & PLAYGROUNDS DELEGATE:- | Nan Bourke |
| AUDITOR: | Wal Roots, Maurice Berry, |
| TRUSTEES: | Joe Turner. |
| HON SOLICITOR: | Colin Broad |
| MAGAZINE BUSINESS MANAGER: | Jack Gentle |

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PROSPECTING IN THE FISH

- Keith Renwick

With many doubts about the weather we left Central on Friday night with the lust for gold in our talk. Thirty-three and a third percent of the party were leaders, which made six of us: Jack Wren, Frank Young, Pat Kelly and Henry Ford, with Howard Ireland and myself as leaders. Conversation ranged from the pessimistic - "We'll only need a Land Rover to carry out the gold" - to the super optimist who wanted us to arrange for a semi-trailer.

According to the programme, 20-21-22nd Jan. we were due to go to Blackheath, thence by taxi to Fish River. In order to save fares I suggested we omit the taxi and go straight through to Tarana, but general opinion was we continue as planned, so we caught the 6.23 to Blackheath. Here we made enquiries about trains - the next one was due out at 1 minute to 10 - then we went off to find out about the taxi. We waited and waited and waited, but the taxi-man didn't show up till 3 minutes to 10. We told him where we wanted to go. He kept trying to bustle us in. We asked him the price - just as the train hove into view. Much humming and hawing, and eventually he said "25/-" which was much more than we expected. We left the poor chap just standing there gaping as with one accord we took off for the station and just caught the train. This train was only to get us to Mt. Victoria, as the Coonamble mail, which comes along later and stops at Tarana, doesn't stop at Blackheath. We waited about half an hour at Mt. Victoria and eventually caught the Coonamble mail which, at about 12.34 a.m., dropped us at Tarana.

It had been raining exceptionally heavily over the past day or

so. Signs of flooding were everywhere, and it was with some difficulty we found an area dry enough to camp on. The night was fine, and in spite of the forecast, things looked bright for the morrow.

Next morning the weather was better than expected - it was beautiful. We packed up and were away by 9 a.m. for about 4 miles of road to the campsite. On the way Howard and I found good signs of black illmanite in the gutter at the side of the road - washed down by the recent heavy rains. This is a good sign as, being also heavy, it is often present where gold is. We downed packs and collected three large dishes of dirt, and in the next pot-hole of water we washed it to the black concentrate. Just as well we didn't have time to search the concentrate for gold, or the Main Roads Dept. may have had some trouble stopping us dredging the road. We took our booty with us in a plastic bag to look at afterwards and hurried after our party, which had shot ahead.

Soon after this, having caught up with the others, the subject, as usual, turned to food. Frank asked Jack if he had had porridge for breakfast. "Porridge!" says Jack with scorn, "Porridge is only sand in the gear box. You want to eat rice, man! Rice!" Some people have queer tastes for a 3-course meal. Jack has lived too long in New Guinea I suppose.

The Fish River at the place we were headed for cuts through a north-south granite outcrop ridge of rock via a gorge which should act as a natural ripple and trap the gold coming down the river. We found a pretty good campsite on the flats just on the eastern side of this, (better spots on the western side of the gorge we found later), and made camp.

Lunch was an hilarious affair, and Frank had extreme difficulty in consuming his meal for laughing. After this we set about the more serious business of earning our board. We started off with some sand and gravel caught in cracks of rock at the side of the river. The Fish River itself was running abanker and was very muddy, swift and turbulent. This was bad from our point of view as we hadn't a hope of getting anywhere near the bottom of the river to where gold, being heavier than the gravel, settles. Still, we started, and were encouraged when our first dishes showed signs of the black illmanite sands. We looked closer at the washed concentrate as it sparkled in the sun with flashes of red (spinel ruby and garnet), light honey brown (zircon), light green (citrine) and dark brown (cainngorm). My, but they were pretty! - but next time we'll take a microscope instead of a magnifying glass and see them better.

We spent all that afternoon trying various cracks in the rocks, and a few microscopic specks were found, but My, they were tiny! So we returned to camp for an early tea and sat round talking for hours and hours over coffee - a very pleasant pastime. Our fine weather was threatened by a bank of clouds which yielded a few drops of rain, but nothing serious.

Sunday morning saw us wandering upstream to dig our various small pot holes and wash the results. We even dug a big hole in the

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sand bank to get down deep, but without results; once more the flooded river beat us. So after lunch we went right through the gorge to the west side which is very like the Cox with its casuarinas and grass-covered banks. Here we picked up another road and followed it back to Tarna in time to boil the billy before the train came at 5.55 p.m. We managed to get a dog-box carriage to ourselves, and of the 5-hour train trip back it may be said, "You don't have to be mad to be a Bushwalker, but by Gosh it helps!"

Some day we hope to return when the river is down and dry, and we should do a lot better because it really is an ideal spot.

FEDERATION REPORT - MARCH

- Allen A. Strom

PRACTICE SEARCH & RESCUE WEEK-END is set down for April 14-15th in the Whceney Creek area. See your Search & Rescue Contact Men for further details.

The Federation S. & R. has received a letter of thanks from a grateful parent of one of the boys overdue recently on a trip to Mt. Solitary.

6.

CAN YOU HELP? Federation is in trouble - it needs a TREASURER!!!

