

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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HERE I BELONG

- "Bull Moose"

Here I belong where the breezes blow
Their songs by a creek not yet run dry,
Here are the roofs that I want to know -
Faded japara and open sky.
Here I belong, but the green hours fly,
Time's hand writes with a tireless pen,
Answer me, eagle, circling high,
How can I live in the city again?

Lowering my gaze to the sunset's glow,
A silhouette peak in the blazing sky -
Alone as the light begins to go,
Solitarily watches with ageless eye
My rambling path as I wandered by.
But leave I must for the world of men
Calls me - Will you mountain be lonely as I
When I return to the city again?

AT OUR MAY MEETING

As the President was unable to be at the meeting, Vice-President Brian Harvey occupied the Chair. The members too sat in chairs - new green metal ones with arm rests - for which we expressed our thanks to the Rationalist Society. They are a strong job, but, though the crashes which punctuate our gatherings were no longer heard, they were not conducive to slumber, and a certain restlessness became evident after the first hour or so.

The meeting opened with a welcome to new member Eileen Taylor. Irene Pridham, another new member, sent her apologies for being unable to attend. Margaret Ryan, our new Hon. Assist. Sec., couldn't get along either, and Jess Martin was at her old post next to the Secretary. The Vice-President welcomed back Malcolm McGregor, whose luggage included 1,000 slides of the U.S. (Social Sec. please note). Malcolm lost no time in getting down to business by pointing out that the minutes of the last meeting recorded that it both opened and closed at 8.45. As this threw some doubt on the possibility of the meeting having been held at all, the starting time was put back half an hour.

In correspondence a letter from Allen Strom requested a donation to the Stead Memorial Fund to be set up for the foundation of a conservation scholarship, an annual research grant, an annual lecture, a plaque, or some other suitable purpose. Tom Moppett's proposal that we should vote £100 from the Era Fund was referred to the sub-committee on the investment of club funds. This committee, though dormant, was reported to be stirring.

A motion by Tom that our conservation policy should be formed in consultation with the N.P.A., either directly or per medium of the Federation, was carried (one dissentient).

Jim Hooper brought up the subject of the purchase of walkie-talkies for the S. & R. Section. It appeared that they would cost some £400 (for enough sets to be effective), and, when they were needed, would probably have flat batteries and other defects through infrequent use. Colin Putt thought they would be all right provided someone could be found to do the searching while the searchers twiddled. Malcolm foresaw the need for more experts and things, and counselled going back to smoke signals. It was decided we didn't want walkie-talkies.

Tom Moppett told us that 45 scientists interested in the Kosciusko area had recommended setting aside as a primitive area the tops between Jagungal and the Geehi, including the western faces below Kosciusko and Townsend. The Kosciusko State Park Act enabled 10% of the park to be declared a primitive area and this tract contained a range of environments unequalled in Australia. It contained plants not found anywhere else. It was resolved that the club favoured Myles Dunphy's proposal for a primitive area between the Upper Murray and Snowy, south of Dead Horse Gap, and that the Act be amended to remove the 10% limit so that the tops too could be made a primitive area. It was pointed out that the

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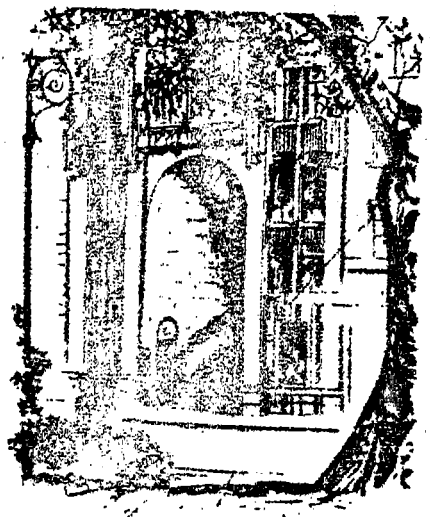
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scientists' findings in effect meant that all the country above the dams should be a primitive area.

Tom also drew our attention to the good news that Allan Strom had been appointed Chief Guardian of Fauna. Malcolm moved and it was carried, that the Club recommend Tom Moppett for the vacancy on the Fauna Protection Panel created by Allan's appointment.

Permission was given for Pam Baker's Judo Club to take up a collection after their demonstration in the Clubroom on 24th June.

The meeting closed at 9.45 p.m. after some oblique insinuations of long-windedness at meetings from Jack Wren, a vote of thanks to Jess for taking the minutes, and an announcement by the Secretary that he could make good use of a baby's cot.

WHO'D BE A BAULKER - (PART IV)

- "Mulga"

or

"The Harassed Weeds"

which is not a tale of Scottish cloth,
but rather of clottish sloth.

One of the delights of having an outer suburban cottage is in growing a garden which reminds you enough of the bush so that you don't have to go walking and can stay at home to grow a garden which reminds you of the bush, etc., but it's still good to get away from it all now and again, especially when you leave the day before six inches of rain overnight, and even if you run into foul weather at Kosciusko and rain in Melbourne and come home worn out to find that

The weeds across the garden grew in wildest profusion.
'Twas hard to pick just what was what
Which weeds were flowers and which were not
So perfect the confusion.

I grabbed my pitchfork firm in hand and started off with
What matter if I dig up plants, relish.
For is not life just full of chance
And other things as hellish?

But someone else had other thoughts and reached a quick
She tied a ribbon round each plant decision,
And round I think too some that aren't
To guide my sure incision.

She must have left her glasses off by error in her speed,
For nowhere can a flower be seen
Just row onrow of waving green -
Varieties of weed.

We'll have to start again from scratch to build our garden
With lawns of concrete coloured green, fair
Which thoughtless people think obscene,
But in which weeds are rare.

The rest can be of rocks and pots with cactuses and stuff,
No mowing lawn, no digging weed,
From all back-breaking labour freed,
'CAUSE I HAVE HAD ENOUGH!!

