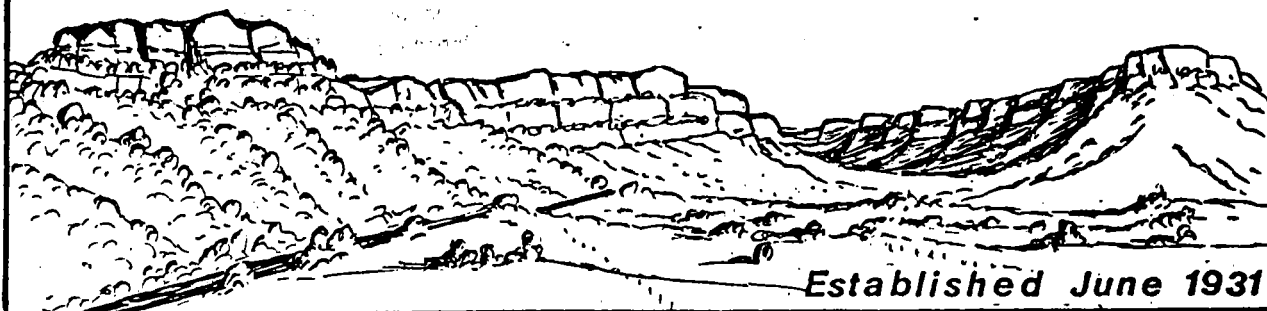


THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER



WIDDEN VALLEY

A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to The Sydney Bush Walkers, Box 4476 GPO, Sydney 2001. Club meetings are held every Wednesday from 7.45 pm at the Ella Community Centre, 58a Dalhousie Street, Haberfield (next to the Post Office). Prospective members and visitors are invited to visit the Club on any Wednesday. To advertise in this magazine please contact the Business Manager.

* * * * *

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MARCH, 1988

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The Sydney Bushwalker

S.B.W. OFFICE BEARERS & COMMITTEE 1988

The following Office Bearers and Committee Members as well as other Club workers were elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Club held on Wednesday, 9th March, 1988:-

President	* Barrie Murdoch	498 7834
Public Officer	* Bill Holland	484 6636
Vice President	* Alan Doherty	476 6531
Treasurer	* Anita Doherty	476 6531
Secretary	* Carol Bruce	797 9784
Walks Secretary	* John Porter	439 6714
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New Members Secretary	* Oliver Crawford	44 1685
Conservation Secretary	* Alex Colley	44 2707
Magazine Editor	* Patrick James	588 2614
Membership Secretary	* Joy Hynes	982 2615
2 Committee Members	* Don Finch	85 2167
	* Deborah Shapira	798 0309
2 Delegates to Federation	* Gordon Lee	744 1824
	* Spiro Hajinakitas	357 1381
- - - - -		
Federation Delegate	Tim Coffey	489 5035
Magazine Business Manager	Anita Doherty	476 6531
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	Kenn Clacher	449 4853
	George Mawer	
Archivist	Ainslie Morris	428 3178
Solicitor	Barrie Murdoch	498 7834
Auditor	Tony Marshall	713 6985
Search & Rescue Contacts	Hans Stichter	688 3050
	Bob Younger	57 1158
	Don Finch	85 2067
Kosciusko Huts Association Delegates	Jim Percy	
	Ray Hookway	
Projectionist	Alan Doherty	
Trustees	Bill Burke	
	Heather White	
	Gordon Redmond	

NOTE: All Club workers are honorary.

* Indicates members of Committee.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS - See page 20.

DAMP, DAMPER, DAMN PESTS

by Deborah Shapira

Kowmung River Trip led by Don Finch from
December 26th to January 3rd, 1988.

The following are extracts from a diary I kept in honour of this being my first trip with SBW of more than two day duration.

Saturday, 26th December. Arrived at Don's at midday and drove to Blackheath. The party consisted of Don, Wendy Aliano, George Mawer, Lynne Jones, Barry Wallace, Les Powell, Joe Marton, Shirley Dean (our collective "mother"), Trisha Dean and me. The drivers went off to Carlton's while Don treated the harem at the pub. By about three the drivers had returned by taxi and we piled into the minibus for a two hour drive to the Bdyd River Fire Trail. We made camp and dinner included Shirley's Xmas cake, several varieties of red wine and Barry's story about a darts club which I'd forgotten by morning.

Sunday, 27th December. Got off to an early 7 am start on a hot sunny morning down Megalith Ridge. Had morning tea at Hanrahan Creek (new map nomenclature) and then a steep descent to the Kowmung. Enjoyed a great swim with lunch. Walked downstream along the banks and made camp at a 4 star spot beyond Ruby Creek. Although cloudy, it was so hot that some of us had lots of swims in between happy hour - dinner - happy hour. I'd pitched my fly on slightly sloping ground.

Monday, 28th December. It rained a little in the night to get the fly damp. Decided to learn to lilo down the river on my pack and found an excellent teacher in Wendy. Near disaster when a rapid got me off balance and I went head first. Practised a little more caution after that. The rest had a couple of compulsory swims and it had begun to rain more seriously so we pulled up for early lunch in a pretty damp state. During a break in the rain we set off and made camp in a fabulous 4.75 star spot further downstream. IF anyone wants to know where it is I'll tell them - for a price. It rained on and off so we cooked in between showers. Mother dried things in front of the fire. I'd pitched my fly on sloping ground.

Tuesday, 29th December. With everything damp and dressed in raincoats (24 hours earlier I'd mentioned that I'd been dragging my coat all over the countryside and never getting to use it - ha!!) set off downstream. Met some bedraggled-looking but keen liloists from the Wilderness Society and played cat and mouse with them all day. Dodging the showers we made an early camp and ate and drank all our goodies in anticipation of Finding the Food Cache the next day. Mother dried things in front of the fire and my fly was pitched on slightly sloping ground.

Wednesday, 30th December. Left early under grey skies and dressed in raincoats. We marched in formation through the Wilderness Society camp hoping to frighten them or something. We cheated a couple of loops in the river by doing a couple of "up and overs" to arrive at Bullshead Creek at about 3.30 pm. The camp area was inhabited by all kinds of creatures - ants, flies and also leeches in the creek bed. My fly was on sloping ground next to a bull-ant nest. Our food drop was intact up the creek except for George's port which had undergone some kind of underground self-destruction. I enjoyed a fantastic wash, an act copied by Barry a little later much to the delight of another passing group of liloists we'd met earlier. We had a premature New Year's Eve with all the goodies in the drop and had a lot of fun with George's stories, Lynne's song sheets and Mother drying things. She is going to be a Hill's Hoist in her next existence.

