

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to the Sydney Bushwalker,
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Hi,

A balmy sunny afternoon by the seaside is hardly conducive to the writing of fiery editorials, but as I can't change the locale without a domestic crisis and have no control over the elements there is little that can be done in this direction, which, no doubt, is a great pity.

Bawley Point, which the Brooks family is presently gracing, is not a place one would exchange precipitately just for the purpose of an editorial with some purpose. 160 odd miles from Sydney, one leaves the Prices Highway at Termeil and travels 4 miles coastwards to the said B.P.

The area is largely undeveloped and one can camp in relative solitude amidst natural timber within a stones throw (if you're a Neil Harvey) of a safe surfing beach and its attendant lagoon - a lovely spot and more particularly so if you have an up and coming generation of nature lovers to cater for. There is no fresh water occurring naturally on this section of the south coast, but 2 miles south of B.P. on the bush road to Kiola, we have discovered an old farm, deserted, but with tanks intact which saves carting water from Uladulla.

Before dragging the family off southwards, I had the extreme pleasure of being conducted on a tour of the Morong Deep by two experienced Kowmungers - my initiation to this awe-inspiring area - and unless my zeal evaporates, or the fish start to bite a bit better, my impressions will be recorded elsewhere in this issue (this is perhaps the only advantage of being Editor).

Half-way through the Morong Deep, over a cup of heroic coffee one evening, the experienced Kowmunger (female) and I learnt rather heavily on the experienced Kowmunger (male) and such was the strength of either the heroic coffee or our persuasion that he promised to record his impressions of the trip also.

In my present detached geographical situation I have no way of checking up on whether this exorbitant promise is being honoured, but if it is, it will be worth the time and effort of reading, as he has the literary ability and integrity (rather lacking in yours-truly) to record his impressions with insight and accuracy. His particular choice of pseudonym for the occasion is likewise a complete mystery to me so I am afraid you are going to be left in that glorious state of incertitude for which bushwalking has undoubtedly trained you well.

We trust the January editorial seeds fell on fertile ground and you are now giving the financial questions there raised your undivided mental concentration, so that you can approach the A.G.M. with your thoughts clearly marshalled.

March will bring its own gloomy problems which will require your undivided attention, the human sacrifice on the editorial altar being not the least.

----- STOP PRESS.

My triumphant return to the metropolis (and the countless cares of contented customers) was somewhat chastened by the chilling news that my experienced friend had not come good with his version. Rather had he seen fit to present what was a thinly-disguised (and unwarranted) attack upon myself (or perhaps I'm becoming unduly sensitive). Things being what they are, and honouring a policy of impartiality regardless of cost (as my friend would say "grace under pressure"), the article is included in this issue, intact, but with all its vertiginous verisimilitude.

AT OUR JANUARY MEETING.

Alex Colley.

It was nearly 9 p.m. when the President, with hardly time to draw breath after the Committee meeting, which had to be held on the same evening, summoned us to the General Meeting. It was not surprising, in view of the pressure of business, that the meeting commenced somewhat irregularly with a dong on the Assistant Secretary instead of the gong, and the admission of two members with defective Constitutions. The members were Margaret McLeod and John Holly, and the trouble with their Constitutions was that they were out of date, a matter which would be rectified by the Secretary.

In correspondence was a letter from Brian Harvey informing us that the recent registration of the magazine as a periodical meant a small saving in postage due to bulk rates. Denise Hull pointed out that this incurred more work in posting the magazines, which would only be worthwhile if the Club as a whole benefited.

Molly Rodgers told us that many famous characters had attended the Christmas party, including Dr. Barbara Moore, Sir Lancelot, Samson and Delilah and Julius Caesar. It had been both a social and financial success, netting £1.3.3 profit. This was mainly because John Holly had donated a cake and provided the other supper items at cost, while Molly and Bill Rodgers, John Holly, Edna Stretton and Jack Gentle had prepared the supper. The meeting voted its thanks for their work.

The reunion site was chosen - Woods Creek again, with Burning Palms as an alternative for flood weather. Bill Burke, Edna Stretton, Dick Childs, Jack Gentle, Helen and George Gray and David Brown were chosen as the Reunion Committee.

In view of the lack of test walks on the programme for the next two months, it was announced that Committee had decided to extend the prospective membership period of all prospectives by two months.

Heather Joyce then gave us a description of the search for the Scouts stranded on a ledge at Arethusa Canyon. One hundred and twenty Bushwalkers had assembled at 5.30 a.m. on the Saturday and had searched the upper Grose area. There was close and successful co-operation with the police. Because of the need to verify reports, and the lack of wireless sets, it had not been possible to recall all searchers immediately the lost boys were found.

Frank Ashdown told us that, as he would be away, he would not be able to look after Club equipment for a couple of months, and Roy Craggs volunteered to do the job during this time.

The President told us that it was time to start thinking of office bearers for next year. One office that would need filling was that of Secretary, because David Ingram would be away for some time in the U.S.

