

CIRCULAR

"THE NEWS"

No. 60.

25th Sept. 1953.

- THE MELBOURNE BUSHWALKERS -

Address: Room 110, 3rd Floor, Victorian Railways Institute-
Flinders Street, Melbourne.

HALF-YEARLY GENERAL MEETING. AUGUST 28.

At this meeting the following amendment to the constitution was moved and carried by a 60 per cent majority :-

Amendment to Clause 10 (c) which will now read:

" 10 (c). A bi-monthly General Meeting shall be held in the last week of each second month for the transaction of general business. "

As a result of this, our next meetings for general business will occur in October, December and February. Experience has shown that the December meetings are not well attended and a quorum is never reached, so that members are reminded that the October meeting will be the last business meeting before the Annual Meeting in February.

NOTE: Friday, 30 October, is an Extra-Ordinary General Meeting to elect a social secretary, made necessary by the resignation of our former secretary, Win Dryden.

FIELD STUDY OF SNAKES:

On Saturday afternoon, 3rd October, we are to have a lecture at Warrandyte given by Messrs. Ian and Ron Wallace, who will use live specimens to demonstrate how to cope with snakes while in the bush and how to treat snake-bite quickly. Safety precautions will be taken.

Place of Meeting. At 2.45 pm, we meet at Warrandyte, corner of Harris Gully Road, on the Melbourne- Warrandyte Bus Route, near the Football and Recreation Ground. The demonstration will take place in Anderson Road (road to Gold Memorial) some short distance away from the meeting place.

Transport: Bus from Wright's Tourist Bureau - 2 pm
or Train to Ringwood and Bus to Football Ground
(as above .

Arrangement: Emil Slade.

After the demonstration, "billy tea" will be available. We also welcome some Girl Guides from the district who are coming along.

"Willie, wearing one of his bright new sashes,
Fell into the fire and was burnt to ashes,
And now, even though the room grows chilly,
I haven't the heart to poke poor Willie."

NEW MEMBERS: We are happy to welcome the following new Members:-

BERYL MAUD MASON, 144 High Street, Prahran. (p) LA.3549.
JOSEPH FRANK CULELL, 9 Melbourne Street, Murrumbeena, S.E.9.
RONALD ALVA KING, 226 South Road, East Brighton S. 6.
(b) MX.1241 Ext Mechanical Drawing Office.
MARGARET RUSTON, 191 Glen Iris Road, Glen Iris. (p) BL.2920.
(b) MB.2771.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS:

LAURIE COLES, "Sunnybank", High Point Crescent, Eltham
(b) MY 240 Ext 210.
JEANNETTE ASPLAND, C/- Y.W.C.A., 161 Gordon Street, Footscray.
JOYCE EDGECURSE, C/- Y.W.C.A., 161 Gordon Street, Footscray.

SOCIAL NOTES:

The club's heartiest congratulations to Eric Sculthorpe upon his engagement to Verna Hodger.

The club also extends its best wishes to Win Dryden and Max Downes who were married on the 29th August, and to Margaret Dark and Jock Low who were married on the 19th September.

Brian Wilcher has returned to "the old dart" for a short visit, flying by Constellation and stopping off for a week's holiday in Italy. He is returning in the new year via the States.

Marie Gillespie is now in full charge of a large canteen in Alice Springs. She has some very good photos of some of her trips. She misses the Bushwalkers very much and one of these days hopes to pop in on us in the club room. There is not much of the Territory that she hasn't been to now!

ANNOUNCEMENTS: (Dates to Remember).

November 27. Lecture by Mr. W. Wannon, "Australian Folklore."
Mr. Wannon is an experienced and entertaining lecturer.
October 21-24. Nature Show at the Prahran Town Hall organised by the Field Naturalists' Society. Apart from the showing of wildflowers, this show is exhibiting many other features of interest to the community in connection with natural history.

NOTE: Sleeping Bags.

Edna Richards can provide information for the making of sleeping bags, or will help anybody to obtain information for this purpose. Making your own, you can reduce the price by two thirds!

MAGAZINES:

Frank Pitt has the Launceston Walking Club magazine "Skyline" May issue, for sale at 2/6d. a copy. This little publication is noted for its good material and all those going to Tasmania are recommended to read it, for it deals particularly with northern Tasmanian scenery and walking conditions. It is a good idea to read the magazines of other clubs, for besides strengthening inter-club relationships, it affords us useful knowledge when planning to go interstate for Xmas trips or private holidays.

