

# THE SYDNEY BUSHWALKER



Established June 1931

ON THE AXEHEAD

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 door to the Post Office). Prospective members and visitors are invited to visit the Club any Wednesday. To advertise in this magazine please contact the Business Manager.

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## WHILE THE BILLY BOILS.

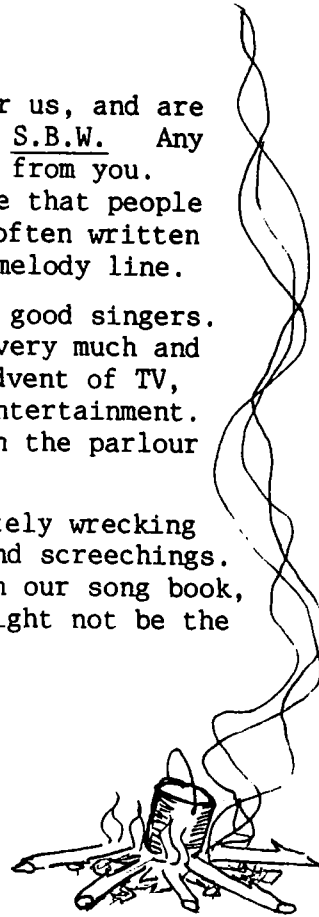
Our committee is trying to organise a new song book for us, and are trying to find or create a book with songs peculiar to S.B.W. Any suggestions? - if so, Mr. President would like to hear from you. Many of the songs in available books are so out of date that people can't even remember the tunes. Current pop songs are often written to be accompanied by a rhythm section, and have little melody line.

In addition to a good song book, what we need are more good singers. The star singers of yester-year no longer come walking very much and there don't seem to be many replacements. Since the advent of TV, people have come to rely more and more on commercial entertainment. Singers who had their training around that old piano in the parlour have faded away.

Worse, I have recently noticed certain people deliberately wrecking any singing around the fire with discordant howlings and screechings. (Just how low can petty jealousy take you?) Along with our song book, we should take along some muzzles for such pests. We might not be the world's greatest singers, but practice makes perfect!

See you on the track....

*W. M. M.*



## GOING TO TASMANIA THIS SUMMER?

Then   NOTE!   NOTE!!   NOTE!!!

Bushfires in Tasmania's National Parks have been disasterous. In the last 30 years over 16% of alpine flora and 8% of rainforest have been burnt. Many alpine and rainforest species, especially the native conifers, do not regenerate after fire.

Therefore the following areas are now "FUEL STOVE ONLY" areas.

Cradle Mountain-Lake St. Clair. 'Fuel Stoves Only' in the entire park.

Walls of Jerusalem 'Fuel Stoves Only' in the entire park.

Wild Rivers National Park 'Fuel Stoves Only' on the Frenchmans Cap Track. In 1980 a fire started by walkers at Lake Vera Hut burnt out 6,500 hectares, including stands of native pine.

Southwest National Park 'Fuel Stoves Only' in Western and Eastern Arthurs, Mt. Anne, the Southern Ranges and the Ironbound's high camp on the South Coast Track.

ALL Alpine and Rainforest areas are 'Fuel Stoves Only'

And elsewhere? be sensible. Don't light fires in hot, windy weather. Don't light fires on peat soil - the soil can ignite and burn underground for months, causing disasterous fires in hot, dry weather.

IF YOU LOVE TO VISIT TASMANIA'S NATIONAL PARKS - PROTECT THEM!

## MINIMAL IMPACT ALPINE WALKING AND CAMPING

For walkers, summertime is Snowy Mountains time. To help you enjoy your trip without wrecking the area, we received the following useful tips from Kosciusko National Park. Please note that all Alpine areas are now FUEL STOVE ONLY areas. Have a great walk - see you there! EDITOR.

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Alpine and sub-alpine plants are vulnerable to foot impact. Damage occurs rapidly. When damaged plants die the soil is left bare and is subject to wind, rain and snow-melt erosion as well as frost-heave. The latter occurs when water in soil freezes and expands. Ice crystals thrust upward through disturbed soil carrying large soil particles with them. This leads to rapid local erosion.

At the time when livestock grazing ceased in the alpine area some 10,000 tonnes of soil were being lost annually from the Main Range. Damage done by grazing took over two decades of Soil Conservation Service work to repair. Now the main erosion threat to the alpine area is walking and camping. Up to 1300 walkers and 300 campers may be in the Main Range at a time. By behaving responsibly we can reduce that threat.

\* \* \* \* \*

Avoid camping anywhere in the catchment basin of any glacial lake i.e. Hedley Tarn, Blue Lake, Club Lake, Lake Albina and Lake Cootapatamba. A catchment basin includes all feeder peaks and ridges around the lake to below the moraine humps at the exits of the lake.

Many excellent sites are available in the remainder of the alpine area. In the Main Range good group sites can be found around the north arm of the Snowy River and in Wilkinson Valley. Contact Sawpit Creek Visitors' Centre for further information.

Camp 50 metres from water where possible. Take a different route from tent to water each time thus avoiding impact tracking and breaking down of one area of creek bank.

Camp on thick, strong snowgrass meadow. Avoid camping on vegetation that is bright or deep green, on sparse or ground-hugging vegetation or on moss.

Wash well away from creeks and scatter used water so that it is filtered by soil and gravel before it reaches a creek.

Toilet and urinate as far from water as possible. Avoid digging holes - disturbed soil is subject to frost heave and erodes rapidly. Place tampons, disposable nappies, etc. in a strong plastic bag and carry them out with you.

Use campstoves for cooking. The lighting of fires is prohibited in the alpine zone. This zone is not fire-adapted and regrowth of vegetation is very slow. A campfire scar may be bare for many years and then is colonised by weed species.

Carry out all garbage including food scraps, used matches, cigarette butts and tissues.