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: IN TASMANIA'S SOUTH WEST (Part 3)

- Frank Rigby

The hot, breathless sunshine poured down from a cloudless sky. Four tiny dots, dwarfed into insignificance by the vastness of plains and mountains, barely seemed to move along the southern foothills of Mt. Solitary. Every so often these strange shapes would stop and then split in halves as bodies and bulging packs were separated. After an interval the eight would simplify to four again and movement could once more be detected.

Such was the scene witnessed by a circling eagle the morning that Joan, Arthur, Henry and I set out from Lake Pedder to trek to Mt. Anne. Fortunately, we were too much alive to be of anything but passing interest to circling eagles - the weather, so frustrating during our stay at Pedder, had come good with a vengeance; the rugged grandeur of that sunlit landscape had filled us brimfull of admiration; and with the adventure of Mt. Anne ahead of us, we felt an exciting tingle of anticipation well up within us.

A clump of small trees, practically the only shelter on the plain, afforded us a shady lunch spot where we could let our restless spirits wander over the sharp peaks and dips of the Arthur Range. For the moment it was enough to admire from afar, but inwardly I knew the Arthurs would bring me back to Tassie some other day. Replenished, we pushed on around the end of Solitary where we began to really appreciate the full magnificence of the Annes for the first time. ("A mighty hunk of masonry!" as Arthur would exclaim.) The eye would inevitably be drawn to the peak

6.

of Anne itself, truly a regal queen of all she surveyed. The whole of that long afternoon we crossed the button grass plains, heading directly for the foot of the Mt. Eliza climbing ridge. The Huon River, by legend a fearsome obstacle at times, was this day no more than a harmless brook. Fortunately, with a full quota of photographers, there were plenty of diversions to temper the bash and it was always amusing to study the ridiculous postures adopted by the wild flower experts, Henry and Arthur, to say nothing of the endless discussions on the higher technicalities of close-up photography. Our goal was now well in sight but what's this? Surprise of surprises! Without warning we had suddenly stumbled on the most delightful little creek running fair slap-bang through the middle of those soggy plains. The sparkling clear water ran swiftly over a bed of clean smooth stones, so reminiscent of our own Blue Mountains. After consulting the map I realised that it was the lower reaches of Condemnion Ck., whose source lies high up on the slopes of Mt. Anne - no wonder it was the best water in Tasmania! We made a pleasant camp amidst a clump of trees higher up the creek, just where it runs past the foot of the climbing ridge. It was mighty good to relax through the long summer twilight and put a mug of soup, a giant plate of "Henry's Meal" (see Henry for the secret formula) and a couple of syrup dumplings in the place where they ought to go. As we lingered over coffee (or was it rum cocoa) and discussed plans for Anne, dark clouds came sweeping up from the south - in ten minutes a cloudless sky had been transformed into a distinctly ominous one. But that's so typical of the South-West; changes in the weather for better or worse can occur with such frightening speed. However, the weather did not seem to matter then, not when bodies as tired as ours were being called to that haven of tents and sleeping bags we had come to appreciate so much -----

But in the morning it was a different story - the low and threatening cloud ceiling took the edge off our enthusiasm. The mountains which had surrounded us in all their glory the previous day had suddenly ceased to exist. Eliza's climbing ridge disappeared into a forbidding sea of grey less than half-way up its length - the conditions were not exactly promising for an exposed high camp but our hopes would not be dashed. Our plan was to carry two days food up to a spot just underneath the top of Mt. Eliza, a recognised campsite from which the Mt. Anne plateau can be comfortably explored. So, stringing up the excess food and gear from a tree, we set off up the ridge and reached our objective after a steady two hour climb. Several members of the Launceston Walking Club were already encamped, straining at the leash for an attempt on Anne at the first break in the weather. As the first bout of icy rain stung our faces we carved two tent sites out of the small dead timber which covers the ridge at this point. I might mention the necessity of placing a stout log across the bottom end of the tent to prevent sleeping bodies from sliding out of cover down the 30° slope. A biting, southerly provided a hint of what conditions could be like in prolonged bad weather. Later in the afternoon the swirling all-around-east gave some sign of breaking and a two-club party hurried to the tops, but it was all so much wishful thinking; once or twice the murk thinned out to give us tantalising glimpses of great boulder-strewn slopes and

plunging ridges; there was nothing for it but to return to camp with fingers crossed for the day to come.

After tossing and turning through one of the coldest nights I can ever remember, I awoke to Arthur's lusty shouts of "It's fine! I tell you it's fine! What are you doing on your backs?" As it was barely five o'clock and I needed external supports to keep my eyelids open through not having slept since the thermometer dipped "below", I could not answer him and still be polite. It was a struggle to raise the body for a peep at the world beyond the tent's flap but it was worth it. From a pale but clear sky above the freshly-risen sun slanted down to wake up the landscape spread beneath our camp like a huge relief map. We looked down here and there onto the tops of fleecy clouds, clouds that were to gradually dissolve as a promise of warmth grappled with the chill morning air, and there up above was the peak of Anne, waiting so calmly for us. There also close at hand were the Tassie crew, already well advanced with breakfast. The challenge or the shame, I'm not sure which, was overpowering - I shed my sleeping bag and jumped out of the tent with a whoop! (This article has not yet been corrected by my companions who may hold their own opinions).

Equipped with one only day pack a very excited party started off for what promised to be a day of days. As we climbed higher, wide panoramic views to the south and west began to open up and even Frenchman's Cap, looking like the gabled end of a barn, could be picked out on the horizon. But as we breasted the top of the plateau, four pairs of eyes were suddenly held spellbound by the magnificent sight of Federation Peak playing hide and seek with a line of low horizon clouds. It was then that I became convinced that one day I would have to plan a trip to Federation - once seen it could never be forgotten. Indeed, in the excitement of recording this thrilling scene four times over with the tele lenses, we almost forgot that Mt. Anne, so close at hand, was still to be climbed. Fortunately, this day, unlike most others in the high regions of Tasmania, improved with age and by nine o'clock, barely a cloud remained in a sky of deepest blue. Strolling along the tops towards our objective, there was so much to see on every side and so many tempting visions for our cameras that I'd rather not say how long it took to cover those two miles. I remember looking back at one stage and seeing a tiny figure on the skyline darting from one edge of the plateau to the other. Poor Henry, his photographic impulses just would not let him come on. Eventually we were together again, climbing up among the crumbling dolerite columns of which Mt. Anne is made; and what a terrific thrill to stand upon that summit on such a day! Just about everything that was worth seeing in southern Tasmania could be seen and appreciated; even Precipitous Bluff, practically on the southern coastline, stood out clear and sharp against the blue sky. Just to complete the picture, we were again visited by our old friend Lloyd Jones of the Aero Club. He flew the Cessna over from Lake Pedder and buzzed us a friendly twice, skimming over our heads so low that we could easily enjoy the astonished expressions on the faces of his tourist passengers. That 'plane

covered the distance from Pedder to Anne in five minutes flat, a journey that would take we bushwalkers two full days - but at least we could stand there on our own two feet with a vital pride in the achievement behind us.

