

October 1956

No. 3

WALKS AND TALKS

The Magazine

Of

THE BUSH CLUB

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Madam,

Every self-respecting periodical has a column "Letters to the Editor". I think it is high time that we introduce this famous free-for-all now into the pages of our WALKS AND TALKS. Two articles in the second issue give me the sad occasion to start the ball rolling. The danger for the harmony and future of our club arising from those contributions is very grave indeed. Disaster is looming. Can we still avert it?

Mac urges us, in his article "While the Billy Boils", always to use billy-hooks to hang up the billies over the fire, and on page 12 Wally advises us how we can avoid using them. What will happen if now the whole club splits up into "billy-hookers" and "green-stickers"? With some members, like myself, not even being able to decide to which party they want to belong? Could we at least be allowed to use two green sticks, when camping, one to stir the stew and the other for the sweet, instead of the two ends of the same stick?

E.M.

Editor: Janet Stevenson, 45 Mona Vale Road, PYMBLE.

REPORT TO THE 17th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Held at Assembly Building, Saturday 11th August, 1956.

Your Committee now reports to you at the 17th Annual Meeting of The Bush Club, upon the Club's activities over the past twelve months.

The membership of the Club has now reached the 50 mark, and there are 5 prospective members. Since the last Annual Meeting 15 new members have been welcomed into the Club and we have regretfully farewelled several keen members who have left the state.

Regular monthly meetings have been held and have been well attended. The year 1956 started off well with the first meeting being held in our new, larger clubroom on the Lower Ground Floor of the Assembly Building in Jamison Street, where we now meet on the third Monday of each month. Each meeting has been followed by entertainment in the form of talks and colour slides, and our thanks are due, amongst others, to Mrs Dorothy Bryant, Mrs Bessie Benn, Messrs John Griffiths, Albert Fried, Wally McGrath and George Laube.

Fourteen Committee meetings have been held during the year. Two of these were special meetings to discuss the revision of the Club Constitution. On Edith Donovan's departure for New Zealand, Dorothy Bryant was elected committee member in her stead.

The Bush Club Constitution was revised and amended at the May meeting of the Club, when the Committee's recommendations were adopted.

DAY WALKS: During the last twelve months there has been a day walk every Sunday. Despite a long succession of wet weekends the walks have been very well attended—only once was a walk called off because of the impossible weather. The average attendance has steadily risen and we have had visitors on most of the walks. There is now a very high percentage of active walking members.

CAMPING: Our usual Christmas Camp was held at Resolute Bay and there were 20 campers and day walkers there over the holiday period. Thirteen members went on the Easter trip, Clyde River - Pigeonhouse Mt, and the most popular weekend of all proved to be that from Katoomba to Carlon's Farm, 19 people being present. During the year 19 camps were held and 3 were cancelled due to bad weather.

A feature of the walking program over the last six months has been the number of new walks which have appeared on the schedule. Members' appetites have been considerably whetted for exploring new routes and maps and compasses have been very much to the fore on some of the weekends.

16th ANNUAL BIRTHDAY: This was celebrated by a gathering of members and friends at Cheltenham on Saturday, 24th September, on the reserve beyond Miss Mary Byles' property. Our thanks go to Miss Byles for allowing us the use of the hut and for the very entertaining, illustrated talk on her Indian journey.

ANNUAL DANCE: This was held in the I.O.O.F. Building, Clarence Street, on Wednesday, 18th July, and a very good time was had by all present. Our thanks go to our Social Secretary and her helpers for the work they put into making this such an enjoyable evening.

CLUB MAGAZINE: At the beginning of the year plans were discussed for the issuing of a Club Magazine. Enthusiastic support was given to the idea by all members and the second issue of WALKS AND TALKS has now made its appearance. It is hoped that its pages will provide a permanent record for Club interests and activities.

In conclusion, your Committee feels that the last year has been a particularly successful one and we would like to thank all Club Members for their active co-operation. With the support of our many enthusiastic new members we feel that the coming year holds great promise for the future of The Bush Club.

