

* * * * *
* T H E N E W S *
* * * * *

No. 24

8th September, 1950

Issued Monthly by the Melbourne Bushwalkers.
(For Men and Women Walkers)

NEWS SUB-COMMITTEE:

Fay Pitt (XB 5736)
Margaret Dark (LA4171-bus)
Gordon Coutts (WX3910)

CLUB ROOM

Room 110(next to Dance Hall)
3rd Floor,V.R.I.,Flinders St.
Open every Friday,7.50-11pm.

HON. SECRETARY:

Frank Pitt (XB5736)
8, Railway Avenue.
BRIGHTON, S.5.

THE HALF-YEARLY GENERAL MEETING on August 18th was very successful, with an attentive audience of about 80. In his opening remarks the President, Norm Richards, urged all members to use our monthly meetings to air their views on current Club affairs so that decisions of the Committee may always reflect the will of the Club as a whole. He also affirmed that the Club was now at a stage where we could expect a development of interest in the natural sciences and in mapping, and finally exhorted all members to give their strongest support to "WALK". The Treasurer made his report and presented the Half-yearly balance sheet, which showed that we had a credit balance of £55. Arising from the report, a question concerning the calculation of van fares provoked considerable discussion. The Walks Secretary explained that fares are worked out on the basis of 1d per mile for day trips and maintained that this was the minimum the Club could afford to charge, adding that the costs generally compared more than favourably with those of public transport. Reports of other sub-committees passed with little comment.

In congratulating Norm Richards on having completed five years as President, Egon Donath spoke highly of Norm's capable handling of meetings, and Club matters in general, especially in some of the stormier periods of our history. The meeting expressed their whole-hearted support in no uncertain fashion.

* * * * *

EQUIPMENT OFFICER

We are sorry to hear that Don Smellie will be away from the Club for some time - we hope it won't be for too long. HAROLD SOUTTER has been appointed to take his place as Equipment Officer. We'd like to thank Don for the good work he's done in that capacity, and ask that borrowers of equipment make the task as easy as possible for his successor by taking every care of borrowed articles and returning them promptly.

* * * * *

NEW MEMBERS:

We are pleased to welcome

MONA CLARKE, JEAN FORBES, LOIS PARKINSON and ROGER WILKINS,

who have now been accepted as members, and hope to see them at the next General Meeting. Our membership, steadily growing, is now 140.

Marie Gillespie attended another Good Neighbour Council reception to newly-arrived migrants last week, and reports that she met several people who were very interested to learn of our activities and will probably be coming along.

* * * * *

WALKS NOTES

THE SPRING WALKS PROGRAM was ready on August 18th. There are 21 day walks, including the Federation annual day walk and a Saturday walk on September 23rd; 9 weekends, including our Annual Field Weekend; and one four-day trip for those who are lucky enough to be free on the Monday preceding Cup Day.

It is unfortunate that this lot of programs were damaged, most of them being completely cut through along one fold when received from the printer. We recommend that you re-inforce your copy with transparent tape before the four sections part company altogether.

It has been decided to alter the period covered by each season's program, having each begin a month earlier than at present; e.g. the coming Summer Program will cover November, December and January, thus overlapping the present one.

PLEASE NOTE these ticket alterations: For Weekend Walk, Sept.9/10, ticket should be Hiker's return Yarra Glen - Lilydale. For Boronia-Mooroolbark walk, Sept.24, ticket should be Hiker's return, Upper Ferntree Gully -Lilydale. (2/8).

If you want to leave spare gear in the van for the day, see that it is securely stowed towards the front. You can't expect the driver, as the empty van jolts along, to keep an eye on the road behind for your scattered belongings.

* * * * *

We're sorry to hear that Marie has been knocking herself about again. First she had her leg scalded when a billy tipped over. Now she has pulled a ligament in her knee and may be off the walking list for some time. Bad luck, Marie, we hope it won't be too long before it's right again.

* * * * *

AUGUST WALKING

There have been enthusiastic reports of all walks in the last month. Forty two enjoyed the day in the Romsey area with Emil. Once again it was found that a short cut isn't always the quickest way to a given point! Emil will tell you all about it. He'll also give you the answer to the "Riddell", "Why is Felix like a good sheep dog?"

