

NEWSLETTER

of the

BUSHWALKERS OF NEW SOUTH WALES

The N.S.W. Federation of Bushwalking Clubs
G.P.O. Box 2090, Sydney, 2001.

ISSN 0313-2684

NORTHERN BLUE MOUNTAINS

Dennis Rittson, Convenor,
Conservation Committee

The Conservation Committee's major project at present, the dedication of a Northern Blue Mountains National Park, is a significant step closer to realisation now that our first report has been favourably received by the Premier.

In the past few months a combined committee consisting of members of Federation, the Colong Committee, National Parks Association and the Bindook and Colo Committees has been working towards the dedication of a national park covering the area between the Wollondilly and Hunter Rivers - a dream that originated with Myles Dunphy over 40 years ago. Reports from these organisations are now also in the hands of the Premier.

Our report relied heavily on field information supplied by members of Federation's affiliated clubs and in particular I would like to thank Chris Cosgrove and Dave Noble (SUBW), Keith Seddon (KBC) and Ted Daniels (NPA) for their efforts.

No doubt we still have a long way to go with this project and Federation's clubs can still do much to assist in the way of supplying further field information. For example we were not able in time to get information on the country either east or west of Widden Brook or the upper catchments of Wollemi Creek and Macdonald River. There is still plenty of scope for exploratory walks in these areas.

To show the various clubs exactly what is in the area that Federation is proposing Dave Noble and I are preparing a slide show that we would like to take around to the various club meetings. This area is equal to anything in NSW and these slides are worth seeing. I will be contacting club secretaries in order to organise their showing.

Threats are everywhere, and photos are invaluable records of these: - if you see something happening anywhere in the Blue Mountains take a photo or two, and mark the spot on your map. Federation will pay for a new map and any enlargements of photos that we can use.

Most of the issues that the Conservation Committee is dealing with at present reflect our involvement with the Northern Blue Mountains. The Singleton Army training area, off-road vehicles and power lines are just three of the other issues being investigated. Nevertheless unrelated issues continue to surface and are not being ignored. For example we are still awaiting a reply from the Minister for Lands on our letter criticising his decision to allow grazing in the Kosciusko National Park,

ostensibly for drought relief. However as he was ratifying the decision heavy rain was falling in the area!

The next Conservation Committee meeting will be held on the lower level of the NSW Environment Centre, 263b The Broadway, Broadway, at 6.30 p.m. on Tuesday, 23rd November. All interested walkers are invited to attend to have a say in Federation's conservation policies. The Northern Blue Mountains proposal will be tabled at this meeting and I expect that it will be scrutinised, elaborated on and further modified in the months to come.

S & R GRANT

Through the Sports Council of NSW and the NSW Volunteer Rescue Association, Federation has been offered a dollar for dollar grant of up to \$1,000 to pay for new search and rescue equipment. Mike Richter, S and R's Radio Officer, reports that changed legislation will make our present radios obsolete in around 3 years, and they will have to be replaced. At a cost of \$900 for a base radio and some \$500 per packset this is no mean expenditure, so the grant should be of great assistance. With \$2,000 available (\$1,000 each from the Government and Federation) we seem likely to buy the base radio plus two packsets, and some more packsets later.

The new base radio will have some significant advantages, including the ability to communicate with the Flying Doctor base at Broken Hill. Medical advice could thus be obtained very promptly. Although the new base radio will be able to contact all existing packsets and the old base radio, the new and old packsets are incompatible. However this is not a major problem as the existing packsets are often not powerful enough to communicate with each other anyway.

LOG BOOKS

The usual final resting place of log books from peaks and huts is the Public Library of NSW. There, they are available for anyone with a reasonable excuse for looking at them (e.g. studying bushwalker usage of a certain area). However at least part of the NPWS does not agree with this. The District Superintendent at Fitzroy Falls (part of Morton National Park) has requested the return to him from the Library a log book which was recently removed from Pigeon House Mountain. If Federation has its say, we will make sure that log books and the like will stay in the Library and be available to all, not just some NPWS administrators.

MAPS, HUTS & TRACKS

Compiled from information supplied by
Wilf Hilder, Information Officer.

*Maps

New maps from the Department of Lands (all 1:25 000): Wollombi, Mountain Lagoon, Auburn, Lower Portland, Murrays Run (all NE Blue Mtns. area); Wards Mistake, Maiden Creek, Marengo, Lyndhurst, Ebor, Kookabookra, Bulldog Rock, Sandy Flat (all far north of the state); Arkstone (near Shoorters Hill) Binalong and Burringla. There is also a new edition of the Bathurst Tourist Map which covers Hill End, etc as well.

