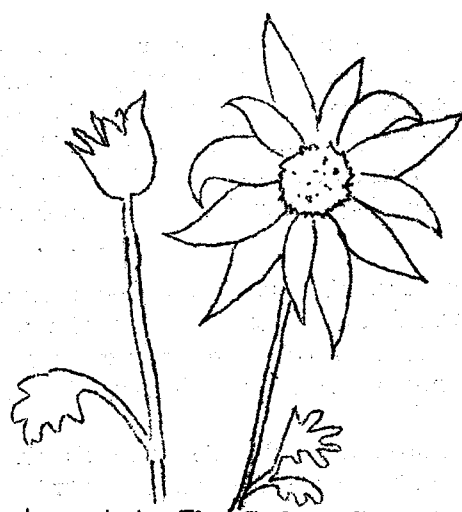


# THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER



A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to The Sydney Bushwalkers, Box 4476 G.P.O. Sydney, 2001. Club meetings are held every Wednesday evening from 7.30 pm at the Wireless Institute Building, 14 Atchison Street, St. Leonards. Enquiries concerning the Club should be referred to Mrs. Marcia Shappert - Telephone 30-2028.

.....

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A RAINFOREST - THE BORDER RANGES.

by Alex Colley.

"It appears likely that all the world's tropical rainforest, with the exception of a few small, conserved relics, will be destroyed in the next 20 to 30 years. This destruction will inevitably have important consequences for life on the earth although the nature and the magnitude of these consequences cannot be seen with precision." Paul W. Richards, world authority on rainforest ecology.

.....

For many thousands of years men have been destroying tropical and sub tropical rain forests for the sake of the timber they yield and the fertile lands which they cover, but the end is near. One more generation at the present rate of destruction and only "relics" will remain.

In Australia the forests which existed before white settlement were mainly confined to the narrow strip of the eastern and southern river catchments, to Tasmania and to the South Western tip of Western Australia. Rain forest was almost entirely confined to the high rainfall areas east of the Dividing Range in Queensland and N.S.W. Most of it was on rich coastal lands long since cleared for dairying, sugar cane and other rural uses. Some tableland stands such as Dorriggo, Comboyne and Atherton were not exploited until this century, but only remnants of these upland forests are now left. The recent Forwood Inventory Survey estimated that rain forest remains in only 0.37 per cent of N.S.W., and sub-tropical rain forest in only 0.05 per cent of N.S.W. Of this 0.05 per cent only 18 per cent was in National Parks and Nature Reserves. A. C. Floyd of the North Coast Forestry Research Centre, estimated that in the last 120 years the original 1,800,000 acres of rain forest in N.S.W. has been reduced to 200,000 acres. It occurred in five major areas - Illawarra, Barrington Tops, Hastings River, Headwaters Dorriggo Plateau, and the Macpherson Ranges and Richmond Tweed Valleys. The only substantial area remaining is that on the Border Ranges. Elsewhere only inaccessible remnants, some in small reserves, remains unlogged, and the great northern forests have passed into folk lore.

GEOGRAPHY OF THE PROPOSED NATIONAL PARK.

Study of topographical and geological maps of the Tweed Valley prove that it occupies the caldera of an enormous extinct volcano. Mt. Warning, the conduit of the volcano, is flanked on the north, west and south, at a distance of about 10 miles, by an almost continuous escarpment some 3,000 to 4,000 feet high, which represented the ring of the caldera. The northern and north-western arc is part of the Macpherson Range. The N.S.W. Queensland border is on the crest of the Range. In the north western sector is the Lamington Plateau, draining into the Logan River. To the west is the Tweed Range, the divide between the Tweed and Richmond Rivers. The southern extremity of the Tweed Range is known as Bar Mountain. The Macpherson Range continues west, on the northern side of Wiangarie forest between the Logan and Richmond Rivers. Ten miles west of the escarpment is the Richmond Gap, about 1,200 feet above sea level. The Macpherson Range continues to the west rising to over 2,000 feet as it

reaches Lever's Plateau, about 5 miles from the Gap. The crest of the range continues about 3 miles west, along the northern edge of Lever's Plateau, then turns approximately W/S/W to Glennies Chair and Mount Lindesay, some 10 miles from the Plateau.

The area which should be incorporated into a national park consists of the forested country south of the border, between Lamington and Mount Lindesay. Several cleared valleys penetrate the forested area. The upper portions at least of these clearings are ideal camping sites, and could well be incorporated in the park.

#### ACCESSIBILITY.

A park anywhere in Australia with the scenic, botanical and faunal beauty of the Border Ranges would be a tourist attraction of international repute, but the ready accessibility of the area greatly enhances its recreational potential. Over  $1\frac{1}{4}$  million people live near enough to it to enjoy a day visit. There is only one potential park with comparable one-day accessibility and that is the Greater Blue Mountains National Park. But it will not be an exclusively motorists park, as are many other National Parks. The main Sydney Brisbane railway passes under the middle section of the park through the border tunnel at Richmond Gap. Brisbane can be reached in a little over an hour from Sydney by air, and buses could ply from there to the park in little more time than it takes to travel from Mascot to the northern suburbs. It would compare in accessibility to the Gold Coast, which attracts hundreds of thousands of state, interstate and international tourists and without doubt is Australia's most popular tourist resort. Australia is indeed a lucky country to have such an outstanding wilderness area astride lines of communications and less than 50 miles from a State capital. But if the wilderness is destroyed it will not be bad luck - simply lack of vision.

