

ON McALISTER SADDLE

A monthly bulletin of matters of interest to The Sydney Bush Walkers Incorporated, Box 4476 GPO, Sydney, 2001. Club meetings are held every Wednesday evening 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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(Deadline for September issue - Articles 31 Aug. Notes 7 Sept.)

A RESPONSE TO "NO MIDDLE GROUND"

by Alex Colley

Now that I can hold my arm up and use my fingers I'll have a go at answering the "No Middle Ground" view in the editorial (July magazine). I'm glad the Editor expressed this view because I believe it is widely shared and reasonable.

In the 40,000 years of human occupation our natural environment has taken a mighty bashing, first from the fire sticks of the Aborigines, and then from the axes and introduced grazing animals of the Europeans. Myles Dunphy described this as follows:-

"The Sign of the Axe (The Katoomba Daily, Friday, August 24, 1934).

The task of subjugating wilderness in the past rightly was reckoned to be a manful job. Sturdy men and trusty axes, confronted with primeval bushland, steadily hewed a wide and wasteful way through it and out the other side. Later on, tree destruction became a kind of national complexus, it went altogether too far; it became spiteful. For some settlers the very zenith of land 'improvement' was a holding absolutely short of trees - a grassy desert.

Prescience (The Katoomba Daily, Friday, August 24, 1934).

Who can measure correctly the needs of the future? Have not most provisions fallen far short of the real measure of necessity? It behoves the acknowledged experts to indicate suitable areas, and Government to set them aside in time, before alienation can take place or the wilderness qualities be leased away for ever; so that our people, whose land it is, may enjoy the amenities of noble scenery and priceless natural environment, bestowed once, and only once, by beneficent Nature."

Since Myles' day bulldozers, chain saws and 4-wheel-drive vehicles have facilitated environmental degradation. Only isolated wilderness areas remain. The eastern areas, where we walk, represent a little over 1% of the area of the State. If we use the Australian Conservation Foundation's definition of wilderness areas being land more than three miles from a road, only minute areas are left. In addition to wilderness there are, of course, natural areas too small or too much developed to be described as wilderness, many are already within national parks.

Wilderness is now scarce and irreplaceable. The onus should therefore be on developers to show that the resources they seek are not available elsewhere, rather than on conservationists to find alternatives.

There are two versions of the "middle ground". The first is that inevitably described by development interests as a "balanced" solution. This means that part, usually a major part, of the natural area in question is to be sacrificed. Examples are the Forestry Commission's proposal for cosmetic strip of native forest along the Kanangra Road to hide the pine forests planned for the Boyd Plateau, and "Snake Park", the description given to the 50 km narrow strip of parkland in the Government's first proposal for a Border Ranges National Park. Both proposals were firmly rejected by the Colong Committee and eventually both the Boyd and the Border Ranges were saved in entirety.

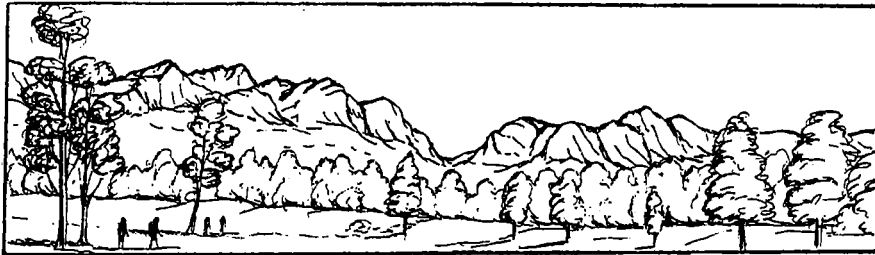
The second version of "middle ground" is provision of alternative resources and/or compensation to business and labour interests disadvantaged. The Colong Committee (later Colong Foundation) proved that there was lots of limestone not far from Mount Armour, other places to plant pines and alternatives to rainforest logging. Compensation was made for the abandonment of the Franklin Dam and the cessation of northern Queensland logging. The Unsworth Government was prepared to compensate woodchippers in the Eden woodchip area. By these means the dwindling remnants of our natural environment are preserved without cost to development interests. Nevertheless these interests never accept such solutions until compelled to do so.

The next question is "Why lie in front of bulldozers?" This is necessary because conservationists cannot match the means of developers, who have resources measured in millions of dollars available to employ lobbyists, pay public relations officers and buy large chunks of expensive media advertising. It is usually necessary to have the support of some 80% of the public before governments will act, and this can only come through publicity. The way

to get it is by lying in front of bulldozers, climbing trees in advance of the chainsaws etc. There is no doubt that Terania Creek, the Franklin Blockade and the Greater Daintree Action Group were essential to saving the rainforests and the Franklin.

Coming to the Lemonthyme and southern forests. Ninety per cent of Tasmania's tall trees have already been lost. Some 50% of the remainder are in the area the Helsham Inquiry recommends should be clear felled. Some of these will be preserved in small reservations within over 200,000 ha of desolation. Thank goodness for those who lie in front of bulldozers!

* * * * *



IN LITTLE HARTLEY WE ALSO THINK

by Rosemary Butler

I read with interest "A Few Thoughts from Victoria", which appeared in the June '88 issue of our magazine, and would like to comment, particularly on the subject of campfires.