Frank also has a number of Paddy Pallin's booklet on bushwalking and camping technique, available for 2/- a copy. These are of great value to new and prospective members.

XMAS WALKS: (Short walk at Wilson's Promontory.)

For those wishing to do only a short Xmas Walk, we have another trip planned for about 6 days at Wilson's Promontory. Mary Nash is leading this walk and would like to hear from anyone interested in going.

FEDERATION NOTES: (Informal Meeting at the Richard's home.)

Following a discussion at the August General Meeting, it was decided that quite a lot could be gained, by a meeting of all who took part in the Search. On Thursday 3rd Sept., 18 members met and some managed to get the last train home after a very informative and enlightening night.

SEARCH for Jennifer Laycock and Kirk McLeod, lost on Mt. Donna Buang (25-27 August)

At 11.35 a.m. on Tuesday 25th August, the Federation Search & Rescue contact received a call up from Police Headquarters and at noon our Club S. & R. contact began calling out S. & R. members, to help in the search for two people lost on Donna Buang since Saturday. Four M.B.W. members were on the 2.30 p.m. police bus and six more left later in the day, while a further eleven went up the next morning. In all there were 100 walkers in the field 15 hours after the call up. Of the 21 M.B.W. members there, eight were elected group leaders and four of these group leaders were in charge of groups at the headwaters of the Watts River where the couple were found and assisted in the arduous task of carrying them out on the Thursday.

When the first S. & R. members arrived at Donna Buang, they found that practically nothing had been done in the way of organisation of the search and the four S. & R. sub-committee members there, including Bill Bewsher, who acted as field organiser and our S. & R. delegate, Bill Horton, worked out a plan of action which was put into practice the following morning. The search was carried out in groups, each group splitting into smaller groups of 3 or 4 members for the purpose of searching, and then rejoining at specified points. Two of the groups were equipped with portable walkie talkie radio sets loaned by Pye Electrics. It was when six of these small groups had met for lunch at the main stream junction of the Watts River headwaters and were awaiting their last group's arrival that the leader, Bill Horton, and his operator, Arthur Birch, decided to try to contact base in case there was some news of the lost couple. In order to establish this radio contact they climbed the ridge opposite hoping that the increased height would enable them to contact base and it was while doing this that they heard Jennifer Laycock's faint cry a little to their left. Jenny and Kirk had built themselves a small humpy of 2 crossed logs with a roof of smaller logs and ferns and had been lying in this so that it would have been very difficult to see them. Jenny had crawled out of the humpy when she saw Bill and Arthur. Bill rushed back to bring help from the party and within 35 minutes, the pair were in fresh dry clothes, and sleeping bags and had had a hot drink of sweet tea. Four people were delegated to look after the pair and give them what treatment they could while the rest began making stretchers and two were sent off to intercept a party further afield. About 3.30 the helicopter found the party and hovered overhead but could not land.

It was impractical to start carrying the pair out that night so this was started the next morning with an average of 16 carrying the stretchers and the rest cutting a track through the dense bush. By 11.00 a.m. Gordon Coutts managed to get a party of 13 through to meet the rescue party who were very glad of their help. This was the only party to get through until about 3.00 p.m. when hordes of searchers and helpers descended on the party about a mile from the top where the going was by comparison, very easy, and praise should be given to those who struggled all day up the steep slope to receive help only on the last lap. The top was reached about 4 pm and a bus-load of searchers were sent off home at 5.00 pm, the rest following later that day and next morning.

Thanks are due to all those who dropped everything and went out to help in the search and particularly those who lost pay or leave by so doing, and we take off our hats to those lads who gave up their sleeping bags and clothes to the two lost people, and there were quite a few who did this. No matter how many clothes one puts on or how many people sleep around one, it's not the same without a sleeping bag. The parents of the lost couple have also expressed their sincere thanks to all the searchers.

One thing emerging from the search is the considerable prestige that the walking fraternity in general and the S. & R. section in particular, has gained in the eyes of the Police, of the other interested parties, e.g. Forestry Commission, and also of the general public.

In passing it should be noted that the S. & R. section, which is called out officially by the Police Department, received its call rather late on this occasion for several reasons, but in future the call-out will be better related to the emergency of the situation.

SEARCH on Donna Buang (Ctd)

After Jenny Laycock's cheerful manner during the rescue operation, we were all very sorry to hear of her serious condition two days later and of her very slow recovery. We hope that her condition will rapidly improve and that her future activities will not be unduly handicapped by her recent misfortunes.