Report read by Hon. Secretary
at Annual General Meeting

OFFICE BEARERS 1956/57

At the Annual Meeting of the Club on the 11th August, the following members were elected to Office for the year 1956-56:

President: Mrs Dorothy Bryant

Vice Presidents: Mr Wally McGrath
Mr Alan Sugerman

Hon. Secretary: Miss Ellen Mautner

Treasurer: Mr Maurice Clare

Assistant Secretary: Mr Gordon Robinson

Social Secretary: Mr Frank Macken

Walks Secretary: Mr Albert Fried

Committee Member: Mr Desmond Longton

Federation Delegates: Miss Beryl McLean
Mr Gordon Robinson
Mr Desmond Longton (proxy)
Miss Margaret Phillips (proxy)

Search & Rescue Delegate: Mr Albert Fried

IS BUSHWALKING DESIRABLE?

At the rise of the full moon the Annual Convention of Bush Dwellers was opened by a magnificent and dignified choir of bullfrogs, mopokes and Hexham Grays, the latter having especially flown over from their home swamps to ensure the success of the great meeting.

Then the spokesmen for the various sections of the bush dweller's community were announced: Mr Jacks, the kookaburra, Old Man Kangaroo, Miss Yoohoo the night owl and several other illustrious personalities.

As to the program of the discussion, it was pointed out that the subject "Is Bushwalking Desirable" did not refer to the activities of the respectable bush community but to the strange multi-furred animals who periodically appeared in the bush to perform their queer antics.

The first speaker, Mr Jacks, spoke in the affirmative since the laughable activities of the multi-furred provided him with an unending amount of fun and entertainment apart from an occasional slice of breakfast bacon snatched from their plates.

Miss Yoohoo stressed the more serious side of the subject. In her opinion the occasional appearance of the multi-furred provided an excellent opportunity for nature study for the bush dwellers. Among other things it was interesting to watch them unpack dead and unappetising looking items of food while the surrounding abounded with choice living meals such as mice, grubs and lizards. Therefore, she felt that in the interests of science she also had to speak in the affirmative.

Old Man Kangaroo, although appreciating the fact that the multi-furred, for foolish reasons of their own, did not compete with him in the search for luscious edible grasses, complained however that they made a nuisance of themselves by often forcing him to interrupt a leisurely meal and thus upsetting his delicate digesting system.

Mr Wombat was undecided. Referring to one of the previous speakers who had mentioned the interesting spectacle offered by the multi-furred, he found the dark walls of his earth hole just as interesting to look at.

Mr Bullfrog spoke in the negative, pointing out that although the multi-furred showed a certain usefulness in killing his arch enemy the black snake, he, being a great admirer of good music and, as he modestly added, not a bad musician himself, was at times greatly discomfited and even disturbed in his own performance by disharmonious noises coming from bushwalkers' camps, which probably was, as he mournfully added, their unpleasant way of making music.

Mr Zzz, the valiant leader of the Hexham Grays who, as he announce himself, was speaking for the humble looking but nevertheless numerous section of the mosquitoes, sandflies and leeches, pointed out that the multi-furred in their great generosity and hospitality satisfied an urgent need of his people for good wholesome food and when

it came to the vote, the vast numbers he had spoken for swamped the ballot and thus achieved an enormous majority for the affirmative.

When I heard the unfavourable opinions of Old Man Kangaroo and the bullfrog I became very anxious about the desirability of my favourite sport but only until I heard the favourable outcome of the ballot announced, when I woke up in a pool of blood fed by numerous leech bites and itching all over with insect stings, which indicated to me that my presence in the bush was indeed appreciated by at least some of the bush dwellers.

Albert Fried

A RECORD OF A WALK

This record of a walk, which was enjoyable and favoured by good weather, clearly illustrates a big problem which bushwalkers encounter today.

I was leading the walk in question which was scheduled from Bell to Mt King George, via Pages Pass to the Grose River, past Victoria Falls to Mt Victoria.

This walk was done by the Club on one previous occasion about four years earlier. The walk down Pages Pass was first done by club members about 1946. In that year members went down to Blue Gum via Perry's on the Friday night of the Eight-Hour weekend, and after having enjoyed a lazy day on the Saturday, on the Sunday the party climbed up the chimney to Mt Victoria, having the benefit of an experienced rock climber - a former member - and a rope which made the ascent easy. A good view was enjoyed from Mt King George and then we walked along the road to the turnoff to Pages Pass. Even in those days it was not easy to find but the track, once found, proved to be a very good one and led us down to Blue Gum Forest on the left hand side of the Grose River, making it easy for us to enjoy the countryside as the track was well defined and no obstacles were in our way.

