



THE NEWS

OF THE MELBOURNE BUSHWALKERS

Edition 366

JANUARY 1981

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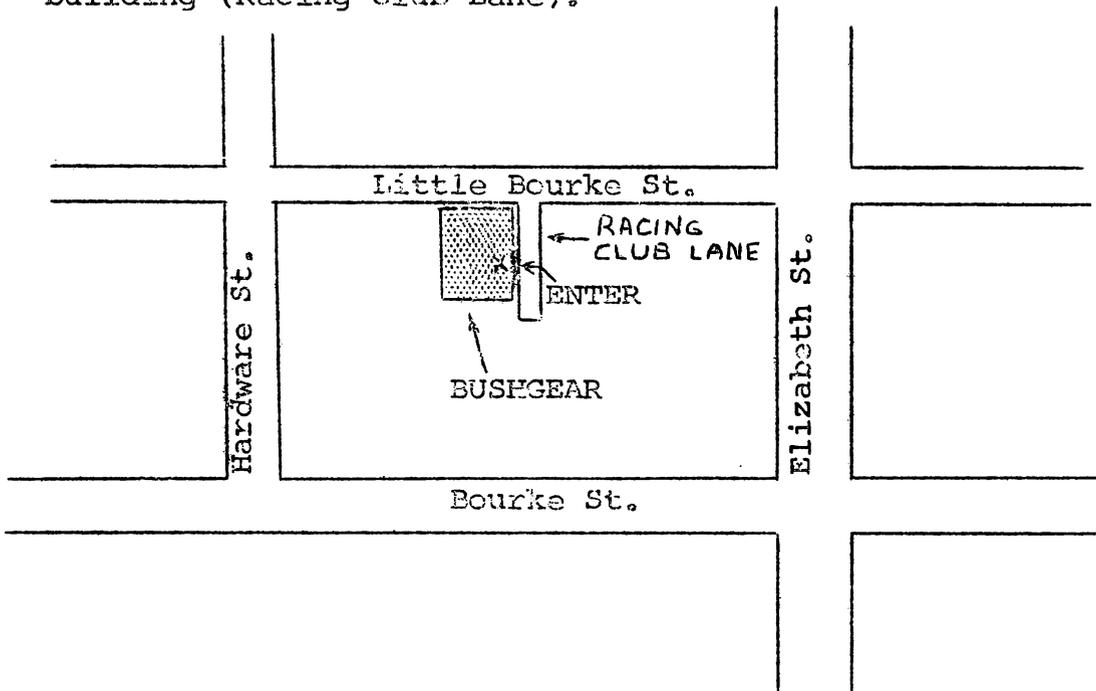
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CHANGE OF CLUB ROOMS

NOTICE

As from Wednesday 1st February 1981 the club will be meeting at Bushgear, at 377 Little Bourke Street, Melbourne - on the second floor.

- The entrance is in the lane at the side of the building (Racing Club Lane).



PRUE'S PAGE

Tuesday 10th February

"They're playing Our song" 

starring John Waters + Jacki
Weaver

at

The Comedy Theatre

8.00 pm.

Tickets at special price of \$10.9

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Saturday 21st February



"Teddy Bear's Picnic"
at



Hangjing Rock, via Woodend

time — 12.00 onwards

bring — one teddy bear, grog (for you
and the bear) bar-b-que food.
Ice-cream + fruit salad provided

Correspondence should be directed to:

The Secretary,
Melbourne Bushwalkers,
BOX 1751Q, G.P.O.,
MELBOURNE, Vic 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.

From 2nd February, the clubroom will be above Bushgear, 377 Little Bourke Street, Entrance from Racing Club Lane.

FEBRUARY - WALK PREVIEWS

DAY WALKS

FEBRUARY 1 FOREST CAVES - SUTHERLAND BAY - EASY
PYRAMID ROCK

LEADER: Chris Nicol

TRANSPORT: Van from Batman Ave. 9.15 a.m.

With the sea sparkling to our left, a refreshing breeze and the sun shining brightly down (well, here's hoping) we shall stroll along the shores of Phillip Island. Lunch will be a leisurely stop at Sutherland Bay, where if the day turns out as hoped for, 'bathers are beautiful!' The afternoon will find us continuing our jaunt to a point overlooking craggy Pyramid Rock where the van will await.

Don't forget to bring: water, lunch, sun hat, sun cream and your swim gear (a rain jacket should ensure a clear sky).

It promises to be a beaut day.