Perhaps, as Sandra Bardwell says, campfires have fallen into disfavour for cooking, particularly at those sites where firewood is scarce. I very much doubt if they are no longer popular as a means of providing warmth at night, or as a focal point for after dark gatherings. Most people, even the shyest, are drawn to a campfire as if by a magnet, and some of the best conversations to which I have ever listened have taken place around a campfire. Sandra does concede the point about the lack of atmosphere at a camp with no fire, but I believe that far from being 'obsessed', those of us who are drawn to a campfire are obeying the prompting of an instinct as old as mankind, and we are merely the slaves of our primitive origins. If one lived in a cave, subject to a host of primitive superstitions and fears, and in real danger from predatory animals, one would very likely be 'obsessed' with fire. I realise that some things have changed since the days of cave dwellers, but our remote ancestors would have found fire, once discovered, to be indispensable for survival, and instincts die hard.

As for it being 'almost silly' to walk 200-300 metres from one particular hut to collect firewood to provide pleasure, haven't these same persons just walked many miles in the bush for pleasure. Is that 'almost silly' too?

I am sure that dead timber has an ecological value, but bush fires occur without the intervention of humans, and they would remove all the dead timber for a while. It does appear that the points raised on the pros and cons of fires versus stoves are more from the viewpoint of the walker's convenience than that of the environment, and even from the ecological aspect they are not the main issue in preservation of the bush. Wood, dead or alive, is a renewable resource, as trees, if they are given the chance, will continue to grow and die. Choofers, on the other hand, are made from aluminium and other metals, and these have to be manufactured. What about the enormous heat required to smelt bauxite. The consumption of fossil fuel and the pollution that that causes!

The environment in which we live takes in the whole planet, and polluting and harmful substances can move about quite freely in the atmosphere. In the end these could ruin all the bush. (Acid rain in the Black Forest, in Germany.) Note also the much mentioned problem with fluorocarbons and similar damaging the ozone layer.

I feel it unlikely that the number of campfires lit by the Sydney Bush Walkers or other responsible persons would have as much impact, taking the long view, as the manufacture

of the multitude of portable stoves that would be required if we all carried one. Choofers also require fuel, without doubt a non-renewable fossil fuel. Probably the biggest impact problem is caused by the increase in the popularity of bushwalking as much as what the walkers do when in the bush. There are too many of us.

If it is ecologically feasible to walk in the bush at all, or even to live in Australia or anywhere else as a wasteful lazy greedy polluting more-or-less modern human who rides in a filthy smelly car, my vote is for campfires. I have primitive instincts. I would prefer to go out in a blaze of fire rather than the hiss of a choofer..... But the problem begins nearer home than the bush.

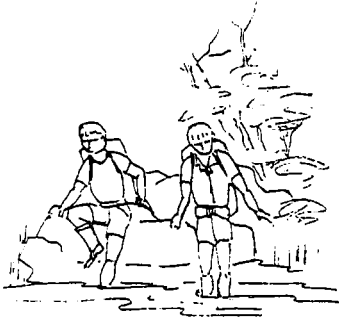
(As I mentioned in last month's magazine, comment and discussion are welcomed. We now have had a pro-stoves article and a pro-campfires article. Are there any other angles still to be considered? EDITOR)

KOUMUNG-ING 1988 STYLE

A COMPARISON OF BUSHWALKING GEAR

1946-1988

by Shirley Dean



I had the pleasure of walking down part of the Koumung River just after last Christmas (see earlier article this year). A very well organised, navigated, compatible trip it was too. In fact I spent some time reflecting on the changes which have taken place in bushwalking gear, transport and the Boyd Plateau since I first did the Koumung in 1946.

I've checked with Russell Wilkins, one of the members of the 1946 trip whose memory of the events and names of the people who were on the trip is more than probably a little more accurate than mine, and include his impressions below.

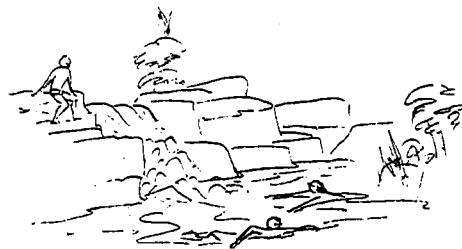
"..... I think we travelled to Mount Victoria by train on Saturday morning, caught the mail car to Jenolan Caves with lunch at Hampden, paid the driver extra to take us to the top of Oberon Hill.

Clem Hallstrom - a vegetarian, took a mixture of oatmeal, bran, nuts, dried fruit and of course, powdered milk. He rarely ate our food (weevils in his mixture on first day out!). Clem also managed to provide four quarter pound blocks of chocolate (a real luxury). He wore boots, no sox, and few clothes. He went barefoot through the gorges and the many swims.

Bill Newman - straight from the army, via New Guinea. Very fit but not quite used to our spartan diet. Owe trip, never seen again.

Shirley - after a few days of swimming, our packs became too heavy so we jettisoned all surplus gear. Russell says, "I remember that you were the most ruthless - out went the steel frame of your pack, towel, spare clothing and all!"

Russell - carried a three-man tent and did not use it at all. Also about 15 m of line, which we used a lot, mainly for lowering our packs over waterfalls before we jumped after them. We all had oiled japara ground sheets to bundle around our packs. Our packs floated O.K. but some water managed to get in (oh for some plastic!).