Bob Buck has compiled a most useful mapping index for NSW National Parks. This is being published in several instalments in the Catholic Bushwalkers' magazine, "Waysider" (available from usual retailers) starting with the September - October issue. It summarises all relevant sketch, forestry and topographical maps, including six different series of the latter.

*Huts Destroyed

The following huts in the Kosciusko National Park have been destroyed: Harveys No. 1 (on Teddy's Creek en route to Kidmans) - burnt down some months ago.

Billmans or West Denison (W. shore of N. end of Lake Eucumbene) - damaged by fishermen's orgies and pulled down by Park authorities.

Studlands (4 km E of Billmans) - burnt down and remains again removed by the Park.

*More on Huts

The Kosciusko National Park has agreed that portagas will no longer be supplied to Albina Hut due to extravagant use. In an effort to improve hygiene at Albine (see last Newsletter, "Epidemic") it is intended to move the septic tank further away from the creek so that the effluent will have more time to degrade as it seeps through the soil. (Editor's comment: The tank is downstream of the hut anyway. If, as separate rumours have it, the hut itself is almost crawling with E. Coli (faecal bacteria) then moving the septic tank seems irrelevant and may have little effect. In this case, the only solution will be some sort of fumigation, plus frequent and thorough washing of hands).

On similar lines, the Park is becoming concerned about over-camping at Blue Lake and consequent pollution of the lake by human waste. The solution may be to build a small toilet below the lake outlet - an unpleasant thought, but probably better than a polluted lake.

It now looks as if Rawsons Hut will go, and without opposition. The Kosciusko Huts Association has not objected to the Park's plans to remove it. On the other hand, there is a proposal (initiated by the Park and supported by KHA) for a largish hut to be built downstream of Cootapatamba Hut, possibly as accommodation on the Tri-State Track. It has also been agreed that there should be a hut in the Mt Stilwell area, but not necessarily the existing Old Restaurant.

Finally, it is now Park policy not to have fireplaces in huts above the treeline (or at least not to supply them with firewood or other fuel) and to discourage the use of fires at other huts. Wood is becoming harder and harder to find around the huts in the Jagungal area, at least.

*New Pass

On a completely different subject, a new/old route into the upper Nattai has been (re) discovered. This is Blatchs Pass, from Colo Vale via Mt. Flora. It is suspected that it was an old bridle track, but is probably now no more than a negotiable route. The Pass will be shown on the new topographical map (Hilltop) to be released in a few months.

SCENIC RIM - BORDER RANGES

The Queensland Federation of Bushwalking Clubs has convened a Scenic Rim Association to press for the dedication in Queensland of a Scenic Rim National Park. The "Scenic Rim refers to the mountains that encircle Brisbane to the south and west some 70 miles away. It includes part of the Great Divide and the McPherson Range.

Now the McPherson Range is none other than part of the Border Ranges, hence the relevance to the NSW conservation movement. It is encouraging to see that the fight for the Border Ranges and their surroundings is continuing on both sides of the border.

NEWS FROM MOUNTAIN EQUIPMENT

SCARPA WALKING BOOTS - Just arrived from Italy. Superb quality and reasonable prices assure these boots continuing popularity. Two models:

Hercules 76 - Lightweight leather upper, Vibram sole..... Sizes 4-12

Trecima 904 - One piece upper of thick greasy leather, stitched construction, Vibram sole Sizes 4-12

KASTINGER WALKING BOOTS - From Austria's largest bootmaker comes a neat lightweight. Nubuk Grain leather for comfort Sizes 4-11

CAYONING THIS SUMMER? We have some Edelrid Speleo rope that is designed for abseiling - high tensile strength, low stretch. 10mm diameter, 100% nylon and Kernmantle construction. Price per metre.....\$0.82 Also Clog figure 8 descenders are now in stock.

OILSKIN JACKETS - TYPHOON. We have recently extended our range to include a heavy weight deluxe parka, suitable for the severest conditions and hardest wear.

BERGHAUS CYCLOPS PACKS - These internal frame rucksacks are proving popular for walking as well as ski - touring. If you're after a new pack these are worth looking at. Three different models in canvas and nylon.