#### TOPOGRAPHY.

Australia is, in the main, a flat and arid country, notably deficient in forests and high mountain scenery. Only 5 per cent of its area is capable of producing forest trees of commercial use. Mountain scenery occurs only in scattered locations, mainly along the Dividing Range, and much of it is, in fact, dissected plateaux, rather than true mountains. The volcanic plugs and escarpments of the Macpherson Range, with impressive cliff faces and luxuriant cover of rain forest provide some of our most dramatic mountain scenery. Tremendous views of the Tweed Valley, dominated by 3,750 feet peak of Mount Warning, and of the whole escarpment rim which nearly encircles it are obtainable from the Tweed Range. Extending eastwards from the escarpment is the Pinnacle. Viewed from the valley near Tyalgum this feature could well be described as Australia's Matterhorn. Below the escarpment the fertile and verdant Tweed Valley extends to the sea coast. A never to be forgotten scene is the mist-filled valley surmounted by the Tweed Range escarpment and Mount Warning, illuminated by the morning sun. Extensive views north towards Brisbane are obtained from Lever's Plateau. From the western edge of the Plateau some of the most beautiful scenery anywhere in the continent can be enjoyed. From here can be seen the precipitous crown of Mount Lindesay, the great rock

domes of Mount Barney, 4,449 feet, the symmetrical Mount Maroon, Mount Wilson, and numerous other peaks and ranges to the north. On the upper reaches of the numerous streams there are many small waterfalls flanked by tropical growth, moss and ferns.

In the Wiangarie area most of the ridges are easily negotiable and the northern part of Lever's Plateau is gently undulating. To reach the top of Glennie's Chair or Mount Lindesay, rock climbing is necessary. The Border fence runs along the crest of the Macpherson Range from a point 9 miles east of Richmond Gap to the Great Dividing Range. There is a four wheel drive, or horse track alongside it, and the track, although it is not contoured, is mostly easy walking in the vicinity of Lever's Plateau.

#### FLORA.

Vegetation types are a product of climate and soil. Rainfall is heaviest on the Tweed Valley escarpment, which is cloud covered for a good part of the year. Rainfall here may reach 150 inches per annum. Rainfall is also heavy on the southern slopes, but decreases to the west, and is believed to be only some 50 inches at Lever's Plateau. Nearly all the plateau, both at Wiangarie and Lever's is of volcanic origin, but soil depths may be considerably greater at Lever's. The plateau areas and wetter slopes are entirely covered with rain forest with mixed rain forest and wet sclerophyll types on the dryer slopes. The forests of Wiangarie are not as tall as on Lever's Plateau, and support fairly dense undergrowth, which makes progress away from made tracks difficult. The forest of Lever's Plateau is taller than that of Wiangarie. It is distinguished by its enormous trees, and canopy well over 100 feet above the ground, and easy access at ground level, little impeded by undergrowth. Although most of the rain forest species of the Range are common to both Wiangarie and Lever's, there are differences, the most notable being the absence of Antarctic Beech in Lever's, and the lack of hoop pine on Wiangarie. Rain forest differs from the common sclerophyll forests in which the trees are mainly eucalypts, by reason of the enormous variety of tree and other plant species and the density of its canopy.

The most impressive feature of the rain forest is the size of the trees. Lords of the forest are the stately hoop pines, which soar upward with gun-barrel straightness to the first limbs 80 or 100 feet above the ground. The crown of the trees which may extend another 50 or 60 feet, bursts through the canopy. A number of these trees are 130 or more feet high. One, recently fallen, was 6 feet in diameter and at least 180 feet long. On Lever's Plateau are some of the largest known specimens of brown pine, white beech, cedar and carabeen. Brown pine is not usually a very large tree, but there is one specimen 148 feet high and with a 13 feet girth. The white beech rises 90 feet to the first branch and total height is 130 feet. There are many large specimens of red carabeen, blush tulip oak and rosewood, some of which probably reach heights of 150 feet. To walk around some of these great flanged trees may require 15 to 20 paces because of the great spread of the buttresses at their base. The strangler figs gain a hold on their host trees far above ground level, then extend their root system down the tree. Eventually the host tree, surrounded by a lattice of fig, dies and rots. The fig, by this time an enormous tree, larger

than its host, is then supported by a great hollow trunk. At Wiangarie there are stands of giant Antarctic Beeches. The root system of some of these trees may be over 2,000 years old.

Other species which may be observed in the course of a couple of hours walk include the white walnut, olive sassafras, black myrtle, pigeon berry, maiden's blush, beefwood, silky beech, fire wheel, crow's ash, southern maple cedar and brush box. Beneath the canopy, often in openings caused by the fall of a tree, are the tall straight bangalow, or picabeen palms, some reaching a height of 50 feet or more. At ground level are numerous walking stick palms, tree-ferns, croton lilies and similar plants, woody lianas (monkey vines) and other vines, dangle from great heights. Clinging to the branches and trunks of the trees are the numerous epiphytes (i.e. plants which grow upon other plants, but are not parasitic). These include the enormous birds nest ferns, many weighing probably half a ton or more. The epiphytes also include many orchids and ferns.

Far below the forest canopy in the stillness and muted light of ground level there is another realm of beauty consisting of what might be termed the micro-flora. Small leafed vines and delicate ferns lightly clothe the stems and buttresses of the trees, which are mottled with multi-coloured mosses and lichens. There is a light covering of fragile ground ferns and many forms of fungi.

#### FAUNA.

As a result of lack of sunlight on the forest floor, no grass grows in rain forests. Ground fauna is therefore dependent on fruits and seeds dropped from the trees, small edible plants, roots, insects, fungi, etc., and the range of species is limited. The sunlight canopy however, is rich in seeds, fruits and insects and supports a numerous population of animals and birds. The difficulties of observing tree dwelling animals in a thick canopy 100 feet above ground level is increased by the fact that most of animal life and some of the bird life is nocturnal. These difficulties did not, however, prevent the Wildlife Research Group from Brisbane University from recording 8 species of mammals, 74 species of birds, 5 of reptiles and 10 of amphibia in the course of a two day study. Many more species not observed during these two days, are known to live there. Animals thought to be extinct in Australia, such as the Parma Wallaby, and the Potaroo (a long-nose rat kangaroo) are known to exist there. Even a previously unknown marsupial frog has been discovered. Summarising the results of their observations the Wildlife Research Group states:-

"The above list demonstrates beyond doubt that this area is extremely well endowed with vertebrate rain forest fauna and so is of great scientific and aesthetic value. At least 24 of the species listed are largely restricted to rain forest and associated habitat and so depend on the preservation of these areas for their survival. Some, such as the Sooty Owl, Albert Lyrebird and Glossy Black Cockatoo are amongst the rarest birds in Australia and have their stronghold in these habitats. Others, such as the Spine-tailed Legrunner, Green Catbird, Regent Bowerbird, Paradise Riflebird and the Albert Lyrebird are mostly entirely restricted to the remnant rain forest of south-east Queensland and north-east N.S.W.