FEBRUARY 8 SAILORS FALLS - DAYLESFORD EASY

LEADER: Sylvia Andrews

TRANSPORT: Van from Batman Ave. 9.15 a.m.

EXPECTED TIME OF RETURN: 7.30 p.m.

APPROXIMATE DISTANCE: 8 miles

MAP REFERENCE: Melbourne 1:250 000

The walk is in the Daylesford area once known for its thriving goldmining and mineral springs spas. However times change and not a great deal of evidence remains today of past glories. The walk is in the state forest south west of the town. The route follows an abandoned railway to Wombat, then forestry tracks until the end near Sailors Falls, which are named after two sailors who first found gold in the creek there. Bring plenty of water as it may be hot climbing, although the hills are quite gentle.

FEBRUARY 15 KINGS FALLS - SEAWINDS - ROSEBUD EASY

LEADER: Art Terry

TRANSPORT: Van from Batman Ave. 9.15 a.m.

EXPECTED TIME OF RETURN: 8.15 p.m.

MAP REFERENCE: Broadbents Mornington Peninsula

APPROXIMATE DISTANCE: 10 miles

An interesting walk taking in bushland on the slopes of Arthur's Seat, with the exception of a medium climb it could be classed as an easy Sunday walk. Bring bathers as we will have a swim at the end of the walk.

DAY WALKS (Cont.)

FEBRUARY 22 MOORABOOL RIVER GORGE EASY

LEADER: Jope Bodegraven
 TRANSPORT: Van from Batman Ave. 9.15 a.m.
 EXPECTED TIME OF RETURN: Sunday evening
 MAP REFERENCE: Meredith 1" = 1 mile
 APPROXIMATE DISTANCE: 11 km

Most people probably don't realise that there is a gorge on this river but if you look at the Meredith 1" = 1 mile map between Maude and She Oaks you will see a lot of brown lines very close together.

This is a lovely section of river with little waterfalls and rock pools for swimming. The water is clear too except after heavy rain. In one part, the valley walls have obviously collapsed producing a tangled mass of large boulders through which the river leaps and tumbles its way with waterfalls, caves, nooks and crannies. There will be ample time for sticky-nosing and for swimming in my favourite rock pool complete with waterfall pummelling into its upstream end, so bring togs as the weather is bound to be hot.

The water looks clear normally but I don't advise drinking it so bring water.

WEEK-END WALKSJANUARY 30 - SEALERS COVE BASE CAMP EASY
FEBRUARY 1

LEADER: Michael Mann
 TRANSPORT: Private

FOR DETAILS SEE LEADER IN CLUBROOMS

FEBRUARY 6-8 ALANSFORD - CHILDERS COVE - BAY EASY
OF ISLANDS - PETERBOROUGH

LEADER: Graham Wills-Johnson
 TRANSPORT: Van from Batman Ave. 6.30 p.m.
 EXPECTED TIME OF RETURN: 8-9 p.m.
 MAP REFERENCE: National Mapping Mortlake/
 Port Campbell 1:100 000 (1 sheet)
 APPROXIMATE DISTANCE: 31 km (19 miles)

Imagine the front cover of Walk 1981 with the addition of hundreds of rocky islands, and Spencer in perhaps not quite so lairy a singlet, and you have much of what will be seen on this walk. Last time we did it the weather got a bit misty on the Sunday, and we didn't see Bay of Islands at its best, which is why I asked for it to be put on again. The Victorian coastline at its most picturesque. There are two bonuses . . . it's a van trip, so you'll be able to catch up on all the club gossip. And YOU DON'T HAVE TO CARRY A WEEKEND PACK!! You DO have to bring 1-2 gallons of water (enough for your needs for the week-end), but this (as well as your tent, bag, choofer etc etc) can be left on the van, which will meet us at Saturday night's campsite. Remember your daypack and something to carry enough water to last you through each day.

* * * WANTED * * *

1 PERSON TO SHARE HOUSE IN ALPHINGTON.

MICK MANN - 49 4782

WEEK-END WALKS (Cont.)

FEBRUARY
13-15HISTORICAL RAMBLE: ABERFELDY
RIVER AREAVARIOUS

LEADER: Ken MacMahon
 TRANSPORT: Private
 EXPECTED TIME OF RETURN: 9 p.m.
 MAP REFERENCE: Matlock 1:100 000 (Nat Map)

One hundred years ago thousands flocked to the rugged mountains to the east of Melbourne in the search for gold. An astonishing amount of energy was expended establishing mines, towns, roads, etc. The gold slowly petered out and by the time of World War I only a few families remained to eke a living from the land. However, enough remains today to provide us with a fascinating insight into a past era.