Two weeks after the search, the police commissioner called a meeting of all interested parties to discuss the organisation of S. & R. in the future, and a sub-committee was organised. This sub-committee is called "The Victorian Search and Rescue Co-ordination Sub-Committee", and its job will be to co-ordinate all search activities, equipment, etc. The Federation have two delegates on this committee, while the Lands and Forestry Departments, M.M.B.W. and Country Fire Authority, have one representative each.

S. & R. members, or any club members called out on a search must be sure that the club S. & R. contact (Edna Richards, Tel. WX 5450) knows that they are leaving for the search area and must be sure to check in to the contact on return home. This is the only real check that all club members have returned home safely.

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"ON THE TRACK"

LILYDALE-MT. EVELYN-LILYDALE. (Judy Shepherd - 9 August)

After a late start from Lilydale due to the cancelling of the train, 17 walkers had an enjoyable trip to Mt. Evelyn in warm spring-like weather. We had exceptionally clear views of distant ranges during the walk, and were able to see the top of Mt. Donna Buang at one point. After lunch which was short due to sudden climatic changes, a few reliable and many budding leaders led 15 of us back to Lilydale, via the much water-logged paddocks around Olinda Creek. Somewhat wet and muddy underfoot most of the party caught the 5.45 pm train and someone brightly suggested that this walk should be reserved for the summer months in future.

BUNGAREE-MT. WARRENHEIP-GONG GONG RES.-BLACK HILL-BALLARAT. (Athol Schafer - 16 Aug)

With every toot of the diesel the sky became more blue and sunny as 13 of us Bushwalkers sped westwards away from bleak and showery Melbourne. On disembarking at Bungaree, we learnt that we had missed the snow by only a few hours. However, we were soon compensated for that loss by a chill wind which blew and whistled over the plains bringing an off-the-ice nip.

After successfully crossing Two Mile Creek, a formidable obstacle indeed, its approach being guarded by entanglements of barbed wire and blackberries and being the domain of a ring-nosed bull with a murderous glint in its eye, we missed Felix. Knowing him an expert bushman, we pressed on, or rather plodded through the oozy, red rich slush and mire which so characterizes the district. About a mile further on he caught up with us. It seemed he had made an heroic attempt to cross the creek by bashing a way through blackberry bushes with his own two bare hands. But Flesh (especially in shorts) availed for naught against prickles and thorns, and so he ingloriously extricated himself and crossed by a convenient footbridge, perhaps a less spectacular way but definitely much more comfortable.

Still pressing westerly, passing by acres and acres of spuds, we at last reached the wooded slopes of Mt. Warrenheip. After a steep climb the summit leveled out, horseshoe-shaped. From here were gained some extensive views of the lava plains of the Western District which is dotted with volcanic cones, as such is Mt. Warrenheip.

After leaving the mountain we hastened to a small creek and enjoyed a late lunch. On reaching the city limits we made a pilgrimage to the Eureka Stockade, and thence we climbed Black Hill where there is a fine panoramic view of the Ballarat countryside.

Descending down a slippery and overgrown tourist track, we headed for the station, just in time for the return train. As a means of passing away a long train journey, we recommend Allan with his seemingly inexhaustible store of shaggy dog stories, dialogues, yarns, etc.

"ON THE TRACK" Ctd.

WATTLE GLEN-KANGAROO GROUND-ELTHAM. (13 September)

Only eleven participated, the reason was partly that an alternate day walk was on the same date - partly that the leader, a notorious fungiologist, (the celebrated Dr Crosbie Mushroom) could be expected to get deliberately bushed in order to be able to feed his party on vicious-looking toadstools and poison them slowly to death. However, the very nature of the terrain thwarted such evil purposes and the party arrived safely at Kangaroo Ground shortly after noon. The more energetic members went on to the lookout tower, the others - less energetic, but more hungry - hurried to the lunch spot. By that time the sun had made up its mind to put on a gala performance and we had a most enjoyable spell of sun bathing. Finally, we went back over timbered hills to Eltham to reach it in good time for the 6.24 pm train.

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Arriving in October: Swedish "Svea" stoves.
Just received from Paddy Pallin: "Perfection" Headband Torch
 for bushwalking at night.

also "Lilo" inflatable rubber pillows,
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 and a new "Zippa" Trampler rucksack,
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Paddy Pallin Equipment: Sheet insert \$1. 16. 3.
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