

## THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to the Sydney Bushwalker,  
The N.S.W. Nurses' Association Rooms "Northcote Building," Reiby Place, Sydney.  
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OCTOBER 1962

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Hi,

We of the editorial staff anxiously await the next Putt expedition. We might even start a fund raising campaign to launch it. Visions of voluminous reports spur us on. Imagine all that copy!

Things have been a bit quiet around here since we finished the Carstensz report. Gone are all illusions of sitting back, pipe, slippers and thick black pencil surrounded by piles of manuscripts from hopeful contributors, carelessly casting aside an indifferent article, striking out a paragraph here and there. Power, Power.

Instead I wait anxiously for the mailman's whistle - rush out and grovel madly through the piles of bills - surely there must be something today.

This was published on 1st June 1931...

"The aim of 'The bushwalker' is neither ambitious nor comprehensive; the main endeavour being to place before members accounts of trips which otherwise would not be so readily accessible to them. Such accounts will be more or less detailed and contain more of the personal element than can be the case with the Club's official reports.

This first publication is brought forward with the hope of future continuous help and patronage of our members; and in this respect the Publishing Committee invites them to consider their various experiences in the light of common interest to fellow members, and to hand in clearly written accounts, in serious or humorous vein, together with personal items or jokes concerning members or walking. Constant features of future issues will be reports of social events and equipment section."

It is not particularly difficult to fill 18 pages with more or less readable material. (It is in fact a wonderful excuse for escaping dreary household chores.) But you can buy plenty of sixpenny weeklies if a little light reading is your desire. The main purpose of this magazine is to establish a communal fund of knowledge of interesting places to go, condition of tracks, advice on means of access, maps - all aimed at furthering the principal purpose of this club - enjoyment of the bush.

You don't have to be Quenton Reynolds to add your share. A simple report of what you saw and found on your walk is all that is required. In not facing up to your responsibility in this direction, you are allowing your magazine to degenerate to the ladies' weekly category. It's up to you whether your magazine is something vital in furthering the purpose of this Club or an insipid paper-back. The small amount of effort required you will find amply repaid; all that is required is a little energy and enthusiasm.

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#### SOCIAL REPORT FOR SEPTEMBER

On 19th, the Shell Film, "The Back of Beyond" was screened, preceded by a film showing different industries in Japan which was brought along by Jack Gentle. Thanks to Jack also for the use of a 16 mm projector for the evening.

Twenty members and friends saw "East Lynne" at the Music Hall on 20th and had a most entertaining evening. A profit of £2.10.0 was made on the night.

On 26th Malcolm MacGregor and Jim Brown staged a Sing-a-Long in the Club Room with audience participation. New members and prospectives were introduced to some of the Chronic Opera songs in the latest song book.

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AT OUR SEPTEMBER HALF YEARLY MEETING

Whether it was the congestion on the roads, the diligence of the Membership Secretary and his helpers, or the wiles of the Treasurer which caused it would be hard to say, but our meeting commenced with a welcome to no less than six new members - Ruth Thompson, Geoff Boxsell, Bob Fischer, Jim Middleton, Bill Reid and Lawrence Quaker.

In correspondence was a letter from Bob and Mary Eastoe, accompanied by an extract from the Manly Daily describing the good work Mrs. Stoddart had done for the district. For many years "Stoddy" was organist at St. Paul's Church of England, Seaforth (in fact her death occurred, as she might have wished, at the organ after playing the last hymn on a Sunday evening). A fund is being raised to instal a new pipe organ as a memorial, and Ron Knightley suggested we should contribute. He undertook to collect donations from Club members and forward them to the Church.

The Treasurer's report revealed expenses of £62/12/6 for the month including £17/11/6 to Paddy Pallin for repair of gear, and repairs to typewriter £12/10/. Explaining the expenditure on gear repairs, Frank Ashdown said that it had been necessary to replace everything but the frame on three packs, and to replace three old ground sheets with three new heavy duty ones. In response to a suggestion that old members might be induced to donate gear, Frank said there was no room for any more.

The Walks Secretary's report gave us details of another active month. Although the first walk to Kanangra did not go "due to lack of transport" the instructional walk to Euroka on the same week-end, led by Lynette White and Roy Craggs, was done by 12 members and 9 prospectives. On August 10-11-12 there was a combined walk with the C.M.W., led by Ken Lewis to Point Possibility. The weather was bad and on the Sunday the party "while beating about the bush, walked in a large figure 8." The situation was retrieved by the Lord Mayor of Point Possibility, who knew where he was. Ron Knightley's walk on 10-11-12 was a great success. The weather, inclement early on Sunday, was perfect by the end of the day spent mainly at the Royal George at Picton. Frank Leyden's walk from Budthingeroo to Carlon's was cancelled due to lack of starters (maybe Kanangra Road is too expensive to reach for frequent week-end walks). But Audrey Kenway's 1½ day walk to Palona Brook and Uloomla Falls was completed by 5 members and 9 prospectives, despite a very wet Sunday. The wild flowers were reported as being very profuse.

