



THE NEWS

OF THE MELBOURNE BUSHWALKERS

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MAY, 1979

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DONT BE A

DONKEY

PAY YOUR SUBS

If this donkey has a

RED NOSE

this is your last copy
of "NEWS"



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VISITOR (ON ALL WALKS)	\$ 1
NEWS SUBSCRIBER	\$ 3

PLEASE NOTE:-

Correspondence should be addressed to:-

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

Meetings are held in the clubrooms, 14 Hosier Lane, at the rear of the Forum Theatre, every Wednesday night at 7.00 p.m. Visitors are always welcome.

Day Walks - Winter ProgrammeJUNE WALK PREVIEWS

June 3rd BEACH WALK - KILCUNDA - POWLETT RIVER
TRANSPORT: Van from Batman Ave., 9.15 a.m.
LEADER: Ian Hargreaves
EXPECTED TIME OF RETURN: 8 p.m.
MAP REFERENCE: Wonthaggi 1:100,000
APPROXIMATE DISTANCE: 12 kms.

A beach walk in winter! Well I'll try anything once. We start on the outskirts of the thriving metropolis of Kilcunda. Then follow the beach to the Powlett River. We travel inland to the Bridge then follow beach and finally a road to the town? of Hickborough where the van will be waiting. Bring water, parka and warm clothes and enjoy the sound of surf breaking (it did on the preview) and the sight of the numerous sand ridges mentioned on the map.

June 10th MT. SLIDE - JEHOOPHAT VALLEY - ST. ANDREWS
LEADER: Graham Mascas
TRANSPORT: Van from Batman Av ., 9.15 a.m.
EXPECTED TIME OF RETURN: Unknown
MAP REFERENCE Yarra Glen 1:50,000
APPROXIMATE DISTANCE: 20 kms.

This is not an easy walk and is not recommended for first-timers. Most of the walk is in the King Lake National Park. Leaving the Mt.Slide Rd., we will head west across the grain of the country giving 6 climbs for the day, some quite steep. A total of 20 kms, together with the ups and downs makes this a medium/hard walk with plenty of challenge. Come along and enjoy(?) a really invigorating walk.

June 24th Cycling trip. All relevant information unknown. Please see Otto Christiansen in clubrooms on Wednesdays

June 24th BREAK O'DAY - DEVLINS BRIDGE
LEADER: Peter Bullard
TRANSPORT: Van from Batman Ave., 9.15 a.m.
EXPECTED TIME OF RETURN: Unknown
MAP REFERENCE: Glenburn 1:50,000
APPROXIMATE DISTANCE: 12 miles

This will be a walk along open ridges with views into the Yea River Valley.

When this was printed I had as yet not previewed it but I shall before the walk. Bring water for lunch and a parka is a MUST Also there will not be very much climbing.

Weekend Walks

1-3 June: WARATAH BAY - CAPE LIPTRAP
LEADER: Ian Stewart
TRANSPORT: Van from Batman Ave., at 6.30 p.m.
EXPECTED TIME OF RETURN: 5.00 p.m.
MAP REFERENCE: Wonthaggi 1:100,000 (Nat. map)
APPROXIMATE DISTANCE 10 miles (Easy/Medium)

Cont'd.....

Weekend walk cont'd....
 Waratah Bay - Cape Liptrap

This is an easy, quite short walk along a scenic stretch of coastline. There are cliffs, caves, interesting rock formations, coastal scrub and views of Wilsons Prom. in the distances

The only reason the walk is graded easy/medium rather than dead easy is that there are sections of rock-hopping which present some difficulty when wearing a pack.

On Friday night we will camp at Walkerville camping ground, and on Saturday night, on or very close to a sandy beach. We should reach Cape Liptrap about midday on Sunday and can spend some time exploring further round the coast towards Morgans Beach if people are interested.

9-10 June BELGRAVE - KALLISTA - LYREBIRD WALK

LEADER Sue Filson
 TRANSPORT: Train
 EXPECTED TIME OF RETURN: 4.30 p.m.
 MAP REFERENCE: Unstated
 APPROXIMATE DISTANCE: Unstated

Resurrecting an old tradition: A very easy walk-stroll for beginners. Meet under the clocks at Flinders Street on Saturday in time to catch the 1.33 p.m. train to Belgrave. A short walk to the Kallista Hall where we will stay the night. Please bring one dollar to cover the cost of the hall. We will be up before dawn to wander through Sherbrooke Forest hopefully to see the Lyrebirds displaying their finery. Return train from Belgrave leaves at 2.43 p.m.