Walk on designated tracks as much as possible. When walking off-track (e.g. to a camp site) your impact will be minimised if you:-

- \* Spread the group (single file walking creates new tracks).
- \* Contour (zig-zag) up and down slopes to lessen impact.
- \* Walk only on thick snowgrass which is better able to withstand impact.
- \* Avoid walking on anything wet, bright or deep green, mossy, spongy, gravelly or stony. Detour around such places.

\*\*\*\*\*

**CHANGED DAY WALK** 19 NOVEMBER Alan Mewett's walk in Dharug National Park has had to be postponed until 26 November. Ring him for further details.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO - - -****PADDY PALLIN!**

November 28th 1900 was a happy day for Australia's future bushwalkers, for it was then that Paddy Pallin was born. Inventor of the 'Era' tent, numerous sleeping bags and lightweight rucksacks, he made walking more comfortable for generations of walkers. But how many younger people know that he was a star singer around the campfire?

Read on and find out ....

\*\*\*\*\*

**THANKS PADDY!**

By 'Mumbedah'

There is no necessity to add 'Pallin' to the title!

Paddy has received many accolades for his prowess in the development of lightweight walking gear. He received an accolade from Her Majesty too, in the form of the Order of Australia, for his work in encouraging Australia's youth to venture into the great outdoors. Youth Hostels and conservation also benefitted from his vigorous support. Strangely, no one has ever mentioned the many years he conducted the campfire singing for S.B.W. and Federation Reunions, beginning in the late 1940's. No thought ever seemed to have been given to ensure the presence of a conductor - it was always taken for granted he would be there.

And he was.

It was no easy task, being out there in front, half roasted by a huge fire, bringing to mind the appropriate song and remembering all the words. Early in the evening there would be songs for the children, then the old favourites interspersed with 'rounds' which required some agility in springing from part to part, bringing in the words at the exact spot.

Back in the Roaring '50's, when over 200 attended the S.B.W. Reunions, it was no easy matter to encourage harmonious singing from a huge semi-circle of walkers, seated about five deep around the fire. But that wonderful, strong, rounded voice reached all.

Similar conditions prevailed at the Federation Reunions. One huge gathering at Euroka learing comes to mind, before the roads and fire trails, when we all walked down from the railway station. And another at Macquarie Fields, when all was bush. We waded across the George's River then, using a log on the deepest section.

The 'old hands' will never forget your "Little Tom Tinker" (who sat on a clinker!) or "Out Along the Highway Clear", which you taught to the Sherpas during your 1960 Everest Base Camp trip where you were also a campfire song leader.

So now, Paddy, we take the opportunity to place all this on record and to say a big "Thank you" in the loudest voice we can muster, for a job well done.

Bravo, bravissimo, for a wonderful performance!

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P.S. Paddy has a new telephone number - 416 8461. ED.

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## B U S H F I R E S !

Extracts from a talk given by Ben Esgate on 31st May '89

PANIC is the biggest killer. When faced with a fast-moving bushfire, people forget every bit of good advice they have ever been given.

If a fire approaches when you are out walking:

FIND RAINFOREST - this has thick, dark green foliage (lilly-pilly, coachwood), and is a safe retreat. So are clumps of lawyer vines and tall trees without undergrowth (like Blue Gum). Green casuarinas (she-oaks) also burn poorly.

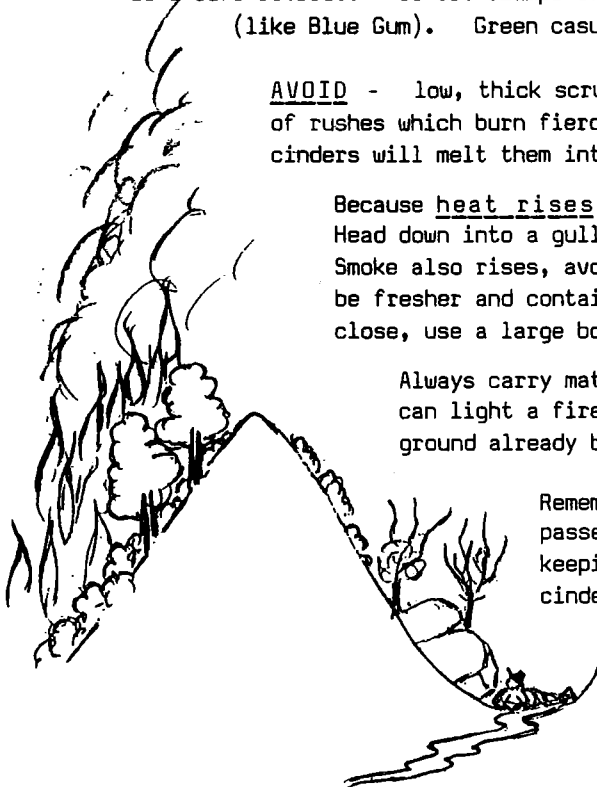
AVOID - low, thick scrub, in forested or open areas. Dry swamps are full of rushes which burn fiercely. Avoid wearing synthetic materials, as flying cinders will melt them into your skin. Wool or cotton is best.

Because heat rises, fire races UP hill, but burns slowly DOWN hill. Head down into a gully. A rocky stream bed, even if dry, is good. Smoke also rises, avoid being asphyxiated by lying down, where the air will be fresher and contain more oxygen. If the fire is going to pass fairly close, use a large boulder to shield you from heat radiation.

Always carry matches. If the situation is really desperate, you can light a fire and walk behind the flames. A bushfire cannot burn ground already burnt.

Remember that even the biggest fire passes. Once it HAS passed, walk carefully over the burnt ground. Try keeping to rocky patches to avoid treading on burning cinders.

\* \* \* \* \*



### FROM THE SECRETARY

At the General Meeting on Wednesday, 11th October, the following motions were passed:-

1. That the Club replace the present printer and a demonstration of the Yaaken OD 2020 stencil cutter and 1980 Duplicator, and other comparable machines be arranged.
2. (a) That the Club examine available song books and decide whether it is desirable to produce our own song book.  
(b) That the Club appoint a sub-committee to carry out above motion.

