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No 34

"WALKS & TALKS"



THE MAGAZINE OF THE BUSH
CLUB

Many Club members also belong to the National Parks Association and as a Club we are vitally interested in the aims and achievements of the National Parks Association. In this issue we have tried to give a general picture of the concept of National Parks throughout the world, their particular application in New South Wales and what we as a Club have done to help.

I am very sorry for the delay in publication of this issue of Walks & Talks. I am afraid I have fallen down on the job lately as I find it difficult to get out on walks to see people and obtain contributions from them, and also to find the time necessary for the actual typing and arranging of publication. Judy Ellis, with very limited time herself, has done a sterling job in typing stencils for this issue, and Flora Graham came to the rescue to complete the work necessary for its publication, with expert assistance from Gordon in reproducing the cover design drawn by Peter Brown - just another example of the Bush Club's co-operative spirit.

All future issues of Walks & Talks will be under the joint editorship of Dorothy Bryant and Flora Graham, with Judy Ellis as Assistant. I am very pleased to hand over to such a capable team, and I am sure everyone will give them the help and advice I have always had, and I hope they enjoy looking over the magazine as much as I have,

Will you please send all future contributions to Mrs. Dorothy Bryant, 84 Bowden Boulevard, Yagoona, or Miss Flora Graham, 77 Peacock Street, Seaforth.

Janet Robinson,
Retiring Editor

OFFICE BEARERS, 1964/65

At the Annual general Meeting held on Saturday, 15th August, 1964 the following Office Bearers were elected -

PRESIDENT:	Mr Alan Catford
VICE PRESIDENTS:	Mrs Dorothy Bryant, Miss Flora Graham
SECRETARY:	Miss Barbara Brearley
ASSISTANT SECRETARY:	Miss Judith Ellis
TREASURER:	Mr Walter McGrath
SOCIAL SECRETARY:	Miss Mabs Bennett
SOCIAL COMMITTEE:	Mrs Judy Loos, Miss Rhona McBurney and Mrs Phyllis Goulding
WALKS SECRETARY:	Mr Howard Graham
COMMITTEE MEMBER:	Mr Barry Davis
FEDERATION DELEGATES:	Miss Ruth Price and Mr Howard Graham
" " Proxies:	Mr Sam Hinde, Mrs Phyllis Goulding
SEARCH & RESCUE DELEGATE:	Mr Howard Graham
N.P.A. DELEGATE:	Miss Rhona McBurney
AUDITORS:	Mr Maurice Clare and Mrs Nance Stillman
TRACK & ACCESS DELEGATE:	Mr Alan Catford

GUEST OF HONOUR MR MYRON D. SUTTON

Mr Myron D. Sutton of the National Park Service of the United States of America, came to Australia recently - first, to assist the U.S. Travel Service in its "Visit U.S.A." programme; and second, to meet Australian park and conservation personnel.

Not long ago, a veteran explorer returned to parts of Africa that he had not seen for decades. He calculated that within the last 50 years, almost 90% of the wildlife of Africa had disappeared. Africa, to him, had almost ceased to be. Some animals had been lost entirely. Others were going fast. Already it was too late to save the total fauna - the original heritage - of Africa.

One question remains today - how much can be salvaged in the time that is left? And that same question is pertinent to every other nation on earth. And, as time rolls relentlessly on, more and more nations are meeting the matter with a desperate sense of urgency. They are building their last frontiers into national parks and equivalent reserves in which their precious, vanishing heritage - natural and historic - may be preserved for the benefit and enjoyment of future generations.

We in the United States of America can thank our pioneer explorers who were farsighted enough to start the national park idea early.

In 1872, Yellowstone National Park, the world's first national park, was "dedicated and set apart as a public park or pleasuring-ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the people".

Since then, the National Park System in the United States has grown to more than 200 separate units, comprising some 25 million acres. Even this is less than 1% of the land area of the Nation. Each year there are more than 90 million visits made and the number is growing.

Now even though Yellowstone was the first of all national parks - as such parks are known today - it was not the first park to be set aside for public benefit, nor was the United States the first to set aside public parks.

