

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER
Established June 1931

A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to The Sydney Bush Walkers,
Box 4476 G.P.O., Sydney, 2001. Club meetings are held every Wednesday
evening from 7.30 pm at the Cahill Community Centre (Upper Hall),
34 Falcon Street, Crow's Nest. Enquiries concerning the Club should be
referred to Ann Ravn, telephone 798-8607;

EDITOR: Evelyn Walker, 158 Evans Street, Rozelle, 2039.
Telephone 827-3695.

BUSINESS MANAGER: Bill Burke, 3 Coral Tree Drive, Carlingford, 2118.
Telephone 871-1207.

PRODUCTION MANAGER: Helen Gray. Telephone 86-6263.

TYPIST: Kath Brown.

DUPLICATOR OPERATOR: Phil Butt.

APRIL, 1983.

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SEARCH & RESCUE.

by Steve Hodgman.

It was 6.30 am, Thursday, 17th March, when the phone rang. Cursing the early risers of this world, we struggled to the phone to discover that it was Keith Maxwell, Field Officer from Search & Rescue, telling us of a young couple, three days overdue from a walk on the Colo. Suddenly we were awake. A quick call to the other S.B.W. Contacts - Tony Marshall and Ray Hookway - and then many more calls to try to find people who could drop everything and go out searching. Frank Tacker, Bob Younger, Wendy and myself eventually made up the S.B.W. team. Thanks must go to Bob and Frank who also went out on the previous search.

We arrived at the Base at about 10 am, to find Police, vehicles, helicopters, Federation's S. & R. Trailer and about 25 bushwalkers. Our S.B.W. party was joined by Morrie, from Sutherland Bushwalkers (an S.B.W. prospective as well). We were given instructions, a radio set, and were soon piled into the back of a 4 W-D van and bumped off along the Culoul Fire Trail. We searched an area down Boorai Ridge and upstream along the Colo in very wet conditions. On the Colo we met up with a Police Team, and accompanied them back up to the Fire Trail, arriving well after dark. Another bumpy trip back to Base, where there was hot food and drink provided by the Police Rescue Squad.

Next morning we were joined by more bushwalkers, replacing those who had returned to Sydney the previous night. (60 walkers in all took part.) After breakfast, again provided by Police, we were dropped by the 4 W-D to investigate Pass 5, near Crawford's Lookout. On our way down a very deep gully, the call came over the radio that the missing couple had walked out, many miles downstream. So it was back up to the top for our final bumpy ride out. Unfortunately we were one of the few parties not to get a helicopter ride. Once all parties had returned and been fed, we were thanked by the Police and Fergus Bell (S. & R. Director), and then it was off back to Sydney, about 4 pm.

It would appear that S. & R. is going to be called out more often, as Police need bushwalkers to do the searching. S.B.W., being one of the larger clubs, should be able to field a team every time. As we don't want to be always calling the same people, we need to know who is available to go on S. & R. callouts. Essentially we need people with a couple of years' walking experience (and preferably who have attended an S. & R. practice weekend). If you do attend a callout you will receive a letter signed by S. & R. and a Police Officer, explaining your absence from work. This is accepted by most employers to qualify you for paid absence.

If there is any possibility of you being available, please fill out the form and send to me, or phone with details. The replies will be used to create a callout list, which will greatly improve our response time, share the load more evenly, and make the S. & R. contacts' job much easier.

Steve Hodgman, 54 Chelmsford St, Newtown, 2042. Phones 519,6633(H)
406,6177(B)

Details wanted: Name, address, phones, when available (weekdays, weekends, school holidays only, other) - Response time (immediate, within 24 hours), Do you have a car? - Comments.

BUSHWALKING, BIRDING AND BLUDGING.

by Wendy Hodgman.

Bushwalking, birding and bludging..... such was the nature of John Redfern's weekend trip on 11th, 12th and 13th February. Some people did more of one particular activity than the others, but it was generally agreed that everyone should do as they please.

The trip was variously advertised by John, depending upon who he was talking to and their particular interests. Advertised in the programme as a "bird-watching weekend on the Nattai or Wollondilly" (just to lend it some authenticity), we found ourselves located on the Shoalhaven, about one hour's walk from Tallowa Dam. Most people had come laden with "goodies", knowing it would be an easy walk to a base camp; wine bottles full (until Saturday evening that is), lilos to sleep on, fresh fruit and vegetables, books, etc. Only Tony Marshall and ourselves had come with our usual light packs - victims of false advertising. Perhaps Tony's minuscule pack was habit, but there seemed to issue forth a never-ending supply of biscuits and minties, so maybe he has mastered the art of compression. Steve and I were of the mistaken belief that we were going to camp on a creek away from the Shoalhaven. Knowing the weight of two pairs of binoculars and bird books we thus packed sparingly, but there was no need. No amount of my mutinous utterings was able to persuade the group to climb the ridge for a camp, so there we stayed, beside a beautiful deep pool on the Shoalhaven.