In a review of some Conservation Projects with which Federation has been connected, the following results are to hand:

1. The Barren Grounds: About 3 3/4 thousand acres have been declared a Faunal Reserve.
2. The Budderoo Peninsula (which adjoins the Barren Grounds): About 8,000 acres have been reserved from sale and lease for the preservation of flora and fauna.
3. The Morton Primitive Reserve: Whilst the establishment of a Faunal Reserve has been refused, the Dept. of Lands has expressed confidence in the Trust that has been administering the Reserve since 1938.
4. Kariong-Patonga Area: Recent actions by the Dept. of Lands and unofficial reports, suggest some satisfaction in the Kariong National Park proposal.
5. The Warrumbungle National Park: has been established on 14,000 acres, and although this did not meet with our initial wishes, we are hopeful of extensions.
6. Barrington-Gloucester Tops: Information coming to hand indicates that there will be some areas of National Park and Primitive Area in this region. The recommendations are being finalised.
7. The Bouddi Natural Park is now 1,200 acres and acquisitions would now appear to have almost reached finality. The Trust has been hampered in its efforts to develop walking tracks, erect signposts and prepare nature trails, by bad weather and a generally poor response for voluntary work parties.
8. Nadgee: The Dept. of Lands has made surveys of the area and we await a decision by the Minister.

No progress has been made in these projects:

- a) Bungonia Gorge Preservation
- b) Blue Mountains Natural Park Proposal.

The Federation Ball is planned for Oct. 6th (Sat.) at Hotel Australia. A committee has been appointed with power to co-opt. If you are interested in helping, see Paul Barnes.

The Federation Reunion was held at Euroka on March 17/18th, 110 persons being present. The lower numbers were due to the inclement weather. There was some further discussion on the unsavoury behaviour of a few.

Paddy Pallin addressed the Council on certain features of participation in walking and allied activities noted during his visits overseas, and in his contacts at home. He has made recommendations to Federation for improvement in numbers of people taking part in these activities in N.S.W. Federation will consider these recommendations at its April meeting.

A vote by Council has indicated that Federation has general approval for the fixing of a chain and plaque on Splendour Rock as a Memorial to the late President of the Kameruka Club.

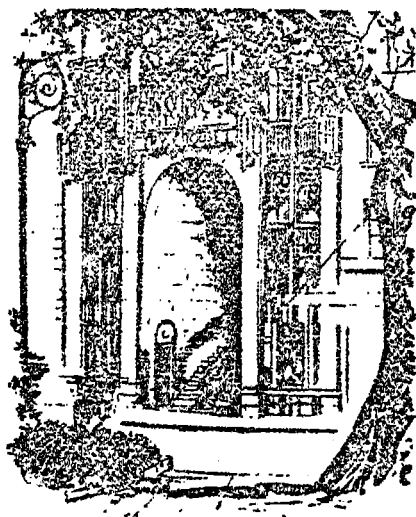
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QUARTERLY REPORT OF PARKS AND PLAYGROUNDS MOVEMENT

- H.I. Stoddart.

OPERA HOUSE SITE.

The question as to whether the Opera House should be built at Benelong Point on the site of the old Fort which is used as a Tram Depot is still being debated by the Parks & Playgrounds Movement. Opinion is divided. Many members think that as 5 acres will be required for the building and surroundings, the 2 acres available at Benelong Point will not be enough. The Hon. Sec., Mr. Hume, advocates a site in Chippendale which would be central and could be acquired by ridding Sydney of slums. It is considered that Benelong Point is a beautiful spot, but access is not so good and parking space is not sufficient.

E.S. MARKS ATHLETIC FIELD.

The City Council proposes to spend £92,000 on this ground, to make a cinder track of Olympic standard in order to cater for events

8.

after the Games in Melbourne. The proposal is to erect stands and an amphitheatre to provide accommodation for 15,000 people. The Parks & Playgrounds tried to get this ground for Women's Sports. It is feared that if this work is carried out this ground may be taken for professional sport. It was decided to protest to the Council.

HUDSON PARK, STRATHFIELD.

There are 36 acres of land in this park on the border of the Cemetery. Council has agreed to the proposal to make a golf course and has promised to retain about 12 acres for a playing field.

GILBERT PARK, MANLY.

This attractive park adjacent to the Council Chambers and fronting Sydney Road and Belgrave Street has large fig trees and other varieties and gay flower beds and lawns. It is a priceless possession but the Manly Council has asked the Minister for Lands to allow them to make an underground parking station there. Of course the big trees would have to go. The Minister for Lands has refused the request, so for the present the park is safe.

WHALE BEACH IMPROVEMENTS:

The Movement was asked to write to the Warringah Shire Council about the unsatisfactory state of the Beach by a member, Mr. Wearne, who donated the sum of £10.10.0 to help with improvements. The Council got to work and installed water taps, fixed lavatories, burnt the lantana and cleaned out the swimming pool and generally improved the area.

THE BARREN GROUNDS, JAMBEROO

The Minister for Lands wrote to the Movement giving approval of the dedication of the Barren Grounds as a Faunal Reserve of about 4,000 acres

WARRAH SANCTUARY and COASTAL HIGHWAY.

Miss Cromellin wrote to the Movement about the proposal to place a rifle range alongside the Warrah Sanctuary. She also reported a proposal by the Woy Woy Chamber of Commerce for a main Coastal Highway to cross from Patonga by punt to Flint and Steel Bay and join the West Head Road. There would be about 3 miles of rough water to cross.

NATIONAL PARK.

Housing schemes are reported to be contemplated by Sutherland Shire Council on land alienated from National Park. It was decided to write to the Dept. of Lands asking for details of land alienated from the Park over the last 30 years.

OATLEY HEIGHTS PARK.

The Movement wrote to Hurstville Council about the cutting down of trees in this park and the danger from bushfires. The Council has expressed its intention to look into these matters.

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THE S.B.W. versus TASMANIAROUND TWO

- Digby

It was barely 5 a.m., Friday, Jan. 6th. I hardly dared to turn my head to the window. This was our promised day of climbing Ossa, but the weather, as usual, would have the final say. The visible sky outside the Pelion Hut was just a smooth white blankness. That could mean anything in the Reserve. I rolled over in my sleeping bag again and didn't care to think of the weather, Ossa, or anything. The whispered voice of Geof came from the bunk above me.