In his Walks Report, Wilf Hilder told us that the Christmas period had been a very active one for both official and private trips. On Nov. 30 and Dec 1 & 2, Bill Burke and Ron Knightley had 15 starters on their walk from Long Point Lookout to King Pin, Shoalhaven River, Bungonia and back via Barber's Creek. It was very hot, but the swimming was good, specially in Barber's Creek. Wilf's own walk on 7-8-9 Dec. was not led as planned because of floods on the Kowmung, but a walk including Chanton Canyon, Dungalla Falls and Morong Falls was completed by the party of 6. Bulldozing had been carried out in this area, as nearly everywhere else, and two ugly scars have been gouged down the mountainside to the Kowmung River near Tuglow Hole. On the same week-end Frank Leyden led a walk down Misery Ridge to Werong Creek for the purpose of putting in a food dump. Frank's party too had difficulty crossing the river. The Sunday walk for that week-end was Ramon U'Brien's Sutherland-Woronora-Engadine trip. It was a bit of a scramble through the thick undergrowth upstream between Mosquito camp and Heathcote Rd. Four members, 2 prospectives and 1 visitor were on the walk. As there were no starters for the Club track clearing weekend on Dec. 14-16, Wilf assisted the Kameruka and YMCA Hobnails Club to clear Pearce's Pass, previously wrongly called Paige's Pass, and also known as Hungerford's track. One section of the trail took about 4 hours to locate under some 3 ft. of lawyer vine. Judging by the thousands of blazed trees in the area the trail must get a heavy volume of traffic.

There were several trips over the Christmas period. Frank Leyden with a party of 4, did an 11 day Kowmung trip, starting from Boss Mountain on the new fire road and returning from Lannigan's Creek. The river was high and swimming cold and difficult. Some of the pools had to be sidled. Colin Ferguson received a nasty cut on the leg towards the end of the trip, but managed to get out without help, though he was unable to get to work the next week. Roy Craggs went fishing on the Upper Turon and Snow Brown led a party of 4 to the Pilot, Wombat Flat, Cascade Falls, the Indi River and Dead Horse Gap. John Scott, Bill Cosgrove and Alex Colley wandered to and fro for some days in the mists which covered the upper reaches of the Badja River, then headed across the upper Shoalhaven and down the Deua to Araluen. Much of the country is not bulldozed yet. Wilf led an 11 day trip in the Colo country. The party covered the whole of the Colo in 5½ days, and also

included Uraterer. They tried to return to the Colo via Running Stream Creek, which, however, disappeared into an unscaleable canyon.

At the close of the meeting (nearly 10.30 pm) Wilf told us that new maps of St. Albans and Kurin-gai were available and Jenolan sheets would be available in 2 or 3 months time.

DAY WALKS.

- FEBRUARY 17 Don't overlook the day walk to the SWIMMING CARNIVAL.
Details in last month's magazine.
- FEBRUARY 24 Waterfall - Uloola Falls - Karloo Pool - Heathcote. 8 miles
A pleasant stroll through the south-western portion of National Park. Uloola Falls are particularly good after rain. Recommended for new prospective members.
Train: 8.50 a.m. Cronulla train from Central Electric Station.
CHANGE AT SUTHERLAND for rail motor to Waterfall.
Tickets: Waterfall return @ 6/-
Map: Port Hacking Tourist.
Leader: Dick Child.
- MARCH 3. Helensburgh - Wilson's Creek - Bola Heights - Burning Palms - Lilyvale. 12 miles.
Good test walk material, this, particularly if the weather is hot. Bola Heights could be scratchy and gaiters are recommended.
Train: 8.42 a.m. Wollongong train from Central Steam Station to Helensburgh.
Tickets: Lilyvale return @ 7/7.
Map: Port Hacking Tourist.
Leader: Jack Gentle.
- MARCH 10 Otford - Burning Palms - Garie.
Some lovely forest country in the Garrawarra Primitive Area. 8 miles. Usually good surfing at "The Palms".
Train: 8.42 a.m. Wollongong train from Central Steam Station to Otford.
Tickets: Otford return @ 8/- plus 2/6 bus fare Garie-Waterfall.
Map: Port Hacking Tourist.
Leader: Margaret Wilson.
-

Letter to the Editor: From an Interested Non-Active Member.

"Is the magazine going downhill?" you ask, perhaps rhetorically, in your January editorial. Certainly not, if volume is any measure of editorial affluence, as the more or less traditional eighteen pages is being maintained and sometimes even exceeded.

But a closer look at this apparently robust and healthy exterior reveals some undesirable and even unhealthy symptoms. You may hasten to ask how I, as a non-contributor, can have the effrontery to make such a claim. The reasons should become clear.

Returning to my point, I have noticed over the last year or so, a growing use of a number of devices which serve to ameliorate an otherwise unhappy situation - a form of editorial cosmetic for a tired old magazine if you like. The presentation of articles under various pseudonyms (all probably written by the same person) the use of cartoon figures (reminiscent of certain magazines?) articles with no acknowledgement, your "Science Naturally" series, snippets of verse whose only connection with the bush is that they're a bit green and the reprinting of articles, albeit good ones, all point to frantic efforts to instil some life into a worn out body.