15-18 June WYPERFELD - BASE CAMP

LEADER: Marijke Mascas
 TRANSPORT: Private
 EXPECTED TIME OF RETURN: Unstated
 MAP REFERENCE: (Unstated)
 Approximate distance: (Unstated)

A base camp in a most enjoyable spot in the Mallee country.

Wyperfeld is a National Park. Wood for fires is supplied by the ranger, no extra wood must be gathered within the national park, so bring chuffers for that quick brew you may need if the weather is cold. Fires may ONLY be lit at the campsites. Two full day walks are planned in the park. There is an abundance of wildlife, although it may be a bit early for spring flowers, but bring all your books, as I will allow plenty of time to look at plants etc.

15-18 June WYPERFELD - PINE PLAINS

LEADER: Rex Filson
 TRANSPORT: Private
 EXPECTED TIME OF RETURN: Late
 MAP REFERENCE: Altona Wyperfeld National Park
 APPROXIMATE DISTANCE: 50-60 Kms.

Friday night will see us camped at the Wonga Hut campsite. Saturday morning will be an early start for a walk westwards through the low heathland visiting the only significant rocky outcrop in the park. We will camp outside the western boundary on Saturday night. This will be a dry camp so carry all the water that you require for Saturday and Sunday. On Sunday we will continue through the heathland to the pine forests to the north of the park where we will camp - hopefully there will be

Cont'd...

Weekend walks cont'd...
WYPERFELD - PINE PLAINS

water at the campsite. Monday's walk will be back to Wonga Hut through the central lakes system. Long days will be the feature of this walk, together with beautiful countryside and the cool conditions of our dry country in winter.

* Last time I led a walk in Wyperfeld it rained so do not forget a jumper and parka.

PLEASE NOTE AMBITIOUS SKIERS

Winter skiing trip.

I am planning a skiing trip from Snowy Plains through to The Bluff over a period of 7-8 days in August or September this year. A food dump will be necessary near Macalister Springs, which will need to be organized pronto. If you are interested give me a ring on 45 2977 in the evenings.

Ken MacMahon

SOCIAL EVENTS

MAY

Gather round all prospective roller - skaters!!!!!!!!????

It does not matter if you can't roller-skate, you will soon learn.

WHERE: Rollercity, 200 Johnston Street, Collingwood.

WHEN: Thursday 31st May, 1979

TIME: 7.30 - 10.00pm.

COST: Only \$1.50 per head for admission fee and skate hire.

See Prue in clubrooms for any further details required.



IT MUST RAIN, I HAVEN'T PUT MY TENT UP, MY PARKA IS AT THE BOTTOM OF MY PACK AND I'VE CAMPED IN A DRIED LAKEBED. WHAT ELSE CAN I DO ?

L O P E Z

I heard this story the other night around the campfire - when the fire was low and the witching hour was upon us, so you may believe it or not. It seems the story teller was in Tassie recently, when he saw "the weirdest mob I have ever seen in the bush". In dribs and drabs six person of the female gender were passed coming from the opposite direction, all six had very short, almost crew-cut length haircuts. At least three were bare-footed on a very muddy, (ankle depth) track, one was naked from the waist up, and another was naked from the waist down. The storyteller says he actually missed his footing and virtually fell off the track at the sight. Bewildered, he and his party moved on until they met a "normal" party at the next hut. The females, they were informed, belonged to "THE RADICAL LESBI NS BUSHWALKING CO-OPERATIVE", and the "normal party" were just as astounded as the story teller at the sight. The tale culminates with a reported sighting a day later of six naked females climbing Mt. Ossa. By the time the party that saw them got to the spot, the six had vanished. At this point the story teller fell silent and sat staring into the dying embers of the fire, then slowly shook his head.

Continuing on with these social walks, the ice skating night was fraught with dangers as flasher Murphy kept exposing film in everyones faces. At one stage a train with about 10 carriages raced around the rink at bre knect speed.

The general meeting went by at a brisk pace as the MAN OF STEELE showed who was boss. I'd always wondered why his hair was red and I now think it is from walking in the rain and it went rusty before he could dry it.

