

THE Bushwalker FEB 93

Newsletter of the Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs NSW Inc.

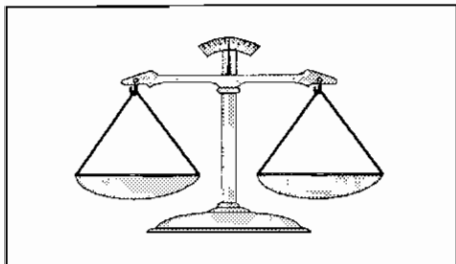
ISSN 0313 2684

THE BUSHWALKER AND LEADERSHIP LIABILITY

IN THESE DAYS of the "sue everybody" society the question of liability frequently comes up. Unfortunately there is a lot of misinformation about the subject, even within the Legal fraternity. In the simplest terms - you are liable to a person when, through fault or omission, you cause injury to that person or his property.

After that it gets complicated and discussions on the subject have filled many books.

It is not possible to have a barrister on every trip to help you make the right legal decisions. There could also be complications where you are canoeing or bushwalking on the border between states which have different liability laws.



There are so many things to think about during an emergency in the bush that you don't want to add liability to the list. However there are a number of things you can do to minimise the possibility of being sued.

First of all be practical. Most experienced bushwalkers are. Your knowledge will protect you if:-

1. you have a current First Aid Certificate.
2. your wilderness navigation is good.
3. you take the correct safety equipment :-
 - a. Personal First Aid Kits.

HELP !! WANTED RADIO TECHNICIAN

We need somebody!

Applicants should:-

- * be prepared to work long hours without recompense and so join the other Officers of S&R who belong to the same Union.
- * be dedicated to Service to the Community.
- * be a technician working in the trade that has after-hours access to equipment that amateurs only dream about.
- * Have some bushwalking experience so as to understand how walkers think, and be self-sufficient during call-outs and practices.

b. Group First Aid Kit. (if applicable: see footnote 1.)

c. Helmets where danger of head injury exists.

d. Group Safety Equipment. (if applicable: see footnote 2.& 3.)

Above all, use good judgement and try to prevent accidents before they happen. Remember Murphy's Law - If anything can go wrong, it will. So, like a good Scout, "Be Prepared." It is a good idea to know the rules of wilderness safety. Attend S&R training weekends.

If all of the above is attended to then the chances of being sued as a leader are very slight.

Footnotes.

1. This would apply if the trip undertaken is in an area where assistance, if in trouble, would be difficult to obtain within a reasonable time.
2. Handlines, Throw-bags for whitewater trips - body only, rafting or canoeing.
3. Self-rescue equipment when canyoning, caving etc.

David Recompense - Professional Bushman.

DUTIES

1. To take charge of, and keep in working order S&R's Radio equipment so that it is operational at all times. This could mean drying out radios after a wet callout, replacing batteries and carrying out repairs.
2. Being prepared to give instruction, at practices, on radio usage and care.
3. Be able to advise S&R on the latest and best when purchasing new equipment.

ASSISTANCE

Several of the S&R officers have sufficient knowledge to be co-opted to help you in your work.

If you think you have the qualifications and qualities listed above please contact Keith Maxwell S&R Director at home on (02) 6220049.

The reason for this cry for help is that our previous radio officer has moved to Orange and is sorely missed.

Two things set S&R apart from all other groups who "say" they can do bush search and rescue.

First and obvious is the quality of personnel available. Many outside groups imagine they can bushwalk - they don't compare.

Second is the excellent communications from our specialised HF network. This equipment is being upgraded and improved as often as we can afford.

Over the years Federation's S&R has kept a low profile even though it has been in operation for over 50 years and has effected many successful rescues in that time.

It is voluntary, not Government funded and costs the PUBLIC purse NOTHING.



HOW IT BEGAN

ST GEORGE WALKERS.

THE St George Walkers was inaugurated on 26/3/87 under the sponsorship of the Senior Adult Unit, Dept of Health, NSW, through their program of "Walking for Pleasure". During the year 1989/90 the responsibility for "Walking for Pleasure" activities was conducted by the Healthy Life Style Promotion Unit, Dept of Health NSW. (Typical inept bureaucratic organisation - Ed.)

Initially the group walked every second Tuesday. However the activity became so popular that weekly walks were introduced. Luncheons and other social events were arranged to raise funds. Attendances at walks rose from about 30 to regular attendances of 60 to 70 walkers, giving rise to management difficulties on bush tracks as well as transportation problems where other than rail or ferry services were involved.

Government funds were transferred from the Health Dept to the Dept of Sport, Recreation and Racing and wide distribution of our "Walks Program" was made by that Dept to all interested members of the community. Our membership rose in 1991 to an active membership of 250 walkers so that we were regularly faced with 110 - 130 walkers on a programmed walk most Tuesdays.

We tried to explain the impossible situation to the Dept of Sport etc. asking that the membership be closed and that they cease to distribute the Walks Program only to be advised that "Walking for Pleasure" must be open to all members of the community.

As a group we decided that this was "mission impossible" and we could not live with the Depts regulations, so we formally terminated our membership and withdrew from the "Walking for Pleasure" banner on 17/12/91. At our request the Dept formed a new WFP Club (The Bayside WFP Club) in July '92. That Club, with the assistance of

several of our old walkers now walk each Tuesday and whose membership is open to all.

St George Walkers is now affiliated with the Confederation and has a registered membership of 170. Currently membership is full with a waiting list. In addition to programmed walks each Tuesday, mini-holidays, usually of a weeks duration are held several times a year for groups of 20 to 40. These "holidays" can be coach tours or visiting places where walking is done on most days.

Comradeship within the club is such that large numbers attend in groups at theatres, flora displays, local charity functions and community fund raising activities.

At least 25% of all members would walk 2 and 3 days a week with other clubs and groups.

THE MORISSET BUSHWALKERS

KAREN LISASOAIN, a local lady with a keen interest in walking, thought the formation of a local bushwalking club a good idea, so she advertised a meeting on the Community Notice Board. As a result eight people came along, agreed with her, the idea became a reality, and the Morisset Bushwalkers was initiated.

Four of those who attended that meeting are still with us - Anne Kane, the president; Les Critchley, treasurer; Jenny Whyte and June Critchley.

