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WALKS AND TALKS

The Magazine

Of

THE BUSH CLUB

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Madam,

I believe E.M. is unduly worried over the harmony within the Club being at stake, the issue being (a) for, and (b) against, the use of billy-hooks.

Presuming two parties are formed (in which case E.M. will have to make up her mind clearly which side to be on) I am confident this will make our outing all the more interesting.

We shall then have two fires going, using billy-hooks on one and placing billies into the fire on the other. By observing which party sits down to sip their 'cuppa' first we shall once and for all establish the correct way of boiling the billy and thus eliminate any friction that may have arisen amongst members.

M.R.

Annandale

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

## AN INTRODUCTION TO FEDERATION

The New South Wales Federation of bushwalking Clubs is a body representing all associations which engage or are interested in outdoor life as a recreation, whether it be in the form of bushwalking, camping, trail riding, ski-ing, canoeing, exploring, mountain climbing or any similar activity.

Each association is represented at Federation meeting by delegates elected by the respective Associations - two delegates from each affiliated association having not more than 75 members, three delegates when not more than 150 members, and four delegates when more than 150 members.

These delegates from the different Associations form the Council of the Federation. From these delegates and affiliated association members the office bearers are chosen at an annual general meeting, held in July.

The officers are: President, 2 Vice Presidents, Hon. Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Minute Secretary and Treasurer.

The council has the power to appoint sub-committees as it may consider necessary. Those in operation at the present are:

Bushfire Committee and patrol for the national Park area. There is some talk of extending to Kuring-gai Chase area but more volunteers are needed.

Trail Blazing Committee

Junior Walks Committee

Information Section - Help is needed in the way of Walks Reports giving precise directions that would get a novice to the desired destination, not forgetting compass directions where necessary.

Conservation Officer

Social Secretary

Publicity Officer

The Objects of the Federation are:-

1. To unite all Associations and persons interested in recreational walking, camping, or other similar forms of outdoor recreational activities.
2. To protect the interests of all such Associations and persons, and extend their privileges and opportunities for such recreational activities.
3. To promote the establishment and preservation of national parks and primitive areas and reserves for the protection of native flora and fauna, and to prevent the incursion of roads into recognized primitive areas.
4. To prevent the spoilation of the bush, natural scenery and wild life, and to educate public opinion to appreciate and preserve these things.

5. To function as a bureau of information in regard to country, routes, maps, travelling facilities, camping places, technique of bushwalking and bush craft.
6. To co-operate with other bodies and persons for protection of any of the objects, or to further the interests of the Federation.
7. To promote goodwill and social intercourse between bush lovers.

Gordon Robinson  
Federation Delegate

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#### BUSHWALKING: NEW CLUES FROM A TENDERFOOT

##### Suggested Club Walks:

<u>Departure Point</u>	<u>Equipment Needed</u>	<u>Destination</u>
Central Railway	Drinking straws	Tooheys Brewery
Wynyard Railway (male members only)	Binoculars	The Tivoli (front stalls)

##### Bush Club Dances: Do's and Don'ts

While beginning a waltz with a NEW member of the Club, it is indiscreet:

- (1) To ask if he or she has remembered to change out of spiked shoes
- (2) To say that the lines on his (or her) face remind you of aboriginal rock carvings.

At supper, if said newcomer has not been given a teaspoon, remind him (or her) it is inexcusable to stir your tea with your Dr Scholes Arch Support (unless nobody happens to be looking).

##### The Experienced Bushwalker Never:

Calls a bushwalk a "hike".

Offers to carry any lady's knapsack, with his own.

Offers to carry any lady.

Travels by:

- (1) bicycle.
- (2) tricycle.
- (3) horse, cow or any other animal, unless it is a registered member of the Club.