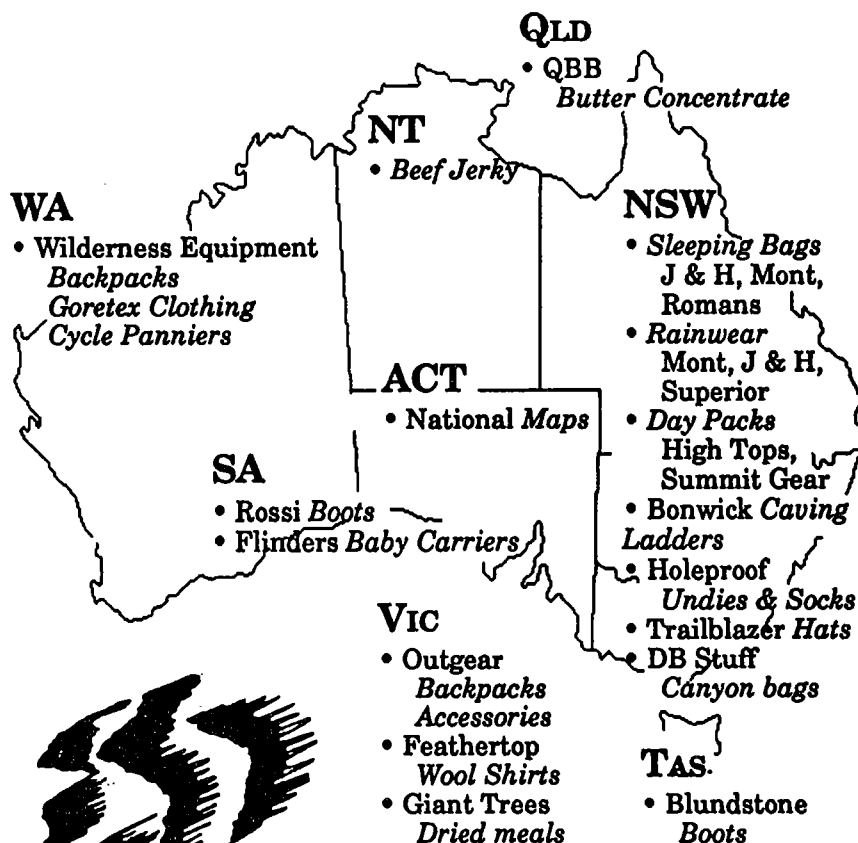
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### Notice of Motion:

That the 1990 Annual Reunion be held at Coolana on the weekend immediately following the Annual General Meeting.

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**FROM EVERY STATE,  
AUSTRALIAN MADE  
IS GREAT!**



**EASTWOOD  
CAMPING  
CENTRE**

**3 Trelawney St (PO Box 131) Eastwood NSW 2122**

**PHONE US TODAY & SAY "G'DAY"**  
**02-858-3833**

**Walking in the Top End (The Northern Territory and Western Australia) : Keep River, Bungle Bungle and Kakadu National Parks: May-June 1989 - Part II : Bungle Bungle NP**

(Second Week - 13th to 20th May 1989)

Jan Mohandas

**Saturday, 13th May 1989:** After breakfast the packs were loaded into the vehicles and we left the caravan park campsite in Kununurra at 6.55 am. Russell drove the Nissan for 100 Km along the Great Northern Highway towards south and then I drove for another 100 Km to reach Turkey Creek town at 9.30 am. Everyone had coffee or tea, biscuits, ice cream and other goodies. Both vehicles took fuel in Turkey Creek and we left at 10.30 am. Some extra fuel also had to be taken in Jerry cans. Peter drove the Nissan from there on. Chris drove the Pajero most of the time during the entire trip. Russell drove the Pajero whenever Chris wanted a break. We reached the turn off to Bungle Bungle National Park (BB) from the Great Northern highway, 54 Km away from Turkey Creek, at 11.15 am. The road to BB was only good for the first 20 km. After that it was rough going. At a creek with water, about 33 Km from the turn off to BB, lunch break was taken at 12.15 for an hour. Russell drove the Nissan to the three ways junction in BB. Leaving the party behind, Russell went to inform the Ranger at the Kurrajong camp about our walking plans and came back at 2.45 pm. We reached Bellburn creek campsite at 3.25 pm and the end of the road to the Piccaninny gorge at 4.15 pm. Total distance from the highway was 86 km. By the time everyone collected their packs and left, it was about 4.45 pm. The plan was to spend the next 4 days in the Piccaninny gorge. We walked into the gorge and found that there was plenty of water. Piccaninny gorge was quite wide where we were and as we went upstream it looked magnificent in the evening sun. The red coloured pagoda like rock formations all around us looked stunningly beautiful under the golden sun. Camp was set up after walking for a while in an open area in the gorge. Half the number of walkers put up the tents. The rest slept in the open on flat rocks. Dinner was cooked using stoves as no open fires were allowed in BB.

**Sunday, 14th May 89:** Everyone got ready after breakfast at 6.30 am. The plan for the day was to walk to the location for the base camp for 3 nights, upstream in the gorge. We wandered off to look at a number of side gorges on the way. The views in and around them were spectacular. Hundreds of dome like rock formations going up and up in so many levels, with an attractive red colour around them. The sky was absolutely clear. We stopped for scroggin and dried fruits at 10.00 am near a big pool. As the warm weather was becoming a bit uncomfortable, everyone enjoyed a lengthy swimming

break. Left after about half an hour to continue to go upstream. Where the Piccaninny gorge took a sharp left turn, we stopped, left the packs and wandered up a small gully on the right to look at a large permanent water hole. We were there for quite a while. We left that pleasant shady spot with palm trees and different kinds of small trees at 11.45 am. We picked up the packs and walked upstream to stop in about an hour for lunch. But stopped in the shade as it was getting very hot at 12.10 pm for lunch near another pool. Lucky for me that early lunch was taken. When I opened the pack, I found 4 small rocks (about a kg each) and a big rock (about 2 kg) inside. Some joker did that when the pack was left behind in the main gorge. We left after 2.30 pm and got to the base camp spot near a large pool at 3.15 pm. Then we went upstream about 250 metres to see another permanent water hole where everyone went swimming. After dinner Russell brought out 3 litres of port wine in a cask. Everyone enjoyed the evening..

