



THE NEWS

OF THE MELBOURNE BUSHWALKERS

Edition 301

DECEMBER 1974

Price 3c

MERRY
CHRISTMAS

TO ALL
THE

BUSHIES

FROM THE
EDITOR,
STAFF OF
NEWS

AND THE

COMMITTEE



All correspondence should be addressed to:

The Secretary
Melbourne Bushwalkers
GPO Box 17510
MELBOURNE VIC 3001

Meetings are held in the clubrooms, 14 Mosier Lane, at the rear of the Forum Theatre, every Wednesday night at 7.30 p.m. Visitors are always welcome

COMMITTEE NOTES

CLUB ROOM

The Club Room will be closed on the 25th December but will be open on the 1st January to enable people to book in for the walk on the 5th January.

VAN FARES

It was reported in last month's "News" that van fares had been increased 33% by Gronows. This, apparently, referred to day walks. The cost of van fares for weekend walks has been increased by 50% which is why the cost of fares for weekend walks now seem rather high.

VAN FARES - COLLECTION THEREOF

At the General Meeting on the 27th November, the problem was raised of collecting van fares after a walk, and the balancing of finances at the end. The problem of collecting fares should refer to weekend walks only, as it was stated some time ago that all day walkers should pay the full amount, and it was requested that weekend walkers also pay the full amount, though this was a request rather than a rule. Could we therefore remind weekend walkers that it would help the leader greatly if the full fare for the trip was paid before the walk and not after.

Re the problem of finances not balancing, this often occurs because on the Wednesdays in the Clubroom, the money has been collected by the various Duty Officers because of the absence of the leaders. This is not inferring that Duty Officers are poor mathematicians, but it is often a case of collecting, not just for one walk, but for five, and each walk has to be paid into the Treasurer separately, so confusion over the amounts collected can easily arise.

It is possible that some leaders are under the impression that it is the Duty Officers' responsibility to collect money for fares. This is not so. The Duty Officer is merely doing the leader a favour by collecting the money in the leaders' absence.

It was therefore decided at the Committee meeting that in future the leader only is responsible for the collection of fares for her/his walk. This means that the leader should be in the Clubrooms for the duration that her/his walk is listed on the Walks Notice Board i.e. three Wednesdays prior to the walk. If the leader is present to collect the fares this should also eliminate having to collect money on the van, she/he can canvass for the walk if necessary, and as people often ask for information on the walk and the route the van is leaving Melbourne etc. the leader is very often the only person to answer them.

So leaders, PLEASE REMEMBER, it is YOUR walk and YOUR responsibility to collect and account for all fares. Happy leading!

CLUB CONTACTS

During the period December 21st to January 2nd the Club Contacts will be in the following order:

1. Norm and Edna Richards 857 6793
2. Geoff and Jenny Kenafacke 29 4667

WALK PREVIEWSJANUARY

Please note that two of the dates printed for the walks in January are incorrect. They should read January 5th instead of January 4th and January 12th instead of January 13th.

DAY-WALKS

January 5th FYANSFORD-MOORABOOL RIVER-BAKER'S BRIDGE Easy

Leader: Andy Price
 Transport: Van leaves Batman Ave 9.15 a m - Fare \$2
 Expected time of Return: 8.30 p m
 Map Reference: Geelong 1:63,360
 Approximate Distance: 9 miles

For those wanting an easy and interesting walk with many pretty points. A few bluestone buildings from the early days and a chance to see koala bears (as when previewing) amongst many birds along the banks of the Moorabool River. Bring some water to be sure of a drink, and don't forget your bathers because our lunch spot offers an inviting pool.

January 12th LEDERDERG RIVER AND FAMILY WALK Easy

A leader is required for this walk. Please see Alex Stirkul if you would like to volunteer.

January 19th ECHO FLAT-BOUNDARY TRAIL-GRACE DARLING ROAD-TAGGERTY RIVER Easy/
Medium

Leader: Fred Halls (p) 973724
 Transport: Van leaves Batman Ave 9.15 a m (SHARP) - Fare \$2.50
 Expected time of return: 9.00 p m
 Map Reference: Taggerty - FCV
 Approximate Distance: 10-11 miles

At this time of the year, normally there is good walking through enchanting silvered snow gums growing on high plains, and through thick growths of flowering alpine plants, along a narrow pad. Altitude c. 4,700 ft. The Walk is mainly along soft bush tracks. In particular, look for lovely Cascade Everlasting, Golden Oxylobium and red Royal Grevillea. Also tall Woollybutts and Beech groves. For further information refer to "Walk" 1974 Page 72 - first section. We shall have to keep moving due to a late start, because of the slow van trip. A couple of uphill sections provide the medium part of the walk, the rest is relatively easy. If fire danger should threaten, or total fire ban, there may need to be a change of plans.