Thursday, 31st December. This day was renamed Yom F.S. (Zero Day in Hebrew). We had a nice quick shower in the early hours to get the dry tents and flies a bit damp. Actually when we finally crawled out of bed there were a few blue patches in the sky and we set off after 9 ligh ly hung over. Actually had lunch in sunshine!! Don and George took out their fancy mo quit: nets. Just after ambling off the Yerranderie map we met a fisherman who had just cc e down Hughes' Ridge. Realizing that we had not been in civilisation for a while he told us all re exciting things that had happened in the world, as in who had won the cricket test! Th weather having cleared we made the acquaintance of several snakes and goannas. It was

not until after 5 that we found a suitable camp spot although we had to dislodge the resident landlord - a nice black snake. Wendy said I couldn't camp where I'd pitched my fly - it was too flat!

Friday, 1st January. Woke up to clear blue skies. Set off at a fast trot and walked until 10.30 - 11.00 when we had arrived at a beautiful pool. We farewelled Joe who had a wedding to get to and we finally had the promised holiday, swimming, loafing, making damper and fly swotting. We left at 3 and the skies turned black, the thunder clapped, the lightning struck and we just managed to pull out our raincoats before the deluge. Made camp at New Yards Bend and pitched tents and flies in between downpours.

Saturday, 2nd January. Set off in sticky conditions through the lower Kowmung which was pretty tough going. After lunch at the end of Devil's Elbow (aptly named I thought) it was pretty wet and the going was a bit hairy on greasy sloping slatey rocks until we reached the Cox. Continued on a bit until we made a damp camp and spent the last night planning future trips.

Sunday, 3rd January. Although we packed away a lot of damp gear we were grateful for the coolish weather for the White Dog Fire Trail Slog. The mountains were now assuming a wintry look with mists everywhere. From Medlow Gap, after seeing a few kangaroos hopping around, we arrived at Carlon's to the cars and clean clothes at about 1 pm. Went to Aroney's in a Katoomba cloaked in thick fog.

I had a great time, thank you Don, and I can't wait for the next extended walk.

* * * * *

NOTE S & R Contact List (see next page) For any additional information, please contact HANS STICHTER on 688 3050 (home) or 410 9410 (business).
(Also next first aid course is on May 21/22. Ed.)

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(See also page 4)

SBW SEARCH & RESCUE CONTACT LIST

by Hans Stichter

The Sydney Bush Walkers have four (4) nominated search and rescue contact officers, as listed on the last page of every walks program. Their primary role is to contact Club members who may be available to participate in a Search and Rescue alert for any person/s overdue on walking trips.

To enable an effective contact system to work, the contact officers need to know which members are available immediately (i.e. same day) when contacted, those that require one day's notice, and those members who are available for weekends only.

Prerequisites are a current St. John's First Aid Certificate and a reasonable level of fitness. All persons attending an alert should have light overnight equipment, suitable for all weathers such as:-

- ° suitable overnight pack and day pack
- ° sleeping bag
- ° tent or bivy bag
- ° tent fly (optional)
- ° water bottle/wine cask inner
- ° food for 48 hours - 40% of which requires no cooking
- ° clothing that remains warm when wet e.g. wool
- ° suitable wet weather gear
- ° beanie or balaclava
- ° gaiters (optional)
- ° reliable fire lighting equipment (all weather)
- ° sunburn cream (optional, for summer use)
- ° garbage bags (for keeping items dry in pack)
- ° torch
- ° bushwalkers first aid kit
- ° map/s and compass (which map will be advised)

S & R alerts may require attendance for 1 or 2 days, with the option usually being left up to the individual.

Should you wish to be considered for S & R alerts, and you have the necessary prerequisites, would you please complete the following form and forward to:

Hans Stichter, . Moorgate Street, Toongabbie 2146

Alternately, you can phone through the information to me on either of the following telephone numbers:

688 3050 (home)

410 9410 (business)

SBW SEARCH & RESCUE CONTACT LIST

I wish to be considered for the SBW S & R contact list, on the following basis:

A - available same day

B - require one (1) day's notice

C - available weekends only

Circle appropriate category

NAME .

Phone no. (home)

Home ADDRESS -

" " (business)

THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER

C
&
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GEORGE WALTON'S KOSCIUSKO N.P. WALKORWE DID IT OUR WAY

by Errol Sheedy.

Participants: George Walton, Elaine Walton, Matthew Walton, Sue, Brian Bolton, Morag Ryder, Frank Woodgate, Derek Wilson, Tim Rannard, Hans Stichter, Frances Tylman, Diana Lynn, John Jansons, Laurie Bore, Bill Hall, Madeleine Graf, Errol Sheedy.

December 26:

The party of fifteen assembled at Guthega Power Station at 2 pm and set off northwards. The stretch from the power station to White's River Hut was an easy, but hot, walk of 8 km, with an ascent of 400 m gained by following the Aqueduct Road up the valley of the Mungyang or White's River. About ten minutes before reaching our first camp the road passed, on the uphill side, an extensive jumble of granite boulders which I believe constituted a "large terminal moraine....". This bouldery barrier was dumped by the glacier as it retreated up the valley....(1)". We briefly inspected the White's River Hut which had some bunks, a wood stove and table. It would doubtless look very attractive to snow-blown souls in the winter, but on our sunny afternoon the campsite nearby among the snowgums was George's obvious choice.

December 27:

After breakfast a short walk north took us to a wooden sign at the edge of the road:- "SCHLINK PASS - 5918 ft - 1804 m". "The pass is named after the eminent surgeon, Sir Herbert Schlink, who died in 1963. Sir Herbert spent a great deal of his leisure time in the Snowy Mountains."(2) From here we had an easy climb, mostly with a track, to the top of the ridge, proclaimed in capital letters by the map as the "GREAT DIVIDING RANGE".

This ridge headed off towards the north-east, and so did we, skirting around the ubiquitous granite boulders until we arrived at the eastern side of a rocky eminence named Gungartan (2068 m). It was rather breezy and under the shelter of this hill we had morning tea on the grass among the boulders. At this point a rather remarkable phenomenon occurred when I placed an empty plastic freezer bag on the ground. A gust of wind snatched up the bag, and I didn't know what had happened to it until somebody pointed it out, about twenty metres up in the air, hovering rather like a kite. The wind then took it higher and further away downhill where it finally came to rest among some low rocks about a hundred metres off. I was contemplating going down to collect it when it again fluttered further downhill and disappeared. A moment later somebody said, "Hey! It's off again!" and sure enough, there it was, high in the air, heading back in our direction towards the top of Gungartan. To the accompaniment of several exclamations of incredulity from the party it approached us, dropped down, lost speed, and as I stood up it came towards me, whereupon I took one step and trapped it between both open hands. I have seen people throw hats, skimming them out backhanded from a cliff top into the teeth of an updraught, and have watched the hats return safely, but this was the first time I had seen a plastic bag imitate a boomerang. Perhaps the spirits of the ancient inhabitants of the locality were jocularly re-enacting an antedeluvian game for our benefit?

