

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

A Monthly Bulletin of matters of interest to the
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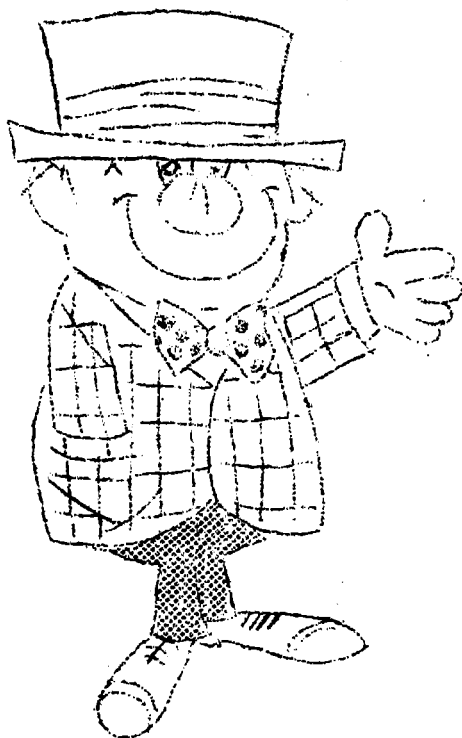
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EDITORIAL

On 21st. October, 1927 was held the first meeting of the Sydney Bushwalkers, which means that the Club is now in its 40th. year. It would seem a pity to let this year go by without having some sort of celebration. There has been a great deal of discussion as to what would be an appropriate celebration of the occasion of our 40th. birthday. Forty years, after all, is a long time for a Club to survive. The Sydney Bushwalkers, I am sure you will agree, is an organization with a tradition; a tradition of high standards in walking activity, a tradition of achievements in the conservation field, and a tradition of friendship created over the years. But what exactly is tradition? It is often associated with strength, with conservatism, with maturity, with reaction, and with decadence. S.B.W. has sentimental attachments for many, even though they no longer partake of the activities of the Club. It is these people, it is said, who must be considered primarily in arranging the anniversary celebrations. The actives meet and see each other every week. It is those who have families tying them down, and those who for reasons of health, no longer go walking, who should benefit. The Club belongs to these people as much as it belongs to the novices. Tradition can be compared with the roots of a tree. It is those roots which form the base upon which the tree stands. Yet without constant sunshine and rain the tree would die. No matter how much of a tradition our Club has, nor how much sentimentality attaches to it, the new blood is very necessary, or it would die. So to those who say that these birthday celebration should be primarily for the older members, I say no, the arrangements should be made for no-one primarily, but for every member, whether a foundation member, or admitted at the last meeting. A little bit of give, and a little bit of take is necessary by everyone. The Club belongs to every member, and every member is a part of the Club; accordingly every member should be enabled to take part in a function as important as our 40th. Anniversary celebrations.

P.S. If sufficient support is forthcoming, consideration may be given to producing a special issue of the magazine in October, possibly taking the form of a club history. If you have any ideas, please let me know.

THE APRIL GENERAL MEETING

by Neville Page

Once in every year a terrible tragedy befalls the S.B.W. Magazine Editor (whoever he or she may happen to be at the time). Jim Brown goes on holidays. As regular readers will know, Jim is our political reporter, reporting every month on the General Meeting and on other things political. Well, hardly had I settled into the position of editor when Jim hit me with the bad news that he wouldn't be in for the April meeting. Gadzooks and horrors, thought I, but I quickly gathered my wits together, and decided that the job must be done. What would the magazine be without some account of the wrangling, haranguing, and oral agitation which constitute the general meeting. On the evening of Wednesday, 12th April I gathered up some writing paper, filled my pen with ink and set out to do the job myself. With two assistants, I prepared to gather for posterity the political news of the moment.

This was an important meeting for it was the first under the chairmanship of our new President, Frank Rigby. Frank got the meeting under way promptly at 8.05 p.m. when, according to my count, there were 48 persons present. This month there was only one new member to welcome in with badge and constitution, and that was Colin Burton. Passing through from apologies to minutes, we had a small adjustment from Gordon Redmond about the annual financial statements. Next was correspondence, and things were running smoothly. A letter was received from the Nurses' Association advising that they would be using the Club Rooms on 21st June, and asking us if we would change the night of the meeting. In "items arising" the Social Secretary advised that Committee had discussed the matter and it had been decided that rather than change the evening of our meeting, it would be better to have a social evening somewhere else. A letter was sent to the Colo Shire following a motion at the last meeting regarding the cutting of green timber at Woods Creek.

Next on deck was the Treasurer with his report. Expenditure at \$228 was abnormally high. Income was \$331, leaving the Club coffers with a closing balance of \$368 in them. Significant in expenditure was the payment of \$62 for the commercial preparation of the annual report. Gordon at this point foreshadowed a motion for discussion under General Business.

Owen Marks then presented his Social Report, reminding everyone about the theatre party which had been arranged to see "The Dreadful Fate of the H.M.S. Revenge" at the Music Hall on 4th May.

A Federation Report was presented by Muriel Goldstein, out of which arose the matter of Budai Natural Park. It appears that proposals are under way whereby permission will have to be gained before camping in the Park.

This matter brought forth a lot of discussion, and it was moved by Alex Colley: "That this club opposes written (later amended to "prior") application for use of parks, but we are in favour of charging fees". Alex stated that this Club had been largely responsible for having this park reserved, and any plan whereby permission to use the park would have to be obtained beforehand would be an unwarranted restriction of freedom. Phil Butt gave a brief explanation of the reasons why this action is being considered. Apparently the limited camping space is being overtaxed, and the system of prior permission would ensure that only a certain number of people used the park at any one time. Bill Burke reminded us that Alan Strom, in a talk he gave to the Club, foreshadowed this type of thing. Already there are parks, such as the Barren Grounds Fauna Reserve, where it is necessary to obtain prior permission before walking there. Alex's motion was put to the vote and passed.

Margaret Child was not on hand to present her Parks and Playgrounds Report personally, but the Secretary read out the salient features. It dealt mainly with Scouts building halls in public parks, and was not of general interest to bushwalkers.

General Business now reared its ugly head, and the first item was the election of a new Secretary. This is one position which, because of the volume of work involved, always seems to be hard to fill. There was one nomination only, being Ian Steven, and his election was accepted by the meeting. Did I detect a sigh of relief from Uncle David as a great work burden was lifted from his shoulders. Sandra Butt was elected to a second term of office as assistant secretary.