January 26th LAUNCHING PLACE VIA MT THULE FROM THREE BRIDGES Easy/
Medium

Leader: George Telehin (b) 387 1066 X 422
 Transport: Van leaves Batman Ave 9.15 a m - Fare \$2
 Expected time of return: 8.30 - 9.00 p m
 Map Reference: Gembrook 1:50,000
 Approximate Distance: 11 miles

A pleasant ridge walk covering approximately 11 miles mostly along old four-wheel drive tracks through timbered country. Bring water for lunch.

WEEKEND-WALKS

January 11-12th LILLO DERBY: LERDERDERG RIVER Easy

Leader: Alec Proudfoot
 Transport: Van leaves Batman Ave 1.30 p m - Fare \$2
 Expected time of return: 7.00 p m
 Approximate Distance: 8 miles

This classic event (2nd in fame only to the Melbourne Cup) will be held this Summer on the 12th January on the usual time-renowned course in the Lerdederg River. Regrettably our President, programmed to preside over the memorable event, will be in England (we understand at Royal Command to conduct a similar event on the Thames) and has deputed the Ex. to take over the Colonials.

The van leaves Batman Avenue Terminal at 1.30 p m on the 11th January. We disembark at Darley Ford, walk about four miles up river and set up tents beside the course. There will be time during the afternoon and long evening to get in some final

WEEKEND WALK PREVIEWS CONTINUED

practice on the lilos and to take a quiet walk along the river. Sand shoes are recommended for walking in the stream. Proceedings would be enlivened if individuals or groups put on variety turns - fancy dress, water ballet, water polo etc. Think about it and let me know.

So - bring your bathers, your lilos, your best holiday mood to the Lerdederg on the 11th and 12th and herald the arrival of another year.

January 17th - 19th BAW BAW-MT ERICA-MUSHROOM ROCKS Medium

Leader: Ron Filsell (p) 874 6431
 Transport: Van leaves Batman Ave 6.30 p m - Fare \$8
 Expected time of return: 9.00 p m
 Map Reference: State Aerial Survey Walhala B and D
 Approximate Distance: 18 miles

A pleasant easy walk across the Bay Baw Plateau from the Upper Thomson to above Erica with good open views and plenty of wild flowers. There is plenty of water. Saturday night's camp will probably be at Mustering Flat overlooking the Thomson Valley. If you are thinking of trying your first weekender this is just the walk.

January 24th - 27th DINNER PLAIN-MAYFORD-KING SPUR-DARGO HIGH PLAINS Easy/
Medium

Leader: Peter Ashby (b) 329 6711
 Transport: Private(not van as in programme)
 Expected time of return: 8.00 p m
 Map Reference: Forests Commission Victoria Dargo 823
 Approximate Distance: 20 miles

A walk through alpine country and most of it is described in an article by Tyrone Thomas for 1973 "Walk" Page 63.

January 24th - 27th MT ST BERNARD-THE TWINS-MT SELWYN-TI-TREE RANGE-WONGUNGURRA RIVER-BLUE RAG RANGE-MT BLUE RAG Medium/
Hard

Leader: Tim Dent (b) 69 7073
 Transport: Private (not van as in programme)
 Expected time of return: 10 p m
 Map reference: Dargo 1" - 1 mile (FCV)
 Howitt 1" - 1 mile (Lands Dept.)
 Approximate distance: 35 miles

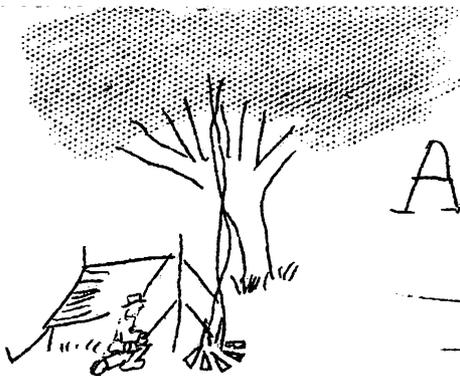
Remember back almost two years ago to a walk with a difference - 3 days in the Baw Baws? This walk may be along similar lines, though the leader will attempt to make it more conventional but still with that un-previewed section of trackless country (for day no. 2.) Most of this walk is along seldom visited alpine ridges with plenty of ups and downs. Camp sites are of unknown quality, so be prepared for anything. Water should be available for each night but come prepared (with a large water-bottle) in case the precious clear fluid is scarce.