Over my long and erstwhile active association with this club, the mainstay of the magazine has always been the accounts of walks written by enthusiastic members. These serve a twofold purpose - passing on information of tracks, routes, conditions etc. to newer members, and reviving memories for the non-active group (who probably constitute the large part of your reading public anyway).

It is unfortunate but true, that the non-active cannot contribute to this phase of club life, though many have done so in their more active past.

This responsibility and burden must be carried by that happy group of active walkers, though it may require a little persuasion from the office bearers of the club to achieve.

The walks programme and reports from monthly meetings indicate a walking activity probably as vigorous as ever, but I am afraid that the same cannot be said for the support being given to the magazine from these active walkers. Education at the prospective stage and a little nagging from the Chair could undoubtedly return the magazine to its former vigour, when you could smell gum leaves as soon as you opened its pages.

Curious Headhunter.
ex patria.

AT OUR CHRISTMAS PARTY.

On Sat., December Twenty-Two
The sprightly S.B.W.
Disported, old and recent members,
In the North Sydney Council Chambers.
The dancers came in fancy dress
And represented, more or less,
Great characters from history's pages,
The brave, the fair, all down the ages.
We could not help but glance a lot
At Guinevere and Lancelot
- Jack G. and Ed in deep disguise.
Indeed, he won the second prize;
But first place was awarded to
A fairly recent member who
As carrot-munching epicure
Marathon walker, Barbara Moore,
Strode nonchalantly on to fame,
And Esme Biddulph was her name.
Toga'd Tiberius was there,
And Nero, vine-leaves in his hair.
The scrapings of his toy violin
Were heard (or were they?) in the din.
Many were barefoot, lightly clad,
A state of things which made them glad
When those who tripped the light fantastic
Became increasingly gymnastic.
That very well-known walker, Dot,
Found wig and stockings far too hot,
And soon most prancers shed their wrappings
For airier more mundane trappings.
We feel we must record the hapless
Case of a lass in garments strapless
Who, clutching, galloped helter-skelter,
To seek the cloak-room's friendly shelter.
Enough. Good times were had by all,
And nearly fifty graced the hall.
May you be present, fit and hearty,
At next December's Christmas Party!

Kath McKay.

THE CONQUERING OF THE KOWMUNG.

Stuart Brooks

It is not often that the 'leader' of a walk is the only one not to have seen the country before. Perhaps having collected most of the food and providing the transport, won me some rights to this euphemism, but I rather think I achieved the rank of nominal leader through the innate politeness of my two companions. Maybe they realised this was a subtle way to ensure my continued serenity and acquiescence.

But I found the presence of a Kowmunger, Experienced, Female and a Kowmunger, Experienced, Male, (Shirley Dean and Bill Gillam for the record) a perfect excuse for declining the onus of decision-making, thereby leaving my mind free to tackle the more urgent problems of having the food in my pack eaten first, and getting Kem to carry the tent. I might add that Kef and Kem were sufficiently experienced to frustrate the resolution of these problems beneficially for Brooks despite my not inconsiderable mental gymnastics.

The Xmas rains had made the Kanangra road a quagmire and we feel justified in claiming the first sideways car trip from Jenolan Caves to Kanangra. Certainly I was able to frustrate any desire for sleep my two passengers may have nurtured. We boiled as we toiled crab-wise up the Jenolan hill and the final act of ignomy was to bog the car at Kanangra. We abandoned it where it sat, deep in mud, and grabbed a few hours sleep in the small cave.

Over a spartan breakfast of grilled bacon, coffee and brandy, the first vague plans were born, appropriately enough, with considerable difficulty. We would go back along the road to Dungalla Heights and follow the ridge out, dropping into Hollander's above Chardon Canyon. Only there, I was assured, would I see the genesis of the Kowmung, with all its un-tamed primeval grandeur.

To the squeak of block and cordage, grunts (self), racing motor (Kef) and the maddening click of camera shutter (Kem) the car was de-bogged and pointed round the other way. Kef manoeuvred the car back along the road, while I studied the map and Kem threw in the odd sonnet for spiritual comfort.

By 10.30 a.m. we were close to Dungalla Heights and with pack and parka, walking along a convenient fire trail in misty rain. By an unfortunate oversight, no one had a compass, and so, at any stage, we had the choice of three directions. What I thought was north Kef would be equally sure was south-east and Kem would automatically call west. Not many parties are so fortunate. The stage was set for a brilliant S & R operation.

Finally, we deserted our road and headed virtuously through the scrub. We lunched on a sidestream, pressed on and hit another fire-trail, which we followed and followed as it twisted and turned. Just when we would, in exasperation, decide to abandon it, a swing towards our general line of approach would convince us to stick with it. Finally by mid-afternoon, we could tolerate its meanderings no further, and we took off along an enthusiastic stream.

We camped early, determined to pick up the hours of sleep that the trip out had denied us.