In general our food was dried - potato, meat (terrible), egg, fruit, milk, custard powder,

rice, jelly etc. We took from Saturday to Saturday and were ready for a feed when we hit Katoomba. We missed the train and so returned early Sunday morning after going to the Katoomba flicks and then sleeping on the waiting room floor."

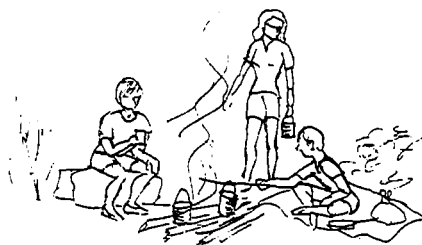
In 1946 the road to Kanangra Walls was just a dirt track, there were no fire trails and the map we carried was the Myles Dunphy "Blue Mountains" map. Rubber soled shoes were not on the market. In fact I did the trip in sandals with very funny rubber soles. The men had army boots with nails hammered into the soles - the boots were very slippery on rock. Our packs were "Paddy-made", and were carried low on the back. All the gear was very heavy when wet, and the only waterproofing was the oiled japara groundsheet.

In 1963 when I did more walking in the Koomung area, the fire trails had become a fact of life, and plastic was an item which was beginning to revolutionise bushwalking. Also the O.C. Volley sandshoe was on the market, and had proved its worth when walking down and through rivers. I have written this article in memory of Bill Gillam and asked the Editor to include also his article written under the pseudonym 'Eff See Wun' which records the changes taking place in food, gear and transport and how the standard of living/bushwalking had progressed (see SBW magazine, February 1963). Bill was Editor of the magazine on two separate occasions, and died of cancer late in 1987.

When I compare my gear in 1946 with what I use in 1988 I know that I can now waterproof each item of food and clothing within my pack. I can waterproof my pack by putting it into a huge plastic container and be reasonably certain that the weight of the pack will not change despite it being immersed in water. I know that the food I carry now is so much more interesting, and so much more lightweight; that the maps are totally accurate every inch of the way; that the transport will take me to the very beginning of the walk and more than probably be at the spot where the walk ends.

In 1988 our leader and others carried in a food drop via one of the fire trails the Saturday before we started. They were able to leave Sydney on Friday night late, drive to the Boyd Plateau, and early on Saturday morning take the food drop down to the Koomung and return to Sydney on the same day. That is only one of the big differences between 1946 and 1988.

Overall my pack is at least 1 to 2 lbs lighter, my sleeping bag is warmer, smaller and 2 to 3 lbs lighter. My groundsheet is 1 to 2 lbs lighter and the food for a weekend can be 4 to 6 lbs lighter. My clothes are lighter, capable of warming me more quickly. This month on the 10 day trip walking in the Chewing Ranges I carried all up 27 lbs in contrast to the 38 lbs I carried in 1946.



I feel it is a long ridge I have taken over those 40 years of walking and have had a tremendous amount of pleasure in all of it.

* * * * *

NOTICE OF RESOLUTION to be put to the September General Meeting.

Required under Section 51 of the Constitution. The Club must nominate another body as our inheritor in the event of the winding up of the Club.

Moved by CAROL BRUCE and seconded by ALEX COLLEY:-

"That the Environment Centre of NSW Pty Ltd, 176 Cumberland Street, Sydney be nominated as the body to whom our assets will be dispersed in the event of the winding up of the Club."

CAROL BRUCE, Hon. Secretary SBW.

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WHO KILLED THE GOURMETS AND THE EPICYCLIC WALKER

by Bill Gillam

[BILL GILLAM died in 1987. This article first appeared in the February 1963 edition of the magazine and has been reprinted at Shirley Dean's request. When first published it was under the nom-de-plume EFF SEE WUN and according to the 1963 footnote Eff See Wun was the Chinese herbalist who introduced dried mushrooms to the astonished world. Now deceased, he is buried at the foot of a magnificent tree on the Boyd Plateau. For pilgrims who would worship at his shrine, an access road has recently been constructed to the site.]

When I was commencing my career I had the good fortune to be a member of a group whose chief member was not only an excellent navigator but a superlative cook. She had the added advantage of having access to one of those mechanical ledger machines which provide information under fifty different headings. Food lists were issued to members of a walk not only with the exact amount of food to be taken but in a form which would not disgrace the stowing diagram of the First Officer of an Antarctic expedition. If the chart was followed one could so pack that the cook could go through any fourteen rucksacks neatly lined up in front of her fire, itself a masterpiece of required and varied temperatures, and produce, it seemed effortlessly, seven aesthetically satisfying courses. Even if the food was no 4-star Michelin it was only prevented from being so by the vagaries of weather which might dilute the soup with rain water while one sipped it, or the frostiness of the night could prevent the magnificent sauce arriving on one's plate at the same temperature as the superlative pudding. (The Anglo-Sacon term "afters" gives one a clue to the indifference of a whole nation.) The food was beautifully cooked, ample, varied, possibly 3-star.

Naturally the beauty of such arrangements depends on the presence at the cooking fire of all the members of the food list. The cook was only once, in my recollection, put out. Five of the party of ten or twelve appeared to be so caught on a ridge that there was a strong possibility of their being benighted. This in itself was no cause for alarm; it was only a day walk from a base or food; camp and all the ingredients were in their right places except the potatoes. One of the benighted persons had used his 2.235 lbs of potatoes as a pillow in complete disregard of the mores of the group. Such are the imponderables of gourmets.