"What's it like?" he asked anxiously.

"The sky's clear but hasn't had time to get blue yet," I lied in a half hopeful sort of way. He wasn't convinced and we lapsed again into half-sleep. 5.30 I was awakened by an excited yell. Geof was standing at the window in his sleeping bag.

"It's lifting! There's blue sky above! We'll do it yet!"

Six bods jolted into consciousness. Without a doubt the "blankness" was just a fog, a fog now lifting before our unbelieving eyes, to uncover the bluest of blue skies above. The air was crisp and still; across the button-grass plains the first rays of sun hit the pinnacles of Oakleigh; shrill bird calls echoed the promise

of the new-born day. Nothing could stop us now. This would be our day, and we could have shouted it to the mountain top.

| | | | |
|--------|----------|---|---|
| Score: | Tasmania | - | 3 |
| | S.B.W. | - | 1 |

The girls were galvanised into bustling activity. It was their turn to cook the breakfast, and with incredible efficiency the boys were fed with porridge and corn fritters in their sleeping bags. Then all were in action. We must struggle with boots and gaiters, pack up quickly and take full advantage of the sunshine. 7.30 was our deadline. It came and went. At a quarter to eight Bev was still setting out her vast array of photographic gear, while outside our leader paced it up and down, straining at the leash. Something must be done. We would move off up the track to stress the urgency - and we waited and waited - still no Bev in sight. In desperation Geof returned to find our lass circling and recircling the hut in search of the track! Only his sense of humour stalled off a violent explosion. If we didn't hurry we might be S.B.W. - Nil again, so we headed for the Pelion Gap at top speed. Through a break in the timber we saw our quarry in all its glory for the first time. Ossa towered up ahead of us, all covered in new snow, dazzling white against the blue sky. It became a challenge which we must grapple with and conquer. The excitement mounted. We reached the Gap, downed our packs and took stock of our surroundings. Don (with gammy boot) and Bev were yet to come. Cradle and Barn Bluff could be seen well to the north, with Oakleigh in the middle distance. On our right Pelion East rose directly from the Gap, its clear grassy slopes capped by a crown of broken cliffs like an old-world castle. We looked behind us up the Mersey valley and across to the peaks of the Du Cane Range. And on our left was Doris, leading up to snowy Ossa, its mighty dolerite columns all standing up in rows. It was indeed a fine sight but we could not afford to linger long; already new clouds were peeping over the horizon. Aha, here's Don. What's happened to Bev. Oh, no! A mile out from the hut she had discovered a camera to be missing and had gone back for it. Well, there was some excuse for that. I should mention that Bev was our mobile photographic shop, complete with two cameras, assorted lenses and filters and whatnots, black bag and other oddments all stowed away in a home-made case humped on the front of the body. Even a camera would not be hard to miss. Still, we couldn't wait this time - she would understand....

Up we started, over the top of Doris and down onto the saddle on the Ossa side. Our boots sank into the deep snow and we loved it. The route to the lower summits was now clear. We climbed up a broad gully, floored with rocks and snow which led up between two enormous spires. It was like a giant cathedral, only much more awesome. As we gained height the Reserve began to open out, craggy range upon range, peak beyond peak. At last we gained the col between the spires and looked through to the other side. It seemed a spell was cast upon us. This was Nature's masterpiece. It was like another world up there - a world of crags and snow, certainly not the world of human beings. A long, winding white

slope led to the final summit, its virgin snow untremelled, dazzling in the sunlight. For a moment we felt we might be trespassing. Then somebody lurched into it with a whoop and the spell was broken. With new gusto we kicked into its soft depths and ploughed up until we stood on top, 5,3000 ft. above the sea, two hours from the track.

Nearly half of Tasmania was spread out around us. Visibility was perfect, the clouds had kept their distance. To describe our feelings as we stood on that great white summit would be impossible. We drank it in bit by bit; we got busy with our cameras (all six of them), but it was all too vast. Far to the south a great snow-capped peak jutted up into the sky, rising above all else - our first sight of Frenchman's Cap. We had won on Ossa, but what would the Frenchman hold for us? Whatever happened, we would never forget the Day of Ossa. It was time to chalk up a victory!

Score: Tasmania - 3
S.B.W. - 2

We returned to the track for lunch, and reunion with Bev. We looked up at Pelion East and wondered. Could we tuck a second mountain under our belts and still reach Du Cane Hut by dark? Could we stand the anti-climax after Ossa? The answers, we decided, were yes. Joan and Don, with aches and pains, decided to go on slowly while the rest of us were soon scaling the 200 ft. crumbling rock which crowns the mountain-top. It was not the spectacular scenery of the morning, but it rounded off the day. The colour slides with human foreground captured on that broken summit are due to Geof alone. He would balance himself in what seemed the most horrifying positions with the confidence of a mountain goat. I shuddered and tightened my grip - I wasn't budging - to hell with the composition!

It was a weary party who trudged into Du Cane Hut on that Friday night, but we were supremely happy. That one day had made up for everything. Let's steal another point - we felt we had equalised at last.

Score: 3 all.

Next morning it was pretty obvious that the Big Day had left its mark. Grace could not be debagged without a plate of porridge and a crack of the whip; Joan's knee, sprained on the climb of Ossa, showed no improvement - her pace would be slow. Don suffered with a painful ankle caused by a gammy boot, while my boots had made enemies of my feet. We were degenerating into a bunch of corks. The Reserve was fighting back again.