**Monday, 15th May 89:** Nice morning. Some of us went swimming. Last night many of us slept in the open. There were no mosquitoes in the gorge. One could sleep comfortably using a silk inner sheet or a lightweight summer sleeping bag. It did get rather cool very early in the morning. We left carrying day packs upstream in the main gorge at 7.45 am. We had to do some rockscrambling, go around a number of rock pools and were also walking through some beautiful valleys in the gorge. At 9.15 am we reached a major junction. The main gorge went to the right and a major side gorge went to the left. Russell took the left gorge and we followed him upstream. Soon we came to a cave through which the creek was flowing. We had to wade through two pools of water. There were plenty of bats in that cave. Then we came to an open area and had to swim through another very narrow water hole with 2 deep spots. When we went further upstream it became quite rocky with big boulders and then a deep water hole below with high side walls. Russell scrambled up the rockface on the right with some difficulty, followed by Bill. At this stage only half the party followed Russell and the other half retreated. Russell's group had Bill, Sue, Patrick, Jim, Jo and Ray. The second group guided by Chris consisted of me, Peter, Brian, Judy, Joan and Neil. Russell's group went ahead to explore deeper into the minor gorge. Chris's group stopped on the way back to the junction of the two gorges, had some scroggin and left at 11.25 am to go further upstream in the main gorge. In the main gorge there were many large boulders. After a while there was no water in the main creek and also it was getting very warm. At about 12.15 pm we had to scramble up to get above a 50 metre drop in the creek. We reached a rock platform and everyone enjoyed the fabulous views towards the gorge down below. It was a delightful and sheltered spot with water coming through splits in rock walls on the right. Enough rock pools for everyone to lie in. The water was pleasantly cold. After

spending about half an hour for lunch, four of us (me, Chris, Peter and Neil) decided to go further up in the Piccaninny gorge. Others (Judy, Joan and Brian) then returned to the base camp. The trip upstream in the Piccaninny gorge involved scrambling up large rocks and crawling under small trees all the way. We realized that the creek had disappeared into some passage under the huge boulders far below the top towards which we were heading for. Chris almost stepped on a sleeping death adder, curled beside a rock near some Pandanus palm leaves. In about an hour we reached the top. Then to our amazement we saw a chasm on the other side about 100 metres below where the creek was flowing. We didn't go down. We returned to the lunch spot at 2.50 pm, had a quick dip to cool down in the rock pools, and headed for the base camp. Everyone returned to the campsite before 5.00 pm. Several of us went into the pool adjacent to the campsite. After dinner we had port wine left over from last night. Not many jokes tonight. Everyone appeared to prefer a nice rest after a hard day's walk. Russell was particularly happy that he was able to explore an area where he hadn't gone before.

**Tuesday, 16th May 89:** Russell's plan was to do two walks, one in the morning and another one in the afternoon. Bill had a head cold and decided to rest. Brian left early to look for his wallet which he lost on the previous day. The morning sun made the walls around the campsite look absolutely beautiful with the red glow. The rest of us left at 8.45 am and walked upstream in the main gorge. At 9.00 am we came to a turn off into a small side gorge on the right. We collected water from the main gorge and walked upstream through that narrow side gully which had no water. We walked through that creek bed for a while and then had to scramble up to the right to get above a big drop in the creek and then joined the creek again. A lot of large rocks to negotiate and continually we went up. Then we came to this beautiful large flat enclosed valley with a lot of palm trees, fig trees and other medium size trees and plenty of other kind of flora. A large open area surrounded by rocky side walls. We got to this beautiful valley at 9.50 am. After enjoying some scroggin we stayed there until 11.00 am. We continued to walk upstream in the valley. Plenty of palms and big fig trees on the way. Suddenly we walked into an amazing narrow but long chasm with high rock walls on both sides. At the end of that narrow chasm, only about a metre or less across most of the way, there was a smooth waterfall area about 100 metres high with a small opening at the top. When we arrived there it was 11.20 am and there was plenty of light coming through to see that chasm in its full glory. We were lying down and looking up for a long time appreciating the beauty of that dazzling chasm. About 100 metres high red walls on both sides, with 5 to 10 metres apart at the top. At one place there was also a rockbridge high across. We could see palm trees at different sections high above the cliff lines. We left at 11.50 am to get back.

The first party was back at the main gorge junction at 12.30 pm and the campsite at 12.45 pm. At the campsite a very happy Brian was back from his trip. Luckily he found his lost wallet lying around in the sand. We had a long lunch. For the afternoon walk we left at 2.45 pm. The access route was to go near the permanent water hole about 250 metres upstream, then continue on towards the side creek still further upstream on the left from the main gorge and walk up. Not too far away, it opened up into a small valley with plenty of palm trees and small trees everywhere. At about 3.15 pm we got to the end of the valley and walked into a narrow water filled chasm. Patrick went in first followed by Jim. Russell went to an island rock about 50 metres in. Then Joan, Sue, Chris, Jo and Neil went followed by Ray. Russell, Neil and Jim went to the island rock and didn't go any further. It was apparently freezing cold. Peter and I decided to return to the campsite and had a swim on the way. We heard what happened later on when the swimming party returned. Patrick went further and gave up when he felt the cold. Joan, Jo, Chris, Sue and Ray went furthest to the dry land, some shallow pools and further dry land in the chasm. Others returned early. Those who went furthest, got concerned about the twists and turns in the dark chasm and decided to return. Everyone came back by 5.00 pm. Previously none of the members of Russell's other parties ever went that far. The moon was shining by that time on the entire camping area with clouds frequently causing shadows. After dinner Russell produced a second cask of port wine. He carried in 2 casks of port wine, 5 litres of stove fuel and all sorts of other things.

