

# MOBSAC

1978



**U.N.S.W. BUSHWALKING  
AND  
MOUNTAINEERING CLUB**



Ski touring  
instructional.  
Now, what clothes  
were you wearing?  
Think hard.  
"Surely that's not  
me!"



Life in the  
wilderness.  
Tufts saw this  
Wedgetail eagle  
near Geehi Hut

Ben Hall's house - Megalong Valley



# MOBSAC

## Magazine of The Bushwalking And Mountaineering Club

### University of New South Wales November 1978

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Easter 1978: a party of 12 leaves Sydney for Canberra to walk in the Brindabella Range. The aim was to cover the Mt Scabby - Mt Kelly area, using Naas Creek as the entry point. The more usual approach up Bogong Creek (as in "Bushwalking near Canberra") was described as reasonably arduous and scrubby by a previous party. This didn't sound very promising for use by a large party containing several not very experienced walkers. Naas Creek, on the other hand, had a fine trail running up to its headwaters, assuring speedy and uncomplicated access.

Thursday night: driving down, through rain with the intensity of water from a fire-hose, thinking that you must be absolutely mad to be anywhere else than in a dry bed on such a night. Brake failure at the first set of traffic lights in Canberra - a little entertainment.

Friday morning: after replacing the brake fluid, my "mature age" car was back on the road. Saddle up the troops, and head out for the mountains.

Friday evening: after a short haul up through the farmland around lower Naas Creek, we are encamped at the edge of the tree-line. Fresh field-picked mushrooms to go with tea. A record of TWO mouth organs to accompany the singing. Ian Donovan and Greg doing the honours. A very lusty sing-along, enjoyed by all.

Saturday morning: mist on the peaks as we set off up Naas Creek. Up to the saddle above Sam's Creek, and down to the crossing. Attempts to cross dry-shod were unsuccessful - after 15 minutes of floundering through the scrub and water, all were at last across. Up Sam's Creek, until it was decided to start climbing towards a little valley east of Mt Scabby. We thanked last summer's fires for providing us with a fast passage, as up we went. However, the party began to string out like the proverbial dog's breakfast: one member at the rear of the party sat down on a rock and began a unilateral lunch. Finally, all were gathered at a creek for lunch. Then a final haul to the top, and the reward of a delightful alpine valley looking towards Mt Kelly. Camp was quickly set up, and the local, giving views of the main Brindabella Range, climbed. Back for dinner and another roaring sing-along.

Sunday morning: the party split into a slow group, which had Mt Kelly as its objective, and a fast party aiming for Mt Morgan. The fast went up Mt Scabby, disturbing some brumbies on the top. Then we had to pick a ridge (right on the junction of two maps) to run down to Yaouk Gap, before we climbed up towards Mt Morgan. We launched off down to the end of Scabby. After a while we suffered navigational doubts. Out with map and compass, off on a bearing. Several sweaty hours later, decided we had not chosen the correct route off Mt Scabby, and so we had muffed our chance of making Mt Morgan. We grunted back up Scabby, along the correct ridge. By the time we reached the top, we were not sorry to have abandoned Mt Morgan; it would have been an epic day. Stopped for a swim and lunch in the horseshoe valley at Scabby - delightful.

Sunday afternoon: walked over to the tarn between Scabby and Kelly. Had an argument with a snake on the way. Being struck at by a snake has a miraculous effect on your speed. At the tarn, the others decided to return to camp. I went on to Mt Kelly, meeting the returning slow party on the way. They had had a thoroughly enjoyable day. On to Mt Kelly, watching rainstorms race in from the west, raining on the base camp and on my route home. Very glad we didn't go to Mt Morgan. Begin homewards. Into the rain. Then mist. Very scary, negotiating the ridge by yourself in the mist. Some moments of unease as expected landmarks are slow to appear. However, camp is eventually regained. Cook and eat tea in the rain. Oh, who wouldn't be a bushwalker!

Monday morning: crawl out of bed into/near-zero alpine morning. Race to get the fire going before fingers give out. Pack up, head for home via a different route. Quick detour up Scabby for a look, then sidle round above a valley, through a saddle, more sidling around, and then

This is the first MOBSAC for some time. Whether it appears regularly will depend on the interest of club members, and prospective members. Perhaps the formation of the new club will inspire greater energy in diverse fields, not the least being contributing to the club magazine.

This is a great opportunity for new and younger members to get in at the outset and assert themselves, regardless of seemingly overbearing "oldies". Do not be scared to speak out. The club activities are for all members to enjoy. If you want to go to a particular area and do not know much about it - ask! The same applies if you've never been rock-climbing or canyoning.

For those who don't know, MOBSAC stands for:

- M - mountaineering; this is usually pursued in the long vacations when people have time to travel to Tasmania, New Zealand, and sometimes further afield.
- O - orienteering; the organisation by the club of this year's Inter Varsity contest has aroused more interest in orienteering; hopefully the interest will not wane.
- B - bushwalking; most people try walking before anything else, and continue it longer than anything else.
- S - skiing; the favoured activity in winter and spring; more try it every year.
- A - abseiling; often necessary for descending cliffs; an essential part of canyoning, climbing, mountaineering, and sometimes just ordinary walking
- C - stands for two things - climbing; a most challenging activity; more all-over strength must be developed, although there is usually more opportunity for rests and enjoyment of scenery.  
canyoning; a summer sport. NSW is better endowed with canyons than other States - the sport is virtually unknown in Victoria. Those who haven't been down a canyon, don't miss out this summer!

Don't let this list confine your interests and abilities. Photography is an encouraged art - the next photographic competition is underway, so start sorting out your best shots. Those with actual or potential skills for campfire entertainment are eagerly sought after. And so the list goes on..... Make this club live, and you'll live too.

Rosalie Meadows  
Editor

Many thanks to Bill Blunt for arranging duplication of this issue, and for helpful advice, etc. Thanks also to Richard Apthorpe for lettering on the cover and title page, and to the Sports Union Staff for duplicating the magazine.

Sorry about the bad spacing, folks; I hope reading will not be too difficult.

#### BUSHRANGER COUNTRY - BEWARE!

Recently, whilst passing through the Megalong Valley, I was surprised to come across a number of very beautiful old settler's huts, which, in fact, were the sets for the ABC production, "Ben Hall".

On the Megalong Creek Road, two miles from Devil's Hole, Katoomba, these huts could be the destination for a short, but most interesting, day walk. They represent settings near Forbes and the Weddin Mountains where Ben, apparently a quiet and kindly man, was forced to bushranging by police persecution in the 1860's. The buildings are very authentic, including ironbark slab, and wattle and daub construction, and typically Australian bark roof lined with hessian. All feature impressive stone chimneys. With Narrowneck's high orange cliffs as a backdrop, the effect is magnificent, and far more breathtaking than on any colour television set.

Ian Donovan

See the illustration inside the front cover - also by Ian Donovan.

Liloing is the art of covering the shortest distance in the longest time with the minimum of effort and the greatest enjoyment. It is only recommended to be done in hot weather and on relatively tame rivers.

One trip which defied most of these criteria took place last January long weekend on the Colo River. Those present were Richard Apthorpe, Mary-Anne Barnes, Gary Foster, John and Rosalie Meadows, Sue and Greg Cave and Peter and Robyn Tuft.

It had been raining steadily and mostly torrentially all Friday. Saturday dawned wet and miserable. As we had planned to meet the others at the Colo bridge at 7.00 am, we set off armed with numerous and alternative ideas for the weekend. But most others were determined to proceed as planned.

We left the Subaru at the start of Bob Turner's track and drove the other cars to the start of the Canoe Creek track near Alidade Hill. The distance to be travelled by river was 25 km, but we were wise enough to plan a couple of escape routes (which are difficult to find in the Colo region).

We reached the river at about 10 am. It was well up and flowing reasonably fast. We contemplated the scene over an early lunch, then donned jumpers, jackets and over-trousers and launched in steady rain. Another party (out for a walk) jeered. They reckoned that we'd never make the distance in the time and warned us of certain trouble spots, especially the rapids at Angorewa Creek.

The water was flowing in the pools, and most rapids required portaging. The three rapids which were attempted successively capsized all members \* of the party, who was then nearly dunked by his jealous cold and wet colleagues. By 5 pm, we'd had enough and proceeded to set up camp, well above the river, at Main Creek. Greg then planted a 1 metre stick at the water's edge. It rained consistently all night. I had visions of being floated away in my sleep.

\* except Peter

By morning the stick had almost disappeared. The creek had turned into a raging torrent which had to be crossed by lilo in its "estuary". We then entered the river in a back eddy and most of us soon entered the main current and were swiftly carried downstream at about 10 kph. Rosalie, however, got caught in the eddy which took her upstream and she finally extricated herself amongst some rocks. Much frantic paddling later, she caught up to the rest of the party who were fighting the current by clinging to bushes on the bank.

The weather was gradually improving and progress was fast. (We were beginning to wonder if we could get out if the need arose). The first rapid took its usual toll. Some cautious members portaged. Those who capsized kept hold of their lilos and drifted through them trying to regain control before the next set.

I was first in line for the next set. The water looked reasonably safe with no rocks and with 1-2 ft pressure waves. I capsized but clung onto the lilo and reseated myself before plunging into the next rapids which looked a little worse. I dropped 2 feet from a pressure wave and soon after slipped off my lilo - fortunately near the end of the rapid. While climbing on, I noticed two lilos and a pack floating through the rapid. The obvious explanation came to mind. I paddled out, retrieved the various items and returned to the bank 200 metres further downstream where Peter soon arrived (looking a bit worried). After much scrub bashing, recrossing the river (and being washed another 100 metres downstream), puncturing a lilo on more scrub and nearly being dragged down the rapid once more, we returned to the others who were recovering at the start of the rapids and discovered what happened.

