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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C O N T E N T S.

THE DECEMBER GENERAL MEETING.

J. Brown.

..... which began with a welcome to six — yes, six, new members, fruits of the last walking season, and in view of the dearth of test walks during the summer, likely to be the last for a while, started peaceably and finished garrulously. However the six were, Mike Blaha, Bob Dampf, Roger Lockwood, Harry Miller, Geof Wood and Jean Jordan, while John Marane and the elusive Philip Nicol were called in vain.

No business out of Minutes, and little from correspondence, except the pleasant news that Rae and Peter Page are now Honorary Members. There was also a circular from the Australian Conservation Foundation, advising that this organisation, the first of its kind with a nation wide character, had held its first meeting. We proposed to seek affiliation as a Member Body.

Financial report showed an excess of expenditure over income of £23, mostly due to purchase of a stock of new badges, and a concluding total of £282 in the current funds.

Bob Godfrey reported on November walkabouts, including Ron Knightley's Blue Gum trip of 6-7 Nov (party of 21) while his own Grose trip, of the following weekend brought out 10. Betty Farquhar's Instructional at Burning Palms on Nov. 20 had a total attendance of 29 including members of a Church of England Boy's Club, and some visitors. But hold it! - more than 40 went gold prospecting with Bob Godfrey on the last week-end of the month.

At the close of the Walks Report David Ingram drew attention to activities of the Noises-Off Club, and people going in and out of the meeting without seeking the Chairman's permission.

Federation Report had already been published, but it may do no harm to repeat the warning of the Department of the Army that increasing use is being made of the Tianjara Proof Range near Sassafras, and any walking party not desirous of unintentional bombardment may be advised to check on dates when it would be used.

In succession to Bill O'Neill as Federation Delegate, Kerry Hore was elected (also to sit on Committee) and Judith Simpson took over the vacancy of Substitute Delegate.

Now the President announced that prospective members who may be hampered by the lack of test walks would have a time extension to April. However if leaders believed that their walk was of test standard, they may write to Committee seeking its acceptance for prospectives in their party.

The President also pointed out that the magazine was having a lean time for contributors and appealed for stronger support. In relation to Federations' Insurance proposals, he said that there was not yet concrete scheme for consideration by Clubs.

Ron Knightley pointed to a pair of ice axes and 2 sets of crampons donated by a retired mountaineer, Phil Humphreys, and then proposed a series of motions covering use of the equipment. Broadly it provided that gear would be available to members of the Aust. Section of the N.Z.A.C. as well as all Club members, that the maximum period of hire be 8 weeks, and that hiring charges be 10/- for an ice axe or crampons used overseas and 5/- in Australia. A deposit of 10/- should be sought on gear hired, and S.B.W. members could book 8 weeks ahead, members of N.Z.A.C. six weeks ahead. The last motion, that hirers be not required to make good loss or damage in reasonable circumstances, brought quite a deal of debate, but was carried, as was a separate proposal that the Club obtain suitable straps for the crampons. Alan Rigby proposed sending a letter of appreciation to the donor.

Snow Brown referred to a pamphlet received the previous month, "Save the South West" from a body seeking to retain unspoiled the wilderness area surrounding Lake Pedder in Tasmania, which was threatened by hydro-electric planning. We agreed to write supporting the campaign to arrest such development.

Kath Brown proposed that we write the Minister for Lands commending the nature and parkland conservation features of the Bill under dealing in State Parliament. John White quoted The Minister as saying that, it was a piece of legislation which should be given general approval by conservation minded people, who should not split into different camps over minor aspects of the overall proposal. Ron Knightley supported the spirit of the motion and suggested we might send a copy of our view on bush parklands published previously. Gordon Redmond said that when the Bill was presented we should be in a better position to assess its value for a walker's viewpoint. After the main motion was carried, Gordon went further and proposed that, during the passage of the Bill, the Club should consider it carefully and submit our view to Federation - also carried.

Kath Brown pointed out several conservation items had arisen, and the Secretary would be involved in writing some letters on such questions. It seemed time to revive the position of Conservation Secretary which was still listed in the Constitution, but had not been actually filled for a while. The President said it would be listed for the Annual Meeting in March.

Alan Rigby referred to schemes being put forward for coal mining beneath the Royal National Park; he said the assurances that tunnels would be outside park boundaries was not good enough. The coal measures were near sea level and the mining could lead to subsidences, access roads, air vents

and a gradual infiltration. He moved that we protest strongly to the Minister for Lands and Mines, pointing out that there was no shortage of coal and other mineral deposits outside reserves.

Bog Godfrey felt such action may persuade some people that we were only fanatics, and a doubt was expressed whether it was in keeping with our compliment to the Lands Department on the projected Bill. Ron Knightley said if the motion were lost, he would put forward a resolution protesting against permission to construct access roads, vents etc, in the Park. New member Bob Dampf saw nothing incongruous in the letters of commendation and protest - they were in line with our overall view of protection and conservation of parklands.

