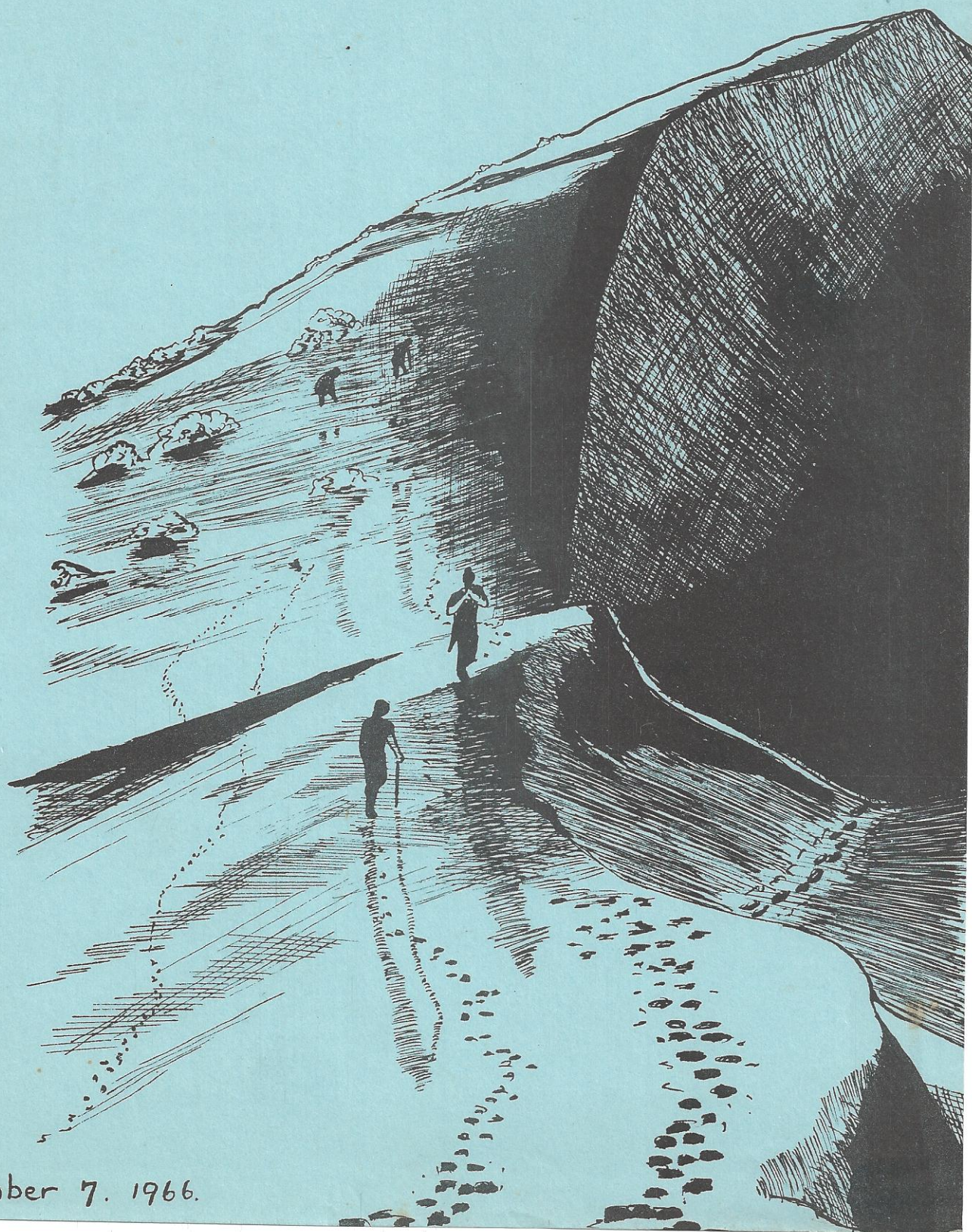
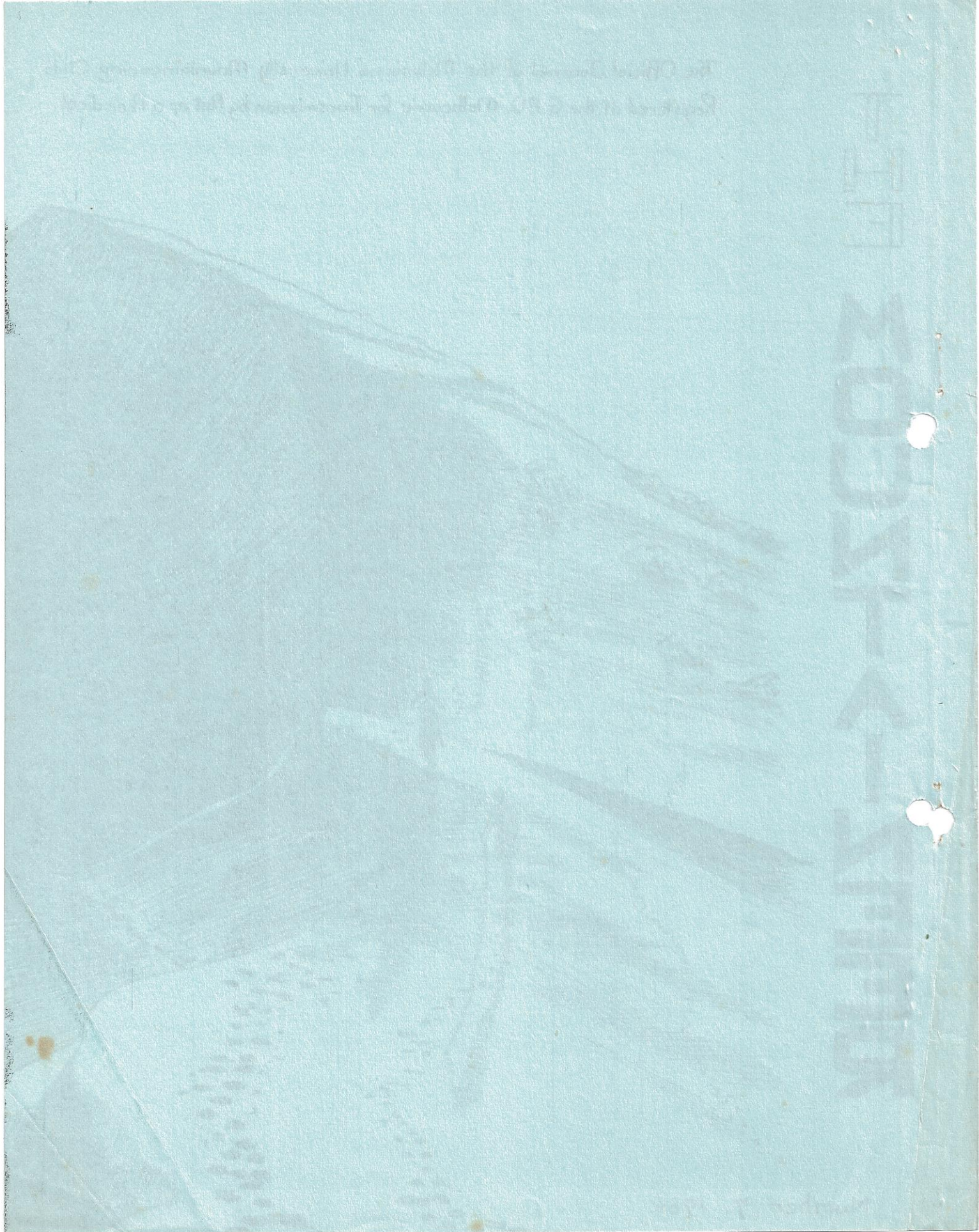