The President next asked for the general opinion of bushwalkers present regarding the provision of tea and biscuits at some meetings. Upon a show of hands, it appeared that the work involved in serving, washing up, etc. on the part of a few did not make the suppers worthwhile.

Now came Gordon Redmond's foreshadowed motion "That future annual reports be typed, duplicated and collated by Club members." This motion brought much animated discussion and occasional emotional outbursts, but it didn't seem to be leading anywhere. Ron Knightley raised a point of order, saying that the matter was one of administration and therefore it was up the committee, and not the members in General Meeting, to act. This gave Frank an opportunity to terminate discussion, but he chose to accept the motion in the form "That this meeting recommends to Committee, etc....." More discussion about little took place, until it was terminated by Ron Knightley's motion "That we move on to the next item of business". This was passed, meaning that a vote couldn't be taken on the prior motion, having the effect of tossing it out.

Things were now beginning to warm up considerably, and as the President wiped the perspiration from his furrowed brow, we moved on to the next business, which was the 40th Anniversary celebrations. Jack Gentle wanted to know what was being done. The Social Secretary said that everything was under control, and he and his wife (Jack's wife that is) were working with Dot Butler on suggested forms which the celebrations might take.

Jack Perry next moved that a fresh approach to the Nurses' Association

(.....ctd. on p. 14)

OUR REUNION

by Taro

EDITOR'S NOTE: "This is the first time in the history of the Club that it has ever happened", Taro (Duke of Clear Hill) informed me in the club room. Yes, I had blundered - I had omitted to include an account of the 1967 Reunion in the April Magazine. "It's not that I forgot", said I, trying to explain away my obvious guilt, "I just didn't seem to find time to write it". Dearly indeed have I been made to pay for my error, being chastised, not by one, but by many, including the President himself. It would appear that an apology would be in order; but no, I refuse to apologise. In fact, I'm glad there was no Reunion article in April, because if there had been we would have missed out on the colourfully written article which appears below. Being a man of action and not words alone (or at least action in words, or vice versa) Taro offered a solution to my dilemma. He had written a letter to Joe Turner, giving an account of the great event. This letter, suggested Taro, could be adapted to suit the magazine. So Joe has typed out the letter and returned it to Taro, who has kindly forwarded it to me.

NOW READ ON:

May this "recounting" of the 1967 Reunion be a warning against those who missed it; that they may, perhaps, get, if even an inkling only, of what a success it was and regret their absence, and here and now resolve to be "in it" for 1968 and for many years thereafter, or, as I said to one of the absentees - ".....let this tale of what you missed be the punishment that fits the crime!"

Aye! like unto a bunch of grapes was this cluster of faithful S.B.W.'s. The weekend was one long handclasp; a curious intense friendship seemed to be in the air. Maybe it was a reward for the idea of weather-ignoring; all threat it was, but for us - not one drop from a clouded sky. Unfortunately, there were many "defaulters". It would take more than can be spared here to name all those who, unlike the one referred to above, (who lives a considerable distance from Sydney) live within reasonable "walking" distance of our glorious Woods Creek site.

Only a sprinkling of elders turned up, but the "newies" made a great show - and OH! the babies!! - one long ripple of fascination! To name some, the McInnes three! Fairy floss! and the baby of 18 months! a dream child - but more anon.

This time, most tents were at the big campfire end of the Eden. More colours than in a rainbow. The grass was lush, and Woods Creek was running, thus saving that awkward scramble up from the river when billy-laden. And "someone" had "planted" thousands of bellbirds to give us all a vociferous

welcome. Also, a week before, some "tigers" (bless them) had been down with a cross-cut saw and piled some big logs - some up to 15" diameter. They put two logs - 10" - parallel, 10' apart and criss-crossed the rest, thus the gap had ample breathing space; result, on this night, one big GAS-FLAME. It was still active at noon Sunday.

On the Saturday night - temperature 68°, the usual horseshoe formed and away we went with Eric Rowan as M.O. - an excellent choice - his voice is music!

Jim Brown gave a Star turn - a long monologue; humourous and topical, it kept us hopping. We could have done with more solo work, but among the high-lights was a little recorder bit by a "little girl". Sad to relate, though, the Duke's flute could not "toot", a kep pad had vanished. Of course, there were all the usual choruses and a yarn or two was heard. Heck Carruthers gave some "beauts" - it was a real easy do-as-you-please party.

THEN - a new couple, young, German, gave some folk-songs of the "Faderland" - AND PLUS A GUITAR!! Cheers - then back to their seats, when, from the Duke of Clear Hill came a loud cry "Holy Night, Holy Night!" No response - then in a lull, the guitar began to tremble with chords and the girl sang, so softly, "Holy Night" - and then the boy joined - not in unison BUT IN HARMONY! This was really terrific, coming after the Aussie "jingle" (no offence meant) - it was as though, in the mingled murk of dark sky and tree shadow, Venus broke through and smiled happily down upon us!! Frankly, the writer does not expect ever again to hear such perfection. It was purest magic! It stunned the audience!! It gave us a hint of what may be the rule with the bushwalkers in Europe - a draught from the purest Spring of Music! One hopes the Bellbirds woke to hear it.

Came the usual ceremony of past Presidents - yes, 7 of them - strange how this ritual always retains the solemn flavour; makes us Bushwalkers feel MIGHTY BIG, MIGHTY GOOD - even exclusive - for where, in all Australia, is such a similar thing happening? (Surely too, in all Australia, Bushwalking must be the cream of the good life!)

After this, the initiation of the "newies" - about a dozen with the usual "satanic" craft! And the new President made his maiden speech - yes, just the right size, shape and colour - in fact, a "model" of a speech.

Then, of course, HO for supper. What a tumble of getting together with hailstorms of chatter. The usual "hugging" of the fire by the usual groups until about 3 a.m. - they drained the song books dry - (and a few tins, too!!)

The night remained dumb - glass down to 57° at 5.30, then the early "risers", up the hill to the fire for breakfast - that "City of Glowing Ashes" waiting all night for those desirous of toasting over it, their bread. Very good for the Spartan few early enough to revel in the early morn.

Then a few of those nice "kids" which the S.B.W. finds no trouble to produce got together with the reviewer, and together we watched the breakfast fires spring up everywhere, and thus we "skated" around, visiting fire by

fire seeing, by light of day, just who was who. Never were there so many "young-uns" - all nice, too, and as for the babies? - "Minilovelies". The McInnes three, flowers!! especially the 18 months oldster, a magnet for every eye.