Jack Wren supported the motion, adding his agreement that the coal level would tend to cause subsidence of the surface, David Ingram mentioned that the President of the National Park Trust had indicated his disapproval of the mining scheme. After Alan Rigby's address in reply, the matter went to the vote and we will add our voice to the protests.

All this had taken quite a while. In fact by the time the usual announcements had been made and the President had voiced Christmas wishes to all members, it was 9.35 when the meeting closed.

H A P P Y N E W Y E A R!

SOCIAL NOTES FOR JANUARY.

Alan Rigby's name on the social programme is always a welcome sight. Since many club members have been to the Centre and many others anticipate a visit, "Central Australia" on 19th January should see a large crowd in the Club room.

"Samoa" as presented by Alex and Jean Burton on 26th January, will be another good reason for a night out at the Club. Their recent visit to the south seas will be unfolded by movie and slides. Already we have enjoyed their travels to distant isles and we now look forward to another pleasant interlude.

Congratulations to Sandra Bardwell and Phil Butt on their engagement.

THE KOSCIUSKO STATE PARK.

How did it begin?

Myles J. Dunphy.

The recent publication of the proposed plan for the management and development of The Kosciusko State Park prompts the question How did it all begin? The events leading to the creation of this largest of Australian parklands and the circumstances that invested that process were complicated; the story cannot be told adequately in a few hundred words.

In common with all worthwhile achievements the KSP did not just happen; its establishment was preceded by a great deal of hard work. It was not unique but merely one of a series of parkland schemes that evolved with the growth of the bushwalking-conservation movement which commenced about 1914. In time other camping-walking clubs were formed in Sydney including the largest - the Sydney Bushwalkers in 1927. The object of nearly all these clubs included the preservation of scenic bushland wildlife and wildlife habitat; because of their regard for these things that constituted their own environment. The trailers and bushwalkers set out on a campaign of park making to some extent caused by the onset of motor tourism and the invasion of bush tracks by "pioneering" motorists. Their ideal was the primitive area.

The Blue Mountains National Park Committee, formed in 1933 to prosecute the scheme of that name was changed to the National Parks and Primitive Area Council in 1934 to enable it to conduct a number of park projects. The functions of this self-supporting autonomous coterie of trailers and bushwalkers was to initiate, formulate and to submit to the authorities schemes for parklands; to spearhead the conservation efforts of bushwalkers and to conduct campaigns for moral support (the NPPAC continued to operate up to about 1960).

The NSW Federation of Bushwalking clubs, established in 1930 to consolidate and regulate bushwalking formed its own Conservation Bureau in 1938. Thereafter it pursued a parallel path with the NPPA council and added weight to the conservation drive. The requirements of practical users of the scenic bushland were recognised by the authorities and several new parklands were established.

In the period 1933-1946 the NPPA Council worked with all speed most of the time in touch with Surveyor General H.B. Mathews and his officers; the Department of Lands was well aware of the conservation efforts of this and other societies and gave a great deal of sympathetic help to what was recognised as a continuing campaign for the public good. However during the war years and the following period of rehabilitation the Department was unable to assist or entertain parkland projects as surveyors could not be spared to investigate them. The Snowy Indi scheme was an exception as it had important aspects for government.

When the situation eased the bushwalking conservation movement was resumed on a greater scale than before, there being a marked increase in the number of Clubs and other conservation societies. In fact the feeling for the conservation of bushland and wildlife had developed to an extraordinary extent. The scientific bodies were taking notice of the park schemes being initiated and formulated, and gave moral support to some of them. Some conservation societies had support NPPA Council schemes from the beginning notably the Wildlife Preservation Society, the Parks and Playground Movement and The Rangers League.

Included in the several projects of the NPPA Council was one entitled a "Snow-Indi National Park or Primitive Area", unique to the extent that it comprised about a million acres of Snow highland of both NSW and Victoria. The tract of country extended from Grey Mare Bogong, Gungartan, Black Jack and Big Byabo on the eastern side extending to a line joining Deddick, Mt. Lienster and Mt. Pinnabar. This scheme was initiated between 1930 and 1943 by Myles J. Dunphy of the Mountain Trails Club. Tours of inspection were made and information filed for the time when it could be formulated, but a tentative was laid down which designedly did not include valuable grazing lands on its northern and eastern environs. With other parkland projects and studies of erosion and bushfire damage in various parts of the State it was exhibited at two annual Bushland Exhibitions in the Blaxland Galeries held by the Rangers League - about 1935. These schemes for large parklands were viewed by thousands of persons and created a great deal of interest, judged from questions asked on the spot.

NPPA Council men and other bushwalkers continued to carry out numerous pack carrying expeditions of upwards of two weeks duration to procure first hand knowledge about potential parklands. Some of these were the Blue Mountains National Park, Snow Indi National Park, Beecroft Peninsula (Jervis Bay) reserves, Warrumbungles National Park. The only way to accomplish these objectives was to make the work a collaboration effort of the team internally and a community effort externally. The team needed freedom to act as it thought best. During its long existence this voluntary unhampered direction and conduct of work proved successful. By 1950 the number of major parklands had increased substantially since the MTC and SBW supporters began their initial Garrawarra Park campaign in 1933.