We continued towards the N.E. to Tin Hut, at the headwaters of Finn's River, where we had lunch. Bill said the huts in this region took their rise from the days when leaseholders were required by regulation to provide shelter for employees shepherding flocks and tending cattle. Tin Hut was built in 1925-26 at the instigation of Dr. Schlink who had been contemplating a ski trip from Kiandra to Kosciusko (Bett's Camp) - or the reverse, but had been deterred by lack of shelter on the way. However, one summer "Dr. Schlink noticed a tumble-down shepherd's hut at the head of Finn's River and realized its significance to the expedition. Mr. Litchfield, lessee of the snow leases at that time, was approached for permission to rehabilitate the hut and he proved both interested and generous and, with his help, a small weatherproof hut, the present Tin Hut, was built in 1925-26 a few hundred metres from the old site."(3)

From Tin Hut it was an easy walk up into the hills of the Brassy Mountains which extend for about five kilometres northwards. Actually, they are more like a rocky ridge than mountains, the gain in height from Tin Hut being only about 100 m. The lack in relative altitude was more than compensated for by the rock formations such as the one where we had afternoon tea among the alpine flowers in a grassy bay with a backdrop of elongated granite boulders stabbing at the sky like the fingers of a hand.



We made an early camp on an arm of Dead Horse Creek on the eastern side of The Brassy Peak. "The Brassy Mountains are the definite eastern topographic boundary to the Main Range, as well as being part of the Great Divide." (4)

Some brave souls immersed themselves in the creek, downstream from camp, while the less hardy of us filled waterbags, and even contemplated performing less heroic ablutions. The hills in this area constantly leak quite cold water. Tiny creeklets do not seem to need rain to cause them to flow. It is as if whole mountainsides are so waterlogged from melted snows that the subterranean waters are continually seeking the comfort of appropriate points of egress. (Having said that, it does also seem to rain here a fair bit!) As George had said, there is really no need to carry water in these parts.

December 28:

It was raining when we awoke, and though the rain on the tent sounded worse than it was, it was still rather unpleasant outside, and breakfasting and packing up were less fun than usual.

We headed back towards the ridge of the Brassy Hills, and shortly afterwards met George's son Matthew and his friend Sue who had just walked up via Gungartan. At this point the weather looked positively foul and although the rain was easing off, the low cloud was fogging the high points, and it was getting colder. A conference was held as to the best course to follow. The result was that Bill, Fran, John, Derek and I decided to return to Tin Hut to await an improvement in the weather, while the twelve others elected to push on north towards Mawson's Hut. That was the last time we saw the rest of the party until we were reunited at White's River camp on the last afternoon of the trip.

Retracing our steps in the poor conditions was no problem, especially with Bill leading, and we soon found ourselves back at Tin Hut where five other people were in residence. They, however, decided during the afternoon, when the weather improved, to press on north, and thus apart from two latecomers who tented outside and cooked on the hut fire, we had the place to ourselves for the night. The afternoon at the hut had enabled us to stop still and enjoy the atmosphere of granite boulders and alpine plants in fog, and to photograph such delights as green and yellow patterns on the wet trunks of gnarled snow gums where the rainwater had darkened and highlighted the colours of the smooth bark.

December 29:

WE enjoyed the shelter of the hut and its open fireplace which apparently worked much better than it had in August 1926. A party led by Dr. Schlink "reached the Tin Hut in the dark at the start of a blizzard. Five minutes after lighting the fire the hut was full of smoke and remained so for the three days while the blizzard lasted. The smoke was so bad that the six men in the 3 metre by 4 metre space could not see each other and spent the time hungry and in miserable darkness except when they ventured out for wood."(5).

As we left Tin Hut the fog began to clear and we wended our way past Valentine Creek towards Gungartan Pass, with Kerrie's Ridge providing a rocky backdrop to the west. After morning tea just north of Gungartan we set off for Schlink Pass, and when we looked downhill towards the road we saw what seemed to be an easy way down via a small valley so, not bothering to follow the ridge of the actual Pass, down we went. It would have been quite a good way down had it not been for the granite boulders (another terminal moraine, I think). Where these stood above the bed of the creek their rounded surfaces presented a chance to do some easy rock hopping, but further downstream prostrate shrubs grew over the rock in thin matting offering a deceptive surface which was secure as long as we stood on the rock beneath. In many places, however, the sparse foliage covered the holes between the rocks and it became a difficult matter to keep from stepping into the interminable interstices. This problem was compounded by the spongy boggy





vegetation which made walking tiring in the wetter places near the creek. Eventually we descended to the road and arrived at the conclusion that in this area it is advisable to keep to the ridges, and stay out of the creeks however easy they may look from a distance.

Before I left home I should have studied my copy of "Snowy Mountains Walks" where the admonition says, in relation to Schlink Pass, "avoid the cirque depression a little to the north"(6). We might have added, "else you'll get depressed!"

In retrospect it was a more demanding, more adventurous descent than Schlink Pass. I do not think I would care to repeat the performance.

The road walking, north, was a pleasant change after our stumbles: I slipped down from Gungahran, but it grew hot and when we eventually reached Valentine's Hut (complete with a row of red hearts on the awning over the window) at 3.30 pm I was quite ready to stop. We found a good campsite nearby on the side of a hill overlooking Valentine River where we enjoyed a leisurely campfire. Just on dark, as clouds passed overhead, a blood-red sunset illuminated the closing of the day.

December 30:

After breakfast Bill minded the packs while Fran, John, Derek and I followed the track downstream to see the Valentine Falls and the view of the valley where the Valentine flows into the Geehi River. Then it was back to the road where the walking was hot, but not as hot as it seemed. Even though we felt very warm the thermometer on John's pack indicated a mere 18° C, and when we stopped for lunch among the snow gums at the edge of the road I needed to don jumper and parka. We arrived back at our first camp at White's River about an hour before the main party reappeared, all looking very fit and sturdy after their adventures in the high wilds.

The final night's camp had a festive air, with the last of the food goodies, etc, being trotted out to the accompaniment of a hot solution of lime-flavoured barley crystals laced with various additives the precise nature of which, gentle reader, I will mercifully pass over. It is sufficient to say that even though the early hours became quite cool (resulting in ice on the waterbuckets at breakfast) the combination of fatigue, drinks and thermal underclothing insured a cosy night.

December 31:

On the last morning most of the party, intending to be back in Sydney for New Year's Eve, packed swiftly and made an early start and headed back down the road towards Guthega. The five of us followed later - John and Fran destined for a Thredbo detour, and Bill, Derek and I bound for Tumut where we camped overnight on the banks of the Tumut River.

Many thanks, George, for organizing the trip, and for the leadership.

References: 1 - 6 are all from Snowy Mountains Walks, Fifth Edition, compiled and published by The Geehi Club, Cooma, N.S.W. 1978. pp 89 - 101.



THE SYDNEY BUSH WALKERS - THE FIRST SIXTY YEARS.

Copies are still available of our Historical Book. Price is \$10 if collected at the Clubroom. When ordering by mail, please add postage at the rate of \$2.05 for one copy, \$3.15 for two and \$3.50 for two copies posted interstate. Postage includes 55c for padded Postage Bag.

SBW T-Shirts are still available except size 22. Beverley Foulds, phone 798 5650 after 6 pm or Wednesday evening at the Club. \$7 each, postage \$1.50 extra.