Lunchtime saw a very entranced party satisfying their scenic appetites with what surely must be one of the most beautiful natural landscapes in the world. From the rocky eastern edge of the plateau our gaze shot down plummeting precipices into the lovely blue depths of Judd's Charm two thousand feet below. Across the lake the incredibly steep slopes of Mt. Sarah Jane, completely covered by the densest and greenest mantle of vegetation (something for the tigers) I have ever seen, rose up nearly to our own level. Far beyond the southern tip of the Charm and some intriguing hanging lakes cradled in their own circle of mountains, the sheer slab of Federation Peak dominated the razor-sharp horizon of the Arthur Range. These features stood out in their attraction and competition for the eye, but even without them it would be a sight that no true bushwalker would be likely to forget.

The rest of the day was spent in leisurely exploring the many interesting features of this remarkable mountain mass. Wild flowers there were a-plenty and of course Henry and Arthur were in their element while Joan and I contented ourselves with trying to photograph the landscape at large. Finally, after almost twelve hours of exposure in that brilliant sunshine, it was no hardship to return to our high camp and think about the inner man, for we had had our fill in overflowing measure. At twenty minutes to nine we sipped coffee and watched with wonderment as the sun, distorted into the shape of a fiery ten gallon hat, sank into the ocean fifty miles to the south-west. It had been OUR day from beginning to end, and as the full moon peeked over Mt. Anne, we slid into our sleeping bags to sleep the sleep which only the great outdoors can bring to bushwalkers.

The next morning it was time to be off the mountain. Only three days remained of our trip, the three days it would take us to walk out to Maydena. Only the continuing spell of fine weather tempered our regret at leaving Mt. Anne behind. And so, quietly, each engrossed in his own thoughts, we descended the ridge and looked back, and looked back again. At Condominion Ck. the gear was recovered and the loads reorganised - ah, that loathsome lump was getting lighter at last and it was not hard to take. Lunch and a well-earned bath at Huon Crossing and camp at Woody Island set the pattern of the day, a good day made even better by a memorable campsite and a still more memorable menu. From our tents pitched in a clearing amid beautiful gum trees, we looked out at Mt. Anne again for the last time, its peak ablaze in the low rays of the evening sun. Spread over a respectable period of about three hours, it was a pleasure to engage in a marathon eating effort of six "courses" - tea, soup, salmon fritters and mashed potato, apricots and mellow, coffee and finally rum cocoa for a nightcap. The forty odd salmon fritters conjured out of a 1 lb. tin of salmon were a masterpiece of bushwalking economy. The one trouble was that we burnt too many of them when the lot of us raced out on two occasions to take pictures of the sunset. (Like all sunset

pictures, the colours improved no end after the first impetuous shots and we graciously gave Kodak a second dividend.) "A mighty trip", breathed Joan with a sigh as we bedded down onto a soft mattress of cut bauera, little dreaming that on the morrow we would be cursing this innocent looking shrub as we pushed through it along the track.

How well I remember our first encounter with the enemy. Previously we had enjoyed our arguments with the local walkers on long trousers versus shorts for Tassie bushwalking. "Wait till you strike our bauera," they laughed. We were not convinced then, but after braving it for a few hundred yards in shorts, we were forced to admit defeat. It was then that Arthur could not find his trousers; every nook and cranny of the "Mountain Mule" was examined but although the baths became more bloody, still no long pants were forthcoming. It was a shorts job for Arthur that day, and a rather painful one at that. Only when he went to bed that night did he unearth his precious pants - right down in the bottom of his sleeping bag cover. I have steadfastly refrained from setting down in print the muffled language which filtered out from the inside of his tent that night.

Those last two days were really enjoyable for their variety - good solid track (?) walking through country that was always delightfully changing its character. There were the cool damp myrtle forests with their vines and mosses and their atmosphere of great age and decay; (how can we forget the stumbling over the interminable trees fallen across the track); there were the open button grass plains with their quartzite outcrops, the stretches of green forest where giant ferns formed a canopy above the track and the pleasant interlude of gum trees with good burning wood, and of course, not forgetting the patches of unspeakable Tasmanian mud to make life interesting. Personal incidents and laughs were two bob a dozen with a party of such character as ours and we revelled in the life - it was bushwalking and comradeship at its very best. All too soon we found ourselves surrounded by the signs of civilisation, until at the end of our last day four bushwalkers with all the character of a long tough trip stamped upon them walked quietly into the little town of Maydena. It was here that the famous Tasmanian hospitality treated us so unexpectedly and so unstintingly to glorious hot baths and home-cooked food. Civilisation would indeed have been hard to take without such compensations.

And so our trip had ended, as end they all must; that is except for the hundreds of colour slides and the bragging and the endless story-telling and the reminiscences, and as far as all that was concerned, it had only just begun.

THE END

ANYONE WANT A BAG?

The sleeping variety. Standard length Paddymade sleeping bag in good order - £4. See Eric Pegram or ring XB.4401.

YOUR WALKING GUIDEWalk No.