Gladys Roberts' Sunday walk in the Bobbin Head area was enjoyed by the 12 who did it, despite the weather, and the flowers there too were fine. Lack of private transport cause the re-routing of the walk on 24-26th led by Wilf Hilder. The walk went from Bell to the Hartley Vale Coal Mine, down the Grose and up Lockley's Pylon. There were long stretches of rock hopping and lawyer wine dodging in the upper Grose and the Lockley's track was obscure, so some clearing and cairn building was done. The other walk that

week-end was led by Bob Godfrey and attended by 6 members and 1 prospective, succeeded in finding the entrance of the old coal mine below Blue Gum Forest. David Ingram's Sunday walk in the Cattai Creek area was well attended - 10 members, 2 prospectives and 3 visitors - who enjoyed a pleasant walk through undulating country.

After this report Frank Ashdown's constitutional amendment - to allow any day walk of 10 miles or more to count as a test - was discussed. Frank thought that, now the bush was so much opened up, prospectives should be encouraged to enjoy it rather than be taken through miles of hakea. Subsequent speakers, and the Committee, were against the proposal. Mick Elphick pointed out that some 10 mile walks would be ridiculously easy, others could be very difficult. Week-end walks were a much better test since some might only carry their lunch on a day walk. Harder tests would be preferable. Jack Wren also thought standards should be raised - it had been recognised that the completion of test walks alone was hardly sufficient evidence of a prospective's interest in walking. Alex Colley said that if the amendment were carried there would be a considerable increase in sprained ankles on the harder walks because leaders couldn't be expected to judge the capacity of the ten-milers. Under such conditions the difficulty of finding leaders would be even greater than at present. There was then some discussion of the social value of day walks, Frank being of the opinion that many members were never seen on day walks which were well attended and gave prospectives the chance of meeting some 20 members at once. Wilf Hilder thought that you might see 20 members in a day but prospectives couldn't possibly get to know them on one day walk. Colin Putt thought that if we installed a tread mill prospectives could do their first aid and mapping tests while completing their walks. With reasonable efficiency there should be time to administer an intelligence test also.

John White told us that he was unable to carry on as Assistant Treasurer and that Gordon Redmond had nominated Tony Queitsch as his successor.

Gordon Redmond then gave us a warning, on behalf of Committee on Club finances. A surplus of £41 in 1960 had been succeeded by a deficit of £9 in 1961 and, though we had a surplus of £36 last year, this was due to a donation of £50. Without the donation the deficit would have been £14 (these figures excluded magazine results). This year a deficit of £30 was probable. Suggestion for rehabilitation of our finances included a surcharge of 10/- on tickets sold at the door of the Christmas Party Hall, and the squeezing of the unfinancial.

Wilf Hilder told us of new contour maps of Bandook and Nattai and a walks guide of the Binnaburra area.

At the conclusion of the meeting Bill Rodgers asked new members who wanted to go on official walks to come into the Club room and interview leaders rather than ring up at the end of the week. Such late phone calls gave the leader no means of assessing a new members walking capability.

There were only two volunteers for the job of room steward, the Walks Secretary and the meeting reporter. Ernie French did most of the work anyway.

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DAY WALKS

- OCTOBER 21. Cronulla - launch to Bundeena - Wattamolla - Garie Beach - bus to Waterfall. 10 miles.  
A pleasant trip through National Park visiting the coastal resorts of Bundeena, Marley, Wattamolla and Garie. Could be scratchy beyond Marley. Gaiters recommended.  
Train 7.50 am. Cronulla train from Central Electric Station.  
9 a.m. launch Cronulla to Bundeena. Tickets: Cronulla return @ 5/4. For journey home, purchase single rail tickets from Waterfall-Sutherland, then use return half of the Cronulla ticket for travel between Sutherland and home station. Add 6/- for launch, bus and extra train fares.  
Map: Port Hacking Tourist. Leader: Grace Rigg.
- OCTOBER 28. Minto - Freer's Crossing - Georges River - Bushwalkers' Basin - Minto. 12 miles.  
Georges River is always worth a day's outing, particularly at Bushwalkers' Basin, where the river falls about 20 feet into a "beaut" pool. Could be scratchy along the river.  
Train: 8.25 a.m. Goulburn train to Minto from Central Steam Station. Tickets: Minto return @ 6/9. Map: Camden Military.  
Leader: David Ingram.
- NOVEMBER 4. Lilyvale - Figure 8 Pool - Burning Palms - The Jungle - Otford. 8 miles. The Figure 8 and other pools are excellent "bogey" holes in the rock shell just South of Burning Palms Beach. Some lovely forest country enroute. Train: 8.42 a.m. Wollongong train from Central Steam Station to Lilyvale. Tickets: Otford return @ 7/8.  
Map: Port Hacking Tourist. Leader: Ron Knightley.
- NOVEMBER 11. Waterfall - bus to Governor Game Lookout - Era Beach - Garie Beach - bus to Waterfall. 4 miles.  
Plenty of time for fishing or surfing at Era. An ideal outing for a first walk with the Club. Be in on this one.  
Train: 8.42 a.m. Wollongong train to Waterfall from Central Steam Station. Tickets: Waterfall return @ 5/9 plus 4/6 return bus fare. Map: Port Hacking Tourist. Leader: Helen McMaugh.