Tony (ironically the person least concerned with bird-watching) spotted the first bird, and the only Azure Kingfisher seen on this trip. Tony's other contribution to the bird list was a 6"-8" silver bird seen leaping into the air across the water, but this was later identified as a fish.

Lunch over and camp established, we decided it was time for some serious bird-watching. We watched some tiny brown birds feeding in the casuarinas, and after much discussion and thumbing through books we decided they were Brown Thornbills. We have since learnt that this is unlikely because Brown Thornbills tend to feed singly, rather than in groups. So we must change this identification to the very similar-looking Striated Thornbill. An easy mistake for the novices, so we are told.

Satisfied with this "positive" identification, some of us proceeded along the river in search of more birds. Then down came the rain. So we sheltered as best we could, and put binoculars and all thoughts of bird-watching safely away. After the rain we ventured back to camp, and decided to set off in the opposite direction, hoping for more luck. Bronwyn, who had decided to do her bird-watching around the camp, saw many more species than the rest of us that afternoon. However, our second attempt was much more productive. Birds seen included Wedge-tailed Eagle, Grey Fantail, Willie Wagtail, Superb Blue Wren, Rainbow Bird, Eastern Yellow Robin, Rufous Whistler, Welcome Swallow, King Parrot, Grey Shrike Thrush, Currawong, Yellow Tufted Honeyeater, Rose Robin, Crimson Rosella, Noisy Friar Bird and a Cormorant. A Lyre Bird and a Kookaburra were identified by their calls.

For those people who have never done any bird-watching, it may be difficult to see the enjoyment. But it can be quite a challenge to find

.....
a bird, observe it - its shape, colours, size, behaviour - and then identify it. Two things are important though. Firstly, you need binoculars, and secondly, you can't mix bushwalking and bird-watching. They are two separate activities, with quite different objectives, and must be approached in different frames of mind. Either you are bushwalking - enjoying the bush and getting to a certain place - or you are bird-watching - observing birds closely and content to stay in the one spot for an hour if necessary.

This pleasant day, with its variety of activities depending upon individual interests (ranging from swimming, reading, bird-watching to sleeping) was then followed by a pleasant evening around the campfire with a variety of food, drink and conversation topics. The next day allowed for the same amount of choice. Some people returned to the cars early, and once again Bronwyn did her bird-watching around the camp (and was lucky enough to spot a sea eagle). The more foolhardy of us set off up Steer Ridge, with map and compass lessons all the way up for Pat, a prospective. Beautiful views rewarded us at the top, across the Shoalhaven, Tallowa Dam, and parts of Morton National Park. We continued on to Hobble Creek, a delightful creek with fairly deep cold pools, despite the drought. Lunch and then it was time to return to camp. Bird-watching was restricted to a quick peek through binoculars from time to time, but today was for bushwalking, not bird-watching.

Careful navigation brought us out at exactly the right places, both on the top and then down on the river (actually we are not sure whether to attribute this to navigation or luck). A quick walk back to the cars and a swim in Tallowa Dam completed a most enjoyable bushwalking/bird-watching weekend. Everyone seemed to enjoy it because they were able to do exactly as they pleased - bushwalk, bird-watch, bludge, or a bit of everything.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR,

March, 1983.

Dear Madam,

There is possibly no doubt that what Warwick Blayden wrote about the origin of the title - "Pigeon House and Beyond" - is correct as recorded in the Minutes of the Budawang Committee.

Minutes of meetings are notoriously brief, and rarely record preliminary discussion or thought. I cannot concede, however, that an article heading out of one of the principal primary sources of material for "Pigeon House and Beyond", which no doubt would have been read by all associated with its publication, would not have influenced, consciously or sub-consciously, the decision on the fitness of the title for the book.

Because of this I think it should be conceded that the title is Ray Kirkby's, as the Budawang Committee must surely have known it in their researches, and especially as his articles are quoted in the book.

(Sgd.) REG ALDER,
45 Stark Street, Higgins. A.C.T. 2615.

LETTER TO THE CLUB: NATIONAL PARKS & WILDLIFE SERVICE, KOSCIUSKO
DISTRICT. 26th January, 1983.

Dear Sir,

As you may be aware, the 1982 Plan of Management for Kosciusko National Park called for the removal of Rawsons Hut. This decision was based on the state of disrepair of the Hut and its relative proximity to Seamans Hut which provides adequate shelter for visitors.