On the same day, Willie took a party of eleven from Mooroolbark over Mt. Dandenong to Boronia.

In checking up on transport for his Powelltown weekend, Felix found that the bus service from Lilydale had been discontinued, so last-minute arrangements were made for the party of twenty six to go by van. Saturday's weather was cold and wet, but the party spent a comfortable night in the huts at the top of the High Lead, with a cheery roaring fire. The weather began clearing overnight, and Sunday was fine. The route for the greater part followed along old timber-tram tracks, and there were some quivering hearts when it came to crossing the many old trestle bridges, now rather decrepit, and slippery after the rain, which used to carry the timber trucks across the steep-sided creek gullies. The Ada Valley was as lovely as ever, without the snakes for which it is famous in warmer weather. (The leeches made up for this!) Unexpected tough going was encountered where recent timber-felling has obliterated the track and churned up the mud. That was just part of the fun though, and altogether it proved a very satisfying weekend. It even inspired a new verse:

Oh, you can't go to Heaven, On a timber track,
Your muddy soles, Will hold you back!

There were twenty three on Paul's Ringwood-Warrandyte trip on the Sunday, and several commented that it was one of the most delightful walks they'd been on for a long time. The party lunched at Paul's - even boiled the tea water in his electric jug! However there was a camp-fire, too - at which one of the boys burnt a piece out of his pants. (We're not told the extent or location of the damage.) In the afternoon they went on to the Gold Memorial, and beyond this, armed with torches, to explore an old mining tunnel.

There wasn't quite as much ~~snow~~ as they'd hoped for at Donna Buang, but nevertheless Jo Thompson's party of twenty six enjoyed their varied day - there was enough for snow-balling, and a little more fell while they were there. They had lunch in the van at the turntable, with hot (?) pies from the kiosk.

There were twenty six again on Thelma Jackson's Beaconsfield-Officer trip last Sunday. Except for a shower before lunch, the weather was fine and sunny. In parts, especially near the reservoir, the red and white heath and small wattles made a colourful picture.

And Mira! Mira had a party of seven, ALL men! And all obeyed her instructions except one - which one do you think that would be? They heard the lyre-birds, and almost saw them, in Sherbrooke Forest.

* * * * *

THE NEWS ON "THE NEWS"

It has been decided that, when not collected in the Clubroom, "THE NEWS" will be posted to the following only:

Financial Members.

Those who are awaiting the Committee's approval of their applications.

Those whose names appear in the particular issue as having been accepted.

Interested ex-members willing to defray postage costs etc. (2/- per year)

Prospective members and others may obtain a copy in the Clubroom

We are grateful to those who have volunteered each month to assist in folding and addressing "THE NEWS". We feel, however, it would be more efficient and reliable to have a permanent team, and would be glad to have volunteers who would undertake to help on the 2nd Friday of each month (including tonight) from about 9 pm.

* * * * *

FEDERATION OF VICTORIAN WALKING CLUBS

The Federation exists to foster the interests of all walkers, and to act on their behalf in matters where co-ordinated effort is most necessary. An executive is elected at an annual General Meeting of members from all clubs, held in November. This executive plus one delegate appointed by each club forms the Committee, which meets every two months. (Gordon Coutts is our Delegate while Norm Richards is a vice-president.)

As well as this, sub-committees are formed to carry out specific activities. One of these is the Search and Rescue Organization, meetings of which are called from time to time. Ken Grant has represented the Bushwalkers on this, but during his absence Fred Soutter has been appointed to carry on.

There is also a mapping sub-committee, which exists to collect and collate data from the various clubs and other sources, in order to build up a comprehensive and accurate series of maps which will then be available to ALL walkers. Norm Richards is the Convenor of this sub-committee, and Gordon Coutts has just been appointed as our representative.