**Wednesday, 17th May 89:** This morning we left the campsite after spending 3 nights there. It was an excellent campsite. Most of the party left before 7.30 am for the return journey downstream. Russell said that there was a large permanent waterhole in about 2 Km on the left, under a watercourse mark on the rock face, which could be reached through a little gully. At about 8.45 am we got to that big waterhole, one of the largest in that area. There were palm trees, cork trees and other trees all around. Water lillies in the waterhole as well. Joan and Jo went swimming. We left that waterhole, walked further downstream and stopped for morning tea near another pool at 9.45 am. Some people went swimming. In BB there were plenty of flies. Over the last few days we watched occasional big planes, many light planes and many helicopters flying above BB. Almost every evening when the party got to the campsite, Peter regularly played pleasant tunes in his harmonica and also did some sketches with pen or pencil or drew pictures with colour pencils. We left soon from the morning tea spot, came to the big bend in the gorge and started walking in the hot sun at 10.15 am. We found an overhang at 10.45 am for sitting in the shade. The breeze was strong and was a welcome relief. Joan and Jo went down to a deep pool. Russell sang a four liner



about Neil and his pants and shorts which were by now in shreds. We left at about 11.15 am and continued our return journey through the gorge. Very soon at a bend with a high wall on the right, we stopped to look at some rare aboriginal paintings. The paintings were at locations about 10 metres high from the floor of the gorge. We had lunch and rest for 3 hours and left at 2.40 pm. On the way to the camping spot (2 Km in from the vehicle parking area at the end of the road into BB) we had several stops in the shade and a number of cool down dips. We reached the location for camping at 4.00 pm. A number of us decided to go with Russell to look at two small gullies near the camping area. We walked upstream towards the first gully on the left. Soon we turned into the side creek bed, walked a little to a small waterhole under a waterfall. We scrambled up to the next level. There was a big waterhole there. We came back to the main gorge, walked upstream a short distance, picked up the next side creek on the left and followed it upstream. Fifteen minutes of walking took us to a large permanent waterhole. At the edge of the waterhole, on a small twig, there was a long but thin tree snake (about 0.75 metres long). It was light yellow in colour. We also saw a brown snake in a rockhole in the creek bed on our way back. The campsite was surrounded by pagoda like rock formations. The moon was very bright. It was cooler than the nights before. Brian, Bill and Judy were nursing head and chest colds.

**Thursday, 18th May 89:** We left the campsite at 6.30 am. It took about 45 minutes to reach the area where the vehicles were. In the morning, the sunlight made beautiful impressions on the BB pagoda rocks, near the camping area. Everywhere we looked it looked beautiful under the morning sun. While Russell and Chris were arranging things, we went to the Cathedral gorge. It took about 15 minutes to get to the end of Cathedral gorge which had a big waterhole and a large Cathedral like open area. We found some drawings made by vandals on the right at the end of the overhang behind the waterhole. While coming back I saw a large yellow snake with black trellis like markings. Most of us got back by about 8.20 am. We left at about 9.30 am. Russell drove the Nissan and Chris drove the Pajero. On the way we stopped at the Kurrajong camping area to leave the trailer behind at 10.45 am and left at 11.15 am. We reached Echidna chasm car park at 11.55 am. We left for the walk into the Echidna chasm at 12.05 pm and reached the end of the chasm, an interesting area at 12.25 pm. We had lunch there, got back to the vehicles and left the parking area at 1.50 pm. At 2.15 pm we came to a flowing creek with plenty of water. A stop for a dip in the water to cool down and some people got water for drinking. We left after 10 minutes and reached the three ways junction at 3.00 pm. After a brief stop we continued our return journey. On the way we filled a number of wineskins with good water from the creek near where we had lunch on our inward journey. Time

was 4.30 pm. Around 5.00 pm there was only 30 minutes sunlight left and we decided to stop to camp at a dry creek near the road from BB. Tents were put up with mosquito nets as there were plenty of mosquitoes. At about 7.30 pm Russell recited a poem about the SBW party. (Note: This was published in the August issue). It was a hot day and it remained warm at night.

**Friday, 19th May 89:** Everyone was up and ready by 6.30 am. It was very sunny and pleasant. We left the campsite at 7.00 am and reached the highway at 7.25 am. We drove into Turkey Creek town at 8.00 am and left at 8.20 am. Patrick drove the Nissan from Turkey creek. We got to Kununurra at 10.20 am and left soon. We got to Timber Creek town at 3.50 pm (NT time). On the way we stopped a couple of times to pick up Boab nuts. Peter drove from Kununurra to Timber creek. We left Timber Creek at 4.30 pm. Ray drove the Nissan from Timber Creek. In between Kununurra and Timber Creek we saw bush fires with flames about 2 metres high along both sides of the main road. We saw that also when we were going in the opposite direction many days ago. Arrived at Victoria River town at 5.40 and left soon. We filled several wineskins with water from a water tap in Victoria River town with the intention of finding a campsite around 6.30 pm. We stopped to camp in a camping area adjacent to Mathison Creek, 90 Km short of Kathryn. Dinner was cooked in a nice campfire in that pleasant campsite. Everyone stayed late singing several songs, reciting poems and telling a good round of jokes.