A couple of judiciously placed kicks and a cup of tea extracted Kem at a respectable hour and we were on our way by 7.30 a.m. Our creek rapidly assumed a more rugged, deeper look and our two K's, E., felt sure we were really on Hollanders. When it ran into a rocky gorge, the impulsive cry was "Chardon Canyon, here we come!" The E.K's suddenly appeared in swimming costume and took to the centre of the stream. Fighting baptism, I clung to the craggy banks and half a mile later, from a lofty pinnacle, got my first shock. I could see the stream for perhaps 200 yards, but beyond that, - nothing! Its muffled roar spoke of a fair-sized fall. I scrambled down to have a closer look. Some waterfall! 5 or 600 feet if I'm any judge, and disappearing into a respectably deep valley. This Chardon Canyon was really something!

The water babies soon joined me, mouths agape. "Not Chardon Canyon" was their unanimous opinion. I was easily swayed. "Must be Dungalla Falls. How on earth did we get onto Box Creek?!"

We slid down the steep hillside beside these magnificent falls, pausing from time to time to admire each new perspective our descent offered. At 10.30 a.m. we had reached the valley floor and were in intimate and damp consort with a man-sized river. "Kowmung River" was the reverent refrain and I trust I appeared suitably impressed.

We moved downstream until we were directly opposite the final 200 ft. plunge of the falls straight into the Kowmung, and here, at precisely 11 a.m. we, with our combined domestic, chemical and electrical skills, won from the inhospitable banks, a campsite supreme. If these were indeed Dungalla Falls, we were exactly $1\frac{1}{2}$ days ahead of our rough schedule, a truly heroic endeavour.

To fill in the day, it was resolved over early lunch to whistle upstream to Tuglow Falls and Chardon Canyon. ("These, you must see!") Off we went.

Soon, the walls closed in and the river became a series of large pools, bounded by steeply sloping rock. The K's (E) hit the drink, but water-shy, I started skirting the walls. My new sandshoes and Laver-socks must be kept dry at all costs! I wasn't very far along when I slipped and performed a running, sitting, involuntary glissade into a deep pool. There was some

conflict as to how far I'd fallen. Conservatively, I had estimated twenty feet. In his usual perverse fashion, Kem observed that if it were over two feet, he'd shout, and with typical feminine guile, Kef stated that 'it was really quite a long way, at least four feet.' This, I am sure, was the highlight of the trip for the E.K's, despite the fact that the expedition's only watch was severely dunked. I was baptised, K. had claimed me!

An hour and a half found us at a sizeable sidestream - assumably Tuglow Creek, but where were the falls? Slowly the truth dawned. We were, in fact, camped opposite Morong Falls and this was Tuglow Hole Creek! We splashed back to our camp in a sullen silence.

Over dinner that evening, a 'new philosophy' was evolved to rationalise our inglorious record - two days ahead of schedule and our first day out. Forsaking all scientific impedimenta, we would wend our way through space and time unfettered by their cold clutch. Flying by the seat of our pants (or swimming costumes) we would unravel fate's capricious whim as it was presented to us. Sufficient unto the day!

9.30 a.m. next morning found us, nylon clad, paddling down the Morong Deep. The river was running strongly and our numerous crossings and swims were boisterous affairs. We lunched at mid-day above an impressive fall in the river. The flow of water prevented any reasonable attempt at negotiation and we were forced to sidle. Several hundred feet above the river, we found remarkably easy and pleasant going, and put a few miles of the Deep under our belts before, at 4 p.m., deciding to return to the river, to the sand, and seek a campsite.

A spot was soon located, complete with swimming pool and thundering cascades. Kem modestly assessed the V.G. at £5,000 - and no rates!

We ate, talked and climbed into the bag; it was still remarkably light. "How's the time, Scroggin?" asked Kem. I inspected the watch. "Just after 10.30., Shack" I replied. But it was still broad daylight! At 1 a.m. on the dial, the gloomy grey clouds disappeared into the gathering dusk. The amphibious watch was about 5 hours fast! We must have steamed off about 5.30am lunched about 10 a.m. and camped not long after mid-day! The new philosophy passed this crucial test with flying colours. Kef, Kem and I were at peace with the world!

Thereafter, we sauntered downstream, eating and camping as the mood struck us and eventually found a sizeable creek that did us for Werong Creek. Climbing out opposite (our Misery Ridge) we roamed around the tops and camped on a sizeable rivulet. (the Boyd again?)

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Next day, we were once more on fire trails, and, with the Gods of the Kowmung smiling upon us, found the car in the late morning. Liquid supplies were running low, so we headed for Oberon which boasted the closest garage. A picnic lunch at Oberon dam, the map on the grass, bright sunlight - the new philosophy was rampant.

We dragged ourselves away and headed for Ginkin. Despite a cool reception from the farmer's sons at Tuglow ("Dad don't like no guns or bottles"), we managed to get the car parked, and an hour later were throwing up the tent on Tuglow Creek in glorious afternoon sunshine.