Much as one would like to remain a lotophagi the really adventurous gourmet moves on. An offshoot of the ledger machine group was semi-vego, and it was pleasant, indeed healthy, to dally among their strange dishes for a while. Aromatic goulashes, pemmican, wholemeal dampers and a technique for the preparation and consumption of porridge were the crowning glories of this group. The porridge technique was to place the amount required of scotch cut oats in a billy with a handful of dried fruit for each person. This was soaked overnight, warmed in the morning and then eaten directly from the billy. The convention was that each had a spoon of approximately the same capacity and one stirred the fruit and oats thoroughly at each dip. The leading spirits of the group carried this togetherness to its logical conclusion and cooked and ate every course from the same billy. One could thus enjoy tomato custard and appled coffee. It is a long while since I had appled coffee.

The mobile meals of this group were particularly good. One such meal was taken standing in a crowded swaying train and consisted of crisp-bread sandwiches, pemmican pieces, handfulls of nuts and thirds of oranges. Since the party boarded the train from either end of a corridor carriage the source of these delicacies and their point of ingestion were rather separated. My share of the meal passed through ten pairs of strange hands, but such is the honesty of train travellers I believe I received every piece that was intended for me.

Occasionally we had all-fruit trips on which the skins, pips and peel were saved and simmered to a thin syrup which was drunk instead of an early morning cup of tea. The rind of a pineapple, but not the rough end, was especially prized for this syrup. It was a delightful experience to return from one of these walks and then to be shunted onto the line at Redfern next to the bread factory which proclaimed "What you eat today walks and talks tomorrow". For myself I could hardly wait to get to Central and eat a hamburger relishing

the pungent onions and the slightly suspect meat with the abandonment of a fallen angel. These fruit weekends were the cause of some social embarrassment at a later date. I had gone to Era over Christmas with a canoe bag full of fruit from the garden; fruit which would have spoilt had it not been eaten that weekend. There was sufficient fruit for three meals a day, and even at that it was a race between ripeness and rottenness. By some quirk of romantic fate I discovered a girl at Era with the Mozart and coffee tastes of myself, and in due course was invited to a meal at her home before we went to a concert. There was a delicious aroma of lovingly baked lamb; as we sat down, a plate of lettuce, pineapple and cheese was placed in front of me while the rest of the family demolished the lamb. Be assured that the girl was properly but politely informed that fruit weekends were not my normal diet.

The decline and fall of the great standards of my youth I now place on the invention of a plastic that is at once transparent, tough and easily fabricated into plastic bags. This innovation ensures that all dried food will arrive at the point of consumption in an identifiable state and not stuck tenaciously to a cloth food bag. In the past one could recognise, at times, porridge from dried vegetable only by the fact that the porridge had been put into a floral pattern bag and the vegetables into a bag made from an old shirt. The great debate between the durability of fresh potatoes and the uncertainty of the dried variety has now been settled to the detriment of good eating. The logical end of all this is that if the planning is left in the hands of a person bereft of inspiration a food list can be produced in which all the ingredients are thoroughly dry, unpalatable and indestructible.

The generic term for this food is scroggin and there is vegetable scroggin, nut scroggin, smoking scroggin and map scroggin. All these scroggins are self explanatory and are self-contained each in their own plastic envelope. Smoking scroggin needs match or scratch scroggin; map scroggin is the smallest possible piece of the map cut out and carried deep inside the pack which in turn has its own liner. To consult the map is too much trouble for the small consolation of knowing where one is. This in turn gives rise to vector scroggin in which one's velocity and direction are thoroughly mixed. A firmer type of the same ubiquitous plastic has been fashioned into indestructible bottles, a saving grace for its inventor. My container held, not scroggin, but bottled-in-bond stuff even though it was labelled "Vorsicht-stark atzent. Caution - very corrosive".

While the collating of a food list has thus been opened to people of little imagination the margin of safety in the bush has been immensely increased. By blowing air into these scroggin holders and whipping a rubber band over the neck a collection of bouyant chambers can be stuffed into a pack making a pack far more stable than the Titanic or the ill-fated Andrea Dorea. Equipped with such a pack even the weakest swimmer can now face with equanimity the Kowmung canyons. By leaving the glucose scroggin in an outside pocket and adding a cupful of water a readily available and repulsive source of energy is always on hand. If a capsiz occurs the pack can be inverted and all the sullage drained. Very personal equipment should be packed in double scroggins.

Such is the way of the world. One trades the delights of a deep billy for the certainty of a meal. And the Epicyclic walker. He owes me the bus fare from the Quay to the Railway. But that is another story.

* * * * *

SBW AUCTION on 27th July with a top attendance of about 55. Auctioneer "Charlie" Brown was in good fettle and didn't lose his aplomb even when confronted with THE THING which realised \$2. Many items for sale, some of the more interesting results being - \$8 for a green japara "one-person" tent and the same for a wool shirt, while three cotton shirts realised only \$1 in total. A wool jumper was fought over, ending at \$13. Two brief cases brought \$6 and \$16, and two 1000-piece jigsaws went for \$2. A lightweight sleeping bag (not for walking trips) \$1. Several packs were sold, a child's "day" pack fetching 50 cents, while a green frame pack in good shape produced competition and was knocked down for \$24.