This letter is to inform your members that the removal of Rawsons Hut has been completed and all materials are being carried out by helicopter. The site is now being rehabilitated.

Could you please advise your members and any associates who might visit the area that Rawsons Hut is no longer available to provide shelter and that Seamans Hut is the nearest available facility in an emergency situation.

Again in compliance with the Plan of Management, replacement of Albina Hut by a temporary emergency shelter will be commenced this summer. This shelter will be removed after three years. The Soil Conservation Hut is also to be removed as it no longer serves a purpose in Summit restoration works.

I shall advise you when these works are completed and trust you will remind your members of their impending removal.

I look forward to your co-operation in this matter.

Yours faithfully, J. ROBSON.

Superintendent, Kosciusko District.

SOCIAL NOTES FOR MAY.

by Jo Van Sommers.

* May 18 - Ski Films - to whet your appetite for the approaching ski season.

May 25 - Moonshine Blue Grass Band
(a professional group which includes club member Gordon Lee)

* All members are invited to meet for dinner at Phuong Vietnamese Restaurant, 87 Willoughby Road, Crow's Nest (near Clubhouse) 6.30 pm. Reasonable (it's in Cheap Eats). B.Y.O.



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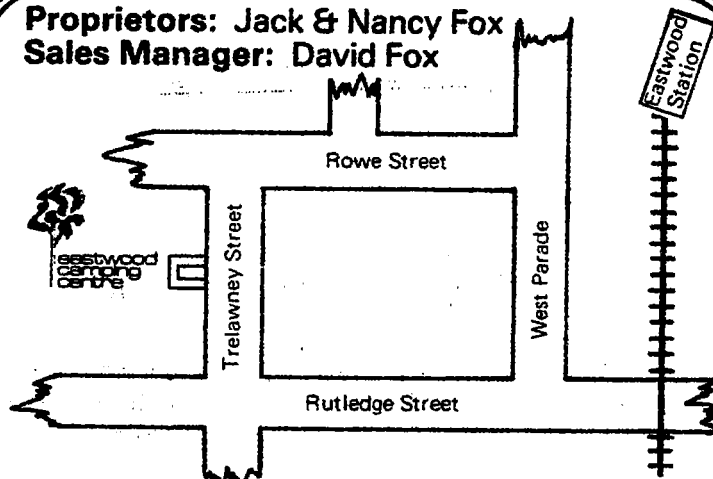
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TODAY THE "S.M. HERALD"; TOMORROW "THE TIMES".

by Jim Brown.

On the morning of Thursday, March 10th, the day after our Annual General Meeting, there were 16 letters to the Editor published in the "Sydney Morning Herald". Two of them - one eighth, or $12\frac{1}{2}\%$ - were from S.B.W. members.

Now I had passed a rather disturbed night - of which I may write another time - but my attention was first called by Kath who said over early morning tea in bed - one of the incalculable boons of being a retired person - "Here's a letter from Helen Gray in the paper". And there it was, headed "Inexcusable Boos" and signed "Helen Gray, Malton Road, Epping". In essence it said that the writer, as a supporter of the new Federal Government, watched the TV coverage on the night of the Election of 5th March, and felt that the boos and jeers when the retiring Prime Minister conceded defeat were in poor taste, and that it would have been kinder and more sportsmanlike to clap both winner and loser.

With al. of which I have no argument. Amongst my pet aversions are (1) the people who can't lose without showing ill temper; (2) the macho men and the arrogant who lose no opportunity to put down or belittle more modest (if often more thoughtful) citizens; and (3) those older people who are forever complaining that youngsters - anyone under 35 - don't do things as well as their generation did.

I must admit I did not hear the jeers and boos to which Helen objects. Possibly this was because, as soon as I heard the ex-P.M. concede defeat, I sighed with relief, turned off the TV set and hastened to hide my savings under the bed. This took some time, not because my savings are particularly bulky, but because I remembered on the way that the incoming Prime Minister had said there wouldn't be room under the bed with all the Commies hiding there.

So I first lifted up the bed cover and immediately saw a pair of shoes. Encouragingly, I said, "It's all right, Tovarish, it's safe to come out now." (I thought the use of the Russian word for Comrade would inspire his confidence. After all he had probably been hiding there 20 years or more since Bob Menzies first raised the scare.) When he made no move to come out, I shook one of the shoes and it came away in my hand. It was one of a pair of my own shoes I had left there and forgotten. I then thought, well, if there aren't any Commies under the bed after all, maybe I shouldn't put my savings there, or I may forget them too.