No one knows what country did. It is possible that the ancient Sumerians, or Babylonians, or Egyptians, reserved for general use some portion of public or royal lands. So, probably, did the Greeks and Romans - for it was the Roman lawgiver, Justinian, who laid down a principle that beaches and shorelines belonged to all the people.

In China, centuries ago, parks were created for the display of animals. India, well before the Christian Era, declared that certain species of birds and animals were totally protected, and they established "Abbayaranya", or places "where beasts could roam around without any fear of man". Lord Buddha himself preached in a deer park near Barnaras.

The "Wood of the Hague", in Holland, was reserved in 1576, and in 1853, the Forest of Fontainebleau was established south of Paris, France.

After Yellowstone, the tradition of national parks for the enjoyment of all the people gained momentum on a worldwide scale.

Canada created Banff National Park in 1887; Australia established national parks in 1891, New Zealand in 1894. Great Britain set up a National Trust; Mexico started work on its park system; and what was to become South Africa's famous Kruger National Park was first placed under protection in 1892.

Then followed Sweden, Switzerland, Russia and many others.

During 1925, King Albert of Belgium created in the Congo a gorilla sanctuary that was enlarged to become the world-renowned Albert National park.

Great strides were made in the 1930's in Chile, Argentina and Ecuador. Japanese officials, after visiting the U.S.A., began to build a system of parks that now occupies some 5% of the land area of Japan.

After World War II, a number of outstanding African parks were set aside, among them the Serengeti, Queen Elizabeth, Tsavo, Wankie, and Kafue - and all just in the nick of time. Today, more than 80 nations have national parks and equivalent reserves.

Now around the world, rangers and custodians are engaged in a desperate struggle to save their animals from complete extinction. In Indonesia, scarcely four-dozen Java rhinoceros (if that many) remain alive. Their footprints are observed from time to time in the Ujung Kulon preserve, but that is about all. The animals themselves have not been seen in years.

Square-lipped rhinos very nearly disappeared from South Africa, and had it not been for strict conservation, the animals would have gone forever. They have made a comeback, happily, and rangers are transferring them from near the Umfulozi Reserve to National Parks and other sanctuaries, where they will be safe.

So it is that many species of animals are being either hunted or crowded toward extinction. And, since their regular ranges ignore political boundaries, their survival is a matter of world concern. National Parks, therefore, are of international significance.

The United Nations itself has become involved. Under the auspices of UNESCO there was created in 1948 an organization that has become the International Union for the Conservation of Nature - or IUCN. The IUCN, with headquarters in Morges, Switzerland, dedicates itself to saving wildlife and landscapes and to discussing ways of preserving natural resources. Many persons who wish to help directly in worldwide conservation programmes find it convenient to do so through the IUCN.

In 1962, the United Nations passed a resolution urging all nations to beautify and safeguard landscapes and sites. These were considered a "powerful physical, moral and spiritual regenerating influence, while at the same time contributing to the artistic and cultural life of peoples". Furthermore, said the report, they are important "in the economic and social life of many countries, and are largely instrumental in ensuring the health of their inhabitants".

What finer testimonial for national parks?

John Muir, the great American conservationist, put the same idea in poetic form when he said - half a century ago: "thousands of nerve-shaken, over-civilized people are beginning to find out that going to the mountains is going home; that wilderness is a necessity; and that mountains parks and reservations are useful not only as fountains of timber and irrigating rivers, but as fountains of life".

Extracts from the Guest of Honour broadcast by Mr.
Myron D. Sutton, by permission of the Australian
Broadcast Commission.

For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts;
even one thing befalleth them: as one dieth, so dieth the
other; yea, they all have one breath; so that a man hath no
pre-eminence above a beast: for all is vanity.
All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to
dust again.

Ecclesiastes III.

THE BUSH CLUB AND THE NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION
Rhone McBurney.

For a few years past Mr. J.G. McKern of the National Parks Association has spent much of his valuable time at the Lands Department locating vacant crown lands in New South Wales.