Sue had come off in the previous rapid and lost her lilo. While Greg chased the lilo, Sue clung to her pack and safely reached shore.

down to Sam's Creek. Discover another tarn. Make the top of Naas Creek for lunch.

During lunch, talk turns to mushrooms. Will there be enough to go around? One person finishes off lunch, packs hurriedly, and tries surreptitiously to set off down the valley, plastic bag at the ready. Aha! cries everyone else; there is a mad scramble of hurried packing, as everyone tries to be first to the mushrooms. Soon, the valley is filled with twelve ruthless mushroom hunters, staking claims on the best beds, and running (complete with full packs) onto the next one. Eventually all this proved unnecessary as the supply exceeded the possible demand.

Back to the cars, load up after a superb trip. At one halt on the way out, Ian Donovan discovers the grandfather mushroom of them all. Out through the Brindabellas, sad to be leaving, and off home.

Charlie Morris

#### MT MURCHISON - TASMANIA

A traverse of the Mt Murchison ridge by David Wagland and Nick Fisher in December 1976.

Nick made a mental picture of Mt Murchison from the Sophia map and I had remembered it from a tourist trip around Tassie in '73. The result was that we diverted hitching straight to Frenchmans Cap to spend two days around the mining town of Rosebury to have a look at the attractive peak.

After a night in the midst of a huge gravel basin, we woke up early the following morning to hunt for an abandoned railway track that once took a route up to Maxon Saddle, on the southern end of the ridge. It didn't appear to exist so the two of us headed directly for the Queenstown powerlines, quite naive about Tasmanian scrub. For much of that kilometre, we played Christmas Beetles upended, when the unlucky person would fall through metres of bracken, to end up back down, with legs and arms thrashing uselessly at paper soft twigs. Meanwhile the other mobile person would attempt to offer moral assistance without ending up in the same humus prison predicament.

Once on the powerline track, it was easier walking, so we strode past an old pinewood hut, the Stiff River in its youth, and lots of tiny waterfalls dwarfed by red Mountain Bells, to end up on the saddle about 10 am. Leaving the powerline, we wandered northwards to enter a strange whitewashed conglomerate canyon. Nick and I clambered up wet slabs on the upstream end to be offered good views of the Tyndall and Eldon Ranges. Just on the right were Lake Sandra, Lake Gay and Little Sister - three lakes formed by a terminal moraine - and well west, a profile of the Cradle Mountain area.

Onwards, perched boulders, disobeying all laws of gravity, made way for thrilling leaps and bridging across chasms. In one place the ridge formed a knifeblade top, forcing one to straddle across. About mid-afternoon we had lunch on the steep lee side of the ridge, with two black unnamed lakes well below. They were not disturbed by the slightest wind, but when we joined the ridge the breeze was a bit violent, heralding a line of cloud moving quickly over the coast.

With no more rockhopping involved, we moved at double pace towards the trig station which was just visible. With just 10 vertical metres and 100 horizontal metres to the trig, we decided to return to the packs, fearful of the storm building up. We retreated from the ridge via the same route, but sprinting like madmen, laughing at the rain-streaked horizon. Nevertheless, both of us landed at Rosebury quite dry, just as the first hour of a five day shower of rain moved in.

David Wagland

COME, WORK ON THE HUT!

Some years ago the Kosciusko National Park became the responsibility of the National Parks and Wildlife Service. Management plans are still being determined so that areas are set aside not only for present populations, but also for future generations.

The NP&WS is always faced with immense management problems, trying to satisfy the vast number of people who use the Park for recreation. A number of items had to be considered by them; one, in particular, was the small old huts spread throughout the Park.

Policy in the beginning seemed to suggest that the huts should be demolished. Statements to this effect led to outcries by many clubs, bushwalkers and ski tourers. At that time, our club became involved with the issue, and a reply to our letter was received from the then Hon. Tom Lewis, stating that no huts would be destroyed other than those already in ruin.

At the time, I felt that NP&WS thought that maintenance of huts would be far beyond their budget - hence the decision to remove them. Indeed they did not anticipate so many objections.

Because of these events, the Kosciusko Huts Association was formed in 1971. Its role as an independent body was to locate willing caretaker groups to maintain the huts as simple shells, mainly for safety purposes, but also for the enjoyment of Park users. The KHA works in co-operation with the NP&WS, enabling both bodies to be made aware of changes in hut maintenance and Park policies.

Most members know that this club is caretaker for Mawson's Hut. This hut was built in 1929-30 as a stockman's hut by Herb Mawson for the lessee NZ & Aust. Land & Finance Co. It has two rooms and a woodshed cum entrance way. The hut measures approximately 6.5 X 3.5 metres with iron roof and walls and wooden floor. It is in a delightful setting amongst beautiful snow gums. Looking from the door in a NW direction, one sees Jagungal. This graceful peak has a magnetic attraction for any bushwalker or ski tourer who aspires to reach its summit.

Many enjoyable and industrious hours have been worked by past and present members in maintaining the hut. We took over from the "Exclusive Squirrel Club", a group of skiers who had maintained it before KHA was conceived.

A few of our work parties have carried out the following activities:  
digging and building a "long drop" toilet,  
repairs to walls, windows, fireplace and ceiling,  
painting the roof,  
removal of rubbish and old foodstuffs,  
collection and stacking of firewood.

We had a large party of willing workers when the pit of the toilet was dug. Each person came armed with an implement; picks, mattocks, crow bar, shovels, saws and axe. It was indeed a strange sight seeing the mob walking to the site. The toilet structure was flown in from Waste Point and was later put together over a long weekend.

It has been good to see so many members working together to keep the hut in a reasonable state of repair. I am sure that most people have obtained some satisfaction from their efforts, but most of all they have enjoyed the friendliness and companionship while doing the job. I hope that future members will play their part in hut maintenance and so continue to preserve part of Australia's heritage.

John Meadows

Greg had just caught hold of the lilo when he noticed Richard bob towards him looking distressed and minus lilo and pack. He had been caught up in a "stopper" - a type of whirlpool formed downstream of a rock - and churned around as if in a washing machine until he nearly blacked out. Greg and Sue literally dragged him ashore. John also came off in the same spot and underwent a similar terrifying experience. Both had released their packs, which were ripped away, in the hope of rising to the surface. Meanwhile Rosalie was on the opposite bank. She tried to cross, lost her lilo and just managed to grab the last tree preventing her from being dragged down the rapids.

We regrouped, lit a fire and generally recovered. We were at the mouth of Angorewa Creek (that earlier warning!) which fortunately was one of our possible exit routes. After much scrambling, scrub bashing, people vomiting, sore knees, etc., we reached a fire trail. As it was dark we thought it wise to camp the night. It had taken 5 hours to cover about 4 kilometres. We eventually emerged at the cars by 1 pm. the next day. Mary-Anne's knee made it a slow unpleasant walk which was worsened by the millions of leeches which attacked from all directions. While picking up the Subaru, we had a view of the Colo, upstream of our intended exit. For several hundred metres, it seemed to be one continuous mass of white water.

- Comments.
1. A quick release waistband is essential for liloing, but it should be remembered that jettisoning a pack can be dangerous as the pack can give considerable bouyancy.
  2. It's essential to keep hold of the lilo after coming off - some loops of cord may help.
  3. Above all, don't lilo in flooded rivers.
- P.S. It was a lot of fun. (Some parts, not others - Ed.)

Robyn Tuft

Have you noticed that the kookaburras in the bush seem particularly vocal this spring? Probably the wet weather over the past few months has provided them with an abundance of food, and so more energy for their dawn and dusk choruses.

I found this poem by Douglas Stewart in my trusty campfire book, "Australian Poets Speak".

KOOKABURRAS

I see we have undervalued the kookaburras;  
They think they are waking the world, and I think so too.  
They gobble the night in their throats like purple berries,  
They plunge their beaks in the tide of darkness and dew  
And fish up long rays of light; no wonder now they howl  
In such a triumph of trumpets, leaves fall from the trees,  
Small birds fly backwards, snakes disappear in a hole.  
And all day long they will rule the bush as they please.  
Perched on high branches, one eye cocked for the snake,  
From treetop to treetop they watch the sun and follow it;  
Far in the west they take it in that great, great, beak  
And bang it against a blue gum branch and swallow it;  
Then nothing is left in the world but the kookaburras  
Like waterfalls exulting down the gullies.

What are you going to write for the next MOBSAC? Hadn't you better start thinking about it NOW?

The August meeting comes before I realise that it is only three weeks until the Intervarsity 24 hour orienteering. Better start training!! Greg and Adrian are unavailable on the next weekend so I arrange a day-trip with Paul and Ian. Pounding out along Narrowneck, racing over Splendour Rock down to the Cox, still going strongly up White Dog but starting to struggle back along Narrowneck in the dark. Back to the car at last. Great relief all round. I am very concerned with my performance. Blistered feet and buggered after only 12 hours! Not a good sign. The next day I am stiff and sore and even more worried.

Next weekend, a bludge walk down Starlight's Track to the Nattai River. Another blister and the signs aren't encouraging.

The Thursday before the event arrives, and so does the rain. Friday is the same. The Reps meeting on Friday night drags on interminably; then to bed in the Judo Room. Curses upon the table tennis club next door! The early birds are up at 6.00 am. Curses upon them too. I roll over, cover my ears and get up at 7.00. Still raining. Breakfast, then we pile into the bus. Most try to sleep. Adrian keeps waking the La Trobe girls in front of us so that they don't have an unfair advantage over our girls who are talking. Monash are sprawled all over the back seat. We finally arrive at Wollombi (west of Cessnock). Still raining, though only just. The draw for starting order. We are third away. Frantic copying from the master map, then into the back room to devise a route.