In 1952 we came from Bell and again had trouble in finding Pages Pass, but when found it was quite easy to follow the track for some time at least. Once we got down on to the slopes, leading down from the range to the Grose Valley, we found the undergrowth impeding our way and we could not follow the track but had to cross the river about half an hour upstream from Blue Gum Forest. After crossing the river we found a beautiful track which led us to an excellent camp site where we stayed the night. The following day we found the track easy. Making good time we reached the bottom of Mt Victoria Falls. There we found the track partly washed away, but we still managed to scramble up the slope, walk across a strip of remaining track and then once again the going was easy right up to Mt Victoria. Now we encountered a very different picture, for, though the party was rather a strong one, we were able to compare times with our previous walk and all round it took much longer. This was not our fault, as we had found the track to Pages Pass and the weather could not have been better, but very soon after we left the

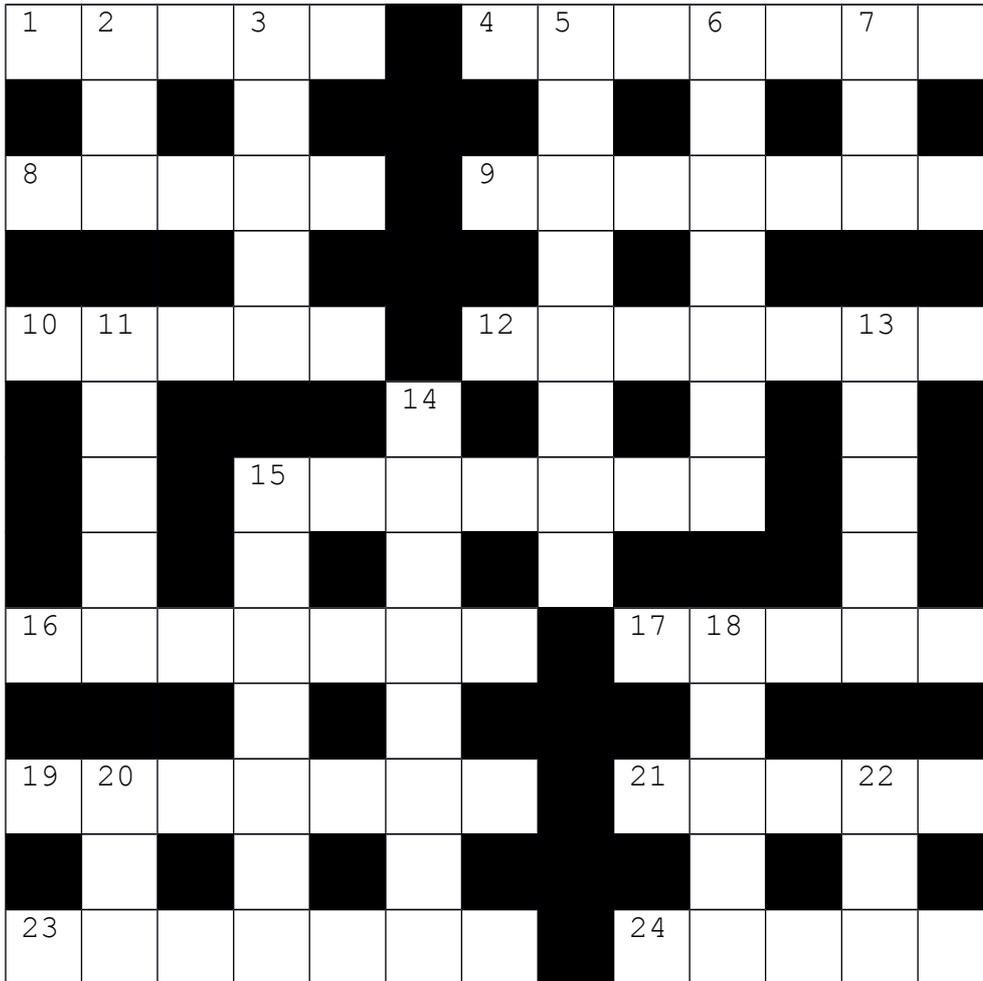
Rock Face we found lawyer vine hiding amongst high ferns and undergrowth, not only impeding our progress but making it rather unpleasant. A little lower down we decided to leave what remained of the track and scramble down a slope, across the river and found ourselves about an hour and a half upstream from Blue Gum Forest. That track had been very good four years earlier, but now had some difficult parts due to landslides, and also lawyer vine and other undergrowth had increased to such an extent that our progress to the bottom of the falls was slow and our legs felt very sore by the time we reached the falls.