Score: Tassi - 4
S.B.W. - 3

The weather still held, though, and we moved off at a slow dog-trot finding any number of excuses for rests. However, while Joan hobbled on, we left the main track to see the Mersey River Falls -

we could not miss those. The lethargy increased. Our goal for that day was Pine Valley Hut, still a good ten miles off. Should we ought to try for it? Less strenuous plans were trotted out and painted up in glowing colours. Wanted: A White Ant Exterminator. Quickly. Fortunately we had him. All we needed was some "getting on with", Geof said firmly, "Pine Valley's just too good to miss." So our spirits having been convinced, we forced our bodies onward. Over the Du Cane Gap to the next hut for lunch. It was a gift to find a new short-cut trail across to Pine Valley. Two map miles saved, Hurrah! Push on up the valley as ominous grey clouds roll across the sky. At last, the hut, and what a setting - mountains all around us! It was worth the effort. Then we were brought back to earth, for we were not alone.

The hut was rather full already. It would be overflowing with another seven. As I suggested tenting out the first drops of rain wet our heads. It was not a popular idea at first - a Job's Comforter stood in the doorway of the hut and predicted, "two days steady rain in this lot." He was a local so we dared not doubt his word. Reluctantly we abdulled the tents and hoped for the best - and by a miracle we got it. The "two days steady rain" dwindled to a ten minute shower, and when darkness came, not a star was hidden.

Score: Even Stephen.

Not until six nights later, at Frenchman's Cap, were we to enter another hut. This was bushwalking as we knew it. Soup, D.V., stew, syrup dumplings and apricots for tea, cocoa for supper. This diet chart never left us wanting - it was a bobby dazzler. Full of contentment we lay back in our sleeping bags and looked out at Mt. Gould and the Parthenon, now silhouetted against a starry sky. The Acropolis was at our backs. We had a free half-day on the morrow. Maybe we could tackle another mountain.....

At 6.30, in perfect weather, Geof, Brian and I moved off to climb the Acropolis while the casualties did a bit of convalescing. An hour later we stood on its nearest ridge and explored the possibilities of an ascent at the Pine Valley end through Geof's telephoto lense. One or two chimneys looked promising. We battled with them for a time before Discretion took over from Valour. We retreated.

Score: Tassi one up.

Oh well, there was still the easy way up, and as time was mooching on we didn't hesitate. First, up to the giant columns, set like huge blocks balanced fantastically, one upon the other. It seemed a puff would send them tumbling. Here was exposure plus. On the other side the walls plummeted straight down for a thousand feet, to rise again across the narrow valley into the sheer precipices of Mt. Geryon. Then on to the summit and a magnificent view. Even the West Coast and the Queenstown hills were visible. Pine Valley nestled far below looking green and cool. Up here the sun beat from a cloudless sky - it was blisteringly hot, even at 5,000 ft. What contrasts in the weather we had seen!

We needed no coaxing for a cold bath when we returned. It was the only time we didn't hesitate, but it was an icy dip just the same. The others had enjoyed a lazy morning and our No. 1 patient had improved a little, so after lunch we all packed up and set off for Nicholls Hut. It was hard to leave this beautiful valley behind, and we discussed the pros and cons of a winter return trip some day.

The hut was occupied so we camped out again, this time in leechiferous country. The selection of a site was easy but of somewhat doubtful value. If you could sit down for two whole minutes and still be free of leeches, then, brother, that was the place to put your tent.

The following day, our eighth in the Reserve, we were due at Cynthis Bay and civilization. Mile on mile of beech forest, right down the twelve mile length of Lake St. Clair. For the first time the walking became rather automatic - one hour's steady trekking, ten minutes rest. But our packs were light and the going pleasant and thoughts of a change in diet spurred us on, (fresh eggs for breakfast!)

The end at last! No more boots, no more gaiters, no more walking for three whole days. We found a secluded spot along the lakeside for our camp, and then it happened. Just why will never be known. Grace had just arrived with steady, fixed expression (a bit of a trance, I'd say.) She walked straight into the lake as though in a hypnotic spell. Nothing could stop her as she sank fully clothed into the cool waters. Something must have snapped inside then, for she got up quickly, shivered, and then emptied out her pockets. We rocked with laughter - we had not seen anything quite like it before.

We pitched the tents on the shingle beach to thwart the leeches swarming in the grass beyond. The clear water lapped gently a few yards from the tents, and over the lake Mt. Ida formed a perfect background. The sky was clear again. It was a fitting finale for our last day in the Reserve.

Tuesday morn saw us heading for the West Coast Road. We were spic and span again. A few eight-day growths had been painfully removed and the girls were full of glamour. This was important, for we had to hitch to Queenstown, sixty miles away. We paired off, boy and girl, to brighten our prospects. Brian was the unlucky one, but he didn't seem to mind. As we bashed it out down the road, our first road for nine days, we wondered what would happen next.....

(To be concluded)

ALTERATION TO WALKS PROGRAMME. Brian Harvey's walk of 22nd April has been shown as 18 miles. This is a misprint. It should read 13 miles. This alteration may encourage more to come on the walk.

THE 1956 FEDERATION ANNUAL RE-UNION

- Brian G. Harvey

Those travelling to the Federation Re-union on Sat., 17th March, approached Glenbrook Creek with some anxiety. However, by removing boots and socks we made a safe way over, to continue by muddy track to Euroka Clearing, hoping there would be no overnight rain heavy enough to cause a rise in the creek and so cut us off from getting back to the station and civilisation. Flood marks on the banks disclosed a recent 25-foot rise!

Nobody could recall seeing the clearing so lush and green, nor Euroka Creek running so well, nor the hillsides so ooze. It was very pleasant on arrival to see the gold and green and white tents dotted about the emerald background, with the blue smoke of the afternoon-tea fires curling lazily upwards.