ULTIMATE EQUIPMENT TENTS. A good range is now in stock, from a super light (3lb. 11 oz.) one man to an expedition tent suitable

ULTIMATE EQUIPMENT TENTS. A good range is now in stock, from a super light (3lb. 11 oz.) one man to an expedition tent suitable for Mt Everest. All are completely waterproof and include poles, pegs and flysheet.

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ARNHEM LAND 1975 - 76 Dennis Rittson, KBC

With the publication last year of 1:100,000 topographical maps of the Northern Territory, which replaced the sketchy, inferior 1:250,000 maps of some vintage, Arnhem Land joined Tasmania, New Zealand and the like as practical propositions for extended, expedition-type bushwalks as discussed in last month's Newsletter. Subsequent and increasing interest by bushwalkers is inevitable.

However my researches early this year for such a trip were not encouraging - the early European explorers mostly gave it a miss; those, like Leichhardt, who didn't recount ghastly stories. Others dismiss it as "untrafficable"; the Aborigines remain silent.

Consequently, I feel that the experiences of two KBC parties in the area these two winters gone may be useful to the others who feel the enchantment of this mysterious and legendary land. This is not a walk report as such - this will appear elsewhere, probably a future NPA journal - but rather some brief descriptions and tips on the country, and accounts of our difficulties in realising the trips as planned. Hopefully, this will ease the difficulties of subsequent parties with similar intentions.

Looking at the new maps, one is struck by the unusual drainage pattern on the East Alligator River - a complex system of criss-crossing gorges and tributaries eroded along a geometric jumble of faults and jointings in the sandstone. All of our trips so far have featured some part of the East, and future ones are likely to do likewise. In addition, we found that the region along the rugged escarpment line itself is a fascinating and rewarding place, with incredibly ornate and eye-riveting rock formations and landforms.

In 1975, Dave Marks began organising a 'Grand Tour' type of trip that would fly us around the Northern Territory in two weeks, visiting missions and settlements. Only four or five days could be allowed for a walking trip on the East.

All negotiations for Entry Permits to enter the Arnhem Land Aboriginal Reserve were with the Department of Aboriginal Affairs in Darwin, by phone and letter. In due course these permits arrived and, in June, we packed up and set off from Bankstown. At Katherine, however, we were met by an officer of the Department who regretted to inform us that our permit to land at Oenpelli Mission had been rescinded without explanation. We then spent the remainder of the day telephoning around the Territory searching out a landing strip where we could actually touch down. This is how we learnt of Jabiru.

Landing here the next day on spec., we were welcomed by the locals, but soon found that we were sitting on top of the whole uranium mining controversy, centred on the Ranger One ore bearing deposit nearby, for which the town of Jabiru was constructed! We escaped antagonism by alleging indifference to the battle.

We were dropped off the next day at Cahills Crossing, by the local Wildlife Ranger (not Ranger Uranium!) Claude Azzopardi, and so began our four day walk back to Jabiru via the Waralkka Valley. This passed off without a hitch. Keeping to the valleys, however, we didn't see much of the plateau, but even so, saw plenty to interest us. Obviously an area requiring such greater scrutiny.

Another highlight of our "Tour" was an overflight of an Aboriginal Sacred Site, known only to Europeans as "The Ruined City". About 60 km NE of Roper River Mission (Ngukurr), this remarkable area is well named: dozens of acres of ordered stone beehives and towers; an

amazing petrified Hiroshima, complete with "streets".

In November 1975, I began negotiations anew with the Dept. of Aboriginal Affairs, as well as ordering some likely-looking aerial photographs of the East from the Dept. of Minerals and Energy in Queanbeyan. These negotiations proceeded ambiguously until early May (discounting two months in NZ), so to clarify this issue I rang Darwin, only to be duly informed that in all this time, I should have been negotiating with Oenpelli Mission directly. At this stage, the route had been finalised, 4 wheel drive transport arranged with Claude again at Jabiru, and my proposed airdrop sites overflown and okayed by the Darwin Aero Club. I quickly raced a letter off to the Mission, outlining our plans and requesting permission. After a fortnight of no replies, I sent a telegram off urging a reply as food had yet to be bought, packed and roadshipped to Darwin for airdropping. A telegram answered stating that my letter hadn't been received and consequently permission was not granted. My answer to that was a long, expensive telegram, being essentially a duplicate of that first letter. The answer from the Chairman of the Oenpelli Council, another telegram, was brief:

"We regret that under no circumstances can permission be given to private individuals to enter the Oenpelli areas of the Arnhem Land Reserve."

