



THE NEWS

OF THE MELBOURNE BUSHWALKERS

Edition 299

October, 1974

Price 3c

GIPPSLAND GOLD, ALFRED HOWITT, AND THE PRESIDENT'S WEEKEND 1974.

If you read Howitt's biography "Come Wind Come Weather" there is a chapter devoted to his explorations of Gippsland. He was commissioned by the Victorian Government to find gold in order to boost the declining economy. Here is an excerpt from the book of his explorations:- "The Alpine country was a constant delight to Howitt and his long tramps took him among the peaks of the Great Dividing Range or camping at their base in view of the 'great snowy mountains looking like frosted silver and with black gorges and chasms running among their rugged spurs'. October saw them prospecting the Wennengatta River and its tributary the Wongungarra, the east branch of which Howitt named the Crooked River when he grew disgusted at its constant meanderings. He lingered in the vicinity of the Crooked River as 'prospects' were promising and the party followed up the small streams that fed it, prospecting as they went, as is the pattern in the search for gold. On 17th November, on Good Luck Creek, Short washed a prospect of 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ pennyweights of payable gold - the best results the party had. 'In one day's work three of us washed out about £7- 10 worth of "nuggety gold"! ... We have got prospects that will pay for sluicing about 10/- to 12/- per man per day.' Howitt showed caution in announcing his find to the Board, as he could not be certain that the future of the Crooked River field would be extraordinarily good but, nevertheless, he knew that it had possibilities. This proved to be true, although its prosperity was short lived and was outshone by the discovery of reef gold at Grant by Angus McMillan and his party in 1864 which ushered in an era of reef gold discoveries and workings in Gippsland.

Howitt had found gold, but he still had work to do. News of the find went down country, and soon the vanguard of prospectors were on their way up - Howitt was now faced with the necessity of making tracks, not only for the packteams, but for the 'rush' which was beginning in earnest. His contract with the Board did not allow the leader of the prospecting party to make any personal gain from the discovery, but his men were under no such bond and at once handed in their resignations and took up their gold dishes again - this time on their own behalf. 'All my men are going to leave me and I cannot object though I am afraid I shall not get another such party in a hurry'. However, to help out their leader with the road-making, five of the men withdrew their resignations.

For fifty miles we have formed a very good track (considering) for horses - the trees and scrub cut down - the great scrubby flats burnt - several small bridges made and I daresay ten miles formed by cutting paths along the faces of the steep mountains-down precipices a hundred feet above the river. One cutting is over a mile long - and they look at a distance like garden paths winding along the hill sides.

If the establishment of the goldfield was the end of Howitt's mission on the Crooked River, it was by no means the end of his interest in the area, and echoes of its progress were to ring through his letters for some years to come. Although the discovery of reef gold to some extent eclipsed his alluvial find at the Crooked River, it was the beginning of an increase in population and prosperity in Gippsland and in the improved economy of the colony of Victoria. A few months after he left, he was able to report that 'the Crooked River is going on well there are 600 people up there and eating-housed on the road'. Later, he wrote: 'Gippsland had received quite an impetus from it; there are hotels, stores and butchers' and 'the Crooked River diggings are still going ahead a tolerable population is collecting and a line of coaches is to be put on again from the port (Albert) to Sale'.

After reading this it is all too easy to be attracted to this area and see what remains. This is what I want to do for this year's President Weekend. The journey is long, but I hope the walk will be worthwhile.

Friday night camp will be at Grant, which can be found by travelling to Dargo (200 miles) then from the township follow the road to the highplain for 11 miles to Grant Junction sign posted, turn left and follow the track to the site of Grant (approx. 3 miles).

The walk will be circular taking in the sites of the old mining towns of

cont'd. Page

All correspondence should be addressed to:

The Secretary, Melbourne Bushwalkers,
G.P.O. Box 1751Q, Melbourne, Vic. 3001

Meetings are held in the clubrooms 14 Hosier Lane at the rear of the Forum Theatre every Wednesday night at 7.30 pm. Visitors are always welcome.