Our first recorded walk was on 2nd September, 1988, along the Wattagan Mountains "Wildflowers Pine Forest Walk." Nineteen people participated on that occasion.

During 1989 the formation of an official Club was discussed. Prior to this we had carried out our activities on an ad hoc basis. Finally at a meeting held on 14th November of that year, attended by 17 walkers, officers were elected to get the ball rolling.

Eric Power, who became our secretary, had joined on the 25th February, 1989, and largely due to his efforts the spade work was carried out. A constitution and rules were written and application was made to the Confederation so as to take advantage of the Public Liability Insurance cover necessary for incorporation. At a Special General Meeting held on 30th October 1991 it was agreed that our Club should be

come incorporated. Again the secretary Eric Power attended to this matter and incorporation was granted on December 19, 1991.

After a small beginning our Club now boasts a membership of over 80 and these members come from as far afield as Sydney, Nords Wharf, Hamilton and the Central Coast.

We have enriched the Morisset community with our activities.

When we started we experienced two very wet years and seldom came home with dry feet. Despite that, the leeches and other occasional bothers we have gone from strength to strength and we have enriched the Morisset community life with our activities.

We have ventured on more than one hundred different tracks from the Barringtons to the Snowies, out to the Blue Mountains and all over the local areas. Some members have walked the Milford Track in New Zealand as a Club event. Of course there are many places yet to see and walk.

We walk every Wednesday and Saturday and during daylight saving on Sunday evenings. On the Wednesday walks we usually have 25/35 members.

At present we have 81 members (average age 56 - oldest 79); 15 married couples; 56 ladies and 25 men.

The officers of the Club are justly proud of their efforts in building the Club from a small beginning to what it is today and it is still growing.

CONFEDERATION CALENDAR 1993

March 27/28
Search and Rescue Training
April 17/18
YHA 50 Peaks
24/25
ANZAC Memorial Weekend at
Splendour Rock
May 29/30
First Aid Course
June 25/26
S & R Rogain
Aug. 21/22
AGM and Conference
Sept. 3
Annual Bush Dance
Oct. 16/17
S & R Training Weekend
23/24
First Aid Course
Nov. 6/7
Kanangra Walls Track Maintenance

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HERPETOLOGY CORNER

Snakebite on a Bushwalk.

Snakes, though much discussed, cause less harm to bushwalkers than rocks, scrub, insects or cars. It seems hard on me that, after nearly 40 years of walking, my claim to fame will be as one of the few who actually suffered a snakebite. Perhaps a summary of the circumstances and our actions may be of use to others in a similar situation.

It was late in the second day of a three day bushwalk when, despite reasonable care, I was 'bitten' twice on the leg by a red-bellied black snake. We were between 9 and 13 Km from our car, depending on the route, and an unknown distance from nearest occupied property. With just my husband Frank and myself we had to balance recommended first aid with the practicalities of our circumstances.

The incomprehension of casualty staff of bush isolation conditions was frustrating.

The 'bite' itself was just two sharp raps on my lower leg. If I had not seen the snake I could easily have disregarded them. All we could see were four small marks and four tiny drops of blood. At no time did I have pain or excessive swelling around the bite.

A crepe bandage was in my rucksack pocket and within seconds I had started bandaging from the knee downward. We deliberately washed the bite site where there was a risk of venom entering through open scratches and I knew that bandages and socks from over a snake bite rarely gave positive venom identification. Then Frank made tea and we talked over our situation.

It would be after dark before Frank could reach our car. He could not bring help until the next day. We decided it was better to camp together and see what my condition was in the morning. Then it might be possible for me to reach the firetrail. If the snake had been a Brown, I do not know what we would have done.

About an hour later I had some shock-like reactions, but these passed. We did not splint the leg. I had to toilet and move a little during the night, but I restrained myself as much as possible. The bandaging delayed the venom dispersal. In the morning I had some bruises and tender joints, my system was coping fairly well.

We started to walk out by the longer but easier route- 6km to the firetrail. The walking obviously dispersed venom and by the time we reached the trail, yesterday's scratches were bleeding, joints were swollen and there was blood in my urine. However I was not a stretcher case and we continued slowly and with care and along the 6km firetrail. I drank much water to flush possible harmful proteins from my kidneys, and, as walking loosened the bandage, we replaced it, winding by winding, with a tighter wrapping.

We reached the road 24 hours after the incident. Once in the car we had more problems to consider. I was bruising wherever there was pressure. My fear now was of a major haemorrhage. Also I knew I was allergic to horse serum, the basis of anti-venoms. We decided to drive an extra 120km to the Base Hospital rather than seek medical aid in a small township.

Casualty at the hospital did not take my account very seriously at first, nor would they accept my identification of the snake. The bandages were removed almost immediately and I then started to have double vision and the blood in my urine increased. The bandage had still been helping me. Blood tests showed a gross haemorrhagic condition and polyvalent antivenom was given. I received only a few mls of this before I reacted severely and the infusion was stopped. Perhaps this was sufficient or the venom may have run its course, but after a night under observation in ICU the haemorrhagic condition reversed itself and I was discharged as good as new next day.

Joan Rigby - Sydney BW.

Joan, as stated above, is a very experienced and competent walker and because of the following is more qualified than most to speak on this subject. - EDITOR.

"At the time of the incident I was Senior Biochemist in the Pathology Dept of the Base Hospital. I have performed many identification tests for snake venom - including dirty socks. In retrospect I should have soaked the venom into a scrap of damp fabric or cotton wool, wrapped it in a plastic bag and given that to the laboratory.

Discoloured urine in snakebite cases is often not due to blood but to

myoglobin (the harmful protein of my article) released by damaged muscle. I was aware of this possibility while we were walking out but had seen red cells in the urine. As the Laboratory expert on myoglobin identification, after my discharge, I did satisfy myself myoglobin was absent.

As in other bushwalking accidents, the incomprehension of casualty staff regarding bush isolation conditions was frustrating. More annoying was their disbelief of my identification of the snake, despite the local snake expert (another lab staff member) vouching for my knowledge. The on-duty physician presumably scoured books and proposed a 'Glen Innes Taipan' as a possible culprit. The 5ml monovalent antivenom instead of the 50ml (I think) polyvalent dose might actually have been tolerated.

Lastly, *the problem of horse serum allergy should be better known.* Most people would not be aware of their sensitivity to this and the anaphylactic reaction this can have."