Despite heavily overcast conditions, the rain held off, and after tea about 110 souls foregathered before a large log-fire on the hillside, where Ken Stewart of the Rover Ramblers took charge of the entertainment. Like our own re-union, the camp-fire refused to light until extra stokers were called in to the accompaniment of a hearty rendition of "Fire's Burning" during the complete black-out following the first light-up. The community singing was interspersed by amusing "turns" put on by various participating clubs. The S.B.W., represented by ten members, relied on the old standby "Excerpts from the Operas". Supper came on about 10.30 and will be remembered for its fruit cake. This was of a crumbly variety which had endured a rough trip on the track out. As a result, the diners were handed a compressed fruit-cake rissole approximating the usual slice in cubic contents, and which had to be pecked at from the cupped hand whilst the other juggled the cup of hot cocoa. The S.B.W. party withdrew to its own campfire to re-live the "Golden Screw", whilst other clubs were heard softly singing in little groups. That is, all except one club whose members displayed their larrikin instincts by commencing to sing in a raucous manner, later developing into a shouting and yelling match into the small hours of the morning, with letting down of tent guys and pulling folk out of sleeping bags. It is small wonder no great enthusiasm is shown in attendance at Federation Re-unions as similar animal antics can be observed at Taronga Park combined with the Police Dept's drunks' wagon on any Saturday night.

We couldn't believe our eyes on Sunday morning when we awoke (after our disturbed sleep) to find the sun shining in a cloudless sky. This was short-lived, and before long it was again the now normal overcast sky with a light shower or two. The morning was spent chattering to and fro and signing the log-book and laughing at the old photographs of by-gone re-unions when we looked a lot younger.

Everyone apparently decided it would be dryer to wait at Glenbrook for the 5.5 train, and soon after lunch the site was practically deserted.....and so ended another foregathering of the Federated clubs.

THE CHUDLEIGH LAKES - TASMANIA.

- "The Gent in the Tent"

A fortnight before Xmas, Betty Holdsworth, Jess Martin and I found that the likelihood of our crossing Bass Strait in the "Taroom" was decidedly unpromising owing to a shipping dispute, so we cancelled our steamer passages and organised ourselves on to a plane which landed us in Launceston at 11.30 a.m. on Sunday with $3\frac{1}{2}$ days to fill in before taking up our booked itinerary.

Before leaving Sydney, any spare minutes of the last couple of days were spent in making a rapid digest of "Tasmanian Tramp" and "Skyline" magazines in an effort to find a suggestion for a suitable 3-day trip in Northern Tasmania. The 1948 issue of the "Tasmanian Tramp" supplied the answer in an article bearing the same title as this one, by J.A. Peterson.

In Launceston, after seeing the lovely fountain in Princes Square, the Gorge of the South Esk River is the obvious place to spend an afternoon. The day was warm and the locals were flocking to the First Basin Swimming Pool. We did not sample it but pressed on, after a leisurely lunch, to the Second Basin and the old Power Station. There were plenty of native flowers growing near the path and on the banks above it. The Gorge retains most of its natural charm beyond the First Basin and is a credit to the City of Launceston. The return is by a quiet country road which serves the Power House residence and affords fine panoramic views of Mt. Barrow and Ben Lomond some 30 miles to the east. We were considering where to camp for the night, when a bright idea came forward that we catch the 6.30 bus to Deloraine and camp there on the Meander River. So back to the city and on to the Deloraine bus.

The 30 mile trip through the late afternoon was a delight. As the bus climbed out of Launceston we had a glimpse of the camping area which looked all right for an overnight stay, but we have since heard that tents are not encouraged as the area is designed for caravan camping. Near the top of the first hill is "Entally House", well over a century old and now the property of the National Trust. The old stone house and barns nestling amongst the trees overlooking the Tamar Valley were picturesque and I would have been happy to have spent an hour or so there. Then on past orchards, with their hawthorn and pine breakwinds, and harvesting scenes in a countryside lush with 15 inches over average rainfall. Approaching Deloraine, a rolling cloud over the Western Tiers forboded a change in the weather.

The Meander River bank at Deloraine looked very inviting as a camp spot, but we were told, upon enquiry, that the new camping area was about half a mile up river. We soon reached the spot and got a fire going for tea in spite of the scarcity of firewood. The place was deserted except for a carload of Victorians. The long grass would be a problem in wet weather. It also conceals odd bits of cow manure which would not be obvious when camping after dark.

We rose late, bathed, and the girls spent the morning buying

food and stores for the trip. When all was ready a Mr. Pratt took us out to Western Creek in a very spacious hire car. At Western Creek P.O. Mr. and Mrs. Cunningham were most helpful with directions to the start of Higg's Track up the Mountains. There seemed to be a reasonable camp spot at the P.O., but we decided to go on up the mountain in case the weather became too bad to travel at all.