##### Of Historical Interest:

My research had proved that bushwalking goes back to Biblical times, back to the days of Adam and Eve, when the bush Club insignia was a figleaf and wasn't generally worn on the lapel. Robin Hood was a bushwalker. Walking along one day, he bumped into Friar Tuck, didn't like the look of him, and so gave the first bush friar warning.

Another keen Bush Club member was Ned Kelly, who rode on a horse with his head in a tin cylinder. Today we carry our billycans in our haversacks and you will agree this is more sensible all round.

I am investigating a new theory that Richard III was trapped into arduous Bush Club walks in 1485. It seems so, for does history not relate that he hobbled on to Bosworth Field, screaming "A horse! My Kingdom for a horse!"

John Brooking

#### AN UNFORGETTABLE NIGHT

It all happened some years ago in the heart of the wild dog country, down by the Cox's River.

A party from the Bush Club were on a walk to Dex Creek, near the summit of Cloudmaker.

All went well till late in the afternoon of the first day, when a point was reached from where the descent to the Cox's River begins. There are two routes down, the longer but easier White Dog Ridge, and the shorter but more difficult White Pup, which is virtually a steeply falling water course, bounded on both sides by the steep slopes of the adjoining ridges. As the water course is too rugged to walk in, the route down is across the slope of the left hand ridge, just above the water course. The latter route was chosen because it was shorter and finished at a point directly opposite from where the ascent of the morrow was to be made.

Trouble started early. Albert was in the lead when someone higher up dislodged a rock which, gathering speed, headed straight for him. With warning shouts, Albert, prepared, just managed to jump aside and let the rock hurl downwards, where it finally crashed into another rock and was broken into fragments.

A few seconds later another large rock was dislodged by one of the young ladies of the party. It, like the first one, went hurtling downwards, but on this occasion it did not have an uninterrupted passage. It crashed into the young lady's fiancé, pinning him by the leg against another rock. Fortunately, apart from a cut leg, he suffered no injury. The young lady concerned, however, lost her nerve. This slowed up the party and it was soon obvious that, at this rate, it would mean finishing the descent in the dark. Albert, who had forgotten his glasses, deemed it expedient to reach the camp site before dark, so he went fast, the rest of the party following after him, with the exception of the sliding lady, the injured walker, an enthusiastic photographer, who was always last, and myself, who, to hasten the progress of the lady, was carrying her rucksack as well as my own and speaking words of comfort and encouragement to her.

From far below Eckart shouted back to me to stay with the rear party, as the forward party was now about to make a final dash down to the river.

When it grew pitch dark the young lady refused to slide any further. The other two walkers quickly agreed with her and I too decided to call it a night. But where were we to sleep? The steep slope we were descending was too difficult to even stand upon without holding on to some hand holds. We were all very tired and darkness was upon the face of the earth.

In emergencies minor objects, which pass unnoticed under normal conditions, assume importance. A fallen tree had left a small depression in the earth where the roots had been torn out. Into this cavity crawled three of the weary walkers. They, being all of short status, were able to contain themselves almost wholly within this cavity. After a few trials I knew that I could never fit in so I had to use my imagination. I knew that if I lay on the uphill side of a tree trunk I would not roll downhill when I fell asleep.

So that is where we spent a very uncomfortable night.

Wally McGrath

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#### A SKY LINE TOUR

It was on a bright summer morning in Vienna when I quietly picked up my borrowed climbing gear--ice pick and sharp toothed crampons--in the cloakroom of a nearby cafe, for officially I was leaving for a restful holiday and the slightest suspicion of my taking climbing equipment with me would have made my people's life uncomfortable during the following days.

The small provincial capital of the Eastern Tyrol, overshadowed by the immense towers of the Dolomite Mountains, was the immediate destination. From there my mate and I continued on a motor lorry which was to take us into the heart of the Central Alps.

The bizarre dolomite towers soon disappeared behind the rounded slopes of the much older Central Alps. Here old igneous rock peep through a "Geological Window" out of a vast layer of sedimentary rock. A greater contrast can hardly be imagined than that between the bright limestone and dolomite cliffs of the younger sediment and the dark forbidding shapes seen in the central backbone of the Alps.