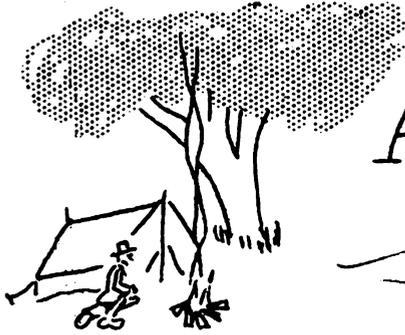
At the wine bottling the rain started at the same time as the bottling. This caused some consternation as the Equipment Officer kept saying that the rain would dilute the wine. After showing some ingenuity Rob put up his big fly and kept an area dry enough to bottle in. After the wine was in the bottles (or as much as could be bottled), the partying began with a B.B.Q. on the lawn and a magnificent saladinside. At various times during the night there were crowds inside, outside, and in the cellar.

Talking of cellars, the committee rooms looked like one on a recent Wednesday night, what with a set of wine holders pretending they were pigeon holes, and a bottle of Brown's White in the Social Secretary's possey????

Congratulations at last to John and Jeanette Hodges who were recently married. Rumour has it that they will be travelling around a bit on their honeymoon to try to keep ahead of their creditors.

After the clubroom cleanup the place looked like a maternity hospital with a couple of expectant bushies making their appearance on the scene.

An old circular is rumoured to have left the presses so long ago that it is going to be known under the title of "History of M.B.W.".



A LONG THE TRACK

A FINE TIME IN TASMANIA

Stepping off the plane at Devonport after the badlam of Tullamarine at Easter is literally like a breath of fresh air. It's so peaceful and relaxed - except of course for Dennis Maxwell, our driver waiting to whisk us off to the wilds in his trusty Land Rover. Dennis never speaks, he shouts (comes after driving Land Rovers for many years I expect) and we quickly gathered that he was in a hurry for he had to meet a later flight carrying a party for Cradle Mountain. We were soon packed and speeding through the countryside. Dennis shouted "I s'pose you's would like a hamburger or something?" "Oh yes", was the chorus from his passengers. At 6 p.m. we watched the Land Rover disappear down a gravel track as we stood in a dark forest and wondered what happened to the hamburger we never got. However, with the assistance of the full moon drifting amongst the tree tops we soon had a comfortable camp set up and a billy on.

Next morning we climbed out of the Fish River valley and onto the Central Highlands plateau. It is a plateau literally covered with countless lakes of various sizes bordered with boulders, sphagnum moss, and pencil pines. Our first day's camp was by the Pool of Bethesda within the Walls of Jerusalem. "The Walls" are towering cliffs containing within them a series of valleys, lakes and hills all bearing names taken from the ancient walled city of Jerusalem. There are indeed some fascinating names such as: Gate of the Chain, Wailing Wall and The Temple, and it's difficult not to let ones imagination come into play.

After setting up camp and having lunch we set off to explore the area. Numerous skeletons of wallabies were seen as we strolled about. The carcasses were cleaned up extremely efficiently and traces of red flesh adhering to the bones indicated that they were only recently devoured. I can only assume that it was the work of Tasmanian Devils. Undaunted, we continued our stroll which included an assault on the East Wall (Mt. Jerusalem). Our efforts were rewarded with extensive views. To the north, east and south were lake, after lake, after lake, whilst to the west towered Cradle Mountain and Barn Bluff.

I found it fascinating that the terrain seemed to be sealed down by Victorian standards, for although mountains and valleys appeared as grand as any, it seemed to take a lot less time to get up and down the mountains and across the valleys. Until you adjust your thinking there is great satisfaction to be gleaned by having conquered things so effortlessly.

Meanwhile around the campfire that evening the talk was of the weather and our leader, Graham W.J., was graphically explaining how miserable it was the last time he visited "The Walls" using some of his best, or worst adjectives. He then went on to say that it would surely be raining or worse tomorrow.

Tomorrow came and in calm, sunny conditions we scaled the West Wall that towers imposingly over Lake Salome. From our vantage point we could see for one hundred kilometres around.

Our restless leader had us on the march all afternoon. At five with a cold

A Fine Time In Tasmania Cont'd...

wind blowing we created a campsite overlooking Lake Toorah. By the second night it had become traditional to set around the campfire and wait for the moon to rise. Once again the conversation centred about the weather as misty clouds skimmed just above our heads.