In 1944 NPPA Council decided it was time to straighten out Snowy Indi Scheme in preparation for submission when the opportunity arose after the war but events were precipitated by action taken at a higher level. Statements in the Press and elsewhere made it plain that many activities concerning the water rights of three states were involved - water catchment, irrigation, Murray and Snowy River flows, electric power generation, sheep and cattle grazing, forestry and probably mining. Also recreations such as summer motoring, winter sports, recreational walking trail riding, fishing and nature study. Scientists also had their interests. The extent of the productive activities was alarming, it seemed that matters of recreation, scenic wilderness might be trampled

underfoot. It was felt that the time was opportune to show there existed a strong body of opinion in favour of reserving a large area of the Snowy Mountains in its wilderness state. Investigations continued.

On 8.4.43 officers of the Department of Lands verbally advised the NPPA to submit its Snow Indi Scheme in June. Intensive work was carried out on letters, appendices and maps. Dated 14.6.43 the scheme was lodged with the Department and copies delivered to the Premier, W.J. McKell, to the River Murray Commission and other statutory bodies as well as to the walking and parks bodies. The Government appointed a committee to investigate certain matters deemed to have precedence over public recreation interests.

The Department arranged a meeting between M.J. Dunphy and Messrs.Harnett and Barrie for 3.8.43. The Harnett Committee explained aspects of the matter very clearly and gave the NPPA spokesman a good hearing. The discussion was continued on the following day when several senior Lands Department officers joined in. The emergent facts and matters were -

a. The committee said at once they were not interested in the proposed parkland across the border in Victoria, and said that dual control could not be considered (thus the two state unique feature was cast out without further comment. As a matter of fact the NPPAC had never advocated dual control; had rather envisaged the area in Victoria as a primitive area administered by the Department of Lands Victoria.

b. Legislation would be brought down to reorganise the grazing leases, covering practically the whole area to preserve the considerable revenue derived from lease rents or tenders.

c. Water conservation.

d. Forestry.

e. Soil erosion, pests etc.

f. the development of a large national park was assured and would be established very soon.

Following representations made at these meetings by M.J. Dunphy it was conceded that the park when approved could not be a "national park" because of grazing leases and permissive occupancies and that the public should have right of access through leaseholds and use of the whole area. He suggested that the term "State Park" would meet the case.

Early in 1943 the Surveyor General sent a large party of surveyors into the field and the large two-sheet Snow lease map was produced primarily for the use of interested graziers. The region surveyed extended from Tumut and Brindabella to Paupong and Forest Hill.

On 8.9.43 the Premier, Mr. W.J.McKell, wrote NPPAC explaining the governments decision to set aside 1,400,000 acres of the Snowy Mountains as a national park. He noted the Councils suggestion for the future creation

of a separate State Parkland Authority Council, expressed surprise and thanks for the magnitude of the area, and also expressed surprise that in all this area no area had been left free of grazing for undisturbed wildlife propogation. The Council maintained that the southern section was most suitable for a wildlife sanctuary.

Signs of a coming conflict of interests were plain. Following on Press articles "Cattle in State Park" Mr. Tully, Minister for Lands, said there was a restrictive condition that stock must be off the snow leases between May 31 and December 1 each year, and that the extent of stocking would be limited in order to prevent exposure and erosion. The appropriate regulations when issued gave free access to the whole area to bona fide "pleasure seekers". This was a promising beginning.

The scientific societies objected to aspects of the proposals. The Royal Zoological Society suggested that an area one tenth of the proposed park should be marked as "Strict Natural Reserve" and be completely exempted from tenures of any kind. They selected the Snowy Indi area as the best place for such a sanctuary. (At a later date they changed their mind and selected the problem "summit" area for desired treatment. The R.Z. said that any area designated park should be reserved from any sort of tenure.

On 5.1.44 members of the various societies met at the Premiers office to discuss matters with the Select Committee appointed to meet them. The Committee advissd the societies to wait and see what was stated in the act when it would be assented to soon. The Act was assented to 19.4.44. Section 5, Clause 3 stated The Trust may retain as primitive area such part of the KSP (not exceeding one tenth of the area of the park) as it may think fit.

Section 13 stated. Subject to the regulations, land within the Park shall be available to the public for the purpose of riding, hiking, camping, snow sports and any form of recreation, and the public should have free access to and over all roads and tracks, and to all fishing streams within the park."

There were other activities affecting the beginning of the State Park. The operation of the Murray Waters Act from 1915, the use of controlling locks and weirs, the level of the Hume Reservoir and expansion of irrigation areas a long way from the Snowy Mountains all depended on the Burrenjuck Reservoir watershed.. To this end the NSW Soil Erosion Service played a major role in the prevention of erosion and the Commonwealth Forestry and Timber Bureau did the first erosion survey of the highland catchments of the two states.