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### TREES OR LOGS?

Most of the area of the proposed Border Ranges National Park is under the control of the Forestry Commission, and is destined for logging. Under its statutory objectives the Commission is charged with the diametrically opposed aims of both conserving timber and encouraging its use (see Forestry Act) and it claims to be fulfilling both these aims in its operations at Wiangarie. It claims to be endeavouring 'to maintain the necessary supply of timber to industry with a minimum of upset, however ephemeral to the forest environment and its scenic, recreational and wildlife values. The Commission believes that it has succeeded well in this endeavour, and that the values and assets of this outstanding State Forest (Wiangarie) are in fact being well maintained and conserved.' (background notes issued by the Forestry Commission April 1973). If this statement means what it says, no damage is being done to the forest, and trees are being replaced as fast as they are being removed. But the Commission is not consistent on this point. It describes its operations as being 'not exploitation or devastation' or some other emotively adverse operation, but as 'harvesting a crop'. How can harvesting be carried out without destruction of plants which will not be replaced until another generation of plants matures? This 'burning bush' fandangle, whereby trees are cut but not consumed, is to be achieved 'by a policy of selective logging with the retention of 50 per cent of the upper canopy and the maintenance of full species diversity in the remaining stand. The trees to be removed are selected and marked by the Commission's staff, and the operation is carefully controlled to ensure that only the marked trees are removed and damage to the remaining trees is kept to the lowest practical level.' The question is - 'What is the lowest practical level of damage?' and is it consistent with the 'maintenance and conservation of the values and assets of this outstanding State forest?

The first part of the answer lies in the trees to be selected. These will be, presumably, the large, mature sound stems. The age of such trees is usually not known with certainty, because most rain forest species do not have annual rings, but it is believed the age of the larger specimens is measured in centuries, or millenia if we are talking about Antarctic Beech. Fifty per cent canopy reduction, involving the removal of the best trees would probably mean removal of more than 50 per cent of total log volume, and would increase water run-off. In this region of steep slopes and high rainfall, any track is a potential watercourse, down which soil will be carried to enter the streams below. Logging is totally incompatible with the maintenance of scenic, recreational and wilderness values.

### A NATIONAL PARK IN WORLD HERITAGE CLASS.

There are a number of rainforest remnants included in existing national parks. Outside national parks, selective logging - i.e. the removal of the most valuable timbers - has left a scrubby growth of immature trees and weeds. This process is already under way in Wiangarie. Lever's Plateau, however, remains intact. The forest canopy is unbroken, and the original native flora and fauna remains unspoilt. No introduced flora or fauna is known to exist within the forest, and most of it is unaffected by fire. It is almost certainly the best preserved wilderness area in the state. It remains in this condition not because it has been reserved or conserved by the Forestry Commission, but because the holder

of the logging concession which covered it, Mr. John Lever, appreciated its beauty and refrained from logging it.

The Colong Committee seeks the preservation of this last extensive remnant of the once great rain forest areas. It envisages a park extending from Mount Lindesay to the Tweed Range, where it would adjoin the Lamington Park. A walking or riding trail along the Range from Binnaburra to Mount Lindesay would probably prove every bit as attractive as the Milford Track in New Zealand, or the Reserve track in Tasmania. There are already two guest houses which could be used by those using the trail - Binnaburra and O'Reillys and there are other cleared sites in proximity to the range further west. The concept could well be extended to the creation of a trail along the entire Macpherson Range from the coast to the Great Dividing Range, where it would join the proposed Tri-State Trail. Such a trail would pass through some of the best scenery on the entire east coast.

Such a park should be extremely attractive to tourists from overseas. There are extensive tropical or subtropical rain forests in other parts of the world, though few remain in the pristine condition of the unlogged areas of the Border Range. Heat, humidity, insects and disease, however, repel tourists. The Border Ranges have a mild climate. Rainfall is heavy in the early summer months, but moderate for much of the year, particularly in the western part of the Range. Insects are not a worry, apart from the inevitable leeches and ticks. Tropical diseases are absent.

A readily accessible sub-tropical temperate rain forest like that of the Border Ranges may not be unique, but it is at least rare. Such a forest incorporating much of the distinctive flora and fauna evolved only in this isolated continent is unique. It is the climax of a long period of development. Once destroyed or extensively damaged it might regenerate (in the unlikely event of it being left untouched) but certainly not in a period that is meaningful in terms of human history.

It is not necessary to destroy native forests to produce timber. Trees can be, and are being grown, on land previously used for rural purposes. There are large areas of such land that have proved poor and should never have been cleared in the first place. Timber can also be imported either to fill immediate needs or as an ongoing policy. But the growing of rain forests is a silvicultural impossibility. Let us therefore preserve the one we have.

#### WHAT YOU CAN DO.

Write letters, send telegrams, make representations to the Premier, Mr. Wran, the Minister for Lands, Mr. Crabtree, the Minister for Conservation and Water Resources, Mr. Gordon, the Minister for Planning and Environment, Mr. Landa (all c/o Parliament House, Macquarie Street, Sydney).

Write a letter to a newspaper; donate funds to the Colong Committee, 18 Argyle Street, Sydney, N.S.W. 2000; buy a Border Ranges poster from the Colong Committee; follow the campaign by subscribing to the "Save Colong Bulletin", hand this article to friends and make them aware of the Border Ranges.

(From "The Border Ranges Tabloid" - insert in National Parks Journal)



V E N I C E.

by Owen Marks.

I have come to the conclusion that I, too, like God, prefer Gothic. That such a thought could occur whilst gazing into the wonders of St. Marks in Venice, is probably beyond the grasp of mere mortals, but it did, and so has to be recorded for posterity. After travelling around Europe one becomes an authority on many things, without any previous study or of any knowledge whatsoever. For instance, you cannot wander through many art galleries without the lives of the saints being thrust before your eyes. The (smiling) martyrs dying with arrows protruding horribly etc. In two or three weeks you are an authority on saints.