DATES TO REMEMBER IN OCTOBER

- November 17 Sydney to London - Part I. John Bookluck's slides of his overland trip by land-rover.
- November 24 Auction - Remember the last one? Come and join the fun and bring in anything you want to get rid of, bushwalking or otherwise and let Jim Brown auction it off for you!
- November 31 Members' slide night.

MAKE A NOTE IN YOUR DIARY.

S.B.W. CHRISTMAS DANCE - 22nd December.

Come dressed as an historical character.

Letters to the Editor."A True Bushlover".

Hilda Irene Stoddard was an untiring, and unceasing worker for all things of The Bushland. She was forever helping people to love The Bush. "Stoddy" was quite wonderful in the way she made and marked tracks for the Youth Hostellers at Kuringai Chase. It did one's soul good to see this frail woman, skipping from rock to rock tying scraps of rags to twigs, and then later organising a working bee to make a track.

I remember on another occasion camping with her in a large cave. This was to be found below the West Head Road immediately opposite "the first peep of the Hawkesbury River Bridge". She had brought with her some young folk, and we spent the next day enjoying the wild flowers, which were then at their best. Her interest and enthusiasm fired the imagination of these youngsters. She was the S.B.W. Delegate to the Parks and Playgrounds Movement for many years. She was an active member of the Wild Life Preservation Society; Manly Historical Society; and other organisations with similar ideals.

She was the mother of Mary Stoddard (now Mrs. Bob Estoe). Mary was, for many years, one of the extremely tough Tiger Walkers, who could burn up the miles walking over rough country. Mary, and her two brothers, Jim and Bob, must have wonderful memories of a wonderful mother.

Hilda Stoddard was a delegate representing Australia at the dedication of the Australian War Memorial in Egypt. Recently, she had been at Norfolk Island with the local rector and his wife.

She attended St. Paul's Church at Seaforth. This lovely church is surrounded by Eucalyptus, Banksia, Grevillia and many other wild shrubs and trees. Lots of these were planted by "Stoddy"; some, I believe, in soil that she brought and had delivered to the grounds. She arranged for working bees to tend them. So, the original tiny church, which has grown into a larger edifice, is now in a lovely bushland setting. Stoddy, as many of you know, was for many years the organist at this church. At the morning service, on Sunday, the fifth of August, she completed the first verse of the first hymn, and then there was silence. It was found that "Stoddy" had passed quickly, and peacefully away doing her duty, and serving her Lord in the way that she had chosen to do.

A simple Farewell Service was held on Wednesday, 8th August; Bushwalkers, Wilf Life, Historical, and kindred societies were represented. "Stoddy" had for years trained choristers for Reunions for Concerts and for church. St. Paul's choir sang one of her favourite Anthems. It filled the church with sounds to match the golden glow from the sun through the glass.

Prominent among the many beautiful flowers was a lovely tribute. It was made up of Dilwynnia, Boronia, Eriostemon, Epacris, and in the middle one lovely

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spray of white Flannel Flowers. The sun shone, and it was the kind of day that "Stoddy" always enjoyed when setting off for a journey.

Our good wishes go with "Stoddy", and some of the love that she has given so freely will be her lasting memory amongst, not only the Sydney Bush Walkers, but many others.

L.G. Harrison.

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Dear Editor,

Here is ample cogitation material for the Bambis of the Club - the lightweight specialists. It comes from Gunther's "Inside Africa".

"Never - not even in the Andes, have I seen women so much like beasts of burden as the Kiyuyu. They do not carry their loads on their heads - but on their backs supported by a leather loop around the forehead. By the time a Kiyuyu housewife has reached middle age - this belt or halter will have worn a groove - literally - across her temples.

It is not unusual for a Kiyuyu woman to carry 200 lbs - particularly if she is collecting firewood from the forest groves. A donkey carries 100 lbs. A professional porter 60 lbs - the standard load which must not be exceeded - a prisoner doing hard labor - 14 lbs!"

That's miffin - what about the rash of misprints in September issue, S.B.W. magazine. The staggering one of course "orbituary!?!". Maybe its not a bloomer - in this space era - era - not age - age implies wisdom.

By the grim law of compensation - don't you think Myles should be asked to wheel Dad to Kanangra in a station pram. I remember the time - and the conditions - Rocky top was rocky, not the axminster of today. A great cove is Myles - pity we could not collect him in marble or bronze.

Taro. September 20, 1962.

(We, red of face, assure you that spelling errors are unintentional - Ed.)

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Dear Sir,

Ron Knightly is to be congratulated on his letter to you in "deprecating the intentions and actions of the N.Z.A.C. expedition in so far as they involved danger to the lives of people other than members of the expedition".

So outstanding is the noble intention of his argument that it would not be surprising if the Professorial Board of Taurus conferred upon him his Doctorate or even possibly, a higher degree of the "Golden Horn".

His two charges are really one - we must not agree to the wanton killing of wallabies, snakes, wildflowers, trees and even human beings, and with this thought, I wholly agree.

