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The Magazine

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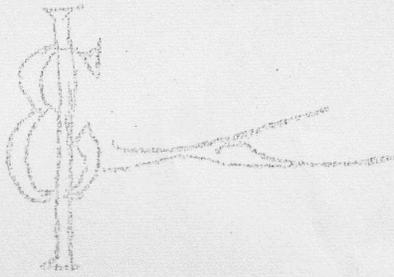
Bush Club

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WALKS AND TALKS

June 1961

The Magazine

ISSUE No. 22

Of

THE BUSH CLUB

Well here we are nearly through another year, and before the next issue is due we will have had our Annual General Meeting once again.

We have had a busy and well filled programme since our last A.G.M., many good camps in new areas and new walks, as well as the old favourites - and particularly good attendances. Our Social Secretary has arranged several theatre parties, and Hazel had another "bottle and plate."

Some of our members are away from home - Alan Cutford in Tasmania where he is both working and walking, Betty in Europe motoring down to Greece when I last heard. Isla "somewhere in a broken down bus" I heard some time back but I'm sure happy and enthusiastic and probably safely in England now, Peter Bedford in New Guinea for the next two years, (how that man moves round). All these members, except Isla who left Sydney last Christmas) have been with us quite a lot this year, so we miss them from our circle and look forward to having them with us again some time. Rhona has had a wonderful trip abroad and we are glad to have her back again, and Monty has been to England and is the latest one to turn up again. It is good when our members return to Australia and come with us again.

Soon another batch of travellers will be setting out for Central Australia by bus. The trip last year was a great success and has encouraged others to try it too. We wish them a very happy journey, and still another group hope to leave for Western Australia a little later and they will carry our best wishes too, looks as though there will be slides of these travels for months ahead.

Another item of interest is the recent engagement of Brian, and we all send him our hearty congratulations and best wishes, together with the hope that we do not thereby lose him entirely from our circle. He is a very good walker and camper with a real love of the bush.

The photographic competition was very interesting, and no one had to be dismayed at the candid camera shots. (Thank you).

Happy Camping, Happy Walking,

(Mrs.) Nance Stillman
Hon. Ed. XB1761
2 Rose Avenue
NORTH SYDNEY

ON STARTING OFF

It never seems very easy to me - Sunday morning bus timetables are not to be trusted, so it's often a taxi to Central. So far, I have only missed a train once, and that was the morning after Hazel's party when I was at the EL platform at the right time, waiting for an ST train. It didn't come. That was Nance's walk to Hell Hole, and I did manage to get there alone a couple of hours later.

The car trips have been my biggest problem. Once I am in a car or on the train, the hardest part of the walk or camp for me is over, and I relax and enjoy it. One Saturday morning I waited rather anxiously for an hour on the wrong side of a hotel in town while Jack Graham waited very patiently on the right side. Jack also had the bad luck to drive me on the next car trip, and he waited about twenty minutes after the stipulated time, as I had taxi trouble. The next driver who gave me a lift must have heard of these lapses, as I was directed to wait at a spot in Central Square where even I could not get confused.

I resolved to do much better for the Warrumbungle trip. Having just returned from Melbourne, I had all day Thursday to shop, pack and get ready, and I was up at the bus stop before 7p.m. The general traffic was very heavy, and after five or ten minutes with no sign of a bus, I hailed a vacant cab I saw approaching. I couldn't open the back door, so the driver opened the front door for me, which meant that I had to hold my pack on my knees, blocking about half my vision. "Martin Place, please." With a slight accent the driver informed me that he did not know it. I was amazed. "How long have you had your license?" I demanded. No answer. I began composing a stirring letter to the Editor of the G.I.H. about it. "Do you know the College St. turn off?" "No." "I'll direct you." Somewhere after Taylor Square I started to notice my surroundings; I couldn't see the jigger that moved the "Vacant" sign up. Cautiously I moved my pack to see if it went down instead. It wasn't there, neither was the meter. "Isn't this a taxi?" "No."

