

)- THE MELBOURNE BUSHWALKERS -(

Address: Room 110, 3rd floor, Victorian Railways Institute,
Flinders Street, Melbourne

CHRISTMAS TRIPS 1952 -53 :BENNIE'S-COBBLER-SPECULATION-CROSSCUT SAW-THE BLUFF-HOWQUA RIVER- BILL HORTON, 24-29th December, '52

"- By train to Wangaratta, bus to Whitfield, culminating in a bumpy ride on the back of a lorry, a party of seven reached Bennie's on the Upper Rose River about 11 O'clock on Christmas Eve and were greeted by the hospitable family who had laid on a sumptuous spread of tea and all good things to eat for our benefit. A fireside chat was soon followed by sleep in comfort, for the Bennie's insisted that we use the huts, which were then empty.

Christmas Day dawned brightly and it was with some reluctance that we crawled out of our bags, breakfasted, said goodbye to our kind host and hostess and their family, and set out on our way. Very shortly we started to climb and with full packs and the sun beating down on us we made heavy weather of it. Lunch proved a wonderful respite by a cool stream. As we followed the Dandongdale River up we caught glimpses of the Falls of that name, a lovely reward for our toil. We camped that night by the Cobbler Huts and on the second day, four of us hopped up to the top of Cobbler, then along the Cobbler Plateau, up and over Mt. Koonika to the side of Speculation. By way of contrast from the previous day, the gods that watch over the mountains drenched us with heavy rain and wrapped us in clouds for most of that day. They relented the following day to give us a hot sun and light breeze for our assault on the waterless Crosscut Saw. Five hours walking and Saw was behind us as we lunched at Macallister Springs.

The extensive views from the ridge top of the Great Divide were continued in the afternoon as we crossed Mt. Howitt, sidled around Magdala, and again the following day as we went around Lovick and on to the Bluff. There we had to say good-bye to our panorama of mountains as we literally dropped off the Bluff and bashed our way through various sorts of scrub to the Rocky Top. An easy run to the rest of the 8-mile brought us to the lovely Howqua River. Unfortunately time was short and we couldn't linger by it. By dusk and moonlight it smiled up at us as we hastened along the old mining track to camp at 9 pm. by its gurgling waters. 4.30am came all too soon, and before six we had crossed the river and were on our way past Fry's to Merrigig. Another lovely morning and how we wished the 10 miles road-bashing were along the Howqua! The advantages of an early start were obvious when the bus arrived- 3 minutes after the last two of the party reached the picking-up point. I lost count of the milk-shakes and ice-creams consumed in Mansfield before the bus drove us back to Melbourne, to dream at odd moments of the sun-softened folds of mountains and a sparkling pebbly river. "

H. Horton

CANBERRA-COTTER'S GAP-MT. MURRAY-BIMBERI-GOORADIGBEE RIVER-BLUNDELL'S

WARREN OLLE- 25th December-3rd Jan.

On Christmas Eve eight Bushwalkers left Melbourne in high spirits for an eight-day walk in the mountains forming the boundary of New South Wales and A.C.T. All went well until Yass, when one car broke down. Bert Bennett, who had made arrangements for us in Canberra, towed in the casualty and also drove some of the party on the next day 35 miles out of Canberra. Then we set out per Shank's pony and soon reached the Orroral homestead. Travelling up the valley the track was mislaid and not found again until the following day after several scouting trips. Our elusive track continued to wind through lightly timbered country up to the granite boulders of Cotter's Gap and then led down through open grassy country to the Cotter River where we camped. Excellent views of the massive Bimberri and Gingera were obtained.

The next day being the day of rest (Sunday) we began the struggle up to the saddle between Mts. Murray (6040') and Bimberri (6279'). We found the saddle open and well-grassed, but boggy. It was flanked by snow gums and

wildflowers grew in profusion, snow daisies and everlastings predominating. After climbing Mt. Murray before lunch, we tackled Bimberi, whose easier grade was countered by the rough going. Toward the top it became more open, the summit being virtually treeless. A magnificent panorama met our gaze. To the South lay the Murrumbidgee Valley and in the distance to the south-west rose the snowcapped peaks of Kosciusko and Jagungal. Westwards we looked down upon the Cooleman Plain and the Goodradigbee River where we camped several days later. To the East were the rugged Tendery Ranges and Tidbunbulla bulked majestically across the steep and narrow Cotter Valley. Gingera (6092') was the closest mountain. After an early tea and camp, we watched a glorious sunset from just below Bimberi's summit. A terrific thunderstorm did not disturb our slumbers that night, despite Athol's cheery remark that 15 Australians die every year through being struck by lightning.

Some memorable highlights of the next few days were - border-hopping along the Cotter-Goodradigbee Divide without visas ... the view from Mt. Gingeri... the rest on the sparkling Goodradigbee where we enjoyed a much-needed wash... New Year's Eve at Bundabella with its impromptu campfire entertainment and pancakes to follow... and finally the unforgettable view from Bendora overlooking the Canberra Plain, watching the scene darken and the moon rise directly behind the coloured lights of Canberra City ...