* * * * *

SOCIAL INFORMATION

The big event ahead is the Federation Ball at Tudor Court on October 6th. Tickets (10/5 each) are available from Marie, who was elected Ticket Secretary at a meeting of Social Secretaries from the various clubs. Soft drinks will be available - and talking of drinks, I wonder what potent potions the home-brew experts will have produced this year? Older members, with memories of previous Federation Balls in mind, will need no urging to come, and newer members are assured of a most enjoyable evening. So all come along and see what bushwalkers look like dressed up - it is claimed that last year they were barely distinguishable from ordinary people!

On September 14th there will be a theatre night at the Princess to see "The Two Mrs. Carrolls", for which the theatre finally agreed to give a concession rate. Tickets for this have been in great demand, a total of 102 having been sold - an all-time record for a Club party. Good work, Marie!

The second Federation night for "Song of Norway" will be on September 12th. 148 seats have been booked for this, of which 20 will be available to our club. At the first night on August 17th there were 34 Bushwalkers and friends among the party of 88.

On 28th October we'll be seeing the show at the King's, "High Temperature", for which tickets at 5/- each are available now.

BY SPECIAL REQUEST. after this month's General Meeting (Sept. 23th), Norm Richards will give a talk designed to help all walkers get the best out of walking. Drawing on his long and varied bushwalking experience, he will give both practical hints and general advice. Whether you are a seasoned walker planning a Christmas trip or a beginner wondering just what you need on a day walk, you are recommended to come and get the benefit of his ideas. There'll be time for questions, too, we hope.

* * * * *

PERSONAL

We were pleased to receive a letter which Norm read at the General Meeting, from Gwen Hancock. She expressed her thanks for the Club's wedding present, sent to her a short time before, and extended an invitation for Bushwalkers to visit her in her vineyard home. Thanks, Gwen, you may be sure that as time goes on you'll find some of us pitching camp near you. Meantime, best wishes from all your friends here.

We offer our congratulations and best wishes to Heinz Marcuse, who was married on August 19th.

This month we have no fewer than three engagements to announce! Our congratulations go to Barbara Lynch and Ray Dunstan, to Beryl Regan, and to Alice Busse and Wally Marks, with every good wish for future happiness.

Breathing a sigh of relief, Noeline Henderson confided that she has successfully passed her exams. Congratulations, Noeline, and we're glad to know that you are postponing your return to New Zealand for a while longer.

Margaret Milne is another who is going to join the nursing ranks, and will begin her training at the Melbourne Hospital shortly. We wish her every success in her new vocation.

We were pleased to hear from Mary Gibson, a "Rambling Pommie" as she terms herself - who became a member earlier this year, and we thank her sincerely for the donation she enclosed. Appealing to the Club's photographers, she writes that she is most anxious to obtain some really good photos of gum-trees and bush scenery, birds, flowers, etc., and would gladly pay for them. She is now at Mildura High School, but hopes to do some more walks with us in January, before returning home on 1st February.

We've had news of many of our travelling members lately. A card from Fred and Gisela Heilpern, dated June 25th, lets us know they've been on their first walk - in pine-clad slopes beneath snow-capped Mt. Rainer..... Tess Maddison was at Gretna Green - but don't jump to conclusions, she was alone! Joan and Jimmy Dyall are on their way home in the Stratheden, due here next month..... Jack Smith and Gwen Morris have been away with an Australian team invited by the New Zealand Government to take part in the ski-ing championships there - you may have seen the newsreel film of these sports - and have been at Coronet Peak, Ball Hut and Mt. Cook..... Pat Holmes left for England on August 23rd, having been offered a Government bursary to enable her to take a fifteen months' course at the London School of Psychiatry. This is the first award of its kind to be made, and we congratulate Pat on the honour, wishing her every success with her studies..... Bill Horton is off to enjoy six weeks' leave in Sydney and Queensland, before being sent to England in a couple of months..... Egon Donath has just returned from Adelaide..... Young Wendy Richards had her first snow trip last weekend, when Dad took her to Mt. Buller. And what did you think of the game, Wendy?

* * * * *

Many members who have made trips to Wilson's Promontory have enjoyed meeting Mr. Banks, a light-house keeper there. He has been a patient at the Heidelberg Military Hospital for some weeks, so we wrote wishing him a speedy recovery. He is unable to write yet, but his wife replied saying how pleased he had been to receive our letter.

