

## THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to the Sydney  
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### CONTENTS

Page

At our June Meeting	1
Hattswell's Taxi & Tourist Service (Advt.)	3
Colong Caves Capers - Dot Barr	3
The Sanitarium Health Food Shop (Advt.)	5
Siedlecky's Taxi & Tourist Service (Advt.)	7
Federation Report, June - Allen A. Strom	8
Leica Photo Service (Advt.)	9
Walks Programme Report for May	10
Some Notes for Rock Climbers	11
The Bushwalkers' "Code of Ethics" - Brian G. Harvey	12
Easter at the Warrumbungles - Dot Butler	14
The Worst Journey in the World - Geof Wagg	21
Gossip	25
"What's doing at Paddy's" (Paddy's Advt.)	26

### AT OUR MONTHLY MEETING - JUNE

- A.G. Colley

The meeting started at 8.23 p.m. with the President in the chair and about 47 members present.

It opened with a welcome to Ron Knightley, who has been readmitted to active membership after being away in New Zealand, the Antarctic, South Australia and other places for six years.

After the reading of the minutes containing the motion which declares shirts to be non-essentials, the President said his attention had been drawn to a clause in the Federation Code of Ethics, to which we originally subscribed. (You will read more about this in another article in this issue, Ed.) The clause stated that walkers were not to appear scantily dressed in public.

Next the meeting got down to a serious discussion on the falling off of walking in N.S.W., as described in Paddy Pallin's report to

2.

Federation. Tom Moppett moved that our delegates to Federation suggest that, in place of the normal type of Federation Annual, we investigate the publication of a booklet describing easy walks and giving general information about walking and the bush, and that the S.B.W. undertake this work. Allan Hardie thought that bushwalking clubs were too exclusive. Many walkers were "burnt off" early in their walking careers. Some got into clubs by dint of perseverance and then dropped out. We should make entrance easy - like the Youth Hostels Association, and we could also imitate the sociability of the Hostels movement. Jim Hooper asked whether bushwalking was dropping off in other states, and finding it wasn't suggested it would be better to donate funds to a "so-called Sales Campaign." Grace Aird, Membership Secretary, said that members generally did not come from publicity - only one member had come in through the article on bushwalking in the "Women's Weekly." Most come in through personal contact with members. An amendment to the effect that we offer to "co-operate in" the production of a booklet, rather than undertake it, was defeated. Alan Strom said the amendment would make it more difficult for the delegates to have the scheme adopted. The motion was carried.

By this time our newest member, Garth Coulter, had arrived and was welcomed by the President.

Next we had a new report - the Walks Secretary's monthly report, which was listened to with interest and appears on another page.

After this Frank Rigby moved that we appoint a panel of four to look into the question of publicity for bushwalking. He was impressed by the success of an amateur society which he knew, which had approached the A.B.C. and was not only allotted time, but paid for it at the rate of a guinea a minute. He thought a lot of people would like to go bushwalking but didn't know where to go to join a club. The committee should not work for the S.B.W. only, but for membership of all clubs. Jim Hooper thought the S.B.W. alone couldn't accomplish the necessary publicity. It would involve cash and should be a Federation matter. Frank Rigby, Grace Aird, Jim Hooper and Tom Moppett were appointed to the Committee.

Alex Colley thought that if we had a good Sunday walks programme it would encourage new members, and moved that volunteers be called for to lead walks - if necessary over routes suggested by the Walks Secretary. Nine members volunteered, including the President who offered to lead two Sunday walks when no more than nine people volunteered.

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#### A THOUGHT ON THE FIRST DAY OF JULY

Oh to be out walking  
Now July is here -  
And the same goes for all the other three hundred and sixty four days  
And the odd day every Leap Year.

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-D.B.

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WE WILL BE PLEASED TO QUOTE OTHER TRIPS OR SPECIAL PARTIES  
ON APPLICATION

COLONG CAVING CAPERS

(Not the Stitt variety of capers)

- Dot Barr.

With work forgotten, Friday night, Heather, Snow, myself and Rudolph, a new prospective, piled into Heather's Renault and headed for Camden where we were to meet Stan Madden and his Holden passengers Jack Perry, Brian Anderson and Ern Munz. At Camden we were greeted by "Yak, Yak, Yak" across the main street and knew that the rest of the party had already arrived. The general idea was 'chunder and choof' - so after consuming hot hamburgers and cold pies we eventually took the road to Burragorang Valley.

Apart from a few creek crossings the going wasn't too bad. Stan declared the road a highway compared with the condition it had been in at Easter. It was late, cold and pitch dark when we arrived at Yerranderie, and the only life in the place was the shindy made by the 'Lord Mayor's' dogs. The cars were parked by the side of the road and we slept under the stars in a sheltered spot not far from the shaft of the old silver mine. Next morning, before the neighbours were up, we collected all our gear required and walked down to the creek for breakfast.

4.

The leader, Peter Stitt, had been unable to come and Snow Brown was taking his place. The morning was beautiful and the track was good - that is, when we were on it. At one stage we went ploughing up a ridge, even though it was agreed we were going the wrong way and should have kept to the creek. What odds! These little detours make a trip amusing. However, from then on we did keep to the creek and eventually reached Colong Swamp through which we waded. We passed through Tonali Gap and then came up to the saddle where we had refreshments and viewed the view.

The track was too clear now, made so by someone who had recently blazed the trees every six feet - up and down gullies, along the side and top of the ridge we walked and then, for no known reason (except that some of the party had definite intentions of going caving, even though we were headed for the Kowmung River), we stopped at the turn off down to Colong Caves. It was a case of do we go on or do we go down to the Caves to have a look? "Well, now that we're so near we might as well go down and have lunch," someone suggested. "All in favour? - Right!" Down we went, right down to the creek. Lunch was eaten - then a snap decision had to be made as time was flying: the Kowmung or caving? That was the question. This was the result:-

"The Kowmung would be a good trip, but we'll have to bash to make it."

"Not all of us have seen the caves; why not go caving?"

"This is an official trip; we'd better do what's on the programme"

"It's not an official trip; the leader (Peter Stitt) isn't here so we don't have to go to the Kowmung."

"Who wants to go to the Kowmung?"

At this stage someone remembered that Rudolph's foot had been troubling him. Here was a wonderful excuse to whate-ant the party!!

"Rudolph won't be able to get to the Kowmung!"

"We'd better stay here and go caving then."

"Agreed?" "Agreed!"

"Fancy being white-anted by a prospective!!" (Much laughter)

After tents had been erected and gear unpacked we were ready to go caving, complete with torches and batteries. The caves' entrances were about 100 yards downstream from our camp. Standing below this entrance and looking up from the creek we could see two tall red cedar trees framed by a huge rocky cave whose entrance appeared to be choked with great boulders. We reached this point, and after trying several false leads we found a good entrance higher up on the hillside. Conditions were reasonable as the caves were mainly dry and the four squeeze holes we went through were not too small for an Admiral.

Some of the caves were rather large and a few of them contained the usual live limestone formations; the rest housed mostly dead rock, dirt, and live bats, but it was interesting trying out all the different leads and following the string and arrows!! After a while we picked on the main chain of caves and walked and crawled and wriggled through, gradually dropping lower and lower until, after about an hour and a half, we decided we were probably level with the

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creek as the caves floor was covered with water. Suddenly Brian shouted, "Oh, we're out again," and we emerged into the daylight about five feet above the creek.