Came the races - really a fun feast. Events for every size and age. The under 6 was a knockout; had it happened with the Melbourne Cup, it would have been a riot. They had 30 feet to run, with all the Mums at the winning tape. Four entries - BANG! They are off - at least one was - the teeny babe with his teeny legs - the others were fumbling - straight to the line went this "atom" - roars, cheers - THEN HE STOPPED, four feet from home, with the others, now parent-maddened, creeping up. Kath McInnes was delirious, finally reached in and grabbed her darling - no matter anyhow - every starter received a prize! (How wise). Then there were events for marrieds, singles, 10 years, 14 years, over 16. Also "Pommies" versus "Aussies" - a wheelbarrow race - a real paralyzer. And after that, a League of Nations, about 20 Aussies, Pommies, Scotch, German and yes, a dark chap from Uganda, here on a scholarship grant. A nice informative sort of blake. This event knocked out the big November affair in Melbourne and, blow-me-down (!) was won by a German! As one may guess, that "Doer" of the Bushwalking movement, Dot Butler won the married ladies event. But, oh wait. Next came the over 30, into which a certain "Duke" was pushed. (No one took exception to his youth!!) He had the privilege of starting from a mark of his choice. He snipped one third off the course and found it easy, BUT at the post, instead of breasting the tape, instinct made him duck under and he lost by a touch, but, says the "Duke", "What odds - I got a prize, just the same!!".

The race events were a Carnival of fun, gleaming with fraternity - like every other moment of this magnificent week-end.

Of course a S.B.W. Re-une would not be complete without the Damper Competition, with the wit of Judge Miriam - for example, "This damper, for instance, - the maker is not to blame, it is what happened to it after!!" And of a big and small damper together, "Mother and daughter both doing well!!" This half hour of damper judging was as rich and rare as anything in the whole weekend.

Yes, this Reunion was unique.

MAY'S QUOTABLE QUOTE

He that can draw a charm
From rocks, or woods, or weeds, or things
that seem
All mute, and does it - is wise.

....Bryan Waller Procter



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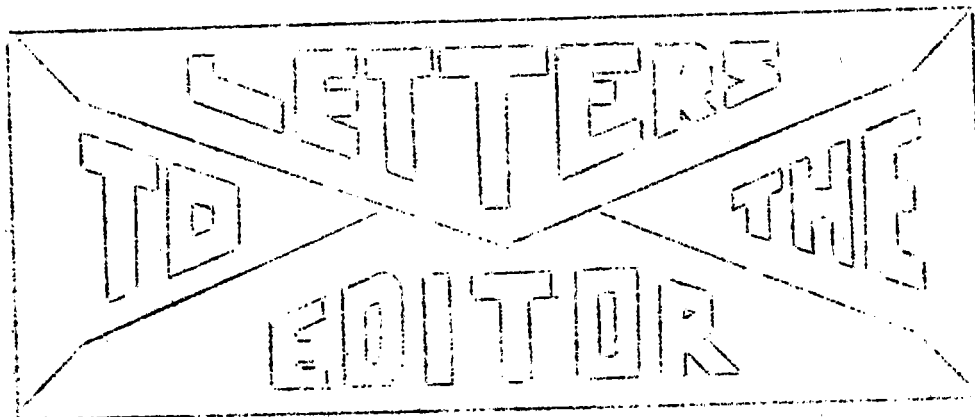
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MEMOIR OF A MELBOURNEITE

Sir,

It has been my pleasure whilst working in Sydney to have been an Associate Member of the Sydney Bushwalkers. I had done quite a few trips with the Melbourne Bushwalkers but I must write and congratulate your Club for the excellent opportunities I have had whilst on your trips. The first one I did was to Otford, Palm Jungle, Burning Palms, Era and Garies. Although I went on others - to Bobbin Head, Blue Pool and Uloola, Kingfisher etc., Era will remain in my memory as the most enjoyable place visited. I mean, we do have mountains and sea in Victoria; but alas, not with the accessibility of being within 35 miles of the city.

I have revisited Era many times since that first trip; and never fail to be impressed by the warm colours of the Sydney Red Gums in contrast to the stark white Scribbly's. The clarity of Era's tepid waters; and the sounds of the insects conjure up a vivid picture of an Australian summer which I'll long remember.

I have enjoyed seeing the N.S.W. flora too; which seemed to be abundant and constant despite the climatic conditions. I don't know the names of them all, (as some of you do) but I remember well the Flannel Flowers, the tall Gynea Lilies, the Banksia and the Waratah.

Equally enjoyable was being amongst you all. You have a fine Club and are to be commended on the work some of you do to ensure Prospective Members' qualifications, with the necessary Instructional Weekends; and the valuable experience which members have obviously gained as is shown in their ability and sense of responsibility.

I would have liked to have spent more time with you all as there is obviously an abundance of bushwalking enjoyment to be had with your Club. I thoroughly enjoyed the Christmas Party in that lovely setting with the green lawns; the fairy-lit willow; and the photographic display well-lit under canvas. The somewhat energetic Strip-the-Willow even had the bonus of that

VEGETABLES ALL

by Alex Colley.

Being what we were, old fashioned types, our party of seven (Frank Leyden, Bill Cosgrove, John Scott, Colin Ferguson, Grace Rigg, Gordon Redmond and I) left its six cars behind and all caught the 2.25 p.m. train to Bathurst on the Thursday before Easter. Long before this, in our typically stodgy way, we had decided exactly where we were going - from Turondale to Ophir, had booked our seats back on the 3.20 p.m. from Orange on the Monday, and had as good an idea of our route as our 4 mile to the inch map could provide. From Bathurst we took two taxis to the Turon River, where we arrived a little after 9 p.m. It was good to get out of the heated cars and savour the typical inland scent of dry grass and eucalyptus borne to us on the cool night air. A few minutes reconnaissance and we had found a camp site under a big casuarina, just beyond the car blighted zone.

