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THE NEWS
of
THE MELBOURNE BUSHWALKERS

21st January, 1955.

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

PERSONAL.

CONGRATULATIONS and Best Wishes to Leslie Kurth & Ron Abbott
announced their engagement on the 9th December.

CONGRATULATIONS also, to Helen Wallace and John Ball, who
announced their engagement recently.

We hear that Len Barr, (an ex-walker who many will remember)
announced his engagement to Joyce Quinn, ex-Secretary of the Sydney
Club. -- Best Wishes Len and Joyce!!!

and again!!!

CONGRATULATIONS are extended to Eric Sculthorpe and Vera Hedger
(at Mrs!) who married on the 18th December. Eric and Vera honeymooned
the Blue Mountains.

Many who remember Gwen Cato will be interested to hear Gwen
has a daughter, Myra.

We are all sorry to hear that Jock will be absent from our
for a few months. Jock's job has taken him to Sydney for approx.
months. We are looking forward to your return, Jock!!

BATHING BOX.

The Bathing Box at Sandringham is again available to
persons under the following conditions:-

Use for the whole season -- 5/- plus 2/6d deposit for the key.
(married couples - 7/6d plus 2/6d)

Daily use -- 1/-d. (married couples, 1/6d.)

Will all those interested, contact Karl Bing at BY3708.

CANCELLATION!!!!

29th - 31st January.

WANDONG- SUNDAY CREEK - KINGLAKE/ Leader, Frank Pitt.
This walk has been cancelled, and therefore, will not be "on".

WALKS PROGRAMME.

Some corrections have to be made on the Autumn Walks Programme
regard to Anzac Weekend. Watch the "News" for further details!!!!

GORDON NEILSON APPEAL.

Another letter has been received from Mrs. Neilson, this time
thank us for the Xmas Hamper and balance of the money which was sent to
don prior to Xmas. The letter is on the Notice Board for you to read.

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XMAS CARDS.

We received quite a bit of Xmas Mail, and some very interesting cards, -in case you haven't had a chance to see them on the Notice Board, they were received from :-

Melbourne Womens Walking Club.

Victorian Mountain Tramping Club.

Youth Hostels Association.

Western Walking Club.

Catholic Walking Club.

Paddy & Keith Murray and family, Peter and Nicholas.

Bob & Joan Derby.

and Fred & Jill Heilpern.

It is certainly very nice to receive cards from these clubs, and members who were not with us at Xmas, and we do appreciate it very much.

COMING EVENTS.

Jan. 23rd. Ledorderg Gorge. Bob Bittner. UY3129.

As the leader wants to organize car transport for this trip, would all intending to go on this trip contact him as soon as possible. There will be swimming a-plenty, so take your togs.

Jan. 29-31st. Eildon - Big River - Howqua. Gerda Schwerin. WA6965.

The bus for this trip leaves on the Friday night. Contact Gerda for more particulars regarding this. The distance of the walk is approx. 23 miles, and there will be swimming.

Jan. 30th. Monbulk - Emerald. Karl Bing. UY6708.

The train leaves at 8.55am, you will need a 2nd return ticket Ferntrees Gully. There will be 9 miles of walking (approx.) and plenty of swimming, if it is necessary to cool off.

Feb. 6th. Boronia - Olinda - Beagley's Bridge - Belgrave.

Vilma Harant. WA 7771.

Buy a 2nd return ticket to Ferntrees Gully, catch the 8.55am train, and join Vilma on this interesting walk through the Dandenongs. It will be a walk off approx. 12 miles.

Feb. 12-13th. Yarra Glen - Smith's Gully - Hurstbridge.

John Brownlie. LF9692.

Your ticket this time, will need to be a Hiker's Ticket, - Yarra Glen - Hurstbridge, - the train pulls out at 8.25am. The distance will be only 15miles, an enjoyable distance for a weekend walk. Why not come along ??

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AUSKI... 6th Floor, McEwen House, Little Collins Street, Melbourne.

Visit Auski for your walking needs. Auski stocks all the articles you would ever need for bushwalking. Complete range of Paddy Pallin goods kept in stock.

Have you a pocket compass ??? Auski has several different types, priced from 5/- to £1.17. 6d., each.

Have you enough food containers?? Auski has aluminium food jars with press-in lids. Sizes, - $\frac{1}{8}$ pint, 2/6d., $\frac{3}{4}$ pint, 3/-d., and 1 pint, 1/-d.

BUY AT AUSKI !!!

ON THE TRACK....

BRISBANE RANGES..

November 20th-21st.

In spite of drizzling rain, ten enthusiastic members (one even shorts), gathered at Batman Avenue ready to brave the elements, and visit the Brisbane Ranges.