Up to date Mr. McKern has located some two million acres in sizeable blocks which may be suitable for reservation for nature conservation purposes. With the pressures of expanding population, the opportunities for securing vacant crown lands for this purpose will soon have vanished.

For this reason these lands must be explored and, if suitable, be claimed as soon as possible. This is probably the most important and urgent project in the field of nature conservation at present.

With this in mind, Mr. McKern, at the last Annual General Meeting of the N.P.A., stressed the need for exploring these areas and, soon after, a special meeting was called.

A group from the Bush Club attended this inaugural meeting of the Explorers Section of the N.P.A., and also the practice field day held in the Royal National Park.

A list of areas was presented to the meeting and those present were invited to select areas to explore. The Bush Club, after finding no special scientific qualifications were required, selected the Ulan area because it was reasonably close to Sydney and could be reached by public transport without too much trouble in limited time.

Mr. McKern provided maps of the area and at Easter 1964 we made our first exploratory expedition.

REPORT ON NATURAL AREA

The exploration party was from the Bush Club, led by Howard Graham and Rhona McBurney.

The area examined was that part shown on the map bounded on the east by the Goulburn River and a creek flowing south-east into the Goulburn River; on the north by a creek flowing into the Goulburn River and a line running more or less east-west from this creek to the Dividing Range, crossing the upper part of Ulan Creek about midway; on the west by the Dividing Range; and on the south by Ulan Creek. The area extends further than this in the west and south, but time did not allow us to get to these parts.

The campsite we chose was on the right bank of the Goulburn River about half a mile upstream from the bridge where the Ulan-Cassilis road crosses the river. The site was not far from the road and on the same side of the river as the road. This area is very attractive for camping and picnicking. The river, although it did not have a large volume of water, had a clean sandy bed and was running with a good flow. Fish about 6" long could be seen in the deeper parts. The banks on either side are grassy and have a good cover of trees with not much undergrowth. The trees here are mostly eucalypts and wattles. Angophoras and Ironbarks are also quite numerous. On the west bank opposite to our campsite there was a line of sandstone and conglomerate cliffs about 30 feet high and extending for about a quarter of a mile, with the land sloping gently beyond with sandstone outcrops rising abruptly.

The investigation trips were made on two days, the first on Saturday, 28th March 1964.

From the camp site we walked along the river bank upstream for about a mile, noticing a great variety of animal and bird tracks in the sand. We then left the river at a right-angled bend and moved in a more or less westerly direction into sandstone hilly country, and continued in this direction for about 4 miles. This area, which was on the north side of the lower portion of Ulan Creek, rose fairly steeply and was formed by sandstone and conglomerate outcrops cut by watercourses which flowed into Ulan Creek. All these watercourses were dry. The rock formations here showed unusual weathering and lamination patterns, with tilted and curved bedding planes, and varying textures of conglomerate and finer shale beds as well as sandstone. Striking colours were seen too in cliffs and caves, ranging from cream to clear yellows to orange.

We crossed Ulan Creek, which was rough and steep here, with a waterfall (but no water). We moved westwards towards Ulan Trig but did not locate it. The country here was of such a nature that it was difficult to pick out which was the highest point, and although we didn't find the Trig we think we were very close to it. The growth consisted of stunted trees, mostly eucalypts, and thick scratchy heath, which made it difficult to get a view. We returned on our tracks from here as far as Ulan Creek, and then followed its course down, finding a few small waterholes below the waterfall. Here the vegetation was richer, with tree ferns, bauera and epacrids. Otherwise the creek bed was quite dry all the way down to the Goulburn River. The lower portion of Ulan Creek comes out into a river flat which has been cleared and grassed for farming.

The country we passed through consisted of open forest on the lower slopes, dry sclerophyll on the upper slopes and open heath on the tops, with bare sandstone and conglomerate outcrops which weather into interesting shapes as though sculptured - very much like those around the hilltops above the Zigzag (Lithgow) and along the old Newnes railway - the same geological series, probably. The trees were mostly eucalypts, including numerous ironbarks. There were also cypress pines. Flowers were not plentiful, but this was not the flowering season and the summer had been a dry one. We would expect to see a much better show in the spring. The ridges were about 500 feet above the river flat, and on occasions when the growth permitted we got some quite extensive views to the south over cleared land along the river and to the rolling hills and beyond to the mountains. The walking was rough and steep at times but not impossible, and also at times very scratchy.