Next morning we were away about 8. The clear, greenish-blue water of the river flowed quietly between low hills, mostly open. Walking was easy along grassy banks and pebble flats. There were few big stones, because the river flowed too slowly to transport them. The warm dry autumn sun soon had us peeling off our shirts. There was no undergrowth either, but one plant had to be watched. This was a small prickly pear with spines about half an inch long. These would go right through boots, penetrate the skin, and stick there, like burrs to wool, at the slightest contact. Around us were the typical inland birds such as rosellas, magpies, willy-wagtails, crows (at a respectable distance) and wedge-tailed eagles just over the tree tops. We walked through vertically bedded slates laid down horizontally by the seas which covered this part of the continent when life on land had just begun. On the hillsides veins of quartz intruded the parallel lines of upturned strata. This was gold-bearing country. Big excavations, piles of stones, old water races and stone chimneys, were constant reminders of Australia's first gold rush (gold was discovered by Hargreaves at Ophir). The miners in their vests and bowyangs, toiling and sweating with pick and shovel, were with us in spirit. More substantially, they had planted trees which still bore fruit. On the first day it was figs. Later we had almonds, oranges, quinces and apples.

As the river was not deeply entrenched we were able to climb the hills to cut off bends. From the tops we had extensive views of the broad valley. It was rolling country covered with brown grass beyond which rose the blue hills - typical "Gruner" country, as Bill described it.

On the first day we covered about 12 miles before camping on one of the many flats by the river. The next day could have been made more interesting had we lazed about till 11 a.m. then set off at a brisk pace and camped on a rock in the dark. But we got up at 6. We did, however, manage a late start. This was partly because of a discussion on that very

old theme "Is the club dying on its feet?". By the time we had decided it was not on its feet it was nearly 9 o'clock. As Frank opined that our progress was behind schedule we commenced the day with a quick climb over a steep hill in order to save 5 minutes of the time we had wasted. By pushing on all day with little rest we covered 16 miles - an effort which was probably the reason for one member of the party being off-colour next day.

Just after lunch that day we crossed the Hill End road. Along the bank, between the road and the river, cars and tents were packed close together. Ah, to be a motorist! To drive there, put up your tent, then go inside and listen to the transistor, with an occasional sortie outside to fire a few shots when the programme became dull! But not for us. Onward into the bush again with nothing better to listen to than the murmur of the river, the birds, and each others' voices. A little after this we came to the Macquarie River, quite a large stream with magnificent long deep pools. Difficult to cross, however, because of a slippery weed covering over a rocky bottom.

On Sunday we left the river at 7.30 and climbed on and off for most of the morning. Although it was open sheep country we enjoyed the sun and the unobstructed views of the valley. Between us and the river was a long flat dissected plateau which may have represented the old river valley before the Kosciusko uplift which created the blue Mountains.

Navigation difficulties due to the small scale of our map were soon offset by the breadth of our view, and it was soon obvious that we were well up on schedule. We had lunch on Daddys Holes Creek, about half a mile from Lewis Ponds Creek. This was good bush-walking country - no sheep, uncleared, and very like the Southern Blue Mountains. By 5 we were on a hill top looking for a camp site in the open country. By going a little off course we found quite a good one, though all water had to be boiled. We were now only about 8 miles from the railway at Mullion Creek, so we finished the trip there instead of getting a taxi from Ophir about 3 miles away.

Back in Orange I had time to visit the famous Cook Park. There I saw a giant Sequoia, a peacock, a scrub turkey, and a bride being photographed on the steps of the sunken garden - a very lovely setting. The park contains what is probably one of the most mature stands of cold country trees to be seen in the State, and is well patronised by the citizens.

The 3.20 from Orange had us back in town before 10. So ended another of our old-fashioned Easter trips. The weather had been perfect throughout. The only disappointing feature was the party's failure to find me a nugget, which I needed. Somehow their hearts were not in the search. Gordon Redmond, I thought, should have an eye for a nugget, if anyone had, but not a speck did he find. Disappointing to pass within a couple of miles of the place where the biggest nugget in the world was found and not find any gold, even with a magnifying glass. (The Holtermann nugget, found at Hill End was 4'9" high, 2'9" wide, 5" thick, and weighed 630 lbs.)

Back home on Tuesday I was pleased to read that the 80 police on the Bathurst road had charged 200 motorists, booked another 400 and sent 150 bad girls back home to Sydney.

Obviously this is no walk for the modern walker. However, it might be adapted to suit. The best time to do it would probably be in late July, when those icy westerlies blow. The distance from Sydney is too short to provide a worth-while drive for a weekend, let alone an Easter trip. It would probably be best as a day walk. If a starting time of 10 a.m. were agreed upon some might be ready then and the joke would be on them when the others arrived at 12. Those who like to leave it to the last thing to decide whether to come should be jammed in. The cheerful conversation of these care-free types will compensate for any lack of seats. A couple of hours driving should see the party at Bathurst, from which most of the route we covered could be seen by taking short drives to the main vantage points. There are some cliff faces on Lewis Ponds Creek. If the party reached there about sunset it could lower a rope over one of these and do a dangle (an abseil I think it's called) down to the creek bed. After a good swim with packs on they could get back to the cars not long after dark. Some of those prickly pears scattered on the seats would provide conversation pieces. A couple of hours in a tavern in a town, followed by a three hour drive home might make the trip worth while. At any rate it would provide good material for a magazine article.

SONGS OF THE TIMES

MOUNT BENELONG

by Jim Brown

PART A:

TUNE: First Subject of F MAJOR ORGAN CONCERTO (Handel)

What's the gutz on
This bloke Utzon,
Many people have gone nuts on.
Is he a dreamer
Or a schemer?
Does he know his stuff?

PART B:

TUNE: "SAMMY HALL"

- (1) Oh his name is Peter Hall, Peter Hall, Peter Hall,
And he's going up the wall, up the wall.
As the Opera House grows tall,
People say it's far too small:
He just hopes the roof won't fall,
Both the halls, big and small,
In the stalls, that is all.