HANDY HINTS

Snake / Spider Bite

Prevention

Most snake bites occur on the limbs with 75% on the lower limbs.

* So wear thick sox and gaiters when off-track walking.

Treatment

* Remove the victim from danger and reassure him/her.

* Immediately apply a broad crepe bandage over the area then down to the extremity and then up the limb to the trunk. Apply it firmly as for a sprain.

This will reduce the blood circulation and restrict the flow of Lymphatic fluid. Periodically check the fingers and toes below the bandage and adjust if necessary.

* Immobilise the limb with a splint and send for medical assistance. Watch for breathing or circulation failure - treat as necessary.

* Record the time of the bite, and any symptoms as they occur.

* To assist in identification of the venom give a description of the snake or spider and get a specimen of the venom by soaking any venom left at the site of the bite into a damp cloth or cotton wool. Store in a plastic bag.

* DO NOT cut or suck the bite.

* DO NOT apply a tourniquet.

HERPETOLOGY CORNER. 2

BE KIND TO YOUR RED-BELLIED FRIEND.

After all the bad publicity that has been given the Snake, right back to Genesis, it was pleasing to see the more humane (Correction - delete "humane," substitute "serpentine") approach in the Bits and Pieces column in January's issue of "The Bushwalker". This was a whimsical article dealing with snake-bite from the Snake's point of view. It put me in mind of two snippets of "snake-lore" from the legends of the SBW.

The earliest was 'way back in those Dark Ages, when the recommended treatment for snake-bite included incising the bite between the fang punctures, sucking out the contaminated blood, then pouring Condy's Crystals (Potassium Permanganate) into the wound. A walking party on the Kowmung River experienced one of the rare cases of a snake-bitten walker when the victim stepped out of some long grass into a small clearing and was bitten on the leg.



He received "the treatment" (walker, not snake) and two of the strongest members of the party raced off at top speed to Yerranderie, which was then still a small town with road access to Camden. Hiring a horse, they brought it back to the Kowmung and carried out the victim, who was then taken by road to Camden for proper medical attention. It is recorded that, by the time they got to town, the sufferer had just about got over the bite, however, he had a very sore and swollen leg for a couple of weeks - all due to the "first aid" treatment.

In the other fable the snake had only a minor role. You might call it a "slither on slither off" part. Easter, 1977, at a lazy camp at Macarthur's Flat on the Nattai some easy day walks from the base were programmed. On Saturday, during a stroll up Wanganderry Creek, a sand-bar collapsed under the feet of a girl prospective member, throwing her sideways and causing a fractured fibula.

We didn't realise at first that it was fractured but it was clear that she couldn't walk out, so a litter was fashioned from bush timber, a couple of packs and some clothing. On this she was brought late in the day back to base camp.

Since it was obvious that we'd not get up Starlight's Track with this primitive gear, three of the fastest and more presentable members scuttled out to civilisation on Easter Sunday to seek aid.

They returned that night carrying a proper stretcher borrowed from Bowral Ambulance Station, where the staff were greatly relieved to learn that we thought we could manage without them. Telephone calls to Sydney resulted in about six strong and active members, who had not gone walking that Easter, trooping in ready to assist with the portage.

Meanwhile on the Sunday it was agreed it would be silly for a swag of people to sit idle. Some volunteered to stay with the lass and the rest attempted to reach Russel's Needle on a spur overlooking the upper Nattai. This trip was also aborted when another young lady crossing the river on stepping stones, slipped and fell on her wrist tearing some tendons.

As we arrived again at base, this time with the walking wounded, another club member who had come out solo to join us for the last two days started to tell us that while crossing Macarthur's Flat something wrenched itself savagely from under his feet and rustled off into the tall grass. He was quite put out to find that his "snake" story was ignored by all who had already had enough trauma.

Later in a campfire skit on the delights of leisurely, relaxing camps, we announced a tally of "one busted leg, one torn wrist, and one snake with a sore back." A girl player then exclaimed "The poor snake! Fancy having a large lad like '.....' stomping on your back."

So you see, walkers can be sympathetic to the troubles of their red-bellied friend.

Jim brown - SBW.

BITS AND PIECES

MOTH BEATS BACK FERAL BUSH

By science and technology writer JULIAN CRIBB

SCIENTISTS are claiming an early tactical victory in the war against one of the worst cases of environmental protection gone wrong - the bitou bush.

Introduced from South Africa half a century ago to combat coastal erosion, the bush has proved itself a cane toad of the plant world, destroying hundreds of kilometres of native beach ecosystems from northern NSW to South Australia, blocking beach access and displacing wildlife.

Rated by biologists as the worst invading pest plant of the Australian coastal environment, the bush will devour 90 percent of NSW coastal habitat by 2010 unless halted and its range will extend from Townsville to Adelaide.

But researchers at the CSIRO Division of Entomology and Keith Turnbull Research Institute in Victoria believe that they have got the weapon to stop the bitou bush in its tracks.

Five years ago they introduced a small moth, native to South Africa, which feeds on the bush. A survey has now revealed that the moth has succeeded in reducing flower production by 50 percent and fruit production by 70 percent on the bush in some places. This should substantially curb the plant's ability to spread, they say.

The CSIRO's Dr John Scott, working in South Africa, has uncovered a range of beetles, mites, weevils, moths and flies that attack the bush. These are now being screened for safety in the Australian environment to ensure they will attack only the bitou bush.

Garry Phillipot - CMW

PETER'S ANNIVERSARY RUN

In Nov 1992 Peter Tresseder completed a 400 Km trip from Muswellbrook to Mittagong in NSW. He traversed, north to south, Wollemi, Blue Mountains, Kanangra-Boyd and Nattai National Parks.

The route took him over and through the following features: Gaspers Mt, Mt Mistake, Blue Gum Forest, Cloudmaker, Kanangra Walls, Yerranderie and the Nattai River.

Some of the aims of the trip were :-

- * To raise awareness of rare and endangered plants and animals within the parks.
- * To promote a submission for the World Heritage nomination of the parks involved.

To celebrate the :-

- * 60th Anniversary of the saving of the Blue Gum Forest.
- * 25th Anniversary of the National Parks and Wildlife Service of NSW.
- * 60th Anniversary of the NSW Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs.