Our return to civilization through Piccadilly Circus took us past Mt. Coree, and four intrepid members decided to climb it. So, whilst the others feasted on cherries in Blundell's Orchard, we took life the hard way and struggled up the cliffs and ledges of Mt. Coree with packs, quite a hazardous ascent. The leader managed to get mislaid once more by descending the wrong spur, and the orchard was not reached till after tea. With an early start in the morning and car transport arranged by Bert Bennett we reached Canberra in time to do some sightseeing before returning to Melbourne.

It was a walk of great interest, the country being much different to what we were used to, with grassy plains and sharp granite peaks, wonderful views from Murray, Bimberi, Gingera and Coree, and great numbers of orchids and other wildflowers. The party greatly appreciated the help of Bert Bennett and his wife whose efforts contributed to the success of the trip. The eight members formed a good team, and maintained its spirits to the end.

P.S. One member is alleged to have lost half a stone and another gained a lot of experience hitch-hiking...

(after) W. OLLE

LICOLA-HOWITT-STIRLING-COBBLER-BULLER-AREA -25th December- 4th Jan. '53

NORM RICHARDS

(This trip will be written up more fully by Norm in the next "NEWS")

The Great Divide trip covered some of the finest scenery in Victoria and great walking on the rim of the Divide, with the world spread out below on all sides. Although not all the side trips planned (Macdonald, the Bluff) were accomplished owing to lack of time, the perfect weather and good company added to the enjoyment of the highlights of the trip - Mt. Howitt, Clear, No. 1 Divide, Buller and for some the famed Crosscut Saw and Cobbler.

ATTENTION ALL BUSHWALKERS

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Election day is on Friday, 20th February, when the Annual General Meeting will be held, 8pm, in Room 56 (2nd floor) of the Railways Institute.

All club members should make a special effort to attend, as this is after all the most important meeting of the year, when we elect our new office bearers and take stock of last year's activities as a whole. Remember that now is the time to start thinking about whom you wish to nominate. The life of the Club depends on your interest and support.

VOTE OF THANKS- To Keith and Paddy Murray in Mansfield, who so cheerfully welcomed the rowdy, ragged, laden and dirty walking parties returning from the wilds over Christmas. The sight of these numerous invaders probably aroused grave doubts among the local residents as to the sanity of the Murray family, but the fact remains that the "Murray Hut" hospitality will long be remembered by Christmas '52 bushwalkers.

PERSONAL ITEMS

The new generation of Bushwalkers is coming on apace- we are very glad to hear that the Pitt baby arrived safe and sound on the 2nd of January. The name is Christine and Betty Olle reports that it has red(?) hair.

Mrs.N.Tyn(formerly Laura Howie) gave birth to a 9lb.son, Alan, on Christmas Day.

Val Darcy returned from Berlin on Christmas Eve and was seen in the club-room the Friday before Christmas looking a bit wistfully at all the new faces. Never mind, Val, you will soon get to know them.

Pam Abbott is engaged to Bill Nowak, a Pole she met on her travels abroad. They are to be married on the 14th of March.

Tess Maddison is also engaged(12thJanuary) to Robert Fraser from Scotland.

THEATRE NIGHTS -Repeated from the last "NEWS" for those who may have forgotten over the Christmas holidays, there is a series of theatre nights booked for the National Theatre Festival. The dates are as follows:-

February	2nd	Ballet
"	16th	Opera (La Boheme)
March	2nd	Opera (Tosca)
"	9th	Opera(The Consul- Australian premiere)
"	26th	Drama(Such men are dangerous)

Booking for all these nights are open now with Marie Gillespie, Social Secretary.

1953 ALONG THE TRACK

SILVAN-KALORAMA-MOOROOLBARK- BILL HORTON- January 11, 1953

"- The first walk after Christmas was only a peaceful one-day ramble from Silvan, via the dam and Olinda Creek to Kalorama, and down to Montrose, then by devious means almost to Mooroolbark. As it was a pleasant sunny day, and still early, the walk was re-routed via the pipe-line to Olinda Reservoir and then by old tram-line into Lilydale, arriving slightly damp underfoot in time to catch the 6:03 train home. In all 19 bodies attended, among them a large number of prospectives, and everyone seemed to enjoy the outing. "-

FRANKSTON-CANADIAN BAY- EMIL SLADE - 18th January

This day walk hardly deserved the term "walk" - it was rather a stroll along the beach as a preliminary to a day's swimming. Upon reaching Canadian Bay the party (18) dropped packs in a shady spot on the cliff near a pine hedge (same place as last year) and went in for a swim before lunch. The weather was ideal- in the afternoon the sky clouded over but the sun still had plenty of sting in it. We shared our lunch unwillingly with the inevitable flies and spent a reasonably strenuous day swimming and playing ball.

REMINDER-If you want a share in the management of your club your opportunity is at hand - come to the Annual General Meeting, 20th February - 8 p.m., Room 56.

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