However, his use of Article III of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights is in actuality his basic reason substantiating why "we shall be guilty of hypocrisy in the highest degree."

I am, however, a trifle puzzled: if "everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person", is one particular human who happens to have an arrow accurately aimed at him by another human, being hypocritical or violating the Declaration of Human Rights if he sees fit to defend himself by scaring off the human being with the accurately aimed arrow by means of a loud-powdered BANG?

Bill Carter.  
Curious Headhunter - West Irian  
C/- Dept. of Posts and Telegraphs,  
PORT MORESBY.

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FEDERATION REPORT - AUGUST MEETING.

S.B.W. Delegates. Only two of the four delegates attended again this month. No advice was received from those unable to attend with the result that the substitute delegates were not asked to be present.

The Bushwalkers' Ball, 14th September, 1963. Details of table bookings are required by 11th September, 1962 in order to finalise catering arrangements. There were 237 enthusiasts there last year and this year, there will be room for at least another 70 dancers.

Y.M.C.A. Venturers Club has been accepted as a member of Federation.

Blue Mountains National Park. It has been suggested that primitive areas should be set aside in the Blue Mountains National Park with access by track only. Any suggestion for suitable areas of particular geological or scientific interest or containing unusual features such as aboriginal carvings, would be welcomed. One suggestion was the Grose Valley in view of the fact that only two other valleys of similar formation are known throughout the world.

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THIS WILL BE GOOD.

Sunday October 28th - WILD LIFE PRESERVATION SOCIETY is having a field day at Mt. Tomah in conjunction with the Bathurst Naturalists Club, with particular emphasis on Rain Forest Flora. Meet at Mt. Tomah turn off on Bells Line of Road at 11.a.m. If you require transport, ring the W.L.P.S. secretary Thistle Stead, FU1838.

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THE RED TERROR - (Pardon our fire trails).

From the Victorian border to the mid-North Coast, the State is a tinder-box of dry foliage fuel, and according to the Chief Secretary, Mr. Kelly, already there are ominous signs of bushfire danger.

New South Wales this season could easily have its worst bushfires since the disastrous summer of 1957-58.

New South Wales authorities have improved considerably their fire-fighting weapons and techniques since then. More than 15,000 extra volunteer firefighters have been recruited, bringing the total to 65,000 manning 2500 brigades.

More importantly, perhaps, more than 3000 miles of trails and tracks have been blazed into craggy mountains and lonely forests, giving firefighters access to regions where previously fires started by lightning strikes often raged for days uncontrolled.

Routes for these trails - costing £100 a mile - have been chosen wisely, with dams built and wells sunk to provide ready supplies of water. Strips have also been cleared for helicopters or light planes to fly in emergency equipment or take out casualties.

From the bushfires which last January claimed a number of lives in Victoria's Dandenongs and in the previous January wiped out the West Australian township of Dwellingup, N.S.W. fire-fighters have learned two vital lessons.

One is that firefighters must first assemble at a central depot, then converge on a fire as a team. The other is that police must block off all roads to avoid confusion that sight-seers create. But the battle against the Red Terror the No. 1 weapon is public education - simply because 94 per cent of all bush fires are man-made.

I hate a man who's never late  
Whose every sock has got a mate  
Whose never missed a single date  
And never even tarried.

Give me the man who's unaware  
Who loses things - who's never there -  
And we will make a perfect pair  
In fact we do - we're married.

(The authoress wishes to remain anonymous).

Audrey Kenway's recent walk to Era was notable, apart from the company, for copious quantities of rain, mud and leeches.

Camped at Era, the plump well-fed walkers were attacked by hordes of leeches, and so bitter was the conflict, one anonymous member of the party was forced to express him (or her) self in verse.

"TIGERS ALL" - and leeches too?  
(a prospective's plea for poor Hirudo.)

COWPER said: "The spendthrift and the leech that sucks him..."  
Is there not some moral to be gained?  
Is't nought but scorn for poor Hirudo?

We camped at dusk at Era fair,  
Members, prospectives, all were there.  
The little tents, the evening pause,  
To rest the limbs and use the jaws....  
Campfire, songs (but not by Gounot!)  
Then, all at once, there's HIRUDO!!

... The lowly leech chose a prospective  
Who spurned him in horror but then, as corrective  
Gave to a youth from old Scandinavia -  
Thus to scotch him - but - 'twas a youth with a mania  
For holding Life sacred, in whatever guise -  
So he bore Hirudo away from our eyes ...

The next day it rained and the going was tough  
And at least one prospective had nigh had enough --  
But - here comes the Moral to this rigmarole!  
(Hirudo himself plays the principal role)  
When this prospective was feeling most chicken  
Hirudo injected and then took his pickin' --  
But wonder of wonders! Before taking his due  
He repaid there his earlier debt to the few  
Who respect all Life - he gave what no geiger  
Counter can rife - just one drop from a TIGER!!!

Gladys Roberts' walk programmed for Sunday 14th October has been changed to Saturday, 13th October.

She was probably influenced by all the harsh talk about Sunday walkers at our September meeting, and could easily start a new trend.

Check with Gladys beforehand regarding final train and bus times.