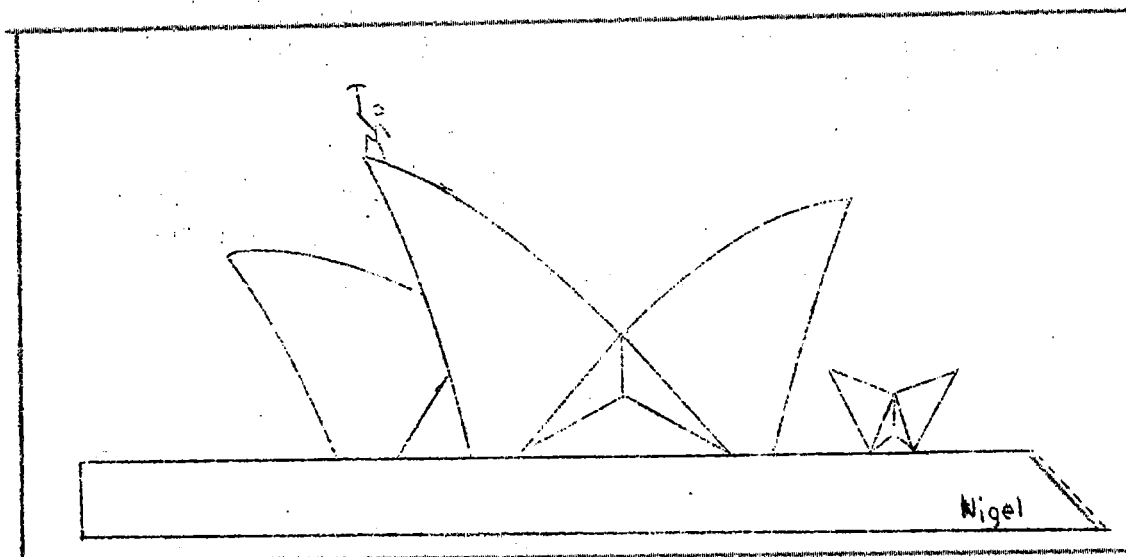
(cont'd)

- (2) There are people raising Cain, raising Cain, raising Cain,
With the cry "Bring back the Dane, bring the Dane",
While he sorts the tangled skein,
Jobs for life they stand to gain,
Money pouring down the drain,
They'd obtain in his train
Once again, that is plain.

PART C:

TUNE: "If You Are After a Little Amusement" from THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO.

- (1) I have no interest in music or singing,
I get my kicks on a precipice clinging,
Where there's exposure, that's where I belong
And I can picture my climbing rope swinging
From that new mountain - Mount Benelong.
- (2) Scaling the Harbour Bridge arch is too easy,
Moss on the Post Office tower makes it greasy,
So for the Opera House I am strong,
Offers a climb that is open and breezy,
On that new mountain - Mount Benelong.



40TH. ANNIVERSARY. How do YOU think the Club should celebrate its fortieth birthday? If you have any ideas, tell them to Owen Marks, Dot Butler, Edna Gentle, or any Committee member. You may happen to know of a good caterer, or a place which would be appropriate for the occasion. If so, the 40th. Birthday sub-committee would like to hear from you.

continued from page 9.

excellent iced punch which was served! The New Year's camp at Era, the slide nights, and the lively talk by Edgar Penzig were just a few of the many pleasures I have experienced with you all.

After a short stay in Melbourne I will be sailing to England where I hope to continue the "mateship" of bushwalking, where it seems you have acceptability no matter where you travel. Farewell, Sydney Bushwalkers, and may your activities be all "Good roads and good weather".

Signed: RITA McCARTHY.

Contd. from p. 4

regarding the housing of the Club library. The voting was very close on this issue, and finally resulted in being passed by a majority of only one. Someone reminded the President that the approach to the nurses must be a fresh one. Jack also moved that the books in the library be insured. This motion was lost on a show of hands.

Alex Colley brought up the matter of R.A.A.F. survival training courses at Bluegum Forest, and suggested that we write to the Blue Mountains Park Trust concerning the matter. This being all of the general General Business, the retiring Secretary handed out some typing work to be done, room stewards were appointed, and the meeting was duly closed.

Frank, apart from failing to put an amendment or two to the meeting, had performed his task almost faultlessly, and all in all, he had weathered the storm well. Those wishing to continue discussion further adjourned to Repins for coffee and all Club problems were solved. Ah, for a general meeting like this; all our troubles would be taken care of.

AN ALPHABETICAL ANECDOTE

Anonymous

All able abseilers are always alert about accident avoidance, and although ambitious abseilers are apparently at an advantage, adequately ambitious adherents attain alarming accuracy, and adventurous activity abounds. (Guess who reads the "Australian".)

"B" stands for "Bushwalker", so who accepts the challenge. Another interesting word exercise is to compile a sentence containing twenty-six words, with each word commencing with a different letter of the alphabet (in order). For example, "All bushwalkers carry dehyd. exclusively etc. etc....." Try it some time and send your attempts to the Editor, who will gladly print them.



APPOINTED SUPPLIER OF MILLERS

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A TROGLODYTE IS BORN

by Barry K. Pacey

(George Bernard Shaw was noted for his practice of prefacing his plays with a long dissertation which in some cases was almost as long as the work itself. Barry Pacey, author of the article below, apparently has also thought a long preface to be necessary for the full understanding and appreciation of his work. Despite the defamatory nature and obvious untruth of some of what he has to say, Mr. Pacey's article has not been altered, and is published exactly as received. I shall leave it to the reader's own perception and common-sense to disregard the maligning tendency of certain paragraphs. Ed.)

PREFACE:

Recently, as many people will no doubt remember, the 1967 S.B.W. Annual General Meeting was held in the club room. During the course of the evening, as seats of importance were in turn vacated and filled, a sad series of events came to pass.

Firstly, our President, whom everyone held in such high esteem, was, due to increased business pursuits, obliged to decline re-election. Secondly, into this much coveted position was placed a rather benign little chap, aptly known as "King of the White Ants". The last, but by no means least of the tragic events which transpired on that balmy March evening I'm about to reveal.

Into the position previously held by the "White Ant" strode a confident young University student; ambitious, virile, a shot in the arm to any organisation. Now this same University student, by name of Neville Page, having, prior to elections, been Officer in Charge of Magazine Sales and Subscriptions, was now eagerly clamouring for the second rung of that proverbial ladder.

The reader may think the above qualities favourable in a person of responsibility, and in most instances he'd be right. But an over-zealous editor is something to be feared. Beware the sly approach of fiend Page. With a disarming smile he'll ask you how you have been lately, then with a friendly pat on the shoulder, he'll want to know if you've been on any of the recent programmed trips. DON'T TELL HIM!

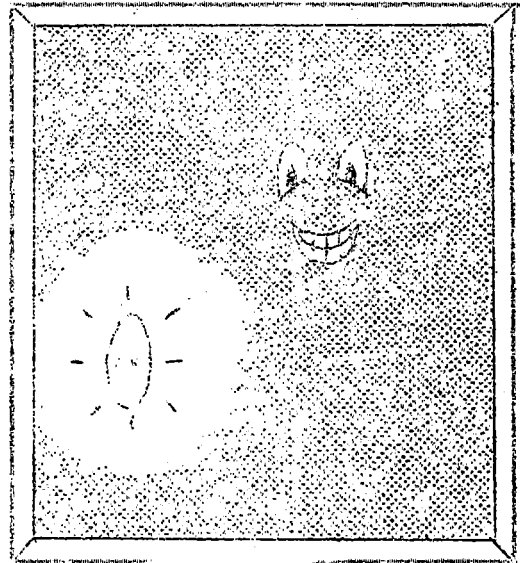
If he catches you off guard and he does find out, you'll be bullied, pestered, publicly humiliated and otherwise intimidated until you can place in his clammy hand an article of some sort or other for his precious magazine.