- 57 Main interest of this walk is the Davies Canyon Section with rock scrambling and some rope work might be necessary. The walk back to Katoomba is river and track walking. Cost - 52/2.
- 58 An easy walk through the scenic Walgon Valley with the added attraction of the famous "glow worm tunnel". Cost - 29/5.
- 59 A good test walk through country that deserves more attention. All types of walking with kodachromatic views makes a camera an essential. Cost - 22/2.
- 60 "The Mount Solitary Test Walk". An excellent walk for prospectives who have done little or no mountain trips. A medium climb of 2,000 feet, then a good track to Katoomba. Excellent views of Cox and Kedumba Valley. Cost - 22/2.
- 61 A pretty walk along creek and river.
- 62 A good Grose River trip with the ever popular Blue Gum Forest. Rock scrambling along river. Walk would be accepted as a test walk. Cost - 26/-.
- 63 A rock climbing trip to the famous Three Sisters. A combined climbing weekend with the Sydney Section of the New Zealand Alpine Club and the Sydney Rock Climbers. Cost - 22/2.
- 64 A typical Admiral Trip in the Glenbrook area. The walk would be interesting. Cost - 12/3.
- 65 A good test walk in the Shoalhaven area and Bungonia Gorge. Walk includes two 2,000 feet climbs with panoramic views. Cost - 37/5.
- 66 A medium test walk through the lower Grose River with some ridge walking. Cost - 16/3.
- 67 A scenic walk in the Hawkesbury River area with good tracks and some patchy scrub.

WALK NO. 65 JULY 4-5-6 SHOALHAVEN R-BUNGONIA

LEADER - Ron Knightley. This walk will NOT go as per programme, as transport will be by car from Sydney to Long Point and back. Numbers will be limited - first come, first booked. The Saturday is rough and tough, with about 4,000 feet of uphill and 2,000 feet down. Sunday is easier, with a mere 2,000 feet down and up. Moderate walkers need not be scared, though, as some white anting seems likely on the Saturday.

LIKE TO THROW OTHER PEOPLE'S WEIGHT AROUND?

Then come to the Judo Display on the 25th June and see how it's done. A collection will be taken to assist a fund for purchasing Judo Mats.

PLEASE NOTE: This is an alteration to the Social Programme where 25th June is marked as a Members Slide Night.

THE SMOKE OF THEIR PASSING

by Puffing Billy
(Old Member, retired)

"Wet," said the lone female in the car.

"Wet?" said the driver. "You're high and dry in Hatswell's Taxi Service.

He had a point there. Albeit the gutters of Blackheath had overflowed as we stepped into the cab and the fording of Megalong Creek had been an astro-nav. job, we were quite dry in the car. Purring smoothly it bore us southwards toward Carlon's.

Came the hill by the church. Purr - chugachug - cough - splutter - pssss. With a long sigh, the engine took refuge in union rules. Opening the door and putting his head out to see the way, the driver let the vehicle run back down the hill. It would have been alright if only they'd built the road where the rear wheels went; but alas! the road went round a corner that we didn't.

Not being registered for bushwalking, the car responded not to further calls upon its energy and refused to budge, despite the pushing of four puffing males.

There was, however, no trace of concern on the driver's face, for he knew that behind us were two more carloads of walkers high and dry in Hatswell's Taxi Service, blissfully unconscious of the wetting to come.

They soon caught up, and there was Brian Harvey, Jack Gentle, Ernie French, Bob O'Hara and all, high and not-so-dry debogging the bomb.

Back on the road, we piled in once more and were soon being disgorged from the taxis at the top of the road down to Carlon's. Rain gone; no-one missing yet - all was well. We waved a cheer to our driver friends and sauntered off into the night.

The road-bash down the hill was merely an appetiser. In Green Gully we found Ron Baker fossicking around with a torch. He was apologising profusely to a cow: "You don't really look like Brian. Wrong shape, side on. But it's hard to tell from behind." He'd gone up early with Jean Harvey, and between the two of them they'd not only organised a cupatea at the house, but beds for the whole party. That is, provided we didn't regard Jack Gentle as part of the whole party. He had to be content with a tot of rum and a loose floorboard while the rest of us had a tot of rum and soft mattresses.

Early on Anzac Day, our energetic leader was stirring us up and chattering away about moving off at eight o'clock. Sure enough, by 8.30 or 9.30 we were strung out up the slope like Carlon's cows and headed for the Black Dog track.

In front - out in front, mark you - was me. Me, who's walked a thousand miles on test walks and always at the rear on the pretext of whipping in the stragglers; me, who's worn out the toes of a hundred boots through treading on the heels of the second-last member of the party; me, whose standing instruction to S & R is always, "Look where the rearguard camped last night - that's where I'll be tomorrow." And here I was, in front.

Two lengths away were Pam Baker and Audrey Kenway; a short head to John Luxton and Peter Cummings, Bob O'Hara and John Proudfoot; with half a furlong to Col Ferguson; three lengths to a bunched up field of Jack Gentle, Margaret Ryan, Isobel Wilkie, Eileen Taylor, Canada Dry and Beryl Collins; closely followed by Ron Baker, Ernie French and Jean Harvey, with the Leader tailed off last.

At the gate I counted them through and slipped into my accustomed position, whipping in the straggling leader.

The day was cool and the pace a killer. You couldn't hear the footsteps for the swishing of the bushes, and it wasn't long before I was finding my way, not by the sight of the party in front, but by the smoke of their passing. They were doing at least a mile and a half to the hour - or an hour and a half to the mile, I forget which.

Unerringly the leader guided the flock along the Black Dog track and rested at the cross roads under Debert's Knob to let your raconteur catch up.

Lunch at the top of the Faithful Hound was quite civilised, really, Ron Baker being the only one to drink his tea straight from the billy. He claimed that he'd forgotten his mug but we suspected lightweight tactics.

Some Federation officials, accompanied by a group of Y.H.A.C.C. types, arrived as we were leaving and blithely took over our campfires. They, too, were headed for Splendour Rock and we idly wondered if they'd try the same cunning trick at nightfall.

Onwards and upwards went the leader, followed by the six hundred, tailed up by John Clubfoot and me. He'd caught on - it's so much cleaner when other bods have wiped all the dew from the bushes and the carbon black from the stumps.

