

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to the Sydney Bush Walkers, c/- Ingersoll Hall, 256 Crown Street, Sydney.

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EDITORIAL

The Bushwalker and the "£"

It is now only a "biscuit toss" to the Annual General Meeting. Among the many important things to be considered on that night is the question of the Club's financial state and the amount of the Annual Subscription, the very lifeblood of the Club. Members would do well to give this matter some really serious thought before coming to the Meeting.

Despite earlier grim forebodings, our Treasurer has hinted with obvious relief that we will probably finish the current year with a small surplus. However, he stresses that it has been rather a "lucky" year for us and that we could have just as easily ended up in the red. A large influx of new members combined with an absence of any major items of expenditure has pulled us through. We have been content to eat the bread and butter bare, but what happens when we want to spread on the jam?

2.

In other words, how much longer can this Club operate on a shoe-string budget? We should be putting a little away for the rainy day; we ought to have the ready and spareable cash for worthy purchases; how can we think in terms of better clubrooms on the present pittance? And lastly, it might be a good idea if we stopped turning the heads of our Treasurers grey with worry.

It is obvious that for a long time we have been buying our bush-walking "on the cheap". In 1952 the Subscription was raised from 15/- to £1, at which level it has since remained. How disproportionate this situation is to the rise in wages and the cost of living since 1952 must surely be plain for all to see. In fact, it seems to be something of a miracle that we are still alive and kicking. Looking at it from another point of view, what other sporting, recreational or social club can you belong to today for a paltry £1 per year? You would be lucky to join the Dead End Kids for that; and surely our wonderful Club is worth much, much more than the D.E.K. We now spend more on the return rail fare for ONE WEEK-END in the Mountains than on our membership for A WHOLE YEAR, and yet our club membership is the very heart and soul, in fact the spring, of all our walking activities. Thus for the great majority of members, the percentage of our bush-walking expenses which is outlayed for Club Membership is fantastically low. Is the Club doing much more for us as individuals than we are doing in return for the Club? In terms of financial reimbursement, the answer would appear to be "yes".

And so when the question of fixing subscriptions comes before the Annual General Meeting, we will be faced with a simple choice. We can be mean and unyielding and so stint and scrape our way through yet another year, eternally hovering on the brink of insolvency; or we can be rationally generous and provide our Club with the means it deserves and ought to have; and if we decide on the latter, then we ought not to be afraid or short-sighted, so let us open up our purse strings and give those old moths their well-earned freedom.

The Editor wishes to express his appreciation for the fine job done by Dot Butler in producing the January Magazine while he was away in Tasmania. Many thanks, Dot.

F.R.

WHO IS THE ADMIRAL?

WHY DID HE RETURN?

WHY WERE THE BUSHWALKER MAGAZINES BURNED?

WHY DID THE PRESIDENT THUNDER "MAYHEM AT THE MEETING"?

LEARN THE ANSWERS AT WOODS CREEK
ON THE NIGHT OF MARCH 15TH

AT OUR JANUARY MEETING.

-- Alex Colley

Our first meeting of the New Year opened with the President in the chair and about 60 members in attendance.

In correspondence was a letter from Clem Hallstrom, informing us that the Boilermakers' Union had acquired premises at Forester House, in Castlereagh St., near Bathurst St., and not far from Paddy Pallin's shop. They would have a main assembly hall on the ground floor, with plenty of space to accommodate our club furniture, so he suggested we make inquiries.

The N.P.A. advised us that we had been accepted as a corporate member. Len Fall was elected as our delegate.

The financial results of the Christmas Party are not yet complete, but tickets realised £78/15/-, and the Treasurer anticipates a profit of between £5 and £10.

Woods Creek was again chosen for our reunion. Colin Putt, Jim Hooper, Michael Elphick, Frank Young, Grace and Geof Wagg, and Pam Baker, were appointed to the Re-union committee.

Kath Brown then moved that we book the R.S.L. Hall for Friday 12th Dec. 1958 for our next Christmas party. By booking now we would be sure of getting a Friday night instead of a week night. A discussion ensued on the quality of R.S.L. beer. Jack Wren said that, though he had drunk none of it himself, he had heard a lot of complaints, the consensus of opinion being that "it was hardly worth washing your feet in." Jack Gentle said that the R.S.L. had contracted with one brewer from whom it bought the stuff in draught, then bottled it for sale. Kath replied that despite these disadvantages we had found nowhere else as good and if we dithered till mid-year we might not get a booking on a suitable night - if at all. Her motion was carried.

Dot Butler announced that as Sergeant Ware now "practically owned the Gap", the Sunday rock-climbing expedition would be held on the next headland along.

Before the close of the meeting the President once more announced that the positions of President, Walks Secretary, Social Secretary, Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer would be vacant in March.

OUR SUFFERING CITIZENS

"A "cruising ban" on taxis in the inner-city area is turning Sydney people into a race of hikers.

"People in the city frequently have to walk distances of a quarter of a mile and more in a vain search for transport because of the ban."

(Daily Mirror - 15th Jan. 1958).

P.S. Just so you can't point the bone, the Editor is at this moment in the throes of trying to set down on paper an account of his trip to the South-West of Tasmania.

You can go either on the Saturday or the Sunday, but try to make it Saturday so you cop all the fun and games.

Tickets to Heathcote.

And come and say bon voyage to Sheila Binns who leaves for England during the following week.

The swimming carnival is always different - you can't miss it -
so see you at Eckersley.

It is easy enough to be pleasant
When you can sleep soundly and snore
But the man worth while,
Is the man who can smile
When he's kept awake by the roar!

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DECEMBER WALKS REPORT

-- B. Anderson
Walks Secretary

Taking into consideration the programmed walks and private trips over the Christmas period, December proved to be an unusually busy month for walking and touring.