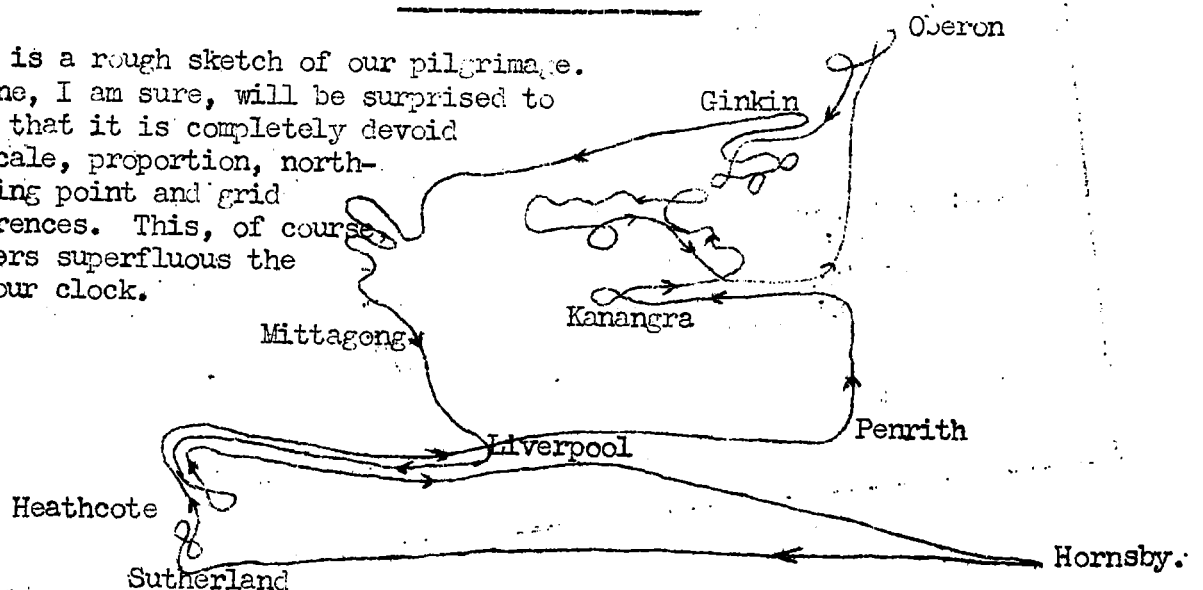
From here on in, Ken was in his element. This was his country. We were conducted on an exuberant tour of Tuglow Creek, Tuglow Falls, Tuglow Hole, up through Chardon Canyon, Hollanders Creek and cross-country back to Tuglow.

Ablutions in the schoolhouse with Tuckers and Xmas cake under a noble pine tree at Porters Retreat, provided fitting last rites to the country we were leaving.

In the flush of our new philosophy, we drove quietly home via Abercrombie River, Goodman's Ford over the Wollondilly and Mittagong.

(The discerning reader will observe that the title of this narrative may infer that we conquered the Kowmung, or, equally well, that the Kowmung conquered us. Which is correct, we will never be sure, but at least, this is consistent with our new philosophy).

This is a rough sketch of our pilgrimage. No one, I am sure, will be surprised to note that it is completely devoid of scale, proportion, north-seeking point and grid references. This, of course, renders superfluous the 24 hour clock.



PADDY MADE

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"After the evening meal, we retired to our tents - a little hail had fallen, but the storm had not yet broken.

What a surious sense of security and comfort is given us by a tent and sleeping bag.

We listened quite happily at the wind working at the tent cloth, which resisted it and gave us protection."

All of you who have experienced high mountain camps in an approaching storm recognise a sense of comradeship in these words. Those of you who still have this adventure to look forward to, will share this confident spirit and mutual understanding, when the time comes.

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WHO KILLED THE GOURMETS AND THE EPICYCLIC WALKER

Eff See Wun

When I was commencing my career I had the good fortune to be a member of a group whose chief member was not only an excellent navigator but a superlative cook. She had the added advantage of having access to one of those mechanical ledger machines which provide information under fifty different headings. Food lists were issued to members of a walk not only with the exact amount of food to be taken but in a form which would not disgrace the stowing diagram of the First Officer of an Antarctic expedition. If the chart was followed one could so pack that the cook could go through say fourteen rucksacks neatly lined up in front of her fire, itself a masterpiece of required and varied temperatures, and produce, it seemed effortlessly, seven aesthetically satisfying courses. Even if the food was not 4-star Michelin it was only prevented from being so by the vagaries of weather which might dilute the soup with rain water while one sipped it, or the frostiness of the night could prevent the magnificent sauce arriving on one's plate at the same temperature as the superlative pudding. (The Anglo-Saxon term "afters" gives one a clue to the indifference of a whole nation). The food was beautifully cooked, ample, varied, possibly 3-star.

Naturally the beauty of such arrangements depends on the presence at the cooking fire of all the members of the food list. The cook was only once, in my recollection put out. Five of the party of ten or twelve appeared to be so caught on a ridge that there was a strong possibility of their being benighted. This in itself was no cause for alarm; it was only a day walk from a base or food; camp and all the ingredients were in their right places except the potatoes. One of the benighted persons had used his 2.235 lbs of potatoes as a pillow in complete disregard of the mores of the group. Such are the imponderables of gourmets.