After a few fleeting glimpses of sun during the van trip, they left the van during light rain, which soon afterwards increased to being almost torrential, and continued to keep up this standard nearly all day. The morning was spent walking through open grazing country, which frequently inspired the comment "What beautiful walking country on a fine day", at lunch time a farm-hand took pity on the party, and a dry lunch was enjoyed in a shed. In the afternoon, the party made for the Moorebool river, and followed it along a gorge for some distance. Not even the rain was able to spoil the beauty of this gorge, in fact it may have even enhanced it by ensuring a torrent at the bottom. Leaving the gorge an open ridge was followed exposing the party not only to the rain, but also to the full force of the wind, so that when a farmer offered ten, rather wet and bedraggled bushwalkers, the use of his shearing shed for the night was accepted eagerly. Changed into dry clothes, the leader divided the party into three groups which took turns to cook dinner on his gumpy. The evening was spent sitting around a candle listening to the storm, while one member unsuccessfully tried his skill as a hypnotist.

The next morning an early start was made, and to the joy of the party, it was made in bright sunlight. The early afternoon was spent walking through pleasant country, which was covered with masses of glorious wildflowers. About mid-afternoon, the creek which the leader had intended follow out of the ranges was reached. However, he had reckoned without rain. The rain had swollen it till it almost completely filled the narrow valley. Although it gave the party an excellent opportunity to show their skill at jumping from rock to rock, the creek eventually had to be left in favour of the more rapid progress which could be made along the ridge, in order to reach the van before dark. However, in spite of the bad weather, the weekend was a great success and one thing is certain, that some excellent gorge scenery was enjoyed as a result of the rain.

MT. RIDDELL - BADGER CREEK. November 28th.

The beginning of this trip was deceptively gentle, - a mile or of pleasant walking beside cool flowing waters of the aqueduct, with a faint breeze to temper the morning's blazing heat. It certainly gave to the 25 innocents who ventured out with Emil, no hint of the rigors that lay ahead. We left the aqueduct to follow a track recently cut by M.M.B.W. a shorty afterwards the leader advised us to fill our water bottles, as this may be the last water. Rather premature advice, we felt, as the track for the next couple of miles was the bed of a turbulent mountain stream, appropriately named Slip Creek !! Up, and Up, and Up, through cascades and between muddy cliffs, clambering over wet rocks and pushing through vines and branches, and still Up !! At last, as a waterfall loomed ahead the track left the creek, and climbed through the bush. At about 2pm., the last of the party reached the lunch spot, and found that the leader (and a few others) had wisely gone ahead to avoid the imprecations of a hot and famished crew. A point of interest here was a great moss-covered cliff at the head of the valley, from which the creek springs unseen. Still up went the track, through lush rain forest, with ferns and vines hanging to the trees. At last, The Top!. Then, shades of the Grand Old Duke of York, "he marched them down again"... Down and down and down, over a clear track, which was sometimes steep, and at others, steeper. A refreshing drink from Picceninny Creek to celebrate the end of the descent, and then we followed the pipeline and finally, ending as we began, travelled pleasantly beside the aqueduct, and reached the van at about 7pm. ---- N.B. Next time the Programme describes a walk as "Not Easy" -- believe it !!.

ON THE TRACK, cont... /XMAS WALKS/

Mt. Buller.. Cobbler.. Speculation.. Howitt.. Snowy Plains..
Wellington River.. Licola:

Leaving Spencer Street on Christmas Eve - hot and humid - by 5.25pm for Mansfield, (where greetings were exchanged with Heinz's party) and continuing on by Volkswagen through Mirimbah up the winding road to Buller, by something after midnight we had made our first camp.

So Christmas morning found our party of seven with tents pitched by a group of snow gums near the old chalet site, a couple of miles below the summit of Mt. Buller. Soon we were making our way up, - dumping packs on the way - and already getting a taste of the hot weather that was to continue throughout the trip. Revived by the cool breeze, from its rocky top, we enjoyed the fine panoramic views and scanned the route we were to follow in the next few days - Mts. Sterling, Cobbler, Speculation, the Crosscut Saw, like a disagreeable dragon, and Howitt, to name the high spots.

Roads are steadily encroaching our mountain areas. The jeep track we followed to Sterling continued on for some miles past it, with evidence of recent work on it, while at Woollybutt Saddle (where we lunch. ed) a wide new road cut across our track, and there were gloomy speculations on the fate of the country so opened up. Walking on the jeep track was rough going in many parts where it was water worn, or covered with loose rocks.

The Clear Hills, park-like with large trees and little undergrowth, made pleasant walking on Sunday morning, before we dropped down to the King River - a refreshing sight. Late in the afternoon we reluctantly forsook this sylvan glade to make for the Cobbler Plateau. The track up was good, but even the best track can't get you from 2500' to 4350' without climbing, and it was certainly hot work! It was a late camp that night, and so warm that half the party slept under the stars.

Early starts to avoid walking in the heat of the day, were now the order of the day. Without packs, we reached Bobbler's rocky knob, about 9am, and fine views kept the cameras busy for some time. The Cobbler Plateau is quite well timbered, and the going easy, but mislaying the track once or twice we had a little mild scrub-bashing. Mt. Koonika consists of several sharp eminences with few trees on top, from whose shelter we could view the rocky faces on the S.W. side of the ridge. There followed a couple of miles of rocky sidling and some scrub, before we reached our campsite on Spec. - a fine grassy saddle below the peak, with the Catherine R. rising only a few yards away. A couple of hundred yards' walk brought fine views at sunset, and again in the early morning, when clouds filled the valleys like a sea.