Crestfallen, our group discussed a new route, the Katherine River, and picked our new dropsites. The feeling was, however, that we had settled for second best; those original maps taunted incessantly.

In good time, the drops were packed and sent north. Four days before the start of the trip I flew into Darwin to go on the airdrop flight. On route, I decided to land at Oenpelli unannounced for one last fling at retrieving the East Alligator trip. The Mission Superintendent arrived and what follows is the essence of our conversation.

Me: Various attempts to persuade the Council to change its mind. Him: There's no way you'll persuade the Council to change its mind. Me: Is there no way around this; what's the extent of the "Oenpelli Areas"? Him: The relevant border runs down the centre of the East Alligator River. Me: (Nervously) What if we were to walk on the southern bank only? Him: No worries. the traditional owner of that land doesn't mind your being there. Me: Ah, airdrops? Him: Provided they land on the southern bank, no worries. Me: (Hurriedly) Well, yes, thanks. Goodday! (sound of light aircraft escaping at high speed.)

Here my allotted space is running short, so I'll have to summarise more harshly from here on.

The East Alligator Trip, Part One.

(a) The route was up Deaf Adder Creek (entry Permits needed from the Dept. of Fisheries, Forests, Wildlife, Environment and National Parks) and down the East Alligator River.

(b) Water was nowhere a problem (June - early in the dry season.)

(c) Johnson River Crocodiles are harmless, although disconcertingly curious at times.

(d) Water buffalo often deserve respect! Let them get wind of you first, and they'll run off. Don't jump around waving and shouting; this only makes these short-sighted critters curious and they'll come in for a closer look!

(e) Lilos would be handy of the East Alligator.

(f) Take a handline (40 lb) and at least 6 balsa lures.

(g) Mosquito nets (Army surplus ground type are good value) are an absolute necessity.

- (h) Walk from early morning and have a long lunch/ siesta during heat of day — 1 to 4 p.m.
- (i) Have plenty of time up the sleeve for rest days, side trips, etc., We budgeted for 10km per day. Hot weather can make one lazy.
- (j) Much of the area traversed is known for its aboriginal rock art; Deaf Adder Gorge being particularly significant See Bibliography-Archeological Survey. The chances of bushwalking parties making new discoveries are good. We found unmarked locations of cave paintings on the East Alligator and the plateau.
- (k) Party member required medical attention so two of us made a 75km dash to Jabiru to organise a helicopter evacuation from the East Alligator. The plateau country traversed was surprisingly easy to cross (without packs) and very interesting to boot. Navigation had to be spot on. All finally turned out well.

Alligator River, Part Two.

- (a) Utilised two of the three remaining airdrops, plus additional food from Darwin. The former were hard to find due to elated condition of leader during the drop run.
- (b) Much scrambling en route for views. Magnificent panoramas from near Exploding Mtn.

The Future

(a) Aboriginal Landrights is a very sensitive issue at the moment and consequently getting permission to enter Arnhem Land won't get any easier. I've already been knocked back Roper River Council on a proposal to walk to the Ruined City next year.

It is also difficult to determine the boundaries of tribal areas such as the "Oenpelli Area" that gave us so much trouble. Maps showing the boundaries are proving hard to find, although they're supposed to exist. In addition the aborigines themselves define the boundaries only vaguely.

(b) Airdrops are expensive in the NT - 3½ hr of air-dropping time cost us \$240 - and was hardly worth the trouble considering the fishing that's to be had.

(c) Hitching between Darwin and Jabiru is reasonable; allow a day for each trip.

(d) Accommodation in Darwin can be free - consult the squatters.

(e) Fight uranium mining - it'll ruin the area.

(f) The dry season runs from May to November. NO rain falls in June. Parkas and tents are unnecessary. Expect a temperature range from 20 to 40 odd degrees C.

This is by no means the full story, but anyone who would like to see slides of the area or view maps, aerial photographs, etc, is welcome to contact me on 95-6060 (H) or 43 0433 Ex: 4266 (W).

DEUA-BENDETHRA — PERMISSION REQUIRED

The Canberra Bushwalkers' Newsletter for October included an item to the following effect:

would all walkers planning a trip in the Deua-Bendethra area please write and ask permission from:

Mr. Eric Robinson,
11 Deakin Street,
Oak Flats, NSW. 2527.