The third day saw us winding single file through undulating, rocky country dotted with lakes in idyllic settings. Some lakes or ponds seemed to be perched in the most unlikely locations such as right on top of low hills. Bennets Wallabies were seen in abundance through this region. It was a most pleasant morning's walk. I can recall a strong feeling of being free and at one with my surroundings in this unspoilt wilderness. Our afternoons walk across the Mersey Valleys to Lake Chalice was also through unspoilt wilderness although I can't say there was the same feeling of freedom as the bogs and scrub seemed to be constantly laying claim to me.

We reached Lake Chalice just in time to see it as its best in the yellow light of the setting sun. The sky was perfectly clear that night and by 8 p.m. a thick layer of frost had formed on our tents. Later an incredibly large moon rose out of some bog just beyond the horizon and as bright as it was it did nothing to warm that chilling night.

Our camp spot placed us well for a side trip to Cathedral Mountains which frowns over the central section of "The Reserve". For some unexplainable reason the weather was fine once again and those amongst us who know Tasmania better were becoming uneasy. However, we climbed the mountain and performed the normal bushwalkers ritual of naming every peak that could be seen. After lunch in the sunshine we packed up and plodded off to find a way through hitherto unexplored country towards Lake Myrtle.

It was a particularly interesting trek. We had to fight our way through a patch of Deciduous Beech and our leaders mutterings became louder and louder as he crawled and squeezed through the tangled growth. We had a soggy campsite that evening mainly due to the fact that we were forced by failing light to set up in a swamp. Fortunately the leeches made us very welcome.

On the final day of our East walk we emerged from our swamp and we soon found ourselves slurping along a well used and muddy track back to civilization.

Before I end this tale I must explain that our Easter trip to Tasmania was a complete disappointment. There we were in the Central Highlands with every scrap of warm and waterproof gear we possessed and the fickle Tasmanian weather just lead us on and let us down. Yes, we tried all the various tricks such as not putting tents up, packing our parkas deep in our packs, even setting up tents in dried up pools and for all our trouble we were blessed with five drops of rain - for some mysterious reason they all fell on the leaders tent. Oh well, I gues we'll know better next time and leave all that surplus gear at home.

Ken MacMahon

ALONG THE TRACK CONTINUED BY MICHAEL GRIFFIN - EASTER '79

It started off well, with danish pastries on The Fokker Friendship to Devonport. Dennis Maxwell was waiting with his landrover and we were soon whooshing through the night towards Lake Rowallan. Dennis was as vocal as ever, and the ride passed pleasantly.

Friday morning, not too early, by The Fish River, ready to climb up towards The Walls. Graham was already declaring himself unfit, but somehow managed to lead the ascent to the tarn country. A cool day, but fine. The few clouds had Graham worried. It was bound to rain.

We were camped at the Pool of Bet esda by lunchtime, gazing across at the crags of The West Wall. No rain so far, and fate was tempted by an afternoon stroll around the area, finishing with a scramble to the top of Mt. Jerusalem. No rain.

We tackled the West Wall on Saturday morning, a straightforward climb clear of the cliff lines. The sky was working up to a substantial blue, but it was darker over towards The Reserve. Graham had further visions of falling rain and was beginning to contemplate the prospect of snow. We packed up after lunch, making sure that parkas and warm clothing were ready to hand. After all it was Easter in Tasmania, and we all knew what that meant.

Saturday afternoon, striking south for Chinamans Plains and Lake Torah low flying clouds scudded across as night approached. Graham battened down his tent. NO RAIN.

Sunday was to be our only full day with packs and, to hammer the point home, Graham headed for the scrub. Down to the Mersey River below Lake Meston, and then every variety of Tasmanian nasty known to man, except for The Horizontal. We tacked back and forth like a yacht in a perverse breeze, eventually climbing up to the south end of Cloister Lagoon, where the leader had once buried a Christmas pudding in the forlorn hope of firming up the shaky shore. Afternoon tea under tender skies, with more forecasts of diabolical woe from Graham. I quietly reached for the sunburn cream.

We were aiming for Chalice Lake now, upwards through carnivorous scrub. This is real Tassie country, we told ourselves, wincing at our lacerated limbs. All we need now is a bit of sknow to make the scene complete. But the cursed sky mocked us and poured down sunshine, shining straight in our eyes as we dodged the muddy holes on the way down to Chalice Lake.

We slept in next morning, letting the youthful sun warm us into activity. A leisurely breakfast preceded a side trip to Cathedral Mountain, where we gazed into the Reserve from lofty heights.

