

NEWSLETTER

of the

BUSHWALKERS OF NEW SOUTH WALES

The N.S.W. Federation of Bushwalking Clubs
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EDITORIAL

Mr. Crabtree and National Parks

In late March the Minister for lands, Mr. Crabtree, opened extensions to the Kosciusko National Park Visitor Centre at Sawpit Creek. In the course of his address he announced the Government's policy on future national parks. Broadly he sees national parks as having two roles: "On the one hand they must be reserved for educational, scientific research and spiritual inspiration of coming generations. On the other hand they must provide an outlet and offer relaxation for people living in the high-pressure society we have today." (From Sydney Morning Herald report, 29th March.) With this in mind it is intended to increase NSW national parks five-fold to cover 12% of the state.

So far this sounds good to be true. However it seems that a large proportion of this 12% is likely to consist of pseudo-parks where towns, farming mining, etc. will continue to be carried out. This too is all to the good, provided that these "functioning" pseudo-parks do not encroach on our existing "passive" parks.

If Mr. Crabtree wishes to introduce his "two role" national park concept, it is highly desirable, in fact essential, that we also have a "two tier" national park structure so that "passive" parks are not lost through being confused with "functioning" pseudo-parks. Of course there is no reason why this should necessarily happen, but since we have enough difficulty preserving existing parks it could be prudent insurance to guarantee an absence of confusion. It is tempting fate to allow mining, say, in one "national park" but not in another. Without a formal two-tier system the potential for misinterpretation, and for later changes of ministerial policy, is too great.

In other words, Mr. Crabtree's new proposal could be one of the best things to happen to national parks for a long time; if it goes in the wrong direction it could be one of the worst. Let us hope that Mr. Crabtree does in fact have the right idea, and that he has the opportunity to implement it. A balanced system of national parks and pseudo-park recreation reserves together occupying nearly one eighth of the state is a conservationist's dream.

AFTERMATH

The body of John Keyes, the search for whom was reported in the last Newsletter, was found in the water of Tallowa Dam about three weeks after he disappeared. The news was something of a relief to those who took part in the search — partly because we know that he was not, after all, missed by the searchers and left to die, and partly because it clears the record for S & R, which cannot be accused of failing to find someone who was not there anyway.

The following extract from Federation's "Safe Walking" Pamphlet is an appropriate reminder: "Never risk lives in flooded streams or rivers. Flood water is always far more dangerous than it looks. Unless every member of the party has been trained to deal with floodwater conditions that exist at the time, wait until the stream goes down no matter how long this may take, or alternatively, take another safer route. If caught by flood waters, make sure that your pack can be shed in an emergency."

Keyes made at least three mistakes: 1. Trying to cross the river in the first place (he should perhaps have sent for help instead), 2. Crossing alone (most river crossing techniques require at least two people), 3. Apparently crossing at a point where there was an island. The island may have provided a halfway rest, but the river on either side would have been more dangerous than elsewhere. He may have survived had he chosen a long, deep stretch of river with no turbulence; searchers later found several such sections where crossing might have been possible.

PADDY'S ORIENTEERING

Paddy Pallin's annual orienteering contest will be held on Saturday, May 28. The start will be located somewhere on the Mt. Hay road, north of Leura. (The exact location has not been finalised, but it will not be hard to find.) Map: Katoomba, 2 inches to 1 mile.

This event is organised for bushwalkers by bushwalkers — not athletes. Paddy extends an invitation to all walkers to come and take part. Entry forms will be available from Paddy's shop, and should preferably be submitted before the day of the event

K.H.A. MEETING

The Kosciusko Huts Association held its Annual General Meeting in Jindabyne on Saturday, March 26th. This article consists of an undoubtedly biased account of the meeting, as seen in my role as Federation's delegate. However in my role as Publications Officer I will also be quite happy to print any letters of dissent (or agreement) of reasonable length.

The major part of the meeting was occupied in debate on the rebuilding of Moulds Hut, which was recently destroyed by fire. Two unusual and unfortunate aspects of this particular incident combined to ensure that much of the discussion was clouded in emotion. Firstly, Moulds was almost certainly the most worked-on hut in the entire Park. Secondly, the fire which destroyed it was deliberately lit by a Park ranger. This "criminal act of arson", to quote one of the caretaker group, was not, repeat not, endorsed by the Park management, and the person concerned has been disciplined (to the extent that the remainder of his career will be affected) and may also be subject to legal proceedings by the caretaker group.

Understandably, those concerned with the hut were deeply affronted by the means of its destruction. They further riled, but perhaps unreasonably, by a letter from Mr. J. Erskine, Park Superintendent, in which he condemned the burning of the hut, but refused to grant immediate permission for construction of a replacement without first investigating the need for a hut at that particular site. Many people seemed to detect insults and inconsistency in this, but to those not so deeply involved it seems quite reasonable to review the situation rather than rushing to take action.