Two sets of silver tea spoons brought \$6.50 and \$10.50, but a vertical grill went off for \$2. Some footwear items were on sale, but only a pair of well-worn Volleys (beware Volley Foot) went off at 50 cents.

In total about \$204 came to the Club (sorry - Association) from the evening's activities..... apart from a sore throat for Charlie.

GOING.... GOING.... GONE!.... AT THE SBW AUCTION

by Jim Brown

Quoth the Editor: "This Club Auction - did it begin when we were raising funds for Coolana?"

I was pretty sure there had been Club Auctions - but only intermittently - in the pre-Coolana Era (Hey, that's not too bad - before Coolana we did have a bit of Era). But I wasn't sure of the history and said I'd do a bit of research.

Old Social Programs gave a few leads, and old magazines supplemented this information, but only to a limited degree. We've been surprisingly coy about comment on our auctions, so what follows is based on the fragments of information I've gathered plus my own recollections. And memories can sometimes be a lying jade, so I won't pretend this is a definitive account of the SBW auctions. Some other members may know more.

The first auction to which I can find reference was held in May, 1957, when the Club sold off some of its library. We then had a lending library with books on exploration and mountaineering plus some simple technical works on flora, fauna, geology. Some of these books were seldom taken out, many obviously outdated, so they were sold off, but I can't find any record of the result.

A few years later someone had the notion that members may wish to dispose of old camping or walking gear which was still good for a few trips to the advantage of newcomers, mainly as a stop-gap till they knew if they would keep on walking and decided what new gear they needed. Auctions were held in November 1961 and October 1962, mostly of walking gear, although a few items of clothing or household appliances also went under the hammer. And some "nonsense" items turned up and were sold.

About this time a policy was arrived at by consensus - the vendor of an item of some real value could nominate a reserve price, and if the item was sold received that amount. Any extra amount bid went to Club funds. Broadly this system has applied ever since. The 1961 auction yielded 15 pounds for the Club, but all we know of the 1962 event is that two old tents were sold for 2 pounds each.

Followed another gap in the cycle until 1966 and 1967, and I can't tell you the results of those, except that in 1966 three jars each containing a pickled funnel-web spider went off at a surprising high price, and one jar at least was later re-sold at a profit. At some of the 1960s auctions, I was a fore-runner of Charlie Brown, but so hectic the pace on the nights that I've no clear recollection of events.

In 1968 the remainder of the Club Library, including the cabinet, was sold off. The only known fact is that Florence Sulman's "Wild Flowers of N.S.W.", which was out of print at that date, realised \$21 for the two volumes.

After Coolana was acquired in 1969, Madame Coolana Herself (Dot Butler) proposed holding auctions to help defray the costs of Land Rates and Insurances. Dot herself worked like a Trojan to gather gear and often made or refurbished sleeping bags for the occasion. The first (October, 1970) yielded \$78. Others were held in 1972 (profit \$42) and in March 1974 and April 1975 (no record of results). If my memory serves me, the auctioneer during most of the 1970s was Spiro Hajinakitas. Nothing surprising in that - over the past 30 years if you wanted something done for the Club, the ubiquitous Hajinakitas was almost always one of those coming forward to help.

From 1977 the auction has been an annual event, bringing in \$51 that year, \$68 in 1979, \$400 in 1980, \$244 in 1983, \$221 in 1984, \$375 in 1985. The results in the other years not known. Up to 1985 the proceeds generally went to the Coolana funds, but in 1986 and 1987 were devoted to the 60th Anniversary Celebrations. On one other occasion (1979) the proceeds of several items of camping gear were specifically allocated to legal costs of protecting Ettrema from a mining threat at the request of the donor of the equipment.

Above all, the Auction has always been a "fun" night. Auctioneers - especially John (Charlie) Brown since 1980 - make outrageous statements and claims about the properties. Ridiculous bids are made for ridiculous objects. Some of the things are obvious white elephants - some are useful. At home we still have a radiator and electric fan bought at Club auctions, and use them regularly. And most of all, when you have joined in the laughter of a SBW Auction, you feel you know what it is makes the Bushies tick.

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THOUGHTS ON CICADAS

by Oliver Crawford

A reaction from a recent experience

Black Princes, Green Grocers, Cherry Nöses, Union Jacks, Yellow Mondays and Ziggadees. These are but a few of the 180 or so different types of cicada to be found in Australia.

The reader may wonder what has inspired this little introduction. Well, I'll tell you!

We arrived in the second car on Carol Bruce's Forbes River trip (see report last month) at a beautiful flat on Cockerawombeeba Creek as planned, to be greeted by a deafening cacophony of sound from a million (probably more) drumming insects - and they were only the males (the females make no sound - they only piss on you!).

Which brings me to memories of my childhood, when some of our favourite summer pastimes revolved around the capture of these fascinating, noisy insects.

Our earliest exploits consisted of simply locating them by homing in on the noise, climbing the tree, and with a quick flash of the hand, covering an insect and then enclosing it. It was then a matter of getting back down with only one hand (not always easy) and depositing said insect in a cardboard box. It was in this practice that we learnt the difference between males and females - the females always let loose upon capture (or near capture) with a stream of liquid, thus to our fertile minds sprang the term 'drummers and pissers' to describe the males and the females.