Birds were plentiful. We saw three lyrebirds in the open forest not far from Ulan Creek, numerous parrots - rosellas and mountain lowreys - also white cockatoos and large black cockatoos with red on the wings and tail. There were many other small birds which we did not identify, and many whose calls we heard but did not see.

Of animals we saw several kangaroos, mostly rather dark in colour, in the rough country, and burrows of wombats near the watercourses. Also noticed were unusual animal droppings containing large seeds, undigested, and some with whole she-oak cones.

On our second trip, on Sunday 28th March 1964, we set out from the camp site in a north-westerly direction across the travelling stock route shown on the map until we reached the creek on the north-east corner of the map. This section consisted of forested savannah country rising up the slope from the Goulburn River. We passed through a good stand of scribbly gums with trunks a clear yellow colour, which could have been on the travelling stock route. The creek had no water but the bed was sandy and damp and water did appear in some burrowings of animals, probably wombats, not far below the surface. This creek had gently sloping flat land on the south side,

which had been cleared and used for grazing in the past. There were fences in derelict condition and a shelter shed also derelict, and wheel tracks which were almost overgrown, and the stumps of trees which had been cut down. On the north side of the creek were sandstone cliffs about 50 feet high.

We moved along the south side of the creek for a distance of about a mile, along an old wheel track, until it became overgrown. We climbed a rocky sandstone outcrop to the south and from here we had an extensive view to the north over cleared grazing country rolling away with a few rocky outcrops, and far in the distance the Dividing Range somewhere near Cassilis Gap. On the skyline were several interesting looking mountain peaks. The flat section along the creek was overgrown mostly with wattles, as well as angophoras, ironbarks and other eucalypts, and cypress pines.

On continuing we went more or less west and came to a fence running in an east-west direction, which we took to be the northern boundary of the area. This fence ran through forested savannah country, rising to rocky outcrops on the south side and flattening out on the north side. The fence was in quite good condition, having netting down to the ground, but had not been maintained recently, the netting having been holed in several places, and in one place a tree had fallen across it, flattening the wire.

We followed this fence for a distance of about 2 miles until we came to Ulan Creek, where the land on the north side of the fence was cleared and grassed, with the remains of what had been stockyards and sheds of some kind, but these were in a derelict condition. Ulan Creek here had water, in the form of a chain of waterholes with very little flow. The water was mostly discoloured by the mud, but at a few spots it was nearly clear and we were able to get enough for thirst quenching purposes. At this point also there was a road running roughly north-south, passing into the grazing country to the north and running south into the area we were exploring.

We walked along the road from here, following the course of Ulan Creek for a while and then veering to the west. The water in Ulan Creek to the south soon petered out to just an occasional small waterhole. We continued along the road for a distance of about a mile and a half, noticing numerous animal and bird tracks in the soft surface. The road eventually led us to a cleared patch of grassed land surrounding a watercourse with water in it - not much, but clean and running - and there were several goats grazing. This watercourse could be part of Ulan Creek or a tributary, but we were not sure of this and did not have time to follow it through. There were remains of an old homestead with two stone chimneys only standing, and stockyards and fences in a derelict condition. There were beehives up on one slope, but we did not investigate to see if they were alive. This area was in a gorge bounded by sandstone ridges which were pretty rugged.

From here we left the road and turned due east for the camp site. This took us across rough rocky outcrops and steep gullies covered by scratchy undergrowth, with eucalypts, cypress and wattles, and various kinds of heathy scrub. Dotted about the rough parts all over the area were blackboys and macrozamia palms. This was the highest part of the area with the exception of the Dividing Range. Some good views all round were obtainable at times, but at most times the growth was too thick to allow any view at all. This part was apparently the southern edge of a plateau which stretched away to the north and was cut away steeply by a system of watercourses which ran south to Ulan Creek. There was no water at all in any of the watercourses, but there is evidence that it is there sometimes, such as moss on the rocks and some of the ground had the appearance of swampiness, which had dried up. As we approached the Goulburn River this rocky plateau dropped

steeply down to the river bank, where the going was rough and scratchy until we reached the open forest country not far from the river.