Monday afternoon saw us struggling through deciduous beech to the north end of Cloister Lagoon, then over to Lake Myrtle and along its northern shore to a makeshift campsite. Ken and Helen seemed determined to sit in a mud pool by the camp fire and Graham made another discouraging analysis of the few available wisps of cloud. It was bound to rain.

The final day dawned overcast and Graham's spirits soared. We found a muddy track to follow undr muddy skies, but perversity again set in and the blue patches stealthily took over. We descended stunningly to Juno Creek and waited for Dennis to arrive. The blue patches kept peeping through and all seemed lost as we headed for the airport. But Graham miled as he heard the news - IT WAS RAINING IN MELBOURNE!

ALONG THE TRACK WITH THE INTANGIBLE AND ELUSIVE TYRONE

There can be few sights more dismal than that of a trio of bushwalkers standing in the traditional circle, with packs on their backs, and boots on their feet, and nowhere to go!

When Otto arrived in Batman Avenue to catch the van for Tyrone's Fraser National Park walk, he was rather concerned - it was a beautiful day for a walk, but WHERE WAS EVERYBODY? He was a little relieved when Liz and finally Rob turned up, but all three were puzzled when the appointed hour of 1.30 p.m. arrived, with still no leader, no van, and only three walkers in the party. They had naively assumed that when the walks programme listed a departure time of 1.30 p.m., and The News listed a departure time of 1.30 p.m. the departure time would be 1.30 p.m. No so! A couple of telephone calls soon established that the van had left at noon.

Having missed the van, and missed it in style, what should be done? Yjey contemplated following by car, but Tyrone had already two hours headstart, and even Andrew Hood's van isn't all that slow. A walk through the closest available approximation to bush - Kings Domain and the Botanic Gardens was proposed and agreed upon, and in full bushwaling regalia they set off. By a circuitous route the Gardens were reached, and here they obtained maps for the Garden's Autumn Walk. Then the fun started. They were geographically embarrassed for the first time somewhere between *Stenocarpus sinuatus* and *Quercus obtusata*, and frequently thereafter. They were consoled by the fact that most of the other visitors had given up trying to follow the course altogether. Otto insisted that the problem was that there were no contours on the map, but Rob and Liz remained convinced that the map could only have been drawn by an armchair cartographer with a poor memory complemented by a vivid imagination.

It wasn't quite the walk they had anticipated, but the interesting walk through gardens painted in Autumn colours, combined with a navigational challenge was a pleasant alternative.

Rob Ayre

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

David Cahill, 1 Mercer Road, Armadale, 3143 (H) 20 4771 (W) 341 5059
Kathy Liley, 3/8 Dalgety Street, Brunswick West, 3055 (H) 387 5003 (W) 34 73833
Ext 329
Janice Llewelyn 92 Palmerston Street, Carlton, 3053. (H) 34 76140 (W) 66 6046
Ext. 320
Terence O'Brien 6/24 Wattletree Road, Hawthorn, 3122 (H) 81 87323 (W) 26 2094
Russell Spokes, 22 Barry Street, Reservoir, 3073 (H) 46 92113
Roy Watson, 50 King Arthur Drive, Glen Waverley, 3150 (H) 23 36583 (W) 347 9744

PLEASE NOTIFY MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY PROMPTLY WITH ALL CHANGES OF ADDRESS
AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS. THANK YOU LIBBY

Change of address and tel Nos.

Geoff & Barbara Crapper, P.O. Box 95 Woodend, 3442
Bryan & Annette Gray, 10 Sturt Rd., Somers, 3927
Michael Griffin, 22 Barry Street, Brunswick, 3056. (H) 38 73417 (W) 66 6046
Ext. 586
Dori Warton, C/- Jill Whitford, Lot 9, Macclesfield Rd., Avonsleigh, 3782
Pam Westgate - (H) 56 90070
Judy Weatherhead, 159 Lennox Street, Richmond, 3121
Derek Black, 31 Leila Road, Ormond 3204 (H) 57 82674 (W) 95 7232

COMMITTEE NOTES

Committee meeting held on 7th May, 1979. All members of committee were present. The usual business was dealt with and reports were received. Significant matters were as follows:-

Finance - there is \$4,975.80 in the bank and accounts totalling \$1,183.87 were passed for payment.