* * * * *

LIBRARY NOTES

In this month's "WALKABOUT" is a most interesting (the first of a series) by Professor Dakin, dealing with the Great Barrier Reef, and including some very fine photographic illustrations. If you would like to borrow this or any other of the magazines which are set out on the table each Friday, see the acting librarian, Lorraine Richey.

An interesting booklet recently to hand is "NATIONAL PARKS", published by the Town and Country Planning Association. This outlines the National Parks situation overseas and in other states, and gives a brief account of Victoria's sixteen Parks, with a map to show the location of these and of several proposed sites. It goes on to propose ways of safe-guarding and developing these, and making them more easily accessible. As bushwalkers we may not see eye to eye with the planners on the degree of accessibility desirable. (They seem to dwell largely on the motorist's needs.) We feel that many lovely spots, such as Lake Tarli Karng, have most allure while they remain comparatively inaccessible. However, this is only one point, and there are many others on which we would certainly agree - protection of wild life, fire prevention, restriction of grazing, etc. We recommend this as a booklet all should read and ponder on.

* * * * *

GENERAL

On the cold, cloudy night of August 22nd eight Bushwalkers gathered in the grounds of the old Observatory as guests of the Astronomical Society. The intention was to view the moon, but "cloudy" being the operative word, it seemed as if they were fated to disappointment. However Mr. Symon, of the Society, with our cold eight around him in the small hut, gave an informal but information-packed talk on matters of astronomical interest, until finally the clouds dispersed a little, and all had a chance of some brief views through the telescope. (This telescope, by the way, used to belong to the late Sir John Monash.) Altogether, although not quite what was expected, this evening opened up fascinating and amazing new worlds.

* * * * *

Some months ago we mentioned the Native Plants Preservation Group of the Field Naturalists' Club, whose meetings Geoff Christensen was attending on our behalf. This group, inspired by Miss Winifred Waddell, has been working steadily, and since April has established a sanctuary in a small area on the property of Station 3AR at Sydenham. The aim is to regenerate the native plants which used to abound in this volcanic area, but which have been almost entirely wiped out by cultivation, grazing and the introduction of foreign weeds. By painstaking search, mostly along the railway lines, Miss Waddell has found specimens of many of these native plants, which she has transferred to the sanctuary, and which are apparently re-establishing themselves very successfully. So that they will not be choked, the rapidly-growing weeds must be removed, and it was for this purpose that Geoff organized a working party of eight Bushwalkers to visit the area last Saturday. In spite of being chased off the field many times by sharp driving showers, they accomplished a surprising amount, digging out the interloping weeds with knives (but leaving the natives) or, when weeds like clover were too dense, scooping them off with spades.

It is an inspiring vision, to imagine the original, pre-settlement nature of the countryside being re-created, with red gums, Murray pines and sheokes as well as native flowers, grasses and orchids, inhabited by the birds which these will attract.

* * * * *

Gerda Schwerin reports that the following have not taken delivery of the water-proofing solution they ordered some time ago, and begs that they do so immediately.

Stephen Minz, Peter Matters, Margaret Milne, Ted Field, Thelma Jackson.

YOU'VE PAID FOR IT, WHY DON'T YOU GET IT? says Gerda.

CHRISTMAS CARDS,

similar to those we had last year, will be available again, and will be ready in time for mailing overseas. Orders may be given from the beginning of October. Enquire from Fay Pitt. *****

FIELD WEEKEND CAMP-FIRE CONCERT

Don't be backward if you have any accomplishment which would add to the entertainment around the fire, but let the social sub-committee know about it.

* * * * *
 * For SPECTACLES see *
 * * * * *
 * WERNER GRAFF *
 * The Optical Specialist, *
 * 80 Swanston Street, *
 * Cent. 3186 MELBOURNE. *
 * * * * *

* * * * *
 * READ *
 * * * * *
 * "WILD LIFE" *
 * Australia's *
 * Nature Magazine *
 * * * * *