PLUMBING TROUBLES ??DO YOU NEED -

NEW ROOF, GUTTERING and DOWNPIPES ??

OR DOES -

THE ROOF AND GUTTERING NEED RE-PAINTING ??

OR PERHAPS -

A NEW WATER SERVICE OR HOT-WATER INSTALLATION ??

No job is too small - for any plumbing installation or alterations

YOU NEED ROY'S FRIENDLY PLUMBING SERVICECONTACT ROY CRAGGS in the S.B.W. Club-rooms or contact Joe Craggs,  
Carpenter and Painter, 41 Rosamond Street, Hornsby, Telephone JU2203

REMEMBER -

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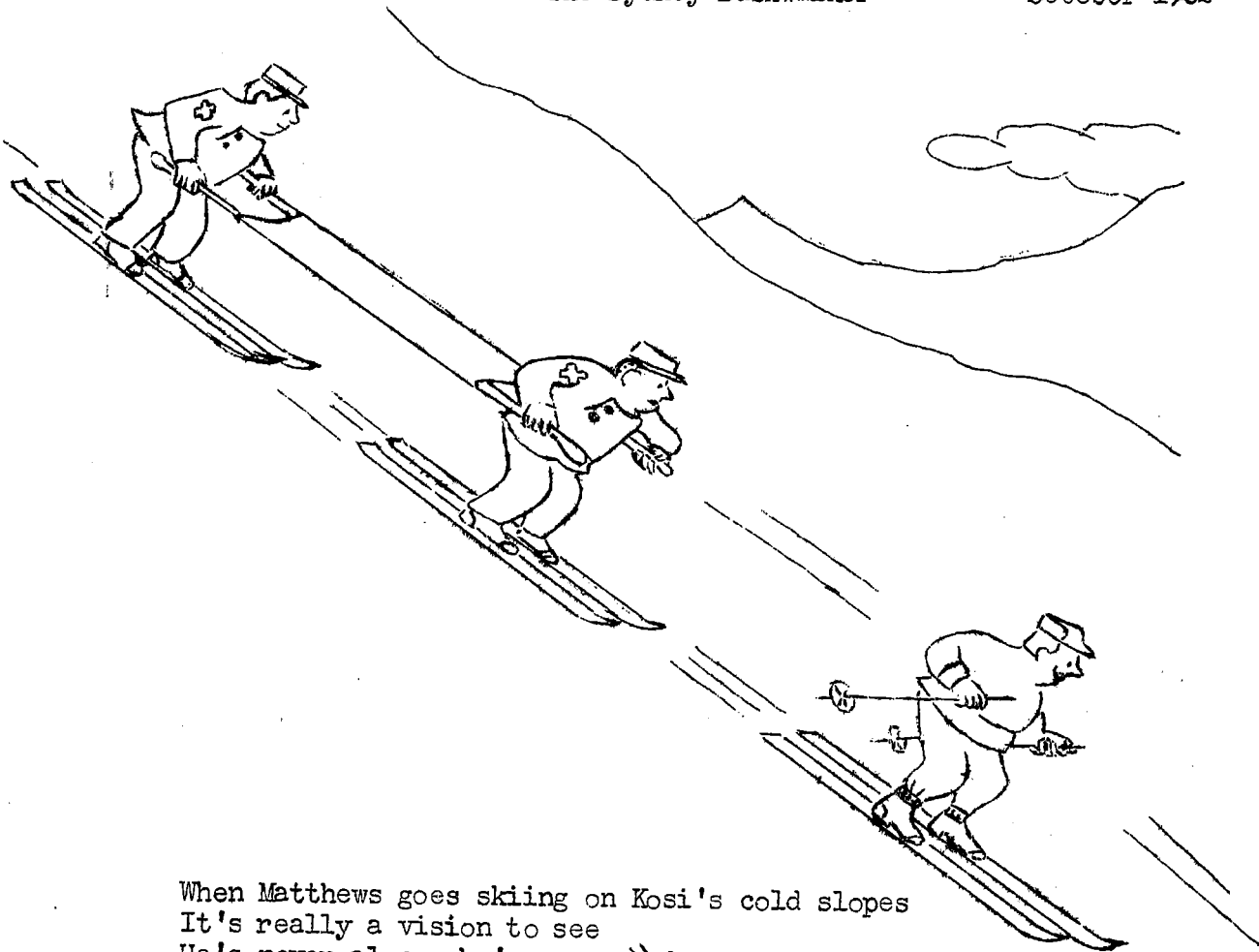
(LOOK FOR THE NEON SIGN)

SPEEDY 5 or 8 PASSENGER CARS AVAILABLE

LARGE OR SMALL PARTIES CATERED FOR

FARES:	KANANGRA WALLS	30/-	per head (minimum 5 passengers)
	PERRY'S LOOKDOWN	4/-	"
	JENCLAN STATE FOREST	20/-	"
	CARLON'S FARM	12/6	"

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



When Matthews goes skiing on Kosi's cold slopes  
It's really a vision to see  
He's never alone, he's never à deux,  
Our Donald is always à three.

Gelandesprung, sitzmark, it's nothing to him  
Or simply just riding one ski,  
He stays quite unruffled, he really is cool,  
He's as fearless as Robert E. Lee.