Much as one would like to remain a lotophagi the really adventurous gourmet moves on. An offshoot of the ledger machine group was semi-vego, and it was pleasant, indeed healthy, to dally among their strange dishes for a while. Aromatic ghouashes, pemmicans, wholemeal dampers and a technique for the preparation and consumption of porridge were the crowning glories of this group. The porridge technique was to place the amount required of scotch cut oats in a billy with a handful of dried fruit for each person. This was soaked overnight, warmed in the morning and then eaten directly from the billy. The convention was that each had a spoon of approximately the same capacity and one stirred the fruit and oats thoroughly at each dip. The leading spirits of the group carried this togetherness to its logical conclusion and cooked and ate every course from the same billy. One could thus enjoy tomato custard and applied coffee. It is a long while since I had applied coffee.

The mobile meals of this group were particularly good. One such meal was taken standing in a crowded swaying train and consisted of crisp-bread sandwiches, pemmican pieces, handfulls of nuts and thirds of oranges. Since the party boarded the train from either end of a corridor carriage the source of these delicacies and their point of ingestion were rather separated. My share of the meal passed through ten pairs of strange hands, but such is the honesty of train travellers I believe I received every piece that was intended for me.

Occasionally we had all-fruit trips on which the skins, pips and peel were saved and slammered to a thin syrup which was drunk instead of an early morning cup of tea. The rind of a pineapple, but not the rough end was especially prized for this syrup. It was a delightful experience to return from one of these walks and then to be shunted onto the line at Redfern next to the bread factory which proclaimed "What you eat today walks and talks tomorrow." For myself I could hardly wait to get to Central and eat a hamburger relishing the pungent onions and the slightly suspect meat with the abandonment of a fallen angel. These fruit weekends were the cause of some social embarrassment at a later date. I had gone to Era over Christmas with a canoe bag full of fruit from the garden; fruit which would have spoiled had it not been eaten that week-end. There was sufficient fruit for three meals a day, and even at that it was a race between ripeness and rotteness. By some quirk of romantic fate I discovered a girl at Era with the Mozart and coffee tastes of myself, and in due course was invited to a meal at her home before we went to a concert. There was a delicious aroma of lovingly baked lamb; as we sat down, a plate of lettuce, pineapple and cheese was placed in front of me while the rest of the family demolished the lamb. Be assured that the girl was properly but politely informed that fruit weekends were not my normal diet.

The decline and fall of the great standards of my youth I now place on the invention of a plastic that is at once transparent, tough and easily fabricated into plastic bags. This innovation ensures that all dried food will arrive at the point of consumption in an identifiable state and not stuck tenaciously to a cloth food bag. In the past one could recognise, at times, porridge from dried vegetable only by the fact that the porridge had been put into a floral pattern bag and the vegetables into a bag made from an old shirt. The great debate between the durability of fresh potatoes and the uncertainty of the dried variety has now been settled to the detriment of good eating. The logical end of all this is that if the planning is left in the hands of a person bereft of inspiration a foodlist can be produced in which all the ingredients are thoroughly dry, unpalatable and indestructible. The generic term for this food is scroggin and there is vegetable scroggin, nut scroggin, smoking scroggin and map scroggin. All these scroggins are self explanatory and are self contained each in their own plastic envelope. Smoking scroggin needs match or scratch scroggin; map scroggin is the smallest possible piece of the map cut out and carried deep inside the pack which in turn has its own liner. To consult the map is too much trouble for the small consolation of knowing where one is. This in turn gives rise

to vector scroggin in which one's velocity and direction are thoroughly mixed. A firmer type of the same ubiquitous plastic has been fashioned into indestructible bottles, a saving grace for its inventor. My container held, not scroggin but bottled-in-bond stuff even though it was labelled "Vorsicht-stark atzent. Caution - very corrosive."

While the collating of a food list has thus been opened to people of little imagination the margin of safety in the bush has been immensely increased. By blowing air into these scroggin holders and whipping a rubber band over the neck a collection of bouyant chambers can be stuffed into a pack making a pack far more stable than the Titanic or the ill-fated Andrea Dorea. Equipped with such a pack even the weakest swimmer can now face with equanimity the Kowmung canyons. By leaving the glucose scroggin in an outside pocket and adding a cupful of water a readily available and repulsive source of energy is always on hand. If a capsizé occurs the pack can be inverted and all the ullage drained. Very personal equipment should be packed in double scroggins.

Such is the way of the world. One trades the delights of a deep billy for the certainty of a meal. And the Epicyclic walker. He owes me the bus fare from the Quay to the Railway. But that is another story.

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(Note for students. Eff See W was the Chinese herbalist who introduced dried mushrooms to the astonished world. Now deceased, he is buried at the foot of a magnificent tree on the Boyd Plateau. For pilgrims who would worship at his shrine, an access road has recently been constructed to the site.)

CHRISTMAS - NEW YEAR AT ERA.

Frank and Jean Ashdown were down early, but didn't stay for New Year. The camp fire on New Year's Eve was a beaut. Some good work was done in getting in a supply of fuel and the entertainment was an all-in effort. The weather was mainly fine with a fair bit of cloud and the surf was very cold for the time of the year.