- walks - 115 people attended walks in April - 33 weekenders and 82 daywalkers.
- there were 171 financial members as at date of meeting
- F.V.W.C. at the last meeting of the Federation it was proposed that club affiliation fees should be \$1 per member with a maximum of \$250. This club accepts this, provided we can get proportional voting - say 1 vote for each \$125.00 or part thereof. The matter is still pending. A faction within Federation is still pushing to allow individual to become members of F.V.W.C. with voting rights.
- VNPA/ACF/CONSERVATION - the mining lobby and other pressure groups are pressing for changes in Federal Environmental related legislation. The club will be writing to the Prime Minister and other MP's urging them to resist this pressure. Letters from individual club members would also be appreciated.
- Club transport report - Jim Hedstrom submitted his preliminary report on transport (printed elsewhere in this News) and committee decided to set up a sub-committee to go into the matter further. The recommendations of this sub-committee will be put to the General Meeting on June 27th for members' decision.

AUSTRALIAN CONSERVATION FOUNDATION
 PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT ACTS - SAFEGUARD OUR HERITAGE -
 NATIONAL CAMPAIGN.

The first half decade of the seventies was a remarkable period of progress in conservation in Australia. The State and Commonwealth Governments, in response to greatly increased public support for environmental conservation, passed many new Acts providing for the control of our heritage (beautiful areas and buildings), the creation of new national park areas, and the assessment of the environmental effect of proposals and powers.

The Commonwealth could use powers, funds, and skills to preserve sites which the States, with more limited resources, were unable to save.

The destruction of Lake Pedder occurred before the Commonwealth had passed its legislation, but the new Commonwealth Acts were used to save Fraser Island a few years later.

Australia has since ratified several international agreements, including the Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage.

The Acts

- (1) The Environment Protection (Impact of Proposals) Act. requires developers to investigate the environmental effects of their projects. It provides for publication of environmental impact statements (EISS), and for public comment on the projects.

CONSERVATION ISSUES CONT'D...

At present Victoria is the only State with similar legislation.

- (2) The National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act appointed a Commonwealth National Parks and Wildlife Service which is responsible with the State services for Ayers Rock and the proposed Kakachi National Parks, for the Great Barrier Reef, S.W. Tasmania, and endangered wildlife.
- (3) The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Act provides for an authority to recommend areas for the park, and prohibits drilling for oil or mining in it. To date, the Commonwealth has deferred decisions, although it believes the rest should be part of 'The World Natural Heritage', so there is NO PARK.
- (4) The Australian Heritage Commission Act provides for citizens and groups to recommend areas and buildings for a register of the national estate, and for these to be investigated. Fraser Island was the first of 5,000 sites to be registered and 1,800 more have been proposed.

THE THREAT TO THE ACTS

Main opponents have been the primary industry interests, particularly the mining industry. These had dominated Australian life, and now easily persuade the Queensland and Western Australian Governments to oppose the Acts. Heritage conservation caters for the whole community now and in the future, but with "development" the main beneficiaries are other overseas shareholders.

The Australian Mining Industry Council argues that since minerals are where you find them, mining should be allowed in national parks, with a few areas set aside for scientific reference, ignoring the fact that scenic areas are equally fixed.

Environment Protection (impact of proposals) Act. Environmentalists have staved off two assaults on this legislation. However, the Act is not being used where it should e.g. no EIS were called for in the proposals to increase immigration, and in considering omission control. There have been many instances of inadequate EISS, and of the making of decisions on projects before studies have been completed.

- NOW:-
- (1) The Commonwealth may hand over responsibility for assessment of projects to the States, most of which lack legislation.
 - (2) Administration of the Act may pass from the Ministry of Environment to the individual ministries concerned, agencies with vested interests in development, (e.g. housing, mining).
 - (3) The AMIC is pressing to amend the clause that no Federal Minister may take any action which adversely affects a place listed in the National Register.....etc.

The ACF wants individuals to write to the Prime Minister and to Senator Webster, Environment Minister, to oppose any cuts in the Environment Legislation. Please consider this action. Sorry I couldn't cut my words down in the time available to write this (Monday night to Wednesday night)

E. McKenzie

REPORT TO COMMITTEE ON CLUB
TRANSPORT FOR DAY & WEEKEND WALKS

Submitted by Jim Hedstrom

Purpose of Report

1. To investigate the circumstances surrounding Gronow's abrupt cancelling of the van arrangements with the Club.
2. To determine ways and means of assuring the constant availability of transport to meet the Club's requirements.
3. To enquire into T.R.B. attitudes, general standards of travel and provision of emergency exits.
4. To explore the relative merits of vans and buses, hire costs and other factors.
5. To make recommendations for consideration by Committee and submission to Club membership for acceptance.