From the programmed side of activities only two of the programmed six walks failed to start. These were in the Blue Mountains area, which at the time was continually subjected to bushfires.

On Sunday 8th Frank Leyden with three members, one prospective, and one visitor completed his walk to Era in ideal cool weather. Frank reported ample water in Black-Gin Creek and also that the bush in this area is slowly recovering after last year's fires.

Also on this Sunday was the Kiddies Christmas outing. However, due to fire risk the site was changed from Bare Ck. to Audley, which may have been one of the main reasons for the poor attendance. Only three families were present.

The following weekend Frank Barlow's swimming crawl from Bundeena

to Burning Palms proceeded with four visitors only. Frank said the area has been shockingly burnt out. Also he reported plenty of fresh water in the side creeks which run into the sea.

As in previous years the Rudolf Cup went off with a big splash -- with many drips competing for the famous Cup. In all twenty bods were present at Audley but only three boats were hired. However this didn't cramp the style of the enthusiastic boat wreckers. Of course the most interesting feature of this event was the fine exhibition of courage, tenacity, fair play, brilliance of tactics, leadership and cunning of the Dalai Lama -- the 1957 winner of the Rudolf Cup.

Three hearty cheers for Bob Duncan -- Yak! Yak! Yak!

Finally, over the Christmas period an estimated 60 bods made up the parties who left Sydney by car, train, plane and thumb to tour and walk in various parts of Australia.

In all the very comprehensive list of areas visited below is quite impressive. They are Kosciusko, Mt. Hotham, Lamington National Park, Lake Pedder - Mt. Anne Area and the Reserve (Tasmania) and car tours of the South Coast and Victoria.

YOUR WALKING GUIDE

<u>Walk No.</u>	
13 & 14	Swimming Carnival - See Brian Harvey's comments on page 4.
15	Details of this boat trip have not come to hand. See Jim Hooper or Walks Sec. 10 days before the weekend of Feb. 21/23.
16	Bus or car to and from Woolwash. To base campsite medium track walking. Main activity is to eat, sleep and swim. Fares return approx. 10/-.
17	Easy to medium ten mile test walk. The going is medium most of way but scrubby in patches. Return fare 5/-.
18	Ideal walk over two days. Seven miles of good track along ridge, then 1500' descent, followed by roughish 5 miles, then easy track walking to Yarramundi. Will be plenty of time devoted to swimming in the many wonderful swimming holes. Good few pleasant colourshots to be taken. Probably be warm so take that beloved hat of years. Fare in train and car approx. 21/-. Leader will arrange for transfer tickets.
19.	Tom Moppett will supply all details if you ring JA 8873 (H)
20	A trip with a difference - bring your camera, bathing costume and book on coastal sea life also of course cut lunch. Leader aims to wander along coastline so this will involve rock hopping. Remember salt water will ruin walking boots unless soaked in fresh water after trip and oiled. Fare approx 8/-
21	Another spine bash with Halversens motor boats. Plenty of opportunities for colour photography. Cost will depend on number of bods and boats. Very interesting trip for those who have never launched in Broken Bay. Cost approx. 15/- to 20/- including fares.

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'PHONE: BW 1725

Walk No.

- 22 Excellent cliff and gorge scenery. Graded track down Govetts Leap (1700'). Good track to Syncarpia then medium to rough to base of Arethusa Falls. Leader intends to spend considerable time swimming. Train fare return 24/9.
- 23 Medium going along coastal rocks and beaches. Excellent opportunity for those interested in coastal photography,, as this section of coast is very rewarding. Return fare from Kiama 24/5
- 24 Easy to medium track. Excellent coastal views. Swimming galore at either Burning Plams, Era, Garie. Bus from Garie to Waterfall Station. Generally down hill all way. Fares 7/-.

THE NEW PRICE OF YOUR MAGAZINE.

As decided by the December Meeting the price of your Magazine will be increased to 1/- as from this present issue. However, why not take advantage of the Special Annual Subscription Rates which are as follows:

RESERVED IN THE CLUBROOM 10/-d
POSTED TO ADDRESS 13/-d (Incl. postage)

We regret the necessity for this always unpopular action, but the cost of materials WILL keep on rising and that is something over which we just have no control. To a certain extent, production costs per magazine are dependent upon circulation, so why not try to interest a friend perhaps in subscribing to the Sydney Bushwalker.

AS THE CIRCULATION GOES UP, THE COST COMES DOWN .

WHITE ANT BORINGS.

Frank Leyden and party were observed setting off on their Christmas trip with a two foot high canister of chloroform in the back of the Land Rover. Asked what it was for they replied, "To make bushwalking bearable."

In last month's issue we mentioned the new Frost and Meadows babies but at that stage we didn't know their sex. Well, the "its" have both turned out to be "hims" and so the mystery has been solved.

How cruel can Nature be to bushwalkers? After thwarting us for months with drought and bushfires, She completely routed a party who went to Koscuisko over the Christmas period by washing them out of their campsite with the heaviest deluge seen for many moons.

Of course you must have heard about the incident of the LONG RED FEMININE UNDERWEAR, in which for a bet, a certain male member of a certain Christmas walking party wore the aforesaid unmentionables on an air trip between Launceston and Melbourne city terminals. The oddest part of the whole fantastic episode was that the wearer wasn't even embarrassed - but the people who had to pay up were, and they couldn't even get away from him! Keep your eyes open for a certain colour slide which will probably be shown in "Rogues' Gallery."