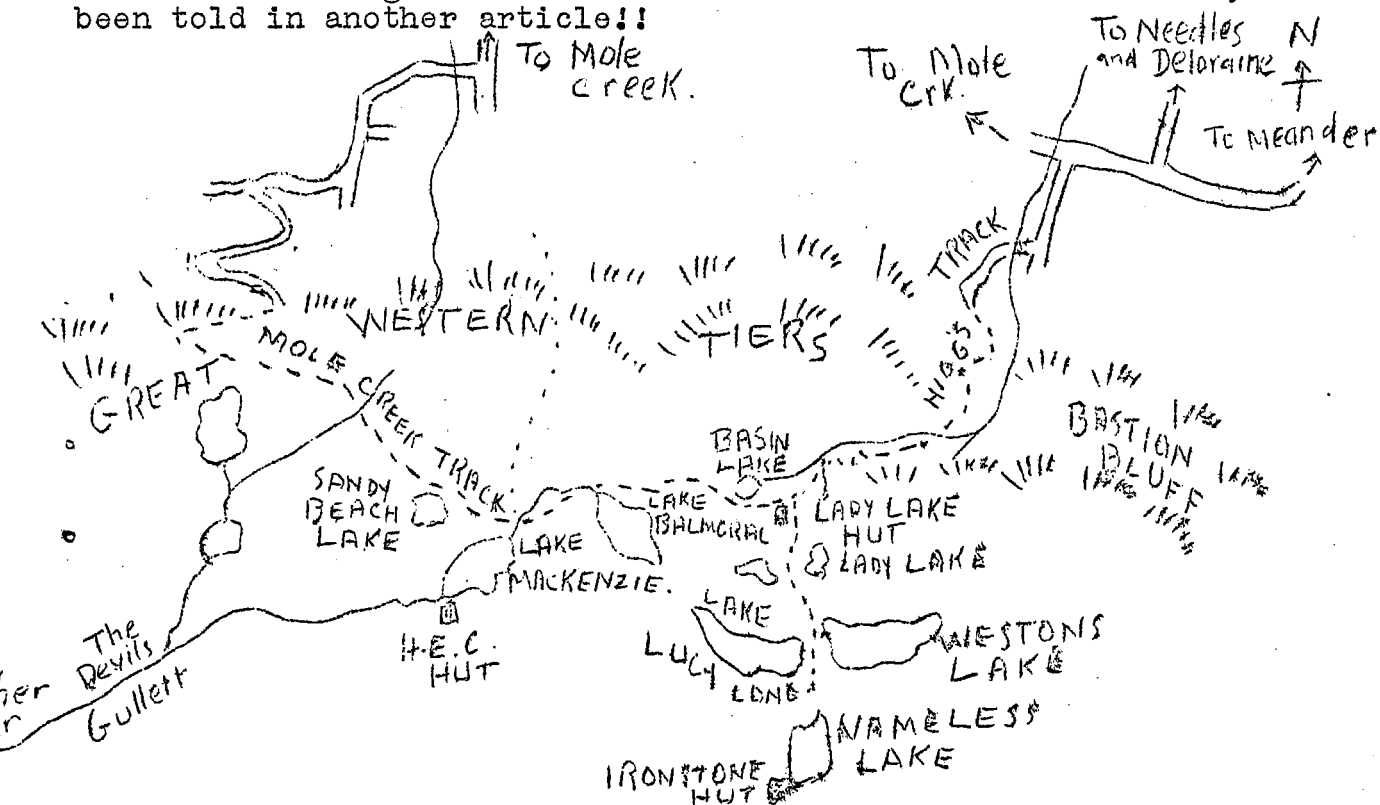
A mile west of the P.O. a tree lined timber road turns south and continues up a gentle grade to a bridge over Dale Brook, an ideal spot for a late lunch. The climb begins in earnest now and ascends about 2,700 ft. in 4 miles. Not far above Dale Brook is a deserted timber mill where there is one hut which would still offer shelter in very bad weather. Near the mill a small cairn indicates the correct route upwards. The track was very wet and sloppy, but the lovely rain forest, tree ferns, waratahs and other flowers compensated for wet feet. Near the top, wind, rain and mist were added to a very stoney path about as steep as the top of Perry's Lookdown following up the side of a rushing stream. We were almost airborne at the top where the country suddenly became marshy, and were delighted to find, only a couple of hundred yards from the brink, the Lady Lake Hut. This structure was apparently intact in 1948, but, as warned by the Cunninghams, we found one room ruined, the destruction being attributed to vandals. The wind blew and the rain poured down with Tasmanian enthusiasm so we made the most of the shelter available in the one room remaining, and were thankful. I'm sure conditions were close to snow that night, with thunder effects added.

Next morning was cold, wet and miserable, so when chores had been done we played Scrabble with a special lightweight set of Holdsworth design. By lunchtime the weather had improved to winter conditions at Katoomba and there was no rain. After a hurried meal we sallied forth to explore. The northern end of Bastion Bluff was most imposing to the east, and a short climb up the snow-poled track southward from the hut led to a summit for the first view of Lady Lake and Little Pine Lake. It was now dull, clear and icy - the countryside being almost a replica of parts of the Scottish Highlands. Our feet were already wet and it was too cold to stand about, so we continued south to Weston's Lake and Lake Lucy Long where we saw empty tins which had apparently been parachuted full of food from a plane to a party of walkers some time previously. It was a short distance south into the next saddle to view Nameless Lake with a hut at its southern end, but we heard that it is not very good. There is an obvious route south from Nameless Lake leading towards the Walls of Jerusalem but time prevented further exploration. A quick trip back to the hut rewarded us with a splendid view from the edge of the Tiers over Northern Tasmania - and almost from our front door step.

In the morning it was fine and clear with occasional sleet showers and a south-west wind - good for walking but not much else. Setting off in a westerly direction from the hut, we followed an odd snow pole or two and a few cairns to Basin Lake where the track petered out. The saddle over to Lake Balmoral is easy to locate - in clear weather. Looking back after passing Balmoral, the rock formation which forms the lake is most interesting. Continuing generally westward, Lake Mackenzie is next with the Hydro Electricity Commission's hut nestling amongst the trees on the far bank. We

passed on over a low ridge covered with yellow flowers to Sandy Beach Lake, living up to its name. Evidence here of campers, a burnt-out hut right on the lake shore and enormous mosquitoes. Mole Creek folk say there is excellent fishing in these waters, and they seem to visit the area frequently. The lakes are all between 3,500 and 3,800 ft. above sea level, and most of them are connected by a stream which flows into the Fisher River, then through the gorge of the Devil's Gullett into the Mersey River. A route, well marked by poles, starts from the northern shore of Sandy Beach Lake and continues in a generally north-westerly direction to the gap whence a good track descends to Mole Creek. Crossing the plains towards the gap, Barn Bluff, Cradle Mountain, Mt. Pelion West and several other peaks, all carrying snow-drifts, came into view about 25 miles to the south-west. We hoped to see and explore these mountains about 10 days later, but I'm afraid the distant view was the only one we were to get.