**Saturday, 20th May 89:** We left Mathison Creek camping spot at 7.30 am and reached Kathryn at 8.30 am. On the way when we stopped for a break at Adelaide river town, Russell and Chris were entertained by the recital of a poem about them, composed by Jim, Jo, Judy, Neil, Sue and Bill. Russell and Chris were quite overwhelmed by that expression of appreciation by the whole group. Reached Russell's place in Darwin at 12.30 pm. After picking up the bags which were left at Russell's we reached Minimbeena Motel at 1.00 pm. After a pleasant shower I headed off to the Airport at 2.00 pm to meet the rest of the party for the Kakadu trip commencing the following day. They were Chris Maher, Carol Beales, Mori Bloom, Bill and Fran Holland, Wally and Robyn O'Brien, Jim and Helen Stevens, Judy McMillan, Lorraine Bloomfield, Mori Ward, Bert Carter and Rob Webb. In the evening all 26 members of the party and Russell got together for a meal at a Thai Restaurant. {To be continued}

**Note:** An excellent article on Bungle Bungle National Park appeared in the January-March 1989 issue of the Australian Geographic Magazine (Issue No. 13) with a detailed map of the area as a supplement. This magazine and the map are available from AUSTRALIAN GEOGRAPHIC, P.O. Box 321, Terry Hills, NSW 2084.

ETTREMA REMEMBEREDPART TWO - JUST - DAY WALK

by Tom Wilhelm

The next traverse of Ettrema occurred by accident. How anyone could walk 25 kilometres of Ettrema Gorge by accident seems a bit ridiculous but..... Some years later - 1982(?) - a friend of mine from work expressed interest in a trip to the deep bush, so I suggested a walk in the Ettrema region. In fact I suggested Tullyangela Clearing, Ettrema, Tullyangela Junction via Howards Pass thence up Tullyangela Creek and ultimately back to the clearing. Poor Colin, my mate, got more than he bargained for. All went well until we reached the Junction, and on a very cloudy day had lunch. This junction is a very confusing place because in fact three creeks meet here and there are innumerable little water courses going every which-way. So after lunch, without reference to map or compass naturally, we moved off up Tullyangela Creek.

I had told Colin that Tullyangela Creek was only some seven or eight kilometres long, and so as the afternoon wore on and we walked and walked and the boulders got larger and larger - something felt wrong. By this time we had walked (unbeknownst to me) right off the Touga map which I actually had in my possession and on to Nerriga which I did not have. It was still very cloudy and when I finally, yes I finally did, take out map and compass, I couldn't figure out just what was wrong. I seemed to have in my possession a SOUTH POINTING COMPASS! Needless to say we made camp that night in this mysterious creek, actually in a small side creek that had recently been fired and everything we touched made us black. It didn't rain, the scenery had been superb, a tiring but good day. It was all obvious the next day when we ascended the 'mysterious creek' till I could see the powerline towers in the distance and in an instant I realized that we had just come up out of none other than Ettrema Creek.

Colin was exhausted so I left him to sit and guard the packs and I took off to retrieve the car, now 25 km away at Tullyangela Clearing. It took me a good three and a half hours to get there! It took an hour to drive back (that road is rough). Colin hadn't moved.



How could I have not recognised Ettrema Creek? Well, when your visits are made many years apart and you in the interim have walked in many other creeks, I find the actual boulders and rocks get a bit blurred, and in any case I didn't recognise it.

In January of 1989 I needed a good dose of wilderness, and on the spur of the moment decided to do Ettrema/Jones. I had a Touga map but not a Nerriga, but I felt that I didn't need one as I was certain I could find my way into the top of Jones Creek regardless. The creek actually begins against a hill that you can see from the road, quite distinctive and easily found.

Travelling by myself I easily entered the creek and moved off down over the rocks, the bush felt lovely, smelled wonderful. Since I didn't have a map (and as it transpired, a compass) I just enjoyed the walking and concentrated on winding my way through the boulder falls, paying little attention to side creeks. By 2.30 in the afternoon I reached a pool with a little beach under a big cliff, with a creek coming in on the right just beyond. Well I thought, pretty early, but still assumed that I had finally reached Jones Creek Junction. I made a lazy camp; I didn't even put up my little tent, but the rain held off, the night was calm and lovely.

In the morning I proceeded up 'Jones Creek'. It was too scrubby and there were so many forks that from memory I just couldn't get anything, so I just tried to stick to the 'main' branch as best I could. I had climbed to the cliffline and then through a nice little break

above it in just under an hour. I knew that somehow I had missed Jones Creek, but it was so scrubby I decided that I didn't want to go back, and I assumed I was on the plateau between Jones and Ettrema. If I stayed on the tops and headed south and east I would sooner or later strike a road. The day was very grey at this point and with an effort of will I trudged onward. I picked up the remains of a road, and followed it for over an hour, my heart sank when I lost it. I picked up a barbed wire fence and followed it eastwards (?) but finally I weered away from it when the Hakea got too thick. The next thing I knew I was standing on the Ettrema Plateau road, and I was out. It started to drizzle so I coated up and went on, glad to be in found condition. I reached the Sassafrass Road at 12.30 and suddenly realized, it was just a day walk.

So on the 14th May 1989, armed with two maps and a compass, a day pack with extra food, safety equipment, protective clothing, but no cooking gear, tent or sleeping bag, I entered the top of Ettrema Creek. I had waited till 7.15 because it was so misty I was afraid it would rain, and I doubted the day trip would be safe or possible on wet rocks, but I sensed it might clear so I went. I made a small route finding error which I immediately corrected with aid of map and compass, and walked on the tops, just south and east till the first big junction, then dropped into the creek. The creek was quite clear this year, a legacy of all the rain we have been having, and made going quite clear. The sun came out, my spirits soared and I kept moving. I reached my previous campsite at 'Jones Creek' just after 11 am, and suddenly realized that that particular site was in fact the location of my 1971 camp with Finch and Wyborn - amazing how the mind can play tricks, because we descended quite a distance to Jones Creek on that occasion, some 2 km, not 100 metres. Armed with my maps, I kept going to the Junction, passing Myall Creek, and was staggered to see the real Thompsons Cliff. It is huge.