Time taken : 65hrs 58mins (continuous)

ADDS ADDS

FOR SALE

TENT - Caribee Caddis - (Snow Tent) in good condition, used twice. Refer "Wild" Issue 39, Pg 67. **\$220** or near offer.

SLEEPING BAG - The North Face - Standard, Box Quilt, -10Deg.C, as new.
\$220 or near offer .

MOUNTAINEERING BOOTS - Koflach Ultra Extrom - Size 8 (43 ?) Used, Fair condition.

\$110 or near offer.
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POSITIONS VACANT

MEDIA LIAISON OFFICER

An experienced media person is desperately required to work in a volunteer capacity to lift the public profile/awareness of the Confederation and Search and Rescue in particular.

S.R. is almost unknown amongst the general public and as a consequence there arises all sorts of misguided suggestions on bush safety.

Many issues come up at short notice which often catch us on the proverbial hop. Someone has to drop a job and quickly reply. This approach will never achieve good results.

A person with media experience could build up an almost standard set of replies to cover the majority of situations and know exactly where to target them. Eventually media releases could be made on behalf of the Confederation.

For further details contact either the President **Robyn Arthur** - (02) 8972270(h) or S.R. Director **Keith Maxwell** - (02) 6220049(h).

FIRST AID COURSE

A Confederation First Aid Course will be held on **March 29/30** by our own instructor - **David Shephard**. Here is your opportunity to renew or gain your **St John's Certificate** at a cheaper rate.

For details ring **Keith Maxwell** on (02) 6220049

MID YEAR REPORT OF S&R

The recent sunny months have (as usual) seen no direct requests for S&R. The best weather to produce a callout is a fine, warm to hot Saturday with a dramatic change to storms, high winds etc that catches out the inexperienced.

During the current lull S&R has worked on its preparedness. There is a major equipment overhaul underway. Two tents have been purchased and a replacement, lighter rescue trailer.

While the previous trailer was excellent as a mobile base it was too heavy and it was always difficult to find tow vehicles.

In addition most of the portable field radios have been either serviced or upgraded.

Training Weekend - October

This was held on the Newnes Plateau in typical callout weather as noted above.

Those present, from a variety of Clubs, were made aware of the number of unusual problems that these conditions present. Many of these problems could not be solved without a strong co-operative effort.

Much friendly mingling between Clubs was noted.

First Aid Course - October

Sixteen club members took advantage of this cheap course on the last weekend of the month. The next course will be held on the last weekend in May '93. (See add this page)

MINI BOOK REVIEW

RABBIT HOT, RABBIT COLD - Owen W. Pearce

This is a history of a family in the Burratorang Valley. The 600-plus page book not only gives the story of the family but also gives a sketch of nearly every person who ever lived in the valley.

Though this limited edition was printed only last year I only just became aware of it when it was put up for sale by a book recycler. (The State Library has a copy)

Since this was a prime walking area of Bushwalkers in the pre war years this publication should throw much light on the residents of that sunken valley.

Much of the material in this book relates to bushwalking and the author often philosphizes on the subject as the following extract illustrates.

"The hills not only take men away from the complex mode of existence, but they teach them that to be happy it is only necessary to have food, shelter and warmth. They bring them face to face with realities, and in so doing inculcate a valuable lesson in the association of simplicity and happiness on a hill we are content to be content."

For the interested bushwalker or the average reader this book is a worthwhile addition to the library.

Clio

A MATTER OF RELIGION

Forgive me if I begin with an anecdote, but the subject matter warrants one. "The creek was up 3 or 4 feet, a raging torrent, and we had to cross on this slippery and treacherous log. It was quite difficult, particularly for so and so (name withdrawn to protect the guilty) who didn't have volleys ..." So began my enlightenment to the much revered footwear of the Sydney bushwalker.

The resilience with which Sydney walkers defend their mode of transportation is matched by the stubbornness with which Melbournites promote theirs. If Spock were a Victorian rather than a Vulcan he would probably raise the customary eyebrow and declare: "To wear volleys and not boots is not logical, Captain". Similarly we may expect that once the border is crossed those without boots begin to stagger and stumble once the ground surface deteriorates beyond anything other than a suburban footpath.

The truth as usual, is somewhere in between. Alas the truth, the desecrator of all things holy, or the termite that gnaws away at higher ideological edifices.

I have worn boots on some quite sustained and difficult rock scrambling sections and still remained comfortably at the head of the party. I have worn volleys many times and

still had my undamaged feet at the end of the day.

What seems so willingly forgotten is while the things on your feet may help your grip, it is how and where you use different muscles, how you transfer weight, how you angle and place your feet, and your level of confidence, that largely determine your balance and walking speed.

What footwear to adopt is a largely a personal matter, varied as the judgement may become as a result of ideological indoctrination or conformity to peers. Certainly it is volleys for creek or river walking, or for rock scrambling- they are ideally suited to the sandstones that are so prevalent. You can really "feel" the rock- an important quality. Another big plus is that constant walking in water tends to erode boot leather quite quickly- a costly exercise. The one drawback is that near the end of long and strenuous days the lack of cushioning both underfoot and around the ankles does become apparent.

I do prefer boots for long climbs or descents, particularly steep, rough descents on loose slopes. Because the mountains around Sydney are not that high, few of the climbs are 800 or 1000 ascents, whereas in Victoria this is more common. This puts

greater strain on ankle ligaments and tendons and the upper part of the foot, and the extra support is welcome.

I also prefer more solid footwear when I am carrying a heavy pack, a la extended walks in Tasmania. Because physically you are under greater duress and often in extremely rough terrain for day after day, tough boots are best as the protection of feet and ankles is more important than reduced qualities of grip.

A fair bit is made of the weight of boots, a valid argument for many walkers. Interestingly though, these slurries come mostly from the fittest of the walkers, who by virtue of weight of pack on the back would often give Atlas a run for his money. It is amusing where the true point of physical weakness lies. Boots do cost more in the long term, but not by much. They last years, not just 4 or 5 hard weekend trips, and can last a lot longer when resoled for 50 or 60 dollars.

So - volleys for around Sydney, glide over those rocks like a gazelle. But elsewhere? Not necessarily volleys. Anyway, I better retire to my bomb shelter now, because in any religious war the last place you want to be is in the middle of it.

Andrew Menck - CMW

CONTROVERSIAL IT IS! JOIN THE DEBATE AND SEND YOUR THOUGHTS TO THE EDITOR

VOLLEYS - IN DEFENCE.