The means of Moulds' destruction should not have in any way influenced the decision on a replacement. Unfortunately most people at the meeting seemed unable to emotionally separate its destruction from its reconstruction. In response to the supposed insult of Mr. Erskine's letter there were two or more assertions of dishonesty on the part of the Park, which was accused of secretly endorsing the destruction of Moulds while publicly denying any part in it. Mr. Geoff Moore, representing the Park, handled these real insults tactfully, and at least one of them was later withdrawn when things cooled a little.

This serves to indicate the tone of the meeting. To the best of my memory, apart from the proposer of the motion (John Paynter) only two speakers, Wilf Hilder and myself, mentioned rational arguments for and against the reconstruction respectively. The main argument for was survival, and to a lesser extent recreation; against, was its proximity to Cesjacks (under 2½km). However most of the meeting was apparently not interested in rational debate, but seemed more concerned at expressing their view on the hut's destruction.

Needless to say, the motion to press for reconstruction of Moulds was passed with only a couple of votes against. Again, following a very short debate (because no-one had the energy left to discuss it further) a motion advocating the reconstruction of Windy Creek Hut was also passed, although not without significant opposition.

Two remaining motions were passed unanimously: That the Park not remove Rawsons Hut until a plan for all huts in the Summit area had been thoroughly considered; and That senior officers in the NPWS be acquainted with the real status of Mr. Geoff Moore's proposed policy on huts in the Park (this document was first put forward solely for discussion and considerable modification was expected; however it was being taken as final by the Superintendent of the Park and the Director of NPWS). This more or less completed the meeting, which was followed by a display of snow tents and a barbeque, somewhat dampened by rain.

It is worth making a final comment on the general attitudes to be found in KHA: The general impression gained from the meeting was that KHA members are bent on retaining a hut on every site at which a hut built by some stockman or miner happens to still exist, regardless of its present value. This is evidenced by the lack of debate on the need or otherwise of a hut on the site of Moulds. Further, the general membership of KHA appears to be antagonistic to anyone who does not share this view of total preservation. When Federation's view was put that destroyed huts should not be replaced so that the density of huts will decrease just a little over the next few decades, there were loud howls of derision. This in spite of the fact that it was repeated again and again that Federation does not oppose all huts in general, and that it would never endorse deliberate destruction of huts (with one or two possible exceptions such as Rawsons and the Stillwell Restaurant).

I came away from the meeting with the distinct impression that the average member of KHA believes that those who do not fully agree with them are totally against them. Fortunately the committee's views can be expected to be a little more reasonable — "If you're not with us you're agin us" is a sure way to make enemies from friends.

Peter B. G.

Moulds and Canberra Bushwalkers

The following letter was received from Canberra Bushwalking Club in late February:

Dear Sir,

It has come to our notice via Paddy Pallin and others that some time last month Moulds Hut (in the Jagungal Wilderness Area of the Kosciusko National Park) burnt down.

In view of the firm stand which Federation made to the NPWS in relation to plans to build a new hut in Windy Creek to replace an old stream gauging station, early attention to the issues which would be raised by plans to build that there is an intention to so build.

Since Moulds was renovated a large, newly built hut 300m from Cesjacks, but just outside the Park, has very considerably expanded built accommodation capacity in this vicinity of the Park.

S.J. Gisz,
Secretary

On the basis of that letter there was a brief paragraph in the March Newsletter stating that Canberra Bushwalking Club was opposed to the reconstruction of Moulds. This article prompted another letter from Canberra:

Dear Sir,

I wish to protest at the interpretation by the Publications Officer of a letter sent by Stephen Gisz to the Federation, the interpretation having received public display in the March Newsletter of Federation.

The letter (written without the knowledge of any committee member or Club member) did three things:

1. Pointed out that Moulds had been burnt down; i.e. alerted the Federation to the fact.
2. Reminded the Federation of its stand on Windy Creek, not our Club's action which was only very narrowly passed.
3. Pointed out the recent construction of a "hut" in the area of Moulds.

Stephen DID NOT state our Club policy. This Club has no "hut policy" as there is a wide range of views on the pros and cons of huts. This issue tends to divide the Club and actions and misinterpretations such as the Publications Officer's tends to add to the divisiveness.

It would be appreciated if you could inform the Publications Officer that the Canberra Bushwalking Club does not have a "hut policy". Each individual hut may be considered, and so far Moulds has not come under consideration. I would appreciate a suitably worded note to this effect in the next Newsletter.

Wendy Davidson,
President

I apologise to Canberra Bushwalking Club if they have been caused any embarrassment. However it must be admitted that Stephen Gisz's letter was remarkably lacking in explicitness, and that the interpretation put on it (which was not disputed by anyone at the March Federation meeting) was not unreasonable. In fact any other interpretation would be somewhat inconsistent with the implications in the letter.