A NATTAI NATIONAL PARK

by Alex Colley

The proposed Nattai National Park covers 75,000 ha. It covers most of the catchment of the Nattai River from the old Mittagong loop line in the east to the Wombeyan Caves Road in the south and extends westward to Lake Burragorang, Yerranderie and the Blue Mountains National Park. It has for long been enjoyed by bushwalkers, particularly the SBW. Myles Dunphy walked down the Couridjah corridor to the Nattai in 1916. He made five more trips to the river between 1928 and 1931, and was so impressed with the magnificent bluegums of the Couridjah Corridor that he approached the Forestry Commission with a view to their preservation. The Commission's response was to locate a sawmill there, and so was lost the last substantial stand of mature timber in the vicinity of Sydney.

Jack Debert farmed on land at the head of what is now Lake Burragorang during depression days (he walked from there to a reunion on the Nepean). Max Gentle was the first to traverse the Wanganderry Range. Features such as Starlights Track, Macarthur's Flat, Bonnum Pic, Mount Jellore and Yerranderie are the bushwalkers' equivalent of sacred sites.

In 1932 Myles Dunphy published in the Blue Mountains Gazette his plan for a Blue Mountains National Park. It consisted of a northern, central and southern division. Separated from the southern division by a corridor some 10 to 15 miles wide was another proposed park which consisted of the Nattai catchment and was described as the "Proposed Nattai National Park". The area west of the Wanganderry Range was excluded probably because it consisted largely of Forest reserves and grazing land. The National Parks Association renewed the proposal in 1974 but without result.

Last year the Total Environment Centre and the Colong Foundation agreed that the time was propitious to make a comprehensive submission for a Nattai Park, one of the few remaining extensive natural areas not reserved. Each organisation contributed \$2,000 and Keith Muir B. Nat. Res. (HON.) was commissioned to write the submission. The NPA was approached for a contribution towards the cost of maps, and although the Sydney Branch was unable to contribute the Berrima Branch donated \$300. This, together with donations from the Campbelltown Branch and from the SBW, has paid for a series of maps drawn by Bill Brennan B. Arch. Henry Gold donated the photographs, two of which are reproduced in this magazine.

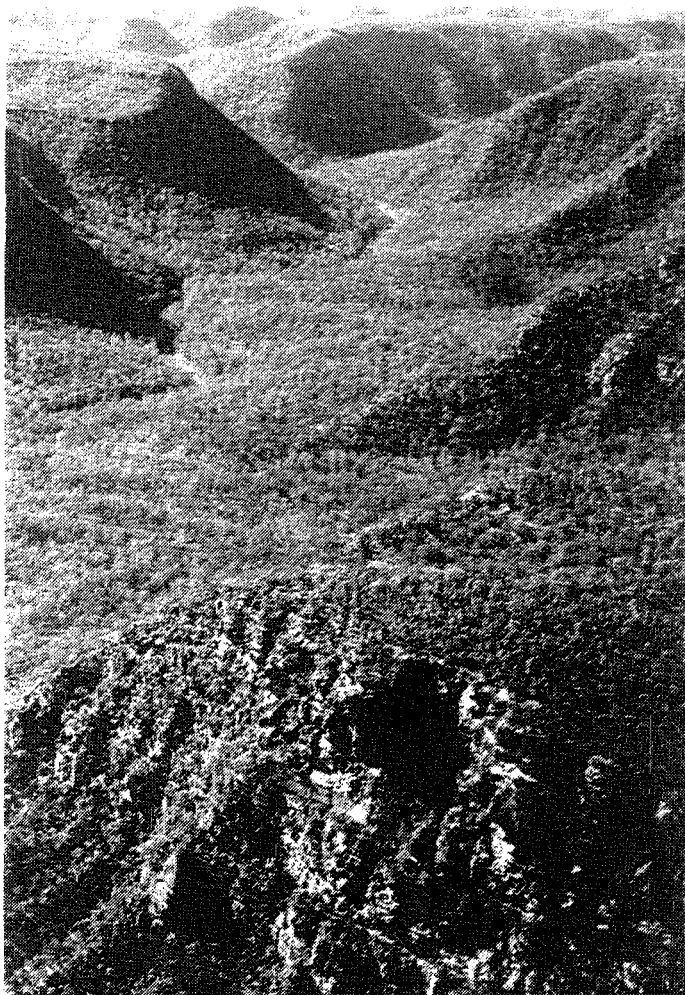
The scenery of the area is not quite so impressive as the central and southern Blue Mountains, but it is both attractive and appealing. In the Nattai catchment the entire rock sequence of the Sydney Basin is represented, giving rise to the typical sandstone cliff escarpments. Further west the basement slates and granites give rise to a less rugged terrain. There are numerous igneous intrusions. The soils formed from these varied rock formations support a wide variety of flora and fauna. By reason of the protection afforded by the Water Board, the area between the Nattai and the Kowmung may well be the best wild life refuge in the State.

Like most Crown lands outside national parks the area has suffered considerable abuse. This includes sewerage discharge from Mittagong, overstocking and burning by graziers with consequent erosion, the annual burning of fire breaks, and penetration, mostly illegal, by off-road vehicles. Threats include quarrying, a rifle range, the Mittagong by-pass and development of Yerranderie as a tourist resort. Coal mining has usually proved uneconomic. That these abuses and threats should continue in an important Warragamba catchment and a prime recreational area is a reflection on the effectiveness of land use planning. But they are preventable and with prevention recovery is likely. Even the bluegums of the Couridjah Corridor may regenerate in time.

By reason of its accessibility to the population of the central coast, its natural endowment and catchment significance, the Nattai area is ideally suited to become park land. Its economic potential has been thoroughly tested since early in the last century and found wanting. It would be an appropriate addition to the "green belt" of parklands north, west and south of Sydney.

A proposed wilderness area of 25,000 ha covering much of the Nattai catchment will be submitted for report by the National Parks & Wildlife Service (as provided by section 7.2 of the Wilderness Act). It is to be hoped that it will be one of the wilderness areas declared in 1988.