Here again we scrambled up the slope and although that part was still passable I don't think any of us would enjoy crossing it in wet weather. We had lunch at the top of the falls knowing we might waste some time getting up the slope, leaving plenty of time, we thought, to catch a train. We left our lunch site and followed the track up but even here the undergrowth had increased, landslides had occurred and progress was much slower. We did manage to catch the train, but only just!

However what we asked ourselves afterwards was: Will it be possible to follow that track in another four years? If we get another few good seasons, we agreed that it would not be worth while attempting it again, and that apparently applies to quite a few tracks which have been frequented by bushwalkers. This brings us to the problem which has been raised by Paddy Pallin and discussed at the federation and at our own meetings. Can we do anything about it? I think we can. The only answer is to increase if possible the number of bushwalkers so that at least some of the tracks perhaps closer to transport and more easily accessible will be maintained, not only for our use but for the use of our children. Bushwalking has something which I think no other sport or activity can give, something which makes us enjoy all sort of hardships, walking with a rucksack through rough country, in heat or drought or rain.

Eckart Hill

BUSH CLUB CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 1 Some walkers like to hang billies on them (5)
- 4 Camp fire delicacies that "whet" one's appetite (7)
- 8 Ours was on July 18th (5)
- 9 A black one might be useful if you get lost (7)
- 10 It comes before aid (5)
- 12 In ascot (anagram) (7)
- 15 They are read at Bush Club meetings (7)
- 16 Naval officer (7)
- 17 Small insects (5)
- 19 Refrain from (7)
- 21 Dried vegetables do this when put in water (5)
- 23 Knock Edward out and growth is checked (7)
- 24 Trousers (5)

DOWN

- 2 Eggs (3)
 - 3 Strikes with the foot (5)
 - 5 Dried ones are popular fare on camp (8)
 - 6 Pleasant excursions which include a meal, sandy like some Bush Club summer walks (7)
 - 7 Small kind of deer (3)
 - 11 On a cold morning you might feel like staying here (2, 3)
 - 13 Sunset to sunrise
 - 14 Not far from Heathcote (8)
 - 15 Would four across do this? (7)
 - 18 At the mouth of the Shoalhaven (5)
 - 20 Is tea a gamble? (3)
 - 22 He had a famous wife (3)
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THE BUDDHA AND THE FOREST

"The Forest a peculiar organism of unlimited kindness and benevolence that makes no demands for its sustenance and extends generously the product of its life activity; it affords protection to all beings, offering shade even to the axeman who destroys it."

This year is the 2,500th anniversary of the death of the Buddha who taught kindness towards the lower orders as well as human beings, towards plants and trees as well as animals. He may be called the world's first great conservationist.

Marie B. Byles

THE LAKES OF ENGLAND

England with its teeming towns may seem overcrowded to Australians. Someone, I've forgotten who, likened the country to an "asphalt jungle" but this epithet is misleading. In Lakeland, for instance, one finds a spaciousness and peaceful beauty far away from the madding crowd.

At Coniston, not far from the delightful village of Ambleside where grey stone cottages nestle together, blending perfectly with the soft green hills and silvery lakes, I spent a most enjoyable week at a Holiday Fellowship guest house. These Holiday Houses, usually charming old country mansions which the Fellowship have taken over, are dotted throughout the British Isles and are excellent places for walkers to stay. The tariff is reasonable and food good and, best of all, walks with an experienced guide are arranged every day.

The lakes were formed long ago when great glaciers covered parts of Britain. Drift from these rivers of ice dammed up valleys and long, narrow lakes were left. The valley sides are often steep and the highest slopes and summits are bare of vegetation. In springtime around

the lakesides the woods are very attractive with golden daffodils waving in the breeze. Innumerable shaggy sheep graze on the tufty grass and picturesque stone fences mark the boundaries of properties.