On Monday morning, 30th March 1964, we broke camp and packed up. While waiting for the bus at the bridge we noticed that the soil on the northern side of the bridge and along the road was a bright red, the only patch of red soil we saw on the whole area, and the growth on this soil was somewhat different from the rest. Under the bridge there were numerous swallow's nests, some with stripes of red and white and grey, formed by the different colours of the mud collected by the birds.

That completed our investigation.

Comment:

The area investigated is a dissected plateau stretching from the Dividing Range to the Goulburn River, and dissected by Ulan Creek and its tributaries. The plateau continues to the north where it is cleared grazing land.

Birds are very numerous, including lyre birds, parrots of various kinds, and lots of small birds that we have not identified.

Animals are apparently quite numerous too, the party having seen kangaroos, a possum, two different types of gliding possum, two snakes (one black, one brown) and there were numerous tracks and droppings of animals, and wombat burrows. The animal tracks were plentiful around the watercourses, which seemed to indicate that there may be more water at most times than there was present when we were there.

We think this area, which would have no commercial value, would be very good as a faunal reserve, but not suitable for a National Park, on account of the rather rough walking, the scarcity of water and the lack of really spectacular scenery. The one part in the area that would be suitable for a public reserve is the section near the road and along the banks of the Goulburn River, including the travelling stock route and along the creek in the north-east portion - roughly the north-east portion of the map. Here the water in the river is all that is required for camping and picnicking, with a good cover of trees, and the ground clear enough to walk in without any difficulty or the need for tracks.

Cy

Nance Stillman

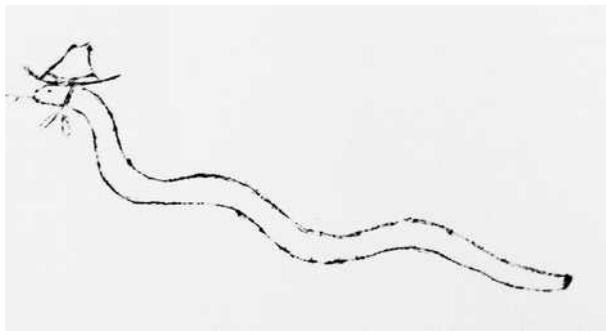
Recently the Club had a walk scheduled from Waterfall to Helensburgh. I wanted to go on this walk and learn the way - so marked the date a good while in advance. When the day arrived I had a too, too hasty glance at the schedule, and rather than try to build up the suspense, let me tell you at the outset that I did not notice that it was a Cy train, and although I caught a train that went to the right station and left at almost the same time, it was the wrong train. Wally and his party probably left Waterfall about 30 minutes before I arrived there.

Oh, well! These things happen to some people - causing them to have a series of surprises, while other, better organized types just do not have so many surprises, one supposes. Well, here I am at Waterfall with the day before me, my lunch and good weather - let there be no grief, most likely I can still do that other trip another day - I mused. I realized that I had much more "musing time" at my disposal than usual - and how I enjoyed that day! Goodness knows I did not muse to any organized pattern or directed extent, but fortunately muddled thinking and poor schedule reading does not necessarily mar all one's pleasures, nor prevent one enjoying the sights, sounds and scents without any thinking whatsoever.

I had a dip in a quiet stretch of creek at lunchtime, had a sunbake as I ate lunch, and just poked about, sometimes walking quite briskly and sometimes just loitering and gazing. I talked for a time with a group of Boy Scouts.