Our half hour is up. Time to go. Across the river (wet/after 5 minutes! Yuk!), then up the hill to the first checkpoint. Legs are sore already! Hope it's just that I'm not warmed up. The next half hour supports this theory. We decide that the winning team will average 4-5 points per hour. The country is good and we are going well. No scrub, open ridges and lots of ups and downs. Four pm and the rain starts. Darkness falls just as we reach the farthest checkpoint. Forty points. That should put us in the lead although the crucial night hours still remain. For the first time, the realisation comes; we could win this!

A rest at last. Huddled under a tiny rock overhang, munching a sandwich and scroggin. The rain starts to dribble down my back and the wind starts to blow. It's bloody miserable so off we go again. But straight into the scrub! Very thick, very wet and very painful. But we have to stay on the ridge until we reach the road. This ridge seems to be going on for ages, and now it's dropping away! Can't keep blundering around like this all night. Better stop and work out what to do. Standing on the top of a knoll, the rain pouring down and the wind blowing hard, we study the map and compass. We determine a plan of action based on where we think we might be. Really, it's all guesswork on such a black night. The only feasible explanation is that the road we were aiming for doesn't exist. Bloody useless organisers, why don't they check these things! (We were later told that they didn't check it because they thought no-one would go that far!) Cold becomes unbearable so wool shirt on under sodden clothes. Off again. The ground corresponds exactly to where we think we are. Relief! Spirits rise again as we are certain of our position. A fine piece of navigation. Next checkpoint. Four hours from the last one! But worse still, Monash (the team to beat) were here three hours ago. They are going in the opposite direction so we are probably still in front, but we will need to work hard to stay that way. The rain stops and the moon shines dimly through the clouds. A road. Peter and Bruce drive past while patrolling the area. After a chat, they they drive on, leaving us to slog along the road. Midnight, and my blisters (old and new) need attention. We decide to head for the hash house, picking up only the easiest checkpoints, to reserve our strength (what little remains) for the daylight in the morning. This proved to be a serious error.

Five thirty am. and the hash house is in sight. We pass the 6 hour competitors on their out. Two girls running down the road towards us. They stop suddenly, then laugh. "We thought you were cows!" Thanks, they were with 45 points well in front of those who have been

As I sat by the fire in Mawson's Hut,  
I heard a noise - tut tut, tut tut;  
Was it, I thought, an owl or hound,  
But alas, as I stood up,  
It stopped its sound.  
I looked around to left and right  
But not a thing was there in sight.  
Then suddenly, to my surprise,  
Behind the fire popped two small eyes;  
It was the Mawson Rat staring straight at me  
As if to say, "Where's the food for me today?"  
But then, in haste, I turned around,  
Grabbed the first thing that came to hand,  
And with a quick almighty swoop  
I tried to kill the bloody brute.  
Then as I sat back down to read,  
I gave a thought to what I did need;  
If I was to get my sleep that night,  
This rat must get more than a great big fright.  
So there I sat for an hour or two  
Thinking how to catch this rat I knew.  
But oh, alas, I went to sleep,  
And dreamt of rats jumping on my feet.  
Next day I awoke and, to my surprise,  
The dream dissolved before my eyes.  
I realise this may not all be true,  
But it may bring a smile to some of you.

Poet J. Meadows.

#### AMALGAMATION

On Tuesday 2nd October, an historic meeting (3 meetings actually) was held of the UNSW Bushwalkers' Club and the UNSW Mountaineering Club. The Bushwalkers' Club has been in existence for decades, and was affiliated with the Students' Union. The Mountaineering Club was formed in 1967 to cater for those with a greater interest in climbing and mountaineering; it has been affiliated with the Sports Union.

Many people belonged to both clubs. It was usual for those in only one club to fraternise equally with members of the other club and pursue the same range of activities.

The Extraordinary General Meeting(s) was called to consider amalgamation of both clubs to form the UNSW Bushwalking and Mountaineering Club which would be affiliated with the Sports Union.

Of those present, many spoke in favour of amalgamation. Arguments included: avoidance of holding two virtually identical meetings each month; the opportunity to meet more friends, some of whom previously attended meetings of only one club, the other club; the opportunity to take better advantage of the full range of activities offering in both clubs; the greater membership would strengthen the club's applications for grants.

Only one person argued against amalgamation, claiming that the Mountaineering Club was for more determined and "harder" people, while the Bushwalkers' Club was for "softer" activities and social walks.

Needless to say, the vote for amalgamation was almost unanimous. Let's hope that members now become more active in many fields, and try those activities they have neglected before, and that the Club does indeed become a much greater force.

A case study from the records of the 1978 Intervarsity 24 hour orienteering event.

The action and amusement of this story hinges on the vital rule that competitors must form a team of two to four people. At no stage throughout the event should any member be separated from his team.

SCENE 1: Wollombi Community Hill ( the throbbing nerve centre of the I.V. event) details  
Friendly congenial officials taking of teams as they check into the hash house at the end of the event.  
Seen - a single solitary competitor walking through the door.  
Official - "Team name."  
Competitor - "Monash 2."  
Official - "How many in your team?"  
Competitor - "Four."  
Official - "We can't check you in until the last member arrives. Where are they?"  
competitor - "Just down the road - here in a moment."

SCENE 2: Some hours later officials driving west, in opposite direction to hash house, encounter a single solitary competitor hurrying towards the hash house.  
Officials - "Hello, what team are you?"  
Competitor - "Monash 2!"  
Officials - "Where's the rest of your team?"  
Competitor - "Just down the road ahead of me - I'm hurrying to catch up!"

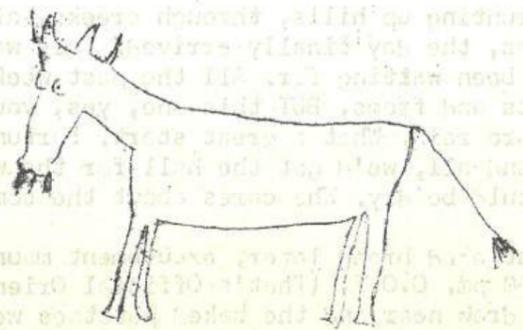
SCENE 3: Same officials another kilometre west from the hash house.  
Seen - a single solitary competitor ambling slowly eastward along the road to the hash house.  
Officials - "Hello, what team are you?"  
Competitor - "Monash 2!"  
Officials - "Where's the rest of your team?"  
Competitor - "Just behind me a bit. I'm going slowly so they can catch up."

SCENE 4: Same officials several kilometres further west along the road from hash house stopped to admire emus behind a fence.  
Noticed - a single solitary competitor basking on the sandy river bank, with shoes off.  
Officials (calling loudly) - "Hello, what team are you?"  
Competitor - "Monash 2!"  
Officials - "Where's the rest of your team?"  
Competitor - "I came down the hill ahead of them - I'm waiting for them to catch up. They'll be here in a moment."  
This competitor, once told the true distribution of his team, was last seen running east towards the hash house with shoes in one hand and pack in the other.

\*Monash 2 = Monash University Men's Team No.2.

Vinings

Get a picture of a Gnu - Cut it out. Place it over a news-paper Caption The no-neck Gnu



back, but that doesn't include Monash. A meal, a change of socks, discard excess gear. Time's up, so out into the sunshine. Our proposed route will give us 20 more points. Second checkpoint of the morning. Down the hill, and my feet getting more painful with each step. Should I drop out? Ten minutes later, it's agony. A decision is needed. I can't go on. Feelings of guilt. I know both the others have sore feet. I just hope mine are worse. The look on Greg's face says it all: I wish it were me. They set off again as I grab a couple of hours sleep in the sun.

Linda and Adrian come to pick me up at around noon. We have come second with 79 points, Monash 84. Disappointment at going so close yet pleasing to do so well. Far better than I expected. In retrospect the greater experience and fitness of Monash won. I think our route was better but the tactical error and the lack of fitness to allow us to go strongly in the last few hours beat us. Oh, well. Until next year.

Peter Tomsett

MT YANGO

Mt Yango lies on the northern extremity of the MacDonald wilderness and is one of the many basalt capped peaks that dot the Blue Mountains. Like Colong, Banks, Pomang and others, Yango's hard geological cap has given the peak (hill) the rather distinctive feature of a high elevation above the surrounding country. Yango is fortunate in some ways in that it has few high neighbours and is therefore visible from many areas and has an impressive view from the top. The distinctive truncated core is a landmark that should attract many walkers, but besides a few from Newcastle and occasionally Sydney, the peak is a strange Mecca for C.M.A. surveyors, as the visitors' book indicates.

The walk to Yango is easy and relatively straightforward, has little scrub, and only 400 metres of climbing. The approach that our party took was along the Calore range from the Yango track.

The drive along the Yango track from Laguna is long and takes a couple of hours. There are a few rough sections although short and passable. The gate at MR209473\* (Wollombi map) may be locked so ask the farmer at Woodworth for his permission (he is very amenable). Many side tracks branch the track until the locked gate at MR053535 (Howe's Valley map) is reached. The continuation along the right fork to the bend at MR000545 is easy. From here, the walk along the obvious ridge is fairly open to MR986525 where a track is found that continues to within a few hundred metres of the top. A tremendous view from Kurrajong to the Hunter is the reward. A possible alternative approach to the summit could be made along from the second locked gate.

The quickest return from the parking area to bituman is north to the Putty road, but the road deteriorates although passable to Cortinas.