Tell him the date of your trip and enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Mr. Robinson is constantly bothered by people trespassing and damaging his property and stock. Please let him know you are coming - getting on the wrong side of landholders will hurt all bushwalkers.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

It may seem inconsistent to bemoan the lack of information on Arnhem Land and then produce a long bibliography on the same topic. However, much of this literature came to light during the trip or after it. The Fact Finding Study is particularly valuable.

- (a) Alligator Rivers Region Environmental Fact Finding Study. Published in numerous parts, viz:
- i) The review Report (Christian, 1973 — Limited edition)
 - ii) Archaeological Survey (Kammings, Allen, 1973)
 - iii) The Art of the Alligator Rivers Region (Edwards, 1974)
 - iv) Other Reports include Wildlife, Entomology, Climate, Birds, Fish, etc (CSIRO).
 - v) Four Australian Atomic Energy Commission Reports (Conway, Davy, Giles, Newton, 1974)
- (b) Proposal for a Northern National Park, Northern Territory (Dept. of N.T., 1971)
- (c) Journal of Overland Expedition from Moreton Bay to Port Essington (Leichhardt, 1847)
- (d) Whispering Wind (Kyle-Little)
- (e) The maps: 1:100 000 Topographic, Cahill, Jim Jim, Gilruth and Howship (Dept. of Minerals and Energy, Australian Govt. Bldg., Chifley Sq., Sydney)

FOR SALE

13' Kayak with double paddles and two spraysheets. Single seater. Virtually new. Price — about \$130.

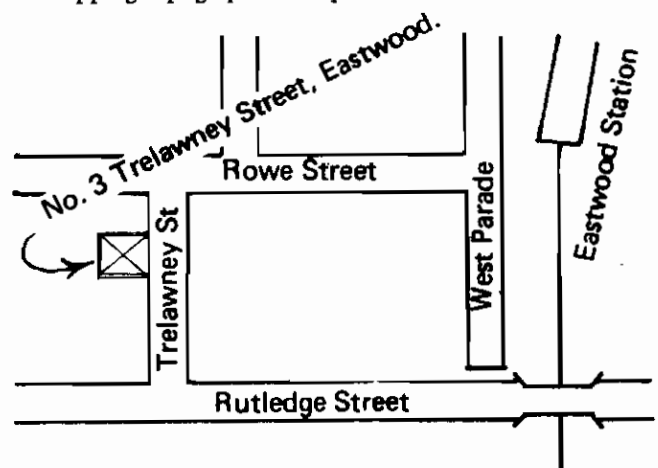
Contact: Warwick Davenport,
C/- Canterbury Hospital

EASTWOOD CAMPING CENTRE

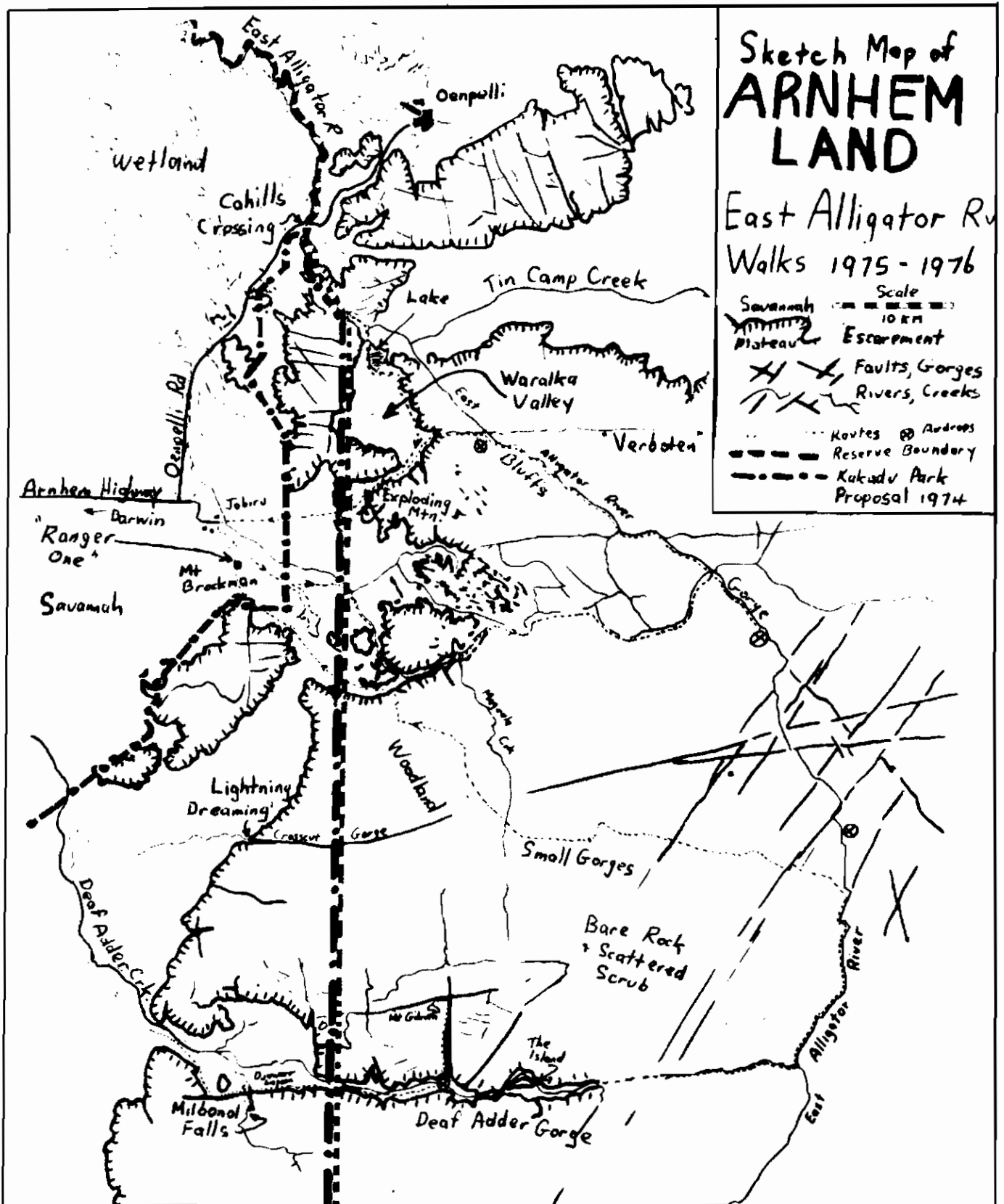
ALL THE USUAL GEAR:

Fairydown sleeping bags, abseiling gear, parkas, packs tents, boots, groundsheets, lightweight food, AND MUCH MORE.

Agents for Lands Department and Division of National Mapping topographical maps.



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HOSPITALITY:

On the October long weekend a large party (about 35 people) went to camp at Blue Lake in the Snowy Mountains for a few days of skiing and ice climbing. During Saturday night a strong northwesterly hit the camp, bringing with it heavy driving rain. By morning almost all tents were leaking to some extent and a couple had partially collapsed. (Even the best snow tents can't handle heavy, wind-driven rain.) There was obviously no point in staying.

Most people had their cars at Guthega, 7km away. Two thirds of the way to Guthega is Illawong Hut, an isolated private lodge, which is what this article is all about. Members of the Blue Lake party reached Illawong in small groups of 3 or 4 at a time. They were very wet, and frequently cold, tired and hungry, not having had time for a proper breakfast. Understandably, several groups asked if they could shelter and rest in the hut for a few minutes. The response from the occupants, issued through a door opened maybe 20 cm, was "Guthega isn't far away. This is a private lodge. We can't let just anyone in here." They didn't even mention the public emergency shelter which was later learned to exist under the hut.

It can't be denied that it was the occupants' prerogative to refuse entry. However, as one of the Blue Lake party put it, "If it was me, I would have had a billy on." One could have expected just a little hospitality, especially in view of the preceding events, the weather, and the consequent very real danger of exposure. All that was wanted was a few minutes shelter just inside the door — not a mass occupation of the hut. We would have been quite happy even with the emergency shelter. Those affected were somewhat stunned.

But that's not all. Even more stunning was this: One member of the Blue Lake group (a fairly inexperienced skier who, admittedly, probably should not have been there) was suffering from hypothermia (exposure). This is a condition which can rapidly become fatal. The Illawong people even refused him shelter until they were persuaded by some medical members of the party that he was real danger of dying. And even then, they only let in the victim, not the doctors!

As we said, stunning. Especially as the gentleman concerned was himself a well known and previously well respected ski-tourer

TEC EXHIBITION

The Total Environment Centre is to hold an exhibition of books and posters on the environment in late November. The exhibition is organised in conjunction with six major Australian and overseas publishers who will be displaying their newest and best publications on the environment, conservation, alternative life styles and the outdoors. Items displayed will be available for purchase — just in time for Christmas.

Accompanying the exhibition will be a display by the Colong Committee on the proposed Border Ranges and Greater Blue Mountains National Parks, and Botany Bay.