It was still dark when we started on our way after a short night's sleep at the village inn. The local farmers spend a short summer in this mountain village looking after their cattle which thrive on the short but luscious grass of the mountain pastures.

We had a short rest at an outlying farm and breakfasted on just milked "grass juice" still frothy and so thick with cream that it had to be chewed.

Soon after when the path led us around a corner we stood in awe: above the green meadows still dark with night, rising out of a pale white fringe of glacier ice, enormous cliffs painted golden by the

rising sun, "The Great Belfry" (Gross Glockner) was shining out of the dark blue sky.

Along the spirited glacier stream, over boulders left behind long ago by the retreating glacier, finally up the steep snow slopes we went, in a world of blinding white, hit by the hot western sun.

At last we arrived after an 8,000 ft climb at the "Eagle's Rest" (Adlersruh, Austria's highest mountain chalet at 11,500 ft). The ice age is still ruling there with snow and ice all around and a mass of glaciers deep below.

The peak was to be climbed the following morning but when I awakened my friend he refused to move saying he had had enough and was going to go down the way we had come up.

I left alone, light as a bird with nothing to carry—even the beloved camera had to stay behind.

The white slope leading up behind the hut was getting steeper and steeper but the crampons held well in the hard packed snow.

In the rocks of the "Small Belfry" (Kleinglockner) I met a professional guide working hard at coaxing a lady with more ambition than skill who was roped to him.

I had soon left the two behind on my way down to the knife edge, a narrow ledge of ice, of ill repute which links "Small Belfry" and "Great Belfry".

Strange are the workings of the human mind: we walk along a path one foot wide and think nothing of it but let the path's sides drop 4,000 ft down and we feel uncomfortable on it.

After managing the knife edge there was still the final assault to be done, a vertical cliff face with good grips and footholds and a few rather widely spaced iron spikes driven into the rock. As to the 4,000 ft vertical drop below, there was no need to look down anyway.

A large wrought iron cross on the summit bears witness to the pluck of the guides who had carried this load up to Austria's highest point, at 12,500 ft, slightly higher than New Zealand's Mount Cook.

Standing above a wavy sea of clouds I could only see three or four of the highest peaks raising their heads out of the mist.

Down at the chalet again I found my friend had left already, so I continued the trip alone.

From the "Eagles Rest" down, the steep snow covered glacier had hardly any crevasses which enabled me to do most of the descent sliding down on my heels, letting the point of the ice pick dig into the snow behind me as a rudder and a brake, feeling as happy as a Bondi surfer riding the breakers.

Soon I was standing on the main glacier, Austria's largest, a broad straight stream of ice, and looking up to its upper end, at what seemed to be a small hill of snow at a few hundred yards distance and really is a mighty ice dome nine miles away.

When night fell I was in a hut build on an island of rock in the middle of the ice stream.

The day after was spent on the "Highlands", crossing miles of "nevé", the birth place of many glaciers, some long wide streams, some just icy precipices clinging to steep dark mountain cliffs.

These fields of neve look harmless enough to walk on but the experienced eye soon discovers here and there are wavy lines of slightly lighter colour, brighter white, where the soft layers of snow hides deep crevasses in the ice below. My safest guide was my ice pick which, being driven into the snow in front at every step, indicates danger by lack of resistance. It worked or I would not be here writing now. But for any would-be glacier walkers who are not would-be suicides there is only one rule, namely to rope together in the established way.

After having safely made my way for so many hours I found myself surrounded by the ominous bright white lines. Wherever I tried, the pick went through until I finally found a place of resistance, jumped over and-down I went. Instinctively spreading both arms and legs I stopped myself on top of the narrow crevasse and even managed to work myself up on the other side to stand there panting.