At one pm I started up Jones, NOT scrubby.... but a beautiful clear granite staircase, one waterfall after another. I had to cross under a few waterfalls to change sides to obtain the best route. I was still worried that I might not make it. I went straight up the cliff by the big waterfall, being ever so careful. By 3 pm I had reached the top of the canyon, and went up on to the Tops map and compass, 120 bearing, very thick Hakea. I crossed my barbed wire fence at what seemed a very weird angle. Crossed Jones and found at 4 pm the road. It was all over but the shouting. Footweary I continued into the darkness, saw heaps of roo's, and reached the Sassafras Road a little after 6 pm.

Some Canberra Bushwalkers came by and gave me a lift down to my car, I was glad to accept. They asked me where I had been, I said, "Ettrema-Jones circuit. Just a day walk....."

\* \* \* \* \*

#### THE WAY OF THE TIGER

PETER TRESEDER's talk on October 25th brought out 61 members to enjoy a memorable evening. Peter passed lightly over the toil and difficulties of his epic canoe trip and instead concentrated on giving us a vivid picture of the majesty and beauty of the Cape York area. For anyone considering travelling the mighty Jardine River, he gave this tip. IF using inflatable rafts/canoes, take at least a metre of patching material and about 4 litres of glue. (Some smelling salts and/or digitalis would also be handy to help you recover from seeing huge salt-water crocodiles slide into the water when you are wading along, chest deep!).

Peter also spoke of his 5,000 kilometres walk from Cape York to Wilson's Promontory, done in three stages during the bicentennial year to draw attention to the need for National Parks. He travelled through 58 National Parks. He had no slides to show for this trip, but answered many questions, and had large maps to indicate where he went.

\*\*\*\*\*

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THE OCTOBER GENERAL MEETING

by Barry Wallace

There were around 25 members present, including the recently detached printer demo. sub-group, at around 2040 when the President called for order and got the show on the road.

There was an apology from Geoff Bridger, and no new members for welcome.

The Minutes of the previous meeting were read and received, with no matters arising.

Correspondence was comprised of a letter from a Mr. Russel Willis from a commercial wilderness tours organisation in the Northern Territory requesting details of the advertising rates for the magazine, a notice from a Mr. Keith Miller of the Friends of the Nattai (this being consigned to the notice-board for display), from Alan Gibson M.D. of Paddy Pallin Adventure Equipment, offering us a song book to save us the trouble of making our own, a copy of the Minutes of the latest F.B.W. meeting, a letter from the Tasmanian Department of Parks, Wildlife and Heritage regarding restrictions on the use of fire in Tasmanian national parks, from the Total Environment Centre advising of a forest summit meeting planned for December '89, and a letter from the Kangaroo Valley volunteer bushfire brigade offering counsel and assistance during the coming bushfire danger period. Outgoing correspondence was limited to a letter advising Russel Willis of our advertising rates. The correspondence was accepted.

The Treasurer's Report indicated that we spent \$170.29, received \$576.00 and closed with a balance in the current account of \$2,138.22. A motion that we re-invest funds from maturing securities, totalling around \$29,000, in one of the semi-government authority loans for periods of around four years, was carried.

The Walks Secretary then rose to tell us how it all went out on the tracks. The weekend of 15,16,17 September saw Les Powell and a party of three pounding the snow in glorious weather on his ski-touring trip to Perisher Valley and district. Bill Holland had 13 starters enjoying good weather and good country on his Yalwal trip. Of the day walks, there was no report of Ralph Penglis's Sydney Harbour N.P. perennial. Alan Mewett saw a return to previous form on his Great North Road area ridge walk with 15 starters and a full report, including trackless ridges, wildflowers (lots of them) and detailed times. Errol Sheedy's walk from Waterfall to Otford had 10 starters but was aborted due to illness of one of them.

Over the weekend of 22,23,24 September Don Finch had 6 people on his Kanangra Range mapping instructional, Greta Davis's day walk to Bluegum had 14 starters reporting a pleasant walk, and Jo Van Sommers' walk in Wolli Creek went to program without the leader. It seems there was a mix-up and the walk was scheduled on the wrong weekend.

Ian Rennard's Mittagong to Katoomba trip, from September 28th to October 3rd, went to program in perfect weather with a party of four.

The trip to "Canopus" over the long weekend, September 29th to October 2nd, attracted three starters. There was no report of Chris Perry's ski-touring trip but George Mawer had a party of 20 enjoying very pleasant weather on his Budawang walk. Jan Mohandas's walk in the Wild Dogs area was cancelled.

The weekend of 6,7,8 October saw George Walton's Mount Solitary trip cancelled. Carol Lubbers reported varying attendances over her two one-day walks to Pantoney's Crown and Tyan Pic. The Saturday (Pantoney's Crown) saw 12 starters and Sunday (Tyan Pic) attracted 6. Jim Percy had 16 on his day walk from Waterfall to Heathcote. The walk went to program, had prolific wildflowers including waratahs, and brought the Walks Report to an end.

The F.B.W. Report was presented. It will appear elsewhere.

The Social Secretary reported on coming attractions and the Conservation Secretary provided further details of the track on the Nattai. The Conservation Secretary also proposed a motion that we write to the Federal Government supporting the decision on the Kakadu conservation zone. The meeting concurred.

General Business brought discussion of the replacement of the offset printer.