We were sitting around the fire after tea when lights started bobbing down the track and six chaps appeared out of the night. They told us they had left their cars at Colong and walked out in the dark. They intended to go into the caves after tea that night and head for home after breakfast next morning. We invited them to cook on our fire as it was then about 9 o'clock, and while doing this they told us they were mainly freelance walkers and rather interested in caving.

Next morning was clear and cold. After eating we walked around to where the other bods were camped to hear about their night's caving. They had with them a map of the caves drawn by Myles Dunphy and from this they pointed out the routes they had followed during their  $3\frac{1}{2}$  hours underground. Obviously we had not seen all of the caves and we decided it would be worth going in again that morning if we had time. We left the bods to depart in peace and rushed back to camp to decide what we would do. We could afford an hour for caving, so we collected our torches, etc., and the Admiral climbed into his japara trousers. This was when we decided to have a joke at his expense. With a sly wink at the urgers Snow said, "I don't think we'd better go caving; we haven't really got time."

"Oh, make up your mind," growled the victim.

"We won't go, okay?" Everyone agreed. Brian commenced to strip off his japara trousers down to his shorts again. He was just dragging the trousers off over his hobnailed boots (rather a hard job)

6.

when someone said, "Come on, let's go caving; we've got plenty of time."

"Yes, let's go," added another.

It was really something to see the expression on the Admiral's face as he pulled his trousers on again. "Now stop mucking around; I'm not going to change these !x!x things again." (Famous last words).

Another snap decision was made, and once more it was decided not to go caving - and once more the Admiral began to change his japara trousers. By this time he was at screaming point;

"Are you sods !x!x?x! going caving or not?"

Naturally enough we were in fits of laughter, but managed to assure Brian we were definitely going caving, no kidding!

We spent another two hours underground, and explored caves leading off the main system. Then...Brian found a beaut squeeze hole leading off a cave we were in, and told Snow to crawl in from what appeared to be the other end and shine his torch.

From Brian: "Can you see my torch?"

"No; can you see mine?"

"No!"

"Then we must be in different squeeze holes!" bellowed Brian. (Elementary, my dear Anderson.)

Finally we left the caves, and before hitting the track plunged into the creek for a swim - never let it be said 'for a wash' - to dissolve the inground, underground mud - or rather, Heather and I plunged into the creek; the others jibbed the issue. Lunch was eaten near the top of a waterfall, with Kanangra Walls and surrounds in the blue distance for scenery. On the track again. Back to the saddle with Big Rick to the right.

"Who's going to climb Big Rick?" asked the Leader.

"Everyone?" "Let's go."

Big Rick ahead! Leaving our packs at the saddle we raced up the ridge. At the top a rock face all the way around momentarily stopped us. "A bit of a climb up here and we should have a wonderful view." (Poor misguided fools.) Up the rock face we went, some of us minus our boots, but we were foiled again; the rock face was only a sham and the top of Big Rick was still above us. We plodded on, but the top when reached was flat and covered in trees which entirely blocked the view.

"We could see more back where we started from."

Back again, barefooted, over grass covered in thistles and sharp pointed rocks.....Enough! This episode is better not mentioned!!! Oh, the indignity of it! Oh, the agony of it!

Ah, the rock ledge at last - luxury to walk on - and below

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and beyond our sought-after view - the Kowmung River weaving a path through the blue, blue mountains, a map at our feet.

Colong Swamp and the creek passed over our boots and the track and then the road passed under them, before we finally choofed into Yerranderie at sunset. Packs were downed and repairs to a certain vehicle were necessary, which included lessons on cleaning spark plugs, punctuated by cups of tea consumed around a blackfellow's fire. Eventually we pulled out of Yerranderie under cover of darkness, leaving the inhabitants to wonder who the unseen travellers were on a certain fine week-end in May.

GOSSIP:

Merl Watman is going off again to England, and old-hand David Darwin Dandy Stead is already there.

We hear that Hannah Shibuya, now married and living in Adelaide, has two children.

### FEDERATION REPORT, JUNE.

The June Meeting of the Federation was attended by 25 delegates and 4 visitors - a record number by recent standards.

The adjourned discussion on the motion "that Annual REUNIONS of FEDERATION should be discontinued" was carried forward. Speakers in favour pointed out that only adverse publicity could arise from the standards being set by some recent Reunions, whilst those opposed to the motion thought that the intrinsic value of Reunions should be brought to the top by better Federation management. The motion was lost, this bringing forward from the President a comment that all clubs voting against discontinuance must support all efforts to prevent misbehaviour of all kinds. It was thereupon agreed that the Camp Committee should, on the actual days of the Reunion, consist of representatives of all Clubs present, and that it should receive direction from Council as to measures to be taken to ensure satisfactory behaviour at the Reunion.

GOOD NEIGHBOUR COUNCIL: The secretary explained that this Council aimed to help a number of migrants (largely British) to fit in with the Australian way of life. He appealed to all Clubs to assist this work by offering leaders for trips with adults and children, and speakers on nature lore and Australian out doors. Opportunities existed for excellent work to be done in the field of Nature Preservation. Council also agreed that Federation should affiliate with the Good Neighbour Council.

DECLINE IN WALKING CLUB MEMBERSHIP: A sub-committee was appointed to work out ways and means to circumvent this decline. It is made up as follows:-

Messrs. F.A. Pallin (Convenor), S.A. Cottier (C.M.W.)  
T. Moppett (S.B.W.), R. North (S.U.B.W.), L. Richards (W.E.A. Ramblers)  
N. Allen (Kameruka), A.A. Strom (S.B.W. and Caloola).

It seems obvious that there is generally a much wider and deeper interest in the out of doors to-day than previously, but this interest is not necessarily directed towards bushwalking as most of us have known it. The enquiries of the Committee must therefore be broad and liberal, aimed at directing interest towards a true love of bushlands and a desire to preserve for the future. No matter what the findings of the Committee, the direction of the planned approach to the problem will demand people who are willing to sacrifice time, money and personal pleasures, not only for to-day and to-morrow, but continuously throughout the years. The philosophy of despair - that which says "You are doing no good, give up" - must be regarded as subversive and treated as it merits.

The president congratulated delegates on the excellent attendance and appealed for a similar response to the Annual General Meeting to be held on the third Tuesday in July. Visitors welcomed. Place of Meeting: "Big Sister" Room, Scot Chambers, Hoskins Place, 17th July at 6.30 p.m.

CONSERVATION: The Caloola Club advised that they are preparing a booklet on the National Parks and Faunal Reserves of this State.



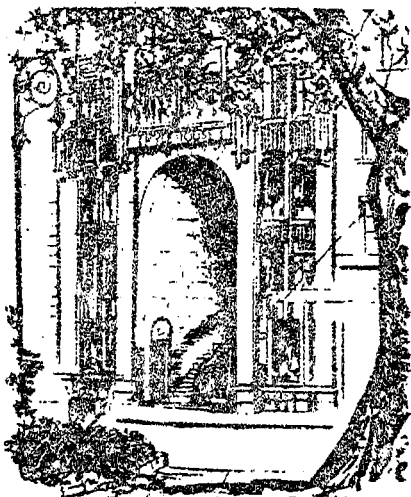
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FEDERATION BALL will take place on 6th October at Hotel Australia. Tickets £1. Book through the Social Secretary. It will not be permitted to bring liquor into the ballroom.