The same goes for architecture. Just by wandering around you see forms that please you more than others, and after six months one can say with authority that one Gothic Cathedral is better than another. The trouble comes with comparisons of two entirely different styles. Baroque versus Gothic, as against two similar styles like Baroque and Rococco. Baroque is easily described - upon entering your mind is caught by angels blowing trumpets from marble clouds behind the altar, with cherubs with pretty bottoms cupping their hands under their chins and gazing at Raphaelite paintings. You actually Rejoice in the Lord. Gothic makes you Fear the Lord - with soaring stone columns, bare and stark, with unbroken vistas from nave to apse, and mostly devoid of colour.

In Venice are three famous cathedrals. One, St. Marks, being the only Byzantine one standing complete in Europe. (In Bethlehem is one built by Constantine's mother that was not destroyed by the Persians owing to a strange fact that the mosaics of the Three Wise Kings from the East were depicted as Mithraic priests and were thus spared.) St. Marks wasn't completed mosaic-wise until late last century, but historically can be said to represent the soul of Venice. But there are two other churches that I found to be much better. Gothic, of course. St. Giovanni and Paolo is made of bricks and inside you are treated with light and height. Very long with graves of the famous which I can't remember who, but I can definitely remember sitting on Monteverdi's tomb. Quite possibly Gabrielli was there too, as well as all of the Doges. It was built in 1246 and outside on the piazza is Italy's finest Renaissance bronze statue. Somebody sitting on a horse, and overlooks an open air cafe today.

The other Gothic pile is the Frari, quite close to the public hospital. Upon entering you stop as though a hand has pressed against your breast. Gaze around. A late Gothic altar (monument would be a better word) and side chapels, each one balanced with the other. This was the only church that was centrally heated in the whole of Venice, and I can't imagine why. Across the laneway to the left is Venice's cheapest meringue and cream shop where I permitted my mother to indulge. So much for Venice's churches. There are lots more and all full of Tintoretto's and ceilings by Tiepolo, Bellini, etc. What a bore.

Another place which I term important is the Hospital. Easy to find as it backs on to the water overlooking the cemetery. This 500 year old

hospital is the pride of the city and is the finest example of renaissance architecture. Built along a narrow canal where the ambulance gondolas can go direct into the basement, the entire facade facing the main square of Campo St. Zanipolo is decorated with lions looking down on you imperiously like all St. Marks lions. I popped inside and it looks like a Kafka nightmare, with glorious paintings and glass walls and Gothic columns and the walls fronting the canal mildewy, marble statues King Size blessing the sick. Weird, though it must have been pleasant 500 years ago for the invalid riff-raff.

Actually, all the civic buildings are remarkable, and in Venice that is saying something, because even the most decayed apartment houses look romantic by the canals and bridges.

The history of the place is well known to everyone, not so the story of how the Doges Palace was saved from the architects. (Everyone knows how architects decree and the world follows. In our town of Sydney all modern buildings have no awnings and everyone gets wet. Aesthetic reasons are all you get for reply. That they stop you getting wet or give protection from the hot Australian sun is quite unimportant, or that God-fearing decent mums and dads are forced to go over their stop and backtrack along old fashioned streets where shelter is, is quite irrelevant to them.) Well, one day many years ago there was a fire in the Palazzo Ducale and it was so badly damaged that the city fathers and the council's panel of architects were in favour of demolishing the whole lot and building a modern palace (modern means - in the late 17th century). To those unaware, the Palazzo Ducale is that exquisite building on the right of the Piazza San Marco, the one with arches on the ground floor, a second storey of gothic ogival windows and huge heavy tessellated brick walls on the third storey, surmounted with marble whatnots, angels, saints, etc.

Passions ran high, gangs roamed the streets, so to shut them up the City Fathers decreed that all would be rebuilt, and thus earned the gratitude of all the civilized world forever. A certain Sansovino who was designing the Library opposite was given the job and there it stands today, a most wonderful Gothic Jewel.

I went down there early on a Sunday morning with my mother in tow, and there were hippies sleeping underneath the arches and about 20 or so in the Piazza San Marco. It reminded me of Pilgrims Deserted City. A thousand years of civilization all deserted with only rubbish of the world in attendance. Water was lapping the square and everyone was expecting another flood, and sure enough it did a day after we left.

But not before the bicycle race around Venice. The Italian Tour de France (you know what I mean) was about to take place. All stepped bridges along the route were boarded over, and a floating bridge built of barges were laid across the Grand Canal. It would have been worthy of Richard Halliburton, who was the chap who swam the Panama Canal and paid the approved tonnage. I would have liked to have cycled around the town. Maybe Snow Brown would lead a lilo trip one day. I'd be in that!

Another grand story is that<sup>of</sup> one of the Doges during the 4th Crusade. If I was a famous playwright I'd certainly write a potboiler, because it goes something like this. The Doge was elected at the age of 83 and he was blind. Just then the 4th Crusade was gathering in Venice, and being unable to raise the money, the wily Dandolo made a deal. "You help me attack the Christian Hungarian city of Zara which is selling armaments to the Saracens and making a fortune, and I'll get you to the Holy Land." When this was accomplished the old man was 93!

Then he talked the crazy Franks into pushing onto Constantinople for looting purposes only. In 1204 Constantinople was sacked with savagery and bestiality that the pious Crusaders often showed. While the Franch were looting and ravaging, the Venetians were not so idle. They were methodically looting the palaces and churches that had been accumulating works of art in Byzantium ever since it was a Greek and Roman city.

That is how the four horses atop of the Basilica came to be there. I don't know when Dandolo died, or if the 4th Crusade ever made it. There was a Frankish Empire in Constantinople prior to the establishment of the Paleologus Dynasty, but I don't know when that was or the dates and I can't be bothered finding out, because it is not important.