After lunching where there was an excellent view of the principal mountains of the Cradle Mt. area, the wind blowing off snow urged us on to the gap and the Mole Creek Track where a lovely panorama opened up dominated by Mt. Claude and Mt. Roland to the north-west, the Mersey Valley and Gog Mt. to the north, and the mountains beyond Launceston to the north-east and east. The Mole Creek Track is steep in parts, but a very pleasant descent even if long. Soon after starting we crossed a scree slope of enormous boulders, fortunately at its narrowest part. The forest has been impressive, but timber-getters have made inroads into the best stands of trees. Arriving at the bottom in the evening we surprised a family of rabbits having their supper - apparently no myxamatoxis here. Two young men in a utility offered transport to Mole Creek and kindly took us right to Sassafra Creek, 3 miles west of Mole Creek, to a good camping ground where we slept under threatening skies. The skies did not threaten in vain, as has been told in another article!!



THERE AND BACK BY 'PUTTMOBILE'

- Dot Barr.

Jan.27-28-29-30, Sassafrass-Braidwood Road-Endrick River and Return. Leader Geof Wagg. That's what the programme said, and that is what it was. But the programme didn't say by 'Puttmobile'. (No reflections on Putt's handiwork, of course, but the bony framework of that 'mobile' sure does wear grooves into one on a 150 mile trip!) But, groans aside, it took us there and back, and it was fun.

Friday night we met at Colin Putt's place and our number for the trip was, at that stage, five: Colin Putt, Brian Milne, Neil Monteith, George Grey and self. What, No leader! Jane gave us tea ("Thanks for the meal, Jane"), and the idea was to sleep first before setting out, so by 10.30 p.m. the Putt's kitchen and dining room was draped with slumbering bods. We were rudely awakened at 12.30 a.m. by Geof Wagg, and Tina and Don Matthews, who had arrived during the night and bedded, or rather bagged down in the hall. By 1 a.m. we were all packed into the 'Puttmobile' and bound for the Endrick River via the South Coast Road. We were now eight. The Dalai Lama, Snow and Stitt were to meet us at Endrick River on Saturday night after their aqua-lunging detour.

We arrived at Tomarong just after daybreak and turned off on to the rough dirt Braidwood road. At Sassafrass we saw a few houses, a few sheep, and rain on the distant coastline. Next stop was breakfast at Tianjara Creek. After this and looking at the Falls, we were off again for the Endrick. Not far to go now. But what is this on the road? It can't be, but it is! Yes, Pat and Ian Wood waiting to welcome and join us. Now we were ten.

Arrival, and after much 'rubbering' around, parking of vehicles, etc., in the rain, we walked down to the river to the decided camping spot and had lunch. The weather cleared in the afternoon and we made our way down, following the river, to the falls. Here much scrambling around took place, and it was decided not to climb down the side of the falls, not without a rope anyway. The view from the top of the ridge was very impressive, looking down almost vertical rocky hill-sides, a drop of about 200 odd feet to the river twisting and turning and finally hiding behind the farther ridge to flow seven miles or so south to join the Shoalhaven. It was rather surprising to see this rocky river valley when the surrounding area was sheep country of green rolling hills dotted here and there with homesteads. Some time, and scrambling later, still on the ridge but below the falls, a few of the more energetic types took to climbing down a rocky and crumbling spur, and later declared they went right down to the river. We took their word for this, and after looking at the scenery for a while we wandered back to camp. Here there was no sign of the Dalai Lama and 'crew' as scheduled. "Maybe they are having car trouble," suggested someone. (No reflection on the Dalai Lama's Ford Prefect, of course!) After tea as things were damp and everybody rather tired (no sleep the night before), it was bed first stop, and, so spoke the leader, "Early start in the morning. Up river this time and we'll take the rope."

Next morning, full of beans and breakfast, we were off to an early start - well, 9 o'clock anyway! Heading up river and about a mile from camp someone discovered we were minus one. "Where's George?" We waited and George finally appeared over the hill and accused one and all of leaving him behind. Anyway we'd had a rest and were ten once more. Along the ridge well back and up from the river we walked until we came out on the hillside above a few houses in the vicinity of Narriga and what appeared to be a small charcoal burning works on the river bank. Beyond this, across the river, loomed a rocky bluff which promised any amount of rock climbing. "That looks quite good," said our leader. "Let's go." Away we went down the hill to the accompaniment of a rather technical conversation on charcoal burning. Along a rough road which twisted and turned past the 'charcoal burner's camp' and down across the river. Actually the river crossed the road, at a depth of about one foot. Over we went, one by one, but the leader was in the rear, unfortunately for him. "What are you doing over there Geof?" "Now we've got you!" "Come on Geof, come across this way, you won't get wet!" All this urging from Putt and others while the victim decided on the best course of action, which was in vain, of course! Much splashing from each side, then, "Look out, here I come!" cried Geof and charged. Crash! Who put that rock in the river anyway? Oh yes, the river was wet - so was Geof - so was the rope. Much laughter from everyone, and as a result Geof distributed some wet bear hugs.

Off again along the track, with lunch and rock climbing ahead. But no! It was to be rock climbing and lunch, instead. A single rocky outcrop about the size of a house offered some experimental climbing for a while, and at this stage some chaps were sighted coming along the track, out for a stroll with their .303's. "We'd better let them know we are here or they'll think we are kangaroos."

From the owners of the .303's - "You crowd rock climbing? You're keen! It's too blooming energetic." "No, we haven't seen any kangaroos yet." "Oh, the outfit by the river? That's a small eucalyptus distillery. Jack here runs it." Well, so much for our charcoal burning talk. Having passed the time of day, our acquaintances continued on their way. Our stomachs thought the time of day was lunch time, but "No," said Geof, "We will climb on to the head of the bluff and have lunch up there." They say revenge is sweet!