HONORARY TREASURER: The office has remained vacant for some time and may interfere with the presentation of the Financial Statement at the Annual General Meeting. Are there any volunteers, please?

SOCIAL NOTE:

The Flannel Flower Badge has often been to the top of Mount Olympus in Tasmania, but now we are proud to record that it was recently taken to the top of the original Mount Olympus in Greece by our own member, Peter Antoniades. Peter gave a most interesting slide lecture in the clubroom on 20th June when he showed us a host of shots taken in Greece, dating from relics from about 6000 B.C. up to the most modern and streamlined innovations in his native land. A great deal of research was undertaken by Peter to deliver a most interesting discourse of the ancient history, and we hope he will be able to give us another show on the next Social Programme as it was certainly something different and deserving of congratulations.

WALKS PROGRAMME REPORT FOR MAY, 1956.

( This report was compiled from information obtained from the leaders of Official Walks for the period mentioned. To assist the Walks Secretary it is earnestly requested that all leaders hand the Walks Sec. a written report immediately after their trip, giving details of number of members and prospective members, highlights of the trip, and any information of general interest. If trips didn't "go", please advise the reason for the non-start.)

There were nine trips listed for May, and six of these started. 50 walkers, including 8 prospectives attended these trips. However since the same people attended different trips the number of members walking on programmed trips in May was probably nearer 30.

Dave Brown led the first walk in the absence of Peter Stitt who is still nursing a broken leg. Once they had started out the venue was changed and the seven participants went to Yerranderie and did a little caveing up Colong way.

The next two trips could only muster one starter between them and by suitable negotiation the trips were cancelled.

Alex Colley was the leader of the Mt. Solitary - Cedar Crk. trip which he was unable to finish because of GOOD leadership. Six members and two prospectives set out, and on Saturday one of the prospectives was not going very well, so Alex withdrew with the said prospective, leaving the remaining six to complete the trip. The basic principles of safety were observed and no one was left to fend for himself.

Trip 5 to Blue Gum drew no starters. Could it be that members thought they might have to do a bit of fixing on the dam?

Trip 6 led by John Noble drew three members and two prospectives. The three members included Ron Knightly who will be remembered by quite a few. Ron is back in Sydney and had transferred back to active after some gallivanting around. The trip itself was shortened because of lack of time, but an interesting day-walk has been pioneered. If a few more leaders would set up trips from maps alone and then carry them out some really interesting walks could result.

Trip 7 was led by an Associate Member, Garth Coulter, who, incidentally, has completed the requirements for full membership. Thirteen members, two prospectives and the leader set out. Again trouble was encountered and one prospective was left in the care of Taro and Frank Young before the Korowall descent was begun. Garth records that a rope is a necessity to lower packs, etc., on the rock faces of the buttress; following trips please note. Also Garth, only an Associate Member at the writing of this report, went to the trouble to furnish a written report on the trip. Would other leaders (with the exception of Alex Colley and John Noble) please note.

The Wentworth-Falls-Bimlow trip led by John White drew five starters and one prospective. A verbal report on the trip tells us that both the bridges across the lower Cox are unusable, and that due

to the Water Board's ministrations, walkers, for a limited time, can make a trip from Kedumba to MacMahons using only one side of the river with the greatest of ease.

Snow Brown led the last trip on the May programme as listed. Seven starters, including one prospective, completed the jaunt.

### SOME NOTES FOR ROCK-CLIMBERS

Geof Wagg has supplied us with this interesting cutting.

A great contribution to climbing is the nylon rope, the usual size being 7/16th" in thickness.

Until just before the war, no climber would consider risking his life on anything but a 120-foot hunk of manila rope. Nylon rope, which had just come on the market, was regarded with suspicion by Eastern (U.S.A.) climbers, but the Sierra Club decided to try it out.

The method of testing was somewhat unusual. Robinson, Leonard and Brower found themselves a suitable rock, about 30 ft. high, in a Berkley Park. One man would sit down, bracing himself solidly, and pass the rope around his body for a belay - meaning a position from which he could stop the fall of another climber. The second man would tie into the rope and jump off the edge of the rock. As he fell, the rope was allowed to slide, and then gradually tightened until the second man came to a stop not far above ground level.

After 20 tests the manila rope broke, with some discomfort to the second man. The nylon rope, however, was still going strong after 200 practice falls. The test crew grew so proficient that at the end of the experiment the second man could leap eighteen feet into space before he was halted in his flight and then lowered slowly to earth.

The sliding, or dynamic, belay has now virtually supplanted the method originated by the Swiss, which was to hook the rope firmly around a projection of rock. Too often the rope broke.

ALTERATION TO SOCIAL PROGRAMME: The play reading, "Phoenix too Frequent" scheduled for July 18th, starring Malcolm McGregor and Grace Jolly, has had to be cancelled owing to Grace's absence from Sydney. Instead, Malcolm has instituted the following lurk:

### DRESS THE GIRLS AS YOU WOULD SEE THEM DRESSED

Bring along 2 "Heralds" and a packet of pins, and any incidental jewellery you may desire. Select your partners on the spot. Half an hour is allowed for the dressing. Leading coutourier Heathen Dior (half-brother to Christian Dior) will be present to give his opinion on the result.

## THE BUSHWALKERS' CODE OF ETHICS

- Brian G. Harvey.

Back in 1949 the N.S.W. Federation of Bush-walking Clubs, in its wisdom, drew up a Code of Ethics, which, it was considered, if practised by all members of the Federated Clubs, would keep bushwalkers and bushwalking on a higher plane as regards both general practice and behaviour. This Code was not regarded as entirely complete in itself, but rather as a minimum standard to be followed by all who walk, camp or picnic in the bush. Further, that its general adoption would add greatly to the enjoyment of the bush, assist in the preservation of flora and fauna, and, of greater importance to us, would earn the acknowledgement and respect of the general public and the Government Ministers.

Consequent upon the adoption of the Code, the Federation addressed all Federated Clubs, asking that they ratify and acknowledge the Code as their Club standard of bushwalking ethics. Our then Committee naturally, on behalf of the members, adopted the Code as it was entirely in keeping with our Objects and Club practices at that time. However, at the subsequent Annual General Meeting, when all Club By-Laws passed since inception were submitted to the meeting for ratification, the Committee's decision was reversed, and it was decided NOT to adopt the Code. It was held that the Code was merely a re-statement of the S.B.W. normal practice of walking behaviour and that the adoption of the Code was unnecessary.

This decision was, in my opinion, high-handed, smug, and left the door open to danger. In the first place, it was treated with some scorn in the Federation Council and has not been forgotten, as the matter was mentioned at a Council meeting a few months ago. Further, we have been told by outside sources that we are a "smug" club - the attitude adopted in this matter does not tend to disprove that statement. The danger is that our general practice and behaviour is liable to undergo evolution, and what we thought proper in 1949 may not hold good today. At one time it was accepted as good manners to ask permission of Leaders to remove one's shirt, as the time and place may not have been propitious for that action. At a recent Monthly Meeting when members were asked to recognise that custom, a resolution was passed that free rein be given to members in the discretion of removing, or conversely, wearing of shirts. This freedom cuts across the Code of Ethics which exhorts walkers to avoid scant attire in public and so assist to gain the respect of the citizen. This clearly demonstrates that changes are taking place in attitude.