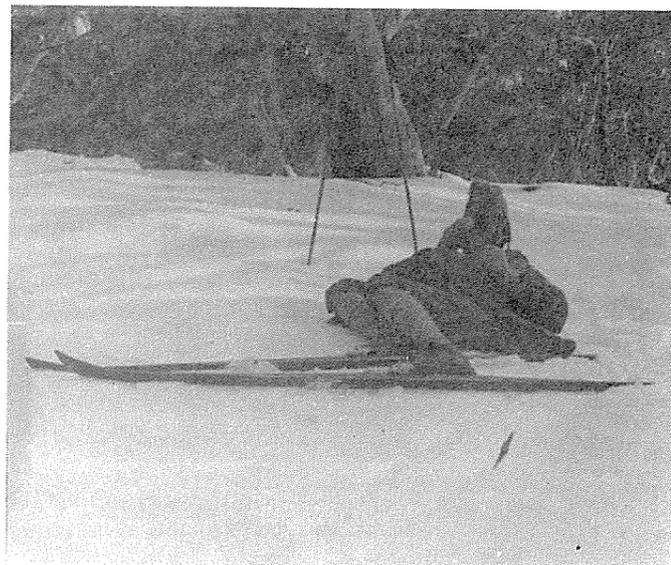
Bill Blunt

\*MR = map reference

Note from editor: there is no water along the route. there are more side tracks to Yango track than marked on the map, and the last right-hand side track marked on the Wollombi map does not exist.



Oh Beautiful  
Victoria -  
Mt Cobbler with  
Mt Howitt on the  
horizon.  
Tufts and Caves  
went there in  
August



Peter did not want to  
remove his skis - but  
how to capture the  
others photographing  
the splendid views?



The same general  
area in summer.  
Rest time is over,  
John - on your  
toes!

"Oh. By the way. You're organising the Intervarsity orienteering this year!" came the casual statement from Bill Harris.

"That's news to me," I said. "Since when have we been doing this?"

"Since no-one else will do it."

"Well then, I guess we are," I replied.

What did I know about organising an orienteering competition? Sure, I knew there was one every year and we usually had a team in it. But run one? Boy, did I need help!

The next club meeting dragged itself around to general business and I casually threw in the suggestion that we were going to organise the orienteering competition.

"Great!!" came the reply. Well almost.

Before I knew it, I was submerged beneath talk of checkpoints and maps, costing for food, setting out. What had I let myself in for?

"Let's go look at some maps," Bill Blunt suggested.

Within an hour we had totally demolished a map catalogue but had managed to narrow the choice down to four or five maps in two different areas.

"Where are the areas?" I hear you asking.

Oh no! That's top secret. Well it used to be. How did Bill and Peter keep the big secret from Robyn and Megs, I wonder.

And so began the regular trips to that secret location around the back blocks of W-----I. How many weekends was it? Five? Six? Seven? I lost count somewhere between the mountain holly and the quicksads. Mind you, the cows were fairly friendly even if they did tend to charge across in front of us as we drove along innumerable fire trails in the Subie. The wombats, however, were a different story.

Having been almost run over by a marauding wombat charging downhill to gain the safety of its burrow, I became rather cautious when we came upon another digging at the entrance of its burrow. I could Bill didn't want to take any chances either, so we just stood and stared. The wombat stared back. We stared back. The wombat stared back. So, deciding that discretion is indeed the better part of valour, we detoured around the wombat and left him to his digging.

Then of course, there is the case of the wild(?) German Shepherds. Strolling casually up a rather pleasant little ridge, I heard a rustling sound behind us. Turning, I saw three of the meanest, largest, biggest, hungriest, most vicious, ferocious German Shepherds. (Please note that some artistic licence has been taken in this account) No matter what Peter and I tried, we could not shake the three beasts. We dodged between trees, over fences, up and down ridges, but all to no avail. It seemed the only recourse was to turn and stare at them. So turning round to give one last glaring look, I discovered they had lost interest and were gone.

"They must have followed us for at least two kilometres," I thought.

"Wow, what if they'd eaten us? What would the others have said? Would the I.V. have been called off on account of two of the organisers having disappeared?" Who knows?

After weeks of grunting up hills, through creeks, along fire trails and pulling out thorns, the day finally arrived. This was it. The BIG weekend. The one we'd all been waiting for. All the past weekends had dawned fine with morning frosts and frogs, BUT this one, yes, you guessed it folks. Rain, rain and more rain. What a great start. Fortunately, what with the cattle sale and all, we'd got the hall for the weekend, so at least the organisers would be dry. Who cares about the competitors?

Many loaves of buttered bread later, excitement mounted as the deadline approached. 12.00 pm. O.O.T. (That's Official Orienteering Time for the uninitiated) drew near and the baked potatoes were going fast. Our men's team came in, but only two of them. They had 70 points. It was...

checkpoints will not be visited unless there is some strong incentive. Without such an incentive, competitors will simply gather the closer checkpoints.

If a course is set so that a good team will collect a large majority of checkpoints (hereafter called a minimum checkpoint event), then there is no need for a score incentive to attract people to outer checkpoints. Competitors (at least the stronger teams) will have to visit the outer checkpoints anyway, high scoring or not, because there will be no others left. Weaker teams are unlikely to visit the outer checkpoints, regardless of the scoring system, as has been consistently demonstrated in past events.

Thus in an excess checkpoint event, remote points must be high scoring in order to attract competitors; in a minimum checkpoint event, scores are unnecessary.

3. Reward for effort. Superficially it seems that if a team spends considerable time climbing uphill through thick scrub then they deserve a high score for the effort. This applies if there is a wide range of checkpoints (an excess checkpoint event) and if other competitors may meanwhile be visiting several easier checkpoints. However the team at the single hard point should not score more than a team who, after comparable effort for the same period, visited several easier points. (In fact it could be argued that the latter team deserve a higher score for the additional navigation required). The basic principle here is that comparable teams working with comparable effort should be able to score at the same rate (points per hour) whether they visit hard or easy checkpoints. For an excess checkpoint event any major deviation from this principle, in either direction, is inequitable.

For a minimum checkpoint event the arguments become very different. On such a course a team wishing to do well must visit virtually all points, and does not have the choice of selecting either many easy low-scorers or fewer hard high-scorers. In this situation the reward for effort is simply the fact of reaching the checkpoint. Unless there is a very large random variation in scores (which is of course ridiculous) the actual value of the checkpoint is irrelevant - the team that reaches it will have the advantage over the team that doesn't. Clearly if checkpoint scores are irrelevant, there is no need for them to be other than 1.

Summarising, for an excess checkpoint event, scores should be such that comparable teams will score at the same rate; for a minimum checkpoint event, scores are irrelevant.

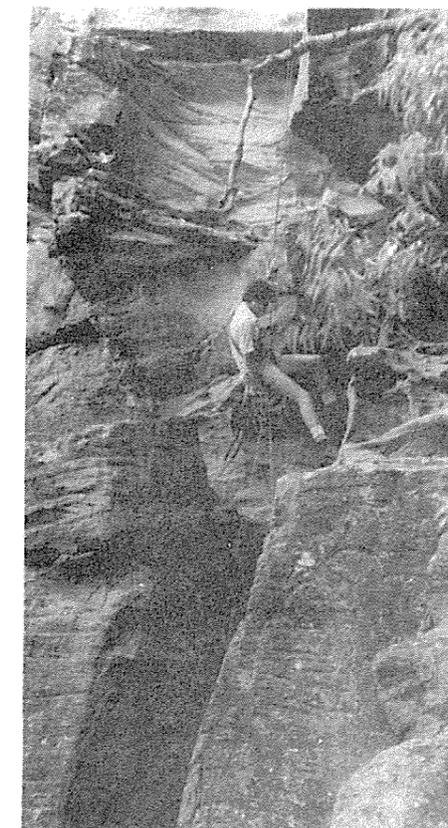
4. The element of decision. It is clearly not fair to give checkpoints completely arbitrary scores simply to increase decision-making, and so this element is not in itself a reason for allocating scores. Since route selection and strategy are a vital part of rogaining, the effect of different scoring schemes on the aspect of the sport should be considered.

In an unscored minimum-checkpoint event, the best teams must concern themselves with the optimum strategy to maximise the points visited, with the faint possibility of reaching all of them. For a scored excess-checkpoint event, the decision concerns the optimum subset of checkpoints to maximise the score. There is a much greater element of chance in the second case, so the minimum-checkpoint event provides a fairer competition. All good teams are presented with the same set of checkpoints, and will differ only in the route selected, rather than having some teams, through either luck or lack of local knowledge, pick a subset of checkpoints on which they cannot do as well as other teams with different sets of checkpoints.

Weaker teams with no possibility of reaching all the points in an unscored minimum-checkpoint event should still find such an event more equitable. In an unscored event, teams have no incentive to go further from the hash house than absolutely necessary. Accordingly, two weaker teams of equal ability are much more likely to visit the same group of points; since only the route differs, they are compared more equally than in the



Coming down requires less effort so long as you've got a strong anchor and sound rope. Mike Drew abseiling in the Wolgan Valley



If there's a crack, there's a way! Relax, most climbing is not quite so desperate. Ask Bill Blunt about this incident



Approaching Mawson's Hut. A picturesque area in both winter and summer

Five of the possible reasons for scoring checkpoints were discounted - to provide an indication of difficulty, and to provide additional decision-making. However the latter, although not a reason in itself, is a vital consideration in comparing scoring schemes and is one of the main reasons why an unscored minimum-checkpoint course is a fairer event.

A scored minimum-checkpoint event is a bad compromise, for the very best teams it will indeed not be greatly different from an unscored event, except that any checkpoints they do miss are likely to be inner ones instead of outer ones. However for weaker teams, there is an enormous difference - the event for them becomes a scored excess-checkpoint event with its disadvantages of chance, unequal courses for different teams, and the superfluous element of checkpoint selection masking the bushwalking skills the event is supposed to test.

Peter Tuft

#### ADVERTISEMENT?

Extracts from John Turnbull's article in Getaway Extra, Sydney Morning Herald, 26/5/78

A new space-age material called Gore-Tex has appeared on the market which is completely wind and waterproof, yet breathes as well as the closely woven cotton fabrics commonly used for making windproof jackets.