NOVEMBER SOCIAL EVENTS

- Nov. 6th Film "Back of Beyond" on the Birdsville Track and surroundings.
The film will start at 7.45 pm. as it is 1 hour long.
- Nov. 20th Slides shown by Tyrone Thomas on "Walking Areas in Africa".
- Nov. 26th Club Dinner - see elsewhere in this "News" for full details.

WALK 1975

The printing of Walk 75 has started and it is hoped that it will be available middle of October.

There will be a display at the MMBW Head Office on Oct. 22nd-25th between 9am - 4.30pm on The Environmental studies of the Thompson River development Stage 3.

On Sat. Nov. 16th an open Forum will be held at Burnley Horticultural College on road reserves and Conservation, between 9am-4.30pm. organised by V.N.P.A. and others.

Australian Conservation Foundation want colour or black and white slides/photos on packaging and disposal theme of woodchopping and rain forest.

THE ALPS AT THE CROSSROADS - Thank you to those people who helped in the preparation of this book. You will be pleased to know the book is now at the printers. Orders are now being taken. This book will make a beautiful present. Order forms should be available soon or ring the Executive Secretary, MMBW office 347 8977 for further information. Further details on the Book Launching will be advised in next month's "News", or in the clubrooms.

DOES THIS CLUB NEED A CONSERVATION COMMITTEE?

At its next meeting (Nov. 11th) the Club Committee will discuss the pros and cons of us forming our own Conservation Committee. The main reason for considering this is the current widespread apathy among Club members on conservation matters which will affect future bush-walking. The existence of our own Conservation Committee could stimulate interest at grass-roots level, and improve awareness of conservation problems and how to tackle them. The Committee could also pursue a more activist role on some issues if it feels strongly enough.

The reasons against are firstly the time and effort involved (which could otherwise be directed into the Federation Conservation Committee), and secondly the possible duplication of Federation activities.

What do you think? Are you concerned with the future of bush-walking? Do you think the formation of our own Conservation Committee will help? If so, what should it do and how should it operate? Are you willing to participate? Is the whole idea a waste of effort? Please give your views to Jerry Grandage or any other Committee member before Nov. 8th.

cont'd. from cover page. - The President's Weekend

Bulltown, Hogtown, Talbotville, Howittville and Winchester following the Crooked River to its junction with the Wongumarra. There are no guarantees but it won't be an easy walk. A 900 metre climb from Winchester back to Grant ensures that. But it should be spectacular, interesting and enjoyable.

Note I'm not taking any bottles of claret this year!

PRESIDENT'S WEEKEND - Private transport.

Map Reference: VMTC Crooked River Dargo Area (1" to 1m)
Approx. distance - 20 miles.