But I digress, I digress. The other letter in the "Herald" was headed "Masts Obscure the Harbour" and was signed "J. F. Noble, Fiona Road, Beecroft". It must be our John Noble because the telephone directory does not list anyone else of that name in Fiona Street, Beecroft. John's gripe was about the increasing number of marinas and other servicing and mooring areas for small craft which now seem to fill almost all the bays and coves of Sydney Harbour.

Apart from thinking of the container wharves, terminals and ships which now occupy the White Bay and Darling Harbour waterways with even larger and more objectionable (if necessary) obstructions, and which I see on every

journey to the City, I don't disagree with him either. At least in the matter of small craft, I can go up on the arch of Gladesville Bridge and spit on them from a great height, if I want to. I would not be game to do anything else, at least in daylight hours.

The interesting angle about it all is - how long before S.B.W. writers take over the "Herald's" letter page, and gradually expand to the feature articles and the Editorials? As a regular reader of the "Letters" page in these more relaxed days, I feel quite hopeful - we couldn't do much worse than a lot of the material published there.

* * * * *

COOLANA IMPRESSIONS

by Deidre Schofield.

Casuarinas by the river;
Lyre birds screened in shady bower;
Nature's hushed voice through needled antennas
Sighing and whispering "This is peace".

Green turf flattened by splashes of colour;
Canvas echoing lorikeets;
A mini village on the banks of the river;
Home for two days with plenty of treats.

Campfire smoke, boiling billies;
Laughter, songs, skits (made some look silly)!
Carrot cake supper; damper contest by day
The results mulberry jammed in a generous way.

Children playing down by the river,
Their wet little bodies glinting and brown.
New friendships made, old ones cemented
As on lilos and logs they float and clown.

Adults flaking (bushwalkers in disguise)
Applicable in metaphor or literal guise.
Such was the week-end - Coolana Re-union,
My first, and what a pleasant surprise!

* * * * *

CLIMBING EXPEDITION - PIGEON HOUSE & THE CASTLE - JUNE 1957.

by Malcolm McGregor & Frank Rigby.

(In the February issue of the magazine it was promised that some further accounts of trips into the Budawangs Mountains would be reprinted later. There follows an account of an ascent of the east side of The Castle, written by Malcolm McGregor and Frank Rigby, and originally published in the September 1957 issue. The trip was a two-pronged affair, carried out on the Queens's Birthday Holiday weekend in June 1957, and the story of the climb on to Mt. Talaterang, told by Dot Butler and Geoff Wagg, was published in the October issue in that year.)

Strange things happened to this trip before ever it left the Club room. To begin with it was down on the programme as an official walk, but this fell through at the last minute owing to prohibitive transport costs, so the official leader took her party to Katoomba. But, like a phoenix rising from the ashes, a new party emerged - a party of considerable magnitude as it took the Puttmobile and four private cars to transport them all to Drury's Farm. To Drury's, did I say? No. That is not quite right. Snow managed to take a wrong turning in the dark and finished up on the edge of a precipice somewhere or other - for the whole weekend he was never quite sure where it was and pointed us out two or three different plateaux on the edge of which his car was reputed to be roosting. However, sufficient for the day is the evil thereof, and when Snow and Henry eventually met up with us after taking a bee-line across the landscape he told us he didn't plan to give another thought to where his car might be until it was time to find it on the last day. George, also, unintentionally or otherwise (probably otherwise if I know George) took an unknown road which landed him up practically within coo-ee of the camp spot it took the rest of us most of Saturday to reach. It didn't take us long to get settled in, and when the Saturday night meal had been put in its proper place, plans were made for Sunday. Who better to tell you of this pleasant camp scene than the old fox, McGregor. (Over to you, Malcolm.)

The main aim of the trip into this area was to climb Talaterang from the Clyde River side; last Easter John Manning had seen a spot which he thought would go, so he was appointed leader. The party was kept small to give it every chance of success. The five to accompany John were Dot and Grace, Geoffo, Mike Elphick and the Dalai Lama. Why put Dalai Lama in? you might ask. It was suggested that prayers might be needed and who better than Dun Khan for that job? (Bob Duncan.)

Now the Castle party - we would try the eastern cliff faces from Byangee Gap - just to make it hard, and ten bods with Putto as leader decided to give it a go. Digby was one who said he'd be in it as he sat by the fire chewing his bit of dessert ironbark. Whiteanted before we started, still....

"Now to give us plenty of time," said Colin, "We'll all pile out at 5 am."

"Righto," said Digby, "5 am we'll all hop, eh." His ironbark branch twig dropped from nerveless fingers. His jaws bit on air. "5 o'clock - no sane man would think of...."

"That's O.K." says Colin. "You aren't sane."