I have very little claim to fame as a walker but I did walk very consistently with the Sydney Bush Walkers between 1975 and 1988. When I joined that club I was a "boots" walker and although I was careful in my selection of type and size of boots and took good care of them, I was never completely free of blisters, especially on long walks.

However on joining the SBW I was soon "converted" to Dunlop Volleys - sandshoes to the uninformed. From then on I was never again troubled by blisters.

In that time I must admit I have never walked in Victoria. I gather from the previous writer that the terrain in that State must be some of the most severe in the country. But to say that lifts of 800 to 1000 metres are more common south of the border is a load of old rubbish.

Australia has no Mountains by definition - the terrain is all eroded plateau. If the walker is adventurous enough to walk in areas other than the coastal National Parks then to get anywhere you are forced to go down. This usually means a descent, with its corresponding ascent, of 800 metres - a little short of the 1000 mentioned.

And if you choose a route which crosses the "grain" of the country then your progress may mean many ups and downs which all adds up to lots of metres. Any of the "Three

Peaks" for instance, or coming up after "doing" any of the Thurat Ridge canyons means a lift of 1000 metres.

Canyons are not easily coped with in boots nor are the number of river and creek crossings on the walks done regularly in NSW. It can only be assumed that there are not many of these encountered on walks in Victoria.

For many of my walking years I walked in the Snowy Mts, at least ten of these consecutively, and on those walks I encountered numerous parties of Victorian walkers. They were always easily recognised - when you looked at their feet. Mountaineering boots on every foot. "You need these when you tramp the hills of Victoria" was the reply to my incredulity. When the greater majority of the alpine areas of the Snowies in summer is covered with Alpine Grass and a little snow I could not understand the reasoning.

Obviously the range in walking footwear is now mind boggling and I respect the individuals' right to choose what they wear on their feet. I would dispute the often repeated "boots give much more support for the ankles" as from my experience there have been as many sprained ankles wearing boots as there has wearing sandshoes. Weight of boots is not the problem that it once was for there are now many lightweight boots on the market.

Perhaps one claim of a first may be possible. I have been to New Zealand three times to "tramp" in the high country; all

have been "offtrack" and most have been in the "Aspiring" area.

However, the tramp I wish to draw attention to is "The Copeland Pass." In the middle of this there is a 500ft snow climb necessitating the use of iceaxe and crampons. No way was I going to carry Mountaineering Boots all the way just for half an hours use. So I adapted my Volleys to take the crampons and did the climb with them. A first?

One of the most ridiculous things I have had brought to my attention was a BMLC candidate from NSW being told that he would not be allowed to do a particular walk unless he was wearing boots. Gosh, the Victorian countryside must be absolutely horrendous.

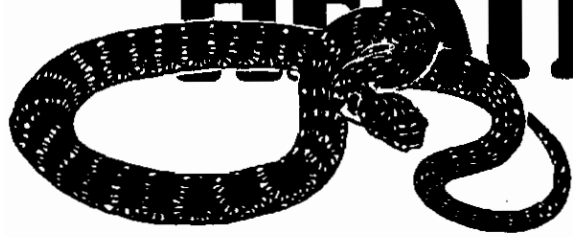
Unfortunately the standard of "volleys" has deteriorated over the years and I have to admit that I have been looking for a replacement. The parameters are very hard to meet. The most important is the tread rubber and pattern. Some type of herringbone style is a must and the sole has to be deep treaded, full, soft enough to pass the "bathtub friction test," sturdy and cheap. A tall order I must admit.

When after years of searching having found and tested shoes which very nearly met the requirements, I bought the last two pairs in the shop only to be told that they were "discontinued."

You can come out of your "bomb shelter" now. The "all clear" has been sounded.

Gordon Lee - SBW

THE GREAT BLUE MOUNTAINS HERITAGE WALK



SEPTEMBER –
NOVEMBER 1992

IT'S A WALK FOR THE WILDERNESS

This unique walk aims to bring people together from around the world to experience some of the most remote and spectacular landscapes in Australia and to study our rare and endangered animal and plant life.

Funds raised will go towards the setting up of a permanent research facility for this National Park area. This would ensure that long term management will be scientifically oriented thus protecting our rare and endangered plants and animals.

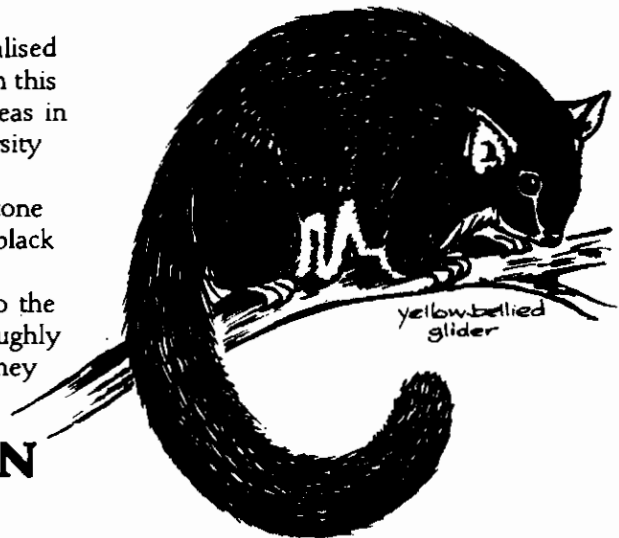
Data collected from this walk will go towards a submission of a World Heritage Nomination for the Blue Mountains, Wollemi, Kanangra Boyd and Nattai National Parks.

These National Parks cover over 1.5 million hectares. There are over 2,000 species of plants, over 100 species each of reptiles, amphibians and mammals, over 100 species of birds as well as an unknown array of invertebrates.

Over 100 rare or endangered plants, including many highly specialised forms adapted to clinging onto rugged cliff lines, are known to grow in this wilderness area. The Upper Blue Mountains is one of the richest areas in NSW for rare plants. In fact, all these National Parks have a great diversity of species considering the nutrient-poor environment.

There are also rare rock wallabies, the unique fauna of the limestone karst systems, as well as the endangered broad-headed snake and the black rock skink who live on the sandstone ridges.

It may seem somewhat surprising then that despite being close to the largest population in Australia, the vast wilderness has not been thoroughly explored. Very little is known about the flora and fauna or how well they adapt to the pressures that settlement imposes.