NOVEMBER WALK PREVIEWSDAY WALKS

- November 3rd GOGHLANDS HILL - MT WILSON - FOSTERS LOOKOUT - GARIBALDI HILL
 Leader: Alex Proudfoot
 Transport: Van leaves Batman Ave. 9.15 am - Fare \$2
 See Leader for further details as I believe that he is previewing the walk while I am typing this.
- Cup Day 5th KILMORE EAST - THE MOUND - MONUMENT HILL - WANDONG
 Leader: Shirley Telehin (p) BH 3871066 x202 (George Telehin)
 AH 7636028 (Mr. Allott)
 Meeting place - Spencer st. station, platform 2.
 Time - 8.25am. train leaves at 8.35am. Note - this time has been given to me by the Vic. Railways as the time of the main train which they assure me will not change but they advise me to ring to check a few days before. So any change will be on the clubrooms notice board and if you are unable to get in to the clubrooms, please ring either of the numbers above.
 We will start from Kilmore E. and walk towards the Mound (Grid 970F kinglake) from there, we will walk over gentle hills towards Monument Hill (grid 9311 kinglake) where we will have a climb of 500'. From there, we will walk over gentle hills to Wandong. The pace will be leisurely as the train doesn't leave until 7.04pm from Wandong (also subject to change?) I suggest that we bring our tea and cook it while we are waiting for the train. ie. have a barbeque. Bring water for lunch. Since we are avoiding roads wher possible, there will be fences to climb.
- November 10th SEE PAGE 4, after weekend walks. - Leader: Tony Walstab
 November 17th ELLIS FALLS - COLIBAN RIVER - TARADALE
 Leader: Marion Hill by the program but I believe she may not be leading this walk. See Alex for further details.
 Transport: Van, Batman Ave. 9.15am. Fare \$3
- November 24th LORNE TEDDY'S LOOKOUT - ST. GEORGE RIVER - PHANTOM FALLS
 Leader: Alwyn Bloom
 Transport: Van, Batman Ave. 9.15am Fare \$3
 Expected time of return: 8 - 9 pm.
 Map Reference: Lorne 1:50,000 Approx. Distance 10 miles.
 An easy climb up to Teddy's Lookout followed by a pleasant walk beside the St. George river, passing the Phantom Falls. Bring bathers. If weather and time permit, a dip in the surf at Lorne may be had.

WEEKEND WALKS

- November 1-3 MT. LOCH - MACHINERY SPUR DIAMANTINA SPUR - TWIN KNOBS - MT. HOTHAM
 Leader: Gary Wills
 Private Transport
 Map Reference: F.C.V.1" - 1 mile Feathertop
 The walk starts at Mt. Hotham, from where we head out to Mt. Loch and down the Machinery Spur to the Kiewa River. From there we climb up the Diamantina Spur to Twin Knobs on the Razor Back where the Leader is proposing that we camp. Although there is no nearby water supply, the Leader is confident that there will be plenty of snow lying around. Although the campsite is not very big, the Leader, has found from past experience that it is a very pleasant place to camp. Sunday will involve an early morning run up to Mt. Feathertop followed by a leisurely walk across the Razorback to Mt. Hotham.
- November 1-5 HORSEYARDS - MOROKA GORGE - SNOWY BLUFF - MT. KENT
 Leader: Jerry Grandage
 Private Transport. Expected time of Return: 11 pm.
 Approx. Distance: 30 miles.
 This will be a good hard 4-day walk in spectacular country. The route taken will depend on the speed of the party and also on the water level. The intention is to start at the Horseyards and walk through the Moroka Gorge on the first day, continue on down

NOVEMBER WALK PREVIEWS (cont'd. from page 3)

WEEKEND WALKS

November 1 - 5 HORSEYARDS - MOROKA GORGE - SNOWY BLUFF - MT. KENT

(cont'd. from P.3) the River to Higgins Yard the second day, climb up onto the Snowy Bluff and return via Shanty Hollow (campsite) and Mt. Kent.

Map Reference: Moroka (Geological Survey) and VMTC Crooked River - Dargo Area.

November 8 - 10 WILKINSON LODGE - BOGONG HIGH PLAINS

Leader: Rod Mattingley

Transport: Private

Map Reference: Bogong High Plains - Algona Guides 1" - 1 mile, or Feathertop FCV. 1" - 1 mile.

Wilky has been the property of the club since 1960 and is about 7 road miles plus 200 yards Shank's pony from Falls Creek. Sufficient "mod cons" have been installed to make it comfortable but not detract from its character.

There must be quite a number of our more recent club members who have not yet had a chance to visit Wilky. This trip is meant for you! A day walk to the Niggerheads and Tawonga Huts will be organised on Saturday for those energetic enough. As the lodge cannot hold more than about 12 comfortably, get your name on the list early.

November 15 - 17

PRESIDENT'S WEEKEND - MT. GRANT - BULLTOWN - CROOKED RIVER - SPRING HILL

See article on front page.