* * * * *

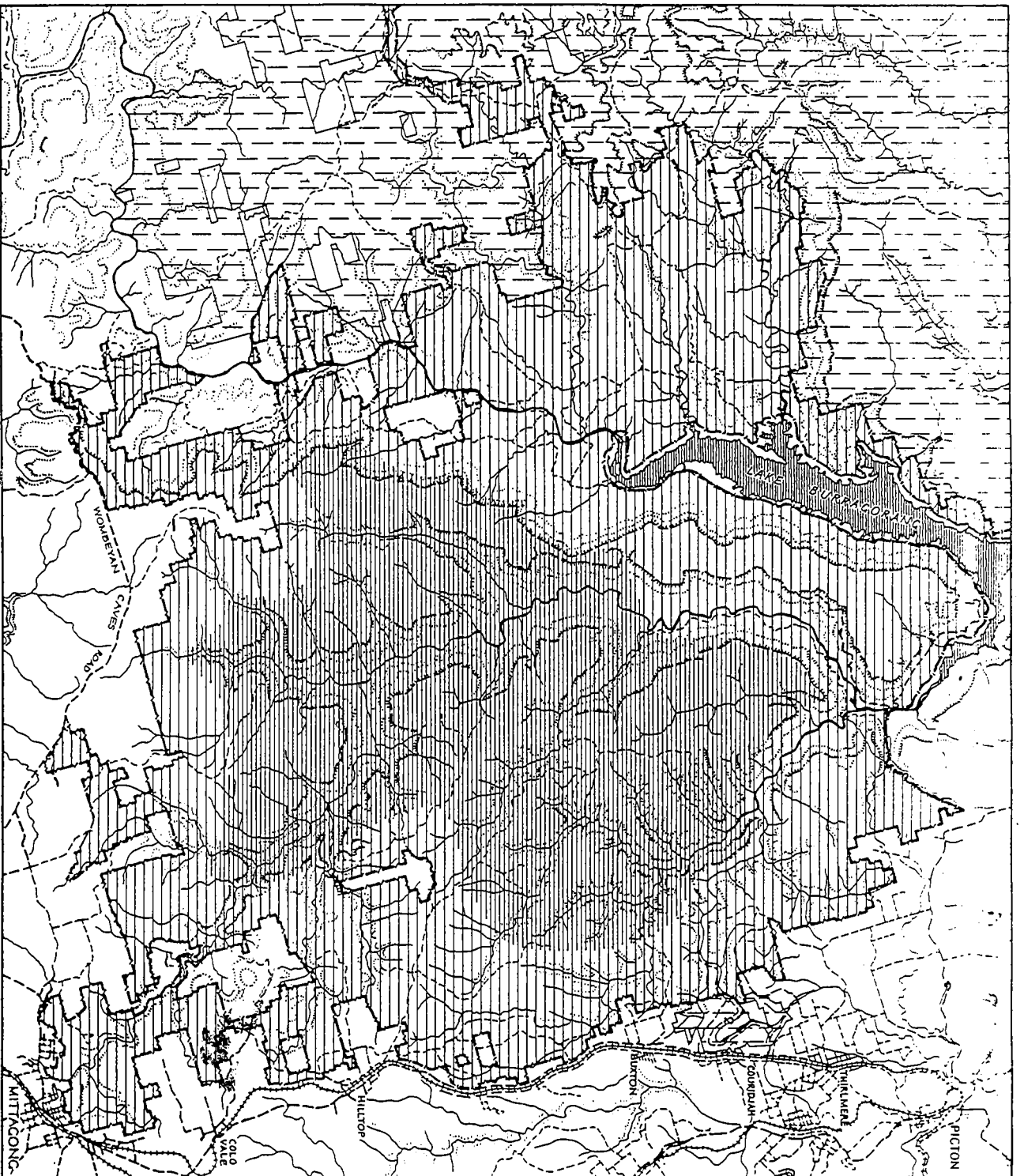


Upper reaches of the Nattai River Valley



Overlooking Wanganderry Tableland west to Mount Colong

Photographs by Henry Gold



LEGEND

Proposed Nattai National Park

Wilderness Area within park proposal

Blue Mountains National Park

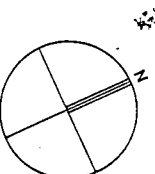
Thirmere Lakes National Park

Railways

Roads, vehicle tracks

SCALE

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 Km



MAP 2

PARK PROPOSAL

THE NATTAI
NATIONAL PARK
PROPOSAL

THE COLONG FOUNDATION FOR
WILDERNESS LTD DEC 1987

"GLOUCESTER TOPS ARE TOPS"

by Brian Hart

Nev, our driver, seemed a little doubtful about the wisdom of our trip to the Gloucester Tops. He had lived in Gloucester for many years and made it clear he intended to notify the police rescue squad if we failed to turn up on time at the end of the trip. As well as being the Gloucester car hire man, Nev was also the area's part-time funeral director, so he would apparently be able to cater for all our needs if the occasion arose.

Fazeley Read, Rik King and I were setting out on a trip to the Barrington National Park west of Newcastle. We planned to go up the Kerripit River, around the Gloucester Tops area and back down the Gloucester River. We had travelled by train from Sydney to Gloucester, and had arranged for Nev to take us by road to a bridge-crossing on the Kerripit River and pick us up four days later on the Gloucester River.

The idea was to go somewhere reasonably cool and close to Sydney during the Christmas hot weather period. Instead of the usual Barrington Tops approach from the southern or western sides, we decided to come in from Gloucester, to the east; this would allow us to maximise cool rain forest and river travel on the way to the higher tops country.

The temperature was in the mid-30s when we left Sydney. I blame Fazeley for the abrupt change in the weather when we arrived in Gloucester. She had bought a large shady hat for the expected heat - naturally, this induced an instant weather change and we spent the next few days in overcast, sometimes stormy conditions, with cold, windy rain towards the end of the trip.

The Kerripit, from where we began walking, to the tributary creek at which we left it, rose about 3000 feet. To those who know the Barrington Tops, this is roughly equivalent to the height gained in going from Lagoon Pinch to the top of Carey's Peak; but instead of a road, one walks about 13 kilometres up a boulder-packed river bed with a fair run of water and some cascades and waterfalls.

We had noted a couple of points where the map contours in the river bed looked a little too close for comfort, denoting possible waterfalls; I accordingly brought 20 metres of light rope whose existence I thought it wiser not to mention to Fazeley until the trip was under way. As it turned out, the river was the easy part of the trip. It was steep in sections, but there were no problems until the last couple of kilometres, when we struck falls 15 metres high and cascades up to 60 metres long and perhaps 20 metres high. These, however, could be clambered around with little difficulty.

We took it fairly easily and had an interesting trip up the river, passing through some attractive and reasonably open semi-rain forest country and then coming into antarctic beech and sphagnum moss on the Gloucester Tops. We camped in eucalypt country on the second night out, experiencing a terrific thunder and lightning storm. It was so violent we thought it could last for only a few minutes, but the fireworks continued for two hours. By morning, all was calm again, but the rain had set in and continued through the day.

At this stage, we hit the Gloucester Tops walking trail. We could have trudged along 14 kilometres of trail and road to the Gloucester River falls, but this would have been a bit bovine, so we elected to orient ourselves along six kilometres of mountain ridge top instead, rejoining another fire trail briefly before dropping down a 2000 ft ridge to the Gloucester River.

The ridge top turned out to be a lacerating experience. The first section was the hardest - low, thick vine scrub, tree ferns, fallen logs, with occasional raspberry vine and spear grass thrown in; Ric said it seemed more like a steeple chase than a bush walk. The six kilometres, including some reasonable stretches of open country, took us six hours to traverse. Rain fell constantly. The elevation was 1150 to 1300 metres and Rik estimated the temperature at below 10 degrees Celsius, with a wind chill factor in the open parts. It was all a bit much for the middle of summer.