He braves frigid Days that would even amaze  
The famous non-ferrous monkey  
The reason we find is those two close behind  
In spotlessly white livery.

These two faithful shadows do not just enhance  
The style of young Matthew D.  
Their use is more mundane, their task more severe,  
They're Donald's good health recipe.

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# PADDY MADE

BETTER VALUES THAN EVER FOR YOU AT  
PADDY'S.

"Prices in Australia have risen an average of 66%  
since 1962".

This information, gleaned from the pages of the Sydney  
Morning Herald a few days ago, prompted us to compare  
our own prices of ten years ago with today's prices.  
We felt the information worthwhile passing on to you.

1952	Article	1962
£13.18.3	Superdown 6'6" sleeping bag "Alpine"	£11.11.6
£16.17.0	" " " " "Kossie"	£13.12.3
£6.9.6	Tramper Steel framed rucksack	£7.11.9
£7.14.6	Bushwalker " "	£8.18.8
£7.14.6	Federation " "	£9.2.6
£8.1.9	2 man Wall tent - green	£9.12.8
£7.1.0	2 " 'A' " "	£8.4.9
£7.16.3	3 " 'A' " "	£9.3.3
£9.13.6	2 " Wall " "	£11.1.9

We are now stocking Eveready "Energiser" torch cells  
costing 1/9 each. These are of special value to walkers  
owing to their much longer life thus dispensing with the  
necessity of carrying spare cells.

Better value once again costing 6d per hour against  
11d per hour for the standard cell.

You're always sure of value when you shop at Paddy

**PADDY PALLIN** Pty.  
Ltd.  
Lightweight Camp Gear  
201 CASTLEREAGH ST SYDNEY  
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FOOD FACTS.

Well I can't complain about the response to the request for tips on preparing, carrying and "menu-ing" food - there just hasn't been any.

You, oh long-suffering reader, will therefore have to put up with our views, which is alright for us, but rather narrows your field.

My tip of the month is plastic bags and rubber-bands - the best thing that has happened to walkers since Paddy Pallin. (Now, that ought to be worth a free groundsheet!)

Plastic bags have some terrific advantages. They are featherweight, waterproof, transparent, and never occupy any more space than their contents. (cheap, too).

I now pack all commodities in p.b.'s. A twist of the top, a couple of flicks of an elastic band, and hey presto, the contents are hermetically sealed. I also use the bag - in-bag technique. All the odd things for breakfast, each in its own little p.b., I keep in one large p.b. which I cleverly call the breakfast plastic bab (b.p.b) - similarly for lunch and dinner. (Also, incidentally, clothes, billies, maps, toilet goods). When breakfast time comes around, I just have to grab the appropriate bag (being transparent, even my dull intellect can handle this sorting problem) and there I have everything I need - (for breakfast) - no grovelling through tins, cloth bags, paper parcels etc.

Not being a jam or honey eater, the only "liquid" item I have to worry about is butter. Last walk, in an endeavour to be a real p.b. purist, I did without butter - and I didn't miss it! Of course, I have deliberately omitted the old snakebit cure which I still carry in a plastic bottle, not having sufficient courage of conviction to trust the precious pint to a plastic bag and rubber band!

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Change in December Walks Programme.

Primitive Arts Week-end. December 14-15-16. Leader, Ron Knightley.

Now Changed to - November 30 - December 1-2. (Same Weekend as Bill Burke, same area).

Activities will include: Saturday Night Corroboree.  
Digeridoo competition.

Boomerang-throwing.

Miss International Dusky Tania Contest

Don't forget to bring your own digeridoo! The leader only has one. (C)

FIRST PERAMBULATOR TO KANANGRA TOPS.

January-February, 1931. - Part I.

When a man acquires a small family and still is afflicted with bush mania, he has to pause frequently during his family-sustaining activities and cogitate furiously about what to do with the wife and hipper. Of course he could say quite brassily "I'm off with the blokes, deah. I'll take care of myself and see that I'm not a total loss to you. Bye-bye!" He could toss his 60 pounds swag daintily, twirl a billycan round his index finger and swagger off relieved at having shed his worries, responsibilities and family definitely with a thud. So long as he does not look back and see the beautiful eyes of his understanding wife mist over with the tears of disappointment, and provided he shuts his ears to his young son's pertinent "we goin' camping, daddy?" he is reasonably safe and should have a good time. He does have a good time; for there's nothing like a good buck party in the bush, where blokes can be wire-haired terriers, vociferously insulting to each other, crude, rude and not too blurry particular about anything. It's a great life, -- but being married somehow makes the difference to a fellow. His wife does, anyway; and young junior does his unconscious or conscious best.