Incoming Prospective Members are handed a copy of "Hints to Prospective Members" to which is appended a copy of the Code of Ethics, and they are told these ethics have been "the standard practice in this Club for over twenty years" ! However, the fact of the matter is that incoming members, and as far as that goes, accepted members, are not bound by any behaviour rules other than a few restrictions contained in our By-Laws. The statement in our "Hints to Prospectives" that the practices therein are OUR practices has NOT been ratified by a general Meeting. As a point of fact, we have no written Accepted Practices as far as our Club is concerned and members can therefore do as they please, subject to the By-Law that

dogs must not be brought on Official Walks and that natural observance of the Law is expected. This places the Club in a very invidious and ludicrous position when we have the effrontery to complain to Federation Council about the behaviour of the members of other walking clubs who, for example, deemed it their pleasure and privilege to kick up their heels in the small hours of the morning at Federation Reunions, or that a party of Wolf Cubs left empty packets of "Minties" on the track and so despoiled the idyllic surroundings of the bush.

It is quite open to question what is the 'Accepted practice' of our Club in anything, for who with any degree of certainty can authoritatively define it? The practice of a member elected, say at the most recent Committee meeting, is more open to question than that of one of our Foundation Members - because we have no established written and ratified Accepted Practices. The Hints and General Information imparted to Prospective Members at Instructional Week-end Camps regarding "Do's and Dont's" are therefore purely unofficial. In applying for membership the Prospective only agrees to abide by the Club Constitution and By-Laws. He, or any full member of our Club, can litter the tracks with papers and orange-peel, leave garbage and tins in the camp-fire-place, chop standing trees, wash in creeks upstream from camp, carve initials on trees or raise Cain whilst in the train - just as he thinks fit. Any nobody has any authority to take him to task, save that a complaint may be lodged with the Committee, which again has no written authority to fall back on as to mode of behaviour, to enable it to reprimand.

The foregoing remarks may have taken things to the extreme, but I challenge anyone to dispute the statements, which are my own opinion and do not reflect that of the Committee.

I hope that some member of good intention will bring the matter forward at the Half-Yearly Meeting and that a suitably framed resolution will be adopted to end our ridiculous position of proclaiming "You do as we say, not as we do!"

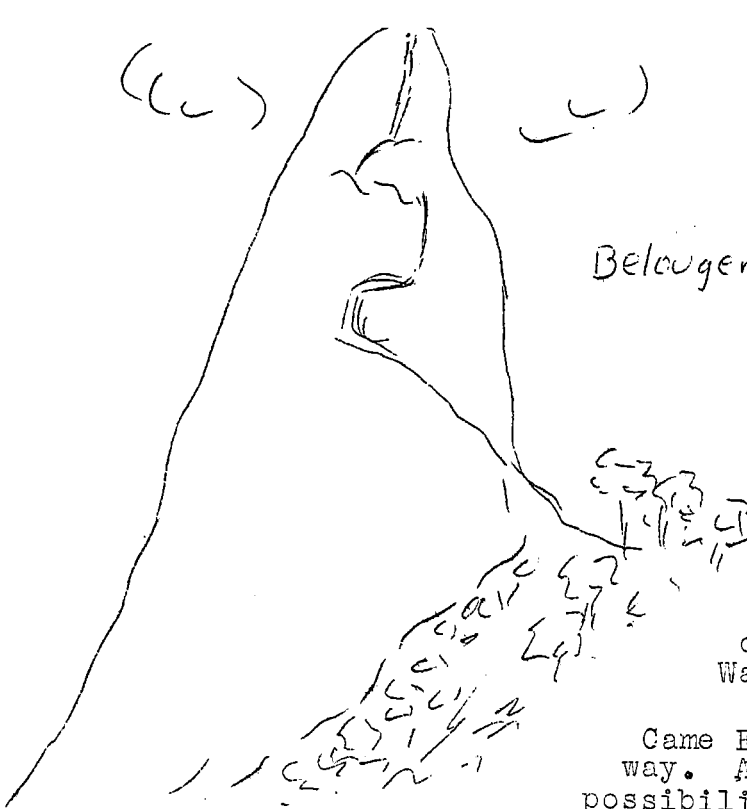
To the non-Club member who may read these lines I would say that we do, as a body, endeavour to set the example in bushwalking behaviour and practice, and that I have felt it necessary to draw the Club's attention to its shortcomings.

---

EDITOR'S EXPLANATION, to save the young members from misinterpreting the above article. To me it appears that the gist of Brian's complaint is not that our rules of behaviour are at fault, but, like the British Constitution, we haven't got them in writing.

---

Why resist temptation -- there'll always be more.



## EASTER AT THE WARRUMBUNGLES

- Dot Butler

It is two years since we camped in a thicket of trees outside the aerodrome at Bankstown waiting for a plane that never turned up. It was the Admiral's scheduled 1954 Easter trip to the Warrumbungles, but the pilot found he couldn't drag his plane out of the mud at Essenden to come and fetch us so we went elsewhere, promising ourselves that we would do our Warrumbungle trip another time.

Came Easter, 1956, and we were on our way. Again we had looked into the possibility of planes for the 350 mile trip, but decided in the end that cars would be more reliable, as well as being a quarter the cost. There were 15 of us and 4 cars, and we left on Easter Thursday night at times varying between 4 and 12 p.m.

Midnight found George's car parked in a windy paddock with George, the Dalai Lama, Snow and myself bedded down under a kurrajong tree among tall thistles and weeds that bent over and whipped our cheeks in the high wind. The boys slept like babes, and somebody snored, and a misty Easter moon circled the kurrajong tree all night.

First light was pale and misty-eyed as we pushed our sleeping-bags into our packs and made our way through the weeds and thistles over a wire fence to the waiting car. There was no water here; we would have breakfast at the first creek we came to.

We had passed the region of eucalypts and had entered into the life of the plains. Flocks of small parrots and galahs were feeding off the bare ground amongst the native pines. As we sped along the flat deserted road we saw a Morris Minor parked by a railway culvert and three figures grouped round a small cooking fire. "That looks like Garth," said Snow, and it was Garth, and with him Brian Watson and his brother Don. We drove in and joined them for breakfast, and as we were eating, over the culvert clattered a train - the one we would have been in had we decided to give the Railways our patronage.

At a quarter to nine we were at Dubbo with Snow hunting for film for his camera, but no chemists' shops were open. The only likely looking place was a paper shop which unfortunately didn't sell film, but the man gave Snow directions to another shop in Macquarry St. We waited patiently while Snow did the rounds of Dubbo at a run, but he failed to find Macquarry St. "You can't miss the place," the newsagent had said, waving vaguely in a general east-south-west

direction, "It's just over there." Snow was disgusted and got into the car and went to sleep, and we moved off minus film. At Gilgandra we poked Snow awake and suggested another film hunt. "No," said a disgruntled voice, "It doesn't actually matter; I haven't got a lense in my camera anyway." This really shook George and the Dalai Lama who demanded to get to the bottom of it. "I plan to borrow Stitt's lense - if ever he gets here," murmured Snow as he sank off to sleep again.