We will be camping by the cars and day walks of varying standard will be organised. Alternatively, people can seek their fortune in the river. (Philip Taylor will be demonstrating the finer points of gold panning.) Or you can swim, sunbake, or swat flies.

On Saturday evening I hope to organise a B.Y.O. barbeque.

This weekend would be a good opportunity for newcomers to weekend walking. So come along.

As an added attraction Walhalla may be visited en route.

FEBRUARY
20-22BINDAREE - MT. HOWITT -
SQUARE HEAD JINNYMEDIUM/HARD

LEADER: Graeme Thornton
 TRANSPORT: Private
 EXPECTED TIME OF RETURN: 10 p.m. Sunday
 MAP REFERENCE: Howitt 1:100 000 - Nat Map 8223
 Watersheds of King, Howqua and
 Jamieson Rivers - VMTC 1:63 360
 APPROXIMATE DISTANCE: 20 km with packs & side
 trips without

I think the view from the summit of Howitt to be one of the most spectacular in Victoria so why not come along and see for yourself - or re-enjoy it.

Friday night's camp will be upstream of Bindaree hut alongside the Howqua. Saturday morning will see us bright eyed and bushy tailed assembled at the bottom of the Howitt Spur. But, you lucky people, your kind leader will not make you climb the spur as we shall cheat and take a short cut via the south branch of the Howqua, then straight up to bring us out directly below Hells Window so that we reach camp by lunch time. The afternoon will be Howitt and return (via the MacAlister and No. 2 Divide if you wish).

Sunday is west over Magdala and Lovick to Square Head Jinny. An interesting unpreviewed descent will be made back down to the Howqua off the western side of SHJ and then a 4WD track. Bathing permitted and probably essential.

Please bring a water bucket or large container for Saturday night and Sunday morning water as a continuing dry summer could make water some distance down Hellfire Creek.

The time is again approaching when the poor old Walks Secretary has to get his brain into gear and draw up the winter and spring programs. It's not easy coming up with fresh, exciting places to visit, particularly for day walks. How about spending 5 minutes jotting down a few ideas and presenting them to me in the next few weeks. - Ken MacMahon.



A LONG THE TRACK

SPRING IN THE HIGH PLAINS

Thirty people tramping across the High Plains! That didn't really seem likely. The bus was still crawling along Sydney Road, when the first mumbles about options reached me. Maps were needed. Well, I don't think Peter had any for S.W. Tassie but his supply seemed to cover every other possibility. Krystyna was talking about the North West Spur. I'd heard of it and wondered what it was like. We settled back with our thoughts and quiet chat.

When you have been on a few van trips you would surely feel you know the routine but there are still ways to be surprised. An hour from the city, right in the middle of almost endless plains, the bus stopped. There we were, miles from anywhere and anyone, but no, Geoff, Ken and a young friend were on the roadside. How they got there, nobody knows. We let them on, giving them the usual polite welcome.

The tea stop was at Seymour and this was uneventful. But Dave Andrews was there. Perhaps he was going to do the counting! In that case it's best not to be last aboard.

Camp was at Freeburgh. I don't think the driver had been off a Melways but with all the experts on board, all he had to do was drive. However, even the mighty fall. We overshot the turn-off and so had to back up just a little. The moon was out, the tents went up and soon we were in. I worried about Peter. Would two girls be enough to keep him warm?

On Saturday at 08:20 a.m. Tyrone, Krystyna, Marilyn, Philip and I started our walk at the trout farm. The rest of the walkers stayed in the bus till Diamantina Hut, I think. We soon left the N.W. Spur track and started up through the scrub to the Bungalow Spur Track at Wombat Camp. As is usual on this route the way was now easy.

Lunch at the old Feathertop Hut was idyllic. The sun, the light, the grass, the air and two flame robins created a scene delightful to the senses. We refilled water bottles. The spring water was cold, clear and welcome.

Then we were off again, going up, past Federation Hut and over to the Cross. Tyrone decided to check the strength of sun and wind by sun bathing while we others revelled in the thought of once again standing on Feathertop.

I walked that final ridge, my whole being tingling with the thrill, the wonder, the majesty of it all. I do not know how others would express it and my words seem not enough. Awesome gullies were still filled with snow. Wilky, unseen, still called. At last we had to turn back and leave it behind.