So it was settled, Colin was appointed alarm clock for 5 am, Grace was to get Geoffo moving, Heather was listed to start George going, Digby to take the Dalai Lama his breakfast in bed; Dot would probably wake up anyway, and old Malc was in the same tent as Colin, so he had no excuse. As for the others, they were young enough not to notice the early rising.

About ten the goodnight brew was brewed and shortly after the camp settled down. The fires dimmed and Jack Frost spread his icy fingers over the flats. 3 am - a lone figure crept from a tent and threw a log on the fire - it disappeared - again all was quiet. Five minutes to five.....

"Get up you lazy loafers" roared Colin's voice. What will power! What fortitude! He stamped around the tents and bellowed in at each, making sufficient noise to wake the Dalai Lama. Groans followed in his wake; again he gave his call; the young-uns tumbled out; a shrill squeal announced Grace's ejection from her sleeping bag; Digby rose grumbling from his quarters; Heather and George appeared like wraiths, only old Malc stayed in his bag. This cunning old so-and-so had pitched his tent right by the fire, by now blazing happily due to Colin's effort.

"Put my billy on please," he says. Someone placed a billy on the fire. Dignu is too benumbed by this early rising to say or do anything - yet - and the Dalai Lama is clamouring for his breakfast.

"Why are we up now?" says Heather vaguely. "I don't know," says Grace. "Where are we going?" Snow chimes in. "To the hills!" roars Colin. "Take my billy off if it's boiling," says Malc, still in his sleeping bag. Colin glares at him. "Aren't you up yet?" he says. "No," says Malc.

Bushwalkers at 5 am on a mid-winter morning are a strange lot. The moans and groans, the..... Oh, I wish I had a tape recorder. The comments are priceless. The clock ticked on and food of one sort and another was consumed. All of the two parties were moving except one - the old.... who was still in his bag. Six o'clock and still only 15 bodies were mobile. Digby was speechless by this time at being up while another was down. "Get up!" he cried. Breakfast was nearly finished and at 6.30 came the call - "Moving off in five minutes!"

Now think of what has happened. Fifteen bushwalkers are up, fed and dressed ready to go, and one fed and ready to go - to sleep. No, the whips are cracking and old Malc slides from his sleeping bag at last. There they are, sixteen bods, in mid-winter, ready to leave camp at 6.30 am. Not bad, eh! At twenty to seven the remaining sleepers had the camp to themselves.

(Now back to Frank Rigby)

The Very Early Morning Kookaburras rubbed their sleepy unbelieving eyes and looked again. In the first wan light of day ten hazy half-conscious figures sleep-walked across the meadow, their frozen feet crunching into the firm white frost which lay like a giant sheet across the slumbering river flats. This was incredible! Bushwalkers afoot at this ungodly hour and in this temperature! After the initial shock was over, no normal strain of Kooka could be expected to restrain itself. A whole bunch of rascals combined in a torrent of rollicking raucous laughter, which had, we felt, a fair share of nasty derision mixed up with it. Such was the beginning of the day the S.B.W. Castle Climbing Contingent set off to do battle with that famous landmark.

When the light had brightened up a trifle, the shadowy figures could no longer hide their true identities. Out in front and egging us on as per usual loped the Putt Machine, brandishing a spanking new red and blue nylon climbing rope. Malcolm and Heather started skipping along together in some sort of Mad Goblins' Dance, allegedly designed for a quick thaw-out. But the rest of us, still a la comatose, would not be hustled and so Alan Abbot, George, Bookie, Jack Perry, Henry Gold, Snow and Digby ambled along in silent single file. A little way further and the Castle Climbers passed a Y.M. Ramblers' camp where nary a soul had bestirred himself from the warmth of the icicled tents. Oh, how the pangs of White Antism, sleeping-bag variety, suddenly swept through our party like a plague. Miracle of miracles, we pressed on with barely a hesitating step - perhaps it was the fiery light in the ferocious eyes of the Putt Machine which won the day! And so up Yadbore Creek we went our way and shortly Colin led off up the ridge which would land us at the Castle - Byangee Walls Saddle.

The plan was to climb the Castle from the eastern side, where a "possible" route was alleged to exist a little way back along the Castle walls behind the saddle. The sun had by now sailed up into a cloudless, windless vault of blue, and as we warmed up all over to a tingle, we began to savour the real anticipation of the unknown adventure ahead.....