MEETING OF CONSERVATION GROUP

The first meeting of the MBW Conservation Group will be held on January 20th at 7.00 p m in the Club Rooms. Anyone in the Club who is concerned about conservation aspects of bush-walking is invited to come along. Don't wait to be invited personally!

** THE ALPS AT THE CROSSROADS**

* This book is an absolute MUST for all bush walkers. It is not just another *
 * conservation book. It is a book written BY one of us FOR us, expressing OUR point *
 * of view on issues which affect US directly. Buy one for Christmas - preferably *
 * more than one! Cost is only \$3.50 (retail) or \$2.50 (direct). The book is *
 * beautifully presented, has some incredible pictures and the contents make tremendously*
 * interesting reading. If you are interested in buying one please contact either *
 * Gerry Grandage (b)640251 x 532 or Tim Dent (b) 792 8515. *



ALONG THE TRACK

HARCOURT-EXPEDITION PASS RESERVOIR-GOLDEN POINT

"Starting with a pleasant walk through apple-orchard country, hopefully at blossom time. This is easy ridge walking at its best with plenty of good views and some variety around the reservoir". Leader's preview, August "News".

As you can see, the Leader promised "some variety around the reservoir". Well, I'll leave that 'till later, for there was ample variety long before we reached the reservoir, and for a good while afterwards, too. (What else could be expected from a situation where the Leader persisted in stating that he did not know where he was while his 24 trusting followers steadfastly refused to believe him?)

Take, for example, the variety of fences and gates which we were obliged to find our way over, under and through. No two were alike. Not only were there high ones, low ones, slack ones, taut ones, and broken down ones, but we were also treated to one sporting a red "KEEP OUT. TRESPASSERS PROSECUTED" sign, and to one with a bull on the other side. Last, but by no means least, came a gate so firmly locked that it was only with considerable difficulty that our Leader was able to prise it open to allow us to escape to the waiting van!

Then there was the variety of animals. At lunch time, as we sat gazing across the apple blossom to the distant hills, a truly enormous Borzoi, looking more like a horse than a hound ("It IS a horse", Otto declared) galloped past, duly admired by the dog lovers amongst us. Sheep were everywhere - who could forget the abandoned lamb found by the Borzoi's owners? And that bull I mentioned was accompanied by his many wives. We also saw two horses, numerous rabbits, and some kangaroos. The variety of birds in the area was considerable. Yellow-tailed Thornbills, Sallows, various Honeyeaters, Grey Shrike Thrushes, Hawks, Blue Wrens, Magpies, Rosellas, Kookaburras, Willie Wagtails, Ravens, White Cockatoos, Cuckoos and Grey Fantails abounded, and no doubt there were many other species besides. Wildflowers, too, were varied though not prevalent in this grazing country. Pimelias, Caladenias, Hardenbergia, Tetrthea, Early Nancy and Acacias were easily seen.

Easy ridge walking it was, but even here there was a variety in the terrain. How about that lovely steep bank where we all accelerated from 0 to 50 in 2 seconds flat! And of course the weather deserves a mention, for despite the grim forebodings of the Bureau the promised rain failed to arrive, and we were treated to bright sunshine, heavily overcast skies, and all the variations in between.

Perhaps the best variety of all was to be found among the walkers themselves, beautifully displayed in the 25 different ways of crossing the creek at the reservoir. Then there was the group which was almost left behind, and, by contrast, the breakaway group, led, needless to say, by Dave and Alex. This latter group consisted of members so energetic that even after throwing several hefty boulders over a cliff to the water below (presumably to raise the water level), they just had to double the distance of the walk in order to be satisfied. So it was that they were seen disappearing at top speed over the hill while the rest of the party sat down to a leisurely afternoon tea followed by a pleasant ramble to the van. Some time later when we picked up the Energetica we learnt that they had been waiting 3/4 hour for us. Perhaps they should have gone 3 times as far.

Thank you Stan, for a very enjoyable walk.

Virgil Davis

THE FOSSIL IS AROUND SOMEWHERE — PROBABLY LOOKING OVER YOUR SHOULDER NOW, SO WATCH WHAT YOU DO OR YOU'LL FIND YOURSELF SPOOKED!

WHY CONSERVATION?

Old Chinese proverb: "Bush-walkers who bury head in sand, soon have nowhere to go".