In the early afternoon a striking mountain came into view, its colour gradually changing from pale glacier white at the base to dark cliffs on top, the picture of a giant bull's horn.

Here I met a small party, a father showing his son the wonders of the mountains.

Ascending the "Bull's Horn" on an ice ridge we had to climb steeper and steeper but the crampons held beautifully on this stairway to heaven.

Arrived at the top, as we looked cautiously down through a snowy cornice, we could now see, 6.000 ft below, a brightly coloured pattern of green meadows stitched with the silver threads of glacier streams: "The Bull's Horn by the Grassy Stream" (Wiesbackhorn) was the name of the mountain we were standing on.

Albert Fried

#### BOOTLACES TO BOOT

Can I load onto you a spare pair of bootlaces to take on your next weekend bush walk?

Some character once said "Take care of the ounces and the pounds will take care of themselves!" Somebody else said "Everything taken should be useful". He was probably a successful burglar.

I say "Bootlaces are worth taking bushwalking in spite of their weight." Here are some of their uses:-

- 1) It would become unnecessary to take along a belt as a bootlace can be used to hold up your strides or, if a bit on the plump side, two may be necessary (bootlaces - not strides!).
- 2) Two bootlaces plaited together make an attractive hatband - only if you have a hat.
- 3) If it is windy a bootlace can be used as a chin strap to keep on your hat - again, only if you have a hat.
- 4) Your socks are slipping down around your ankles? - bootlaces can be used as garters to keep them up. However, if the blood circulation is stopped it may be as well to release them a shade, which leads to No. 5.
- 5) In case of snake bite a bootlace can be used as a tourniquet to prevent your blood diluting the snake's poison.
- 6) A bootlace can be used as a substitute for a billy hook. Tie the billy to the crossbar with a bootlace and place in position over the fire, making sure the lid is on tightly. When the billy boils the bootlace burns through, the billy descends onto the fire from where it is smartly removed. If by some miscalculation it is not boiling, have coffee.
- 7) Right! You come to a creek and the bank is high; two bootlaces tied together with a billy or canvas bag tied to the end and lowered over the edge will acquire water.
- 8) Two bootlaces tied together, stretched across a narrow track and attached to some outcrop may trip one of the following walkers, thus adding to the gaiety of the tramp. Care should be exercised in not executing this light-hearted joke near a cliff face as it may be frowned upon.
- 9) After four or five days that piece of steak becomes pretty high so use a bootlace to tie it down.
- 10) You arrive at your destination and decide to go to the hotel for a decent meal; a bootlace neatly tied in a Windsor Knot makes a tie of the very latest fashion.

..... What more could you ask?

P.S. Bootlaces can also be used as bootlaces if desired

Gordon Robinson

"WHILE THE BILLY BOILS"

As we wait for the tea, you have a chance now to remove those brand new boots that have started blisters forming on your feet, and perhaps listen to some advice.

The breaking-in period for boots often is painful, yet it can be shortened and greatly relieved by using the following method.

1. Wear two pairs of socks with the outer one a size larger.
  2. At the first opportunity on the walk, completely immerse the boots in water for at least one minute, then tip out, put them on and lace up tightly.
  3. At lunch time remove the boots and dry only the socks and feet; a little talc between the toes is worthwhile at this stage.
  4. Again lace up tightly for the last part of the journey and the worst is over. Never tie laces around the ankle but always finish with a bow in front, to permit the uppers to flex and give comfortable walking.
  5. At home, take the warm-damp boots and ram newspaper really hard, and finally grease them there and then if you have the energy left.
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When greasing leather, the skin surface first should be sponged lightly with warm water, or warmed before a heater to make the skin pores enlarge and so permit the dubbin to penetrate.

Cracks on surface mean dry leather, so pay particular attention to the slotted part and buckles and to the tongues.

Heat some dubbin in an old spoon and pour it around the rim between the upper and the sole, for better waterproofing.