THE VOLLEYS SAGA (CONTINUED)

Letter received from Dunlop Footwear:

Dear Sir,

I have noted with interest Page 2 of your February sue copy of Mr. G. Walton's letter under the heading 'More on Volleys', together with an open letter to Dunlop in reply.

Mr. Ray Alsop's comments regarding his experience with the Volley Canvas Sports Shoe are not consistent with Laboratory controlled service wear tests we carry out. Possibly it would be to both our interests if you could give to us the address of Mr. Ray Alsop and we will have him, with some of his colleagues, carry out a controlled service test in bushwalking with our current production.

Trusting you will be able to oblige with this request and thanking you for your interest in our products.

Yours faithfully,
Dunlop Footwear,

J.D. Manson,
NSW Branch Manager.

Ray has indicated that he will be most interested to co-operate with Dunlop in this matter. Controlled testing is almost certain to resolve the present dispute, and this can only be of benefit to both Dunlop and walkers.

OUT OF THE PAST

From an advertisement in a Sydney Morning Herald of 1860:

'The Bush Travellers' Toga . . . is a thoroughly water-proof graceful walking or driving wrapper, fitted with an air pillow for camping out, with which the wearer can, when sleeping, secure himself from damp and wet.

"Manufactured by the inventor, J.C. Hopkins, tailor, George Street."

More recently, in 1943 there were discussions over the Youth Hostels Association's proposal to build huts. Federation conditionally approved some of the proposals, although there were objections over the building at Marley. In July 1943 the following sites were indicated by the YHA: Carlon's Farm, Konangaroo Clearing, Kill's Defile, the top of Kedumba Pass, Valley Farm (Megalong Valley) Gibraltar Creek (on the Cox), Blackheath, Victoria Falls Road, Pearce's Pass, Mt. Hay Road, Grose Road (Faulconbridge) and Euroka Clearing. How attitudes change!

CONSERVATION PIECES

Northern Blue Mountains Park Proposal

After a mad race against the clock, a presentation copy of Federation's Wilderness Proposal for the Northern Blue Mountains was amongst those presented to the Premier, Neville Wran, on the weekend of his visit to the Greater Blue Mountains (see separate report in this Newsletter). I would like to thank all who helped me get this single copy together for the deadline: I couldn't have done it without them.

At the time of writing this (April 1), with the photographs in the hands of the printer, my hope is to have a good number of black and white versions (with nine black and white photos) of the proposal at the April Federation Meeting.

Although hardly able to compete with the Colong Committee's \$500 proposal, our own bound, foolscap proposal is quite handsome enough in its own right. The cover is a striking photograph of one of the first abseils into "Heart Attack" Canyon. The cost is expected to be \$3 or \$4 each. "Presentation" copies, handmade and with five of the photos in colour can be made as people request them. These are expected to cost about \$18.

Delegates will be able to take a copy or so each back to their clubs from the meeting, so contact your delegate to order through your club, or Dennis Rittson (95-6060) to order copies direct.

The Wolgan — classified by the National Trust

Extract from the February National Trust Bulletin:

The Trust has given Classified listing to a "hidden valley", 28 km long and up to 6 km wide, in the Lithgow region. The Wolgan Valley, 24 km north of the City of Lithgow, is deeply entrenched within massive, almost vertical sandstone walls.

The only vehicle access is through Wolgan Gap, and from this point entry is sudden and spectacular. After a steep descent the road winds along the valley floor, often beside the Wolgan River where the scenic features include water-worn boulders and great river oaks. While the valley shows little sign of development, it does contain the former Newnes shale oil refinery, an area of interest to industrial archeologists. Of the township of Newnes only the hotel remains.

Elements that contribute to the scenic quality of the Wolgan Valley are:-

- *The Perpendicular cliffs and their height contrasting with the "gentle" scenery of the valley floor;
- *The "skin-shedding" effect on the rock faces — great slabs of sandstone breaking away creates colour contrasts with adjoining sandstone;
- *The changing light and shade on the sandstone cliffs, and silhouette effect of these against the sky.

Blue Mountains Advisory Committee

Wilf Hilder, who is a member of the Blue Mountains National Park Advisory Committee, has two comments on items in last month's Conservation Pieces. Firstly, recent pollution of Wollongambe Creek was due to breaches of pollution control regulations by a sub-contractor excavating settling ponds for the Clarence Colliery. For some obscure legal reason he cannot be prosecuted directly by the NPWS. The Advisory Committee is enraged, and will probably be seeking prosecution through the State Pollution Control Commission.

Secondly, the Committee has demanded that the Park revegate all of the new fire road near Lockleys Pylon, rather than leaving the first part as it is. The Committee is very concerned about the appearance of the Grose scarp, and would be extremely upset if a road is ever visible in views of the cliffline.