It's a small world. At the foot of Mt. Anne, remote in the Sou'-west of Tasmania, the recent S.B.W. party ran into a group of Launceston walkers. "By gee, you look a bit like our Bob Binks - in fact you talk a lot more like him", says the S.B.W. eyeing one of the Tassie crew. "It's no wonder really", he replied, "I'm Bob's brother."

In his recent slide showing, John Bookluck flashed on the screen a picture of a very dead penguin prostrated on a beach. Without thinking, Bookie began, "Now this was the end of ... (roars of laughter from the gallery) that section of the trip". For one moment it seemed that Bookie might have followed that penguin from the cradle to the grave.

CLIMBER'S JOY

A pathway climbs on the mountain's flank, It elbows up like Z,
At almost any kink of the way, you can see two turns ahead.
Here are steps in the living rock, here is a bloodwood bridge,
And here is an alley of sand that leads
To the pink-white quartz of the ridge.

But there wasn't a path where I came down, there wasn't a sign to guide
The woven bracken clutched at my hand, the grass trees whispered beside
Sliding down from a slippery ledge into a myrtle tree -
The tougher the varied barriers are the greater pleasure to me.

Not that I think I climb so well, not that I do not know
How light the mountains has let me down, but that it's good to go.
Using all of my flowing strength every muscle and nerve,
Speed and balance and judging eye, all eagerly fit to serve.

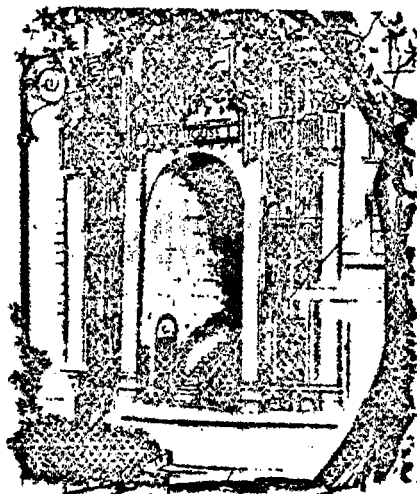
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THE MYSTERY WIRE.

-- Dorothy Lawry.

To entertain the youngsters and perhaps stir a memory or two for the oldsters, here is a tale of long ago - in the pre-atomic age.

It was February, 1942. Malaya had fallen. Singapore had fallen. The enemy was pushing southward through the islands. The shadow of the long-feared "Yellow Peril" loomed large and black over Australia.

The Eighth Division had been lost in Malaya; the rest of the A.I.F. was still fighting in the Middle East. There was now only distance (and the Navy) to defend Australia -- or so it seemed to us civilians. If the Japs should reach Sydney, what were we going to do?

Many of us, members of the federated clubs, decided we would "go bush" and do as much damage as possible to the enemy during what probably would be a short and uncomfortable life. What did we think we could do? Even an aborigine could not now "live off the land" in the Blue Mountains. Naturally, we should have to get supplies from the good land to the west, but so would the Japs if they were to occupy the country for any length of time. We could surely cause trouble as they crossed and re-crossed the mountains. We knew the ridges and gorges of that rugged country better than most folk. We were used to returning after dark on Sundays, and to starting out on Friday

evenings and walking for miles in the dark before camping. Now we had to prepare for what the future might hold.

First we established half-a-dozen small emergency food dumps in different parts. Then we started to learn a new technique of bush-walking by night -- without torches, without tracks and without noises. (Who remembers the practice at Long Angle Gully when I say "without noise!"??). Instead of sitting by the campfire on Saturday evenings, singing and yarnning, we practised infiltrating our camps, or detecting those trying to infiltrate.

.

Such was the atmosphere, such the plan, when five or six of us started out from Waterfall station one fine Saturday that February. An easy walk of about three miles down Heathcote Creek would take us to our campsite at Morella-karong on Myuna Creek. Here we would practise the new skill we were trying to acquire. Down the hill we went and across Heathcote Creek. Then we saw it. Made of a twisted pair of covered wires, it appeared to be a telephone line, but it was just strung loosely along on the bushes beside the track. We had never seen anything like that down here before. And why would anyone run a telephone line along this track down in the valley? On the ridge to the east ran the Princes Highway; on the ridge to the south ran the road to the Woronora Dam, that newest addition to Sydney's water supply. There were telephone wires along both of those roads, so why this wire by the creek?

We decided that probably it was an army field telephone line. Most likely some militia units were practising in this area this weekend. Oh, well, so long as we did not run into them and get ordered away from our campsite, it was no concern of ours. We proceeded on our way -- and the wire kept us company until Kingfisher Pool was passed and the track became faint. Soon the wire disappeared uphill.

Our way led us on and over the low ridge, then down to "Morella-karong" ---- and there was the wire coming down into the valley and across the creek! However, it disappeared up the gully on the other side and there was no sign of the army, so we proceeded to pitch camp. That evening we wondered whether our amateurish attempts at infiltration were being watched from the bluff known as "Mt. Mannell" which rose some hundreds of feet on the other side of the creek; but nothing happened.

At breakfast next morning we discussed the strange fact that there had been neither sound or sign of the army. We seemed to be the only humans in the area that week-end, so why was the wire there? Of course, the army might have left it; been too lazy to collect it through all that length of bush; but there was over three miles of wire, so we decided to investigate -- just in case it belonged to some enemy agent.

Leaving the others to guard the camp, Harold Rolfe, Joy Bailey of the C.M.W., and I set off up the gully and through the scrub up to the ridge on the southern side of the gully. Carefully and as quietly as possible, we followed the wire. Then it led us south along the ridge and to the road! From the shelter of the trees we observed that the mysterious wire was slung high across the road from a tree to one of

the telephone poles. From there we could see it going on from pole to pole towards the dam until the road twisted out of our sight.