On the way down the last long, steep ridge, I became careless and we found ourselves in an unexpected position, with a creek forming up in a wrong location. As it was getting late - 5.30 pm - I decided to abandon map reading finesse and strike directly north and across any intervening obstacles to the Gloucester River, a course of action recommended only with stoic walking companions. The unsophisticated ploy worked and we soon found ourselves looking down on the Gloucester, still quite a fair distance below. We could hear the rumble of the river and it seemed to contain long stretches of white. As it was still raining, Rik thought this could be low-lying cloud - but the river looked to me to be in flood. Not wishing to disturb the ambience of the occasion, I said nothing.

Forcing our way down the ridge proved hard work - lots of vines, raspberry and undergrowth, and it was 7.40 pm by the time we arrived at the top of a line of semi-cliff fringing the river. There was no time to spend on further reconnaissance, so we used our rope line to lower packs and scramble down.

By the time we reached the river, it was 8.15 pm and we could see the Gloucester was carrying a lot of water - not exactly in flood, but not far off it. We would normally have camped then and there, but reasoned that, as it had been raining for 24 hours or more, the river could be impassable next day.

So we made the crossing; fortunately, there was still a lot of late light and we were able to choose a spot where the water was only waist deep or less. Rik's experience stood us in good stead and we were miraculously across in a matter of minutes.

By now it was 8.30 pm. With driver Nev's warning about the police rescue squad in mind, we had been pushing steadily on for 12 hours - no lunch stop, but occasional 10-minute food and rest breaks. I thought the party would be happy to call a halt at the river, but to my surprise Rik and Fazeley were more than ready to go on. Fazeley, with her adrenalin level boosted by the river crossing, declared she could walk for hours. The imperturbable Rik felt it would be desirable to march on until we reached a good camp site.

So off we went through the darkening scrub, coming out on the Gloucester River tourist track about 9 pm. Rain was still pouring down and it took an hour or so to get the tents up and a decent blaze going. After a late meal, we climbed into our sleeping bags about 11.30 pm; we felt we had had our money's worth from that particular day's walking.

To the start of the tourist track, we had not been bothered by leeches. But they were waiting for us at the track; as we prepared to make a fire in the rain, Rik put his torch, apparently bearing a leech, into his mouth, and later found the leech embedded in the roof of his mouth back towards the throat. It resisted all efforts to remove it by hand until Fazeley finally dislodged it with a pair of tweezers. The leeches continued to be a nuisance even after we went to bed. I got up in the morning, removed a few from the outside of my sleeping bag, blew my nose and was startled to expel a blood-laden leech from my right nostril. Literally dozens attached themselves to our persons as we walked out the last six or so kilometres.

But for most people, leeches are only a minor psychological inconvenience, and in any case I had other discomforts to think about. Slogging through the vine scrub the previous day had produced a rather painful set of chafes on my inner thighs. To minimize the discomfort, I had adopted a bowlegged gait which reminded Fazeley, sympathetic but amused, of the Tin Man in the "Wizard of Oz" film. To further avoid rubbing of the affected parts, I had also dispensed with lower body garb and was marching along wearing only a long jumper whose front and back sections were held together under the groin by a large safety pin, a la Dorothy Butler.

Thus partly clad, wet, unshaven, bowlegged and with blood still leaking from my right nostril and various lacerations, I emerged from the scrub to be greeted by the astonished stares of campers at neat caravan sites on the upper Gloucester. I thought of saying I was Bill Capon, but modesty forbade.

Another half kilometre and we made our rendezvous with Nev. And so back to Gloucester, a hot shower, and a luxurious return trip to Sydney on the XPT, sipping expensive railway chardonnay.

All in all, it had been an enlivening walk. We covered a lot (for us) of new ground, arriving back in good spirits with food and time to spare. One day had been a bit prickly, but c'est la vie.

The trip brought home to me once again the value of walking with relaxed, congenial and reliable companions. We're thinking of having a look at parts of the adjoining Barrington or Moppey Rivers in the next few months; this time, I think I'll take some leather gloves.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

It is with dismay that I find that the Sydney Bushwalker has started to actively campaign in politics. I refer of course to the printed appeal leaflet sent to us via our magazine on behalf of three candidates for the NSW State Legislative Council for the March 19th elections.

Religion and politics are two controversial subjects which have always been avoided in our various activities.

Whilst wholeheartedly agreeing that conservation is one of our most foremost aims many other ways of furthering this cause are available as has been demonstrated over 60 years past and 37 years to my knowledge.

Again the leaflet sent is of doubtful legality and may contravene the NSW Electoral Act as the name and address of the accredited author and of the printer are not shown. In the event of any complaint from opposing candidates our Club could court trouble and possible prosecution for being an instrument in its issue.

Notwithstanding all of this how do we all know what general political philosophy the three candidates follow?

A single issue parliamentarian does not enhance stable government as he or she could be completely at sea on such issues as social rights, transport, taxation, education, local government and many other facets.

The election will be over before this letter could be printed so let's hope the SBW emerges unscathed.

Yours faithfully,

JACK GENTLE.

THE EDITOR concurs with the above letter. The decision to include the leaflets was raised at the February 1988 general meeting, a motion was put and carried. As Editor I spoke and voted against the motion on the basis that the leaflets were political and had no place in the magazine. As Editor I am responsible for the contents of the magazine which are those titled and numbered pages stapled together between the standard covers, my responsibility does not extend to other sheets included for postal convenience. The current editorial policy was detailed in the editorial in the May 1987 issue of the Sydney Bushwalker; the policy has not changed.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Patrick James,

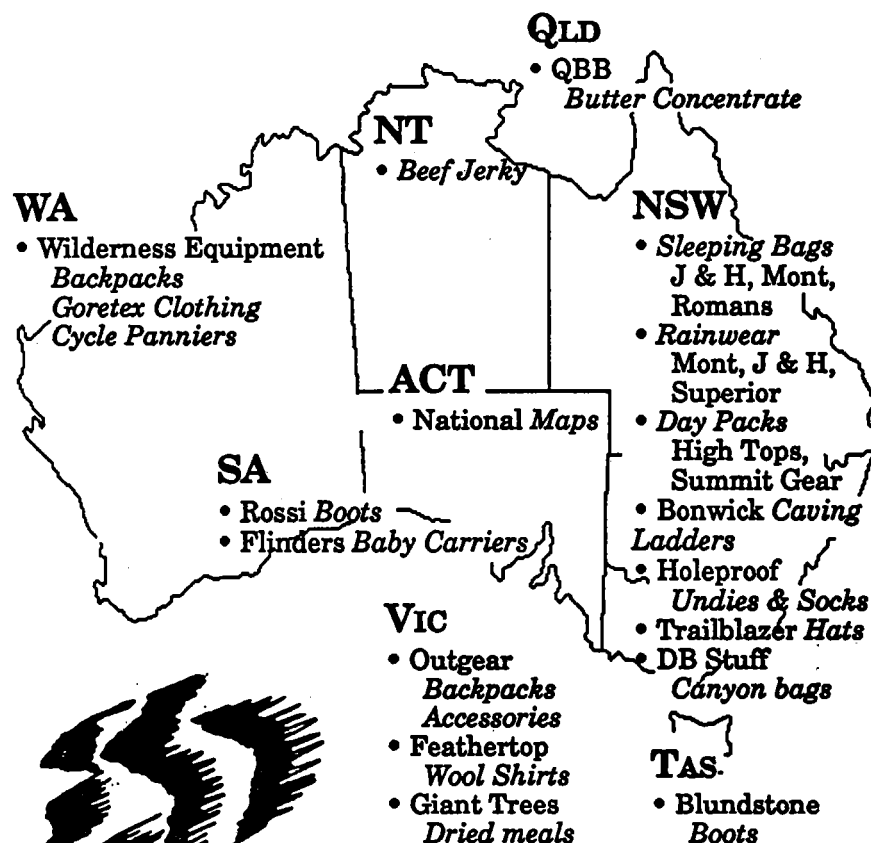
I enjoyed Margaret Wood's puzzle. However, she should be informed that a Stop Sign has only two sides. It has eight edges. A purist might contend that it has 10 sides and 24 edges. It certainly does not have eight sides.