Nature Reserve for Pantoneys Crown

Gazettal of a Nature Reserve of 3230 ha extent is imminent for Pantoneys Crown and adjacent unalienated lands. The reserve will extend west and south of the plateau itself, down to Coko Creek then up to and along the top of the scarp between Baal Bone Gap and Baal Bone Point.

The purpose of gazettal is to protect the physical and scenic integrity of the mountain, slopes and forests. Bushwalkers wishing to walk in the area, eg. over the Crown, should now write to the Superintendent, Blue Mountains National Park, for permits.

It is interesting to note that the NPWS would like to extend the Reserve to Red Rock Creek and the Red Rocks themselves, but has been stalemated against the Mines Department for some time because of the available coal resources in the area.

The potential for coal mining in the Northern Blue Mountains generally is seen by all concerned with its dedication as the single greatest threat to the wilderness integrity of the proposal.

Yarramunmun Creek

Peter Harris, of NPA, has mentioned at several Federation meetings applications for exploratory mining, by a Mr. J. Doyle of Unanderra, on Yarramunmun Creek, Danjera Creek, Tianjara Creek, Jones Creek and Ettrema Creek, and even the Blockup on the shoalhaven.

Two of these application have recently been granted by the Shoalhaven Council, despite protests by Federation and NPA, in Yarramunmun Creek.

It is disturbing enough that both leases are within part of Nowra's water supply and that one abuts the public reserve at Tianjara Falls (roadworks and mine-works would scar the view from the lookout on the Braidwood road), but we are further disturbed by the fact that all these leases and associated roadworks etc. will benefit simply one man — the lessee. The general public will lose a valuable wilderness, some within the Morton National Park and some likely for dedication later.

Accordingly, NPA has formed an Ettrema Committee to co-ordinate protests against these mining application. Information will be distributed by Peter Harris at the April Federation meeting and all bushwalkers are urged to seek this information out via their delegates and to act. We still have the Mining Warden's Court and the State Pollution Control Commission to go through, so plenty of opportunity exists to resist this mining.

FOR SALE, ETC.

Vendramini walking boots, size 48 (equivalent to size 10 or 11 Australian). Worn once, \$20.00. Charles Turner, 44-6092.

Fairydown sleeping bags:

One Everest OS with long zip — \$94.

One Everest standard with long zip — \$94

One Twenty-below OS with long zip — \$80

All brand new. Fran Everingham, 929-2618 after 6.30 pm.

Wanted: One or two enthusiastic skiers to ski in New Zealand during August school holidays. Cost about \$400 including fares, food, car and accommodation. Nick Bendeli, 649-2178.

THE S & R WEEKEND

The 19th and 20th of March was the Search and Rescue practice weekend on the Boyd Plateau. Activities were centred on Boyd Crossing, where Base was set up and where there was room for the 50 or so participants to camp.

Saturday was occupied by the practice search. The scenario was that a small party of walkers had spent some days in the Upper Kowmung Gorge, intending to emerge near Morong Falls on Thursday. When they failed to appear a helicopter (so the story went) searched the gorge on Friday without success. S & R was to search the plateau between the gorge and the Kanangra Road. Parties were sent off to search Morong Creek and areas two or three miles either side of it.

Almost at noon Party 2 found the "lost" group, consisting of two young children and two "injured" adults, below the cascades at the top of Morong Falls. The "injuries", which were very realistically simulated, included a compound fracture of the lower leg, broken ribs and a punctured lung on the woman, and a fractured skull on the man. Party 2 was later criticised for not taking the situation seriously:

Enter leader of Party 2: "Someone injured, eh?" Exits right.

Enter second member of Party 2, stops to take pictures of woman lying injured below cascades, exits right.

Enter remainder of Party 2, radios "Lost party found", exits right and waits for help.

Something like that anyway. However it was their first S & R practice and not quite as bad as it sounds, and of course it was only a simulated accident. They were not the only ones to look a little foolish:

Party 5 (converging on Party 2 and the injured group, like all other parties): "Five calling Seven. Please ask Party 2 to indicate their position with smoke." (Party 7 was relaying radio messages between parties not in direct radio contact.)

Party 7: "Seven calling Two. Party 5 wish you to indicate your position. They suggest smoke, but shouts might do."

Party 5 (interrupting): "It's OK. We have established visual contact."

Party 2 (interrupting, laconically): "Yeah. 20 yards."

Oh well, everyone was learning. It was all very entertaining, especially for the relay group, Party 7, who were in the middle of all of it.

Before very long most groups had reached the top of the falls, and the first victim, the man, was ready to be hauled out of the gully. Shortly afterwards he and his bearers were out of sight up the hillside, still moving fast and at the mercy of the enthusiastic haulers. Meanwhile the second victim sat up and chatted with her rescuers, until the return of the stretcher prompted a hurried resumption of her act. She too was hauled up to the nearest fire road at a great pace, and was ungreteful enough to complain of the bumpy ride. You can't have it both ways.