In the repatriation period there were schemes for the fringes of the highlands in both states. Under stimulation from the Soil Conservation Service the Premier and the Minister for Lands undetook an 8-day horseback

tour of the NSW highlands. By this time the public demand for a large parkland for recreation and conservation was well known to the authorities. This demand was weighted considerably by the scientific societies interested in the preservation of geological features, rare plants, wild life and biotic communities. In time the Minister for Lands brought down a bill which established the Kosciusko State Park and created a Trust to manage it.

The next most important phase in the beginnings of the Park was the emergence of the Snowy Mountains Scheme in 1948; a vast project which involved the full development of the Snowy Highlands as a planned catchment. The SMA lost no time in getting down to work. Having built access roads they set out to develop tourist interest in its huge works. Some service roads, noticeably the Alpine Way became tourist roads, and a steadily increasing influx of visitors was achieved. At least two other results were achieved. A great number of interested persons visited many parts of the Snowy who in other circumstances would not have left the summit road and a lot of genuine interest in "national parks" due to genuine interest in the great national works averted a lot of criticism.

The early improved road access resultedin a greatly increased demand for winter sport facilities, and there was a great boost in the construction of snow sport villages.

Before long it appeared that only the members of the natural science bodies and those who value scenic wilderness scenery for their holidays had anything to grieve over. However there is no room complacency on the score of the ultimate utilisation of scenic wilderness. Realisation of its real value has increased to a marked extent due to the past efforts of the conservators. And more than any other parkland the KSP, by reason of the nature of the region and the many overlapping activities connected with it has had a most educational value.

What has been recorded here deals with facts and circumstances bearing on the beginnings of a great State Park which, because of inherent complications and diverse even conflicting interests will always be a compromise area no matter how wise its administration, it would be impossible to please everyone who has an interest in the place.

In conclusion, as some acknowledgement of the excellence of the original two state scheme an earnest effort should be made to induce the authorities in Victoria to set up a primitive park on their side of the border, entirely separate from the proposed large national park on the highlands further southwards.

22nd December, 1965.

DAY WALKS.

JANUARY 30. Engadine - Woronora River - Lake Eckersley - Heathcote. 7 miles.
A visit to the Northern portion of the Heathcote Primitive Area. This section of the Woronora River is rocky and could involve a rock scramble. Excellent swimming at Lake Eckersley.

Train: Ring leader at B0961 Extension 3077 for departure time.
Tickets: Heathcote return @ 5/6.
Map: Heathcote Primitive Area or Port Hacking Tourist.
Leader: Jim Calloway.

FEBRUARY 6. Waterfall - Heathcote Creek - Heathcote. 8 miles.
Another excursion into the Heathcote Primitive Area. There are several good swimming holes along Heathcote Creek. An ideal walk for new members.
Train: 8.50 a.m. Cronulla train Central Electric Station to Sutherland CHANGE AT SUTHERLAND for rail motor to Waterfall.
Tickets: Waterfall return @ 6/-.
Map: Heathcote Primitive Area or Port Hacking Tourist.
Leader: Ern Farquhar.

FEBRUARY 13. Waterfall - bus to Governor Game Lookout - Thelma Ridge - Era Beach - Mt. Bulgo - Bald Hill - Otford. 10 miles.
After a short sharp descent to Era Beach, there should be ample time for surfing. Then right through the Garrawarra Primitive Area to the panorama at Bald Hill. Suitable for new members.
Train: 8.20 a.m. Cronulla Train Central Electric Station to Sutherland. CHANGE AT SUTHERLAND for rail motor to Waterfall.
Tickets: Otford return @ 8/- plus 2/- bus fare Waterfall - Governor Game Lookout.
Map: Port Hacking Tourist.
Leader: David Ingram.

Congratulations to the organisers of theChristmas Party and to those who attended - 85 people and numerous offspring enjoyed a balmy night at the Grey's residence.

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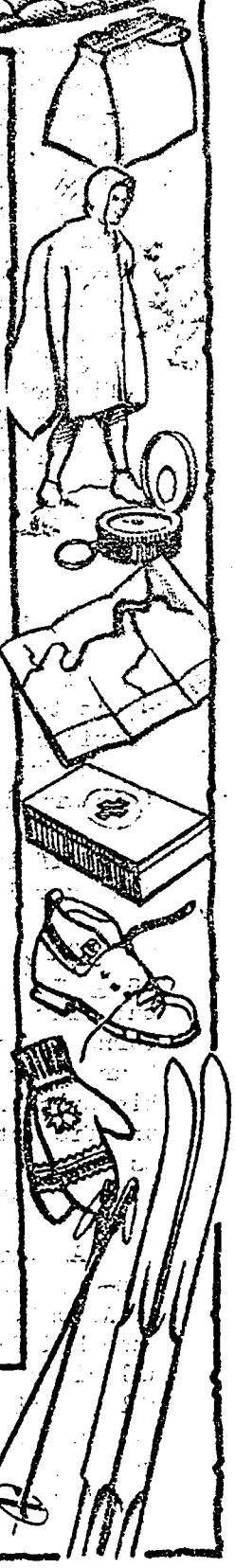