I don't think many Bush Club members have had tea out of a bucket, but I had this experience in the Lakes, and the brew was delicious. While we dipped and drank from the shining milk pail, inquisitive farm animals came nosing around for left over cakes and scones and a Lancashire lad in the party entertained us with "Albert and the Lion" in the best Stanley Holloway manner - an unforgettable and amusing interlude.

Another tea break I remember with pleasure was one partaken in an old world cottage garden under trees laden with ripening fruit and droning bees buzzing around the sweet-scented flowers. We did walk, of course, as well as eat. One day we climbed to the summit of Old man Coniston (2,635 feet), the highest point adjacent to the village. A tarn (small lake in a rock basin) near the top surprised me by the vivid "copper sulphate" blue of its water, due to the large amount of copper in the surrounding rocks, I suppose. Venturesome members of the party equipped with stouter boots than mine slid down on the shaley scree for almost a thousand feet. I walked on the track and kept my equilibrium.

Another time we walked through the beautiful Langdale Valley to the Pikes with the fascinating names of Parvey Ark, Harrison's Stickle (over 2,000 feet, the highest of the Pikes), and Pike's Stickle. Across the tops of the Pikes the ground is marshy and would be hard going in the wet or misty weather but we had a perfect day and sunshine.

On the free day (i.e. without an organized walk) a friend and I took a bus to Thirlmere and climbed Helvellyn, 3,000 feet. From the rounded, grassy summit we gazed on a panorama of hills and gleaming water. Disaster almost overtook us at lunch time when a black-faced sheep nearly made off with our food. Luckily we retrieved it in time and afterwards made our way back via Striding Edge, a very narrow shoulder perfectly safe on a clear summer's day but dangerous, I imagine, if covered by slippery ice or shrouded in mist.

Lakeland contains many delightful little villages, but none more picturesque, I'm sure, than Hawkshead, now administered by the National Trust. It was pleasant to sit in the fifteenth century fire blackened oak-beamed parlour of the inn and sip coffee, and to walk around the narrow cobbled streets to look at the "smallest house in England", about the third I'd seen so labelled, but this one did seem authentic.

The country around Borrowdale Valley is wilder and more rugged than the part where I stayed. Great volcanic activity there in the dim, distant past has upflung huge boulders and cleft hills apart. The highest mountain of the Lakes is in this region but I had no time to attempt the ascent.

There is a charm about the Lakes District of England that is all its own, and moreover it is excellent walking country, quite different from anything in Australia.

Dorothy Bryant

IN THE SWIM

Maybe this is a strange subject for a bushwalking club magazine but, seeing that spring and summer are fast approaching, I thought that this article might be of help to some of our keen aquatic lovers.

Swimmers and bushwalkers have one thing in common and that is they both love what nature provided for them to enjoy.

Whether it is a river, pool or waterhole, or even the surf, you can enjoy yourself to the fullest extent if you know how to go about it. You might say, "Oh, anyone can enjoy themselves in the water." Yes, I agree, but when there are a few together there is fun galore to be had, ball games, races and many others depending on the place of enjoyment. A rubber ball which one can carry easily and without losing and space in the pack, may be bought quite cheaply and blown up by the mouth.

We all know the Do's and Don'ts of bushwalking in winter and summer, but what about swimming? There are Do's and Don'ts in swimming also, so, just to remind you of these, here they are.

The Don'ts

- (1) Don't hesitate to indicate you are in trouble.
- (2) Don't venture too far out of your depth (you can swim quite easily in four feet of water)
- (3) Don't try to swim in against the current or undertow, but try and swim out to the side of it.
- (4) Don't dive into water where you cannot see the bottom, even a shallow dive, as snags can lie anywhere.
- (5) Don't panic when you get cramp but roll over on your back and relax, also call for help.
- (6) Don't lift your arms above your head to indicate you are in difficulties, unless you are out of ear-shot of help, as this will only push the body down with the weight above the head. If arms are raised, try to raise one arm only.
- (7) Don't forget the sunburn lotion or cream.
- (8) Don't give false alarms.
- (9) Don't panic if taken out further than you intended to go; but slowly set course for the shore and safety.

The Do's

- (1) Do wear some sort of headdress to prevent sunstroke.
- (2) Do stick together as this prevents accidents.
- (3) Do call for help when in trouble (it is a lot better to be looked at alive than dead).
- (4) Do above all stay within reach of the shore and safety.
- (5) Do what you like but think first "is it safe?"
- (6) Do above all enjoy yourself.