Gore-Tex contains a layer of the membrane called expanded polytetrafluoroethylene, or PTFE. This is bonded between two lightweight fabrics so that the combination forms a tough laminate suitable for making garments for outside use. Several combinations have been tried. The most useful one uses fine, soft taffeta for comfort and protection on the inner side of the PTFE, along with a finely woven, almost silk-like nylon on the outside for resistance to tears and abrasions.

Gore-Tex's inner PTFE membrane is only 18 per cent solid and features about 9,000 million microscopic pores per square inch. Each pore is about 20,000 times smaller than a molecule of water, yet 700 times larger than a molecule of water vapour. Consequently you can put a piece of Gore-Tex over a steaming cup of coffee and the steam will pass through, yet if you tip the coffee into the Gore-Tex it will hold it without leaking. Gore-Tex works like a molecular sieve, holding water back while passing vapour, much as a wire sieve holds gravel back while passing sand.

When tailored into garments, it keeps rain and chill winds out, while allowing moist air to escape from around active bodies before it can condense and dampen clothing. This is important for people involved in activities in an environment which can become chill, windy and wet.

The manufacturers advise against using garments made from Gore-Tex for abseiling. The rope may produce enough friction to burn through or at least melt the laminate, but this is true of any nylon garment. Another potential problem which has shown up overseas arises if the laminate's microscopic pores become soaked with body oils following wear next to the skin. These oils can break down the surface tension of water, allowing water to seep through, but the problem disappears in the wash, or can be avoided by wearing clean undergarments. Gore-Tex should not be dry-cleaned or ironed, but can be easily washed by hand or machine in cool water with mild detergent.

The supply of Gore-Tex cannot keep pace with the demand, so that it seems unlikely that the cost of garments and gear made from it will drop in the near future. Berghaus's superbly made Mistral parka is priced at about \$80, and their snow gaiters are about \$21. For those who wish to make their own articles, the material is available from some specialist outdoor shops for about \$15 per metre.

alternative event. The decision to be made is not high scores versus low scores, but depends on an accurate assessment of their ability to travel over the terrain shown on the map so as to visit the most checkpoints.

Thus for the unscored minimum-checkpoint event all teams are faced basically only with the question: "Which route?" Given the basic premise of rogaining, that it is a test of bushwalking skills, it seems far more appropriate that it should test only those skills, rather than including an additional, rather arbitrary element of decision making which has nothing to do with normal bushwalking - namely variable checkpoint scores.

Specifically the sort of decision-making process a team must run through for an unscored minimum-checkpoint event would go something like this: "We have been given an objective - these X checkpoints. We must try and estimate exactly how far we think we can walk in this country in 24 hours, and then plan a route that will fit as many checkpoints as possible into that distance. If we are over-ambitious and aim too far out, we may waste time that could have been spent picking up inner checkpoints instead of racing back against the deadline. If we are over-cautious, we may pick up all points close to the hash house with a fair bit of time to spare, but not enough to get to some of the outer points and back." These are decisions which must be made on the fundamental basis of the map and a team's own assessment of its ability, without influence from the course setters' opinion of the countryside as reflected in checkpoint scores. This must be both a better and a fairer test of bushwalking than the scored excess-checkpoint event.

#### CONCLUSIONS

It has become clear that there are two ways in which a 24 hour orienteering course can be set, and that there are two quite different scoring schemes to be applied. It is also clear that one type of course is to be preferred - namely the course with only a few excess checkpoints. In this case there is no need to score points differently. Competitors will be forced to outermost checkpoints because there will be no alternative, and their reward for effort will simply be the greater number of checkpoints collected relative to those who didn't work so hard. Route choice on such a course is the critical decision, since all competitors are faced with the same set of points to visit.

The other class of course is that where there is a large excess of checkpoints, and a very wide choice of subsets of points. In this case, outer points must have a high score to attract teams away from the inner area of the course. Checkpoints should also be scored bearing in mind the difficulty of reaching them, or more correctly, the marginal time required to reach them, so that teams can score at the same rate over the whole map. This requirement and that of attracting teams to the outer points generally conflict and some less than ideal compromise has to be chosen.

The course with the minimum checkpoints, unscored, is preferred for four reasons: i) it is more equitable, as all competitors use the same set of checkpoints, ii) it is also a fairer test of teams' strategy and planning ability, iii) it does not have the inherent conflict in checkpoint scoring requirements, iv) from the organisers' point of view fewer points need be set.

The organisers of such an event must become very familiar with rates of travel through the area before setting any checkpoints, so that the number and spacing of points chosen fulfils the "minimum number" requirement. It is undesirable, but it would not matter, if some teams completed all checkpoints in less than 24 hours, provided that this is exceptional rather than the general rule. In such cases, a number of ways of selecting the winner are possible: i) the first team to finish, ii) the team which can walk furthest along a set route (eg. a road) in the remaining time, iii) the team which can reach the most checkpoints on a second attempt at the course.

... quietest in winter by comparison with the busy days of last season, even one at Scott Base shares in the preparations for the influx of summer workers which will begin in October. Vehicles and sledges have to be overhauled, stores and equipment need to be checked, and necessary repairs have to be made.

Summer field parties are on the move by helicopter and motor toboggan for weeks at a time when the season's program is in full swing, and their food boxes have to be packed and waiting for them when they arrive from Christchurch. So the winter team has had to prepare 100 food boxes, handling about three tonnes of food in the process.

There is time left for sport, hobbies, and celebrations of special occasions like birthdays and holidays. Model-making is probably the most popular hobby, although photography runs it a close second. Russell Arnott, who has gained a high reputation for his fine meals, is not only building a self-steering yacht, he has also been brewing ginger beer, and making raspberry wine.

Once a week the winter men visit their neighbours to take part in the ten pin bowling, basketball, and volley ball competitions in the McMurdo Station gymnasium. They are pessimistic, however, about beating the Americans at their own games, although they have another three months of winter to do it. The less energetic make good use of the station's excellent books and music library.

Exchanges of visits between American and New Zealand neighbours have been part of the pattern of winter life on Ross Island for more than 20 years. Usually the visitors are male, but last month Scott Base had feminine company at the dinner table. The visitor was Miss Sue Williams, of the University of Texas, who works in the geodetic satellite observatory.

Scott<sup>Base</sup> will have to wait until early September for its next aerial visitors. Two ski-equipped Hercules aircraft will fly south with both New Zealand and American staff who will commence the preparations for each country's summer research program. They will bring mail and fresh food, and among their 143 passengers will be some New Zealanders.

Until then the 11 men of the winter team will be waiting and watching for the return of the sun, and the end of darkness. This month they have three birthdays to celebrate, and they can look forward to Mid-Winter's Day, a traditional day of celebration at all bases because it marks the beginning of the end of the winter night.

Later in June, 1978. This month has passed quickly for the winter eleven at Scott Base. June has been unusually active with Mid-Winter celebrations and three birthdays (including Warwick's) to break the quiet routine. Mid-Winter's Day was celebrated in the usual fine style with an excellent meal and only two days off from essential duties. With all our problems and hassles temporarily forgotten, we toasted the return of the sun and the C130S ski-equipped Hercules.

Two days later some optimists claimed that the twilight was indeed brighter and every day now the bright band over Cape Crozier at noon reminds us that the sun is truly somewhere up there and approaching. The Auroral displays this month have been the best so far, and photographing this unique spectacle has absorbed the spare time of many people. Will, Paul, Dean and Warwick have been out whenever the "Southern Lights" are brightest. After much experimentation, exposure times have been evaluated and the results have been very good, so good in fact that Warwick won Third Place in the McMurdo Mid-Winter hobbies competition with his Auroral and general photographic prints.

News provided by Lynn Thompson

Warwick will be back in warm Australia by the time you read this. Welcome back to the land of more living things, Warwick. You'll probably be inundated with requests for more information about life "Down Under".

Warwick Williams has been spending 12 months at Scott Base in Antarctica with the New Zealand team from the Antarctic Division of New Zealand DSIR. Here are some excerpts from telex cables and newsletters sent to team members' families.

Scott Base awaiting return of summer - June 1978

Darkness and colder temperatures are now the daily experience of 10 New Zealanders and one Australian who are wintering at Scott Base. They said goodbye to the sun on April 25, and will not see it again until late in August. Now a few hours of twilight each day have given way to the long winter night, lightened only by a faint glow in the northern sky at mid-day.

Perpetual darkness means an end to most outdoor activities at Scott Base. It also brings problems. Last month the winter leader reported that insomnia had increased, and most of the winter team were finding it difficult to get a good night's sleep.

Lack of light has also put an end to John Lythgoe's weekly run from the base to William's Field and back - a distance of about 10 km - in temperatures ranging from minus 28° to 30°C. He ran every Sunday until the middle of last month. Now he and Warwick Williams, the senior technician and the lone Australian, keep fit by doing circuits of the gymnasium at McMurdo Station over the hill 4 km away.

Like the humans, the 17 huskies at Scott Base have settled in for the winter, protected in their kennels from the extreme cold. Their handler, Steve Chambers, also has "tin dogs" to look after, and has begun to overhaul the motor toboggans. He takes time off each week to check the growth and weight of two pups born on Labour Day last year. Noogis, who will take his place in one of the teams when summer comes, is doing well - he now weighs 35 kg.

There was enough twilight in the first two weeks of May to allow dogs and men to make day trips. John Lythgoe and Steve Chambers took one dog team on a run from the base to William's Field. The temperature was between minus 39° and 40°C, but there was no wind, and the nine dogs covered between 12 and 15 km in just two hours and a half. On the homeward, the dog drivers had only two things to break the semi-darkness. One was a faint glow in the sky behind Observation Hill; the other was the cloud of steam rising, not from Mt Erebus, but from the huskies' breath in the chilly air.