We held another conference! The mystery had deepened. We felt sure now that there was something sinister about the wire. We were not equipped to deal with any enemy agent, and we did not want to give warning of the discovery of the wire, so we returned to camp. On the way back to the train we traced the other end of the wire into the village of Waterfall. There again it used the telephone poles, and it disappeared into the local post and telephone office!!

When we arrived back in the city, two of us reported our discovery to the authorities.

.

About two days later I received a telephone call from Army Intelligence. The caller asked for further directions and said he would be going out to investigate the matter the following weekend!! Well, a large party from the Federation was going to camp up Kingfisher Creek that next week-end to practise infiltrating, so I suggested we travel by the same train and I would act as guide; and so it was arranged.

.

The following Saturday when we left the train we were joined by an elderly corporal in uniform. We showed him the wire in the village, and he saw it trailing along until our whole party turned off the track and entered the enclosed valley in which the camp was to be pitched. Joy Bailey and I left our packs here but took our maps and compasses and set off with the corporal. As he had suggested, we went straight across country from the point on the road where we had seen the wire reach it.

Joy was a short, sturdy youngster specially distinguished for the large, hobnailed boots she always wore bushwalking. I, of course, was big and hefty, and wore rubber-soled shoes and short woollen socks with my khaki shirt and shorts and battered straw hat. Joy also wore the usual kahaki shirt and shorts.

After going up over ridges, down across valleys and up the other side -- all through fairly thick bush and at a pace which the corporal found fairly strenuous -- he was surprised when we arrived within ten yards of the point where the wire reached the road! Now the corporal took the lead.

The three of us walked on along the road and reached Woronora village. We saw various people on their verandahs but no one challenged us -- possibly because of the corporal's uniform and our khaki clothes.

We reached the centre of the village and, on one particular pole, the wire was twisted in and out and round about a collection of ordinary telephone wires. We stood beneath this pole for several minutes, following the wire with our eyes until we were sure to which

12.

of the wires it was connected and to which house it led. Still no one challenged us or questioned our presence there although the dam was supposed to be guarded!

The corporal declared the mystery wire was army field telephone material all right. It was disgracefully badly strung; and he could not see why some four or more miles of it need have been used at all -- if it had been used by the guard, as he suspected. He also thought we should have been challenged before we reached the centre of the village; however, as we had not, he said,

"Come along, we'll have a look at the dam itself and see what happens." We did -- but nothing happened.

Then we found a store and ordered afternoon tea. Apparently the kettle had to be boiled, but after some time we got our tea and chatted about this and that with the woman who served it. Finally we set off to return to camp, still having seen no sign of any guards! And this was part of Sydney's water supply!

A few hundred yards beyond the village we were overtaken by a car containing only the driver, a civilian. The corporal thumbed a lift and got into the front seat. Joy and I rode in the back until we were level with the head of Kingfisher Creek; there we said good-bye to the corporal and left the car. He went on back to the railway and on the way got as much information as possible from the driver.

.

During the following week the corporal borrowed my map and made up his report. This led to certain action which probably made bushwalkers unpopular for a time with certain army personnel.

The explanation? The telephone lines from the Woronora Dam to the Post Office at Waterfall were privately owned by the Water Board and the officer in charge at the dam was unco-operative when the Army wanted the use of one of them. Instead of reminding him there was a war on, the chap in charge of the guard had been bluffed into laying his own telephone line. Even though he had taken it the shortest route, accross country, it was a considerable waste of army material, and so he was told. You can probably imagine HOW he was told

SOME TRANSLATIONS FROM THE ABOROGINAL

BUNDANOON - a place of deep gullies	MORONG - bleak or cold
BURRAGORANG - a tribe who wore nose- pins	WARRIGAL - wild.
WATTAMOLLA - a place near running water	COLONG - a wombat
COLO - a species of possum	KOWMUNG - sore eyes
PATONGA - a small wallaby	WERONG - camping ground
TALLONG - a tounge or peninsula	NATTAI - water.

THINGS TO COME



"THAT'S WHAT THE FESTERING SLOBS GET FOR REFUSING A LIFT!"

(DALÍ NOTE STREAM-LINING)

THE DIARY OF A DOCTORMONDAY:

When Johnnie Walker entered my surgery today I could tell by the smell that he wasn't feeling well, as the saying goes.

"Aha," I said, "another attack of bushwalkers foot?"

"Yes", he admitted, "caused by sleeping with my boots on after wading through the Kowdung all day. My feet started to swell during the night and I haven't been able to get my boots off since."

"Well your feet are doing more than swelling now", I replied.

A bit of work with the hacksaw, scalpel, wire brush and caustic ointment soon fixed Johnnie's feet. If he follows my advice and boils them in brine and sulphuric acid before going on his next walk he should not have a recurrence of this trouble.

TUESDAY:

I noticed that young Mary Lollylegs looked very expectant in the waiting room this morning so I called her into the surgery first.

"What on earth have you got there", I asked as I saw the enormous case she was lugging in with her.

"Leeches. Millions of 'em", she leered, throwing the case open and revealing a squirming mass, "the rains brought 'em out on Black Dog, I spent all yesterday pulling 'em off my legs."

"You don't say", I replied, hastily slamming the lid shut.

"Yair", she went on, "I thought you might like to buy 'em, you're always recommending 'em in your column".

"But my poor dear", I interrupted, "your legs! You are bites from big toe to buttock. Please allow me to rub this calamine lotion deeply into your skin."

"Thanks", she said when it was all over, "how much will you give me for the leeches?"

"I'm sorry", I said, "leeches are certainly an invaluable aid to the medical practitioner, but only hungry leeches; the satisfied leeches removed from bushwalkers' legs are therapeutically quite useless. Take them down to my friend and colleague Dr. Duck on the next corner. If you conceal the fact that you are a bushwalker, he will gladly pay you sixpence apiece for them."