Kind regards,

PAUL SHARP.

Well done Paul, you're the only one to spot our deliberate error. EDITOR.

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"THEIR SPLENDOUR SHALL NEVER FADE"

by Brian Harvey

I first stood on Splendour Rock on March 29th 1939 in the pleasant company of the now late Bill Cosgrove. We had been members of a small private SBW party which had luxuriated for a week at Kanangaroo Clearing, doing the local sights at our ease, no packs. A very young Bert Carlon had accompanied us with a packhorse laden with sugar bags of the bare necessities such as potatoes, pumpkins, cornflakes, Ideal milk, tinned fruit, reduced cream - as recommended for the light-weight camper. Thus nurtured, the party had ascended the Yellow Dog Ridge and skirted round the Wild Dog Peaks, the main body pressing on to Katoomba via Narrow Neck.

Water was scarce as it had been a very dry summer so Bill and I, intent on visiting Splendour Rock, made off to find a water camp and located excellent pools at the extreme head of Mouin Creek in a wattle grove with unlimited firewood, at a point exactly south-east of the main knot of Mount Mouin, which proved to be a good reference for later trips in the area. This deviation had been planned and we carried appropriate walkers' fare for a couple of days, after which we spent three days living in at the Carlon homestead in the continuous glorious weather.

Leaving camp next morning, we made a bee-line up into Black Horse Gap through some atrocious scrub where I'll bet no walker had been before, all walking being confined to the western side. At that period there were no detailed maps of "The Dogs", but by following good instructions we had no problems in locating our objective. Very few had visited the Rock so there were no discernible foot tracks, even on the spine of Mount Dingo.

In those days most folk worked on Saturday morning which frustrated walkers from taking part in the very rewarding Friday night starts, whilst only about 3-5% owned cars. There was no Kanangra Road and one had to hoof it for 30 km from the Oberon Road, adding one and a half days to all trips out there, as the tourist cars always deposited walkers in the afternoon. Additionally, there was trepidation about entering little known areas as missing out a workaday Monday, if overdue, often resulted in dismissal.

Splendour Rock was discovered in 1933 and named by our SBW member Walter J. Hedland Roots, alias "Wally of the Wild Dogs", who was out exploring in the company of Foundation Members Maurie Berry and Alan Rigby, the designer of the front cover of our monthly magazine. Wally claims - and no one has disputed him - that he was the first European to stand on the Rock and is indisputably the oldest living walker to first set foot on it, now enjoying his ripe "eighties"!

To those who have never been there, Splendour Rock could be described as a flat-topped orphan rock, the flat top of which is level with the sandstone escarpment of Mount Dingo's south-eastern aspect, being separated by a very narrow gap which necessitates a little hop to gain it. It is about 4/5 metres in diameter, just about circular.

It possesses a magnificent commanding view with a panorama of about 220° with a great abyss at one's feet where the terrain steeply slopes down to the Cox River 800m below, with Sydney's main water supply, Lake Burragorang, shimmering to the east. Centrally are the distant Kanangra Walls, flanked by the mighty Gangerang Range on their left and the Thurat Plateau to the right, with an array of peaks to the west. And, to cap it all, there is no man-made structure visible to spoil the vision splendid.

So enthralled was I that four months later, with my brother Perce, again I visited the Rock over the Bank Holiday weekend, camping in bitter conditions on the Friday night at Corral Swamp on Narrow Neck, and then down at "Camp Cosgrove", having had the good fortune to be granted leave from working on the Saturday morning. Standing out there, gazing at that peaceful scene, little did I know that one month hence I would, at 4.20 am, receive a priority telegram from the Royal Australian Navy requesting the pelasure of my company which they enjoyed for the next six and a half years!

In 1947 we were all settling down again and learned that some 172 walkers from the small number of then Federated Clubs had been on Active Service and that an unlucky 13 had failed to

return to our shores, the SBW grieving the loss of the following:-

REGINALD HEWITT
GORDON MANNELL
NORMAN SAILL
GORDON SMITH

I felt something tangible should be done in remembrance of them and all fallen walkers and conceived the idea of a suitable bronze plaque to be installed at some prominent and well loved site, and immediately thought of Splendour Rock. I recall moving a resolution at a monthly meeting at our old clubroom at Ingersoll Hall to that effect with the rider that Federation be acquainted with our intentions, the site being Crown Land and not National Park at that time.

Federation greeted the idea with enthusiasm and a small committee of four was elected with myself as Convenor. I put the proposition to the committee, which it adopted, that the inscription be "THEIR SPLENDOUR SHALL NEVER FADE". The full text on the plaque reads: "In memory of bushwalkers who fell in World War II. Their splendour shall never fade." Subscriptions to a fund raised some 27 pounds whilst the cost of the plaque was, I think, 23 pounds, and this was cast by a firm of brass founders in City Road.

It was affixed on site on 22nd February 1948 by a party consisting of Paul Barnes, Ken Compagnoni, Stan Cottier and Len Hall who had a fairly hefty load to carry out there with the necessary cement and rock cutting tools.

Much publicity had been given and with the after-effects of war still prominent, some 83 walkers assembled at Splendour Rock at dawn of Anzac Day 1948 when the plaque was unveiled by Paddy Pallin, himself an ex-Serviceman having served in the Royal Flying Corps (later the RAF) in England during the 1914/1918 war. An address was delivered by the then Federation President, Paul Driver, and two hymns, accompanied by violin music, were sung. In all, it was a very moving ceremony and which had involved quite an effort to reach such a remote location at that time of day.

Further commemorative gatherings were held on 26th April 1958 (10 years), 25th April 1965 and 6th May 1973 (25 years) whilst one or two wreaths have been laid on unofficial occasions as Anzac Day is celebrated on the actual date and not the nearest Monday, when a three day weekend would be created.