Black Horse Gap was our next breather. It's a steep little scramble to a short-tail like me, and by the time I caught up I was wondering if the wreath I was carrying for the morrow's sunrise service might be used for me instead. Ernie French took it from me for the Wombat Parade stretch - apparently he felt more in need of it than I.

Jean Harvey led the girls along the Parade, and after a discreet interval we males followed. Wombat Parade is so called for two very good reasons - first, because there's ample evidence of the presence of wombats, and second because the boulders are

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so big that you feel as if your legs are as short as a wombat's, half grown.

At the drop into Warrigal Gap the cliffs are broken up into a stairway; only it was built in Gargantua and us Liliputians had no ropes. As Margaret's vital statistics are legs 20 inches (length, not round the thighs) and arms 25 inches there was some conjecture as to the ability of herself and others to negotiate the drop; but our gallant leader mustered Jack Gentle, John Sixfoot, etc. into a chain male and manhandled the girls down one by one.

The girls regained their dignity down in the saddle and swung up on to the flat top of Merrigal with true bushwalker rhythm. As we intended camping in Merri-merrigal Saddle, water was gathered from the top of the mount - out of the shallow holes in the sandstone at the rate of a quarter of an mug per dip. We began by carefully skimming the water so as not to scoop up mud and twigs, but finished the last 2,000 dozen scoops by bailing sand, leaves, humus and all. The only objecting voice pointed out that in her native Oirland such peat bogs were frequented only by sheep and cattle. Well? ...?

A few short steps brought us to the col, and yours truly remembered too late a long-forgotten lesson; always be in front at the end of the day. Having slipped once again into the

rearguard position, there was no place left for my tent, in which I had graciously offered to shelter Pam Baker and Audrey Kenway. I was just contemplating the problem of pitching camp over a clump of Xanthorreae when the two girls started hollering that they'd already reserved a site in the executive suite - in among Brian and Jean, Canada, Ron Baker and Col Ferguson. I suggested that it might be better to put up with the Xanthorreas but, chivalrous to the end, acceded to the girls' request.

I had to admit that the site was roomy and comfortable; only we discovered later that the roominess was due to its being the confluence of two well-trodden tracks - one to Splendour Rock and the other to the water. Ever tried sleeping on the Circular Quay overway? If you have, you'll see the similarity in the setup.

As it was only mid-afternoon, we quickly despatched a brew of peat-bog and tea and took a stroll out to Splendour Rock. An overcast sky robbed the scene of colour but the mere majesty of the view made the walk worth while. We left for camp as the Federation president and secretary finished installing the new log-book container.

Having caught on, I was first back in camp and soon had the fire coked up. Perhaps at this juncture I could slip in a serious word of commendation for my camping companions. Pam had already stacked up enough wood for a cheery fire all through the evening and Audrey had built a dam in the gully to impound a meagre trickle she had discovered. Before long, even Irish pronounced the dammed water fit for human consumption - only she didn't define "consumption".

A starlit evening was spent in quiet yarning by the campfire - culture, lotteries, theology and Dormie's 5%. Then we snuggled into the down. The bench order was; Audrey, Pam, me. All slept well except Audrey - the tent was abdulled and Pam spent the night rolling in Audrey's direction. I soon had the tent to myself, with Audrey pushed out to shiver under the stars. The next night we reversed the order and put Pam on the outside - so she rolled the other way and pushed us both out. How's that for gratitude?

The leader's rugby league whistle and Ron Baker's shouted "Rise and Shine" (he has a built-in public address system, butcher's picnic style) brought startled forms from their bags at 5.15 next morning, just as a herd stampeded through the confluence aforementioned. As the dust settled we were told that they were C.M.W.'s and others, headed for the sunrise service.

Dawn found us flannel flowers pounding the same path and just as the sun rose into a cloudless sky we witnessed the simple but impressive commemoration service. It would be sacrilege for one so flippant as I to attempt the description of this moving ceremony, so I'll leave it for someone more coherent.

Back to Merri-merrigal for breakfast, and then down through the scrub to Warrigal Creek, where we rested a while before climbing on to the haunches of Blue Dog. There's something serene and

peaceful about a fag in the calm sunshine of early morning and John Stubfoot and I awoke from our reverie to find that all the others had dispersed into the bush. As their packs had gone with them, we divined that the dispersion was permanent.

So we up packs and after 'em.

Now, you who've been on Blue Dog will remember that there's a little timbered saddle about ten yards across, just before you get onto the ridge proper, to swing right and then left, hoping that you haven't swung too far right or too far left - last time I was there I swung too far left and did four of Merrigal Creek's waterfalls before darkness caught me. I didn't know then that the fourth one was the last one and that the Cox was flowing quietly just round the bend from the boulders on which I tried to sleep.

John Bumblefoot reached the saddle first and he was looking quite worried as I caught up.

"Look," he said, pointing at the ground.

I looked.

"Can't see a thing," I said.

"That's right," said John. "There are no footprints. We're in front of them."

In front! Horrors! What if we took a wrong turn and got lost? S & R would search the rearguard positions and I wouldn't be there. Visions of a puzzled frown on Paddy's face floated before my eyes. Or was it an enigmatic smile?

"Oh, come off it," said I. "We couldn't be. They've crossed just down the gully!"

"We better make sure," said John. "Let's yell."

As the echoes of our cries died away, faint calls came back.

"They're over there," said I pointing north.

"Ditto ditto," said John Footrot pointing south.

We cooeed again.

"They're down there," said I pointing north and south.

"No, up there," said John Webfoot pointing east and west.

Trouble was, we were both right. How were we to know that two other parties were also converging on Blue Dog?

We yelled yet again.

"Over there!" we cried together, both pointing east - we knew, because the response had sounded like a public address system, butchers' picnic style.

Soon we were with them once again, metaphoric tails between our legs - and whether it was by accident or design I know not, but when we got mobile again someone else was guarding the rear.