I coughed as she turned to leave,

"The calamine massage", I prompted, "that will be two guineas, please."

WEDNESDAY:

"Foot and Mouth disease is a thing which is never seen these days", said the Senior Surgeon in the common room today, "in my young day it used to be quite popular."

"Modern antibiotics have all but wiped it out", replied the Pathologist, "but it is still seen occasionally and it is important to distinguish between it and the more common psuedo F and M disease".

"What's that?", asked the Junior Obstretician.

"It's a condition seen in lightweight bushwalkers", replied the Pathologist, "and is often known as Bushwalkers Blight. The constant stubbing of the sneaker-clad feet against boulders, and the continual chumping of the mouthparts on Terry's Meal, razor blades and such like abrasive materials, causes an acute inflammation of the extremities of the toes and lips, which is superficially not unlike the old virus Foot and Mouth disease.

"Is there a reliable diagnostic procedure in these cases?" asked the House Surgeon.

"Yes", replied the Pathologist, "the oral temperature should be taken. If the thermometer is crunched with a convulsive chomp of the china choppers and the fragments smilingly swallowed it is a bad case of "Bushwalker's Blight"."

THURSDAY:

A potion of wombat's woffer, the eye of a newt and ground up toadstool was the accepted protection amongst our ancestors against the complaint which has been variously known as Virs Deferens, The Quaking Palsey, and Hanburys Disease.

This is in all probability the malady which all but wiped out the villagers of Chipping Egbert in the year of 1341, of whom it was written "Thay didst fal lykas the leeves of the alder".

No cases have been reported since 1894 when Hanbury showed that it was caused by toadstool poisoning.

FRIDAY:

This week's reading on sleep.

The Venerable Bede: "He snors longyst who snors loudyst."

The Bible: "Man does not live in bed alone."

Old Proverb: "Let sleeping dogs lie."

Bushwalking Adage: "Give your poor dogs a rest."

SOME MORE NEWS FROM MALCOLM.

9905 Wildwood Road,
Kensington, Maryland.
U.S.A.
Jan. 12th, 1958.

Dear Fellow S.B.W.'s.,

Quite a few things have happened since I wrote last, and not the least of these is the Bush Fire news from Australia; news which has made us most unhappy and the effect on you people in the middle of it must be indescribable.

From America the news is this:- We've had our first major snowfall- 14 inches in a day and a night; to have a fall of this size in the middle of a busy city really makes things go - slow. Our usual drive to the lab. stretched from 15-20 mins. to 2 hrs and coming home we spent $2\frac{1}{2}$ hrs. on the road. In cities where it snows regularly during the winter a large amount of road clearing equipment is available (some places even have streets and pavements which are heated), but in Washington the normal amount of snow is so small that the huge capital investment for removal gear is not warranted. Hence a good snow really fouls things up: a fantastic number of cars had run off the road and smashed bumpers and mudguards were the order of the day.

To us the snow was exciting and many times I clicked the black box. The cold however is another story, at night the temperature has gone down to 6°F and the weather reports say - it will warm up to 26°F. For the past week the sun has been shining beautifully but this in no way helps to make you feel warm. Inside of course things are very comfortable with the central heating. Comfortable except for one thing - the humidity is down round 10-15%. This is very dry, lips chap very easily and one is liable to get some quite significant electric shocks. Any friction caused by sliding on chairs, walking on carpets etc. builds up an electrostatic charge on the body, in moist air this leaks off very quickly, but in very dry conditions the charge is retained for long periods and when the time comes to turn on a tap or similar earthed object - wham! It is most unpleasant.

We've done a bit of walking and the walking types here are just the same as anywhere else -- good types all. The conditions are quite different however, the trees and shrubs are strange, the tracks are the same but the scenery is made up of firs, pines, oaks and maples, some of them very beautiful. Along the creeks one finds icicles hanging from ledges etc. right through the day. In a car tunnel we went through there was a large notice "Beware falling icicles". A look up to the roof showed great spears of ice 2-3 ft. long and 3-4 inches round. These come crashing down periodically and I'd hate to be impaled by one.

During the winter overnight stops are made in huts owned and maintained by the Appalachian Trails Clubs and reservations need to be made for some time ahead. Camping out in below zero weather needs a lot of special gear. The gear here is good but is much more expensive than ours, a good sleeping bag would run to A£20-25 and a pack would cost £10-15A. Aluminium and plastic ware however is very cheap.

We are all off to New York the first week in Feb. for a week and I will continue on to Boston and Canada. Elsa and Bob will go to her cousin in Pennsylvania in the meantime. It should be rather interesting.

Well, half the time is gone and the second part is beginning, the work is going very well and we are all in good condition.

Best wishes for 1958 to all the gang and believe me, we think of you all very often.

Regards,
Malc.

WHITE'S RIVER HUT

(Club member John Bookluck recently visited this much-discussed edifice in the Snowy Mountains, and in view of the Club's interest in the hut as a possible Ski and Walking Lodge, John has thoughtfully prepared an unofficial report which will be of interest to members. Included are photographs of the interior and a Sketch Plan which we believe will be displayed on the Notice Board. The written part of the report appears below -- Editor.)

The general condition of the hut is FAIR to GOOD.

1. Rooms:

(a) Living Room, 16' x 11'6"

The walls are lined with brown caneite in which numerous holes have been made by four-legged rodents. (This damage could be repaired). Apart from the holes, the caneite is in fair condition although no paint has ever been applied. The ceiling is of caneite and takes the shape of the outer galvanised iron roof (in good condition), the ceiling being attached to the roof rafters. The floor is good but one cross beam is unsightly and this could possibly be said of the fireplace also.