Organizations and People Interviewed

The Transport Regulations Board

Mr. M. Foreshaw of the Public Transport Licensing Section
Mr. J. Middlehunt of the Transport Design Section

The Bus Proprietors Association

Mr. Schroder - Manager

Gronow Miller P/L.

Mr B. Miller - Proprietor

Andrew Hood and Son

Mr. L. Hood - Proprietor

1. Circumstances surrounding Gronow's abrupt cancelling of van arrangements with the Club.

In February of this year Gronow officially informed the Club by letter, that the business of J. Gronow P/L. had been sold to a Mr. Brian Miller and further, that the new owner did not intend, at that time, to continue the picnic van hiring section of the business.

This brief communication abruptly and dramatically ended the Club's long association with Gronow and caused some dismay and temporary confusion to the Committee and Club Members. It threatened the Club's walks program and forced the Walks Secretary into a hurried search for a new source of van hire facilities.

The time factor between receipt of the letter and the terminating date of the Club's arrangements with Gronow was a matter of several days.

This total lack of consideration on Gronow's part has understandably created animosity among Club Members towards the new firm, Gronow Miller P/L., which in the light of present information could be unfair to Mr. Miller.

Cont'd...

Gronow's report cont'd...

To clarify the situation Mr. Miller was asked to relate the details of the negotiations with Gronow and a brief summary of Mr. Miller's statement follows:-

Miller approached Gronow with a proposal to purchase the business and following negotiations Gronow offered the entire business for sale which comprised a wood yard, furniture storage and removal, and the picnic van hire section.

Miller purchased the business and as his main interest was in concentrating on and expanding the furniture removal section of the business, he discarded the wood yard, relinquished two of the four T.R.B. passenger van licences held by Gronow, stripped the picnic vans of seating and returned them to furniture removal work. The two T.R.B. licences were retained in case the Company wished to re-enter the picnic van hire business at a later date.

Miller claims that no secrecy restraint on the sale negotiations was imposed by him and that it was left to Gronow to advise customers and employees alike as to the change in ownership and as to how it would affect their various interests. He assumed that such notice by Gronow would be made with common courtesy and consideration and that all concerned would be given ample time to make other arrangements to meet their needs.

This appears to be an acceptable explanation of a business takeover situation and under the circumstances, should free Miller from blame to the Club's view.

Rather the Club's animosity and accusations should be directed at Gronow who had for many years been the recipient of the Club's money and goodwill but despite this, chose, in a critical situation, to ignore the Club's vital interests and to think only of himself.

2. To determine ways and means of assuring the constant availability of Transport to meet the Club's Requirements.

The only real way for the Club to insure itself against further interruptions to the continuity of its transport arrangements which could be caused by the uncertainties of the business world, is to purchase its own vans or buses. Such a step however would probably be beyond the Club's present financial structure. To make vehicle ownership easier it may be possible to invest money into a van or bus hire operators business on the basis that certain vehicles would be signed over to the Club as security.

However further investigation has shown that purchase of vehicles would not only be unwise but also unnecessary.

In the case of picnic vans where passenger licences are reviewed annually with the ever present possibility of non-renewal due to changes in Government policy, the Club could be left with an interest in vehicle for use only as a furniture van.

As for buses investigation has shown that supply of suitable buses for weekend hire greatly exceeds present demand.

The only practical way the Club can protect the continuity of its transport facilities is for the Committee to carefully study the situation and determine the following as outlined overleaf.

Cont'd....

Gronow's report cont'd....

What standard of travel do Club Members want?

What safety provisions are required?

Should the Club switch to buses now due to the uncertainty that surrounds renewal of van passenger licences.

Should the Club retain the vans as long as possible?

Should private transport be used for weekend walks where the walk permits?

Once the Committee has discussed these and other possible relevant points it should submit recommendations to the Club members for determination.

When the Club determines what type of transport is required and the Committee selects a particular hire operator a contract should be entered into with that operator, which would spell out the Club's requirements including provision for prior warning on a changing situation which could affect the Club's interests.

This is not much more than the Club had with Gronow as it all depends on circumstances and human nature.