To my embarrassed apologies and vague explanation about not having my glasses, the poor fellow made no reply, but when I said that outside the Museum station would do me very well, he came to an abrupt stop, and we parted company. I'm sure he is convinced that Australians are a very weird mob. I caught a bus to Martin Place then, but it was quite some time after the coach moved off before I began to relax and enjoy our Easter trip. For future Friday night starts, my pack will be brought into town on the Thursday night - by bus.

...oOo...

Peggy Tafe

A FEW ABORIGINAL PLACE NAMES AND THEIR MEANINGS.

(Compiled from my NSW Aboriginal Place Names by F.D. McCarthy, curator of Anthropology, The Australian Museum (Price 1/6))

It is not claimed that the meanings given are scientifically accurate. Explanations often fail to convey the variety of meanings that a word may have, especially where it is connected with the sacred, legal or social aspects of aboriginal life. We will be visiting some of these places in the 1961 Winter schedule.

Gordon Robinson

BARRENJOEY	- Young Kangaroo
BERRIMA	- To the South
BERRY	- White Box Tree
BIBBENLUKE	- Big Look Out
OBBIN	- Place of Smoke
BOWRAL or BOORAL	- High or Large
BUNDANOON	- Place of Deep gullies

Continued next issue

OUR WARRUMBUNGLE EASTER

Two full days in the Warrumbungle National Park : I wondered if this would be enough to see and enjoy this, the most developed of the state's National Parks; I hoped it was not developed to the extent that the natural charm was lost. We were determined to use every minute of this time to walk and climb over as much as possible of the mountainous terrain.

Wombelong Camp was to be our base camp and as we arrived late on the Friday, the setting sun coloured Beloungery Split Rock a rich red, to provide an impressive backdrop to the camp-site, which was well grassed, near running water and had plenty of firewood. The rising full moon threw the bulk of the Rock into silhouette, and it seemed to introduce a mood of wonderful contentment to me; a good feeling to have on this eve of our walk through the Warrumbungles.

Easter Saturday found us under Gordon's leadership, each with a copy of his sketch map, moving off after an early breakfast along Wombelong Creek, with our packs with two day's supply, and all in high spirits of anticipation. The bird life along the creek was spectacular, the leaders of the large party seeing many small parrots and rosellas at very close range. Canyon Camp soon came into view, with its accommodation in the form of old trams, and there were a number of cars with campers, who gave a friendly wave as we continued along the road to Camp Pincham.

On turning a curve in the road, there in the distance, towering above the tree covered hills, was Beloungery Spire, The Breadknife and Crater Bluff close by, great rock outcrops that we were to view from close quarters. This view spurred us to greater efforts to get nearer to these formations. Camp Pincham was almost deserted as we passed through it, the occupants of the cars and tents no doubt being along the track. We joined the Spirey Creek track, the Creek here being a series of very clear water holes. The day was sunny and warm and how I enjoyed that water, as we walked through the bush which now obstructed all view of our first goal, the Spire, Knife and Bluff. A lookout point just above the track gave us a closer view of them, then down again to carry on. We began to meet other people walking, ranging from children to middle-aged and elderly people, all seemed to be enjoying themselves. They were out for the day only, and were not carrying camping packs.

With dramatic suddenness we sighted Beloungery Spire through a break in the trees. The track began to steepen and soon we were plodding up alongside the formation of which the Breadknife was part. We were on the sheltered side and the sun was quite hot, and I thought of the cool pools in Spirey Creek, and also of the water tank at Dow's hut, which was to be our campsite. We left the track to scramble up the rocks to a point where we could sit astride the rocks at the base of the Breadknife. A glorious cool breeze found us, and sitting on this vantage point, with spectacular views at every hand, I began to realize what a wonderful place this National Park was. No wonder Gordon goes into raptures whenever he talks about it. To walk in it is an experience both refreshing and stimulating.