That more or less completed the day's activities. The various parties scattered in all directions to pick up their cars before reconverging on Boyd Crossing. By this time it was late afternoon, and activity was soon concentrated around the numerous small campfires. After an hour or so, though, attention turned to the large campfire built in a shallow natural amphitheatre. Alternate songs from the rival "Traditionalists" and "Drunkards" were interspersed with a couple of brilliant solo performances from Keith Maxwell.

Halfway through the proceedings Bob Mead interrupted to present S & R with a cheque for \$50. It was later announced that Blacktown Apex Club had given a similar sum. Federation is suitably grateful.

Sunday morning began with a general gathering to discuss the previous day. Those who had made mistakes were corrected, and forgiven on the grounds that they were learning. There were talks on first aid from some visitors who had come to observe and contribute, and discussions with Mike Richter (Ranger Officer) on radio procedure and the new radios (which were supposed to be there that weekend but weren't).

Radio procedures were undoubtedly the worst aspect of the preceding day's practice. In view of this the next item on the agenda was radio practice, and most people collected a radio and set off into the distance to rehearse setting up aerials and generally doing the right thing. Others chose to take a leisurely drive home, or went to have a stroll out at Kanangra.

About lunch time Neville Wran dropped in, on his tour of the Blue Mountains with Bruce Vote and the Colong Committee, but there were not many people left at Boyd Crossing then. The finale to the weekend was the tragedy near Hampton, where S & R took a major role in the rescue (see separate report in this Newsletter).

The weekend was a great success. Some of us who had not been to an S & R weekend before went along feeling duty-bound but unenthusiastic. Our attitude to the next practice will be a bit different.

S & R IN ACTION

At 3.45 pm on Sunday, 20th March a nasty accident occurred on the Jenolan Caves road between the Oberon turn-off and Hampton.

The road was damp and the driver (travelling towards Hampton) had been drinking. The car had conventional cross-ply tyres. A following motorist described his driving as erratic, and that he suddenly took off, losing control whilst rounding a sharp left-hand corner then swerving over the road and crashing through the safety fence at more than 100 km/h.

There were two couples and three children in the car. The car disintegrated as it rolled and tumbled, end for end, down a very steep slope, eventually stopping 200m down. Seat belts were of little use. All the adults and one child were thrown out of the car in its mad tumble; broken seat belt webbing and mounting brackets (less rbbing) were strewn on the slope.

Approximately 80m down both men and a woman were thrown out of the car. The higher man was severely injured and lingered only a short time. The lower man seemed to have been crushed by the vehicle. The injured woman was slightly lower down the slope again. The car's engine was sitting upright, not far from the battery and toolbox nearby.

The vehicle was flattened and shortened almost beyond recognition and although one woman and a child were found near it they were most likely thrown out at the same time as the others.

The other two children were still seat-belted into the car. They were both under four years old and obviously were not heavy enough to generate the force needed to break their seat belts.

The second car to arrive on the scene was driven by Peter Vanamois of Springwood Bushwalking Club. He immediately went down the slope and entered the car to retrieve one child. He subsequently made three more trips up the slope with injured people. Tom Williams, also SBC, stayed and comforted the lower woman who was attempting to climb back up the slope. A swathe through the undergrowth led to her, 50m below the car.

The other child in the car had to be cut free from its safety seat. He was carried up the slope with great difficulty by an unfit tourist. Chris Cosgrove of SUBW offered to take the child, but the tourist insisted on carrying it and Chris practically pushed him back up the slope.

These walkers were returning from the S & R practice at Boyd Crossing. The S & R trailer was less than 5km away. A Sydney Police Rescue Squad vehicle also returning from the practice overheard details of the accident on the police radio and headed back to the accident scene.

I arrived at 4.15, just as the child that was thrown out of the car was being hauled up on a spinal board. Frenzied activity led to poor handling and the spinal board was nearly dropped several times. The child was the most badly injured and later died.

The police and S & R stretchers were now sent down. Fergus Bell, S & R Rock Rescue Officer, accompanied the stretchers. The police did not have enough rope to even reach the higher woman and stretcher hauling would not have been possible without the S & R ropes.

Many tourists eager to assist in stretcher hauling littered the slope. They were not sufficiently controlled and many rocks were dislodged including one from near the top of over 200 kg. One tourist received an unpleasant head wound from a small rock. Stretcher hauling was fast but frenzied. The pull was not smooth as the rope was handled hand over hand. The women were on their way to hospital by 5.00 pm.

All rescuers then took a well-earned rest and traffic was cleared again. At about 5.15 pm Katoomba Police Rescue Squad arrived and took charge of operations. On any other weekend this is when rescue operations would have started.

About this time Channel 10 News also arrived. They interviewed Fergus and took some excellent footage of the S & R trailer and of the stretcher hauling of one of the men.