Conservation is a much misunderstood word. In its broadest sense it refers to three aspects: (a) the effective use of renewable resources such as timber and water, (b) the effective use of non-renewable resources such as minerals, and (c) the preservation of flora and fauna. "Effective use" implies effectiveness for the future community as well as the present one. Thus conservationists in general become involved in a wide range of issues. At one extreme there are urban problems, such as the Newport Power Station, and at the other we have problems of wilderness preservation such as South West Tasmania. As thinking individuals we should be concerned with the effective use of the natural environment - more specifically with its preservation. The natural environment is a non-renewable resource in that it can be destroyed but not re-created (except by extensive restoration). Some valuable economic resources exist in the natural environment and are renewable if the environment is managed effectively. Flora and fauna are an integral part of this environment. Thus conservation of the natural environment is a community need covering all three aspects listed above.

Before continuing it is worth asking why we like bushwalking. Perhaps the main reason is that we appreciate the natural environment for its own sake - we like the scenery, the various forms of vegetation and their inter-relation, the animals and birds, the rock formations, the rivers, and all the other elements which combine to make the environment what it is. For some of us this appreciation is enhanced by remoteness from civilisation. In addition we benefit from the sense of adventure which comes from our commitment to the environment and to our ability to live in it. There is also the satisfaction of physical exertion - the sense of achievement in planning a trip and realising the objectives - the friendship with companions who have similar values to our own - also competition with these companions. For some of us there is a strong element of escapism. Different people have different combinations of motives for walking, but most would agree that the first two (the natural environment for its own sake, and our commitment to it) are the most important. Both these imply our dependence on the environment. Other activities (such as ski-touring, rock-climbing, mountaineering, canoeing, caving and nature study) have similar motives with different priorities.

Why should bush-walkers be concerned with conservation, even if only in the limited sense of preserving our bushland? The answer is that the community has conflicting demands on bushland usage. These demands have been increasing fairly slowly in the past, but have now reached the stage where our bushland is being exploited by incorrect use (from our point of view) at an ever increasing rate. The visible evidence of this is clear for all bushwalkers to see. Examples in Victoria are FCV logging in the Mt Despair area, the upper Howqua, Mt Stirling, the East Kiewa, etc.: in the Grampians land is being cleared for farmlets, holiday blocks, pine plantations and olive groves. On the Bogong High Plains we see pilot plantings of pine trees. Elsewhere land is being cleared for farming with little concern as to whether this really is the best long term use of the land. Trail bikes and four wheel drives are causing widespread visible damage to our bushland. The list goes on. Decisions are now being made at such a rate that in a few more years our natural environment will have suffered a drastic reduction in extent and an equally drastic alteration in character. Bushwalking and other forms of adventure recreation will become a mere shadow of what they are now.

It is unrealistic for us to say that all such activity is wrong. We must realise that the community is entitled to demand timber, farming produce etc. and that people are entitled to have holiday homes in the bush. What we require is a rational land use policy - one which recognizes conflicting demands on land use, segregates incompatible uses, and allows multi-use land only where the demands are genuinely compatible.

How long will the current process of bushland consumption continue? It will continue until the decision makers recognise the rights of bush-walkers (and many others) as regards conservation - not to mention the valid scientific and long term economic reasons for conservation. It is the nature of democratic societies that decision makers respond to community needs only when these are expressed by pressure. Currently the most effective pressure is coming from those sections of the community which are concerned with material needs, e.g. the PCV, MCBW, SECV, CFB, the farming

industry, the mining companies, etc. Various conservation bodies such as the ACF and the Victorian EPA are opposing this pressure on a wide range of issues. However, the only body in Victoria which is set up on behalf of bush-walkers exclusively is the FVWC. Through no fault of its own, the Federation is nowhere nearly as effective as it could be in looking after our future interests. It suffers severely from lack of support from bushwalkers who it represents. In the final analysis it is a problem concerning us as individuals - individuals who are unaware of conservation problems which affect us, and/or unwilling to do anything about them. We seem to be unaware that conservation is not just a hobby which some bushwalkers can indulge in as an interest secondary to walking itself, but rather it is something which crucially affects our future as bushwalkers. If most of us continue to bury our heads in the sand as we are doing now, we have no hope of influencing the decision making process.

To end on an optimistic note, I would draw your attention to a set of problems which have much in common with bushland conservation, and which are being rectified as a result of pressure of public opinion. I refer to the state of Melbourne's inner suburbs a few years ago. Large areas had been allowed to deteriorate to virtually slum-like conditions. The landscape seemed destined to become dominated by freeways and high-rise flats with a few rows of derelict terrace houses rotting in the background. Long term community needs were being neglected in favour of the apparent short term needs of the economic system. However, there arose a spontaneous demand for improvement. This demand was based not on economic criteria but on human needs. People organized their ideas, formed Resident Action Groups, and influenced the decision making process. The visible results are obvious to anyone driving around the residential areas of the inner suburbs. There is no longer such a widespread threat from the freeway planners and the Housing Commission. Can bushwalkers and other like-minded people achieve such dramatic results in the issues which affect them?