What is important is to state out aloud that Venice is crumbling away and is still sinking slowly. Damp and dirty it is, smelly not so much, after all the tides come and go forever. What was sad was that I only saw two gondolas away from their moorings. One in the Grand Canal and the other winding along with American tourists under the narrow bridges near the ancient Jewish Quarter. The famous Pigeons aren't there anymore (the City Fathers have stopped feeding them). Pollution, would you believe!

There isn't much left to be said. The population is dropping alarmingly as the locals are sick of damp premises, floods and lack of jobs. The Italian Government doesn't give a damn either as they taxed all the donations that were contributed in a Save Venice Appeal a few years ago. No one will give again.

But Venice obviously is worth saving, being one of the unique cities of the world. A fairytale from history instead of a Disneyland creation. I hope you all go there some day.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### THE GONG'S GONE!!

Our Club's brass "gong" and its hammer have been missing since the club auction. Someone must have picked them up in the "free for all" at the end of the evening. Please search your treasures/junk for these missing items. Ring Fazeley Read on 909,3671 if you find them.

BUSHWALKER'S SONG.

by Peter Christian.

When I've felt cramped in by the city's jungle  
 I've escaped to the splendour of the Warrumbungle.  
 Asphalt avenues, concrete spires are my stark situation,  
 But thoughts soar far beyond the scars of civilisation.

I drift without limit over untouched virgin lands,  
 Feel the tenderness of nature in my understanding hands.  
 I walk light-hearted through leafy eucalyptus glade,  
 Watching her moods in summer's harshness and winter's shade.

Hawk and wedge-tail eagle share my soul's lofty domain.  
 They are friends of freedom I could never kill or maim.  
 As long as I can walk, a bushwalker I'll be -  
 And conservation-conscious for our fair country.

\* \* \* \* \*

SOCIAL NOTES - NOVEMBER.

by Christine Austin.

- November 15 - The McDonnell Ranges in Central Australia have been involved in an upsurge of interest lately - chiefly with the publication of Frank Rigby's book of that area (the photos are by Henry Gold). On a recent trip there, Pat McBride and Craig Austin took some slides which they'd like to show to you.
- November 22 - You've all seen Peter's name on the walks programme frequently as being the leader to that area of his great interest and fascination - Ettrema. Also, everyone knows its existence has been threatened recently. Peter Harris has some slides of this beautiful area which he will be presenting this night.
- November 29 - From all reports everyone enjoyed the last music evening presented by that renowned group "The Scrub-bashers". So, elated by success, they're sharpening their voices for the next concert on November 29th.

\* \* \* \* \*

BUSHWALKER DINERS OUT - Don't forget that the THIRD Wednesday each month is the evening for "Dinner Before the Club Meeting". The eating place next month is Pino's Pizzeria, Willoughby Road, Crow's Nest (near "The Stoned Crow"). Time for meeting: 6.30 pm. All welcome.

PETER MILLER.

THE SEPTEMBER (HALF-YEARLY) MEETING.

by Barry Wallace.

We begun promptly at 8.25 pm with the President in the chair and about 35 members present. David Ingram and Helen Gray sent apologies. New members were Paul Hannan and Tamara Fleet.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and received and correspondence in, apart from the magazine and circulars, brought a letter from the A.C.F. accepting our offer of magazine space, a book for review, a query from F.B.W. about club Search and Rescue contacts, F.B.W. notification of conditions for participants in S. & R. activities, a letter from a conservation candidate for the state elections, F.B.W. minutes of meetings, a lengthy F.B.W. letter about a "walk in the wilderness" scheme, and notification of change of address from M.W.W.C. Correspondence out consisted of letters to new members and a letter to cloth badge supplier.

The treasurer's report showed an opening balance of \$1548.57 - income of \$61.90, expenditure of \$196.33 - to give a closing balance of \$1414.14 which, while not representing great wealth, does nevertheless have a pleasing orderliness about it.

Federation report indicated that the Ettrema fire trail will in future be locked at Ennis Claire and announced an upcoming Wilderness Recreation Workshop (the third) for 1979. F.B.W. are also appealing for funds for the publication of a leaflet on the Colo Wilderness area. The next F.B.W. Reunion will be held on April 30/May 1, 1979. Additional Colo car stickers are being printed.

The walks report commenced with Belinda Mackenzie's Macarthur's Flat walk of 11,12,13 August, attracting 7 persons, of whom two were children. The walk was described as nice with fine weather. Spiro Hajinaxitas' Boyd Range walk saw 8 bods battling through snow on Saturday morning. Their reward was a fine but cool Sunday. Gladys Roberts reported 25 people on her Bobbin Head walk. Denise Brown had 9 people on her Wentworth Falls trip. They reported some problems on the ascending track due to washaways and rotted ladders.

The following weekend Charlie Brown led 20 people through a wet and misty Saturday into a brighter tomorrow around the Northern Budawangs. Bob Younger's trip to Newnes from the Glowworm Tunnel attracted 10 starters and Vic Lewin's Mt. Hay day walk attracted none. Gordon Lee's day walk on Cowan Creek had 15 starters and Peter Christian's Waterfall walk was reported as enjoyable, with 9 persons present.

The weekend 26,27,28 August saw Wayne Steele with 5 persons on a fine weekend doing the Narrownneck, Yellow Dog, Cox River, Galong Creek circuit. Hans Stichter's Saturday start trip was led by Col Putt. We don't know how many attended but they report extensive ringbarking on a Cox River property adjacent to Carlon's. The people on Hawkesbury flood plains will be pleased! Oliver Crawford's day test walk did not start. David Ingram had a crowd of 32 on his Bundeena trip and Joe Marton's Grose River

# Paddy's

Lightweight bushwalking and camping gear.

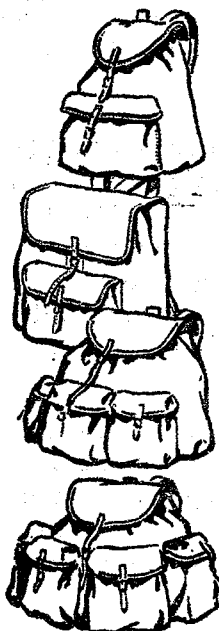


## CLOTHING FOR ALL OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

**Pouch Parka:** Pullover type hooded jacket in proofed nylon. Front zip pocket and zip at throat. Draw cord in hem. So compact it fits into its own pocket. Weight 8ozs.