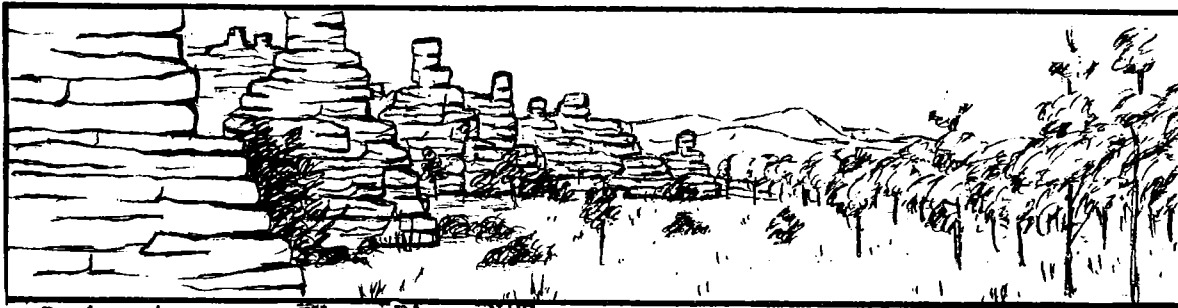
Unfortunately, not only had the sales rep. who came along that evening brought a machine other than the one we were interested in to demonstrate, but it also turned out that the beginning of a General Meeting is a very distracting environment in which to try to assess such a machine. The meeting resolved that we replace our offset printer and that demonstrations of suitable alternative machines be arranged.

The meeting also resolved that we should examine the song books available and determine whether it is desirable to produce our own. To give effect to this motion a further motion was passed that a sub-committee be formed for this purpose.

The chairperson gonged the gong and brought the whole thing to a close at 2205.

\* \* \* \* \*

### BUNGLE BUNGLE & KEEP RIVER NATIONAL PARKS - JAN MOHANDAS



Rock out-crops, Keep River N.P.

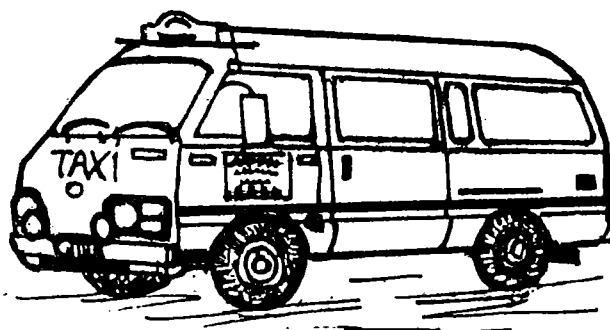
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## FEDERATION NOTES

### Federation Procedure upon Incorporation

A meeting of the Executive Committee was held late in September to define certain procedures that would become necessary when Federation's application for Incorporation has been approved. Some of the more important decisions, which were ratified by the October General Meeting, are:-

1. In future, an Executive Committee Meeting will be held each month, followed by the General Meeting of delegates from Clubs. The meeting night will continue to be the third Tuesday each month, with the General Meeting probably commencing at 7 pm.
2. Federation holds its Annual Meeting in July each year, and to enable all affiliation fees and public liability insurance levies to be assessed, it will be necessary to have knowledge of the membership strength of affiliated Clubs as at 30th June each year; and when the fees are determined at Federation's Annual Meeting, to receive payment from member Clubs by 31st August. Clubs that do not forward these payments will be crossed off, but may rejoin Federation by written application.
3. Federation Minutes will include only the formal business of the meetings, but some supplementary information about issues debated will also be circulated to Clubs.
4. In view of the limited size of the present meeting place at 39 George Street, The Rocks, other venues are being examined - one possibility being a room which may be hired at \$5 per hour at Burwood Primary School.

### TRacks & Access

A letter has been sent to N.P.W.S. requesting they provide better public access to Wollemi National Park from the Putty Road and at Mount Nullo.

### Search & Rescue

No call outs during the past month. It was reported that the new radio sets acquired about two years ago, although much lighter than the old sets, and having many improved features, appear to be less rugged than the older equipment, and some of the new sets are being sent for repair and overhaul. The old sets are still used as a back-up, but contain parts that cannot now be replaced in the event of failure.

Federation Ball      Attended by only 93 people.

### "Clean Up" Campaign

Following the successful "Harbour Clean-up" conducted in January 1989, a further "Clean-up Day" is proposed for January 21, 1990. Federation to consider mounting a campaign to get member Clubs to rally at a National Park (possibly the Royal N.P.) for a clean up on that date.

### General Business

The N.P.W.S. will be asked (again) to repair the damaged "Taro's Ladders" at Clear Hill, and to consider remedial work on severely eroded tracks on Kanangra Walls (both towards the Coal Seam track and to Smith's Pass) where heavy rains have gouged tracks up to a metre deep.



OK then, we'll accept a lift -  
but no funny business, mind.

FOOTNOTES

"DECK THE HALLS WITH BOUGHS OF HOLLY" - gum leaves and flannel flowers - because its Christmas Party time! Bring a plate and your best party jokes; we'll provide wine and soft drinks. ON DECEMBER 20 the gang will be gathering to wish each other Merry Christmas, so come and join in the fun!

CLUBROOM CLOSED - CLUBROOM CLOSED - CLUBROOM CLOSED

Over the Christmas/New Year period the Clubroom will be closed. The program for 1990 starts on January 17th. \* \* \* \* \*

WILDERNESS CALANDARS FOR 1990

From Alex Colley

Henry Gold's wilderness calendars, complete with 13 beautiful colour photographs, phases of the moon, and spaced date tabulations to enable noting of engagements; are now available, costing \$9-00. I will be bringing them into the Clubroom. Also sets of 10 Henry Gold post cards, which make excellent Christmas Cards, Cost - \$10-00

NEW ZEALAND IS CALLING - - -

and George Mawer is going - for 3 weeks during February/March 1990. Routeburn Track, Milford Track, touring and sight seeing. Campervans being considered. Ring NOW if you want to get a cheap Apex air fare.  
Home 707.1343 - Work 774.0500

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Joan and Frank RIGBY have a new address in Tamworth:-  
Unit 2/100A, Carthage Street, Tamworth, 2340.

DECEMBER 16, Saturday - WILDERNESS SOCIETY DANCE - begins 7.30 pm at Sydney Town Hall. Get into the mood for the festive season with 'Skewiff' and also help the Society.

BHOPAL, (INDIA) A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

NOV. 22nd

Tom Hayllar of the Explorers Club was in India at the time of the Bhopal tragedy. Come and hear what the newspapers didn't tell you