Four men who took a tracked vehicle to the auroral telemetry station at Windless Bight faced some hard work at the end of their 30 km journey. Snow had covered the whole hut. When they returned to Scott Base, the job of digging through 2.4 m of snow in a temperature of minus 40° was described as "a little difficult".

Since the last of the summer support staff left on February 21, the men who remain behind have become used to living in a small world of their own - dark, cold, remote, and without new faces. They do have neighbours - 74 Americans, including one woman scientist - at McMurdo Station.

time  
But the winter team leads a busy life with little time to reflect on its isolation, and the darkness and cold which are part of the job. Winter in the Antarctic is not a time for hibernation, and the men who live and work in the low green buildings of Scott Base have many duties to occupy them. Three technicians, Warwick Williams, Will Kimber, and Dean Drake, are responsible for the winter scientific program of seismic, magnetic, ionospheric, and auroral studies. An automatic all-sky camera records the pale, flickering streamers of the aurora in the night sky. But it demands regular trips in cold and darkness to Arrival Heights 4.8 km from the base so film can be changed and the instruments checked.

they would change their steps just as we thought we had worked out a system. The girls formed pairs or larger groups and danced more sedately linking crossed arms in synchronised lines which revolved around the fire like the spokes of a wheel. They looked very proud, with the lines perfectly ordered from smallest to tallest, and flashing the white stripes of their clothing in the night. The two wind instruments were later joined by a flute. The dancing ended abruptly, and the participants streamed down from the circle in the moonlight to their huts.

On the final day, we took three hours to reach the road in pouring rain and slippery mud. So ended a brief glimpse into the lives of the many ethnic groups making up the hill tribes of Northern Thailand. A recommended MUST for all future walkers to Chiang Mai!

Adrian Spragg

Now for more dancing.....

THE 1978 BUSHWALKERS' BALL

A UNSW point of view

The theme was "conservation", so Vinings and Tufts got together to arrange a table decoration. They constructed models of an ocker Aussie and his son who were to sit under a tree in the bush sucking beer cans, trapping animals and proclaiming their belief in conservation. John and I arrived at Chatswood Civic Centre at about 7.30 pm. on Friday 6th October, bearing the "tree", real branches which the Council had lopped near our home. The Bush Band and Mobydisc were tuning up at that time, but alas, another hour passed before numbers started to swell.

The Bush Band got everyone on their feet with lively folk dances, most of them progressive. Despite the cold night outside, superfluous clothing was soon discarded. The shoes went later. The Bush Band alternated with the Disco's lively music, but needless to say, one could hardly carry on a conversation while the music played. (Oh, for the quiet of the bush.) Although the floor was never empty, neither was it over-crowded - unfortunately, more than half the tables in the hall remained vacant.

An Ent appeared on the SRC table with a plea to save our trees, and a model of Precipitous Bluff took its victorious on the SPAN table, with an explanatory poster beside it. Quiet dismay greeted the announcement that our table decoration was not successful. Oh well, maybe next year we'll win the competition for table decoration. The raffles was drawn, and the door entry prize - no winners in our club.

Back to the dancing! The girls were kept on their toes as they were outnumbered by the boys, not that anyone sat still for too long. Dave and Rosita Sanders made their final appearance before departing for the Northern Hemisphere for months or years. Then we and a few others decided fatigue (or Age?) was getting the better of us, and departed soon after 1 pm, well before the scheduled finish of 2 pm. But no such excuses for Lyndall and Peter - they were still whirling away along with many others as we passed out the door.

Meadows

Well, have you thought of your article for the next MOBSAC? Make a resolve now to write about that longed-for trip after the exams, or the one between Christmas and New Year. Or what about that summer lilo or canyon trip that you're sure to make? Don't forget to put your impressions on paper soon after the event. Linda Vining, the next editor, will be only too pleased.

The hill tribes of Northern Thailand came from Tibet some 200 years ago and have maintained their distinctive clothing and village life, largely unaffected by changes in the modern world. Their simple economy has fortunately withstood outside changes.

We paid about \$13 for one of the many tribal treks available in Chiang Mai, Thailand's second largest city. It may be possible to walk without a guide - but one is faced with the prospect of travelling through unfamiliar mountain country and dealing with peoples of a strange tongue (few could speak Thai) and customs.

On Boxing Day six of us were picked up from our guest-house along with Lo, our Thai guide. The taxi, a Toyota ute with seats and frame added, drove for about an hour into the mountains through jungle. Leaving the road and following a well-worn track (road?), we passed through a Muser and Thai village. Bamboo grows plentifully along the path which winds around a mountain revealing beautiful views.

The first night was spent in a small Karen village of about 60 people. Each of the ten houses had a rice pounder and sieves for winnowing. Most were worked by girls in kaftan style white dresses, signifying they were unmarried virgins. Pigs of every shape and size imaginable were everywhere.

We were to sleep on the open "verandah" of the chief's hut. After the Karen women had finished boiling up diced banana tree and corn for pig feed on the elevated platform, Lo cooked a community dish using vegetables we had brought with us. The evening was spent drawing pictures for the Karen children (and attempting to get them to do other than imitate our pictures), amusing them with paper cut-outs or masks, learning Karen words (on a point-name basis) or smoking opium with the chief.

The Karen women rise about 4.30 a.m. and fetch water in bamboo containers, carrying half a dozen at a time on their backs. The rice pounding reverberates throughout the village. Later the boys tie the wooden cow-bells around the necks of the buffalo, and lead them down the hill to the cleared fields on the valley floor. Presumably the men fetch the firewood, tend the fields, or go hunting using old "flintlock" rifles.

Our path led us back along the previous day's wall until we skirted off through opium poppy fields, growing in red earth on the slopes. The Muser people continue to cultivate the white and purple poppies for their livelihood, despite Government attempts to introduce alternative crops. The Karen do not grow it at all - indicative of the differences between the two tribes which do not intermarry, despite being only two or threemiles apart.

This Muser village was much larger than that we had just left, with some 300 people. A new world is revealed when one wanders amongst the huts. The rice pounders continue their ceaseless rhythm, the women sew their distinctive black dresses with colourful stripes, some men forge a knife out of an old car spring, cut firewood or slice up a pig for the evening meal. Many chew betel nut (it does wonders to the teeth), and wear silver jewellery - large etched brooches, neckbands, earrings and armbands. Water was piped some two hundred yards along an aerial aqueduct of half split bamboo - an intriguing piece of engineering to our minds.

That night we were privileged to observe some dancing. We were not able to ascertain whether this was for any special occasion - certainly our presence was quite immaterial. The men playing two bamboo wind instruments which extended above their heads, seemed to call the beat. The men danced as a group, following the leader, with a combination of forward, backward, sideward steps, slides and stamping - always in beat. Somehow they would change their steps just as we thought we had worked out a system. The girls formed pairs or larger groups

When one visits the countries of South East Asia, the main aim is obviously not to go bushwalking. For one thing, there are numerous other exciting things to see, places to visit and foods to eat. For another, the hot humid climate does not encourage a great deal of physical exertion. But if you want to get off the beaten track, get away from all the other tourists, experience some peace and quiet, and the clean air and cool streams of the native bush, or jungle, you often cannot unless you or some friend is in the know.

In Malaysia, there are several accessible areas close to Kuala Lumpur which are suitable for day walks. John and I ventured to one of these recently. With some friends we took the East Coast road out of KL and, after about half an hour, reached the Genting Highlands turnoff. At this point we took the road for Bukit Tinggi for about ten minutes, and then a further windy road to Kampung Jandar Baik (Village of the Good Village). Walking along the dirt track through the village, we passed fields of ginger, gardens of tapioca, sugar-cane and other vegetables, and plantations of coffee trees. The few attractive wooden kampung houses were surrounded by clean swept yards with a few hibiscus, bouganvilleas and coconut palms. Every now and then, we came across a lone hen or rooster or a few scraggly chickens. Beyond the village, the track started upwards, and only the fields of ginger and chilli continued.

We didn't pursue the track as John was suffering from a heavy cold. Instead we pushed through a ginger field to the stream, changed into swimming gear, and plunged into the cool water. Water gushed over large boulders and through short, clear pools - lilos would have been ideal had there been fewer rocks. Upstream, we gazed at Gunung Nguang, the highest peak in that part of Malaysia, and in the opposite direction to Genting Highlands, home of a gambling casino.

On a previous occasion, three of us had continued up the mountain track in search of some native lemons rumoured to grow in the area. The track had obviously been cleared for timber getting purposes. The jungle clad slopes dropped away steeply on either side. Definitely not impenetrable, but plenty of obstacles, deep soil and steep terrain to make progress off the track very slow. Although the mountain was cool, the sweat still poured off us, and one person was inclined to stop. We begged him to persevere for another ten minutes. Just as we were about to turn back, I found a lemon on the track - success! Shrieks of excitement! Then we found more. We had come to an area which had recently been cleared, and several trees lay on the ground. Lemons were picked up here and there, but we could not identify exactly the parent tree. The perfume was delightful, much stronger than that of the ordinary lemon. We collected a bag of them, put our backs to the mountain, and headed for the creek and a refreshing bath. A few days later, we sampled some very tasty lemon butter.

Another pleasant walk/scramble is along Quartz Ridge near the main reservoir for KL and the road to the Zoo. The initial climb takes one up a hill covered with bladey grass, and on to the ridge. Then it is a straight forward route beside the ridge, criss-crossing it, and scrambling over rocks for a couple of hours to the highest point. There are good views along the way and some of the flora is unique to that ridge. One can continue gently downwards to the other end of the ridge, but I have never done so.

The last time a group of us visited Quartz Ridge, we sat on the top after eating our lunch and looked around us. The heavy clouds and rumbling of thunder impressed on us that we should move soon.