Merilyn tried skiing in her runners and really got cold feet. Krystyna wondered about dropping down one of the spurs before attacking the Niggerheads. Thankfully we squashed that one very soon after conception. One couple we passed appeared to have no more than tracksuits and suntans to see them back to the Hotham Road. The mountains smiled this time.

We then met four people who had just traversed the Razorback, well protected in their longs. Early on they had been so cold they could hardly speak. We wondered about the main group emerging from a doze inside the sunny bus. "Poor cows, serves you right", I yelled into the wind. That marked the absolute limit of our concern for their well-being as we rested, warmed by the sun.

As we moved towards High Nob, every backward glance brought its rewards. Feathertop was sharp against the intensity of the sky, the snow brilliant in the light.

What a campsite it is near the top of the Diamantina Spur. I know you have to carry water but what a small price to pay. There are the glades, the snow gums and that magnificent mountain. This might sound just too lyrical but that is how it strikes me except that I can't quite express the beauty that is there. Like Mozart, like Wagner, the experience says it all.

We sat for a few minutes but there was still quite a bit to do. We looked across the valley and searched for the best line up through the horribly scarred slopes leading to the saddle, and probably camp.

The initial descent is easy, allowing frequent glances to the left. Soon, however, eyes are searching elsewhere, for branches, rocks, anything to help break gravity's insistent pull. The sticks and curled-up bark had a roller-bearing effect. Secure handholds, for me, were vital. I slammed into at least one wombat burrow, grateful that my trust was down and not forward! I have now been up, and down that spur. Much as I jog the memory, going up, carrying a gallon of water, in heavy rain(it helps to be mad!) doesn't seem harder than bashing down, seemingly vertically, through the scrub.

I reached the river, threw my boots over and then gingerly edged across. The grit washed off, I put on socks and boots. By now the others seemed to have had a really good rest. I had overlooked one point. It was a river junction. The others had already started so in I plunged, boots, socks, gaiters and all. It was 5.15 p.m.

There are three things I can say about this hill. It is steep, even and long. The obscenity laws inhibit other statements. Eventually it does finish but for almost three hours I found that hard to believe. At first we used the roughest of tracks and then went up, up through waist high sapplings, the grass being annoyingly slippery underfoot. While not the most experienced, I have been on quite a few walks. Never have I seen four bushies move so slowly. I can't tell you about the fifth. I never got close enough to Krystyna to even glimpse her gambolling up. Stops were frequent but didn't help much. They didn't bring the top any closer and there wasn't the mental stimulus I craved. The sun, to the side of Feathertop, was too brilliantly dazzling. With all that effort, the views of Feathertop were denied me.

Two long boulder-strewn slopes meant we now didn't have to fight scrub as well. I have a theory which has always helped on a long climb. "No hill is as bad as it looks from across the valley" This was the first exception. At last there was Ken in the saddle, a lone but welcome figure. Thanks for being there, Ken. "Two hundred yards", he said. And yet they talk about a "Bushman's mile".

At 8.10 p.m. the final walk in to camp was out of the sun's reach. I saw the fire, and I was almost freezing. My unfeeling fingers struggled with elastic bands around plastic bags. At last the tent was up and I could think about tea. I felt rather tired. Joyce brought some water and Bob and Neil talked a while - thoughtfullacts I appreciated then and now.

While my soup cooked, something I had anticipated for weeks eventuated. The sky was clear, and there was the moon, rising above the beautiful country. Tents were silvered, snow gums cast strong shadows and I could see the snow below the Nigger-heads. Yet some of my acquaintances wonder why I go walking.

Tea finished, I checked pegs and guys, and had a last long look at everything, near and far, in that magical moonlight. It was eleven o'clock when I snuggled into my bag, and for the first time since getting off the bus I had nothing to do. Precious thoughts kept tumbling through my mind - and there was still Sunday to come.

In the morning the tents were dry and it promised to be another perfect day. Walkers seemed to approach the Nigger-heads from 180 points of the compass. The place was as crowded as Sandringham beach - packs, plastic bags, clothing and bodies were everywhere.

The stroll to the Fainters seemed to be through an endless park. Ideal "must come back" campsites were everywhere - soft grass, water, wood, shelter and views. They say it is even better under snow. Can that really be so? With icy slopes on Lake Mountain a real handful for me I wondered if I would ever see this extra beauty.

By now I had drifted to the back with Neil, Eve, Jan and Peter. We ate lunch on Mt. Fainter North. There was Feathertop from yet another angle, M.U.M.C. hut, the long North Razorback and, good heavens, Krystyna's possible spur down to the Diamantina.