November 22 - 24 McALLISTER RIVER - NO. 2 DIVIDE - MT. CLEAR - MT. HOWITT

Leader: Rod Mattingley

Private Transport

Easy-Medium

Map Reference: VMTC. King, Howqua, Jamieson Rivers 1" - 1 mile, or Howitt 1" - 1 mile.

This walk is recommended for those who have not yet been on a weekend walk in the Alps, as well as for the hoary and grizzled hard-core weekend walkers.

Camp will be made before lunch on Sat. in a typical alpine elysian setting with a side trip along the divide to Mt. Clear in the afternoon. On Sunday the divide will be followed past Hells Window to Howitt and Macalister Springs. Magnificent views will be found lurking in all directions. It will be advisable to bring water for lunch both days.

DAY WALK

November 10 BALD CONE - CHERRY TREE RANGE - MT. EAGLEHAWK - GOULBOURN RIVER

Leader: Tony Walstab

Transport: Van, Batman Ave. 9.15am.

The walk is likely to be changed from that shown on the program due to the Leader previewing it and finding irate land owners. Further details will be supplied by Tony.

OLD-TIMER'S RE-UNION, SATURDAY 26TH OCTOBER
EMERALD LAKE

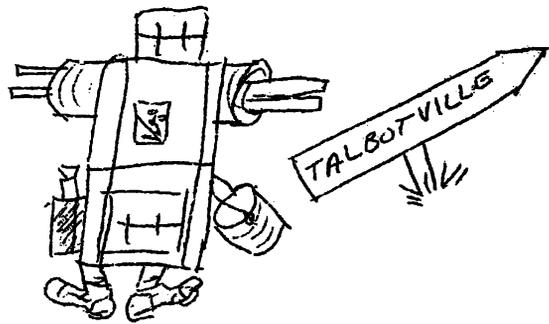
By popular request, the re-union of former members and families will again be held at Emerald Lake. Let friends know, bring lunch, children, and arrive via "Puffing Billy",

Anyone requiring transport from Belgrave or Emerald stations, contact Lorraine Richey phone 48 3885

**** SEE PAGE 7 FOR DETAILS OF OUR NEXT CLUB DINNER



I KNOW SOMEBODY WHO DIDN'T
READ THE PREVIEW OF THE
PRESIDENTS WEEKEND



PHANTOM FOSSIL

QUOTE OF THE MONTH:

Geoff Crapper - "Oh hell, I forget to put any anti-freeze in it".
Geoff was up in the snow for 2 days and as you may guess his car radiator ended up a little worse for wear.

Many congratulations to Lindsay & Les Markham who (in case you didn't know) recently were married. The ceremony took place in (believe it or not) the Royal Mint and was highlighted by the arrival of Lindsay in the Wedding car, a mini panel van!!

Again very best wishes to you both and we hope you will not fade away from bushwalking.

Our globe trotting Tyrone returned to Hosier Lane the other night, he walked in brandishing a Norwegian newspaper with his picture in it. Evidently while he was in Norway a reporter approached him and demanded a story of his travels.

Unfortunately due to the language problem the reporter did not quite get his facts correct and the only thing that was real was Tyrone's picture. The story seemed to be about a 23 year old man called Thomas Tyrone who had taken 17,000 slides of Norway.

This epistle is dedicated to those unfortunate few who have experienced night travel on a country train, without sleepers.

My experience is one of 12 hours from Sydney to Narrabri, a distance of 350 miles. (A cow of a way to start a walk in the Nandewars). Well just what does one do in that time someone may ask, the answer, anything to relieve the misery.

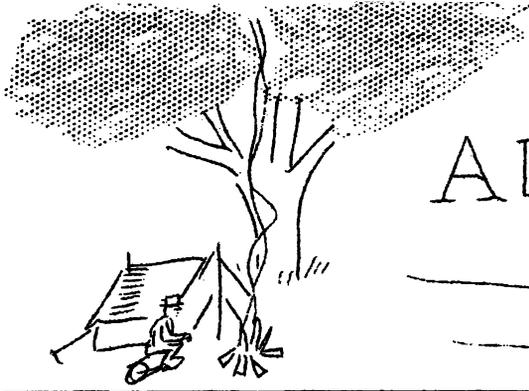
Firstly, one must make immediate friends with those in the compartment, for, sitting gauping at the same face for hours, is enough to stir anyone's nerves. The best way of beating the boredom is to sing; this is reasonably organised for the first half hour but after that, each individual considers his song to be the best and so sings regardless of others; result, eight songs in progress at the one time with subsequent utter rabble and foul words being uttered from sufferers further down the carriage attempting the impossible, sleep.