**'Eidex' hooded oilskin zip front parkas,** considered by experienced walkers to be an indispensable item of their gear. Weight 11b 7ozs. Improved model, made to Paddy's specifications. All sizes.

Everything for the 'well dressed' bushwalker ... heavy wool shirts, wind jackets, duvets, overpants, string singlets, bush hats, webbing belts etc.



### BUNYIP RUCKSACK

This 'shaped' rucksack is excellent for children. Use-full day pack. Weight 14ozs.

### SENIOR RUCKSACK

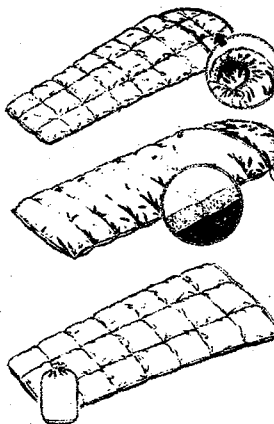
A single pocket, shaped rucksack. Suitable for over-night camping. Weight 1½lbs.

### BUSHMAN RUCKSACK

Has sewn-in curved bottom for extra comfort in carrying. Will hold 30lbs. 2 pocket model 1½lbs. 3 pocket model 1½lbs.

### PIONEER RUCKSACK

Extra large bag with four external pockets and will carry about 40lbs of camp gear. Weight 2½lbs.



### KIANDRA MODEL

Hooded bag. Extra well filled. Very compact. Approx 3½lbs.

### HOTHAM MODEL

Super warm box quilted. Added leg room. Approx 4½lbs.

### SUPERLIGHT MODEL

Half the weight and packed size of regular bags. 9" x 5½" dia. 2lbs.



Everything for the bushwalker, from blankets and air mattresses, stretchers, boots, compasses, maps, books, stoves and lamps to cooking ware and freeze dried and dehydrated foods.



# Paddy's

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trip the same day had 11 bods on a "beautiful day walk". Peter Scandrett's walk was deferred to a later date.

Ian Debert led 3 members, 2 prospectives and 1 visitor on his Murruin Creek walk. A member became detached after Saturday lunch and they spent the rest of the trip searching. Fortunately they did meet up again but the trip was a wipeout. Vic Lewin led 3 members and 3 prospectives on his Junction Rock walk on Sunday. They arrived back in the dark. Gordon Lee's National Park ramble attracted 18 people the same day. Gem Gagne led a team of 11 whiteants on her Airly trip the following weekend. Nancy Alderson's day walk had 10 starters and Barry Zieren had his flock of 30 back in time to catch the 4.30 ferry.

And so to General Business. Next year's Reunion will be held at Coolana. After some discussion it was decided to thank Federation for their letter about the "Walk in the Wilderness" scheme and donate \$100.00 to Federation for conservation causes.

The announcements followed and the meeting closed at 9.45 pm - without the gong or hammer. It seems they disappeared at about the time of the last club auction.

\* \* \* \* \*

IF THIS CREEK FLOWED SOUTH, EVERYTHING WOULD BE LOVELY!

by Christine Austin.

So runneth the thoughts of the party for the first few days of our Chewings Range (part of the Macdonnells) walk in September of this year.

However, as we climbed out of the Fokker Friendship in Alice Springs we were unconcerned by ideas of this kind. We consisted of Eve Walker, Pat McBride, Alan Dixon (a C.M.W.), my husband, Craig and myself. Des Hallam, of Prospecting Safaris, met us at the airport, treated us to a whizz trip through Alice Springs and tea and biscuits at Ellery Creek Big Hole, our starting point. That night we slept out by the river. No insect sound could be heard and the strange silence was unearthly.

However, cold reality faced us in the morning with the prospect of a swim through the Big Hole. It was either a cold swim or a climb over the Heavitree Ranges to reach the distant Chewings across the plains. Eve and I pleaded for the latter option, on the basis that our heavy packs would sink. Of course, the cold water didn't worry us! We didn't want the food to spoil! Like the true gentlemen they are, Pat, Al and Craig granted our wish and we staggered over the Heavitree Range instead.

Down on the other side, crawling over the scree slope with ghost gums growing crazily in all directions, we thought with relish of that cold water. The temperature had risen and we were thirsty. Central Australia was showing us what it could do even in winter.

Now I will digress to give you a foretaste of the small predicament in which we soon found ourselves. Pat had some aerial photos which gave a perfectly clear and precise picture of the country through which we were travelling. The only hitch was that these photos did not cover the "in between" stages, from Ellery Creek to the edge of the photos themselves. This area formed a vast void into which we were about to penetrate.

In the meantime, we had found one of the many branches (the correct branch, we thought) of the Hugh River. This river completely cuts the Chewings from north to south. Up this we happily advanced, lapping up the clear water, admiring the wild flowers and basking in the security of knowing where we were!

However, as clear daylight gave way to dim twilight, we were faced with the realisation that our country just did not match the photos. Moreover, this river didn't have the gorge-like qualities of the Hugh as described by Frank Rigby. We climbed a spinifex covered ridge, took bearings, studied the photos, formed hypotheses, premises and theories and demolished all of them. We descended, and over apple cake and Scrabble, the plan to walk east took shape.

So next morning, we five bushwalkers, who were beginning to feel just a little like Burke and Wills, sallied forth, all the time looking for that magical, southerly flowing river. Up more spinifex ridges we tramped, glimpsed the creek below and rushed down to it. But, alas, they all had the hide to flow north!

You mustn't assume that we weren't enjoying every moment of this. We were! There was something very exciting about this pioneering business. Moreover, the best wildflowers we saw all the trip were in a little valley which we'd never have discovered if we'd had that "in between" photo. Not only that, the spinifex wasn't too bad either. I, myself, think the reputation of spinifex is most unjustified. If your skin is stabbed by some spinifex, it hurts only momentarily. Not at all like some of the eastern nasties. I could name leech bites, and nettle stings drive you mad for days after they attack.