IT'S A WALK OF CELEBRATION

The walk will also celebrate the

- 60th Anniversary of the saving of the Blue Gum Forest
- 25th Anniversary of the National Parks and Wildlife Service of NSW and the
- 60th Anniversary of the NSW Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs

You don't have to participate in the walk, however, to be part of the celebration. Along the way many activities are being planned to celebrate these events. In the Blue Mountains towns the ARTISTS FOR LIFE FOOTSTEPS FESTIVAL will be held. Concerts, street parades, art shows, dinners and a walkfest are just a few of the events already being co-ordinated. The events are being organised by a group called Artists for Life who wish to bring awareness to our rare and endangered plants and animals through the Arts. You can support these events by joining the walk, becoming a member or Artists for Life or simply by joining in the fun.

IT'S A WALK FOR LIFE

It's a walk to save our rare and endangered plants and animals. As well, it will create awareness about how we all live within our natural environment and with each other.

People are coming from all around the World and from many different walks of life to participate in this historical event. The Great Blue Mountains Heritage Walk is truly a Walk for Life.



HERITAGE WALK A SUCCESS

The Great Blue Mountains

Heritage Walk was a 53 day 450Km walk through Goulburn River, Wollemi, Blue Mountains, Kanangra-Boyd and Nattai National Parks.

The aim of the walk was to raise funds and increase awareness of the need for the conservation of rare and endangered species in the Greater Blue Mountains.

This walk was also a celebration of the Confederation's 60th birthday, the National Parks and Wildlife Service's 25th birthday and the 60th anniversary of the saving of Blue Gum Forest.

A total of 58 people participated in various sections of the walk, with the walk leader Wyn Jones being the only one to complete the total distance. Those who participated were part of a unique chapter in NSW bushwalking history. Never before and probably never again will a walk of such magnitude be undertaken.

Unfortunately few Confederation affiliated Clubs were actively involved in organising sections of the walk although most Club secretaries, and I assume Club members, were made aware of the event. During 1992 they received a barrage of paperwork including an invitation to participate in the walk. As a result it was left to a handful of dedicated local conservationists to ensure the ultimate success of the walk.

Thanks must go to the Highland Walkers who, along with numerous others, met the walkers outside Mittagong with huge quantities of much appreciated watermelon.

Relatively few of the Heritage walkers came from Confederation Clubs. Those who did however were: SPAN - Malcolm Carr, CMW - Lyndal Sullivan, Bryne Smith and Carol Tow, Central West - Sue Morrison, Upper Blue Mountains - Marianne Bate and Aine Gliddon, The Bush Club - the oldest walker, Bert Davies.

A total of \$10,000 was raised through sponsorship of walkers, with the largest amount of \$1,500 being raised by Sue Morrison who did three quarters of the walk. Together with funds raised through the Artists for Life Footsteps Festival, held concurrently with the walk, the money will now be used to establish a scientific research and educational facility as a co-operative exercise between the Blue Mountains Rare and Endangered Species Group (BMRESG) and the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

The walk was unique in that scientific survey work was carried out along the way, resulting in significant finds of at least eight plant species and several new locations for yellow-bellied gliders. Only one pair of powerful owls located, on the Nattai River on the second last morning of the walk, indicating the difficulties in surveying for this rare species.

Results of scat and hair tube analysis may reveal further important information about the fauna of those vast wilderness areas. Survey results will be used to support a

World Heritage nomination for the Greater Blue Mountains and to assist in preparation of management plans for a number of rare species.

Further survey work will be undertaken from base camps in the wilderness to get a more complete picture of the flora and fauna of the Greater Blue Mountains. As insufficient funds were raised to provide adequate permanent research staff, it is hoped that a scientific ecotourism operation will allow extensive survey work to be carried out in the future.

If you did not sponsor a walker but would like to make a tax deductible donation, send a cheque to the BMRESG, PO Box 20, Blackheath, 2785. Membership of the group, which has been formed as a sub-committee of the National Parks and Wildlife Foundation, costs \$20.

If your club is interested in a slide presentation on the walk or would like a further information on future survey work, contact Wyn Jones on (047) 87 8877 b.h. or 87 7511 a.h. OR Sue Morrison on (063) 31 9777 b.h. or (063) 32 3731 a.h. Slide nights could be organised by clubs as a fundraising activity, with proceeds to the BMRESG.

Sue Morrison - Central West B/W club.

BARRINGTON TOPS NATIONAL PARK

ALLYN RIVER DAY WALKS 1

ABOUT an hours drive north of Newcastle, through Paterson or Dungog, takes you to the magnificent forests of the Allyn and Williams Rivers.

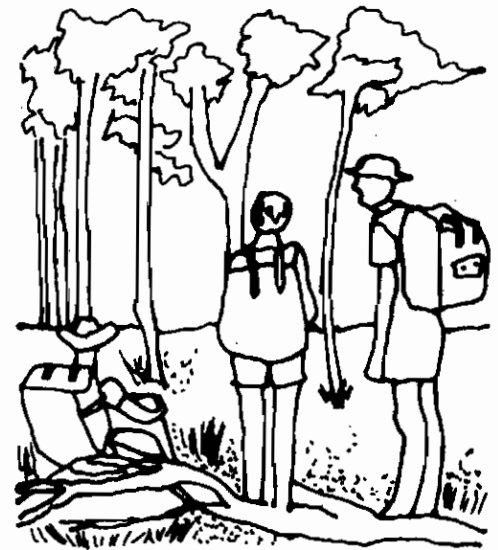
For those who would like to have a quick and easy look at what the Barrington Tops National Park has to offer you may like to do what a number of the Morisset Bushwalkers did as a three day "Car Camp."

The roads here are gravel but are generally well maintained by the Forestry Commission based in Dungog which is to be complimented for the great job they do in this and other forests in the Dungog area.

The walks mentioned are all easy and there are many fine Camp Sites along the Allyn River but for those who prefer a soft bed and all the comforts of home the ever popular Barrington Guest House is right at the edge of the forest.

A pleasant introduction to the Park would be to have lunch at the beautifully kept picnic area, Lister Park, alongside the Allyn River with the gurgling waters of the Allyn and the birdsong mingling to provide soothing background music.