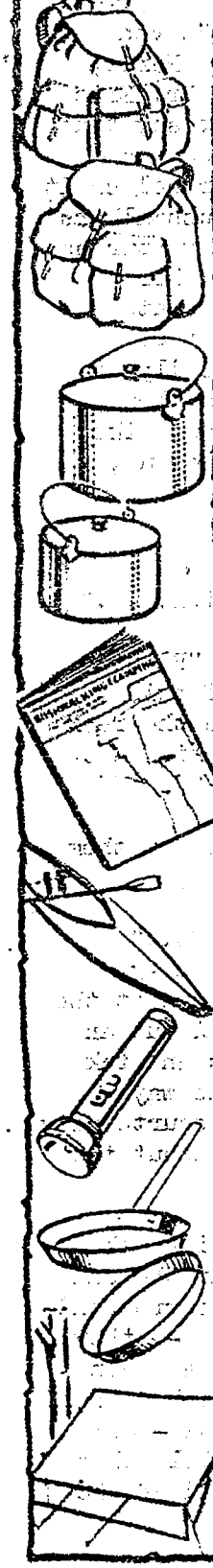

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PROSPECTING THE JAPANESE ALPS

Marie Byles.

(INTRODUCTION by Dot Butler; "Once a climber, always a climber" even though the years roll by and the body becomes frail and stooped. Marie, now a little grey-haired whisp of a woman, was a contemporary of Dr. Eric Dark, the "Father of Rock-climbing" in N.S.W. One might almost say that Marie was the Mother because, although she claims never to have been a good rock-climber, (she was a world-travelled mountaineer), nevertheless it was her enthusiasm which egged the young Tigers on to form the Bushwalkers' Rock Climbing groups. (Surely a Mother's role to encourage her adventurous children:) Marie was always ready to lend climbing books from her copious private library to keen beginners. She readily lent or donated her climbing equipment to the impecunious young, and even helped them financially on some larger expeditions - I am thinking specifically of an expedition into Western China organised by Marie in the 1930's when that part of China was literally the end of the world. And so, like Dr. Dark, accepting that there comes a time when the body must slow up, nevertheless the mind re-lives those kingly days of climbing.)

"I think he should not have charged you from Matsumoto. I think...."

I rudely interrupted the Japanese friend who accompanied me. "Please don't talk of that kind of thing now. I'm enjoying every minute of this glorious scenery; please don't spoil it. Suppose at the next bend the rear of the bus got two feet closer to the edge, what a glorious death amid all this grandeur!"

"If it's only mountains you want," he spoke peevishly, "you'll get them all over Japan."

"Ah, but not as good as these at Kamikochi. These are 12,000 ft.!" As he made his calculations in metres my remark was lost. I jambed my carrying bag more firmly into the middle of my back to ease the swings at the turns and the jumps at the ruts, and rested back utterly content. About an hour later the driver stopped to rest his white-cotton-gloved hands and take his eyes off the narrow rutted road, a road only wide enough for one way traffic but on which cars often met each other and one waited very courteously as near to the edge as possible while the other squeezed past with about two inches between them.

As twilight fell we passed the Imperial Hotel, the only inn which takes non-Japanese guests and which closes down immediately summer ends at the end of August. It was now the middle of September and three months of correspondence had failed to persuade any other inn to accept a foreign guest - they all claimed to be full. The only thing the Japanese Travel Bureau had been able to find was the Gosenjaku Lodge, a kind of hostel for hikers with dinner, bed and breakfast for two and a half dollars a day and a bunk in a six-bunk cabin. The proprietor of the Lodge had relented only when he was told that one Japanese would bring me and another would take me away at the end of the

week. But after he and his assistants had looked at me very dubiously when it was explained I was a vegitarian and ate neither meat nor fish, they reconciled themselves to entertaining one of the lesser breed of humanity and became kindness personified - except on that shocking occasion when I went out for the day with the key of the cabin in my pocket. It needed no common language to make known to me the awfulness of my offence.

"Su mi ma sen!" washes away your sins better than the Blood of the Lamb, I had been told. The receptionist was placated. I never offended again.

Of course we removed our shoes at the entrance, as in all inns, but they provided lockers in which to place your outdoor shoes, and you could put that key in your pocket! It also provided slippers to walk over the polished boards. You might think this avoided all sweeping and susting, but every day every board was wiped over till it shone better than any polisher could shine it.

Each bus brought loads of tourists, mainly hikers and climbers with mainly red or yellow hats and red or yellow rucksacks, the larger ones about three feet across and containing far more than the kitchen sink - I often saw heavy folding umbrellas in the side pockets.