Up the track we rolled towards the Grand High Tops, with Beloungery Spire on our left across the Breadknife Ravine, mentally thanking those who had expended so much effort to cut these wonderful tracks. We made the startling discovery that some rock climbers were in action on the Spire. They looked like ants inching their way up the massive rock, and there was one on the very top. Everyone to his own taste! The Grand High Tops gave us more extensive views. Crater Bluff was close at hand, with the majestic symmetry of Tonduron in the distance. Dow's hut was our objective, as the tank there would provide us with water for lunch, so down the Pinnacles Ramp we went, into bush again. Then came a view of Crater Bluff from a different angle, and another party of climbers could be seen starting to scale the Bluff. The last section of this tract was

up again, well graded as usual, and we were at Dow's Hut. Now for a drink of water, and better still a big billy of tea.

We were very fortunate in meeting Carl Dow at the hut. He is the Park Ranger and the Hut is named in his honour. Here is a man who typifies the spirit of National Parks. A joke and a cheery word for all who arrive, - he wanted to know if my filled water bag was for soaking my feet, - I probably looked as though they needed it. He was glad to talk about the Park and answer our questions, and explained how the tank was brought up in pieces and assembled to water-tight perfection in its present location. The Hut was a gathering point for most walkers to stop, drink and rest. Many of them would take the West Spirey Creek Track from near here, and arrive back at Camp Pincham to complete a day walk. Not us, however this was to be our campsite for the night. Lunch though late was good, especially all the tea and water.

Without packs we took the track leading us to the top of Bluff Mountain, and began the ascent. The views improved as we got higher, and on reaching the shoulder of the mountain, Bluff Pyramid was before us, and when shortly after we reached the top, there was practically the whole day's walk spread out at our feet, with all the scenic highlights to be seen. We spent an enjoyable half hour tracing out the walk for tomorrow, pointing out the various formations, and marvelling at the ease with which two wedge-tailed eagles soared around and over the mountain, and sometimes from quite close range, as they floated past us.

Tea around the camp fires was a very pleasant affair, all of us very relaxed and happy. I could not help observing and appreciating the effect this great National Park had had on us. Here was a concrete example of the workings of National Parks. We had benefit immensely from only one day here, others we had seen today, the young and the not-so-young had been able to walk through the Park benefitting mentally and physically. What a debt we owe to those who had the vision to set aside the area and especially to those who have cut the miles of perfect tracks, making all of this available to those willing to enter this place of contentment.

Easter Sunday - all were very fit and set out at a good pace along Dow's High Tops on the second day of our walk. A few stops were made for photographs, a particularly interesting view being of the sheer size of Bluff Mountain with its pattern of shattered rock face seen to advantage in the morning light. The track led us down to the source of West Spirey Creek, and then climbed up again to the Western High Tops; there was not much dawdling as we had the chance to climb Mt. Exmouth, and also, if we reached our base camp in time, Belougerly Split Rock. An interesting feature of this section was the crossing of the Danu Screens, shortly before reaching Danu Gap and Hut. This must cost the track makers some effort, as the broken rocks have been man-handled to make a level footway. At Danu Gap is another tank, and here we left our packs, drank our fill, and set off up the Exmouth Spur Track towards the top.

The track was good, there seems to be no other kind in this National Park, and we wound our way up the mountain side, through timbered and grassed glades. Many bird calls could be heard and we had a good view of three wallaroos of diminishing size sitting side by side watching us as we stood in the same way on the track to view them. We were on the southern side of the mountain and it was pleasant walking in the shade as we gradually gained height on the way to the summit. Mt. Exmouth is the highest peak in the Park, with an elevation of 4,020 feet above sea level. The trees and paddocks on the plains below were getting appreciably smaller as we negotiated a "foothold" track around a rock spur, with the help of a wire guard rail, more evidence of the Ranger's handiwork, to tackle the last of the track to the top.

We walked along the top to the Trig Station, and then all attention was given to the magnificent panorama spread out below. By now most of us could recognize and name the more prominent features to be seen, the eagles gave us another gliding and soaring display, and it was good to sit in the brilliant sun and enjoy the spectacle before us. However, we had to push on, and so followed the track down to Danu Gap and our packs.