The road to Bogong Jack Saddle is not a real inspiration but it did go down. No one complained. If the fields of Ireland are greener than that saddle, it's no wonder the Irish have so many songs of home. Next time you see Peter, be sure to ask him what he noticed about "B.J." Saddle.

The walk to the village isn't dramatic, but the bush, especially in that pleasant sun, was appealing. Spencer had said that the bus would be there at four. It was, we weren't. We met the search party just as they were swinging into stride.

Soon we were on our way and I thought that possibly this was the first time our driver had ever taken a bus down a mountain road. Changing views of Bogong kept us interested, Quartz Ridge standing out well.

Finally we were in Mt. Beauty, and so were Krystyna, Tyrone and several more who had added a last lengthy leg to the day's walk.

The meal stop was at Benalla. "Be quick", Spencer warned, "people have to catch trams and trains". Dave Andrews was still there, possibly waiting to be asked to do the count. Most took the hint and hurried but we had to wait for two. The driver anxiously revved the motor but they had no special effect. The two tardy ones finally got on. We were too polite or too snoozy (you choose which) to give them the slightest "ribbing".

Near Wallan (who could tell?) Ken and his protege scurried up a bank, through a fence and vanished as mysteriously as they arrived. Our driver was feeling confident now and really poured it on. I have never spent so much time in the passing lane.

Soon we were unloading, finding our own packs. The walk was over, apart from airing, washing, drying, stowing away, showering, setting the alarm and tumbling into bed.

Spencer - for a walk that wasn't really previewed, thank you for the weather which arrived as ordered. To my four companions from Saturday, Tyrone, Krystyna, Marilyn and Philip - thanks for your part in a day to remeber.

Graeme Laidlaw.

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SOME COMMENTS ON WALKERS WEIGHT WATCHERS

One of the problems discussing equipment is that the number of opinions is equal to or greater than the square of the number of bushwalkers invovled in the disucssion ($O \gg n^2$) I am amazed therefore fo find myselfⁱⁿ considerable agreement with the ideas in Rob Harris' "Walkers Weight Watchers" series. What follows is more by way of comment rather than conflict.

To a large extent weight-saving means cost. A silk sleeping bag liner is a little more expensive than poyester and cotton! Less obviously, a small torch with AA cells is much lighter than one using C cells, but as Rob says, the cells do not last as long. For a week-end walk, though, AA cells give ample time, but need replacement more frequently.

Horses for courses is another factor. I favour heavily soled boots as I habitually spend considerable time scrambling around on jagged rocks, and also find the greater stability on uneven surfaces and cross-slopes much easier on my wonky knees. Similarly, if your flashgun uses AA cells there is some advantage in having a torch using the sime size cells. This will only be a factor for photography freaks.

While on the topic of torches, a very small size is much more convenient while cooking as it can be held in the mouth, thereby saving the weight of a headband or neck cord. Two small notches filed near the back of the torch will provide purchase for the teeth (patent pending)

A worthwhile addition to any repair kit is a few copper rivets They are more versatile than nuts and bolts and can be applied with the aid of a suitable rock, much more firmly than finger-tightened nuts.

Finally, each person's first aid kit should contain a 6 cm wide elastic roller bandage. These are very versatile if you know how to use them, and are essential for the latest snakebite treatment. Do not take any first aid item you do not know how to use, so if you buy a commercial kit, first throw out any contents you don't know how to use. Next, toss out the remainder of the contents which will be useless for bushwalking, finally, throw away the container because it will be too heavy.

I won't comment on food and cooking until I have seen what Rob has to say, except that I am amazed at the weight of fresh food carried by many walkers.

What do the rest of you think? Are you really going to let Rob get away with it? Unless you are all now adopting his ideas, you obviously don't agree with him. Why not tell the rest of us why - we might learn something.

Glenn Sanders

* * * * *

A LOT OF GRUMBLING

Well - "Walk 1981" is out. The editor's own photograph I think makes an excellent cover, and he is to be congratulated on a thoughtful and literate editorial. The overall standard of what is actually there I think is up to what the public has come to expect. However, in view of what the editor said in the November issue of "News" there are some things about the current "Walk" which are completely beyond my comprehension. Part of what the editor said in "News" read "Unfortunately not all articles were printed, so these will be used for next year's "Walk" ".