But back to that southerly flowing river. It was becoming increasingly obvious that the country was growing rougher. Yes, and up ahead was a bluff which distinctly matched something on the map. Too early to get excited, though. Up another spinifex ridge and we had to agree that we just might have walked onto the photos; down a treacherous rock strewn ridge during which some people unintentionally played the game of gibberology and there was the mighty Hugh Gorge. Its waters were flowing south! "There is no mistake about it this time", we thought that night with satisfaction as we squatted in the sand and chewed bits of damper.

The Hugh Gorge is a superb example of nature's clever architecture. The soaring, vertical red cliffs contrast dramatically with the olive green macrazamias growing profusely in the gorge. We, unfortunately, were running short of time, so we walked only to the place where it becomes



necessary to swim. However, the overcast day (our only one) made the water look very uninviting.

Now we travelled through country which contained more beautiful gorges, though none as immense and awe-inspiring as the Hugh. In one we saw the remains of an old campfire. Was it the Rigby's? Good chance it could have been, as white feet have trodden rarely in these places. In all the gorges, we saw colourful wild flowers, but the most beautiful clung to the rocky ridges.

At length, we arrived at the main Hugh River. Here we had left the Chewings and we could see the unmistakable signs of humans - trail bike tracks and a river gauge. However, disappointing as this sight was, we were encouraged by the knowledge that we were tracing the footsteps of John McDouall Stuart. His expedition had travelled along this part of the Hugh on some of his several attempts to cross Australia from south to north.

Very soon a large and imposing mountain appeared. It was Brinkley Bluff, looking most unclimbable from this angle. The Browns and Rigbys had insisted that we climb it. Brinkley's distant appearance belied its real state, which was an easy climb from a saddle. And what a view from the top! We studied our destination - Standby Chasm, now two days' walking away. To the south-west we could see the many breaks in the Heavitree Range. From one of these we had started, but which one was difficult to tell.

Unfortunately our week was passing rapidly, as all good weeks do! We were now camped at the northern end of Standby Chasm. The sleeping spaces had taken several chess-like manoeuvres to organise, as the spinifex was profuse. We also had our own native rockery, containing one white cypress pine. It was growing right in the middle of the campsite. Alan placed rocks around it, so it wouldn't be trodden on. It was the only Japanese characteristic of an otherwise totally Australian campsite.

Meanwhile Craig had been exploring the top end of Standby Chasm and had returned with horror stories of jumps and greasy logs suspended high above the cold water. Pat had been having a wash so that he could be clean when he plunged into the cool waters of the chasm. When all these itinerants had assembled, we ate the last of our food - cheese cake that night - and went to bed. That night a dingo howled mournfully (or so they tell me). Pat declared it sounded wonderful, Eve that it was spine chilling and I didn't hear it at all.

Next morning we lined our packs with garbage bags and set off along the Chasm. Craig's stories had, of course, been exaggerated, although they contained an element of truth. The swims were cold but the log was all right provided that you threw your pack into the water below. (We have since been told that this amount of water is unusual for Standby Chasm.) We all took photos of one another in various stages of undress and walked around the corner to greet the first discarded egg carton and beer can. From these, we knew we'd reached the end. Moments later, several tourists walked past. They seemed unperturbed by our standing in dripping underclothes and questioned us about our walk. These people

were followed by some old ladies who pretended not to notice us and then came hordes! There were literally hundreds of people.

However, all these people meant buses coming and going and soon we were back in Alice Springs, wining and dining with the Rigbys. They were off the next day on one of their many trips in the ranges.

To complete this saga, I'll tell you the story of one little beetle who, to me, epitomizes the country in which he was born. This beautiful creature smuggled his way into my pack and was next seen struggling across the mounds in our carpet. Carefully picking him up, I placed him at the bottom of a grevillea on the balcony. Returning from work next day, I saw him back inside, skating across the kitchen floor.

"What determination and resilience!" I thought.

I put him back in the tree and I think he has found a home there.

#### POSTSCRIPT

Beetle was later found crawling up the curtains.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### DAVID COTTON'S NOTE BOOK.

I will be running a "PHOTO-IN" in conjunction with the COOLANA HOOTENANNY being held on the weekend of 24/25/26 November at Kangaroo Valley.

This "PHOTO-IN" will be basically a photo taking exercise where people may have their photo taken, particularly the youngsters who always photograph well. Black and white materials will be used and prints may be ordered as required at reasonable cost. Proof sheets will be available on the following Wednesday evening, 29th November, and the finished prints will be available shortly afterwards. My photographic ability in portrait work is reasonable and processing techniques are sound, making these prints quite suitable for Christmas gifts. Small prints 12 cm X 17 cm (5 X 7 inches) on bromide paper will cost 25 cents each and larger prints 20 cm X 25 cm (8 X 10 inches) on high quality Ilfospeed material will cost \$1 each.

The club's property, "COOLANA", in the Kangaroo Valley is a delightful place. A lot of very good work has been carried out including the construction of a picnic hut and many other small essential projects by a band of keen and enthusiastic workers, including Dot Butler and the Grays, George and Helen, and in particular their girls, Susan and Kathleen, who never seem to tire of helping in the seemingly never-ending round of projects.

Whenever I have had time to attend the Coolana Working Bee weekends, I have enjoyed myself immensely. Coolana is a great place and yet within very reasonable travelling time from Sydney. So let's all come along to the "HOOTENANNY" and make this a fun weekend to remember.

\* \* \* \* \*

COOLANA BARN DANCENovember 24th, 25th, 26th

Some S.B.W. members have put a lot of work into Coolana and its shelter hut. The latest work includes the erection of an inside fire-place, the building of an outside barbecue, the painting of the hut and the laying of a slate-tiled floor.

To celebrate the near-completion of the hut, a Barn Dance has been programmed by - of all the unlikely people! - George Gray.