This merciless zealot is believed to be the first editor in the history of the Club to have acquired reading material five months in advance of publishing.

It was under the above circumstances that I came to write the following article.

THE STORY:

Apprehensively he wormed his way through the gap in the ground. A short slide and he found himself in a pile of fresh bat dung. Shouting obscenities he rose to his feet and left half an ear on a projecting stalactite. He stumbled to a ledge and sat down to light his carbide lamp. With a feverish mind he ran through the steps. Turn the knob, flick the flint wheel; simple enough. A spark jumped and died, scaring blue lights and trumpets out of a passing bat. As he wiped it from his neck he realised that the bloke who told him to mix dried apricots with his carbide had only been joking. While boots pummelled the last of the lamp, white claw-like hands reached for the imaginary throat. He heard the gurgie, the gasp, the dull thud, and he was happy. With a gay chuckle he produced his faithful bike torch and pushed on. Yes, this was the way they had come - old carbide, dead batteries and the occasional lolly wrapper.



PORTRAIT OF A WEE JASPER
TROGLODYTE IN ACTION.

As he scrambled forward his hair became encrusted with mud and grime. His new white overalls now resembled a shredded potato sack and his boots were filled with the aforementioned bat product. It was at this point he forgot that he was a bushwalker. Slōshing on, he came to a narrow wire ladder which he scaled with the agility of a performing ape.

He sniffed the air, ears pricked, eyes gleaming, and beneath quivering nostrils, pale lips parted in an excited leer. Scurrying through a hole which would have balked a ferret, he squealed with glee at the immense chamber on the other side. As he scuttled over boulders towards his waiting companions, the limestone walls echoed his merry chortling.

ANOTHER TROGLODYTE IS BORN!

WILDLIFE IN THE APSLEY RIVER GORGE

by Dot Butler

In the spacious days before speed, when the whole of your life stretched ahead in a golden never-ending summer, you travelled by coastal steamer from Sydney to Port Macquarie taking several days over the trip, including the wait to get over the bar. Uncle met you there with his buggy and you bowled off inland along a dirt road through the dense rain-forest filled with Buffalo Marys (a large-bodied yellow and green wood pigeon), where bullock teams were dragging logs out of steep rocky gullies. You passed cleared areas where the plovers made their odd call by day and the curlews wailed in the dark. Walcha - in those days hardly more than a homestead property, was an infinity of time and space away from Sydney. Now we get in our cars at 6.00 p.m. Friday, travel non-stop through the night, and in the early hours of the morning we have arrived.

Easter Friday morning saw 12 Sydney Bushwalkers and a number of N.P.A. members arriving at the Apsley Lookout Reserve in the New England Highlands, about 12 miles out of Walcha. The N.P.A. people were going to view the region from the top, visiting its various lookout points, while the S.B.W.'s were planning, in the four days at our disposal, to negotiate some thirty miles of its rugged gorges and canyons. As far as we knew, this trip had never been done before.

The Apsley River winds its way in great loops from west to east right across the map, dropping about 2,400 ft. in this distance. While the car drivers took the cars on some thirty miles to where we planned to come out on the last day, the rest of us wandered round to admire the falls, and to speculate on our chances of getting through the deep, rock-piled canyon floor down which the brown water tumbled, building up back-eddies of yellow foam. It was beautiful hot dry inland weather and billies of tea seemed much more in demand than climbing activity. However, when our ruthless leaders, Ross Wyborn and Don Finch, arrived back at about 11 a.m. it was a case of "Finish your eating and get packed up; we're moving off in ten minutes!" And strange as it may seem, in less than ten minutes we were actually moving off.

We clambered down a steep spur, covered with scant vegetation, and moved across to a steeply-falling creek bed. Although this is to be an account of the native fauna, I can't omit mentioning a specimen of introduced fauna - the exotic Homo Sapiens who dislodged a large boulder on the hillside, which split into several pieces as it bounded down, one of them grazing Ross's head as it screamed past. Of course, being Ross's head, it caused no damage. However, another piece hit him on the arm, paralysing it, and it remained out of

commission for the rest of the trip. We applied band-aids and continued on our way.

When we reached the river bed we found it even more rugged than it looked from the top. Huge dark grey block-up boulders lay crowded together in great heaps and over these we clambered for the rest of the afternoon. Those in the lead had plenty of time to admire the scenery while waiting for the tail-enders to catch up. The warm air had a dream-like quality. The sun filtered down in a golden haze. The scene looked like a picture done in pointillism - that form of art in which the whole effect is achieved by little dots of colour. The thousand-foot high rock walls, dark grey and almost vertical, were spotted with palest grey-green lichen, the pale blue sky was a backdrop to countless thousands of lightly floating thistledowns, interspersed with long shining streamers of airborne spiderwebs, and the brown earth-stained water at our feet was flecked with spots of foam the size of golden guineas. Great casuarinas, their gnarled roots gripping the rocks at the water's edge, had entrapped thousands of the floating thistledowns and looked like a child's drawing of trees spotted with snowflakes. In the stark dead branches of a ringbarked gumtree on the skyline a flock of white cockatoos settled - live white flowers dotting its limbs.

We camped in the afternoon on a flood-strewn heap of rocks. To say something in its favour, it was at least fairly horizontal, and after we had scraped up heaps of dry casuarina needles for a bed it was even comfortable. The keen ones studied the map and found we had achieved hardly a mile. We'll have to make better time tomorrow.

Away bright and early in the morning. The water must be swarming with eels; we came across many 2 ft. long ones dead among the rocks, probably killed by the impact of flood waters the previous week. Stranded shells on the black mud gave evidence of fresh-water mussels. This rocky gorge is a lizard's paradise; every jutting piece of rock had its watchful water-dragon, poised on strong front legs ready to plop into the water as we drew near. Over the brown water skimmed swallows, slim little arrows of delight, never still for a moment.

Our progress this day involved much swimming, pushing our floating packs before us. I heard no complaint about the temperature of the water from the girls, but poor Digby, shivering his way over the rocks from one swim to the next, was heard to remark through chattering teeth, "oh, for a little bit of that something that we males haven't got, namely subcutaneous fat!"