We lingered on. Then someone noticed Thomas' hair sticking straight up in the air! (Thomas has the normal straight black Chinese hair.) We seemed to be at a focal point for electric charge. Did we move then! Helter skelter back down the ridge to reach our motor-bikes just as the rain started. The coffee shop a few miles down the road was a welcome haven with a warm drink and a chance to dry out.

Rosalie Meadows

MITTAGONG TO KATOOMBA - THE HARD WAY

All I can remember are the hills. All Bill and I seemed to do was coast down one hill, then hop off our bicycles and push them up the next. Sometimes the trip had a nightmarish quality - the hills stretched forever.

The trip to which I refer was a weekend, crosscountry, Mittagong to Katoomba bicycle trip which Bill Blunt and I did in late 1977. It involved pushing bicycles, with camping equipment and repair unit, over 140 km of dirt tracks and descending 1400 ft off Mt Cookem.

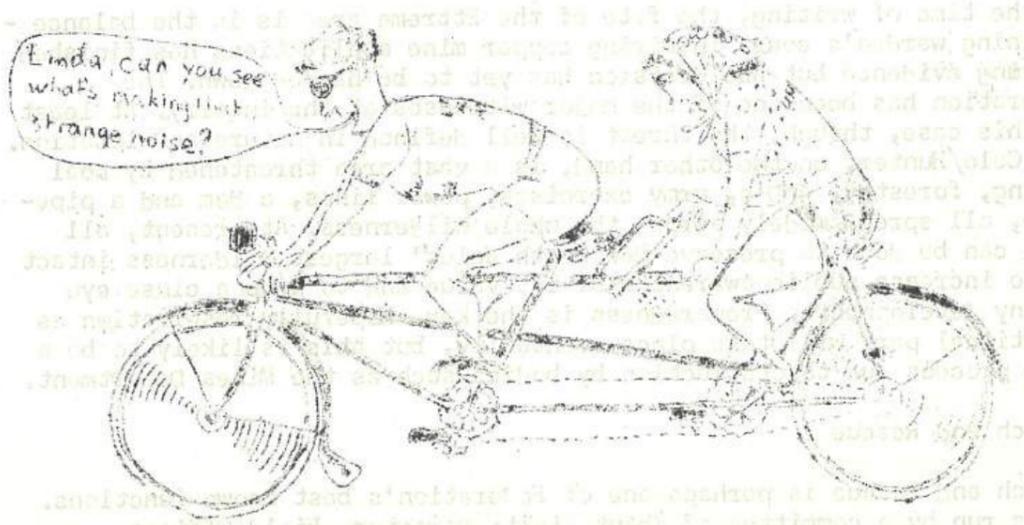
I now find myself about to embark on the same trip again, this time with Stephen Poole and Tim Maltby from the Bushwalkers' Club and a couple from the Bicycle Institute of NSW.

So why would I do it again? The trip did have its good points - chasing kangaroos on the downhill runs in the Wollondilly valley (boy, can they move!); the beautiful cliff-line on the Wollondilly; a superb downhill run on Scott's Main Range; stopping at the end of the day; the look on the tourists' faces as they, on their tame Carlon's farm horses, beheld us, on our very unsteady careering bicycles, hurtling past them on the horsetrack to Carlon's farm.

Basically, you do it again to relive the thrill of travelling across such an unsettled wilderness area. The bicycle seems suited to a trip like this, as it can be lifted over locked gates, carried down mountains, and floated over rivers on lilos - a very versatile bushwalking partner!

I wonder if the hills are really as steep as I remember them???

Ross Vining



With apologies to two certain people - the editor could not resist this drawing found in "Chios off a shoulder" by Sprod.

be available for a search almost immediately upon call. Group 2 has slightly less stringent requirements on ability, and must be available at half a day's notice. Group 3 fulfils the same requirements as Group 2, but will not be called on urgently. Everyone involved must have some knowledge of first aid.

If there is an alert (which happens only two or three times a year) everyone required can be contacted in a very short time by a "chain phone call" system. However, many alerts come to nothing when the missing party turns up, just somewhat late. S&R never goes into action until a missing party is at least one day overdue simply because so few people are really in trouble and not just a little delayed.

Practice days or weekends are held about four times a year, and generally involve a practice search filling most of Saturday (even the Field Officer doesn't know where the lost party is), followed by a campfire. Sometimes a practice rescue from a cliff or canyon will be included after the search, otherwise it occurs on Sunday morning. Then there are first aid exercises (frighteningly realistic "injuries"), radio exercises, ropework practice, etc. To help in all this work, there is over \$10,000 worth of equipment, including several portable two-way radios and a base radio, numerous ropes and associated equipment, two stretchers, first aid equipment and a large trailer to carry it all.

S&R is a very effective group. In real searches, it hasn't yet failed to find its lost party before lunch on the first day.

Tracks and Access

Many years ago, Tracks & Access was actively involved in cutting and maintaining tracks. Now, however, with the emphasis on wilderness recreation, its main concern is with ensuring that bushwalkers' rights of access are not restricted. For example, efforts are presently being made to obtain increased access to the Warragamba Catchment Area and to revoke the permit system recently introduced in the Warrumbungles. Other recent tasks have involved access to the Budawangs via Wog Wog, and discussion of the "Tri-State Track".

Newsletter

The publications Officer is responsible for producing the monthly Federation Newsletter, which is the main means of communication with clubs and individuals, and is thus essential if Federation is to remain representative of its members. Publication of the Newsletter is one of Federation's greatest expenses (over \$1000 p.a.) and this is one indication of the importance placed on it.

Bushwalkers' Ball

The annual Bushwalkers' Ball is Federation's major fundraising effort, although in recent years it has made little or no profit, and direct appeals for specific projects appear to be at least as successful. The Ball is held each year, usually sometime in October. This year it was held in the Chatswood Civic Centre and the theme was "Conservation". The club with the best decorated table along the lines of the theme wins a perpetual trophy. There is usually both a rock band or disco and a bush band. A raffle is held in conjunction with the Ball, with prizes donated by the major equipment suppliers and proceeds going to S&R.

Information

The role of Information Officer has, for some years, been so passive as to be almost non-existent. However, there is an increasing need for Federation to act as an information centre for walkers in general, and for details of wilderness usage to be gathered for use in conservation campaigns. These complementary functions call for an active role for an Information/Club Liaison Officer.

Introduction

The Federation of Bushwalking Clubs, NSW, was formed in the early 1930's by a number of clubs fighting to save Blue Gum Forest from being turned into a walnut plantation. Thus from its foundation it has had an intense interest in issues which affect bushwalkers, but its interests also range well beyond conservation alone.

The Federation's objectives, summarised from its constitution, are:

- to unite all associations and people interested in bushwalking and related activities, to protect their interests, and to extend their opportunities for these recreational activities;
- to promote the establishment of national parks and similar reserves, and to prevent the despoliation of wilderness;
- to act as an information centre on matters related to bushwalking;
- to lobby for the furtherance of the objectives.

Before going a little further into the Federation's activities and means of achieving its objectives, a brief description of its organisation is in order. Basically, it consists of about 45 bushwalking clubs representing several thousand walkers scattered throughout New South Wales. Each club contributes a small number of delegates (exact number depending on club size) to the Federation Council, which is the governing body. "Federation meetings" are in fact meetings of this Council, and take place on the third Tuesday of each month at 6.30 pm. in the NSW Environment Centre, 399 Pitt St., Sydney. Visitors are welcome.

The Council elects a president, two vice-presidents, treasurer, secretary, assistant secretary, minute secretary and numerous other office bearers not specifically mentioned in the constitution: Conservation Officer, Tracks & Access Officer, Publications Officer, Information Officer, Publicity Officer, Director of Search & Rescue, Ball Organiser, Education Officer, etc. Several of these officers chair committees which will be described shortly.

Conservation

Conservation, as mentioned above, is perhaps Federation's major concern. The issues with which it has been involved over the years are far too numerous to mention. However the current major issues are wilderness in general, and the Ettrema and Colo/Hunter wildernesses in particular. At present it also appears likely that the Deua-Iuross-Brogo (South Coast) and Binghi (far Northern Tablelands) wildernesses will also come under the threat from 4WD and forestry, and mining respectively.

At the time of writing, the fate of the Ettrema area is in the balance - a mining warden's court inquiring copper mine applications has finished hearing evidence but the decision has yet to be handed down. The Federation has been one of the major witnesses at the inquiry. At least in this case, though, the threat is well defined in nature and location. The Colo/Hunter, on the other hand, is a vast area threatened by coal mining, forestry, 4WD's, army exercises, power lines, a dam and a pipeline, all spread widely across the whole wilderness. At present, all that can be done to preserve New South Wales' largest wilderness intact is to increase public awareness of its value and to keep a close eye on any developments. Preparedness is the key. Hopefully reservation as a national park will take place eventually, but this is likely to be a long process due to obstruction by bodies such as the Mines Department.

Search and Rescue

Search and Rescue is perhaps one of Federation's best known functions. It is run by a committee of about eight: Director, Field Officer (responsible for direction of searches), Rescue Officer, Radio Officer, Equipment Officer, Publicity Officer and Medical Officers (at present both from UNSW). The ranks consist of ordinary walkers classified according to their ability, experience and availability. Group 1 must be fit, experienced in navigation, canyoning and basic rockclimbing, and

We met a t Jindabyne for breakfast, a whole horde of us. There were 18 altogether, with Peter, Robyn and John the only competent skiers. Several had never been on skis before.

We parked the cars just above Dead Horse Gap and started out across the slope down to the valley. But the slope was too much for some, and after many spills a few of us returned to the road and walked to the Gap.

Then we proceeded, strung out like Brown's cows along the snow covered road next to the Snowy River. Some straggled ahead, a few had trouble merely balancing on their skis and gliding along with heavy packs. One and a half kilometres down the road, we regrouped and sped towards the small bridge crossing the river. On the way, someone lost his ski, which whizzed down the slope and had to be fished out of the icy waters. Everyone crossed the bridge, one by one, and no-one fell in, although some thought about it.