(b) Bedroom or Dormitory, 11'6" x 9'6".

This has Sisalkraft walls and a good floor. The main bugbear was the broken window. I noted that the broken window had cellophane glass which had fallen out.

(c) Fuel Room, 16' x 6'

This has a dirt floor, a single lined wall and a skillion roof in good condition, and shower which hangs from the roof.

2. Improvements (Rough only):

(a) Living Room. This room can be greatly improved by the addition of paint, cleaning up of old cooking utensils and by the addition of a shadow board. The tables and other furniture could be repaired and the rodent holes blocked up. (extermination of the rodents, if possible, is of course desirable). A few lanterns are needed and a stainless steel sink could be added at a later date, as well as a few wall cupboards.

(b) Bedroom. A very cosy warm room can be made of the bedroom by adding caneite walls and painting. Also add a couple of closets and a supply of blankets and mend the window. Such improvements costing only a few pounds and involving a little labour would give us a room comparable with other ski huts.

(c) Fuel Room. The pantry needs cleaning out of foods that might clear out themselves. The W.C. and shower room could be partitioned off and a rack for skis built and fuel space allocated.

3. Inventory:

Note:- The inventory is not to be taken as gospel as I spent only a short period in the hut.

(a) Living Room: 2 x double bunks, 8 x pally-mattresses, 2 x washing dishes, 2 x large aluminium pots (8 pt and 6 pt.), 1 x large baked enamel billy, numerous knives, forks, etc. some crockery, frying pan, food safe, fuel stove in excellent order (replaces open fire), kero lanterns (need repairs), 1 x 44 gl. drum, radio transmitter, electric generator, storage batteries.

(b) Bedroom: 2 x double bunks, 1 x fuel heater, 1 x new fuel heater (not assembled), pally-mattresses, 2 x folding stools, 2 folding or card tables, 3 sheets of new galv. iron, 20 ft. of 4" x 2" oregon (new), 1 x door (new).

(c) Fuel Room. Pantry of galv. iron, plenty of floor-dried foodstuffs (not eatable), well stocked with wood fuel, axe, shovel, shower, bucket, 4 gl. drums.

4. Recommendations:

Above are my own suggestions, but I should like to see -

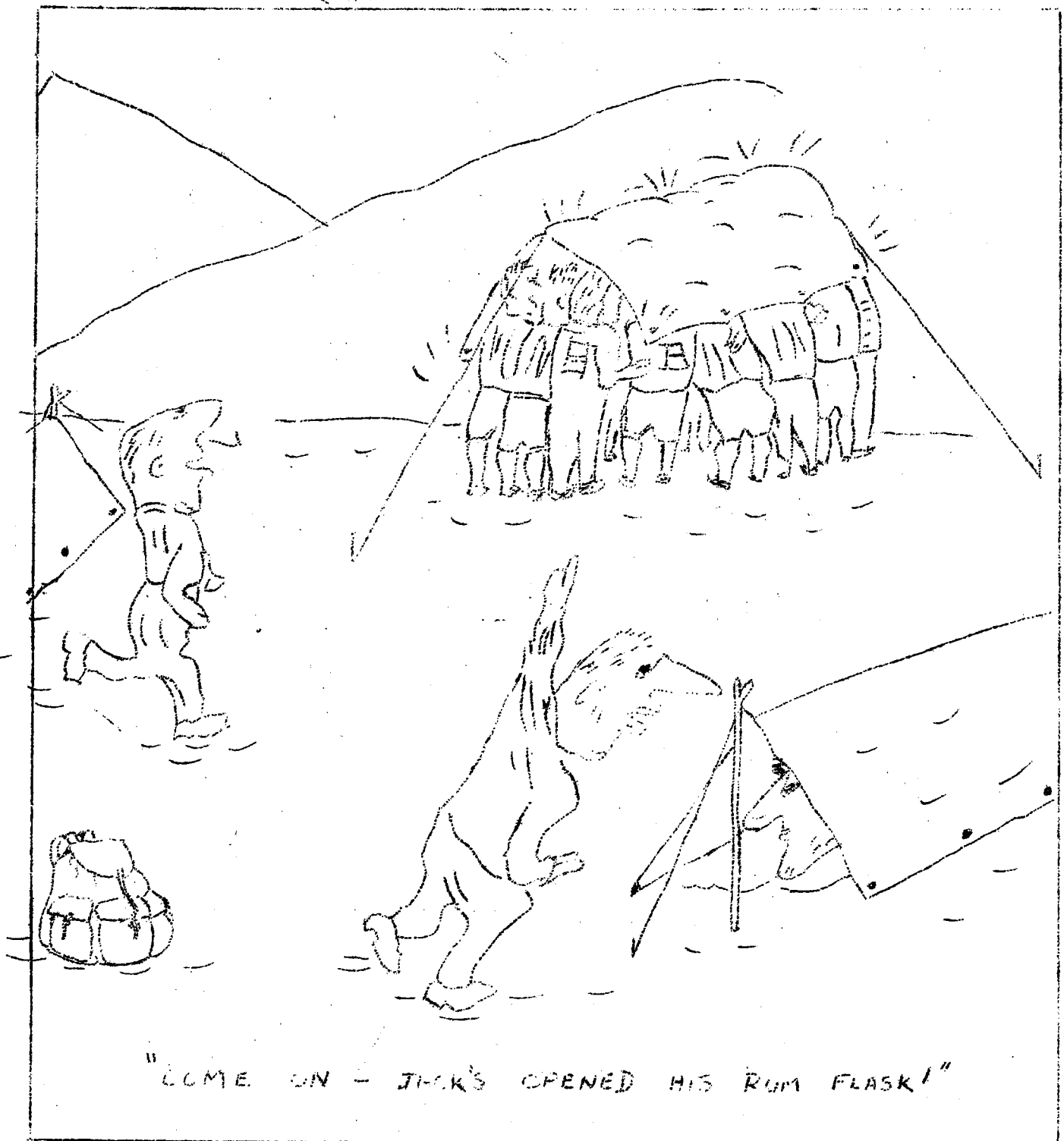
- 1) An architect and builder from the Club visit W.R. Hut and justify my claims.
- 2) The Secretary (or responsible person) VISIT OWNER re purchase of hut and get some concrete information.
- 3) Legalities: We as the leaders of Conservation movements must use our discretion with an aim to meeting the requirements of the Kosciusko Park Trust.