Well, about this perambulator trip. It was something different, believe me; I've got a backache yet. First I roused the district. There is nothing like publicity; sometimes it produces results. I advertised as follows: "Wanted, a good strong, commodious pram, for country roads. Twins' size preferred. URGENT. Replies to Footslogger, "Express" office, Hurstville." The young lady in the office giggled, so there must have been something funny somewhere. Being in a hurry (a necessary concomitant of my existence) I called for the replies too early and so got none. I did not bother to call again because Satan, for my sins, guided me to a second-hand dump at Rockdale and introduced me to the only pram. for the job ever pupped, and a mild-mannered man who had charge of it and gladly put it through its paces. That pram could do everything but eat and propel itself. It even had nice, red tassels around it, but I found a pair of scissors later and gave it a jazz cut. I suspect that mild-mannered man saw me coming. He thought me a goat, and pitied my child, and wished he could see the works when the child's mother's eyes lit upon that antiquated Pharaoh's chariot. I bought the springless squat, long-handled, wide, box-like, be-tasselled, heavy iron framed, 40 pound insult to the pram family, then lugged it to a Henry Ford joint, got new tyres, spares and split pins, pitched it into the train, where a lot of people looked at it so earnestly that it folded itself up in a new way that neither the mild-mannered man nor myself knew about. Having paid good money for it I felt inclined to pity the resurrected atrocity, but after carrying it home on my shoulder in the form of a hamper (one of its Jekyll and Hyde phases) I gave it a private, unmentionable and blistering cognomen.

Margaret (that's the wife) viewed the thing with amazement then laughed quite rudely. I did the works for her and this time the contraption folded up into a baby's cradle on rockers. We straightened it out again and changed it to a pram. (mountain climbing, caper satanii sp. probably. A scientist might be able to correct me if I'm wrong). Young Milo - our 20 months old curiosity box -

climbed on top whilst I held it firmly to prevent it biting or kicking or folding up some other way, then we went for a preliminary tour all around the yard. It yawed, wobbled and was quite conversational about the axles, but otherwise behaved itself and Milo was delighted. I hadn't the heart to tell him he would probably have to walk. That kid has one fault in particular; he takes too much for granted.

We were horribly stuck for time - that is to say we had plenty of time, but the bush was calling and the kid and the wife were handling their camp gear about every half hour. When they get like that there is only thing to do, so actually we were stuck for time. How to make the contraption hold a lot of gear and the boy too, was a problem. I placed this cross between a harvesting machine and a billy-cart before me, sat on a box, peeled two bananas and ate them slowly whilst I studied the problem. Bananas are excellent food, if somewhat slippery to the teeth. I got a great idea - a really brilliant idea, because it enabled me to put plenty of weight onto the pram in a quick, effective and economical manner. The fact that I had to push it made it doubly interesting; anyway, the problem was solved.

Assisted by Milo (he insisted) I fitted two canvas boxes at the sides, slung from little hardwood booms fitted across the pram. Another box was fitted to the front (or back; who knows which end of a pram is the front?), new washers were added to the axles to reduce the wobble, and some other removable improvements were made. Then blimey! there stood the Kanangra Limited (speed and springs) Express, nearly as wide as a sulky, replete with awning, stays, billycan box, side tucker and gear boxes, foot rest for the passenger, rifle carrier and new tyres. No other nipper ever had a go-cart like this one. Dismantled, packed and leg-roped so that it couldn't do any tricks it weighed 62 pounds, which included a lot of gear stowed inside. First, we pushed it to the local railway, consigned it to Oberon, and with that fine, large holiday spirit for which we are famous we allowed ourselves to be stung freight rate plus 50 per cent. because the pram was packed, thereby reducing handling by everyone concerned. Returning jauntily to our home we packed our swag and knapsack, packed something sustaining into Milo and ourselves, wiped the boy's nose, turned off the gas and entrained for Oberon.

The kid's education really began from the time we left Central Station. It was "trains" that end and "bunny rabbits" at the Tarana-Oberon end. Instead of being sleepy he was wide awake when we reached Oberon at 4.30 p.m. Everything was fair to look upon. Lovely afternoon; beautiful colour; bracing atmosphere; haymaking and pea-picking; pleasant people and all that. It wasn't raining; - that was the main thing. Getting the pram onto the road we did no fitting-up but just sat Milo on top, hoisted our packs, and whilst Marg. steadied the kiddie on his perch with one hand I shoved off along the Caves Road for the Fish River Bridge, about a mile and a half distant. No doubt the local people thought us an out-of-work unit shifting camp. The road near the bridge was rough and bumpy, and finding a camp spot and outfitting place was not easy, but finally, round about 6 p.m. we were fixed for the night.

Next morning I visited Oberon for additional tucker and 2 week's supply of apples and oranges for Milo. Back at camp, we fitted up and packed things into working order, and when ready for the road we found we had 199 lbs. gross load



to push, haul and carry. It did not appear possible. The pram complete weighed 68 lbs. including the apples and oranges, some grapes and 1 doz. eggs. Also there were a rifle, torch, small axe, tent and rope, cans and the rest of the usual gear, together with some unusual but very necessary gear. I had heavy, hob-nailed boots and my idea was to carry the knapsack to help weight my feet down and so enable me to push the heavy pram without skidding on the ground. It worked.