As we came swimming into their view, flocks of ducks would take off from the water. We counted as many as fifteen in one flock, thirteen in another. Then there would be crashing amongst the bushes on the steep hillside and the eye, following the sound, would see thickly-furred rock wallabies leaping effortlessly upwards. At a safe distance they would pause and look down on us - the intruders in their country.

After cooling off in the water it was a delightful sensation to lie on the hot rocks and dry off. We weren't the only ones who appreciated this; we found we were sharing the rocks with lizards and snakes, the red-bellied black snake, a greyish whip-snake, a beautifully marked diamond python. With his tail in the water and a large frog on its way down his throat, a bright green tree-

snake tried to look inconspicuous and failed.

Camp for the night was another heap of rocks - the only thing offering in this steep gorge country. We made a big campfire from dry wood brought down by the floods and sang into the late hours, though you might wonder what we had to sing about as this day we had only covered another four or five miles, and no knowing how we were to get out. All night long bats flitted across the star-shine and disappeared into the dark shadows of the trees.

Next day more swimming. In fact, the first seven miles of the gorge involve as much swimming as walking. For this reason it would be wise for anyone else planning this trip to find out about local rainfall during the previous week as it would be extremely hazardous, if not impossible, to swim the canyons in flood. Huge logs and other flood debris was piled 20 and 30 ft. up the sides of the gorge.

This was a glorious day. With most of the food eaten the pack was light and easy to carry. Going quietly, barefoot, over the rocks, the wild creatures were not frightened into hiding. The lizards hardly bothered to plop into the water. As I swam quietly behind my pack the ducks accepted me as part of the scenery and stayed floating above their reflections as I swam among them. A vivid cerulean blue kingfisher darted out of the bank and skimmed across the water. Flocks of swallows filled the air overhead and I floated on my back to watch their darting flight. Up the rocky hillsides rock wallabies grazed, the warm orange-coloured fur on the front of their bodies making a splash of colour on the grey-green hillside. Some black gang-gang parrots were tearing away at a tree with their powerful beaks. I was thinking, "I'll come back here when I'm old and spend the rest of my days floating in this beautiful river." Suddenly there was a great beating of wings above my head and a huge eagle flew by, his wings marked with dark feathers like all eagles, but his underbody a sparkling creamy white. I have never seen a more perfect bird in a more perfect setting. He circled round and finally came to rest on a branch - King of all he surveyed.

In the afternoon the country began to flatten out. The stark rocky canyons had given way to thickly wooded mountains, which now gave way to lower hills. Clawing his way up a tree a 6 ft. goanna looked like some ageless antedeluvian monster in the never-ending sunshine. Bright little butterflies flitted about, some with black and orange markings and some as yellow as a buttercup. Dragonflies skimmed by water on gauzy wings. Huge spiders hung in their webs busy with the day's butchery - trussing up 2-inch long green grasshoppers in silken cocoons.

We had no finished with swimming. Grassy river flats made walking a pleasure. In place of the rock wallabies we now saw pale grey aristocratic kangaroos feeding on the fine native grasses.

Camp for the night was a complete contrast to our previous ones - right in the middle of an acre of grassy river-flat. We made a big camp fire and when Ross arrived we found that he had another close shave - this time with an exotic female who chased him into the river when he appeared to be threatening her baby.

After the evening meal we initiated Donnie into the mysterious practices of the masseur's profession - kneading, stroking, hacking, clapping, pounding,

wringing, toe-rolling, etc. Donnie took to it with sadistic delight and everybody became his victim in turn. Joan was worried "I think Donnie has become a compulsive masseur. Just think what will happen next time he goes to a beach and sees all those recumbent bodies - he won't be able to control himself."

Next day we had only a couple of miles walk along the river flats before the long pull up a steep ridge to the farmlands above and so back to the cars and home.

The Apsley Gorge has such high potential for a Natural Reserve that we hope it will be dedicated as such in the near future.

WALKS

A GUIDE TO SUNDAY WALKS FOR THE COMING MONTH

14th May

Gladys Roberts will be leading a walk to start from St. Ives. The train leaves Central electric platform at 9.10 a.m., meeting the bus at Pymble for conveyance to St. Ives. From there the route of the walk is to Middle Harbour Creek, Bungaroo and thence to Lindfield. This is a pleasant walk graded as 8 miles easy.

21st May

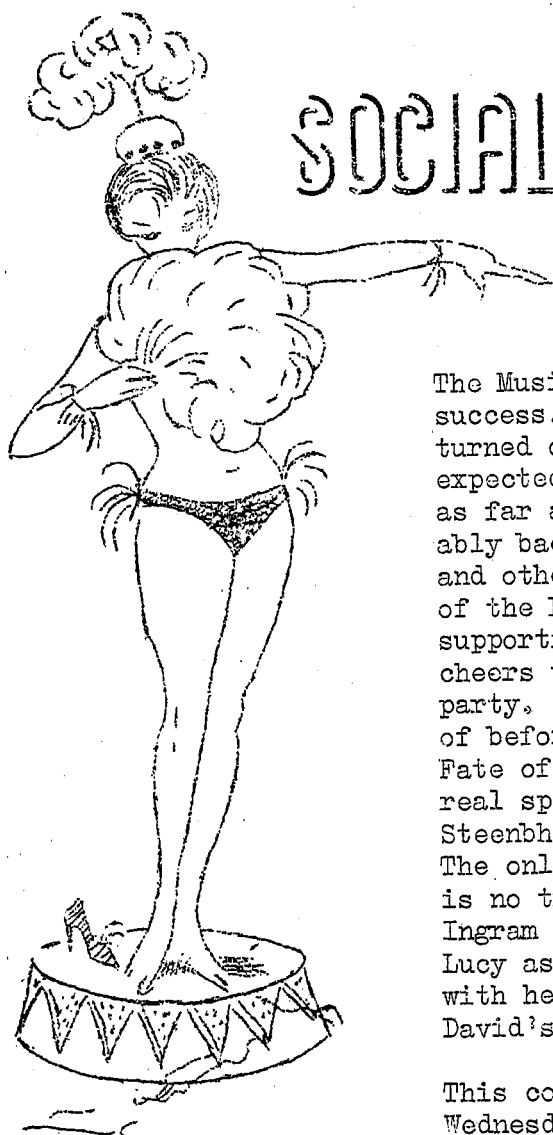
Jack Perry's perennial - Cowan, Porto Bay, Brooklyn, will be going once again. This walk, being a TEST WALK, should be of interest to prospective members. The train leaves Central country platform at 8.30 a.m. Buy tickets return to Hawksbury River. Jack can be contacted at home on telephone number 50-4771. The walk is 12 miles medium.