Mt. Buggery lived up to its name, with thick prickly scrub to lacerate sunburnt legs, as well as a climb that was not to be sneered at. (it was about here that the superiority of, say, an ocean cruise over bushwalking as a recreation began to creep into ones thoughts). The seven peaks of the Crosscut (and the track goes over most of them) give magnificent views - and they are well earned!! At Macallister Springs - an oasis carpeted with wild flowers, violets, - we absorbed innumerable billies of tea, and spent the afternoon reclining in the shade. Next morning the five men of the party visited Howitt and Magdala.

The six miles pleasant walking to Howitt Hut introduced us to the fine Snowy Plains with herds of cattle. At the Hut we collected our boxes of food, the first camp-oven damper appeared, and one renegade shaved!! the classical reason for climbing Everest - "Because it's there"- inspired this memento of our visit in the Visitors Book :-

We're no Hillary's or Hunts,
Unfit for any kind of stunts,
And in exhaustion and despair,
We often wish 'it wasn't there'!

The next two days, we spent going south along the Plains; at first along a narrow rocky ridge, then over typical country lightly timbered with snow gums, or large open plains, often following along a creek. From Guy's Hut, where we camped, we detoured to Bryce's Gorge. From Kelly's, where our New Year came in unheralded, we had an early morning scrubby trip to Mt. Reynard, rewarded with fine views to the west, and back over the plains. From here it was down - gently at first, then really down, down, and down the Bennison Spur, where the track was wide, but rough and bare. The Wellington River was reached late in the afternoon. Our last day was spent following the river, crossing it 21

cont..

times, and twice enjoying a swim - the second time in a deep pool, beneath a sheer rock wall. Between crossings we walked park-like grassy flats, or steep spurs, where the ground was bare, till the valley opened out and we found ourselves on the home stretch approaching Licola. A taxi trip some 30 odd miles brought us to Heyfield darkness, where we spent the night (hottest on record) stretched out the open in a camping ground that is not among the State's show places before getting the early morning train for home.

FRY'S..HOWQUA RIVER..EAGLE'S PEAK.

The Mansfield -Mirimbah bus dropped our party of five, late on Christmas Eve at the beginning of the Howqua track, and after walking 1 mile across paddocks, we reached our camp site at the ford of timbertop Creek just before midnight. As we were getting ready for bed, the "squire" of Fry's suddenly appeared on horseback, returning from celebrating Xmas Eve Merrily. We made friends with him, his horse, Dolly, and his three dogs, and had a lengthy chat with him before turning in, and he continued his long ride home.

We woke on Christmas morning to find that Father Christmas had come down a gum tree instead of the usual chimney. Our first aim was Mt. Timbertop. As we climbed up its slopes, Emil, by some novel, and ingenious "plumbing" imitated Moses by getting water out of a rock, at the same time giving an object lesson to the apprentice plumber in the party. After admiring the view, we walked down to the Howqua River, crossed it on a flying fox, and for lunch we paid a return visit to Fred Fry who entertained us by his interesting tales and by making his horses show off their tricks. Soon after leaving Fry's on our way up the Howqua, there was a victorious battle with a reptile, (two strong men versus a two-foot black snake) and soon after that we had to battle against the strong current of the Howqua which we had to ford ten times before reaching our camp site at 6-Mile Creek (where the second John opened her mouth too wide about a certain pair of underpants)

Boxing Day saw us struggling up steep spurs and ridges on our way to Eagle's Peak. It was well in the afternoon when we finally got to the top, but the beautiful views over ranges and ranges of mountains (from Crosscut Saw to Mt. Torbreck, and from Buller and Stirling to Mt. Skene) made it well worth the effort. A Christmas walk is not complete without the party going the wrong way, and when we were half way down from Eagle's Peak, we found we had taken a more direct, but also more difficult way down to Lickhole Creek than we should have taken. It was a weary party that reached a small grassy flat on Lickhole Creek just as the night began to fall.

Monday, the last full day of our walk, started with a pleasant walk down Lickhole Creek, and then over the intervening ridge to Fry's.

There was a swim at a beautiful spot 1/2 mile upstream of the homestead and our farewell to the Howqua, and in the afternoon we walked the latter part of the way back to the Buller Road. An encounter with two schoolteachers who did not like our camp fire, was a sign that we were bringing civilization again. A swim in the Delatite River, while waiting for the bus (or rather while it waited for us), provided a refreshing conclusion to a pleasant trip.

Two pairs of boots deserve special mention. The one started to disintegrate on the morning of the first day. At the end of the third day, when they were held together by hardly more than the laces, they were at a viking's funeral. As far as the second (guess whose they were) was concerned, we soon found out that it was advisable to keep at a respectable distance; for no fingers, bare feet, camp fires, billies, dogs, frying pans, eggs or biscuits survived after colliding with them.

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