On New Year's Eve the camp fire revellers included Edna Stretton and nephew, Evan Williams, Kath, Jim and Christine Brown, Bill and Ruby Hall and family, Phil and Betty Hall and family round from South Era for the night, Bob and Christa Younger and family, Bill Burke and his four boys and a mate of theirs, Eileen and Jack Wren, Mr & Mrs. Taylor (Eileen's parents) Denise Hull, Jack Gentle, David Ingram, Peiter Rempt, Gladys Roberts and Auriel Mitchell.

THE TIN CANOE TRIP - Part II.

Audrey Kenway.

After a final burst of building we had two canoes built and on the train in time for the trip. They were taken to Darling Harbour on top of a Commer van, and two members were seen holding up peak hour traffic carrying two 17 foot canoes across six lanes of traffic at Pyrmont Bridge.

The rain had not started when the boats left Sydney. We still thought it would all be over before we started the trip when we boarded the train on the night of the 26th, everyone loaded up with paddles, seat backs for the canoes etc. We had good luck in finding the mail van at Wauchope was just the right kind of vehicle, a van with a large luggage rack capable of taking two boats plus all of us and gear in comfort. The driver did not appear at all surprised to see the gear. We met Len Young with his car and canoe on board and the whole party moved off up the Hastings through Ellenborough, where the car was left, and up past the junction of the Forbes River. We were rather uneasy at this time to see the height and speed of the river, as there had already been a week's rain in the district. Len being a canoeist was delighted, but the rest of us were thinking how fast the water was racing and noting the floating logs and the fact that it was very muddy and that the snags would be hard to see. It was also in our minds that our boats had not been intended for this sort of thing, just a little gentle paddling on the Nepean perhaps. Having found a campsite near the road and river with the help of our driver, who asked permission on our behalf, saying the farmers are not happy about camping on their properties, we settled down to wait for the river to go down. It was still raining of course. We waited for three days and finally things looked a little more possible. While filling in time we gathered mushrooms and practiced in a side creek which was also flooded. This gave us more confidence in the handling of the canoes, and we realised they were a lot more stable than expected. A bower-bird's bower was discovered right in the camp. The bird did not appear, but he had collected several pieces of blue plastic, I think off a sticky-tape dispenser, and some blue flowers. We tried to get a photo but of course the weather was not the best for photography. We saw more bird life along the Hastings than on trips nearer Sydney.

On the third day the river looked less fierce and much clearer, so with Len going ahead we pushed off down stream. The first mile included some bad spots we had seen while walking along the banks, so we went very carefully to the first bend. The canoes surprised us with the way they handled. They proved very stable once tested in rough water. We soon came to a spot where the pressure waves were a bit high for us, as it was too easy for them to break over the front and fill the open boats. The two tin canoes were roped round the rough patch without too much trouble, with the women and children walking along the banks. A lunch spot was found at the top of a long stretch of rocks and small falls, so the gear was unpacked and carried about half

a mile and the boats brought down along the shallows on a rope. So far we had only had to carry them a few yards. The rest of the day went well, and a very pleasant camp spot was found. There is no shortage of good-camp sites along the Hastings. It is a beautiful river, and would make an interesting walk when the water level was normal. We saw it at a time when the river was certainly well above normal, but of course made very exciting canoeing. By this time we were beginning to enjoy the fast sections and to have more confidence in handling the boats.

Another nice camping spot was reached on New Year's Eve, and the party spent the evening drying washing and eating. The highlight of the evening was Keith's cake, baked in two plates like a damper, and iced with chocolate icing. Ruth opened a tin of caviar, but the ants got in it. Rain sent us all into the tents early, clutching our half wet washing. By this time we were checking to see we had no mushrooms on our gear, as there was such a lot of dampness. The plastic inner bags had saved all the stuff inside the packs from the rain and river, but after six days of packing up wet things it was really getting too far.

During the night the river rose again and the next day proved the fastest and most exciting of all - a little too exciting. The first mishap was when we turned a bend and found we were on the wrong side to go ashore and check the next rapid which was making quite a noise ahead. We crept upstream along the bank, then turned out into the current. Bob gave a good heave with his paddle against the bank, and pushed us well out, leaving his paddle sticking like an arrow in the mud. That left Ruth and me paddling furiously as we drifted downstream, with nobody steering from the back. It was a breathless few minutes until we were back against the far bank and hauling upstream hanging on to grass and willows to where the paddle was. The rapid proved a hard one, with channels everywhere among the sheoaks and the water going very fast. Len went through on his own, parked the boat and came back to help. We were going along well till we found a log across the river near the bank with no way of roping round it and not enough room for the boat to go under. We lifted ours out and carried it round. Just above this spot Keith and Jean were roping round a tree when one of the packs caught in a tree, tangled in the rope, pulling the boat out into the current, and snapping the light rope on the front. Keith hung on and went downstream with the boat, till it came to the log, and he decided not to go under with it. The boat went down under the log, popped up on the other side and continued half full of water downstream. We were horrified to see it coming down towards us all on its own and with that maze of trees ahead. Len dived in and grabbed the end and Bob grabbed Len and they managed to pull it ashore. The back seat had been ripped out by the force of the water but nothing was lost. Keith appeared very wet and glad to see his gear again. After that Len and Bob took the two boats down the rest of the way as the first had gone, with the two of them in it paddling and steering between the trees. They disappeared very quickly, and we had a long walk to catch up to them for lunch. It was raining heavily during lunch as usual. We had some good