Although these rules may seem to marr your chances of enjoying yourself, they are followed by all good swimmers. So I wish you all many hours of happiness and fun in the coming months.

If there are any members in the Club who would like to improve their style, young and not so young, I would be only too pleased to help you on your way to many hours of fun and enjoyment, as so many of you have helped me to enjoy bushwalking in New South Wales.

D. Longton

KANANGRA MEMORY

It was such a wet Easter. With Eckart, some 18 of us descended upon Kanangra Walls at three o'clock in the morning, when the coach dumped us out in the dark on the road, after a trip from Katoomba through Jenolan. It was raining but somehow the track was found leading to the series of overhanging rocks forming the caves that were to be our camp for three nights.

When we woke in the morning it was gloomy and still pouring soaking rain. How could we enjoy the prospect of such an Easter holiday? However, the caves were quite dry and could hold 50 of us if necessary, and the weather was not really cold.

We huddled over our breakfast fires and hoped for the sun to shine. Wood was plentiful if you went out for it and was quite dry, though soaking wet outside.

Lance, who was always the different personality, brought out his easel, canvas, paints and brushes, and prepared to paint the Kanangra scene to the astonishment of us ordinary bushwalkers.

The next day Eckart and half the party left in the heavy rain to walk to Katoomba via Cloudmaker. After camping out in the rain one night just past Cloudmaker, the incessant deluge and discretion drove them back. They surprised us at camp by appearing again, wet through, cold and hungry for something hot to lift the vitality again. Myrell looked bedraggled with her wet hair hanging in strings down her face. Wally still wore his red rain hood and his inscrutable expression. They had also picked up two inexperienced walkers on the way who were tired out and lost in the mists. It was good bushwalking that brought this party back to us. Thanks Eckart and Albert.

While they had been away we had a few breaks in the deluge of showers, and at last we were able to walk out and look over the Kanangra scene. We saw the Kanangra Valley spread out below us, with the well fed waterfalls tumbling down in and out the cliff faces to reach the creek more than a thousand feet below. Below us, too, floated mist and cloud vapour, for we were 4,000 feet above sea level. The silver-grey scene made Kanangra somehow fascinating and different to the rest of the Blue Mountains.

At night Beryl, Jean and Ruth made sure that we had a camp fire and Lance led us with operatic and classical music. Rita by now had lost her dismay of the rain and cave prison and realized what a spell

from work it all was. Lance had made good progress with his painting and to our surprise the scene was quite recognizable.

There seemed enough to do and we slept well on the dust floor of the cave with the rain cascading down a few feet away from us.

The last day the sun shone again but we had to pack and meet the coach which had been previously booked to pick up our half of the party.

Eckart, who had hoped to be at Katoomba, now had to leave before dawn with his party to walk the 22 miles by road to Jenolan and pick up the service coach there. We met them when we went through Jenolan. But they were unlucky - their coach broke and axle and it was very late when they arrived home again.

But it was a beautiful day on that Easter Monday, with the sun shining on the green countryside and apples and cider at Hartley Vale. It was the best cider we have ever tasted.

Perhaps we have to say the same of Kanangra. Anyway, why not let us all see Kanangra again. It will have to be some time soon.

Frank Macken

CARE OF GEAR

FABRIC Any fabric packed away in a damp condition is liable to mildew and rot. Therefore after camp see that your gear is quite dry before stowing away.

LEATHER All leather needs occasional feeding with oil, especially after severe wetting. Never dry leather out in front of a fire because damp leather is particularly subject to scorching.

BILLIES Billies and eating utensils should be carefully scoured to avoid risk of food poisoning through bacterial action on small particles of fats and food.

FOOD Avoid leaving food which might attract rats or mice in rucksacks.

Paddy Pallin

Answers to Crossword (from p. 12)

ACROSS 1 Hook 4 Dampers
8 Dance 9 Tracker
10 First 12 Actions
15 Minutes 16 Admiral
17 Gnats 19 Abstain
21 Swell 23 Stunted
24 Pants

DOWN 2 Ova 3 Kicks
5 Apricots 6 Picnics
7 Roe 11 In bed
13 Night 14 Engadine
15 Moisten 18 Nowra
20 Bet 22 Lot