A few enthusiasts sported ice-axes, but for what purpose I did not discover, for though in the same latitude as Auckland, New Zealand, these mountains carry neither snow nor ice. This was said to be due to the low winter rain-and-snow-fall. By the time summer arrives there is no water on the tops except at the huts and most of the climbers carried flasks - as well as folding umbrellas and ice-axes! I did not see much evidence of ropes except on the souvenir ice-axe brooches. But the mountains would provide magnificent rock-climbing, and I saw pictures to show that at least some Japanese people cultivate the art.

The first day I walked further than I had walked for twenty years. The track through the lovely forest was covered with pebbles and not very pleasant walking. I do not know if the pebbles were especially laid to protect the surface for maintenance trucks, but I soon found that the forest is growing on deep mulch overlaying river gravels, and that every track becomes pebbles if it is much used, even by walkers, let alone cars. These tracks are scarcely wide enough to take one car and the hikers sometimes have to cling to tree roots over the brink of the swirling river to let that one car pass.

All the young men and women climbers and walkers were friendly. Occasionally I would meet one studying English at the University, glad of the opportunity of 'conversing' with a foreigner, and when I had lost my soap and could see none in the shops an ex-soldier who had been stationed in Singapore for two years came and saved me from what must be little short of a criminal offence, viz., going into the communal bathroom without soap!

Twice I climbed up about two thousand feet until I could look out over the bare rocky tops which rose perhaps five thousand feet higher. One of the climbers lent me his walking stick or I should not have managed it.

It was good to breathe the high mountain air once again. I sat for a long while looking over the long white scree slopes and dreamed of what I would have done twenty, thirty, forty years ago. The climb up was exhilarating but the climb down was rather exhausting. One kind young man came back to keep an eye on me until I reached the bottom again. I wonder did he belong to the Search and Rescue Section! Most of the walkers and climbers wore heavy rubber-soled canvas boots, which probably slipped less on the rolling pebbles than my own stout rubber-soled sandals.

Over the forest of deciduous trees and conifers rose not only the rocky mountains, but also an active volcano which smoked realistically from time to time reminding one of when it had erupted, formed a large lake and left the trees to drown in it.

It is hard to compare the beauties of mountains I have seen in so many countries. The Japanese Alps rise seven thousand feet above the inns and hostels along the rivers and would provide strenuous enough scrambles to suit the toughest, while the camera can find pictures wherever it looks, whether in the creeper-entwined forests or on the open white stony banks of the rivers.

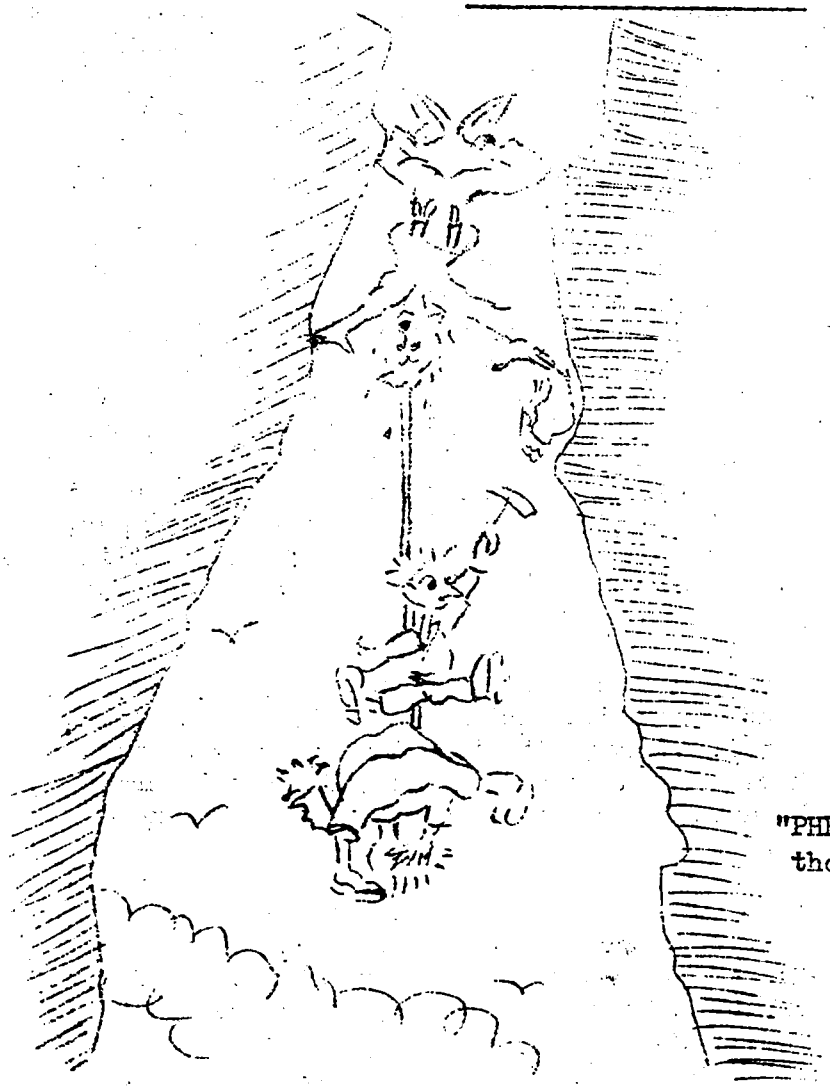
The Japanese Alps are not for the young Australian who thirsts for snow and ice for there is neither in summer, and in winter they are inaccessible for skiing. But they do call to the middle-aged Bushwalker whose search is mainly for beauty. And they are a superb example of how an over-populated country can none the less afford to have wilderness areas untouched by the axe. The forests are of mixed evergreen and deciduous trees, and among the latter is the lovely silver birch which loses its bark in rings so that you think some vandal must have tried to ring-bark it. The floor of the lower forest consists predominantly of a dwarf bamboo which would make impossibly slow-going without a track. But tracks abound, and likewise excellent maps (in Japanese, of course). At least I suppose they were excellent if one judged by the seriousness with which the trampers would pour over them - just as we used to do.