Next boredom beater is a discussion, one on why the train stops for long periods of time in the middle of nowhere for no apparent reason and why, with a mighty powerful locomotive on the front of the train only does 20-25mph. After this rather futile discussion jokes start coming forth. Ha ha, hilarity at last? no, not for long, it is remarkable how quickly they degenerate, result, end of phase 3 of boredom breaking.

Silence now takes over; broken by the clackity clack of the rails, the creaking woodwork, engine's whistle (again for no apparent reason). The various interesting people resembling Margaret Whitlam, Harry Secombe, and Bugs Bunny, conversing in the corridor and the white faced, harassed, and utterly confused ticket inspector falling over luggage stacked high to insert his mark on the little pieces of cardboard.

After all these occurrences one decides to relive oneself. This is a major operation, involving manoeuvres over cases, avoiding pot-plants, guitars, bunches of bananas and finally live bodies arranged in peculiar positions throughout the train i.e. propped up against dangerously swaying doors, flat on their backs in washrooms, on luggage racks and with stupefied looks on their faces gazing at toilet windows wondering why they can't see out.

Feel like going on a long trip at night? It's not over yet; now for sleeping positions, one can stretch one's legs across onto the opposite seat, but unfortunately the person opposite objects and does the same thing, for he is attempting to be comfortable too; result, one leg on the floor, one leg in the person's mouth, one leg in the air and one leg unaccounted for. Not very comfortable, so this time one tries to lie flat on one's back and stick legs up towards the luggage rack; unsuccessful again, for soon the last meal starts gurgling. Well, as a last resort one can protrude the legs out of the window (provided of course you are either sitting next to the window or are ten feet tall) but this is very dangerous, as leg lopping locomotives lurk outside and pass with amazing regularity. Well, after all the little difficulties are overcome and you do get to sleep, then it's time to wake up again. You just can't win.



ALONG THE TRACK

POOCH AND PARTY

Pooch was a friendly character. He was half heeler, half collie and half God-knows-what. We had met him while stopping to admire a Shetland pony, during the Show day walk, and he was to spend the rest of the day with us.

We had been set down by the Healesville railway line at a place supposed to be Tarrawarra, but the only building in sight was an open sided galvanised iron shed.

The hills rose green and pleasant around us. It was a cold, but sunny day, with clouds scurrying across the sky. From here we followed an incredibly muddy, disused road, across swampy ground which rose gently to dry ground, and thence to the top of a slight ridge, where we continued gently descending through park-like country, and onto another rise. Here we paused a moment to stroke the pony's mane. Pooch offered his services as guide and would not take 'no!' for an answer.

Shortly after this, we hit the Yarra Glen-Yea road which we cross with the intent of skirting Highbrow Hill. Dixon's Creek was wide, swollen fast flowing and yellow. Fortunately there was a bridge not too distant which we crossed and climbing up the hill crossing paddocks headed for some trees, beyond where we lunched in a copse, which provided inadequate protection against the chilly wind. Pooch, who became muddier and muddier with every stop, declined with grave courtesy the sandwiches offered him, although he continued to grace the company with his presence.