And now, 40 years on, Anzac Day conveniently does occur on a Monday when, at my suggestion, Federation has again organised a service to be conducted at dawn on Monday, 25th April, details of which are being circulated to all clubs.

I would ask as many walkers as possible to attend the ceremony. I shall be there in spirit.

* * * * *

THE FEBRUARY GENERAL MEETING

by Barry Wallace

The meeting was called to order at around 2031 after a short film about Blue Gum Forest which gave latecomers an even chance. There were 30 or so members present as we called Richard Brading (present) and Dawn Greentree (no show) for welcome to membership with badge and applause. Apologies were called next, and lo and behold, there were apologies from Stan Madden and Dawn Greentree.

The Minutes of the previous meeting were read and received with the only matter arising being advice that the transfer of ownership of Conlana to the incorporated body is proceeding and has been accepted as exempt from stamp duty on the transfer.

Correspondence brought a letter from the Wilderness Society advising of a walk planned for 7th-8th May to celebrate the first recorded walk to Blue Gum Forest; a copy of the minutes of the FBW January meeting; a letter from the Colong Foundation forwarding a copy of the Nattai National Park proposal which was recently submitted to the State Government for consideration; together with the usual letters of notice to new members.

The Treasurer's Report indicated that we began the month with \$5617, received \$844, spent \$5201 and closed with \$1982. Around \$4000 has been placed in a high interest savings account.

The Treasurer also reviewed the final accounts of the 60th Anniversary Committee.

Next came the sheer frenzy of the Walks Reports. Over the first weekend covered, 15/16/17 January, Oliver Crawford led a party of 6 on his Wollongambe walk. They experienced wet weather on the Sunday. Bill Holland with a party of 9 on his Grose River, Grand Canyon trip encountered the same very wet conditions on the Saturday night/all day Sunday. Of Frank Woodgate's overnight walk near Springwood there was no report.

The following extended weekend, 22 to 26 January, Carol Bruce and her party of 10 experienced a wide range of alpine weathers on her Guthega to Jagungal and return walk. David McIntosh was more forthright and described the weather as awful on his Surefire (6 bods) and Heart-attack (8 bods) Canyon trips over the 22,23,24 January weekend. Ian Woolfe went as far as Tasmania to guarantee bad weather for his party of 7 but all to no avail; they had good, fine weather.

Over the weekend 29,30,31 Jan Oliver Crawford's trip to watch the sun rise from The Castle attracted 7 starters and cloudy weather. The only other walk that weekend (was there a reunion on somewhere?) was a day walk from Waterfall to Heathcote with Jim Percy at the helm and some 26 people enjoying a warm sunny day with swims and an hour-and-a-half lunch stop. The rains came as they reached the train and shelter.

The following weekend Ian Debert had 10 starters, not sure how many members, on his retreat to River Island Nature. Anyway, it rained on the parade on the Sunday. Don Finch's Saturday Wollongambe Gorge trip had 17 people with 16 li-los; the water started out cold and became cooler as they progressed. A group of fellow travellers experienced a problem when one of their number broke a leg. Fortunately he was made of stern stuff and managed to hop out of the gorge, up onto one of the ridges from where he was evacuated by Polair.

Greta Davis had 10 starters on her Glenbrook walk enjoying rain, rain, rain and thick scrub. Jan Mohandas' walk from Audley to Marley reported good weather for the 17 people who attended.

The FBW Report indicated that the S & R radio fund had reached \$17,096 and 8 radios have been purchased. Two pager units are also to be purchased to modernise the facilities for contact with S & R officers. The FBW passed a vote of thanks to Peter Tressider for his work at the climbathon. There will be another S & R First Aid Course over the weekend of 21/22 May. There was one call-out over the weekend, the new radios were used and appeared to work well. There are rumours that the ski-resort areas may be excised from Kosciusko National Park.

The Conservation Report brought news that the Nattai National Park submission has been lodged and that draft Plans of Management for Blue Mountains N.P. and Wolloml N.P. are out for comment. The meeting moved that we recommend that Committee make a donation of an appropriate amount to the Colong Foundation.

General Business saw passage of a motion that we include Envirovote pamphlets for the NSW Upper House with the club magazine. The meeting carried a vote of thanks to all those who helped in the preparation and printing of the new Constitution. And then it was just a matter of the announcements and the meeting closed at 2145.



ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

1988

For application form
see

Reverse of this notice



Federation of Bushwalking Clubs NSW - Report of February Meeting.

by Spiro Hajinakitas

Kowmung Committee Report: Photographs of the Kowmung still needed, also volunteers to ease the committee's work load. Main concerns at present are to ensure that damming of major tributaries such as Christie's Creek does not occur and that the general public be educated in usage of water. The Warragamba issue has become a most urgent battle.

Search & Rescue Report: New pagers have been purchased. Next practice at Newnes Plateau 19/20 March. Ref Cullen Bullen 435104. Bring abseiling gear and maps Rock Hill & Mt. Morgan.

Anzac Day Service at Splendour Rock: Gate at Medlow Gap will be opened Sunday 24th at 11 am.

Treasurer's Report: Concern at drain on FBW reserves, loss over the year could be \$1643.00. Consideration should be given to having advertisements in the Bushwalker and Clubs should be persuaded to an increase in fees.

Tracks & Access: No camping allowed at the head-waters of glacial lakes in Kosciusko N.Park. Letter to NPWS re additional spike on Taro's Ladder, exit sign at Wollangambe Canyon, urging that the road from Newhaven Gap to Quilty's Clearing be closed to traffic.

Bush Dance: Will be held on Friday 13th May - 8 pm till midnight - tickets \$8. (See also SBW party to be arranged by Denise Shaw. Ed.)

The Outdoor Club has donated \$100 for S & R Radio appeal.

Please set aside 26/27 March for the Three Sisters Climathon (bucket brigade). Proceeds for S & R. Peter Treseder will attempt to set new records for climbing Three Sisters.

* * * * *

NEW MEMBERS - Please add the following names to your Membership List:-

Brading, Richard - 15/8 Lachlan Avenue, North Ryde, 2113

Phone - - -

Chapman, John - 48 Quinton Road, Manly, 2095

977 4326 (H) 977 7277 (B)

Greentree, Dawn - 8 Florence Avenue, Gosford, 2250

(043) 25 7203

FBW BUSH DANCE - Friday 13th May - BYO Food & Drink - \$8 pay at door.

The SBW party will be arranged by Denise Shaw - phone 922 6093.

Cut out:

THE SYDNEY BUSH WALKERS - ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION 1988

Please send this notice with your cheque/money order to:-

The Hon. Treasurer, The Sydney Bush Walkers, Box 4476 GPO, Sydney, 2001.

NAME/S (For ALL members in household):

.

ADDRESS:

If a receipt is required please send a stamped self-addressed envelope.

TYPE: (Cross out any not applicable) - Single - Household

AMOUNT ENCLOSED: \$

(Single -\$25, Household -\$25 plus \$15 for each extra person. Non-active, Non-active with magazine, magazine subscription only - these will be decided by Committee and advised in next issue)