At 0900 hours we stood in the saddle and surveyed the sandstone cliffs towering above us - well it certainly wouldn't "go" just there, not for us, anyway. So we pushed on along the base of the walls until we found the first promising chink in the Castle's armour, a broad gully in which some good climbing rock sloped upwards at a respectable angle. So great was our enthusiasm we were soon all over it like a rash. After the first pitch, ideal for loosening up lazy muscles, the angle became steeper and it was time to bring out the rope for a spot of belaying. Up went the bods, one by one, cautiously feeling their way in steady climbs, until it was the turn of that really outstanding mountaineer, Mr. John Ants-in-the-pants Bookluck. And what a fantastic performance he put on! Bookie fairly tore up that pitch as though the very Devil were at his heels, arms and legs flailing in all directions at once, footholds and handholds being used and abused in extra-rapid succession. The proverbial rat in the drainpipe could be considered a tired old slowcoach compared with our hero, one could only bring to mind those movies which are speeded up to such an extent as to provoke uncontrollable laughter in the observer - for such indeed was the effect. Of course there is a rumour that certain persons at the top of the rope helped the show along, to say the least, but this was certainly not apparent from below. And so ended the brightest piece of comedy on the whole weekend.

After this episode a bit of exploration was called for as the next step of the mountain loomed ominously and awkwardly above. Several routes which might go were investigated by Alan, Jack and Digby, but were wisely rejected in favour of the "recognised" way just then discovered by Colin further round the face. Hob marks and a cut sapling leaning into a weak gully formation pointed the way.

The party having negotiated this obstacle (with some more frantic antics by Bookie), the rest of the climbing route was obvious, there were no alternatives whichever way you looked at it. Several interesting pitches of moderate severity, a pleasant mixture of chimneying, scrambling and

straight face climbing, with just the right amount of challenge, finally brought us to the top of the first big sandstone step of the mountain. The final step still remained. So far it had been good clean fun in the warm sunshine, despite a few cold shivers down several spines.

Malcolm had enjoyed the leading most of the time, but first prize for the best laissez-faire attitude to the whole adventure would go to Snow. During the waits he would stretch out on a sunny ledge without a care in the world and dream the dreams that only Snow can dream. Only when his turn finally came to climb a pitch would he give the slightest attention to the mountain. Perhaps this is the best attitude after all if one can cultivate that sort of mountaineering temperament.

The old enemy had by this time mooched along to about 1300 hours - and with ten bods using the one rope this was not surprising. Lunchtime, and what better place for lunch than beside a tiny stream running across this wide forested ledge, with a glorious 180° panorama of that rugged and beautiful landscape to feast the eyes upon. Our gaze wandered down on to the Byangee Plateau, now well below us, then across to Pigeon House and finally to the Pacific on the horizon. And from there the eye came slowly back to the Clyde Valley way down in the blue depths on our left, and then shot up the cliffs of Talaterang on the other side, and we wondered how our comrades were faring in their new adventure over there.

A human shout from the summit of the Castle brought us back to the near-at-hand, and we wondered how this could be until we remembered the other walking parties in the area - they had apparently come up by the "accepted" route on the other side. We should be on our way, but one glance at our watches was quite sufficient to convince us that we must skirt along our ledge to the beginning of the Castle "tail" and reach the summit by the orthodox route; the final step would be saved up for another day, that was for sure. At length this plan was achieved, and as we climbed to the top of the fantastic tail, we ran into a Y.H.A. party on their way down; the odd places you meet up with bushwalkers! It was a surprise to recognise familiar faces, some of us had encountered them before in all the last outposts of walking realms, even in far-off Tasmania! After a quick sojourn on the top, in which several of the very active ones made a hasty trip to the Byangee end, our party started down again at the rather latish time of 1500 hours. We would not want to dawdle but now we would descend by the usual west side route, through that remarkable squeeze-hole passage which tunnels right through the tail, and then on down through the cursed sapling forest with its scratchy undergrowth and the torn and twisted creek courses with their boulder beds. Cries of "Never again - give me rock-climbing any day!" could be heard from front to rear, even from those who can't really make up their minds about climbing and its risks.

Finally, as the last light of day flickered and went completely out, we thankfully set foot once again in the more friendly Yadboro Creek, and of course there were the usual false and frustrating leads. After crossing the creek for the umpteenth time (we can't feel our toes any more), Colin called a halt to collect the bods together in the inky blackness. "Number off," says Colin, but even after two attempts we can't get past nine. Whose voice was absent? Where was the missing link? Missing link?

Ah, yes, it must be Bookie. "Where are you, Bookie?" we chant. For a moment the bush was silent. Then from the direction of the creek the chill night air was split asunder by an oathful, wrathful shout "How the blinkin' blazes did you so-and-so's get out of this b..... hole?" Well, of course, not one of us had seen hide nor hair of a "hole", let alone one that would accommodate a whole body.