It was obvious the party would not get much further, so John, Peter and someone else did a reconnaissance and decided we should camp in a sheltered gully, out of the cool wind.

Several feet of powder snow, fallen over the last few days, covered the ground. We marked out our tent sites. Then tramp, tramp, tramp, gosh - 'I've fallen down thigh deep!' This was a common occurrence as everyone tried to pack the snow on their site. After tramping back and forth for about an hour, tents gradually went up, some with ease (like the Tuft Hilton), some with agony.

Water was collected, and then some firewood, as a roaring blaze was proposed. But this never eventuated. The cold and dark closed in and sleeping bags and choofas seemed a quicker means of getting warm. Conversation was drowned as choofas roared, and dinner, of varying standards of cuisine, was dispensed with.

It was too cold afterwards to venture to other tents in our little gully to socialise, so we pulled on extra layers of clothes and snuggled down in our sleeping bags to catch up on lost sleep. Once we were quiet, we could hear the goings-on in neighbouring tents. Above us, Ian Donovan and Ian Smith were making do in their Paddy's tent; Ian Donovan was in fine voice and produced some wonderful and relevant versions of Australian folk songs. Below us, Jenny and Tony were trying to get comfortable. Later comments indicated that they found the night rather traumatic.

Next morning we woke to the sound of snow falling lightly on the tent. Several flurries of snow later, we ventured out into improving weather. The first couple of hours were spent trying to master the art of turning on the hill behind the camp. A long trudge up - very hot and tiring - and then down, one turn, and another safely accomplished, and then, oh dear, I'm losing my balance - splatt - failed again!

Eventually Peter decided it was time we went for a little jaunt. A long, slow haul up a ridge, pleasantly decorated with green trees and dead trees. The latter were bedecked with long icicles (before we reached them). Then we contoured around the head of a gully, John trying desperately to coach the ladders on how to glide correctly. Past one tree, around another. Don't stop in front, or I'll bang into you! At last the downhill run. "See how many snow snakes you can find," called John, as off we sped to meet Peter below. Cheryl showed us up with her elegant style; but where was Ian Smith - ah, here he is, and he only fell over once on that last stretch - Bravo!

Back to the tents - the water buckets sitting in the sun were still frozen over. A quick lunch, then pack up the tents; one must keep moving - to stop is to freeze. Load up, into the wind and back along the road again like Brown's cows. On reaching Dead Horse Gap, we wasted no time in packing the cars and setting off for warmer climes.

Rosalie Meadows

Publicity, too, has until recently been a neglected office, but a brochure on bushwalking in general, and safety in particular, are now being prepared and will be distributed widely. There is also an increasing awareness of the need for Federation to achieve greater general publicity if it is to achieve its aims.

#### Education

The Outdoor Recreation Education program is a recent innovation intended to introduce people to the rucksack sports, and to enable those who have taken up one of these sports to diversify into others. Each year there is one weekend for each activity: bushwalking, ski-touring, mountaineering, canoeing, rockclimbing, caving and canyoning. There are far more applications than the 30-50 places available for each weekend, and the workshop series looks as if it will be a continuing success. Perhaps part of the attraction is its low cost - in 1978, costs averaged \$8 per weekend for instruction, but there may also be hire and transport charges etc. Despite the low fees, Federation still stands to make something of a profit. Next year it will operate under the name "Bushsports '79".

#### "Walk in a Wilderness"

As an extension of its conservation activities, the Federation is organising for 1979 a series of 20 walks to the 20 recognised wilderness areas in New South Wales. Each walk is to be organised by a different club much like an ordinary club trip, except that it will be widely publicised and open to all bushwalkers for a fee of a few dollars, most of which will go to conservation funds. The Walk in a Wilderness weekends, Bushsports '79, Search & Rescue practices and various conservation seminars will make up a very full calendar of Federation activities.

The Federation's activities obviously cover a very wide range. Moreover, once you know a bit about them, they are important to the bushwalkers of New South Wales; unfortunately, many walkers do not know enough about the Federation to appreciate its work. Federation suffers from one serious weakness: its total dependence on the dedication of voluntary office bearers. Three years ago, it was faced with dissolution because no office bearers could be found. It was revitalised and now is booming, but who knows where it will be in another two or three years. The solution: employment of a part-time or full-time executive secretary who can take much of the burden off the voluntary office bearers. Recently there have been various dramatic successes in fund raising, from one source or another, for various special conservation projects. Raising enough to ensure continued employment of an executive secretary is perhaps the ultimate challenge to guarantee the continued existence and effectiveness of Federation.

Peter Tuft

Got any odd recipes that you think other people should know about? What's new in the equipment line that you know about and others don't? Write about it for the next MOBSAC. Drawings are very welcome too.

"CHRISTMAS THE ALPINE WAY"

Not everyone gets a mountain and a days sunshine for Christmas.

After an abortive week at Arthurs Pass (We'd travelled there in an itsy-bitsy teensy-weensy yellow mini loaded with a weeks food, four sacks, ropes, ice axes, three hard men and me and spent the entire time hut bound) - Bill and I left Mara and Priddy en route to Sydney dampened and dissillusioned. We went on to Chch. through the wild Waimakariri gorge on the Arthurs Pass train, following the river through its rapids in and out of tunnels, perched on the edge of the cliff-spectacular.

We arrived in Wanaka and drove to Raspberry flat the next morning (the guy driving the land-rover ran down on foot two earth bound geese for Christmas Dinner on the way in) From there, we followed the Matukituki flats in the Aspiring hut for lunch, and up French Ridge that afternoon (all in the rain) with the idea that if there was a break in the weather, we had to be in the right place to take advantage of it.

There was only one other guy in French Ridge Hut (apart from the Keas and rats). He had been there for 3 weeks in bad weather! We settled in for a long stay. Checking the freeze and the weather at 2 and 4am didn't offer much promise and we finally stirred at about 7.00a.m. to the glorious sunshine and crisp freeze that befits a Christmas morning. There was absolutely no excuse to pike despite the late start and we threw our gear together in record time and charged up the Quarterdeck in superb conditions.

At the lip of the Q.D. the Banar Glacier and its ring of peaks leaves you in awe everytime. There was no hesitation deciding which peak we were heading for. Aspiring Dominates the skyline with its classic profile, irresistible. The Banar was crisp and firm, but distances were deceptive and it took a couple of hours to cross to Aspirings S. face, and from there across the Western flank to the base of a very steep gully leading up the side of the N.W. Ridge. After an hour and 600ft of fair-dinkum front-pointing (more interesting and a little more demanding than the usual glacier plodding and walking of the past few weeks). We reached the N.W. ridge - a broad ramp and easy going to the top. The summit opened up another scale of distances and peaks. The next hour was spent planning trips - Earnslow, the Olivine Plateau, the Snow White glacier... Christmas dinner lacked a bit of the family style. We substituted jelly babies, greasy salami and melting chocolate

Very hard to get yourself going again - a bit of an anticlimax to go down again. The snow after a day of intense sun was much softer and descending our steep gully was a bit hairier than the way up. The Bonar had become slushy and we watched small avalanches coming off Mt. French covering our earlier steps. We slid the entire way down the Quarter deck to French Ridge Hut, 12 hrs later.

The next day, the weather closed in again.

Meg Thornton.

AND THE DOGS CAME TOO

It was a hot day - Australia Day, as we began our trip down Bullee Brook. This creek runs at the edge of Morton National Park, flowing into the Endrick River.

Geoff, Hildegard, Laurie, Lester, Pam, Rosalie and I set off to explore this unexplored route. Our numbers were suddenly swelled by two dachshunds that Pam refused to leave behind.

We walked along the creek, at times pushing through thick scrub of banksias and ti-trees. The two little dogs running between our feet seemed to have no trouble getting through the scrub. But soon they grew tired, and heroic Lester came to the rescue, placing the "little blighters" into his pack.

On we trudged..... Now and then a curse and swear from Lester - "Why didn't we leave the b.... things home?" The sweat poured from everyone's brow and the flies didn't help either. "Phew, it's getting damned hot," said Lester, "One should go for a swim!"

To everyone's sirprise, we soon arrived at a huge pool about 4x12 metres. It appeared as though someone had cut it out of the rock. It was magnificent - surrounded by a smooth rock platform, about half a metre above the water. We all plunged into the water - brrr!!! It was cold, but delightfully refreshing. The dogs hesitated - a quick push, shove, they were in and enjoying it. We stopped for a while thinking how nice it would be to stay for the whole day. The temperature still seemed to be rising - it must have been well over the century.

On we pushed, staying near the water's edge, crossing from one side to another. At last another large pool - Pam jumped in first followed by her two "little ones", then the rest of us.

The creek's banks started to widen and we knew from the map that we would soon be moving on to open plains. Everyone felt tired, sticky and hot, and there were no more cool pools. The sun was sinking as we moved up the scrubby ridge and emerged on to a beautiful grassy plain.

It was sheer delight to be out of scrub and on to smooth ground, where one could run without having to clear the way. The temperature had dropped; we wandered aimlessly across the paddocks until we came upon an old abandoned homestead. Outside stood a gray weathered by the elements - "Oh, if only it could speak, what stories it could tell!"

The sun had almost set as we reached the road and vehicle that we had left on the bank of the Endrick River. We jumped into the Land Cruiser and voted "The Nerriga pub for all." What a pleasant way to finish such a rugged day..... "Schooners all round please, barman!"

John Meadows

Do you think MOBSAC is worth producing? Don't you think it can be better than this issue? You can make it better by contributing - in all sorts of ways If enough articles reach Linda Vining in good time, the next MOBSAC could appear in Orientation Week, 1979.