Up and down, along, around, about - a half hour of this kind of progress and we were looking down on the Breakfast Creek CoxRiver junction. Like terriers after a snake the party began the long drop down the Blue Pup. Something went wrong, though, because by the time Irish and I had done a hundred feet the rest were out of sight in a flurry of dust and flying pebbles - and yet, as we two scrambled out on to the banks of the Cos, there was only Brian to greet us with fire going and billy on.

As the first lady down, Irish was rechristened the Greyhound and there was an impish gleam in her eyes when the misguided ones began trickling in a few minutes later.

"What happened to you?" she asked with studied innocence.

"Well," began Jack Gentle. (This paragraph censored. Sufficient to say that the Blue Pup was renamed the Blue Bitch - Ed.)

As we munched lunch a whirlwind passed along the bank, over Breakfast Ck., and disappeared round the bend towards Harry's River.

"Whawassat?" I asked, startled.

It was Michael Elfick with some S.T.C. confreres, setting a Hilltop-to-Katoomba record - over the hundred miles in two days. I made a mental note never to be following an Elfick sortie.

At the Harry's River cross-over your narrator took a well-merited bath by the simple process of walking where the river bottom wasn't. If my teeth chatter from here on, you'll know that it's only because I had no change of clothes and henceforth had to travel, eat and sleep in my wet duds, even when pushed out into the cold by Pam.

I must have had aquatic amnesia, for my mind is a blank until 4.45 p.m., when John Sorefoot and I were to be seen lounging in the grass at the mouth of Galong Ck. John answered my querulous look by saying, "We're in front."

"Of course," said I. "I made a mental note to be the first in camp tonight, and my tent goes right there on that lush patch of lawn."

Having picked the site I departed up the creek to gather firewood. Alas! I omitted to mark the spot, "Reserved for an old retired member," and by the time I got back Peter Cummings had a tent peg where my hip would have gone and a fire where my feet were to rest. Foiled again.

Breakfast next morning was interrupted by the rugby league whistle and the public address system.

"Moving off in FIVE minutes."

They did, too; Ron Baker and Col Ferguson up Galong Ck. to their cars at Carlon's, and the rest up the Cox.

Last again, I trailed them to the bottom of the Six Foot track where I found cups of tea all ready a-boiling.

The long, steady trudge up to the Megalong was the first ~~work~~ while climb of the trip and in my wish to get it over quickly I hit the front. Onward and upward, stride by stride, and I was soon out of sight of all the rest. Of all the rest? Well, no - not quite. As I cleared the trees at the top of the track I became conscious of someone breathing down my neck. It was Beryl Collins, flimsiest-looking of the prospectives, but quite disappointed that I didn't carry on at the same speed. I explained that it would be polite to wait for the rest, trying not to let her see the heaving of my chest.

At the causeway we found Ron and Colin, fire going and tea ready. I had to admit that Brian's organisation was sine qua non. Not only had he organised this advance preparation, but also portage in the Ferguson car and Baker buggy for our packs.

There was room for some of the girls as well. Eileen Taylor, having sprained her ankle, was first priority. Then Pam Baker discovered that she had to catch an early train; then Canada - well, now, let's be frank about this. Let's admit that Isobel Wilkie and Audrey Kenway were the only two ladies Spartan enough to walk out via Nellie's Glen.

By the time us males and the two girls reached Explorers' Tree, the automobiles were waiting to whisk us into the All British in Katoomba. Now, in case you think the All British is a pub, it's not - it's a cafe; but it was just as good as, because Brian's organisation had extended even to this and despite the presence of The Law at an adjacent table we were soon washing down our fillets mignon with beer and hock.

The walk was over; but if you think this is the end of the story you're wrong. It goes on for a long time yet - hilarity every time we meet in the club; chuckles over kodachromes at odd times; and I still haven't got all the grass seeds out of my sox. In fact, the story is probably just beginning, because I give notice of a motion at the next Annual General to appoint Messrs. Baker and Ferguson as honorary chauffeurs to official test walks and Brian Harvey as permanent honorary organiser of post-walk catering at the All British.

And I'm sure that all my companions on that trip will carry with acclamation (magno clamore) my vote of thanks to an excellent leader.

COMMEMORATION SERVICE AT SPLENDOUR ROCK

On the morning of 26th April, just as the sun rose clear above the cloud sea in the valley of the Cox, Federation President Paul Driver led an assembly of bushwalkers in a moving ceremony to mark the tenth anniversary of the dedication of the memorial plaque at Splendour Rock.

Brian Harvey had prepared an order of service which, although of beautiful simplicity in the bushwalker fashion, paid adequate tribute to those who fell in World War II so that we who remained might still enjoy the hills they knew and loved so well.

With nearly a hundred walkers massed at the Rock, Paul opened the service with this address :-

"Today we are assembled here to commemorate the 10th Anniversary of the unveiling of this Bushwalkers' War Memorial, and at the same time to celebrate Anzac Day, although in this regard, due to time and distance, we are perhaps a little late, but nevertheless not lacking in the Anzac Spirit. Today therefore is OUR Anzac Day.

When War came in 1939, the response to the call from the Bushwalking Movement was truly magnificent. We do not know exactly how many joined the Armed Services, but we do know that at the peak period there were no less than 172 men and women serving their King and Country.

It is gratifying to have so many young people present and to see a new generation of walkers at this Service. Some of those here today probably barely remember the catastrophe that tore the world apart from 1939 to 1945, but those young persons come with the same sincere feelings as those who fought and suffered during those dark years.

On the back of the Order of Service you will find the names of those who did not return. When reading those names you will notice that some of the Clubs to which these men belonged are no longer operating, but I feel that those Clubs are here today and are represented by the new Clubs which have come into being over the intervening years.

Anzac Day is a day of commemorative thought for the past and for the realistic consideration for what may be ahead in the near future - for ourselves, our friends and the fellow-people in other lands, and for our children and their children in times to come.

Let us therefore commemorate today those Bushwalkers from our Clubs, the unknown Bushwalkers and the citizens of Australia who died at a time when the happiness and security of their loved ones, and of their homeland, was endangered. We honour them and we also honour those who gave them birth and grieve with those who have suffered by their death.