The Boulevard was the next section of the track we had to traverse and as this led us directly to our lunch stop at Burbie Spring, we stepped out smartly. It was easy walking; not much evidence of a made track as it was open timbered country, but the metal markers on the tree trunks, similar to those beside all the other tracks, made the way very easy to follow. Here is an example of how the natural features of the Park had been left untouched wherever possible. It is the policy one would expect after seeing how much thought and effort had gone into opening the area we had seen the day before.

Burbie Spring was a series of clear shallow pools, and we enjoyed our lunch stop, with a good billy of tea. We followed the tree markers to join the dry bed of Burbie Creek, and then followed it through Burbie Canyon to join the road back to our base camp. Nance gave us an excellent excuse for a rest before attempting the climb up Belougerie Split Rock by cutting a pineapple into about thirty pieces and handing it round.

The Split Rock was scaled by following the track around to its southern end and climbing the ladder and rock face to arrive at the summit of the South Peak. From this point we could look south to see our old friends Belougerie Spire, the Breadknife, Crater Bluff and Bluff Mountain. South-west was Mt. Exmouth. Time was running out unfortunately, and we reluctantly had to return to our camp and evening meal. Gordon and Brian went straight down the side of the rock! The other less venturesome types descended the rock face and ladder again, where some of us selected the Rock Circuit Track as a way back to camp. We reached a track junction. Peggy and I thought we would follow the side track as it appeared to lead to the Split between the Peaks. It did, and on rounding this timber covered saddle we had a view of the evening sun casting shadows over our camp-site at Wombelong.

It was agreed that the most attractive way down, but probably the hardest, was down the Split through the rocks and trees. It would be a fitting climax to our stay in the National Park. Some of the going was a bit rough but not difficult enough to cause us to regret our decision and before the last light had gone we were in a position to see the fires of the camp and make our way to them. I felt pleased that we were the last ones to get back to camp; even though this was unintentional, I like to think of it as a slight personal tribute to the enjoyment the National Park gave us.

The two days had been crammed with a series of memorable sights and experiences. The highest praise must be given to this example of National Parks in Australia, and our home state should be justly proud. My fears of over-development happily were not realized, and some day I hope the Bush Club will return to the Warrumbungles and walk over these tracks again, and should they walk in other parts without tracks, I hope I am a member of the party.

Barry Davis.

FOG FROLIC:
(or Go Anywhere with Gordon ??)

Perhaps we should have been warned by two vivid flashes of lightning and a thunder clap or two out of a clear starry sky that something was being cooked up for the Queen's Birthday week-end, but we disregarded these omens and eleven of us set out for the Upper Clyde area at about 7:40 on the Friday night.

We enjoyed tea and toast at Kiama, at the same time as a party of other bushwalkers - Kamerukas, Coast and Mountain Walkers, and YHA's, a large party by bus and some, like us, in cars. We camped at Flat Rock Creek and next morning arrived at the turnoff where the bus was waiting, and set off on the first stage of our walk. As we started, alas, we all drew out and donned our ground sheets, and we hardly had them off again until our return. It was only a light scotch mist at this time, but it was obvious that a lot of rain had already fallen, and we headed along a muddy track, across swampy saturated ground, trying at first, as one does, to keep dry feet, but soon giving up all idea of that as we crossed three knee-deep creeks.

We lunched in a pleasant grove of trees on a low saddle - and presently quite a large party of day walkers came sloshing through the marshy flat below us - YHA's going back to their bus, and while Gordon was having a word with them, another batch of campers came over the saddle, Kamerukas I think, so that for a few minutes the scene was thickly populated with bush-walking types, looking like strange birds with their packs, rain soaked hats and ground-sheets, while the smoke from our lunch fires circled round, and the mist blew past. Our destination was blotted out by fog.