The type and the nailing pattern of hobnails in the heel and sole is a matter of personal preference, but remember that one or two driven into the instep will give a good drip when crossing logs.

"Mac"

## ORGANIZED BUSHWALKING AT BINNA BURRA

Binna-Burra Lodge guest house is situated on a peak of the McPherson mountain ranges, which fringe the Northern N.S.W. border. The lodge is 28 miles by road from Southport, Queensland, and is owned by a syndicate originally formed by nature lovers working for the establishment of the National Park, and for the building of a guest house to accommodate the general public.

Mr & Mrs McIntyre have been the managers of the Binna-Burra Lodge for the past 18 years and are an ideal couple for the work. The Lodge consists of a central dining and recreational hall, surrounded by log cabins which have a rustic charm of their own, and there are hot water facilities provided. The meals are good and served buffet system, and the tariff is very reasonable.

Mrs Mac. has already welcomed each newcomer with a pleasant rapid sales description of the house routine and stores, and the walks arrangements. Each morning at breakfast she discusses walks and tours with the guests and allots the various interested people to suitable parties for the day. The kitchen staff pack the lunch materials, plus billies and rucksacks for each party. In addition each party is supplied with a pencilled sketch of the route and the tracks and shortly after 9 a.m. they make off with their rucksacks to forests, wildflowers, waterfalls and scenic lookouts. Soon there are few guests left at the house.

Dinner is served at 6 p.m. when the tired and weary (?) wanderers talk of their experiences. The log fire has a cluster around it and the ping pong table thumps away with its usual chatter and movement. Those relaxing round the fire now have an opportunity to scan the visitors' books of past years. Personally, I want to see more of the Bush Club's badge shown in the book. Don't be shy next time, Bush Clubbers.

Both Mr and Mrs Mac. readily talk of the wild life and walking and give all possible help to walkers. An illustrated walks schedule with map is also available for those who wish to know more of the character and scope of the plateau walks and tracks. We were fortunate one evening to have Mac project his colour slides of the scenic views and wildflowers, orchids and fungi. Also shown were a number of slides which a guest had brought along and I'm sure that any of our members taking their colour slides to Binna-Burra would find them more than welcomed.

Binna-Burra (the place where the beech trees grow) is 2,600 feet high with beautiful views of the surrounding hills and valleys. The rain forests and tall timbers are very different to N.S.W. bushlands. And here there are no stores, theatres, milk bars, golf or other diversions. Yet Binna-Burra has everything for the bush lover. It is a nature lovers' paradise, managed by bush lovers for bushwalkers - and hikers too.

The walks are easy on account of the great amount of money spent by the Queensland Government on graded walking paths complete with sign boards and mileage posts. A complaint seems to indicate that the signs

could often be more detailed or less ambiguous. For instance a turn off a track signboard will perhaps show the one way only, but not the other.

There are short walks of a couple of miles for those who cannot walk actively, and there are longer walks of 8 to 14 miles for average walkers - just right for lunch parties. Perhaps you really wish to go further? Well, just keep going across to O'Reilly's guest house 14 miles away, or even further.

Many years ago much of the adjoining lands were denuded of cedars and other timber, which has thinned out some of the original forests. Down below in the valleys miles away are the bare farm lands and grazing lands with eroded hills. This land of ours, with a low population in the early years, must have seemed quite inexhaustible. Today, with our larger population, our parklands seem all too few. The same lukewarm indifference still pervades most of our political life towards parklands.

Lamington National Park preserves something of our rain forests for the future. Let us hope that the Queensland Government will not remain satisfied with just this small piece of 75 sq. Miles but will proceed to gazette and extend the chain of mountain ranges and forests. This has already been urged and a draft prepared for a greater Lamington National Park. Since 1941 these plans have lain in the pigeon holes of Government. Nothing further has been done. Are the Binna-Burra pioneers to be disappointed?

Frank Macken