Northwards now, through country lightly timbered with rolling hills and open grazing land. Some of the party began to complain about the occasional fence. I must admit that one did cause concern. It was not so much the humans in the party, but Pooch. It was a netting fence, well made so that Pooch could neither climb through, under or over. We continued on, while Pooch ran frantically up and down, on the other side of the fence. Soon, however, our guide had joined us once more. We were not sure how he managed to get past the fence. Soon we reached Pinnacle Lane, crossed Steeles Creek and made the short but steep ascent to the Yarra Ridge, through timber and followed the track along the top to 'Four Winds'. Here we met a tweedy type of gentleman exercising his Yorkshire sheep dog and his tiny dachshund. He suggested that his private road would be a quicker way back to Yarra Glen, but since it involved a fairly long bash on a main road we decided against it. Pooch had become very friendly with the Yorkshire sheep dog and the dachshund, much to their masters' horror. He had to be dragged by the collar away lest "the breeds get mixed". Pooch was having none of it. He dug his feet in, but we persisted. At last we got him away from the canine aristocracy, and he trotted along with us.

Time was getting on, and we had to turn on the pace. Stepping out we got into Yarra Glen four minutes before the one and only train back home. This, I felt was very nice timing, although the other members of the party seemed to think it was cutting things a bit fine. Why? I don't know. We did have a good four minutes up our sleeve, and we had no long wait on a cold platform.

ALONG THE WALL OF BASS STRAIT

As we can't all go for a cruise in winter for some sea breezes to chase away winter wogs, Verna's day walk drew a large crowd. By the time she had sorted the starters from the scratchings, and the unlikely ones from the hopeful overflow at Batman avenue, Gronow's 50-van left with full seating capacity arriving at Rye Back Beach to find a high surf crashing to shore.

Some daring members of the party walked close to the waves and were punished with wet feet, while cautious types chose safety higher up on the sand dunes. When cliffs barred our way, we ascended a track leading through sandy hills covered by a unique variety of coastal vegetation: white flowering tea-tree among succulents with colourful mauve and yellow blooms, while Clematis festooned branches of shrubs with its creamy lace-like blossom.

Lunch at Gunnamatta beach, sheltering among the dunes, enjoying views of dark cliffs, yellow sand and white scalloped, turquoise waves; an occasional ocean liner slipping along the horizon towards Port Philip heads.

Then off again through Sankasia and Boobyalla, until we sighted the (cont'd.P.

CLUB DINNER (Yes another one)

(This is in place of a do closer to Christmas, Social Secretary is going away for the entire month of December).

Where - Diggers Den (corner of Canterbury & Mahoneys Rds. Forest Hills)

When - Tuesday November 26th at 7.30pm onwards.

What to wear - Clothes (mainly of the casual type)

Cost \$5 a head.

This is a relatively new restaurant and quite small when compared with previous places we've been to. We will probably have most of the place to ourselves, thus being a little more cosy than other years.

It is run along the lines of Australian colonial atmosphere, so come along and have a final club fling for the year.

PLEASE SEE GRAHAM HODGSON IF YOU WANT TO GO.

(cont'd. from page 6) Lighthouse and steep rocky extreme end of Cape Schank, crisscrossed by tracks that many explored.

I'm sure that others like myself were interested in Russell Wilk's article in August "News" on this attractive area. Perhaps he will lead a weekend walk there for us?

Thanks to the leader for a refreshing day.

"One of the Forty-Nine"

ADDITIONS &/OR ALTERATIONS TO MEMBERSHIP LIST -

Geoff Kenafacke - b) 347 4822 x 26
 Gerry McPhee - p) 387 3417 b) 345 2822 x 2007
 John Oxley - b) 544 8111
 Rosemary Rider - 6 Heaton Avenue, Glen Iris.
 Greg Stow 26 Union Street, West Preston, 3072
 Peter Thomson - b) 544 0811 x 3914
 Carolyn Venn - 1/8-10 Clyde St., Maribyrnong, 3032 p) 3183371
 Ed Lawton, A.T.T.U., R.A.A.F. Base, Richmond, N.S.W. 2755