If you are thinking of going to Kamikochi I should recommend October when the trees flame with orange red and gold. You could avoid the language difficulty if you took your tent and camped beside the rushing river, either taking food with you or buying it at the shops attached to the rest houses and inns. But it would be a little cold to bathe in the river in October, and you would miss the joy of the Japanese communal bath, always steaming hot, which is a delight all on its own. On the whole I should recommend Gosenjaku Lodge. I think they were as sorry as I when the time came to say goodbye, and I don't think they would be so afraid of the next foreigner especially if I lent you my little two-way dictionary which I bought just before I left Japan!

Later on I visited the mountain resort of Koya San, the headquarters of the Shingon Buddhist Sect. It abounds in lovely temples around which alw ays grow the tall dark crytpomeria and cyprus trees. It was exactly the right time to see the deciduous trees in all their autumn glory, and it was

exactly the right day to see them at their best, for it was very dull and rainy. The tall dark trees rose above the sombre grey-roofed temples, and from the ground beneath leapt up the silent flames of orange gold and red. It was uncanny. The little Olympus Pen F Japaness camera (for which I willingly give a free advertisement) took the best pictures I have ever taken, but even it could not portray that weird fantastic fairyland. You must see it to believe it possible.

The mountains of Japan have left behind the memory of people with hearts of gold to match their golden gingko trees. I should like to visit them again but I should prefer to wait for another life so that I could scramble among their rocky peaks.



"PHEW! For a moment I thought we'd had it."

Reminiscences of a Climber: - Colin Putt

RUNNING AWAY TO SHORE

I never intended, for a start, to go in for climbing as a sport, and that's why, perhaps, I'm still not very good at it. I was brought up in a family atmosphere of boats and sailing; sea chanties were sung over my cradle and my earliest clear memory is of my father steeping planks and timbers in a steambox. Before I went to school I had learned about the vast superiority of gaff rig, fiddle bows and tarred hemp standing rigging. This theoretical grounding was followed by a solid course in knots, bends and splices, rowing steering , and so on.

Later I acquired and rigged by own sailing dinghy and spent all my spare time at sea, taking special care to be out in the middle of winter and in particularly violent storms, which were alw ays more interesting and could offer faster sailing. By this time I had learned that one of my uncles, although a good sailor, used to go to snowy places and indulge in a mysterious sport called "step-cutting", (This was in the early 1930's when the general use of crampons had not yet been adopted in New Zealand), but this was not much talked of in the family.

The dinghy, with her rigging and on a wheeled cradle, weighed about 250 lbs. and had to be pulled home up a mile of extremely steep hill from the water after each day's sailing. At the age of 16 I got a job as a truck driver with a survey team who were mapping some unmapped bits of New Zealand; the job involved little driving and a lot of carrying heavy loads, of foot, through rough country. Heavy packing was dead easy after years of practice dragging the boat up hill and I began to enjoy the bush at once. At the University I naturally joined the tramping clubs and began to go to the ice mountains for climbing. Shipton points out that mountaineering and sailing are very similar while his climbing companion, Tilman, although saying little, currently spends about half of every year sailing the Arctic seas. The transfer from one of these sports to the other is easy and barely noticeable.

In the 1940's much of New Zealand's mountain country was virtually unexplored and many major peaks were still unclimbed. With Bob Cawley's climbing parties I went into this country with the climbing gear of the day; spiky stiff hemp rope, clinkered boots, waist-high axe, Eckenstein crampons, oilskin parka. No slings, karabiners or pitons had been heard of and our loads were accordingly lighter.