Today we also commemorate those who were hurt in mind or body, those who suffered at the hands of an un-Christian enemy and who went to war as young men and returned as old. And, last but not least, those of our Armed Forces who were not harmed by the ravages of war in which they were active participants, but who, happily and knowingly, risked as much as those who did not return.

Realising that all people of all countries must suffer from war and knowing that there is no such reality as victory, we must really try to work to avoid future wars whilst at the same time necessarily preparing ourselves to defend our decent way of life.

We think back today to our own Bushwalkers who died in the service of their country and hope that the sacrifice they made was not in vain. Let us determine that we will do all in our power to make this a better world, this country a better country and ourselves better individuals and that the time may come when wars will be but a distant memory."

Brian Harvey, Stan Cottier (C.M.W.) and Ron Knightley assisted in the service, and all present joined in singing "Abide With Me" and "O God, Our Help In Ages Past".

A laurel wreath was laid on the plaque, and a tin containing a substantial log book was installed to mark the occasion.

"At the going down of the sun, and in the morning" - we remembered them.

MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT BY PLUTO THE EX-MARINER

A certain member wishes to record that the Barrington Tops trip on the Easter weekend was one of the most enjoyable ever under the direction of a "Snowy leader above the snowless snowline. However, the said member fears that the "aesthetic comprehension" of "Brown's Cows" was tantamount to appalling.

The member carried an eighteen ounce portable radio in the pocket of his pack. Being some 500 feet above the main party on the 3,000 foot climb to the Barrington Trig, the member decided to rest. (REST was a necessity as he was somewhat suffering from altitude lassitude.)

Exuding, soft and low, from the pocket of his pack came the strain of Beethoven. Sitting in the grass beside the track and drawing contentedly on a cigarette, the member gazed his fill of far horizons and rugged mountain ranges. What could be more peaceful with soft music and the vision-splendid of the environment set about his feet? His gaze meandered down the steep slope.

Slobbering slavishly up the festering slope was the main party. Being at peace with the world, he watched and puffed (and puffed) contentedly at his cigarette. Like so many ants the main party drew nearer. Those strugglers --- the ants, drew closer and became as people. Faces puffed nearer and suddenly the member's enjoyable reverie was broken most horribly by the imprecations, nee profanity of members who averred their distaste of "Beethoven beating around the bush". Such was the comprehension of these breathless braves. The member was "profoundly shocked" at their lack of aesthetic taste. It must have been the altitude lassitude.

Perhaps the member should explain his use of the term "Brown's Cows". It was really an oversight, or more correctly, a lack of sight on the part of two members. The first member, by an oversight, lost a pair of scissors. He decided to go back to the place where he left them. The second member, with some insight, obligingly decided to wait where he was until the first member got back from his search. The second member by the way was the owner of the scissors.

With further insight, the second member moved around the edge of the swamp and waited directly opposite for the first to come across with the scissors. The first member was unable to sight the scissors (no sight) and returned and walked across to the second member but unfortunately failed to drown in the swamp --- a matter of insight.

Looking over the second member's shoulder across to the distant tree-line of Edward's Plains, the first member remarked about the sheep pottering up the slope over there. The second member turned and looked across the plain. He was not quite so short-sighted, and it could have been insight when he remarked: "Them's not sheep - them's Brown's Cows". It must be unsightly to see people with four legs when in actual fact they only wear two?

On the Sunday night at 7.30 p.m. (1930 hours Admiral time - bless him), the member decided to listen to the GOON SHOW (being one day's walk from anywhere and only 2,000 feet below the roof of Australia).

Unfortunately the little portable radio was a victim of the dew and had an inconvenient bout of laryngitis, and could only speak in whispers. The member is still hazy as to how he got his injuries (crushed ankles, broken ribs and cracked cranium, etc.) He is still wondering whether they were caused by weight of members or weight of opinion?

P.S. The trip was a "dogged" one (doubly so). Ask Digby and Snow for the BIRE facts. Who ended up in the Allyn River instead of the Williams. Who nearly followed them but took to the jungle instead. Who --- well, never mind. Who's going to write up the story? It was a good trip.

THE HUNDRED MILER

- Mick Elfick

The rail motor slid to a stop and the few locals wasted no time in scurrying off towards the warm lights of their houses. After waiting what seemed an eternity while John fixed up his battered headlamp, we splashed down the muddy road towards Coates Farm.

By the time we had reached the farmhouse our "waterproof" parkas were leaking quite steadily and in a very black mood we did a close circuit of the farmhouse trying to recognise any familiar landmarks. This was rather fruitless since the night was dark and wet, our torches and memories were dim and Coates had apparently renewed his fencing after the recent bushfires. Well we just blundered around until we came on a track which led us on to an old road which we mistook for Starlight's Trail. In actual fact we were now travelling in a circle and about 20 minutes later we stepped back on to the road leading to Hilltop. It took us another 25 minutes hard walking before we finally reached the farm for a second time. This time we took no chances, but knocked on the door and asked which way we should go.

At six the next morning we set out across the wet paddocks and had little trouble in picking up Starlight's Trail and following it to the Nattai. Here a split in the party nearly occurred. I'd stopped for a second to tie my pack together with my parka (I'd ripped it on a barbed wire fence the night before and my falling over several minutes before had caused it to fall to pieces) and after fixing it ran down the ridge to McArthur's Flat. Somewhat taken aback to find no John or Fred, I called out to them - the echoes replied - then assuming that they were ahead of me, I was just about to charge off in hot pursuit when the echoes behind me called out some very harsh words indeed - so I sat down and waited.

After this we sped on downstream, stopping for about five minutes at the Alum River before pushing on to Shea's Creek for lunch. About half a mile before the creek we were amazed to see footprints coming towards us on the road then turning back downstream. Apparently Mick Perryman and his party, who were walking from Picton to Katoomba, had followed this timber road and started to walk upstream - what a blunder! After a short lunch we pushed on to Burragorang to find that Mick & Co. were a mere four hours ahead. This cheered us greatly and in high spirits trotted down to the junction with the Wollondilly, which at this point was very wide with a rather sandy bottom. Fred, being first, trotted out along a sand spit which was partly submerged and suddenly sank almost up to his thighs in the sand. Even John sank up to his knees before he could stop. From my vantage point high and dry and well in the rear of these two speedsters I gave helpful advice; however it didn't seem to be appreciated, so I moved off downstream and crossed at some rapids. Poor Fred was finally reduced to slowly crawling back the ten or twelve feet to solid ground - no wonder he took a while to catch up.