5. Conclusion:

As far as walking is concerned, the hut could not be more suitably placed. It is four miles from Munyang Power Station by road and in the middle of the Kosciusko Park, the best walking territory on the Australian mainland.

I sincerely recommend we should acquire this hut purely from the bushwalkers' angle and keep it as a hut, to decorate and preserve it as befits the natural beauty which surrounds it.

-- John Bookluck.



"ON THE WALLABY"

-- Henry Lawson

"Though the way of the swagman is mostly uphill,
 There are joys to be found on the wallaby still
 When the day has gone by with its tramp or its toil,
 And your camp-fire you light, and your billy you boil,
 There is comfort and peace in the bowl of your clay
 Or the yarn of a mate who is tramping that way."

THE CHEF SUGGESTS -----

Cooking and eating (assuming you can eat what you've cooked) are so dear to the hearts and so essential to the lives of all bushwalkers that we have dug up two gems on the vital subject - tasty morsels that you shouldn't have any trouble in digesting. Frances Brown of Newcastle certainly seems to have had her share of fun and games with bush cookery experiments while her namesake, our own Jim, gives us the really good oil on damper-making in rare style. Incidentally, Jim's article first appeared about six years ago, but we know he won't mind being resurrected. If you aren't a better cook after reading these you'll have to blame the authors -- Editor.

COOKING ON BUSHWALKS

(With acknowledgement to "The Newcastle Bushwalker" ^{-- Frances Brown})

This is a subject close to every Bushwalker's heart and one on which most have their own views - some guard their recipes with the jealousy usually attributed to blue-ribbon cooks - some are almost as temperamental about their food as French Chefs are reputed to be.

One thing most agree upon is that if the mothers or landladies serve concoctions of the most delectable bushwalking fare - there would be repercussions heard all over Greater Newcastle.

I, for one, can never look at Rye-Vitas, Vita-Wheats or cheese and dates except on bushwalks. The Cooking habits of this Club may be of interest. I hereby take my life in my hands, and I trust that those mentioned will not take it in the manner intended!

Forever vivid in my memory is my first bushwalk - the Annual Camp at Birdie Beach in 1951. I had done little cooking so Peter Miller took pity on me and did the Boy Scout act - but for Peter's kind ministrations I probably would have starved that weekend. The meal that remains foremost in my mind is the Sunday's lunch. This consisted of spaghetti and cheese - it was no doubt delicious (my memory fails at that point - I wonder what Freud would say of this?), but Peter had rather underestimated the cooking time for some unaccountable reason and lunch was served at 4 p.m.

The other future member of this family about three years later went to the Warrumbungles on his second bushwalk and fell into Peter's hands. Peter Miller's rationing methods were somewhat vague and despite protests by Gordon, a relatively small amount of food was taken. Gordon's misgivings were translated into fact when the food gave out. Although supplies were replenished by a trip to Gunnedah they were forced to make porridge from Rye-Vitas - a brew even worse than Granola.

This naturally leads to a story about another Peter - Peter Mitchell this time. Pete is very partial to Granola. On a trip with Warren and Gordon to Tasmania, he insisted on alternating porridge and Granola. This worked with almost mild protests throughout the St. Clair Reserve but when a party of us were occupying a room under a stand in the Queenstown Sport's Ground - a revolt reared its ugly head! A supply of tepid hot water issued from the tap in this room

and one morning Peter cooked his Granola by the mere addition of this luke-warm water - Gordon and Warren took a mouthful of this ... er ... porridge and then refused to have it ever again. Peter bravely ate all of his portion. His courage can never be doubted!

Another tale of this same Peter relates to his first attempt at making a damper. Everyone praises the apple-pie which resulted.

Many meals cooked by Selby Alley taste as if they have alternately fallen into the icing sugar, castor sugar, brown sugar, syrup and honey. One day someone might find Pop surreptitiously sugaring his steak.

On a walk to Kosciusko with Peter Mitchell, Warren Brisley and Gordon, I was the cook for most meals. One night I decided to make fried rice - of course, I had few of the ingredients but a lot of ingenuity - the rice, onions and sultanas were going well until the addition of the cheese - I forgot that cheese melts and the soggy mess which resulted scorns description. However the boys ate well and didn't complain - of course Gordon and I were only engaged then!

Dealing not so much with the cooking but the dividing - Arthur Munro always asserts that whenever Peter serves the rice and sultanas PETER ALWAYS GOT MORE SULTANAS EVERYTIME.

On a trip to the Bogong High Plains, I co-cooked with Ken Angel. After that trip it would take many of my sponges and pikelets to convince Ken that I can now cook reasonably well. One evening I made a dry-veg. and salami curry; it was delicious but took a lot of water to put out the fire. Another night we were making apple sponge. I was blamed for burning the apples and soundly abused when Ken had to clean the billy. Then on top of Mt. Bogong Ken put a damper on to cook and told me to look after it while he and the rest of the party .. were on the summit viewing the sunset and the famous Bogong Moth. A little later Ken was aghast to find that I also had joined the party. He was most worried about the damper and good will was repaired only when he found the damper to be no more burnt than usual.