We wasted no time over lunch, it was cold sitting about in the drizzle, and we set out after the disappearing campers, up a ridge up a steep narrow chimney and eventually on to a plateau. The country behind us, to the West, was visible, but the campers had already disappeared behind the silent white wall of fog, and from then on visibility was mostly limited to about fifty yards. Now and again we had glimpses of this rough interesting country, with deep ravines, crags and pinnacles of conglomerate, rock faces and peaks, but never much at one time, and never for more than a few moments. We followed a track for a long way, through short grass, every step a splash, a few low bushes and no trees, until we came to the Conglomerate Slope, and a more desolate sight could hardly be imagined. A way was found down the rock face, and so into thick bush on a steep slope. We went right to the bottom, and the only flat piece was the bed of the creek, under the water. Gordon had hoped to reach a cave in this locality, for our night's camp, but our going was slow, impeded by wet bushes and slither, so we walked for a time along the creek bed in the water (refreshing in June) and at one time crawled on hands and knees in the water, under a very large log.

The afternoon closed in rapidly, we saw the top of the hill across the creek for a little time, then all was blotted out in fog and rain, it seemed instantly dark, and there we were. As a campsite it had almost nothing to recommend it, but we had a particularly good leader. He divided the party, and while some collected firewood in the dark, others contrived with four or five tents and some odd bits of cord, to erect a sort of community shelter with the aid of suitable trees and poles. In the meantime one or two worked at the fire making, and shortly we had a really good fire, a supply of wood, and quite a good shelter. When we were all dry and fed, a lot of additions were made to the Paddy Pallin Palace, and everyone was assured of a certain amount of protection and comfort for the night. We all got to bed dry and warm, but it was not a really good night. It rained a great deal, the fog drifted about, and we had no big logs to keep the fire going. Also the

ground sloped so sharply it was hard to stay in place, and everyone got a bit wet from trickles, mud, or rolling out of the shelter.

At daylight the fog was thicker than ever, and rain was falling steadily, and when Gordon suggested that we head back for the cars, he was greeted with enthusiasm. We had a hasty cold breakfast, crammed our dripping tents on to the top of our packs, donned a streaming ground-sheets once more, and a sopping footwear, and off we went. Visibility was much less than the day before at this time, so it took a little time to find our way up the Conglomerate Slope again at the right spot, but when we had climbed back on to the grassy plateau, we well might have been the last people anywhere. Not a single landmark could be seen, the rain fell steadily and the fog made a white silent enclosure.

Well for us that we had a good and well equipped leader, because a mistake in this lonely rugged country could be very costly. However, Gordon had a good compass and map, and patiently checked and double checked whenever we had to make a decision as to which ridge or saddle, and so ultimately led us to the cliffs at the western end of the plateau. Here we paused for a bit, as there seemed no way down, and we had not arrived at exactly the top of the chimney. Luckily, just when we needed it, the fog lifted and the marshy plain we had crossed the day before was spread out before us. We could see about where we had had lunch, and a few ridges behind that, the approximate position of the bus and cars. It was much clearer in the far west, but the fog behind us was just as thick as ever.

We found a way down, further along from the chimney, pausing to watch a very worried wombat, which surged out from some bracken and made a dive between two of us, and so on to the plain, which we crossed in long strides. We still had drizzle and every step was a slosh and three creeks to cross and our packs were heavy with wet gear and we were tired and hungry, but we all felt very cheerful to be returned safely from that obliterating fog.

The whole party felt that Gordon did an outstanding job as leader. He had never been in that locality before, and it was due to his organizing and care that we had as much comfort as we did and were able to return with such little loss of time.

The cars still had to cross three unbridged creeks, and as each carried flood markers (and one a flying fox) we felt it would be as well to try the crossings before it became late, so we did not wait to eat or change, but set off immediately for the first and worst. Barry and Albert waded through and it was decided to go ahead, so with Gordon leading, Howard and Albert followed, and a cheerful party gathered on the other bank and changed into dry clothes at last. The other creeks gave no trouble, and when we reached Flat Rock Creek again, Gordon and three others decided to camp, but the rest of the party headed for home.

The next day was spent in further exploration, and our untiring and enterprising Hon.-Pres. has still another idea coming up. Are you going with Gordon?

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Nance Stillman

(Note: We expect hazards and difficulties at this mid-winter weekend, but I suggest that is the first time that a Bush Club three day week end has been abandoned because of it.)