The other side was a sheer delight for our battered feet - beautiful open couch paddocks, uncluttered with fences or hard roads. Unfortunately we were forced, by a bend in the river, to re-cross about a mile downstream and to save wasting time we cut back on to the old road and on to the Bimlow Bridge. From here we followed the road until it started to curve left towards the township, then we cut diagonally across the paddocks to the right towards the Wollondilly, aiming to pass midway between an occupied house and the workers' camp.

We were halfway across the paddock when John noticed some men who were standing near a landrover by the gates of the township, regarding us suspiciously - so the three of us tried to hide behind one small stunted tree which even the Water Board employees had spared - anyhow it was a good excuse for a halt. This stalemate continued for perhaps two minutes, then tired of playing ostriches, we decided to put on a bold front and stride out as if we owned the place. Well, we certainly precipitated some action by this for we had hardly gone ten yards before we heard shouts and yells from the direction of Bimlow and then the sounds of a land rover being started up. These obnoxious sounds caused a dramatic change in our walking appearance - one moment we were shuffling along, moving our feet like they were tender hunks of lead - the next all that could be seen were three frantically dynamic figures tearing across the paddocks. Taking the thirty foot bank at a jump we slid down to the river, crossed it in two or three wild bounds and headed up into the trees beyond, not stopping until we had put another half mile between us and our pursuers.

We reached the Cox about 5.30 p.m. (or, for the Admiral's benefit, 1750 hours) and as we topped a small rise, John suddenly dropped down and signalled Fred and myself to do likewise. "Pssst," says he, "There's a road block ahead - three horses, two blitzes, a land rover, three men and a dog - let's sit down and wait till they go."

Once again impatience and the realization of the late hour forced us to move on after perhaps three minutes, so assuming a casual air, we walked past this ferocious array of power - especially the dog - bid the men good evening, then walked on to find that the road continued straight down under the waters of the Cox, which formed a lake over 300 yards wide at this point. From here on it was definitely a boat trip for half a mile at least, but having no boat we were reluctantly forced to climb up and over the ridge and by-pass the inundated section of road. It was dark before we regained the level ground again!

Our food dump was located without too much trouble. Fortunately the clouds permitted a fair amount of moonlight to filter through, and after collecting the tins we pushed on, crossed the Cox at McMahons, cut straight over the next hill and back to the river again. This short stretch was most unpleasant to say the least. Since the land has been cleared, every obnoxious weed imaginable and several others besides have grown up and in less than no time we were sticky from head to foot. This was the last straw, and after reaching the Cox we camped at the first driftwood

heap, lit a huge fire, ate our food and spent a glorious seven hours trying to sleep.

The morning was damp and foggy and the valley wreathed in mist was really out of this world, but by the time we had reached Commodore Hut, the first rays of the sun had spirited away our grey world and brought back the colour to the countryside. The Policeman Range seemed to have grown several hundred feet since last time, but with that obstacle well behind us, and the knowledge that Mick Perryman's party were only $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours ahead, we fairly flew upstream with Freddy leading by about half a mile.

By now the various parties had drifted down from Splendour Rock to the Cox and our conversations with them seemed to give us the necessary moral stimulant to keep moving at a very fast pace between stops.

We caught Mick & Co. at Harry's River, just as they were moving off after lunch. Since they thought that they had a good four hours start on us, they were somewhat startled to see us round the bend, so after getting a brief account of our trip they headed off upstream at high speed while we devoured the contents of our food dump.

These food dumps were a mixed blessing - for while the contents were looked forward to longingly and consequently acted as a great stimulant to get to the next dump as quickly as possible, it was very difficult to get moving after eating so much. Indeed, after lunch John went down with acute Youngberryitis, whilst neither Fred nor myself seemed to be able to stir ourselves to get moving at any great speed.

It was dark by the time we reached the Megalong. After losing the track, we blundered across seemingly endless undulating paddocks before striking the road. Not knowing exactly where we were at this stage, we thought that we were then too high up, so we wandered all the way back down again before cutting across and striking the short cut which led us back on to the Six Foot Track.

At the foot of the Devil's Hole we met alone walker (ex S.B.W.) camped and after talking for a short while and declining a cup of tea (what self restraint!) we crawled up to the top. I say crawled, because since Fred was the only one with a torch which would go at all, and his was very weak, John and myself were forced to feel our way - in fact, I still have a lump on the side of my head where I ploughed into a projecting hunk of rock.

At 7.50 three very weary but exultant bods stepped on to the bitumen and headed for Katoomba. As we plodded along the suburban streets, that rainy night at Hilltop seemed a lifetime away. There is something about walks of this kind which completely carries you away - I don't know whether it is the wide range of scenery, the constant battle against time and distance or just the overwhelming enthusiastic spirit of the party. Most likely all of these combine to give that wonderful feeling - the comradeship and the challenge!



PADDY MADE

WHERE HAVE THE WALKERS GONE?

Paddy recommends to the notice of all bushwalkers who are concerned with the falling off of recruits for walking clubs, the "Current Affairs Bulletin". This bulletin deals with population trends in Australia and reveals the following startling facts.

As between the census of 1933 and that of 1954 there was a decrease of 23,000 in the number of people between the ages of 15 and 19. Add four years to bring us up to 1958 and we find there are now 23,000 less people between the ages of 19 and 23. This despite the tremendous increase of total population of Australia.

From the graphs given, in 1956 there were 320,000 males between 15 and 19, 400,000 between 10 and 14, 500,000 between 5 and 9, so the next few years should see a considerable rise in the number of potential walkers.

Paddy hopes he will be privileged to serve them as he has served their fathers over the last 28 years.

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