It was not long before the box was full of insects, some of which would already be coupled together in mating - the males would croak in ecstasy! - so we would let them go, and start all over again. I suppose in one sense we were doing them a service, in bringing the two into close proximity but I guess we'll never know.

It was discovered early on that there was a variety which was particularly difficult to catch - the Union Jack. This was the largest variety and was particularly sensitive to vibration (of the tree it was in) and it invariably chose the tallest trees without limbs. I never did catch one of these in its adult state, many times I only put my foot on a tree at the base and the insect forty feet above would fly off. However, on one Sunday School picnic at Castle Hill Showground we captured many of them, in their most vulnerable position, coming out of their shells.

It was a damp, foggy sort of day and every tree around the periphery of the ground had this type in varying stages of development on its limbs, low down and easy to collect. Three of us who had knowledge knew that their wings should not be touched or they would blister and not form, so we were careful, but most of the others were ignorant and many an insect that chose that day to come out of the ground never flew, and thus probably never mated.

These emperors of the cacada world are truly large in size being possibly 100 mm overall length with a coloured cross on the back of their basically black body, and the males' drums are large, red, protruding pods with which they produce a loud constant high-pitched sound that can be distinguished above all other types even if only one member is present.

So much for the Union Jack. We as boys progressed onto the next method of capture - drowning them out of their holes.

It was discovered that if a small hole (about 2-3 mm diam) in the ground opened up with careful manipulation of a twig (so that no dirt fell back in it) to become about 20 mm diam., then there would be a cicada nymph inside, ready to come out. This was achieved by the simple method of pouring water down the hole. The nymph, not wishing to drown, would come up to the surface and be grabbed deftly from behind with thumb and forefinger, and carefully placed in a container and carried home. Here it would be placed on a curtain, or similar vertical surface, and at an appropriate time, usually after dark, would come out of its shell, to be set free the next day. The advantage of this method was, of course, that the emergence of the mature adult was fascinating to observe, especially to see the formation of the wings.

LIFE CYCLE

The female uses a sharp, strong ovipositor (a kind of needle at the rear of her abdomen) to cut deeply into green twigs and into harder wood, inserting 12 to 14 eggs through drilled

slots into each of two chambers separated by a thin layer of wood. She continues until a total of 400 to 600 eggs are laid. Injury to Australian trees is negligible, although overseas types suffer more damage.

The eggs hatch from 2 to 6 weeks, the young dropping or crawling to the ground, to begin their subterranean life using their powerful front claws to form the hole that will remain their home for anything up to 17 years, depending on type. They suck juices from the roots of the tree, so slowly that no damage is caused. Their holes are 400 mm to 600 mm in depth, and after the appropriate time the mature nymphs emerge, climb several metres up the nearest vertical surface, attach themselves firmly and the adult insect emerges through a split in the dorsal line of the integument.

The adults live only 2 to 3 weeks, in which time mating and egg laying occurs. The male makes his debatably controversial buzzing sound purely in order to attract the female. I don't know what priorities, if any, the female has for choosing one over the other of the males! Could it be the loudest, or the most musical?

If one has to choose a favourite, my choice is between two - the Union Jack described above, and the Cheery Nose, because of its red nose and bright orange spots over a black body, pronounced wing veins and its mellow drumming, best described as a bassoon rather than a trumpet. It tends to be a loner also, not found congregated in large numbers but just in ones and twos dotted here and there in the bush on the dry sandstone ridges about Sydney.

So endeth the saga of the cicada and my love affair with these creatures. I could only add to it by perhaps collecting a set of photographs, which would make a fascinating project in itself.

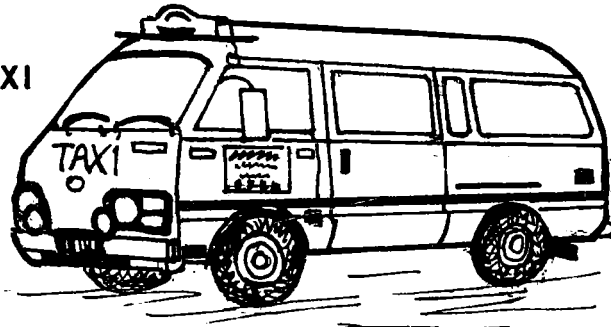
As for the type that prompted this piece, I wouldn't have a clue as to what they are called!

* * * * *

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THE JULY GENERAL MEETING

by Barry Wallace

The meeting began at around 2012 when the President called the 20 or so members present to order. There was one apology, from Margaret Reid, and no new members to welcome.

The minutes of last month's meeting were read and received. As a matter of business arising we were advised that the printing instructional day will now be scheduled for Thursday 1st September. The meeting was pleased to note that Alex Colley is once more restored to our midst, with his arm capable of bending, twisting, waving to the assembly, and generally behaving like new.

Correspondence comprised two months worth of letters. There was a letter from David Rostron notifying committee of his Central Australian walk as a Club activity for insurance purposes, a copy of the Minutes of FBW May Meeting, one from Fazeley REad thanking us for the Get Well card, from Maurie Bloom requesting a refund on his unused 60th Anniversary dinner ticket, from Sheila Binns accepting Honorary Membership, and from the Prime Minister's Office noting receipt of the Club's letter re the Tasmanian Forestry enquiry.