However the Committee should learn from the Gronow affair and avoid the complacency which the long and satisfactory association with Gronow created.

The Committee should through a selected individual - say a transport secretary - keep in regular personal contact with the hire operator and check such things as passenger licence review and its results and be in a position to, where possible, anticipate changes which affects the smooth running of the Club's transport arrangements.

3. To Enquire into T.R.B. attitudes, general standards of travel, and provision of emergency exits.

Discussions with Officers of the T.R.B. revealed that the Government Transport Department considers picnic vans to be unsuitable for transport of people because of:-

1. Lack of emergency exits in case of fire or accident.
2. Poor protection from side on collision due to lightweight chassis and frame construction.
3. Perimeter seating is unsafe in a collision due to method of removable fixing.
4. Lack of facilities and a poor standard of comfort.

The T.R.B. reviews picnic van licences each year and at present continues a policy of renewing licences as the vans fulfil a particular need for those organizations who require to bulk carriage of people and equipment such as camping gear, rowing shells, cycles etc. etc.

Other points raised by the T.R.B. were N.S.W. have banned the use of picnic vans because of the above problems and due to pressure from the bus hire companies.

The Government will not permit further expansion in the use of furniture vans for public hire.

Cont'd...

Gronow's report con'd...

The opinion of T.R.B. Officers is that picnic vans have a very limited future and they believe that once the bus companies produce a bus design which provides for the carriage of specialized bulky equipment as well as people, or a major accident occurs which involves a picnic van with resultant injury or loss of life, then picnic van licences will be cancelled or not renewed.

The T.R.B. are undertaking an inspection of all licenced picnic vans in the interests of public safety, with particular emphasis on provision of emergency exits in case of fire or accident. If the situation warrants the T.R.B. will issue specification for van modification to provide such exits and any van operator not complying will face cancellation of his passenger carrying licence.

In an interview with the Bus Proprietors Association these points were raised.

The Association claims that picnic vans provide a low standard of travel and that Government policy allows unfair competition in that bus operators are forced to provide a higher standard of travel which are not applied to picnic vans.

Bus chassis and frame construction is controlled by strict T.R.B. design standards which are laid down for passenger protection, comfort and safety.

Picnic van design and construction is uncontrolled and based on the requirements of the furniture removal industry with no provision for passenger protection, safety or comfort.

Buses are not permitted to use perimeter seating which is an attraction to Clubs and other weekend hirers.

The Bus Proprietor Association will continue to press for cancellation of picnic van passenger licences especially now that demands for weekend bus hire are diminishing.

Picnic vans are restricted to a 50 mile radius from Melbourne although special licences can be obtained.

One aspect arising from this pressure on picnic vans and the uncertainty of licence renewal is that picnic van operators are unwilling to invest money in replacing old vans or in providing better facilities or safety modifications in current vans.

This statement will cause a gradual decline in the picnic van standard of travel and may eventually force the club into bus travel regardless of future T.R.B. action on van passenger licences.

4. Relative merits of vans and buses and hiring costs

Club members are fairly aware of the relative merits of bus and van travel.

Buses provide a greater degree of comfort and safety, are faster, quieter and probably more helpful in encouraging first time visitors to become full members of the Club.

They are also more expensive and provide aisle seating which restricts conversation and social contact during travel.

Picnic vans leave something to be desired in regard to comfort and safety, are underpowered, slower and could possibly discourage a first time visitor from continuing on to become a full Club member.

Cont'd.....

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Gronow's report cont'd...

However the vans do offer perimeter seating which allows for freer and more wide conversation during travel, which has for so long been an important part of Club life.

Picnic vans are less expensive but offer an uncertain future as Club transport.

Club members can no doubt add to this list of relative merits or demerits and all should have their say in discussion and voting on this issue.

Relative costs of bus and van hire are a little difficult to accurately compare but the following tables should assist the Committee and members in their evaluation.

VEHICLE HIRE COSTS:

Picnic Vans

Gronow Miller P/L

60 mile round trip	35 passengers	\$110
	40 "	125
	45 "	144
	50 "	159
100 mile round trip	35 passengers	\$156
	40 "	183
	45 "	208
	50 "	232
200 mile round trip	35 passengers	\$311
	40 "	360
	45 "	410
	50 "	460

Plus \$65 per night for weekend walks.

Andrew Hood

70c per mile plus \$30 per night

No variation for number of passengers with a minimum charge of \$80