In your next issue of "News" I hope to make a few suggestions as to what you might do.

Jerry Grandage

THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT NEW ZEALAND by Geoff Crapper

Here are a few bits of accumulated knowledge from my experiences last January that might make easier going for anyone contemplating a trip to N Z in the near future:-

- * Aussie 2 cent pieces are too fat for N Z telephones (that's probably the first thing you'll find out)
- * Shellite choofers are the best value over there, and shellite is called "white spirit fuel"
- * GAZ type gas cans are readily obtainable but you can't buy Pongrass or Redigas Cans anywhere
- * New Zealanders will be amazed if they happen to see your water bag or paddy fingers, it's like flashing beads and mirrors in front of natives
- * NZ rucksacks, sleeping bags etc. are not much cheaper than over there and many items are in short supply
- * Pint of milk only costs about 5 cents
- * Beware of the sand flies in the South Island. "Dimp" is a fairly good repellent but nothing really works. They seem to affect the ankles where the boot rubs and their bite forms nasty reddish scabs
- * Ben Lomond and the Remarkables are well worth climbing offering terrific views of Lake Wakatipu
- * Try to avoid the West Coast, that is, Fox Glacier, Hoast, Greymouth, the weather there is often foul and the scenery is not very inspiring compared with the rest of the magnificent South
- * Don't fall for the trap of asking for a 15 cent double header icecream in Christchurch..... it'll take you half an hour to eat it.
- * Hitch hiking in the North island just isn't on, the South Island is a bit better
- * NZ Railway Buses are a pretty reasonable way of travelling

HOUSE TO BE VACATED

House with 2 or 3 bedrooms in North Fitzroy is to be vacated for about 3 months during March-June 1975. It is only about 10 minutes drive from Kosier Lane. Rent is negotiable, but we'll be glad for anything we can get! Contact Jerry Grandage if interested.

AMENDMENTS TO ADDRESS LIST

Greaves, Kevin and Shirley (nee Hoadley) - 7/15 Auburn Grove, Hawthorn East 3123
(p) 82 5094 (b)63 4411 Shirley
Ian Hill - 792 8515

WELCOME TO THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBER

Danaher, Dennis - 8 White Street, Windsor 3181 (b) Shell Company X 771

Thank you all contributors to this month's "News", and to GWJ, I definitely hope to put your article in the January "News" - once again, I have just run out of space.

SUGGAN BUGGAN SCHOOL

Back in about 1966, one of our long standing members, Gwynnyth Taylor heard through a friend that the little old Bush School at Suggan Buggan was in rather a decrepit state. Gwynnyth inspired various of our members at that stage (some are still members) to attend work parties to help in the restoration of a piece of Victorian history. An article on the School House appears in "Walk" 1970.

Gwynnyth has written informing us that the Gelantipy Historical Society welcomes a many bushies as would like to attend the official opening of the Suggan Buggan Schoolhouse which is to take place on Saturday 4th January at 2.30 p.m. The Tambo Shire President is to do the honours - "Bring your friends and a picnic basket. Cup of tea provided. Dress informal". The Secretary of the Society is Mrs Margaret Henham whose address is "Ridge View", Murrindal via Buchan. Mrs Henham also says she has a house on her farm which she would like to let to groups such as the bushies. If interested, please contact Mrs Fenham.

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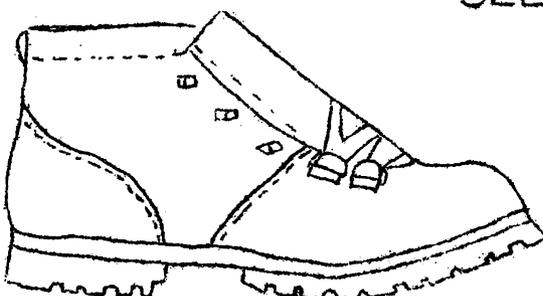
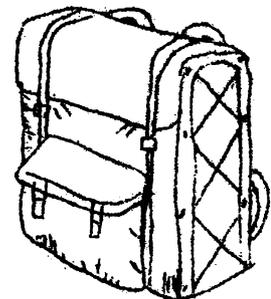
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