This is what we did, and after lunch drove to our chosen campsite where we pitched our tents. We then drove up road on the Williams Ridge, separating the Allyn and Williams Rivers, to "The Old Grader" about 1Km beyond where the road forks; the Ridge road going on up the Mountain; the right fork



taking you down to the Guest House. There is actually an ancient, rusty old machine at the start of the track so there is no mistaking the turn-off.

Here we did a "Car-Swap," the cars being driven down to the Guest House parking area the drivers returning to the "Grader" to start the pleasant walk down to the Guest House.

From a signpost, then just over a kilometre down the mountain track brought us to Rocky Crossing. This is a delightful spot on the Williams River not very far from its head waters. Here the crystal clear water is lined on both sides by tall dense rainforest, and a multitude of ferns understorey the trees right down to the waters edge.

It occurred to me that perhaps the Garden of Eden could have been like this, though I suspect that the leaves from the Strangler Figs may not have been suitable. We were to stop many times to gaze in wonderment at these unusual trees and the many fantastic patterns they make as they wind their way skywards, strangling the host tree.

A short climb back to the main track where it was then a gradual easy walk all the way to Barrington House. This well-formed and maintained track meanders through stands of huge trees, treeferns, and a variety of fern growing both on the ground and high up on the tree branches.

Interesting signposted sidetracks with attractive names such as Pool of Reflections, Lion Rock and Slippery Dip wind their way down to the Williams River where you may find delightful swimming holes, curious rock formations and these should not be missed. There is even a swinging bridge crossing the river giving a fantastic view high above the water.

After a walk of about 10.5Km the Barrington Guest House is reached where you can indulge in a Devonshire Tea at moderate cost. A great finish to a great walk. Then cars back to Camp and dinner. There was much to talk about round the campfire that night on the interest and beauty of what we had experienced and seen.

Eric Power - Morisset Bushwalkers.

BOOK REVIEW.

THE SCROGGIN EATERS.

A History of Bushwalking in Victoria.

After my first reading of this book I recall thinking that while it contained much attractive material, the title was a little ambitious: "A History of the Federation" could have been more appropriate. Upon a second more considered appraisal, I now think the title is indeed a just one. The reason is that since its inception the Federation's sphere of activity and influence has encompassed just about every item of interest to the bushwalker - thus the history of bushwalking is by definition also a history of the Federation of Bushwalking Clubs.

There will be much to interest the avid reader. Even though the focus is naturally on Victoria and the Victorian Federation, most of the topics covered have a widespread relevance and make enjoyable reading.

Bushwalking in pre-Federation days is covered and we can only admire the fortitude and resolve of our pioneers: swags instead of packs, roughish bivvy-bags rather than tents, no lightweight dehydrated food and shirts stuffed with newspaper to keep out the cold. Railway trains and packhorses were a common means of transport, and the types of

clothing were somewhat different too! The birth of the first walking clubs in Australia is described and the text is well supplemented with a series of historic photographs.

Coverage is also given to the development of gear, early attempts at map production and the growth of walking activity over the years. The 1934 Paddy Pallin pricelist for gear is quite illuminating! Attention is also paid to changes in attitude over the years - in the 1930's we wanted to build huts and cut new tracks, but now these activities are frowned on. As usage and awareness of areas has increased so has the exploitation and damage of them by various interest groups, a fact well highlighted by our changed perspective on the value of wilderness. A summary of track clearing and maintenance over the years has been provided. Prominent is the implementation of the Alpine the Alpine Walking Track.

Two themes that come through consistently and powerfully are the importance of conservation in the scale of values of bushwalkers, and secondly the general intransigence and lack of vision in these matters within bureaucratic circles. It is really only in the 80's that the needs of bushwalkers and the policies of Governments have come close to consensus, and the voice of the walkers has been heard and heeded where it counts. Prior to this the walkers interests were ignored and as one quote put it "As it happened, as it so often happened, nothing transpired at all."

This book gives strong emphasis, and rightly so, to the role of Federation in its 58 years of existence. This controlling body has done so much for the walking fraternity: promoting track clearing and maintenance, supplying information and answering queries, lobbying government for protection of areas and the interests of walkers, sitting on various committees, supporting and encouraging new clubs, setting up walkers' insurance and performing a search and rescue role, of which there are many gripping tales.

In conservation matters particularly the sheer weight effort most apparent. We can only feel indebted to the many tireless, selfless and largely unrecognised individuals who have made major contributions over the years.

Lastly there is no shortage of entertaining stories, of which I will name but four. The account of the first traverse of the first real long-distance walking track, The Yarra Track, is certain to amuse even the toughest of

walkers. Less amusing are the descriptions of Cleve Cole's death at the very location he was trying to make safe for other walkers, or the telling recollection of John Stuart's demise in an early trip to Federation Peak. The frustrations and constant delays involved in the construction of Federation Hut is an anecdote of "Yes Minister" proportions, and the best (or worst) example of the never-ending struggles to have walkers heard. Anyone who's ever struggled ever struggled to a hut to escape the frenzy of a blizzard with no visibility should read this.

All in all, "Scroggin Eaters" is an excellent and informative publication that will have something of interest for every bushwalker. It is available from a few bookshops around Sydney and retails for \$30. However, by ordering direct, considerable savings can be made on multiple orders - an order of 4 books translates to \$22 a copy. (See add this page)

Andrew Menck - CMW

THE BUSHWALKER

GOP BOX 20090 SYDNEY 2001

This newsletter is published by the Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs NSW Inc.

The Bushwalker is published quarterly as a voluntary effort. Any assistance offered would be welcome. The aim of the bushwalker is to provide articles and information that relate to, and are relevant to, the member clubs of the Confederation.

Material can be sent to the address below marked for the editor and should be accompanied with the name and address of the author.

Any opinions expressed are those of the individual authors and do not always represent the official views of the Confederation.

Advertising rates are available on request, ring (043) 885 589 to discuss your needs.

Distribution is through the affiliated clubs to their members and through major retail outlets.

Contributions and suggestions are welcomed.

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Information about the Confederation can be obtained from our voluntary answering service or (02) 548 1228 number. The service operates both in and out of office hours, but no late night calls please.

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THE SCROGGIN EATERS

A history of bushwalking in Victoria.