28th May

A jaunt through Royal National Park will be led by Jack Gentle on this date. The route to be taken is Helensburgh, Wilson's Creek, Maynard's Track, Era, Burning Palms, Lilyvale, and it is graded as 12 miles medium. It is also a TEST WALK. The train leaves Central country platform at 8.42 a.m. and starters should buy tickets return to Lilyvale.

4th June

See the new Walks Programme.



SOCIALLY SPEAKING

With our Social Reporter,
namely OWEN MARKS.

The Music Hall show was a rip-roaring success. 88 Bushwalkers and their friends turned out en masse to create mayhem. As expected, Frank Ashdown was in fine form as far as interjecting goes, and he was ably backed up by Edna Gentle, Ern Farquar and others of the more dignified section of the Bushwalking fraternity. A good supporting chorus of boos, hisses and cheers was provided by the rest of our party. Food and good wine were partaken of before the show, and the play, "Dreadful Fate of the H.M.S. Revenge" captured the real spirit of the 1880's. (Or so Miriam Steenbhom said. How does she know, I wonder?) The only thing left to report is that there is no truth in the rumour that David Ingram leapt onto the stage and shouted to Lucy as she was turned out to face the cold with her baby, "I'll save you Ducky, Uncle David's here!"

This coming month we have a motley of Wednesday night doings:

- 17th May Peter Lannigan - our illustrious English traveller and an active S.B.W. member, will be rambling on about the mountains of Norway and Austria.
- 24th May MEMBERS' SLIDE NIGHT. Now here is the chance for all those camera enthusiasts to show fellow members and all the new prospectives just what wonderful scenery we have in N.S.W. Bring out your Christmas slides - there have been many trips to Lamington National Park, Wolgan Valley explorations, Li-Lo trips, not to mention our own Blue Mountains. The New Zealand tourists must have many excellent slides. And for the sensitive members, no one will be permitted to hiss or boo.
- 31st May Malcolm McGregor is giving a talk on wild and other flowers.
- 7th June Mr. John Martyn speaks on the Himalayas (SEE NOTICE ON PAGE 24)

ONE MORE MONTH

by Observer.



ERRATUM On page 22 of last month's magazine, it was reported that Peter Cameron was leaving for overseas. This, unfortunately, is not true. The item should have stated that Peter Kay (I got my names and faces mixed) was leaving for places far-flung. Apologies are tendered to all concerned for this error.

ROGER GOWING, S.B.W. member, jolly gentleman, balmy bushwalker, comic cowboy, champion chess-player and stupendous stew-maker, left Sydney to take up a temporary posting at Kempsey Post Office on Wednesday, 26th April. Roger will be leading a walk in his own district over the Queen's Birthday weekend, so we'll get to see him again then. For further details see the notice on Page 24.

PETER FINCH, the bearded brother of Don, came of age on the 5th May, almost coinciding with the Music Hall do. That, of course, called for a toast and a cheery round of "21 Today", "Why Was He Born So Beautiful", etc, adding further to the festive atmosphere of the turn.

THE BUDAWANGS on the weekend of 20th-21st April were literally crawling with Sydney Bushwalkers. Owen Marks had a large party (only one prospective - mainly lazy members) base-camped near Sally Creek. Also in the area was Colin Putt, with a family group, and Jim Brown doing a lightning leg-stretch by himself.

NEWNES Further to the report that entry to the Glow Worm tunnel in the Wolgan Valley would be restricted, it has now been announced that access would remain open to all wishing to see the tunnel. Whether this is a good or bad thing from the bushwalker's point of view remains to be seen. Let us hope that the road is not developed further, thereby introducing herds of tourists to this beautiful spectacle.

AVOID THE RUSH!!!!! SUBMIT YOUR MAGAZINE CONTRIBUTIONS EARLY !!!!!

This magazine relies on you, the reader, to supply sufficient copy to fill it every month. Anything which would be of general interest to Bushwalkers is acceptable. If you have a point of view to air, an important (or unimportant) announcement to make, or a news item to report, jot it down on something (anything readable) and send it to the editor.

NOTICE EXTRAORDINAIRE

Instead of the usual open night on 7th June we will be having a special guest speaker, Mr. John Martyn. A friend of Dot Butler, he has lived 20 years in India. His talk, accompanied by slides, will be about the Himalayas. So, if any of you are contemplating a climbing holiday in Sikkim, Bhutan, or Nepal, then this lecture is a must. Even if you are not having such contemplations, it is still a must.

CLUB PROPERTY

Margaret Dogterom has been declared, by special decree of Committee, to be officer in charge of chasing up club property so that we can keep track of what we've got. If you have any Club chairs, tables, typewriters, Mandelburg Cups, duplicating machines, desks, bookshelves, library books, maps, or other Club property, would you assist Margaret in her stocktake. Her home address is 32 Jordan Street, Wentworthville.

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY WEEKEND

On the Queen's Birthday Weekend in June, a walk is being arranged in the Macleay River area inland a bit from Kempsey. Roger Gowing will be the leader and he will be organizing things from his end. We will go up by train (eliminating any strenuous driving) and Roger will meet us at Kempsey with a truck to provide local transport. The area is very picturesque and should prove to be pleasant walking country. Any persons interested in this three-day trip should see Neville Page.

DOWN AMONG THE FOSSILS


Word on the grape vine is that we will be supping with a lot of old fossils (prehistoric type that is) in the near future. (Another hairbrained scheme by courtesy of Marks, maybe?) Keep your eyes glued to the social page of this magazine for further details.

IS IT REALLY TRUE?

Unfortunately Roger, the one man who could have given us the answer, has left town. Twinkletoes thinks he saw it, but he didn't have his spectacles on at the time. Muriel said it couldn't have been her, because she doesn't even own a pair of flesh coloured swimming costumes.

IN NEXT MONTH'S MAGAZINE

Paddy Pallin write on ski touring, Helen Breakwell on Wee Jasper, S.B.W. Crossword No.1 (new series), Ivy Painter on the Gibraltar Rocks walk. Another song of the times, as well as barrels of fun, excitement, and false rumours.



There are some ugly stories about us going around

INGO