The following month's correspondence included the Minutes of FBW June Meeting, two outgoing letters by Alex Colley questioning the NPWS about the possible closure of the Narrow Neck fire trail and N.P. access policy, NPWS response advising that the road is still considered necessary but that it will henceforth be locked and we should report any instances of illigitimate use by non-official vehicles, a letter of response from Tim Moore, the Minister for the Environment, advising that a body is yet to be established to consider access to national parks.

Next came the Treasurer's Report, with Jim Oxley delivering his maiden report, as the President called it. We began the month with \$5674.88, received income of approx. \$1650.00, spent in the vicinity of \$250.00, and closed with a balance of \$7075.00. The measure of uncertainty is to do with problems associated with the change over.

The Walks Report was next, with our very own Walks Secretary presiding. The first walk for the month was Wendy Alliano's "children welcome" walk, which did not go. Barrie Murdoch reported 10 starters, beaut weather, scrub cattle, and a divided party on his Wolgan/Capertee river walk. Of George Walton's Glenbrook to Lapstone walk there was no report.

The following weekend, 17,18,19 June saw Bob King's walk in the Wild Dogs as a no go, and no report of Gordon Lee's ski touring instructional at Perisher. Of the day walks, David Underwood had 10 on his Blue Gum walk, Errol Sheedy reported 25 on his Waterfall to Engadine trip and Geoff Bradley's "children welcome" walk was cancelled due to a late prior commitment.

For the weekend 24,25,26 June, David McIntosh's Wollemi trip was a no go, there was no report of Ray Dargan's telemark training trip and Tony Marshall's Kanangra area walk had a party of 7, one of whom (hi Gerry!) dropped out along the way, but in any case the whole party was back at the cars by 1530. Greta Davis reported fine weather for the party of 12 on her Victoria Falls to Perrys Lookdown car-swap-day-walk. Allan Mewett had 25 starters, also enjoying fine weather, on his Muogomarra nature reserve walk, but "were they on time?" I hear people cry.

The following weekend, 1,2,3 July saw a small but truly dedicated band of 4 hardy souls battling against mountainous waves of food, drink, and general decadence in its many forms to complete Wendy Alliano's Clarendon Guest House weekend-in-the-Blue-Mountains trip. Last heard they were scheduled for a check for alimentary erosion. Ian Debert, also no doubt out there doing it tough, ..somewhere, had a party of 10, or was it 12, on his Leura to Victoria Falls walk. There were no day walks that weekend.

July 8,9,10 saw Oliver Crawford and a party of 9 on his Wollongambe Wilderness base camp trip. Rumour has it they were back at the cars by 1600. This party were obviously all too well aware of the difference between a leathery apricot and a pizza. Chris Perry took his party of 7 into conditions where it was possible to ski uphill, on grass, without skis, or so they said. Together with strong winds, a lack of snow, and one case of mild (?) hypothermia, it all sounds truly horrible. Debra Shapira on the other hand reported a beautiful day for the 6 starters and 4 joiners on her Mt. Solitary walk, and Bill Holland was able to arrange similar conditions for the 16 people who went on his Palm Beach to The Basin walk. All of which concluded the Walks Report, except for a presentation of slides of a recent Wolgan area walk.

The Federation Report is now covered separately in the magazine so I will not regale you with its splendours here.

Conservation Report brought news that there is a move to re-route the Elcom transmission line which presently skirts the Kanangra Boyd National Park and cause it to pass through Murong Deep. It appears that there is pressure from the local farming community for such a re-routing.

General Business brought news that the deeds to Coolana are now formally vested in SBW Inc. The question of buying a Scrub Cutter is being investigated further. The prices seem to be in the region of \$550 to \$1,100.

The announcements followed, and the meeting closed at 2145.

NEW MEMBERS. Please add the following names to your List of Members:-

| | |
|--|----------------|
| CALDWELL, Peter, 5/205 Greenwich Road, Grennwich, 2065 | Phone 439 4915 |
| CUTHBERT, (Ms) Chris, 22 Batty Street, Rozelle, 2039 | 810 2268 (H) |
| JOSEPHSEN, Sue, " " " " | " " |
| CZERNIECHI, Maria, 61 Albany Road, Stanmore, 2048 | 517 1712 (H) |

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FEDERATION OF BUSHWALKING CLUBS NSW - Report of July Meeting

by Spiro Hajinakitas

This meeting was also the Annual General Meeting and the following Office Bearers were elected:-

| | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| President | Gordon Lee (SBW) |
| Senior Vice President | Jan Wouters (Outdoor Club) |
| Junior Vice President | Michael Maack (SUBC) |
| Secretary | Maureen Cavill (Sutherland) |
| Minutes Secretary | Spiro Hajinakitas (SBW) |
| Newsletter Editor | Gordon Lee (SBW) |
| Search & Rescue Director | Keith Maxwell (Mt. Druitt) |
| Conservation Officer | Herb Lippmann (Springwood) |
| Publicity Officer | Gary Phillipott (CMW) |
| Ball Convenor | Jan Wouters (ODC) |
| Tracks & Access Officer | Roger Lembit (SUBC) |
| N.C.C. Delegates | Unfilled |
| Auditor | Unfilled |

The fees for 1988/89 were set at \$1.10 per member for metropolitan Clubs and \$1.00 per member for country Clubs. The maximum for big Clubs to be set at 300 members and for small Clubs 20 members. Associate Members fees to be pegged to the minimum Full Member fee.