WELCOME BACK -

Ian Morrison P.O. Box 22, Middle Brighton, 3186 p) 587817 b) 906044
 Christine Nichol - 11/21 Irving Ave., Windsor, 3181 p) 519698
 John Quilky - 7 Welfare Pde., Ashburton, 3147 b) 579 1011
 Mike Reynolds - 1/8-10 Clyde St., Maribyrnong, 3032 p) 3183371
 Tyrone Thomas - 2A Tyne St., Box Hill North, 3129 p) 895197

WELCOME TO THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS -

Shane Locke - 12 Tweedside St., Essendon, 3040
 Philip Pennell - 12 Chester St., Moonee Ponds, 3039 p) 377781

FURTHER NOTE RE VEHICLE CONTROL REGS.

On 4th October I spoke to Mr. Hall who is the "Superintendent of Crown Land Management", for the Lands Department.

He said that he would very much appreciate notification from bushwalkers of "REGULAR, HEAVY, PATTERNS" of cross country use of trail bikes and similar inventions of the devil (my rethoric). If he can establish regular patterns of abuse, he can arrange for the Police to be in attendance at the next likely occasion.

He is not able to do anything about isolated incidences of illegal use of trail bikes. Unless there is a pattern he can make plans, he is not interested in hearing from us. Patterns of abuse should be reported to him on 63 0321, or to one of the 160 Crown Land Bailiffs. The address of the appropriate Bailiff can be obtained from Mr. Hall, Gerry McPhee (pte. 387 3417) or Jerry Grandage at the Clubrooms.

In general, it appears from the response to my letter, that the Police Dept. are not going to do anything about the incident. Looks like we might have to resort to a little direct action against the trail bike menace.

Gerry McPhee

ACTING NEWS CONVENOR

Thanks to all the people who contributed articles for News. Unfortunately I was unable to fit them all in so will hand the rest over to Helen when she returns for the following issue. Others please keep writing as plenty of articles are wanted to keep News going. - Joy Bover -

PLEASE DO NOT TOSS RUBBISH FROM GRONOW'S VAN. THERE IS USUALLY A CONTAINER PROVIDED FOR THIS PURPOSE. IT IS AN OFFENCE TO THROW ANY OBJECT FROM A VEHICLE, AND NOBODY APPRECIATES BEING Clobbered BY AN UNIDENTIFIED FLYING APPLE CORE.

A Mr. R. Austin of Lilydale, phone 735 1345, is looking for a second hand H-frame pack. If anyone has one they wish to sell please contact Mr. Austin.

Geoff Kenafacke has supplied the following information -

Two items concerning Mt. Feathertop.

Firstly - a recent ski party found the Federation Hut had been the site for a booze-up and the floor was literally covered with empty cans. Worse yet, some other idiot hid a live shotgun cartridge amongst things in the fireplace and this exploded when the fire was first lit.

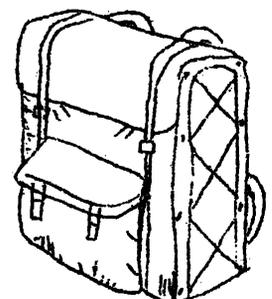
As a result of the same ski trip, involving serious injury to a member near the Feathertop summit, Hotham skiers have apparently now cached a sled at Federation Hut for use in emergencies.

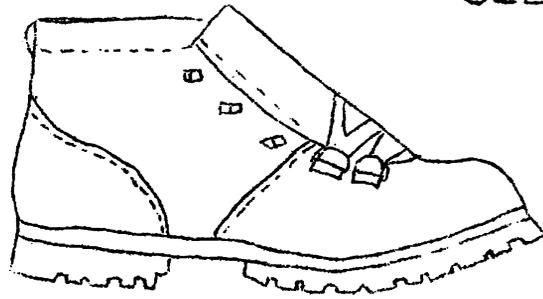
Never let success hide its emptiness from you, achievement its nothingness, toil its desolation. And so keep alive the incentive to push on further, that pain in the soul which drives us beyond ourselves.

Whither? That I don't know. That I don't ask to know.

- Dag Hammarskjold -

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