It is somewhat surprising that the current subcommittee feels free to pre-empt next year's editor in this way, but if we leave that aside, this at least indicates that they feel the standard of the material for which they were unable to find room is perfectly adequate. What I find so surprising is this question of insufficient space. Despite the fact that the pages are numbered differently, it is possible to compare "Walk 1981" directly with "Walk 1980" as the number of pages is exactly the same. One is struck at once by the amount of empty space there seems to be in "Walk 1981", particularly on pages 12, 17, 40, 63, 64 and 74. (I know you can't start a new article at the bottom of a page - you juggle things till the space comes near the top - I've done it). The comparison becomes more striking if we count the number of pages of articles. Here it is convenient to separate things into articles as such (including editorial and book reviews) and what one might call "service" items - i.e. track notes, title page, contents page, mapping notice. These service items come, in round figures, to 11½ pages in 1981 and 9½ pages in 1980..... not much difference there. The articles, on the other hand, came to 51 pages in 1980 and only 37 pages in 1981!!! What on earth has happened to all that space? It would have been possible to print over ½ more material than was actually published if resources had been managed the same way in 1981 as in 1980.

Maps and photographs amount to 14 pages in 1981 as compared with 11½ pages in 1980 - again not a large variation. It is when we come to the advertisements that we get a real shock. If we exclude the covers (inside and out) which are not accessible to articles, there were 10 pages of ads in the 1980 issue. In the 1981 issue, including that fatuous waste of half of page 84 with an advertisers' index (I have never known an advertiser make it a condition that such an index be provided, and if he did he should be told very smartly what to do with his ad), there are no less than 17½ pages of them! This is incredible! It almost looks as if the Advertising Manager has been allowed to take over the magazine. It is time a few people got their priorities straight.

Let's face it - we do not publish the magazine for the benefit of advertisers, and we do not owe them a living. We all know how expensive their products are - they charge you what the market will bear and we should be doing the same. In other words we are doing them a big favour - not the other way round - in providing them with a highly selected readership which they can get in few other places. If 75% more than we want are willing to advertise at our present rates, then our present rates are too low. In a free market the rates would be raised until 7 of them drop out. In any case, YOU DON'T SELL MORE SPACE THAN YOU'VE GOT. Surely a budget was drawn up at the beginning of the year after the printer's quote was received which showed break-even plus a small safety margin? Why was this not adhered to? 17½ pages of ads in the body of the magazine is totally unnecessary and completely unacceptable.

Graham Wills-Johnson.

P.S. In case it seems as if I don't understand the difficulties which are faced by the Advertising Manager, perhaps I should point out that I have done that job myself in the past.

* * * * *

No doubt some members will remember an unfortunate incident in 1979 when both the Summit and Bivouac Huts on Mt. Bogong were burned down by unknown person or persons. On a recent trip to Bogong (December '80) I was interested to come across a group of men, hard at work building a new Bivouac Hut! Situated approximately 100 metres to the north of the old hut site, the new hut is being built out of blackwood timber, inside and out. When completed the hut will accommodate approximately 6 persons. It is to be fitted with benches and a pot belly stove and should be completed by mid December 1980.

Philip Taylor

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WELCOME TO THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS:

Sheila BONNELL,

Stephen FOULKES,

Stephen McCREIDIE,

Kathleen MILLS,

Barbara NEALE,

Leon TRETOWAN,

Changes of Address, Phone Nos., etc.

Peter BULLARD,

Steven BURKE,

Krystyna WATTERS,

Alex STIRKUL,

Would all members PLEASE notify the Membership Secretary promptly of the change of address, phone No. at home or business. Thank you.

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* PLEASE NOTE: MEMBERSHIP FEES DUE IN FEBRUARY *
* * * * *
* AT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING. *
* * * * *

Thanks for all the offers for typing the January News. Thank you Merilyn Whimpey for actually doing it. Closing date for next news February 4th, 1981. Place all copy in the "Red Box" in the clubrooms or post to Marijke Mascas, 12 Hillcrest Rd. Glen Iris, 3146.

NOTICE

Advance warning that the Annual General Meeting is coming up on Wednesday 25th February 1981.

NOW is the time to start thinking about nominations for the various positions in the club.

PRESIDENT - How about a Female President for a change.

TWO VICE PRESIDENTS

SECRETARY, TREASURER, WALKS SECRETARY, SOCIAL SECRETARY, MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY, "WALK" EDITOR, WILKY MANAGER, NEWS CONVENOR and FIVE GENERAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS.

Think about nominating someone or how about having a go yourself - don't be backward about coming forward. See me or any committee member for further information.

Bob Steel.