Remember: The Total Environment Centre,
3rd Floor,
18 Argyle Street, Sydney.
(The Argyle Arts Centre)
26th — 28th November,
9 a.m. — 5 p.m.

DAMMING THE COX

The Water Board is apparently considering a dam on the Cox River just downstream of the Kowmung Junction. This would flood the Cox as far upstream as Breakfast Creek or thereabouts, and the Kowmung to above Gingra Creek. The dam would provide storage for water from the Cox-Kowmung catchment, thus releasing some of the capacity of Lake Burragarang. Lake Burragarang could then be used to store water fed to the Wingecarribe and Wollondilly Rivers from the Shoalhaven Scheme.

No comment need be made on the effects of such a dam on the bushwalking potential of the Cox-Kowmung area. Especially if a two mile prohibited region is proclaimed such as presently exists around Lake Burragarang.

PARK CAMPAIGN APPEAL

The Blue Mountains National Park submissions cannot be produced for nothing. Four copies of the documents alone, including photos, will cost the combined organisations in the campaign around \$1,000. There will be other expenses as well.

The Australian Conservation Foundation has opened a special account for the Blue Mountains campaign. Donations made to the campaign through the ACF have the advantage of being tax-deductible. However such donations must be accompanied by a special form. Copies of the form are being distributed with this Newsletter.

Look at it this way — a donation is a payment towards the complete preservation of one of NSW's finest walking areas. And another thing — for every dollar received by the ACF, the Federal Government provides another two. What greater incentive could you ask for?

"PARKS AND WILDLIFE"

The N.P.W.S. has spasmodically produced the above journal in the past but now promises that for \$5.00 you will receive five issues. The new issues "will be larger than the present and utilise colour. It will be an important document and reference, besides being interesting reading." However it has not been specified just how regular the newer bigger better brighter issues will be — there was a seventeen month wait between Vol. 1, No. 4 and Vol. 1, No. 5.

Each issue concentrates on a particular topic, but the journal also keeps you in touch with information on new parks, research, general information, book reviews, etc. The next issue will concentrate on aborigines, and the following one will be on rainforests.

Whilst it has been beaten to the punch by various journals (e.g. N.P.A. Journal) as regards new parks, it still offers interesting reading to those involved in our parklands — and isn't that all bushwalkers?

The address to send your \$5.00 to is:

The Director (Parks and Wildlife),
National Parks and Wildlife Service,
Box N189, Grosvenor Street, Post Office,
Sydney. N.S.W. 2000.

KOSCIUSKO HUTS

The editorial on Windy Creek Hut which appeared in the August Newsletter stirred up quite a reaction from the Kosciusko Huts Association. In a lengthy and very interesting bout of correspondence between myself and Reet Valley (President of KHA) and Robert Story (ex-President) it emerged that there were several points worth further mention.

Firstly, it was not intended to suggest that KHA (or rather, its committee) acted unconstitutionally in making its decision, which seems to have been one interpretation of the editorial. Rather, it was meant as a general criticism on some of the attitudes which the Association holds, explicit or implied, must as newspapers can criticise governments' policies.

Secondly, with the exception of the Australian Conservation Foundation which hopefully may change its views, no major group that I know of is advocating the removal or "phasing out" of all the huts. This includes Federation and of course KHA. This is not to say that there are not people who would like to see some of the huts removed.

Finally, the status of the huts system as a whole is under review by both the Kosciusko National Park and KHA. The Park management has clearly to be demolished, the even KHA has hinted that it will listen to suggestions as to which huts should go. KHA, of course, can only make representations to the Park management as a user group, and the same applies to Federation. The Park has the final say, and is not necessarily bound to listen to anyone. Nevertheless they have been asking for opinions. The Park's policy should be available shortly, and will be most interesting.

WOLGAN MINING

Walkers who have visited the Wolgan Valley in the last couple of years will be aware of mine workings being developed on the east side of the valley a few miles south of Newnes. This appears to be the site of a major new mining venture, which, if carried through, will see the removal of 1 million tons of coal per year.

The effects on the Valley are uncertain. The only thing that is sure is that the road will have to be upgraded, and probably sealed.

The coal is for export to Japanese steel mills, and the project is dependent to some extent on the Botany Bay Port Project. Perhaps Federation ought to get involved in the Botany Bay protests as well!