Gordon Lee's practicing his fiddle and guitar, Len Newland's practicing his bagpipes, guitar (and sitar?), and Bob Hodgson will have his mouth organ. Hopefully the S.B.W. Singing Group and other club musicians are coming too.

There will be plenty of walking, swimming, talking and eating, too. Come along for a relaxing weekend and enjoy the beauty of Kangaroo Valley in spring.

Ring George or Helen Gray - phone 86,6263 - for transport or further details.

\* \* \* \* \*

FEDERATION OF BUSHWALKING CLUBS N.S.W.

In conjunction with the 1979 Reunion, the F.B.W. is holding a photographic print competition, with the object of displaying to present bushwalkers the places, people and bushwalking of the years before 1970.

We wish to contact the members and ex-members of your club who were taking prints during those years. Great care will be taken of photos exhibited and a substantial prize is being offered in each of the 3 classes. Your club must be one with the greatest potential for supplying the old photos we're after. We will send you more details of the competition as soon as they're available, but would you advertise the competition/exhibition in your club publication as well.

Reply by mail to Federation of Bushwalking Clubs, c/- 4 Electra Street, Heathcote. Phone enquiries - 520,0750.

\* \* \* \* \*

THE GONG'S GONE!!

Our Club's brass "gong" and its hammer have been missing since the club auction. Someone must have picked them up in the "free for all" at the end of the evening. Please search your treasures/junk for these missing items. Ring Fazeley Road 9093671 if you find them.

- NOVEMBER BARRALLIER - Murruin Ck - Bindook - Tomat Ck - Barrallier 25 km MEDIUM Map: Bindook. Cars to be driven to Barrallier where the Wombeyan Caves Road meets the Wollondilly River. An interesting two day test walk with spectacular views from Bindook. Some rock hopping and climbing. LEADER: BILL BURKE 8711207.
- 3,4,5 CARLON'S FARM: Iron Pot Ridge - Tinpot Hill - Galong Ck - Little R - Flaggi Clear Jenolan R - Breakfast Ck 28 km LEADER: WAYNE STEELE 4398945 (H) 290 3951 (B)
- Sunday 5 ROYAL NATIONAL PARK: Helensburgh - Cawley Rd - Heathcote Ck - Heathcote 14 km EASY Map: Royal National Park. Train: Wollongong 8.45 C A very pleasant day walk with a promise of wild flowers. LEADER: JIM BROWN 812675 (H).
- Sunday 5 GROSE VALLEY: Evan's Lookout - Bridle Trail - Blackwall Glen - Upper Govett's Ck to Waterfall base - Carne Wall base - Grand Canyon - Neate's Glen - Evan's Lookout. 13 km MEDIUM Map: Katoomba 8.30 a.m. start. Cars to be left at Evan's Lookout just before Blackheath. Enjoy the majestic valley scenery. LEADER: VIC LEWIN 504096 (H).
- 
- 10,11,12 COLO: Grassy Hill Trail - Canoe Ck - Colo R - Savage Trig - Suicide Ck - Colo R - Tambo Crown - Grassy Hill Trail. 40 km HARD Map: Colo Sketch. A harder than pattern test walk again lead by Bob Hodgson in the rugged but spectacular Colo LEADER: BOB HODGSON 949 6175 (H).
- 11,12 ROYAL NATIONAL PARK: Bundeena - Wattamolla - Garie Beach - Burning Palms - Otford. 28 km MEDIUM MAP: Port Hacking. LEADER: DAVID ROSTRON 4517943. (H)
- 12 SPRINGWOOD: Victory Track - Blaxland. 14 km MEDIUM Map: Springwood Train to Springwood. LEADER: IAN DEBERT 6498576 (H) 6490281 (B).
- 12 NARROW NECK: Wall's Pass - Cedar Ck - Ruined Castle - Federal Pass - Narrow Neck 20 km MEDIUM Maps: Katoomba & Jamison. Pleasant walking and extensive views. Private transport for this day test walk. LEADER: JOE MARTON 638 7353 (H).
- 
- 17,18,19 BARRINGTON TOPS NAT. PARK: Lagoon Pinch - Williams R - Hut Ck to Rocky Crossing - Lagoon Pinch. 40 km HARD. Compulsory swimming. Map: Woolooma. Cars to be driven to Lagoon Pinch in the Barrington Tops National Park (Nth of Maitland & Dungog.) The use of a hut for sleeping is a possibility on Sat. night - excellent high altitude walking country. LEADER: GORDON LEE 3982145 (B) 7.00 am to 3.30 pm.
- 18,19 BLUE MTS NATIONAL PARK - Hazelbrook - Wentworth Ck - Mt Hay Rd 25km MEDIUM Map: Katoomba A good 1½ day private transport trip, steady walking, excellent mountain & creek scenery. LEADER: PETER MILLER 952689 (H).
- 18,19 SAILING TRIP: Pt. Jackson - Pacific Ocean - Broken Bay - Cowan Waters & return. Limit 6 70 km unsteady. Casting off from Berry Bay near Waverton on Peter Levander's yacht. LEADER: PETER LEVANDER 6988866 (B).
- 19 BOUDDI NATIONAL PARK: Little Beach - the Moors Track - Maitland Bay - Coastal track to Kilcare. 15 km MED/EASY Glorious extensive coastal views as far south as Manly - good walking & swimming if desired. LEADER: SNOW BROWN 4517644.
- 
- 24,25,26 KANGAROO VALLEY: Barn dance at Coolana to celebrate completion of work on the club's hut. Good camping on our land on the Kangaroo River - Dancing, walking, swimming or just lazing around. LEADER: GEORGE GRAY 866263 (H).
- 24,25,26 KANGAROO VALLEY: Fitzroy Falls to Coolana and return 45 km MEDIUM. Swimming at Kangaroo Valley - wildlife & wildflowers. Steep climb but not too difficult & some road walking. LEADER: JOHN FOX 6665471 (B).
- 26 ROYAL NATIONAL PARK: Waterfall - Kangaroo Ck - Karloo Pool - Heathcote 10 km MEDIUM Map: Port Hacking Very good walking & swimming if desired. LEADER: SHEILA BINNS 789 1854 (H).