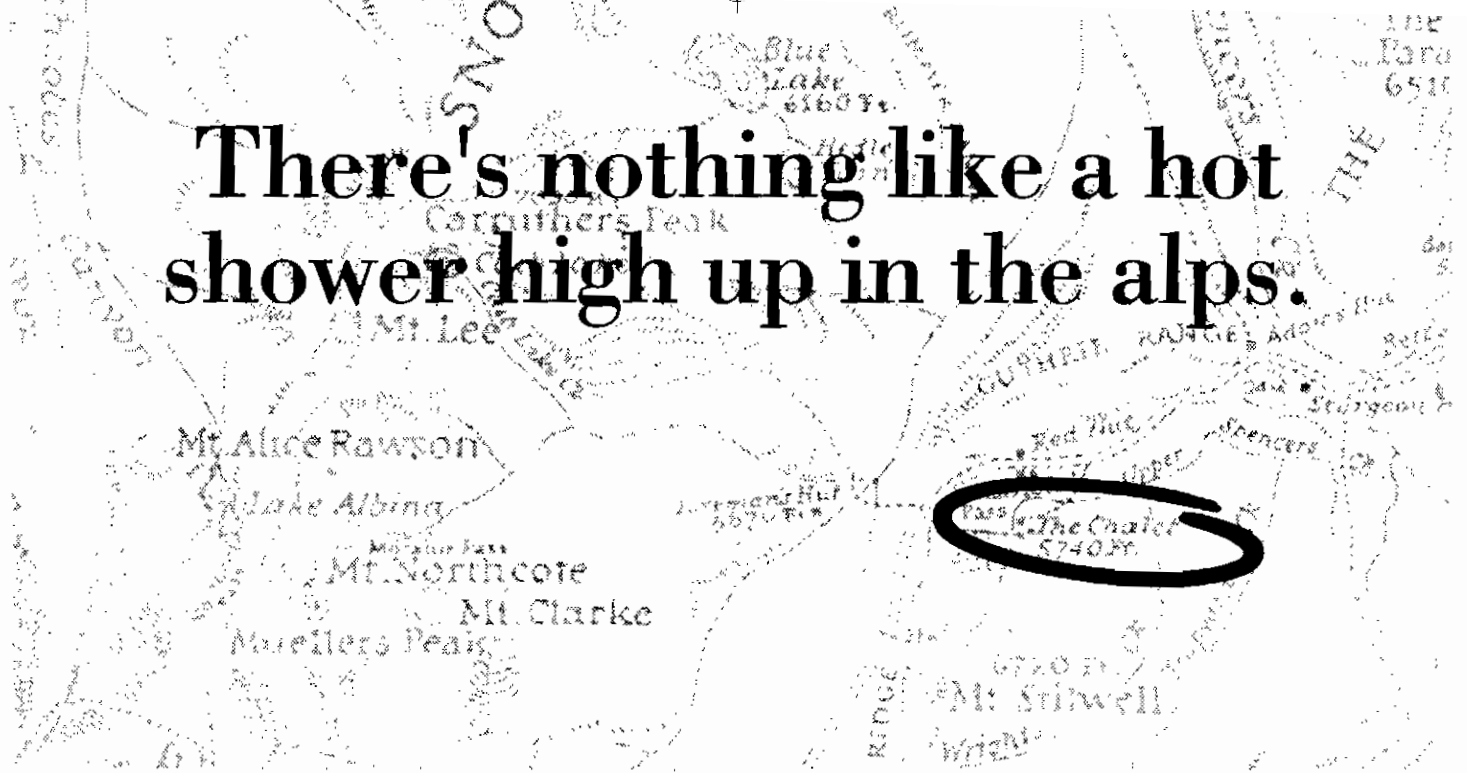
Not just Victoria - Also included are details such as :-

- * The first bushwalkers and the hiking boom in the 1930's.
- * Sydney Clubs' role in the formation of the Victorian Federation.
- * Information on early maps and equipment, including Paddy Pallins.
- * Extensions of the Alpine track into Kosciusko.

A valuable historical text that is a must for every bushwalker.

If you would like a copy then you can obtain one by sending a cheque for \$26.70 (includes postage) to Vicwalk, Box 815, G.P.O. Melbourne 3001. Multiple orders can save up to \$5.

There's nothing like a hot shower high up in the alps.



As a keen bushwalker, you may take a dim view of luxury, especially in a National Park. But one place is an exception - Kosciusko Chalet. High up in the alps at Charlotte Pass, it has long served as base camp for many an alpine expedition since it was first built in 1930.

Of course by some people's standards it's not luxurious.

In fact it's closer to a true alpine lodge than a luxury hotel.

But high it certainly is - at 1,765m, the Chalet is nearly 400m (1,300') higher than Thredbo village, so you'll find it's a little cooler (we have an open fire most nights in summer).

From the Chalet, you can enjoy the great walks along the main range of the Snowy Mountains, do the day treks to Lake Albina, Blue lake or Club lake.

Of course if you are really keen, you can do the overnighter to Kiandra.

No matter how you look at it, summer in the Snowy Mountains is special.

Aside from the great walks, the wildflowers are at their best, trout fishing is on or you can simply relax in the lodge and sample the fine food of our restaurant.

Our flat rate of only \$79 per person per day includes dinner, bed and breakfast.

There are discounts for children.

So this summer come up and enjoy the clear, fresh mountain air of the high alpine country and stay at the Chalet.

We are open from November 13 through to April 26.

For bookings call toll free on 008 026 369 or (064) 575 245.



KOSCIUSKO CHALET

At Charlotte Pass, Australia's highest Alpine Village

We have moved to

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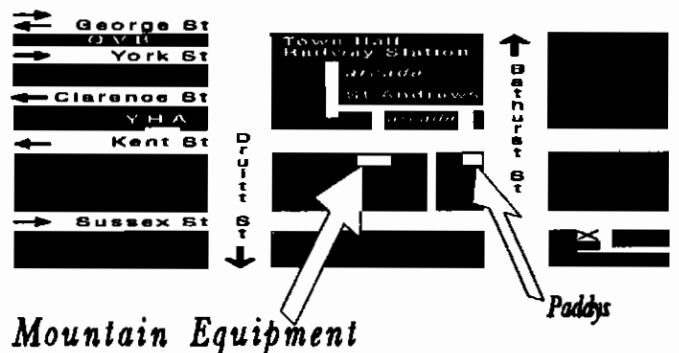
BRIGHTER

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