At about 12 o'clock we reached Tooraweenah. The whole place lay sunk in the sleep of death and a fine drizzling rain wept over its grave. A search round for signs of life revealed some at a half-open garage, and we went in and asked directions to Blackman's farm - this being the jumping-off place for the Hurley Base Camp under Belougerie. "Which Blackman?" asked the garage proprietor, and we experienced momentarily a lost sinking feeling. However, at last we were directed towards the farm of Keith Blackman, which looked to be in the right direction, and we said our thanks and got on our way. But we didn't get very far. At the first turn-off was a bridge, and breaking spasmodically on to its approaches was a battered lorry, its tray groaning under the weight of a WHOLE HOUSE! Someone had decided he didn't like the look of the district where he was and was shifting to a new location a bit further up the road. The house was all intact and through the windows we could see the furniture still in place and the washing up on the kitchen table waiting to be done. The owner was the sort of man who, when he decides to move, moves, and no nonsense! We trailed along in its rear and at last, when the road widened a bit, we were able to pass it and be on our way.

Now came a session of opening and shutting gates. George's car was in the lead with Brian's following. At the first gate out leapt the Dalai Lama, threw open the gate for George, then banged it shut before the other car could get through and dashed back to home base. George looked a bit startled at this turn of events but was easily persuaded to drive on. There was a roar from the occupants of the Watson car and Garth leapt out like a cateract down a mountain side, opened the gate again for his car, closed the gate and dashed for his vehicle which was moving off in pursuit of George - all this before the shocked bewildered gaze of a stolid back-country family on their verandah.

It was a neck and neck race to the next gate with us all laying the odds heavily in our own favour. There was a bit of a dry creek bed which held up the Watson babe and again we made it and slammed the gate in front of its nose. The Greymobile passengers screamed their delight and sped on. From then on the pace became fast and furious. Between gates the Dalai Lama hung on to his door handle quivering like a whippet on the leash, George kept his foot on the accelerator and the supressed excitement inside the car nearly blew its roof off.

The Watson baby bounced and whirled along in pursuit, Garth almost falling out the door with eagerness. Whenever they managed to get through with us before the gate was shut they filled the air with cheers and jeers and yells of exultation. The only gate we found open was one with the inscription "Keep this bloody gate shut!!" As we found it open we left it open, but I still think we should have left it bloody shut.

The next bit of excitement was crossing creeks. We had managed a number of these quite successfully but finally it had to happen - George drove into a creek with a sandy bottom, and the car stopped dead in a couple of feet of water. We pushed and we pulled and the car churned up the sand and sputtered water and exhaust fumes from its submerged pipe and sank deeper. Eventually we got it out, on the wrong side, with the aid of a section of wire netting and a cunningly disposed log of wood and decided that that was as far as mechanised transport would take us and now we must walk. Lunch was a slice of cake and a mug of beer from the Watson's bar and we were away. Over three more creek crossings to Blackman's farm. Here we were told that Col Ferguson, Digby and Dot Barr had passed through about half an hour before us, so we hurried on hoping to meet up with them.

Down through an orchard and over lush paddocks where the grass grew waist high and was peppered with blue gentians, and then we followed up the creek for an hour or so. We didn't meet the others, and by 4 o'clock George, who had been there before, brought us to a rocky little area liberally laced with runnels of water, situated in a narrow valley, and said "This is the Hurley Base Camp." It looked the sort of camp you might make half way down Murdering Gulley, but it was undoubtedly "it" as an inscribed bottle top nailed to a tree clearly showed, so we set to and pitched camp. As there was room for only 4 or 5 tents we abdulled our three side by side to take up less room and leave a place for the others when they should arrive. This edifice we christened the Shooting Gallery. The Watsons, who intended going pig shooting after Easter, had two 303 rifles in their end tent, and the tent at the other end housed our seven packs (the targets). All the rest of the bods occupied the space in between, mostly under the roof of Snow's tent as it was proofed with Digby Waterproofing and was supposed not to leak. (Mirthless laughter).

About half an hour after our arrival we heard coo-ees and Col, Digby and Dot appeared from up another creek. They put up a tent and soon preparations for tea were under way. But Garth had a caribiner, and what is tea compared with a caribiner? He took the rope and climbed to an adjacent rock face to try out his new toy. Snow and I went with him as you can eat any time but you don't often get the chance to dance down a rock face on a rope. We had good fun but the others couldn't be induced to get their thoughts above stomach level. At dark we returned and had tea and all went early to bed.

That night it rained, steadily and unhurriedly. The arsenal roof leaked and its occupants spent a good bit of the night excavating drains between their respective bodies to carry off the floodwaters.

There had been mutinous murmurs when I had suggested rising at 6.30, but strange to say they did actually get up early and we were off by 8 o'clock to climb Belougerie, leaving a note for Pete to follow us when he arrived. "No need to take lunch," said George; "We'll be up and back in an hour." However we did take lunch as past experience has showed that returning to base camp for lunch generally means a wasted afternoon.

The whole party came, up a scree slope and round to an obvious cleft up which we climbed. Then we came to the really steep stuff.



We discarded footwear and got out the rope. George, Snow, Garth and myself set<sup>14</sup> while the others decided to watch. There was really not much choice of a route. The ledges were narrow and precarious with not many holds, and a fine rain made the grey lichen cover slippery and not particularly pleasant. Then we came to one very grizzly spot. It was a case of if we don't get up here we don't get up the mountain. It was an exposed corner where the wind roared like a wild thing and tore at the delicately balanced body. There were a couple of toe holds but no hand holds, and it was necessary to stand and lean out into the wind depending on nothing but the taut rope between myself and an inexpressibly messy finish. Garth belayed me faultlessly, and as I inched my life round the corner I thought, "a dependable companion on the other end of the rope is the fine gold of mountaineering, and I was thankful to Garth for being what he is."

Having got our tow-line up to a good belay George and Garth followed, but when they untied themselves off the rope and we tried to throw the end down for Snow, the updraught of wind was so terrific it blew the 120 ft. of rope up to waver in the air as in an Indian rope-climber's trick. We scrambled round to another spot out of the wind and dropped the rope down a chimney, but here it was not in a good position for Snow and reluctantly we decided we would have to leave him behind. It was not an easy decision.

As George, Garth and I proceeded upwards we could see the others had gone over to a hill opposite to get a grandstand view of the proceedings. A long view of the whole face, as seen from opposite, reveals it as completely and utterly impossible, but with our noses only a couple of inches from the damp rock we couldn't get this impression, so continued. Eventually there was a chimney blocked by chockstones, and this was as far as George had got on a previous occasion. A bit of muscle applied to the chockstones loosened them and I tossed them down one by one. They made a most impressive crashing as they went, and later we found one had narrowly missed braining the Dalai Lama who had not gone with the others but was waiting for us down below.

The chimney was practically vertical all the way to the top, but being a chimney it was climable so we all got up it and so to the top at last. Here was the usual cairn, and in it we found Pat Sullivan's name together with a party of Melbourne University Bushwalkers. We tried to pick out our camp but it was hidden in the trees.