Poor Bookie! The gods were agin him again. We went back and rescued him, and then hit it for home - and never did the warm fires and tents of our camp look more like home to us. Their glow seemed to match an inner glow deep inside us, the glow of success, the glow from a day of happy fulfilment and from a job well done. It was time to have a laugh at the kookaburras.

* * * * *

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING. by Barry Waalace.

The southerly was gradually displacing the heat build-up and paint fumes from our meeting room as the President called the 30 or so members to order and began the A.G.M. at 8.14 pm. Apologies were made for Don Finch, Don and Jenny Cornell, Helen Gray, Bob Sames and Anton Gillezeau.

Of new members there were two, Lynne McDonald and Alan Merrett, both of whom were present to be welcomed in the traditional way.

The Minutes of the February general meeting were read and received, with no business arising.

Correspondence was comprised of a letter from the outgoing Prime Minister regarding the South-west Tasmanian dams question, a letter to the N.S.W. Secretary & Comptroller of Accounts & Treasury, enclosing our Annual Reports and Accounts, a letter from N.P.W.S. ref. the removal of Rawson's Hut and impending removal of Albina and Soil Conservation Huts from the Kosciusko primitive area, a letter advising of dates for F.B.W. Re-union, a letter from Joe Turner remarking on the Coolana property, from Brian Harvey suggesting possible cost savings for the Club magazine, and from Fred Kelly and Bob and Valerie Calvert advising of change of addresses. There was also mention of the death of Brenda White, a former member of the Club.

We then suspended Standing Orders and proceeded with the election of office-bearers. The results have appeared in last month's magazine so they do not appear here. At the close of elections a vote of thanks to the outgoing committee was passed by acclamation.

The Annual Reports were then taken as read and accepted by the meeting. The Annual Accounts were also presented and accepted. A proposal by the Treasurer that the following subscription rates be set for 1983 was passed after some discussion:- Active Membership: Single \$10.00, Married Couple \$13.00, Student \$8.00; Entrance Fee: \$2.00.

The Treasurer then presented the monthly report. It seems we began the month with a balance of \$2121.05, acquired \$304.00, spent \$315.05 and finished with a balance of \$2110.00.

All of which brought us to the Walks Reports. We began at the weekend of February 11,12,13th. Derek Wilson's Coolana relaxing weekend did not go, at least in part because Derek was laid up with a broken ankle. Barry Wallace had 7 starters on a dry but cooler Murruin Creek, Tomat Falls walk and John Redfern reported 9 people watching birds, dodging raindrops and sleeping on his birdo's walk. Peter Christian had 2 members, 6 prospectives one visitor and some water on his Heathcote Creek day walk, and Brian Bolton had 7 members and 5 prospectives on his Stanwell Park to Otford trip.

The weekend of 18,19,20th Feb had 5 walks programmed, but only two of them went. Bill Capon had 15 people on his Jones Creek the easy way weekend and Jim Brown had 15 people on a rather hot Waterfall to Heathcote day walk.

Bill Hall led a mid-week walk on the 23rd Feb - Heathcote to Waterfall - there were 4 members and 3 visitors on a mild, warm day, and all went well.

Bill Burke's Longnose Point walk, weekend of 25,26,27 did not go. Gordon Lee re-routed his Cox River walk by taking his 6 starters to the Kowmung, where there was more water. Gordon also managed to retrieve a pair of billy lifters, and his glasses, misplaced during a previous walk. Laurie Quaken's West Head day walk did not go, but Errol Sheedy reported 7 members and 3 prospectives on his Engadine to Heathcote trip.

Alex Colley reported 3 starters and a very good walk for his 28th Feb, 1,2,3,4th March coast walk from Bateman's Bay.

The first weekend of March, 4,5,6th, saw Ian Debert divert his Cox River walk to the Colo for better water conditions. Unfortunately the Colo was caked deep in black silt, someone's topsoil no doubt. The 8 members and 2 prospectives retreated to a pool in Tootie Creek for most of the weekend. Tony Marshall converted his Cox River ridge walk into a Breakfast Creek, Cox River, Jenolan River and return, thereby saving the 3 starters from heat-stroke or similar. Roy Braithwaite's day walk Lilyvale to Otford went, but there was no report. Ralph Pengliss had 12 people and good swins on his Bundeena to Otford walk the same day. All of which brought the Walks Reports to an end.

Federation Report indicated that F.B.W. plan to join the South-West coalition and will be donating monies to the Tasmanian Wilderness Society. Planning for the 1983 Federation Ball is well under way, so watch this space.

The Coolana Management Committee Report, in the form of minutes of their latest meeting was read and received.

Of General Business there was none. Announcements were made to the effect that members of the Club had raised \$5000 necessary for the printing of car stickers for S.W. Tassie.