fast canoeing and were getting quite game, when we came to a sharp bend where the river divided and pressure waves were coming from two directions. None of us like the look of it. We roped round it and then found trouble in a steep bank with deep water and small trees half under water, which made roping along the sides impossible. The pressure waves were still rather high and the current fast, so Bob climbed into the back of the boat and was working his way along the edges hanging on to the trees when the current swung the boat round, throwing him out and sending the boat broadside into the rough patch. He was in again very smartly, knocking his paddle overboard in the scramble. In a spot where we thought the boat might fill up in the waves, he climbed up to the front and grabbed a spare paddle, then scrambled back over the gear and turned the canoe in the right direction. By the time we caught up Bob was bailing out the boat on the bank and mourning over his wet tobacco and matches. He had managed to catch the lost paddle in the middle of the rough water.

On the third night we came to the Ellenborough River and went up to the house to get the car. We were invited in to a cup of tea, in spite of our wet and muddy clothes, and enjoyed a wonderful Christmas cake and pudding. Robyn was invited to stay at the house with the children, and the rest of us loaded Len's canoe on his car and went back to camp. The weather forecast was for even worse conditions, and the family at Ellenborough warned us that the river could rise very quickly, and we might be caught several miles from the road if the flood rose and we were half way down towards Wauchope. We decided to wait till next day and get some fresh supplies when the shops opened, and then see how the river looked. By this time the tents were beginning to drip from being packed up wet every day. They just never did get dry. We were given a lift into Long Flat, where there was a general store, a butcher's shop and a bakery, and found news had travelled fast. Everyone greeted us with "Are you the people canoeing the river?" On the way back a landrover driver picked us up and took us back to camp, again showing the goodwill of the people in the district. It was still raining, so we sent a message to the mail car driver to come up to Ellenborough and take us back two days early. On the morning he arrived we had the only sunny day, and had nearly dried things out when it was time to pack. It was steamy hot, and we were all annoyed with the weather, but it was only a short break, as we had only gone a little way when a storm came up, and the rain was on again, with lightning and thunder as well. Next morning the river was up over the road bridges again.

The brothers who ran the mail car and buses in Wauchope offered us the use of an old cottage at the depot to camp in while we waited for next day's train. It looked like a palace to us after a week in the rain, but they said it was only a tool store room now, and insisted on sweeping it out for us. During the evening one brother brought over a projector and showed us movies of the district. These included some scenes of the mountains at the back of Comboyne, where there are some really impressive falls on the

Ellenborough River, and interesting walking country. We were sorry to hear there has been a lot of damage done by shooters and campers, who have killed cattle and even dogs. However, we found everyone we met very helpful once they knew we were not shooting. It was just as well we had approached the first farmer before camping, and that the driver had been with us to assure him we were harmless. We even managed a hot bath by boiling kerosene tins of water, and we could hardly recognise each other as we emerged from the bathroom in clean clothes. It was just as well, because we finished the trip home in a first class carriage on the air-conditioned train. This was an accident, of course, due to late change of booking and the railways being swamped with holiday travellers and having to convert a first class carriage to second. We booked our packs and canoe paddles in the baggage car, not having the nerve to take them in on the carpeted floors, and in our clean clothes nobody would have guessed where we had spent the last week. They must have wondered why I was carrying a waterproof tin instead of a handbag!

(the party consisted of Keith Renwick, Jean Balfour, Ramon U'Brien, Len Young, Val Young, Ruth Thompson, Bob Godfrey, Robyn Godfrey and Audrey Kenway.

FEDERATION REPORT - December 1962.

SIGNS IN NATIONAL PARK. Objection was raised to the recent erection of large advertising signs regarding the "Allambie Motel" at Audley. Federation will protest to the Trust.

WARRAGAMBA CATCHMENT AREA. A letter and map were received from the Water Board showing details of permissible areas in the Warragamba Catchment Area. The letter will be duplicated and circulated to all Clubs and the map displayed on Paddy's notice board.

SEARCH AND RESCUE. A party of 3 school boys delayed in the Grose Valley, Blackheath early in December walked out under their own steam at 5.15 p.m. on the Monday before any search was organised. Members of all Clubs are invited to participate in the practice in the use of two-way radio communication to be arranged early in the New Year.

TRACKS AND ACCESS. Starlight's Trail has been blazed, cairned and cleared sufficiently to enable its use with care. Pierce's Pass or Hungerford's Track, formerly Page's Pass, has been partly cleared and signposted by the Council at the top. Lower down, some clearing has been done and the track may be used by following aluminium and tree blazes. The Blue Mountains National Park Trust proposed to do more work on the track.

Lovett Bay Tracks. Pockley's Glen track has been cleared to the top of hill South West of the head of tidal waters in Lovett Bay by the Bush Club.

REUNION 1963. Last week end in March will be the date.

"Bushwalker Annual." The new issue is in the hands of the publishers and should soon be ready for distribution.