Then down we went again to the windy corner. A cold sleet-like wind was biting at our exposed hands making rope work far from cheerful. George and Garth were belayed down. I followed on a double rope which we intended to pull down after us but the perverse thing stuck and no amount of pulling or flicking would dislodge it. I was rather dismayed at the thought of having to go back up to release it but also felt guilty about going down and leaving it. "I should go back for it," said I, not very convincingly, but Co-leader Coulter said "No." (That's what you have a co-leader for - to stop you from doing what you don't want to do.) We finished the descent without the rope and joined the Dalai Lama down below and had lunch,  $4\frac{1}{2}$  hours after having started the climb.

We returned to camp about 3 o'clock to find Pete and the Admiral

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had just arrived and were waiting to have my blood. I had given them a sketch map drawn by someone who had done the trip previously - which, incidentally, they had left in the glove box - but they followed it from memory and it led them on a rough and completely unnecessary detour for a mile or so over the hills in heavy mist which fogged up the Admiral's glasses making him practically blind. What added fuel to the flames of their wrath was the fact that I had not gone on this wild goose chase myself but had cosily and comfortably followed George who knew a quicker way straight up the creek. I tried to plead Not Guilty and told them that anyhow they needed a bit of extra exercise to get them into training for a forthcoming Marathon, but that sort of talk gets you exactly nowhere with Stitt and the Admiral. There were muttered threats of repercussions to take place at the next Reunion, so I was all a-tremble with apprehension.

They told us that Bob Binks and family were camped about one hour back down the creek, so we downed a cup of tea and ran back to greet them. The field spread out like the Grand National as we galloped with long-legged Stitt in the lead, but we arrived all in a bunch at the finishing tape. The Binks were comfortably established and decided to stay where they were as it was now 4 p.m. The next hour was spent instructing Pete and the Admiral on the conditions of their return, should they decide to travel back to Sydney in Bob's car. The gist of it seemed to be: "If it's wet we'll leave after breakfast to-morrow and go back to the car. If it's fine we'll stay here another day. If it's in between we'll stay here till afternoon." Ah, but what does "in between" mean? "Put it this way," said the photographers, "If it's F8 at  $\frac{1}{50}$  you stay. If it's 2.8 at  $\frac{1}{25}$  you go. If it's..."....and they proceeded to argue the conditions of the third clause when the Dalai Lama interrupted; "Put it this way - Rain and thunder, home we chunder. Fine and gay, here we stay." That seemed to cover the situation, so they left it at that.

We left them at 5 and so back to our camp. That night we lit a candle and all twelve of us packed into the Shooting Gallery for talk and fun. George spent a very profitable evening anihilating with a lighted candle the mosquitoes which swarmed into the tent to join the fun. Pete's New Zealand experiences gushed out in a bright and sparkling tide, and with the pick of the Club's wits there in the shape of Digby, the Admiral and the Dalai Lama, backed up by Snow, Garth and the rest of us, screams of mirth issued forth to make the mountains ring, and we felt sorry for Bob and Noel and their little girl all alone down the quiet creek.

At last sleep called. Brian tied a bottle of mosquito lotion by a tape to the roof of the tent for use during the night and we all packed in. Pete and the Admiral had to be housed too, and with six bods now in Snow's tent I knew what the sardine puts up with in its tin. What with somebody snoring in my ear and somebody's elbow gouging out my eye I gave up the unequal struggle and mooched out at midnight to find a better hole. It was raining, which ruled the great outdoors out, so I retired to roost on the wet sloping floor of the pack tent, which was a bit grim, and cursed the mob back yonder for lying so heavily on my ground sheet I couldn't get it out from under them.

After breakfast next morning we moved off early to collect the abandoned rope and reconnoitre Crater Bluff. It wasn't so difficult to climb back up the rope now the wind wasn't blowing a gale. I released it from behind the stone, and double roping over a small tree I sat myself in a bos's's chair and tossed the other end down to Pete and Snow who were going to carry out the lowering operation. As I launched myself into space and looked down between my feet I could see my two stalwarts way down below digging at each other and holding an animated conversation and giving their wholehearted attention to everything except the job of lowering down the dangling body above them. I felt insecure.

"Come on," yelled Peter. "Down you come."

"That's not my business," I shouted back. "You've got to lower me down."

"Swiz!" yelled back Pete, and I supposed that meant he had caught on because the lowering process commenced. As I jerked down the rock face past an overhang, suddenly the rope stopped.

"Keep on coming," yelled Snow and Stitt.

"That's your business," I shouted at them.

They let the rope slack but I still dangled motionless over aeons of space. O Horror! The rope had stuck! I climbed back up it and released it, then launched myself again, but again the rope refused to run freely so I climbed up again to the belay tree, wondering was mountaineering such a sport after all, and sat down to think. But Garth came to the rescue by sending up his caribiner loop of rope. I looped this round the tree, hoping Garth's splice was as secure as it looked, passed the climbing rope through and gave the signal to Snow and Stitt to lower away - and this time it worked. They were blythely viewing the far scenery as I descended. "See that creek down ther Dot," called Pete as I dangled 30 ft. above his head, "That's the one the Admiral and I came up yesterday." (Ho ho. Patience my soul!) I didn't answer, and by the time I arrived safely down at their ledge I had had time to count ten.

Then we came down and rejoined the others and went over to the short face of Crater Bluff and had lunch in sunshine. "you never forget a mountain," I said, but nevertheless I found it difficult to recognise the place I had climbed before. None of the places I tried out looked suitable for the party, so we went down to have a look at the steep face, which was where Dr. Dark and I had made our virgin climb years before. Garth had cut his foot during the barefoot doings on Belougerie the previous day and was hors de combat, so George, Snow and I had a short climb on the ledges and decided to come back again tomorrow. Then we all went down to the creek and followed up the ridge to the base of Belougerie and so back to camp. Here we had to give our attention to food troubles. The humidity had wrought havoc with our meat. The Dalai Lama had already cooked up all his on the first night, which left him with 6 lbs. of potatoes, 2 pkts. of cornflakes and a tin of sardines for the ensuing 4 days, and I had to jettison some suasages and the remains of a cooked sirloin. However we all cashed in on the Watsons' surplus and nobody went hungry.

Monday saw us early astir on a nice fine day and off we all set direct to Crater Bluff. Garth was nursing his injured foot, so it

was George Snow and I for it. We left the others down in the creek and made up to our ledges in sunshine. They were the same hair-raising ledges as of yore, and as I wedged myself into the remembered crack on the sheer face I could see myself, a raw teenager so long and long ago, quivering with excitement, my breath trembling with eagerness as, with my experienced companion, I made my first virgin climb. I supposed that was how Snow was feeling, and probably George too. It was a pity we weren't able to finish, but we had come to a very tricky lichen-covered bulge which defied the combined tactics of George and myself, and now the rain started and made the situation hopeless. We realised it would be suicide to try to go on over the slippery lichen, but hanging over us like a threat was also the knowledge that we had to get back again the way we had come.