While the rescue was going on more and more bushwalkers arrived until they outnumbered the tourists assisting. Stretcher hauling noticeably improved as the number of walkers increased. The tourists just started copying the walkers. The Channel 10 News segment showed the excellent stretcher hauling that was eventually attained. Unfortunately only the stretcher bearers appreciated this smoothness.

By 6.30 pm the road was as empty as when the accident occurred.

Certain points stand out from this accident:

*The survival prospects of the injured persons were greatly increased by the presence of S & R and the Sydney Police Rescue Squad.

*The accident occurred in daylight. No rescue vehicle at the scene had the lights necessary for a night rescue.

*ONE man's drinking was the cause of death and suffering of others. While one may be able to drive home drunk from a party, you just can't start the return trip from Jenolan Caves drunk.

*This part of the Jenolan Caves road is dangerous. This car was not the first to drive off the road at that spot, yet the corner has no advisory speed sign or warning.

*The rescue ran reasonably smoothly due to the presence of many bushwalkers. There were many little jobs that obviously had to be done. The walkers present did most of these with little or no prompting.

The toll stands at three dead and four with mental scars that will lives with them all their days.

Keith Maxwell,
Assistant Field Officer,
Search & Rescue.

MR. WRAN'S WEEKEND

As part of the Blue Mountains National Park campaign, the Premier, Neville Wran, was taken on a grand tour of the region on March 19th and 20th. The weekend began with a sightseeing flight which covered all the country between Yerranderie and Widden Brook — almost the entire park proposal. The plane was provided, paid for and piloted by Dick Smith (the electronic one) who is a member of NPA.

Specifically, the route took in the Colo Gorge (which was suitably impressive for the occasion) Gaspers Mountain, Monundilla, Widden Brook (more gasps of amazement), Pomany Ridge, the Yodeller Range, Coricudgy, Tyan Pic, Glen Davis, Newnes and the Wolgan Valley, the Wollangambe Wilderness (complete with encroaching pine forests and mining), the Grose Valley, Blackheath, Narrowneck, Kedumba Valley, the Cox, Kanangra Gorge and the Walls, Boyd Plateau (where the S & R practice was under way), the Kowmung, Mt. Colong, Bindook, Yerranderie and finally Tonalli Tableland and Camden airfield. And all in only 2 hours.

It would be impossible to adequately describe the flight in the space available here. Bruce Vote, President of Federation and who shared the plane with Mr. & Mrs. Wran, has written a fuller description to appear in the NPA Journal. Suffice to say that Mr. Wran was very impressed, both by the grandeur and extent of the region, and by the many obvious threats to it.

The "opposition" was unwittingly co-operative, in that damage to the region which was inconspicuous at ground level was quite apparent from the air. Such threats included mining at Clarence, forestry on the Newnes Plateau, fires near Gaspers Mountain, phasmatid attack on the Boyd, and a four-wheel-drive vehicle miles from a road whose driver even waved at the plane to make his presence known.

The rest of the weekend was no less successful, but not quite as exciting. After lunch at Burratorang Look-out (a barbeque provided by the Water Board) there was a boat trip across the Lake to Donohoes Flat. The guests of honour travelled in a Water Board launch fitted with twin 135 hp motors and capable of nearly 80 km/h. No wonder Board rangers can catch walkers defying the access restrictions! From Donohoes Flat the group travelled via "Bindook", where they were met by a remarkably amiable Neville Lang, to Bats Camp, arriving about 5 pm.

Wine, cheese, olives etc were followed by dinner at 7.00, and some musical entertainment of both the professional and do-it-yourself varieties. All in all it was probably the most sophisticated evening Bats Camp has ever seen.

The first item on Sunday's program was a stroll up to Mt. Moorain behind Bats Camp, from which there is a superb view of the Kowmung country. Morning tea back at the Camp was followed by departure for Kanangra Walls. After lunch on the Boyd Plateau the party dispersed and went home. All reports indicate that the Premier was very impressed and enthusiastic about what he was shown. Let us hope that his enthusiasm has the conviction and endurance to ensure that the Blue Mountains are properly protected.

RIVER CANOE CLUB

For various reasons the River Canoe Club, after over thirty years affiliation with the Federation, has decided not to renew membership. While lately they have not been prominent in Federation affairs, apparently they have lent quite a bit of support over the years and we are sorry to see them leave us.

BOOK REVIEW

Why review a climbing/mountaineering book in a bushwalkers' newsletter? I'm not too sure, but here goes:

CLIMBING IN NORTH AMERICA

by Chris Jones

American Alpine Club, University of California Press,
1976, \$22.50

(Copy supplied by ANZ Book Co. P/L)

This book traces out a very rigorous history of climbing on the North American continent, except for Mexico which "has been excluded . . . because, apart from the unprecedented ascent of Popocatepetl in 1519, it has never been a leader." A very thorough job of this history is done indeed. People and personalities, areas, techniques, "cult" followings, etc. are all covered in adequate detail with extensive references and personal interviews to back it up. If fact the bibliographies, at the conclusion of each chapter, themselves represent quite an achievement. Add to this the fact that all of the information had to be read, digested, collated and organised into a readily readable form and we have a splendid result.