Our first virgin summit was reached after a week's travel on snow and ice, with 90 lb. packs, in country where only two parties had ever been before, camping in the new-fangled snow-caves. We were stopped half way up our peak by a horrific bergschrund with a narrow shaky bridge and a 15 ft. overhanging ice-wall above it. Self-levitation with two axes got us up this and soon afterwards we were faced with some 300 ft. of rock. Our technique on rock, at this stage, was to scramble up as best we could winding the rope around outcrops where available; fortunately on this occasion we

were able to cut steps up a steep couloir of rotten ice, bombarded by stones, and avoid the 300 ft. of mod.diff.grade rock interspersed by broad ledges. On the way down, we cut an ice-bollard at the bergschrund and roped down it. I was last man down and on arriving at the lower lip gave the rope a tug to free it on the bollard. The bollard flew off and hit me square on the head! We were involved in a small harmless avalanche on the way down - in those days there seemed to be more avalanches than now and the summer climbing season was colder, snowier and later. Or could it be that our equipment and techniques have improved?

By 1949 I had joined one of the small groups which had acquired pre-war English books on rock-climbing and were trying to use the techniques described in them. The next year I came to Australia and found that climbing was looked on in the bushwalking clubs as a criminal activity. Although the local sandstone frightened me, and still does, I naturally got involved in the early efforts to popularise the sport among bushwalkers, and to teach people how to use simple belaying techniques and to abseil. Some memorable early climbs followed - the first rock-climbing Instructional of the Sydney Bushwalkers, which included an ascent of Kanangra Walls, some of the classical climbs at Glenbrook, various first ascents in the Castle area, Glen Davis, Ettrema and the Kowmung. None of these were of great difficulty, but they were long climbs and enjoyed by large parties of bushwalkers who, a year or two earlier, would have been trotting along tracks with good clothes in their packs to wear home in the train. Now they were headed for bigger and steeper country, in old cars or in the one-and-only Puttmobile, and from them perhaps have sprung some of the present generation of climbers.

In 1956 I visited Zermatt with three English climbers and found that the famous Swiss Alps were no more difficult or fearsome that New Zealand after all. Our best climb was a frontier traverse, from Monte Rosa over the Lyskamm, Castor and Pollux. We would have gone on over the Breithorn but a sudden electrical storm forced us to retreat down the North Face of Pollux, so that my only Face Nor has been done downwards, not up. This was the sort of climbing I like - long distances covered fast at high altitudes, on ice, a bit of exposure, and not much rock; a kind of climbing that would be barely possible without crampons, and in which you are likely to spend the next night in a bivouac, or a hut on the wrong side of the range. Here I reached the high point of my climbing career when a Swiss guide who saw me cutting steps took me for an Austrian guide!

On my return to Australia I found that Australians had been getting into trouble in New Zealand. Numbers of them had gone over to climb, some had been killed, the locals felt they were unsafe and wouldn't climb with them, and so the Australians got little chance to learn snow and ice techniques and were unsafe, etc. ..... Something had to be done about this. Dot Butler, Ian Wood and I set about forming the Australian Section of the New Zealand Alpine Club and starting the series of Instruction Courses for Australians which has run on every year since. These were very successful in cutting down the accident rate, though I don't thinkthey are the final answer - there are now enough expert mountaineers in Australia to give more personal attention to our

own novices. All this, of course, involves a lot of organising, and I was soon to find that while climbers are dead easy to get for expeditions, and mountaineers not hard, organisers are scarce.

In 1960 I was cornered at Mascot Airport by Norman Hardie, who was on his way to Nepal, and asked, "Would you like to lead an expedition?"

"Yes, where to?" (Never miss an opportunity, it will frighten other oppor tunities away.)

It turned out to be to the Carstensz mountains of Dutch New Guinea. It was a hard, uncomfortable and sometimes dangerous trip, with very little climbing, but at least I got my party all back alive, and we completed a useful reconnaissance to some good scientific work. I learned, the hard way, that planning and organisation are of prime importance; morale is next on the list, and that given these the ascent of the peak will probably follow unasked.

Two years later, in England, at the end of a good day's rock-climbing, I got a letter from Warwick Deacock in Darwin;

"We are going to Heard Island to climb Big Ben next year, will you come?"

(Marginal note from my wife: "O.K., you can go.")

18 months later I stood at the wheel of the schooner Patanela, steering by a star as she thrashed through the grey seas of the Southern Ocean under close-reefed canvas.

This, I think, is about where I came in to this story.

EARLY CLIMBERS - from N.Z.A.C.

Apparently there's nothing new under the sun, even in the climbing world. Here's an extract from Plutarch's "Lives", A.D. 48 (North's translation)

> "Now these barbarous people had such a glory in themselves and distained their enemies so much, that more to show their force and boldness than of any necessity that compelled them, or for any benefit they got by it; they suffered it to snow upon them...and did climb up to the tops of mountains through great heaps of ice and snow. And, when they were at the very top of all, they laid their long targets under their bodies, and lay all along upon them, sliding down the steep high rocks, that had certain hangings over of an infinite height."