Lunch was eaten on top of the bluff gazing at the scene spread below us: to the north, the hills we had walked across from our camp site, with the valley and trees marking the river's course; to the south, the distant Castle country, heavily timbered, green and inviting. But the activity of the moment was rock climbing, and armed with the rope we walked to the other end of the rocky outcrop in search of possible practice ground. This was found, in the form of a rock shelf with a steeply sloping side, sheltered from wind and possible exposure by an opposite cliff face which all but joined the bottom of the rock shelf, and left only a chimney dropping down to the valley. Everyone had some practice with and without a rope at this spot, and then we moved on to where a few of the intrepid were practising their chimneying techniques. Too quickly the afternoon passed and we were soon headed back to camp. Who crossed the river

first, you ask? Geof Wagg was first with Colin Putt running a close second. No mishaps en route!

Waiting at camp for our return was the Dalai Lama and crew, without any fish! They had left the coast later than they intended, but the car did have something to do with it. Fancy loading a poor little Ford "Prefect" with walking gear and aqua lungs too!

Tea, campfire, and then bed, ended a day which had been sunny for a change.

Next morning the rain greeted us again, and after breakfast we headed once more for the falls with the object of viewing them from below. A more or less easy way was found to descend, some three or five hundred yards below the falls, and we slid and slithered over rock, grass and bushes to the bottom. Across the river and back over great boulders towards the pool at the base of the falls we scrambled until we had found a suitable view point. Under a canopy of rain we surveyed the falls, but the prevailing weather and the grey tone of the pool and surrounding rock gave the spot a rather sinister character. By general agreement we did not linger long and were soon clambering up the steep grassy slope behind us, the opposite ridge to the one we had descended. Along the top of the ridge for a while, and then on to the old road. Eventually we found the Puttmobile hiding in the bush where Colin had parked it. All aboard and back to camp was the general idea. Once more the weather had cleared and we were able to eat lunch in the sunshine.

Lunch dispensed with, packing operations commenced, and soon after we saw Pat and Woody on their way to Canberra. By 3 p.m. the Puttmobile was loaded with us plus the aqua lungs, and with the Ford Prefect in the lead we were on the road home. But only just in time, the drought had broken - again.

We rattled and bumped along the dirt road, made worse by the rain, to Tomarong, and at last on to the bitumen. The traffic was not too heavy and we literally sailed along, to musical accompaniment supplied by certain of our party. "People will think we are a band of gypsies in this," from the depths of the back stalls. "Anyways, it's taken us there and back, that's the main thing," - and everyone agreed.

We all met at Nowra, where we had tea, and then it was on again via Mount Mousley and Sydney ahead.

A letter from Joe Turner asks why, if the price of the magazine was increased to 9d. so that those who enjoy it pay for it, a similar procedure wasn't adopted to make those who enjoyed the Christmas Party pay for the loss of £5/16/-, instead of the Club as a whole footing the bill.

Well, Joe, the answer seems to be that this is the first time the Christmas Party has shown a loss, and it could be said to be offset by last year's profit, and a loss is not likely to occur again. And imagine the difficulty of collecting another shilling each now!

G O S S I P

Just to prove that Sunday walks are popular, a party of 22 turned out on David Ingram's National Park walk on Sunday 25th March. It was David's last official appearance before sailing for England in the "Southern Cross" on April 16th. He has promised to be back in time for our Christmas party.

Old hands, Jean and Ernie Austin have arrived in London ex the "Iberia", and are looking forward to seeing Doris Alden who has already been there a couple of years. They hope to return in time for the Olympic Games. Both Ernie and Jean represented Australia at the 1924 Olympic Games in Paris, Ernie naturally in the walking event and Jean in aquatics.

REUNION HAZARDS:

We hear that Jane Putt kept a very vigilant eye on the two little Putts, especially when Bill Henley was around, as rumour had it he was keen to get all aspiring decathlon candidates shooting a couple of putts. But it's all right, Jane; they were only going to putt a couple of shots.

AT OUR OWN 21st ANNUAL REUNION.

- D.B.

Floods and consequent rising rivers cut us off at the last moment from our planned venue at Wood's Creek, but by a miracle of last minute organising everybody was informed of the change of spot to Long Angle Gully, and 130 members plus children turned up, and 3 visitors. No one went astray.

A great number of willing axemen were to be observed this season, under the able supervision of Bill Henley, and although the fire didn't take off at the first match, due to the sodden timber, a bit of outside aid did the trick in the shape of petrol.

The rain held off and allowed the campfire events, particularly the Opera "The Golden Screw", and the initiation and other entertainments to take place without the audience getting wet, although some of them would not have minded a swim after the initiates had finished running amuck in their mud pool. A bit of after-the-event questioning revealed the fact, surprising though it may seem, that the initiates actually enjoyed their ordeal.

Brian Harvey was inducted as this year's President in the usual solemn fashion, and the supper left nothing to be desired.

There was plenty of chatting the next day, and a bit of swimming when the all-nighters eventually crawled out of their sleeping bags. The Henley field events were most popular, especially the hurling of the javelin, and after lunch folk began moving off in small parties having enjoyed their week-end to the full.



PADDY MADE

Meet the new sleeping bag -

"THE KIANDRA"

With the summer behind us, sleeping bags assume a new importance, and Paddy is pleased to announce that a new pattern of sleeping bag has been devised with a hood, incorporating the advantages of the ordinary bag without a hood with the chill-defying comfort of a hooded one.

The "Kiandra" bag can be left wide open at the top to allow air circulation on warm nights, yet when Jack Frost extends his icy fingers he can easily be thwarted by pulling the cord which converts the pillow into a snug hood.

Varying price range announced next month.

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