The book is well written and the mountains (!) of information are easily assimilated as part of the "story line". The chapters tend to be self-contained and deal with specific aspects of techniques or areas of development, as the chapter headings suggest, eg, "The Southern Californians", "Mount Waddington", "The Granite Crucible". This gives rise to a book that does not have to be read in one go. Depending on one's mood, different chapters can be read at various times, not necessarily in sequence, and no great loss or confusion occurs in doing so.

Chris Jones' insight into the climbers' philosophy arises throughout the book and the movements toward conservation and "clean climbing" come across as a logical extension of what has gone before. No doubt being a well know climber assists. At no time, however, does the reader feel force-fed by Jones' own ideas and concepts. The fact that he could present the work in such a reasonably unbiased and unified manner is illustrated by his being able to approach and interview such diverse personalities as Harding, Robbins, Amet, Beckey, Washburn, etc. etc. The list goes on and on. Incidentally he presents possibly the most unbiased account of Frederick Cook's claim to have climbed Mt. McKinley that I have yet encountered.

On the whole this book should appeal to the rock-climber, mountaineer and even bushwalker, and no time is lost in reading it.

Warwick Williams,

UNSW Mountaineering & Bushwalking Clubs,
Sydney Rockclimbing Club,
N.Z. Alpine Club

"ECOS" ON BUSHFIRES

The February issue of Ecos, the CSIRO's environmental magazine, contains a most interesting article on bushfires in the Kosciusko National Park. One of the most important points to emerge is that burning encourages the growth of scrub, whereas the climax community is represented by snowgums and grass. In view of the proposals to apply control burning to three-quarters of the Park (all land below 1650 m) this is a very relevant article. The same Ecos also includes, among other things, articles on bird-banding and the Landsat program (which has a marvellous coloured satellite photo of the Sydney region).

NAVIGATIONAL

*The "Exit" sign at the base of the Rainbow Ravine route out of the Thunder Canyon system has been removed. Not many people will be going down there at this time of year, but it is something to remember for next summer. The sign may or may not be replaced; in any case those who removed it acted rather irresponsibly since its presence was well known and some people may rely on it. We hope not to hear of any parties emerging into the Grose, two days late.

*The Budawang sketch map is in short supply; however Mountain Equipment still have a few copies left. Work is proceeding on a revised edition of the map, and also on a guide book to accompany it.

*There have been a number of reports of interference with cars parked in the Capertee Valley. One car owner had his spark plug leads rearranged (which caused obvious effects but was not easy to detect), and someone else was rumoured to have had the distributor rotor removed. Despite the criminal nature of such acts, not much can be done other than to take care in choosing a parking spot. Bear in mind that landholders seem to automatically assume that the occupants of a car parked beside their property are up to no good, and find somewhere to park where other interpretations are possible.

*Following a rather strongly worded personal complaint to the Division of National Mapping over inaccuracies in the Tantangara 1:100 000 map, I have received a very civil and apologetic reply from the Director, who explained how the errors occurred, and also included a number of map correction forms. National Mapping is understandably concerned about the accuracy of its maps. They welcome corrections and comments, and walkers would do themselves a favour by supplying them. If one knows of an error in a map, and a new edition perpetuates the error, then you only have yourself to blame for not letting someone know about it.

By the way, the errors which upset me concerned McLeods Fire Trail east of Mt. Jackson and the Mt. Franklin road between Mt. Ginini and Leura Gap. Both these roads exist but do not follow the route shown on the map very closely.

*A note from the Victorian "Federation News": Six new maps of the Mt. Bogong area have been published by the Department of Crown Lands and Survey. They are at 1:25 000 scale, but have many errors. Huts are in the wrong places, roads marked wrongly, tree-ed areas not accurate, one contour does not line up between maps, etc. Buyer beware!

*Wilf Hilder, Information Officer, reports the following new maps available:

NSW Central Mapping Authority, 1:25 000: Port Stevens, Yarrangobilly, Talbingo (Last two are black and white provisional sheets only, and cost \$4.50).

Division of National Mapping, 1:100 000: Howes Valley, Ebor, Yarrowitch, Upper Manning, Wingham, Camden Haven. National Mapping maps now cost \$2.10.

Wilf considers it likely that CMA maps will rise in price to match the Commonwealth maps after the August Budget. Perhaps one should take the hint and get in early.

Also recently available are the new Public Transport Commission country rail and coach timetable (20c) which now uses a 24 hour clock, and the "Melbourne Walker", 1977, published by the Melbourne Amateur Walking and Touring Club. This issue features the Dandenongs, past and present, and also includes track notes on a week-long trip in the southwest ACT (Mts. Kelly, Bimberi, etc.), an article on "Why we need huts", and a critical editorial taking the opposite view.