I can turn the balance a little by telling of Ken's damper and my spoon. On a walk about a year or two ago, Ken had made a damper and was trying to separate it from the billy. My spoon was called for and given. Ken pulled - he tugged - he wheedled - and he finally produced a broken spoon. The damper still adhered fast but by turning the billy upside down and jumping on it he finally produced his masterpiece - covered in charcoal with aluminium inclusions. I still don't know why he didn't eat the billy and throw the damper away.

The calm of the Kirkby marriage was rudely interrupted on a trip to Bungonia Gorge. Kath had forgotten to bring the fish and George was most upset and poor Kath was in strife until George burnt the apricots and Kath was then able to brow-beat him in return.

I frequently take fresh meat on weekend walks and a few years ago on a very hot weekend this meat turned a very pretty pastel green and had a distinct odour; I was persuaded to eat it; I think it was merely

for scientific investigation to find out how bad meat has to be before it would have adverse affects - on this occasion it had none.

Another time I found out just how bad meat could be; I had had a black pudding for three days when I cooked and ate it in conjunction with Cox River water - the combination was too much for me and I was violently unwell.

I cannot really think of anything detrimental about Warwick Magill's cooking so it is almost pointless to mention him but for the fact that he carried a cookery book - the only bushwalker I have known to do so.

The most annoying of eating habits, as all will agree, is when one has prepared a meal of dry veg. and dry biscuits and another of the party produces a delectable meal of grilled steak and onions with eggs - the outcome of this could almost be classed as justifiable homicide.

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TO MAKE DAMPER

-- Jim Brown

For those walkers who propose to make dampers on an extended trip this recipe is provided:

INGREDIENTS: 2 lbs. plain flour)
 Baking Powder) or self-raising flour
 Small quantity of fat
 Salt
 Water
 2 loaves stale bread.

UTENSILS: 2 plates - one large, one small
 1 billy - 2½ pint-size
 1 billy - 4 pint-size
 One walker with long finger nails) May be the
 One walker with keen nose) same person.

METHOD: Roll up shirt sleeves.

Place about 1 lb. of flour on the smaller plate, and add baking powder (fruit salts or wood ash may be used in an emergency, but the use of self raising flour should obviate emergencies). Keep about 1 lb. of flour in reserve (the reason will become apparent later.)

Add water and knead with the hands, and knead with the hands, and knead with the hands. Add more water and knead with the hands, and etc. etc. After a time the dough will begin to flow off the plate. This means that the mixture is too wet. Hence your reserve flour. Sprinkle liberally on the dough, and knead with the hands, etc.

Presently you will notice that the atmosphere is misty with flour dust. This means that the mixture is too dry. By this time the dough has crept up your fingers to the wrist, so you call for more water.

Your assistant explains that the water bucket is empty, so you send him post haste for more. Desist while he is absent, or you will dissipate too much precious flour.

On return, add water generously, and knead with the hands, etc. This will make the dough sloppy so that it will creep up to your elbows (hence rolling up the sleeves). The ball of dough will have diminished to the size of a golf ball. Summon the walker with long finger nails to scrape you down - this can be done by a combination of scratching down to palm level, and "milking" your fingers individually - provided the digits can be isolated.

Transfer the whole mess to the $2\frac{1}{2}$ -pint billy, and add the residue of the flour. Knead with the hands. You will soon find that the dough is unmanageable in the billy, so move it to the larger plate, and continue to knead with the hands. The mixture will soon be too dry, so you must add water sparingly (allow for sweating from forearms) and knead with the hands. The mixture should gradually become damper (go on, laugh, damn you!). Have your long-nailed friends scrape you down periodically, and continue to knead with the hands.

After an interminable time you will have a dough of the right consistency. If you haven't, you'd better give it a go anyhow. Have a final rub-down, and assemble the mixture into one fairly comprehensive rounded lump. Since you have used all your flour, grease the bottom of the 4-pint billy slightly (hence the fat). Pick up the blob of damper and place it centrally in the billy. Invert the lid. Wash the surplus mess off your hands and forearms, scrape away the coals from the bottom of the fire, place the billy there and heap embers around and on top of it.

Bring your keen-nosed walker close to the fire, and move away from the fire or right out of the hut (if in one) yourself. To relax your nerves you may smoke, drink strong tea or coffee, but should not administer alcohol in any form. Keep well away, for the watcher must not be confused with any exotic or unfamiliar smell. All efforts must be bent on sniffing for the first smell of baking. Cooking time will range from ten minutes to an hour and a half.

If, after an hour, no savour of baking is detected, remove the billy from fire and lift lid, pouring in some charcoal in the process. If black, sack the watch-keeper and treat with nasal inhalants and cough mixture: if white, replace in fire (the billy, not the watch-keeper) and repeat the process, until the load has risen well and is nicely browned.

About this time you will discover that you haven't added the salt.

Anyway, it was an interesting experiment and you can eat the two loaves of stale bread (hence the bread - it'll be stale by this time anyway).



PADDY MADE

24.

HAPPY DAYS ARE HERE AGAIN (NEARLY)

Already as we simmer in a tepid bath of salty sweat we are moaning about the humidity, the very humidity we were praying for a few short weeks ago. Heigh ho! The Lord must think we are ungrateful.

The bush, however, is revelling in it and even the blackened stumps of the gum trees which raise their arms in mute supplication are sending out green shoots. Soon greenness will be restored and bushwalking will be a joy again.

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