I met a snake, which meant that we were rather in each other's way. The snake was only too obviously musing over me in a rather bad-tempered way and I felt I had better make the first move as the snake had no train to catch. I remembered the old theory that you drop a hat near the snake, which, being thoroughly fascinated with millinery, gazes at the hat (whether with suspicion or envy is not know for sure) and then you are free to dispense with the hat and leave quietly or commit murder. I had no hat and wondered if a hairpin or two would entertain it or insult it or infuriate it (snakes being bald). We both mused for a time and then declared an honourable truce - snake to the right, lady to the left - and passed on.

It was a very good day. I walked about 7 miles I think, and caught the train home at a different station.



A TYPICAL SUNDAY WALK

John Brown

Ingleburn - George's River - Minto

Four lassies and two laddies made up the party.

The 8.57 a.m. electric gave us half an hour's wait on Liverpool station. However, a huge billy came to light and with hot water from the station urn we gathered around for a cuppa.

Kath Jones was waiting at Ingleburn and gave us a lift to the Weir. Very much appreciated.

Starting the walk at 11 a.m., crossed river, followed old bush track connecting with Greenhills Road - Army bugles on the morning breeze.

After two miles along the way we struck track leading back to river. At this junction we cut into the bush and descended down to Kalibucca Creek. Just the right spot for lunch, and the time being 1.30 we were all ready for munching time.

At 2.30 we were off again, perilously picking our way along a huge tree trunk lying on the slope. Disturbed a nest of bees and two of the little B's got me.

Bushwalkers Basin looked inviting. One member disappeared in a water-hole whilst crossing over the top of the waterfalls. Ladies to the rescue with emergency walking togs.

A bit of road walking to the sounds of various dog barks along the way. Turn off via fence took us into the bush again over a creek, then a climb to the main road, where a kind gent gave us a lift in his utility to Minto in time for the 4.30 train.

25th BIRTHDAY

Nance Stillman

The Bush Club's 25th Birthday was especially good. It will, I think, always be remembered as "The Birthday Party at which those little girls sang so happily".

It had some added features to help it along also. The weather was in good supply and quite beyond compare, whereas other occasions, although well attended and well catered for, have had to contend with showers or storms. Also the gathering had a nice wide time limit and a very interesting and pleasant walk was enjoyed under the motherly eye of our foundress, for those who could arrive early enough.

The barbecue and camp fire had a good setting on a flat above a creek, only about 15 minutes walk from either public or private transport, at Cheltenham close by "Ahimsa", with plenty of wood and water available, and a stone fireplace.

All this adds up - but in addition it was very pleasing to have over 50 at the party, some people having been members for up to 25 years - right down to little Robin Fried, aged less than 18 months. Another pleasing feature was the number of relatives and friends of members who came along also.

The basic arrangements and calculations of quantities had been made by Ruth Price before she went on her holiday. Ruth Milton arranged the walk, which was attended by about a dozen members. Rhona had the job of ordering the enormous food supply and arranging to have it on hand for transport to the site by Gordon. Three or four had been asked to provide home-baked biscuits, and others buttered stacks of sliced bread. Alan, our new Hon. President, was seen pinning direction arrows on trees and also lugging the large drums along to the scene for the coffee. Lots of people collected wood and the cooks worked beside the blaze turning chops and sausages and seeing that all got their share. Others put out the salads and a water party filled the drums at the creek and got them boiling - a truly co-operative effort.

Rosalie organized the camp fire singing. This is always hard work because lots of people know lots of songs but hardly any song is known by lots of people, and often an enthusiastic start dwindles away to an assortment of mumbling and da-de-dahing because nobody knows the song right through. But here we had a very pleasant surprise - the aforementioned little girls not only knew all the words of some songs but they sang them to us quite delightfully, and their enthusiasm spread to the whole party. We hope they come again.

Items were given by Beryl, Val, Victor and the Grahams, and Sam was a terrific success among the children with his extraordinary and highly coloured parrot with its inbuilt tape recorder.

A very good birthday party indeed. It rained the next night.

LIFE'S TREASURINGS

These are life's treasurings:
 The sudden sun through rain;
 Stars on a frosty night;
 Grass rippling o'er the plain;
 Tempest grown still;
 Hearth-fires when long roads end;
 Candle-light in a quiet room;
 And the still silence of a friend.

Mary Gilmore.