The start-off was not as auspicious as it was conspicuous, because the hill onward from Fish River is very steep and several miles long; in fact, it was, is and always will be a fair cow. We rigged a tow-rope and Marg hauled on it whilst she humped her swag also. I don't think it possible for a woman to do harder manual work than that. The ascent was a great sight for passing local residents and occasional motorists. We really needed Lazarus Pura and his celebrated Volga Boat Song. That theme is the nearest approach to our sustained epic effort, but does not transcend it in any way. In fact the heaving effort and the grade were so lengthy that I'm afraid Maestro Lazarus would have been articulating in Chinese towards the end, for the sake of better wind and shorter words. When the grade eased to its normal steepness we shipped the two-line and then the fellow of the party had to show himself no mean pusher. Out in the open one becomes of the earth, earthy. We did. No parents ever slaved for their offspring as we did for our little Question Box, sitting comfortably behind his green mosquito-netting fly screen. The flies were a curse, of course. We were very scantily clad but the sweat trickled down into our boots, for all that. At length the top of the range was attained, also a widened view and another respite. Then came half a mile of sharp, loose ballast that chewed chunks of rubber from the little, half inch tyres and rattled Milo's teeth. This stretch did more damage to the tyres than the rest of the trip's bad places put together, except Kanangra Pass. About the middle of the afternoon we had to stop and give Milo a rest from the constant shaking. At times he must have felt like a blancmange in an earth tremor. About 6 o'clock we camped on Factory Creek reasonably satisfied with the afternoon's experiment. We were learning points about grade and road texture not thought of in either road-walking or motoring.

Next day opened fine and hot and saw Milo and ourselves in our element about camp. An old bloke breezed up with a nice horse, two friendly dogs and a most impressive caution about tiger snakes. Persistent inquiry elicited the facts that one had been killed hereabout the previous year and another 6 or 7 years before that. Anyway, Milo thought the horse belonged to Daddy Christmas. Young hopeful took to camp life with avidity, enjoyed his bath in the creek and spent much time building little dud cook-fires.

The next half day went merrily enough and we lunched near Duckmaloi Bridge, interrupted by minor observations and disturbances of the ever active and curious infant. The overturned skeleton of an old sulky was "gate" or "pram" according to his changing views. He learned about "crows" and "ko-bra" and other things, including "nakes". Prunes and rice, bread, butter and cocoa filled his little tummy. He definitely drew the line about both condensed milk and lactogen right from the start and could never be enticed to drink either just as they were, warm or cold, but our accidental discovery that a tinge of cocoa in either quite overcame his scruples solved the drink problem.

While we lunched we had the Edith Hill in sight before us. It is a boomer for everything on wheels or feet, so we had to consider a plan of action. First I went a mile onward up the hill with all I could carry, including rifle, water and Marg's swag. Returning, Marg was put onto the tow-rope, the brat made comfortable, then I set my hobnails firmly into Australia and pushed - and pushed. An old lady we got some milk from reckoned it the hardest kind of holiday she ever heard of. She was more than ever entitled to her opinion after she had watched us out of sight on the upgrade. The long ascent of the Great Dividing Range was arduous work in the hot sun and had to be done slowly, during which time the infant had a good sleep. Much later he got sick of everything, started to holler, had to be given orange juice and allowed to walk. On the right, about  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile short of the Ginkin Road, we made camp not far from the summit and were comfortably warm despite a sudden cool change and mist.

Next day the mist changed to fairly heavy rain but being very well fitted and glad of the cool change we preferred to push along to Kanangra turnoff. The rain gradually eased off leaving everything deliciously cool and damp. Then we started the traverse of the six mountain tops to Cunryname's "Upper Farm" on Budthingeroo Creek. At about a mile we had a pleasant lunch, after which the real work began, for with the exception of a few good but short stretches, the going was sheer tribulation and hard work. The uphill bits were corkers, Marg having to take her pack on ahead, dump it, return, hop into the tow-line and haul. I wonder how many other women would do the same thing gladly? The little bloke had to walk at the worst bits. The fact is he wanted to walk quite a lot, but between his slow pace and his desire to collect and play with the countless stones - a play paradise quite new to him - he kept us back; so when we could, we dumped him and his collection of stones and sticks aboard and made the pace. Persistent effort got us over this rough switchback in time and the last half mile was pleasant and easy, the only really good piece of track in the whole 20 miles of Kanangra track. We just reached my favourite camp spot short of the huts when heavy rain began. All we wanted was 10 minutes grace and we wanted it badly, so I swore at the rain and behold, it eased right off for 30 minutes, then resuming, closed in wet for the night. We were very snug; so was the old pram, under its waterproof cover; and between the four wheels was a good stock of dry wood. We decided to remain in camp next day and have a rest.

To be continued.

#### Bill Rowlands - Obituary.

On 18th September last, Bill Rowlands was killed, when a gun he was cleaning went off accidentally.

Members who have not been active in club affairs recently would not have met Bill, as he had only been a member for one year. He was one of the ones initiated at the last Reunion. Bill came to the Club a pretty raw recruit (he carried water on his first walk) and had some rather colourful ideas of bushwalking in general. However he was very keen to learn and the twelve months of his membership saw a big change in his bushwalking technique.

Quiet, unassuming and reserved it was not easy to get to know Bill, but when one did, it was to be impressed by his principles and sincerity.