Then it was just a matter of walks announcements and a bit of prompting, and the President said (or did he?) - - "Let us re-une" - - at 9.53 pm.
- - - Amen!

THE 1983 REUNION.

by Helen Gray.

Spiro started the competition years ago. No, not the damper competition; I refer to the borrowed children craze. Ever since the year he turned up with 6 or 7 beautiful nieces or nephews, the rest of us have been showing off our young relatives. This year Fazeley borrowed a couple extra and swelled "her" children to 6, the Grays borrowed two young Duncans, and even Phil Butt brought along two. And why not? Thanks to Paddy Pallin, my next-door-neighbour during my childhood, I was introduced to bushwalkers in the same way, as a child.

"Get on with the story!" I hear you grumble. What story? A bushwalk or camp, and particularly a reunion, doesn't have to make a story. This was a weekend of ease; idle chatter, good-natured arguing and discussion, eating, singing, resting. A weekend of renewing friendships perhaps neglected for a year or so. We exercised too. The river always provides pleasant swimming. Our land, "Coolana", of about 110 acres, provides variety for any walker. There are the grassy river banks with their wattles and casuarinas. Rising from these are the slopes which form a series of terraces, some of banksias and angophoras, some full of burrawang palms, and those with gums. There are the sandstone cliffs with dendrobiums by the score, and following along these cliffs we find slots and caves and small, enclosed areas full of ferns. There are the small streams providing us with fresh water, and their beauty in miniature. We have at least two vantage points above the cliffs from which we can survey the Kangaroo River and valley beyond.

The sky was clear this reunion, the temperature hot. Good weather for lying around and discussing where we'd have the campfire and who'd gather the wood. While this was being discussed at length, Phil Butt was out chopping down dead wattles and building a big wood pile on an excellent site on the grassy flat, which left the rest of us with nothing strenuous to do, for which we were all most grateful.

When darkness had fallen, the first match was put to the wood and the throng gathered, about 70 all told. Song sheets were handed out and under Geoff Wagg's leadership the singing began. Gordon Lee's fiddle accompanied us whenever Gordon worked out which key, for that particular song, the majority was singing in. (He also treated us to a couple of vocal solos in his roisterous, hearty style.) Jim Brown and Dot Butler, as is usual, provided sketches for our entertainment. (Jim's "major work", "The Isle of the Dammed", was published in last month's magazine.) Thanks, Jim, for such first-class entertainment.

Dot's version of "Horatius" (Lord Macaulay's long story-poem) had the proverbial cast of thousands in full period costume. Dot read - no! recited (What a memory!) - the poem in her strong voice that could still be heard above the battle cries, the groaning injured, and clashing cardboard swords. (She also directed and prompted at the same time.) Particular mention must be made of the women's costumes; Jo Van Sommers, who has not yet learned the art of knotting a toga, and Ray Hookway, whose amazing bust-line was achieved with the aid of a bra created by the wearer from a Liberal Party election poster. (Did any poetry-lovers notice the omission of the first 25 stanzas? No? For that thank Jim Brown who wrote an introductory stanza,

which covered all the action - or inaction - of Macaulay's 25.)

Spiro, as is traditional, organised supper. Instead of buying the usual fruit cake or biscuits, Spiro had spent Friday night baking carrot cakes. (Yes, enough for 70 people, and many had seconds!) Spiro, you're marvellous.

This year we dispensed with the swearing-in of the President. (The current President, whose name I won't mention as he's so embarrassed about it, forgot to bring THE BONE!) The evening ended with small groups talking or singing, and when I crawled into my bag at 1 am, the barber's shop septet was still going strong.

The sounds and smells of cooking woke me at the civilized hour of 9 am, and although I was fully awake by 10 am to attend the Annual Damper Competition, I don't remember who won. (Nancy Alderson, Ed.) I do recall that Elaine Zieren and Gladys Roberts made very professional judges and that the decorations were most imaginative. I recall clearly, however, that the dampers were generously shared around and they were all delicious.

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We now have well over 400 members in the Club. Many of those have never been to a reunion, and the loss is their's. My description in no way conveys the spirit of a reunion. It is not just a time of recalling past trips and renewing friendships. New friends are made too, and future trips planned; for example, a trip to Switzerland and another summer trip in Tasmania were planned and these are unlikely to appear in your walks programme. Old members, current members and their families, and especially prospectives are all welcome.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS 1983.

The subscriptions decided upon at the A.G.M. on 9th March and by committee are as follows:-

Single member	\$10
Married couple	13
Full-time student	8
Non-active member	3
Non-active member with magazine posted	8

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