FOOT-WEAR

For years walkers used to complain that the uppers of their Volleys would wear out long before the soles. The problem no longer exists. Due to changes in production procedures (the soles are now made in Taiwan instead of Korea) Dunlop has ensured that the soles now wear out before the uppers. Unfortunately the uppers are not lasting any longer than they used to, so the life of your sandshoes has been reduced.

"We don't have much chance of getting Dunlop to change back again. With around 5,000 walkers in NSW, each using an average of 1 to 2 pairs of Volleys per year, walkers consumption of Volleys would be about 7,000 pairs per year. Even adding in walkers from interstate, this is only a small percentage of Dunlop's annual production of 400,000".

GIVE AND TAKE - TASMANIA

It was recently reported that Precipitous Bluff and its surroundings are to be included in the South West Tasmania National Park. However nothing is free - as a consolation prize for the forestry interests 850 ha of the Hartz Mountains National Park is to be revoked for logging and/or woodchipping.

In another development in the South West, it seems that a new concrete bridge is to be built over the Picton River just above its junction with the Huon, i.e. near the present swing bridge. This will provide access for forestry purposes to almost the whole of the Mt Picton massif, and is another big threat to the integrity of the South West wilderness.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

Dear Sir,

At the recent Mountain Lagoon Search and Rescue weekend, some person or persons unknown - although obviously not bushwalkers - brought along their domestic pets, namely Dogs.

These domestic Pests were allowed to wander freely about the camp, in and around the tents.

Perhaps the bushwalking friends of these persons may like to explain to them that, both from the point of view of hygiene and the preservation of flora and fauna, not to mention public relations, SMALL TENT CAMPING AND DOGS DO NOT MIX.

J.E. Cummings,
Warragamba

BUNGONIA

The boundaries encompassing the State Recreation Reserve have been set and are somewhat greater than expected. Our understanding at the moment is that there will be a separate camping area away from the existing arrangement, and water supply facilities are being designed. With some 18,000 visitors a year, one wonders how the area has coped with the turnover so far. Associated with the camping area there will be a field study centre with examples of the geological features.

A bill to protect the gorge is presently being drafted for presentation to Parliament. Apparently some of the sheds and machinery on Associated Portland Cement's leases are being demolished.

BLUEGUM

There is still confusion over the procedure for obtaining camping permits for Bluegum Forest. At present no one, not even the NPWS seems to know exactly how walkers should go about applying for permits. Some sources say that it is sufficient to make a mere phone call to the Blackheath Park office to obtain, verbally, a permit number, others require more.

The NPWS is for once being uncooperative. In reply to a letter requesting clarification we received only another copy of their original circular letter of some months vintage. Federation will keep trying.

YADBORO FLAT

In the June Conservation Report it was noted that the private holdings on the Clyde River and Yadboro Creek at Yadboro were for sale, but that the NPWS had higher priorities for land acquisitions. It now appears that at least some of the blocks, the most important ones, are to be included in Morton National Park after all. Precise details are not available.

ANOTHER BONNINGTON BOOK

Noticed in the bookshops: "Everest the Hard Way", by Chris Bonnington. Lots of good photographs, most of them by Mick Bourke — a professional photographer who perished on the summit.

24 HOUR WALK

NSW bushwalkers, by default, have cast a vote rejecting an annual 24 Hour Walk. Apart from Federation's Secretary (who was doing some work on old records anyway) and the convenor and his wife, no-one at all turned up to the Environment Centre on October 20th to discuss the event. Unless there is considerable spontaneous interest from more than a handful of people (which at present seems improbable) there will be no event in the next couple of years, at least.

MEET THE POLICE

The Police Emergency Liason Officer, Inspector Ray Williams, has organised a meeting between all police and civilian groups involved in search and rescue and similar emergency activities. If bushwalkers turn up in large numbers it can only help to promote relations between the Police Force and the Search and Rescue Section. At the moment, these relations are not all that they could be in some quarters.

The time: 7.00 p.m. — Wednesday, 1st December
The Place: 35 Addison, Road, Marrickville.

This Newsletter is usually published monthly and is distributed free, through the clubs, to all members of affiliated clubs. Mailing list subscriptions: \$3.00.

There was no issue last month due to insufficient material. As the Publications Officer will be walking in Tasmania for three weeks of November-December, there may not be an issue next month either. If there is, the deadline will be Monday, 13th December, and it will be available at the Council meeting on 21st December.

All correspondence concerning the Newsletter should be addressed to the Publications Officer, who is:

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All other correspondence should be sent to the Secretary at the address on Page 1.