We crouched under a slight overhand while it rained and occupied our minds with dark thoughts of what lay in store for us. If only the sun would come out for a while and dry out the ledges! We waited and waited. Far down below we saw a pterodactyl squatting on a limb with its rain-drenched grey leathery wings half-furled, but it turned out to be Garth in his parka up a tree for a better view. We tried to carry on a shouted conversation with the tiny figures down in the trees, but with not much success. A brief flash of sunshine didn't do much towards drying out the rock face, and the sight of another gloomy rain cloud sweeping across decided us to make the attempt. So Snow yelled them a final message, "Rain and thunder, off we chunder!" and we braced up our minds and our muscles for the ordeal ahead. Actually it was not so bad as our apprehension had painted it, and at last we were back to safety. We went down and joined the others and had lunch on the creek, and Snow and George that day gained a valuable bit of knowledge that will stand them in good stead when they go to New Zealand next Christmas, namely that bad weather can kill your chances of a successful climb.

As we headed back to camp up the ridge Snow and I started a wonderful argument which lasted most of the way over the top. Someone asked us had we noticed something further back, but no, all we had seen was a red haze before our eyes as we argued, if I remember rightly, what a saddle was and whether you could expect to find a creek flowing through it or over it or what not. Gee, life would be quiet without vocal lovable Snow. He actually likes to argue with unreasonable females. The Dalai Lama warned him this was a very dangerous admission to make.

Garth, limping along on his injured foot, lugged the rope over the countryside, and as we couldn't get it from him by force we had finally to resort to subterfuge. We went via the long side of the Breadknife and tried to pick out the way Russ Kippax and the English rock-climber had taken to the summit. And so back to camp and tea. Our last night. As it wasn't actually raining Garth and the Dalai Lama and I slept out by the expiring fire, but it was wet and muddy and moonless and much of the magic was missing.

Tuesday, and it's time to pack up and set off for home. The proposed early start got later and later. We didn't want to go. When we did finally get moving we made good pace and got from the camp to the cars in  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours. And here the Watsons discovered they still had a number of bottles of beer left, so out came the mugs.

Through an alcoholic rainbow I viewed the day and its inhabitants. It was a day such as you only get on the plains, dry and sunny and limitless - and I had never seen people who looked so beautiful. There was Brian, dark and compact and finely formed, deftly knocking the tops off bottles, assisted by tall quiet brother Don with the deep dreamy eyes and soft smile of a poet. On the gnarled roots of a river oak sat Snow, golden haired and golden skinned, looking like a section of sun-dappled bushland that had impulsively decided to turn human. And Garth, dark as the coming of sleep and as soft, with his lovely lilting voice music to the ear. And George - quiet steady George who had met me coming back from my separate swim and said, "I'll just go on ahead if you like and see that the Dalai Lama's got his pants on." "If you like," said I, thinking that a pair of shorts would probably spoil the bronze statuesque line, but he'd better get them on just the same. George said, "O.K. We got his pants on him," so we all foregathered down at the river. The moments flowed in a silver stream through Time's careless fingers as we finished off the other three bottles, and I thought, "God, that flesh could grow so beautiful," and I wished Geof and Grace were with us, because they, too, are lovely to look upon. Then there we were, floating down the road to the cars - drifting like woodsmoke through the still dry air - and if we get in to Tooraweenah by 10 o'clock, all right; and if we don't get there till 12, all right; and if we don't get there till 2, all right again. We got there at 2.

And so the long journey home under the sky heaped with clouds, with periods of bright sunshine and sudden rain squalls, and at 11 p.m. we reached Blacktown and the Wagg's. A cup of tea and a chat with the family in pyjamas while the boys sorted out their cars, then heigh-ho for home by midnight.

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On reading through this I find it is more about people than mountains, and so it should be; the mountains will always be there to be described another time, but how soon will time take away our friends.

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### THE WORST JOURNEY IN THE WORLD

- Geof Wagg.

I suppose to everyone there comes a moment when they feel that they've hit utter bedrock - that things just couldn't be worse and that any change from here is bound to be for the better. Mo too. It happened one night at Coral Swamp, but that wasn't where it started.

'Twas a week-end last July I think, and we were all set to make a do-or-die attempt on Davie's Canyon. "Morong Creek-Davies Canyon-Katoomba or bust, and who cares if we're a day overdue; it'll be good fun and worth it." Thus quoth Stitt and I agreed with him - up until Friday night, that is. But Friday night, about half an hour before I left work, a job bounced. That is to say, a set of plates involving umpteen thousand baked bean and spaghetti labels was returned by the printer as useless and it seemed to be my fault. The big

post mortem was going to be held on Monday, and it occurred to me that if I didn't turn up on Monday it might be better if I didn't turn up again ever. As you might imagine, I was a bit disconcerted by all this, so when I met the others - Grace, Joan and Don Gower at Central I pitched them a sorry tale and they generously agreed to do the comparatively easy Paralizer trip instead.

All went well until Katoomba when two scruffy individuals entered our hitherto peaceful compartment. Stitt and Garth, each looking like a second-hand clothes stall, had pursued the train all the way from Penrith on Garth's glorious machine, with the object of joining it here. Every time they crept ahead Stitt would get a cramp and roar and hammer on Garth's back until he stopped, and the train would zoom to the front once more. This went on until in the last stretch it was a neck and neck struggle and the bike chain broke, so they threw it in a heap into the Police Station and raced down to catch the train.

The temperature at Morong Creek was icy and it was a long time before our toes were warm even inside superdown. Next morning, however, was quite a different matter; our sleeping bags were warm and snug while the outside air held the sting of frost and it was 8.30 before one of us had a will-power great enough to equalise this equation. Naturally we hadn't realised it was so late and the party rose to the occasion, excepting, of course, Stitt and Garth who always fortify themselves for such emergencies with an extra 15 minutes in the sack. Breakfast disappeared with more haste than digestion and we were on our way. I told you it was cold. Kanangra road supported a fine crop of ice crystals and our frozen water-bucket clumped behind us in rhythm with our stride. While Joan was quietly being sick behind a gum tree (treacherous stuff, Terry's Meal), Grace and I paddled our boots hopefully in a patch of watery sunlight and waited for the three boys to appear along the road.

The area of scrub around Kanangra road is, I find, extremely non-committal and rather challenging, but you'd think I'd learn from experience. I suppose I may yet. Off into this scrub we charged, me leading and uttering my old cry of, "I've been here before!" always forgetting to add that it never seems to make any difference. We headed a small creek and climbed a low hump with me recognising practically every stick and stone, then through the trees we sighted an extremely likely looking ridge. Of course I recognised it immediately. That was the one we climbed last time and we had had to drop down into Thurat Creek and up again, so it was no good going up there. The party looked at the ridge and looked at me and gave me the benefit of the doubt. "The leader is always right," quoth Garth. "We must walk harder!"

After following our insignificant little elevation for about two hours and heading several creeks we received another glimpse of something that looked like our first ridge, only by now much higher and difficult to climb. I'd stopped recognising things some time ago and was just a little worried, so I rather agreed with the suggestion that we climb this just to be sure it wasn't the one we wanted, and even though it wasn't we might find out where we were.