*Peter Nichols is chairman of the Education and Promotions Committee of the Orienteering Association of NSW. He has written to Federation offering the Association's facilities for instructing novice walkers in bush navigation. The facilities consist mainly of various permanent orienteering courses. Also available are training courses conducted by the Department of Sport and Recreation in both Sydney and country centres. The Orienteering Association is a very well organised group; Federation is most interested in its offer and will be taking it further.

"WILDERNESS IN AUSTRALIA"

The Department of Geography at the University of New England has recently completed a wilderness survey with the above title. Actually the title is not strictly correct, since the study concentrates on NSW, but the report is an interesting and worthwhile document. It contains some 150 pages, and numerous maps and black and white photographs. Copies can be ordered by sending \$5.00 to the Secretary, Department of Geography, University of New England, Armidale, NSW, 2351.

ACCESS TO YERRANDERIE

It has been reported that surveyors are investigating a possible alternative road to Yerranderie which will bypass Neville Lang's property. Although such a route would undoubtedly overcome the access problems imposed by Lang's ownership of the existing road, it would mean yet another road in an area which already contains far too many. Bushwalkers would almost certainly prefer to see Yerranderie retain its isolation.

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

All material not otherwise acknowledged can be attributed to the Publications Officer. Any opinions expressed are those of the individual authors, and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Federation.

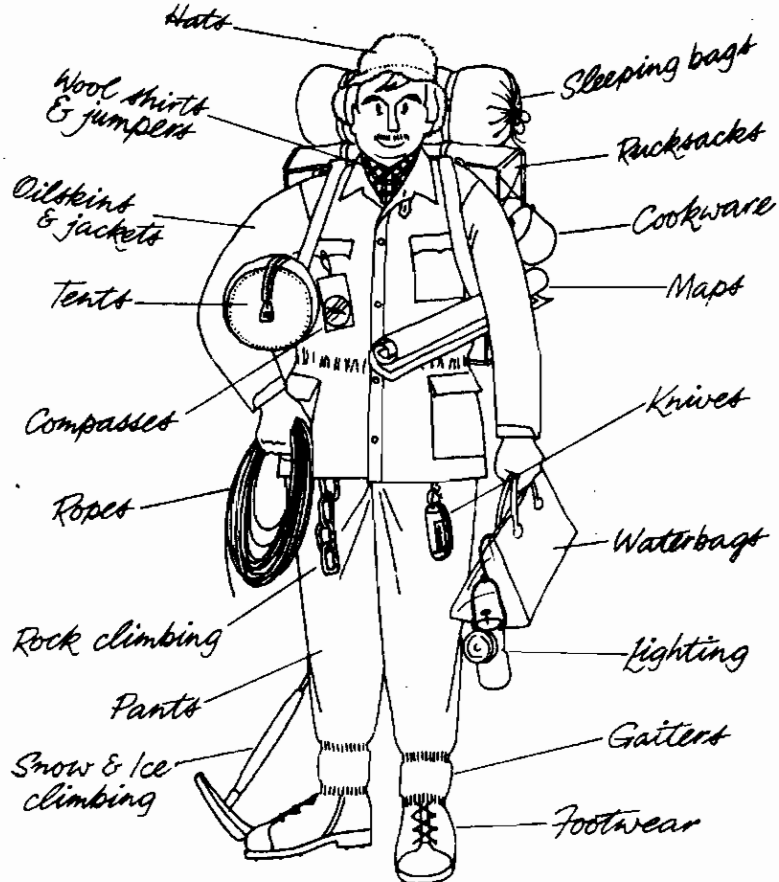
The deadline for the next issue will be Monday, 9th May, and it will be available at the Council meeting on Tuesday, 17th May.

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Paddy Fallon

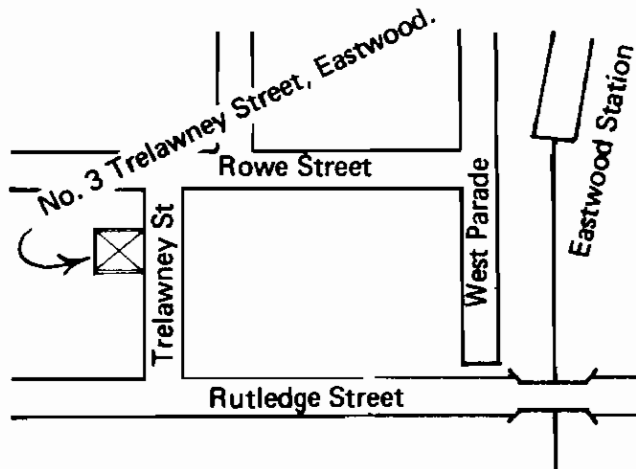
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