National Sports Exhibition will be held on 12 to 16 October in the Manufacturers Hall (RAS Showground). Good quality slides on a general bushwalking flavour required. Volunteers will be required to person the stall. Ring Mike Maack on 546 2358.

Newsletter - Extra copies of "The Bushwalker" to be printed for the special September issue so as to hand out to the public at the National Sports Exhibition. Advertising rates to be increased for this particular edition.

Tracks & Access - It was reported that the road to the Dargels (Kosciusko) has been upgraded to accommodate 4WD vehicles.

Next First Aid Course will be held in October, cost \$43.

Dates for next year's program will be -

| | |
|-------------|--------------|
| FBW Reunion | 8/9 April |
| Bush Dance | 12 May |
| FBW Ball | 15 September |

First Aid Course in May (3rd weekend) and in October (4th weekend)

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A TRULY MODERN TREATMENT FOR VOLLEY FOOT

by Dr Who

I have been shocked to read in recent issues of your valued journal of the primitive treatments recommended by your medical correspondents under the pseudonyms of "Dr Mac" and "Dr Finley".

Put bluntly, their approaches are the kind I would expect from a witch doctor. Dr Mac (whose name makes me think of hamburgers) suggests copious soap and water for the feet and incineration of the footwear. Dr Finley, who is obviously far over the hill from his reference to "50-year-old case books", proposes soaking the footwear in Dettol or similar disinfectants.

Both ignore the huge strides in the field of immunology. The obvious cure for Volley Foot is to ensure that the affected person and all his/her companions are unable to smell the offensive exudations. This can be done quite simply by inoculating all the people likely to be involved with a viral infection, producing the effects of a heavy head cold, so rendering the olfactory organs insensitive - in short they will not smell anything.

Of course, the side effects - nasal and chest congestion and shortness of breath - are disagreeable, but many of your readers may consider this a small price to pay for release from the evil odours of Volley Foot. The treatment should be persevered with and include weekly booster inoculations.

Since Volley Foot is not recognised by the Health Authorities, refunds cannot be obtained from Medicare for this course of treatment. However, in addition to the physical relief obtained, those treated will have the added satisfaction of helping struggling medical practitioners to live in the manner to which they are accustomed.

[At last a modern cure for Volley Foot using the approach 'don't raise the bridge, lower the water'. To set the record straight Dr Mac's only association with hamburgers is to cure the occasional case of chronic indigestion. Dr Finley is not over the hill but a person who researches thoroughly, hence the reference to 50-year-old case books. I'm glad Dr Who has returned to his profession after his years in TV. EDITOR]

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FOOTNOTES

- ° Another month and another magazine and I'm short on footnotes. Obviously the grindstone to which I've had my nose has limited my observations of all and sundry.
- ° Have you paid your subscription to the Club? At the last committee meeting we heard that 68% of members had paid by then. But what of the 32% who had not? Shame on you, bow your head as you read this, then go and organise payment. Read Clause 14(d) of the Constitution of The Sydney Bush Walkers Incorporated if you need motivation. Next year, with the Club year commencing on 1st January, members have until 30th June to pay their subs and still remain members.
- ° The printing instructional day, Thursday 1st September, is looming up, book now. Solvol and Swafega will be supplied. Just imagine the fun you would have if about 15 to 20 people turned up. Stan would be muttering ems and els and getting his fonts in a knot.
- ° Bushwalking in the extreme - at the bottom of this page there is a short report on walking the Great Divide south to north. They have been walking for nearly a year.
- ° WHAT YOU MISSED. The Club auction was held last month. A report is included here on page 8. A history of Club auctions by Jim Brown is also in this issue (page 9). This is part of our continuing series of historical records of Club activities. These are intended to help us younger/newer members understand SBW and also to help the writers of the publication "SBW - the 2nd sixty years".

* * * * *

SOCIAL NOTES

by Ian Debert

24th August - Natural Health.

This will be a night when people can learn the basics of being able to massage others for whatever cause - either when bushwalking or at home. Come along and try it.

31st August - Gordon Lee and the Moonshine Blue Grass Band

Come and hear some great harmonising music from this popular group.

WALKING THE GREAT DIVIDE

On 20th September 1987 Barry Higgins and Steve Tzemony left Dergholme in western Victoria to walk the Great Divide to Cape York. This they have proceeded to do and are now crossing or have just crossed the Windsor Tablelands north of Mossman which is north of Cairns. They plan to arrive at the tip of Cape York on 16th November 1988 after averaging 30 km per day for 450 days.

The walk is sponsored by Paddy Pallin Pty. Ltd. and by "Australian Geographic" magazine. The intension, in part at least, is to test-walk bushwalking gear. It seems a reasonable way to test gear on a 15 month, 6700 km walk. It is also a reasonable way to get topics on which to write, not that I plan to go off on a one year walk. The walk has involved a lot of planning as can be expected. Some 130 caches of food, clothing, maps and water have been organised along the route.