It eventuated that we'd been on the wrong side of Danai Brook, heading rapidly for Kanangra Deep. Also the thing we climbed wasn't the right ridge but it ha' been; now it was a spur leading 3 miles back to Thurat Trig., just one of the places where we should have been. After lunch by Danai Brook we went to Thurat Trig in spite of the sally scrub and arrived at 2.30 - about  $5\frac{1}{2}$  hours late. There we picked up the road that chap carved to get his plane out and followed it to the sight of the prang, a small home-made clearing on the side of the ridge. By 4 o'clock we'd reached Paralizer but the sun was already resting on the rim of Guouogang and we'd a long way to go. As we cast around for the East Buttress I carefully subdued a strong inclination to recognise anything until the boys charged down what I felt convinced was the wrong ridge. They'd been somewhat ahead, and we could only tell which ridge they were on by the rapidly receding sounds of their progress below us. Callously leaving them to their fate I stumped stubbornly off along my ridge with Grace and Joan sagging in the rear, only to be confronted by Cloudmaker dead ahead. These mountains and ridges and things popping up where they shouldn't be had proved most disconcerting all day, and this seemed the final stroke. Feeling most ashamed I informed the girls that I was wrong again. So I sent them back on to the right track while I stopped a moment to collect my shattered self-esteem and take of photo of the evening shadow crawling rapidly up the opposite ridges. That made me feel slightly better so I closed the camera and started down the steep rocky slope. Hell, the blasted thing was steep! After 100 ft. it was so steep I could scarcely stand upright and I had the horrible feeling that this was yet another wrong ridge. Better call the girls back - "Coooooo!" The reply came from my left, and I sidled round to find the girls sitting on a rock waiting for me. Of course I'd been charging down the side of the ridge!

As we dropped lower the sky welled up with brilliance of sunset colours that faded slowly into dusk. The dusk grew dimmer and dimmer until, in the very last of the light, we located the side spur that leads to the Kanangra Creek-River Junction, and dropped over into night. When at last we were down we crossed the river and camped on the first bit of flat ground. Time 7.30 - but what a day!

Next morning about 6 o'clock I peeped out at a dim grey world. The ground was white and bristled with frost, but it was no use waiting for the sun; tucked in here among the ridges we wouldn't see him for many hours. Noting that Joan was stirring I sprinted across and gave the boys a shout (it did no good), grabbed the billy and zoomed back inside the tent. Brrr! Do up the flap and get the primus going, quick! Soon the interior of the tent was much more tropical and Grace could be coaxed out of her sleeping bag. By 7 o'clock we were ready to move, and by a quarter past Stitt was, the odd fifteen minutes being spent by the party taking turns to stamp in the fire ashes - the only unfrozen spot.

The frost extended white right to the very running edge of the river, and even the rocks were iced over, as I discovered while attempting to cross with dry feet and sat in it. After that I moved very rapidly, no longer worried about my feet which grew less sensitive with each successive crossing, until just before reaching the Cox I had to glance down now and again to see if I still had them. At

Kanangaroo the ground was just as white, and where we trod on the sand along the bank the hoar frost crystals crunched under our feet and occasionally the frozen surface layer yielded to show a crisp footprint. The tardy sun was struggling to rise above Yellow Pup as we crossed the Cox, and as the shadowed bank offered no inducement to linger we kept right on until the first patch of reasonably strong sunlight, then changed our socks and kept right on again.

About the top of Yellow Dog the old tootsies were beginning to feel more normal and things had definitely improved - even my pants were dried out. Still we followed the intricacies of the ridge, and while searching for the saddle to Dingo I led the party on interesting explorations of ferny grottos, as Joan will tell anyone who'll listen, but still we arrived at Kennel Flats punctually for lunch at 2 or 2.30. We found Debert's Knob an Effort, Taro's Ladder a Great Effort, and the climb out of Glen Rapheal Darned Near Impossible. Still walking, we observed with displeasure the sun setting for the second time in two days while we were still walking. Night, after stalking us for several miles, finally surrounded us just before that scrubby hump over which lies Coral Swamp - and that's where it happened!

Grace and I were leading and I was in front. I thought I was on the track and Grace followed me. Then suddenly we were lost. But this was ridiculous; we couldn't be lost; we'll just have to retrace our steps. But no. No track! I tried casting about in various directions, calmly at first, but with increasing panic, but no, there wasn't a track; it had disappeared - vanished into the evil spreading gloom of night and the darkening sky. Gone! Mountains rearing up before us, ridges writhing beneath our feet, everything familiar but nothing to identify. I was lost - lost at Coral Swamp. Oh, the ignominy of it all. Me. Geof Wagg, conqueror of Cloudmaker, Paralyzer twice, Guougang three times and all points west - lost at Coral Swamp! All at once the trouble at work, the week-end shambles of leadership, and finally this blow bore down upon me and as my head bowed I uttered a pitiful wail of despair. Stitt, who was coming along the track with the other two boys and Joan mistook this for a call and let out a piercing "Coo-oo!!". We walked towards the sound and joined the party - a distance of about 8 feet. At the swamp I drank most of Stitt's rum and glucose, so for me the rest of the trip was a sheer delight.

(It all turned out that the trouble at work was somebody else's fault.)

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P.S. Just before this article went to press the news came through of yet another Paralyzer trip, and after hearing the details of it I fear I can only claim mine as The Second Worst Journey in the World!!

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CONGRATULATIONS CORNER: To Ron Knightley and Dorothy (who was Dorothy Vincent, you remember) - a daughter.

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"Why walk?" says Heather. "Own a Renault and push."



## GOSSIP

As we go to press we hear that Joan Walker and Bev Price are taking off for Alice Springs (and no doubt all points in the Centre) armed with rolls of Kodachrome and light-meters. Ayer's Rock is in the itinerary. Another booking for the Social Programme, Heather! Incidentally, Joan plans to hop over to England next year.

.....

A party, (names are "mum") over Queen's Birthday week-end nearly had a night out in the Labyrinth when they left their standing camp at The Oaks for a day run out to Erskine Creek and back by a devious route. As Geof says: "The country can be rugged."

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Edna Garrad reports having lost her "Tudor" wrist watch in the vicinity of Compagnoni's Pass. It is engraved "R.M.Garrad".

.....

Harry and Marion Ellis, with Edna Garrad, recently went over Gangerang. What about showing us those slides, Harry?

.....

Remark passed during the Federation Council discussion on the decline in bushwalking - "The Decline and Fall of the Roaming Empire."

.....

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER FROM JANE PUTT: Colin had a good trip over to England. He was not impressed by the way Rome was cluttered up with all sorts of queer machines based on motor scooters and bikes. About the best was one mechanised wheelbarrow affair, full of bricks, and ridden by a nun in full habit! Colin is now at Runcorn, near Liverpool. He has got in with the local Climbers' Club and was going climbing on? at? Tryfan last week-end. He's already been on a car trip round North Wales and circumnavigated Snowdon, etc. He was quite impressed by Tryfan and Snowdon, and also by the roads which he says are beautifully tar-sealed but only about 10 ft. wide and very twisty with high stone walls each side. He's been to Winchester to see the Cathedral and also - don't faint - has got a camera and is taking colour photos. How are the mighty fallen!

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MIRACLES DEPT. - A NOTE FROM YOUR EDITOR: On the day that contributions closed for the June issue I had received absolutely nothing, and was wondering how I was going to string the advertisements together with only our Monthly Meeting notes and Federation Report which had not yet arrived but which I knew I could expect. I raised a wail of despair (making sure that it was heard in the right quarters), but also embarked upon a long enough article myself to make people think they were getting their ninepence worth. Members responded to my wail and contributions poured in. I now have sufficient for two magazines, so in they go regardless. Thank you, everybody.

.....



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