The Official Journal of the Melbourne University Mountaineering Club.
Registered at the G.P.O. Melbourne for Transmission by Post as a Periodical.

THE MOUNTAIN REFLEX



Number 7. 1966.



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All correspondence addressed to Beaerepaire Centre, University of Melbourne, Parkville, N.2.

Editorial

With a rush of snow trips the Second Term vacation is over. Packs are being emptied and put on top of wardrobes or under beds, well dried tents are packed away, the oil freshly rubbed into the boots should keep them soft for the summer, and sleeping bags have received their last airing for several months. Brightly dyed climbing ropes are hanging on walls or in cupboards, and the pitons there with them will not be heard to jingle for many weekends hence. It is third term, a time when mountaineers must sit in the Bailleau, gazing idly out of the windows and wishing they were in the mountains.

It is a time for the club to look at its recent past. Nineteen sixty-six began tragically for M.U.M.C., but it developed into a year of great activity. A hut has been built, climbing has been put back on its feet as never before, successful alpine climbing trips have been held, caving has revived with new gusto, and M.U.M.C. Has another first with their convivial Poyntons nights.

Time passes quickly and soon it will be the post exam weekend, the adjournment will be over. Feverish activity will follow. The more sensible will restrict their outdoor activities to beaches and beer gardens. Mad dogs, englishmen, and some mountaineers are not put off by the heat, and many will be seen clinging to a sunbaked cliff, or sweating their way up Mt. Feathertop. Some will feel the winter was too short and will go south to Tasmania and eternal winter. Some eminent personalities are heading even further south for twelve months or so, and for such foolishness we can offer nothing but sympathy.

Mike Stone is working with some bunnies in England.

AN OXOMETRIC INVASION OF MT. BULLER

Six-thirty p.m. Friday was the time of departure. True to form we left at seven-fifteen pm. This was not due to the van, but due to a rather volatile Stores Officer who was mysteriously delayed - Sue perhaps? All told progress was rather good and camp was pitched at the Delatite before midnight.

Awakened by the ravings of a demented mountaineer we crawled slowly out of our sleeping bags, curst the frost and attempted to light a fire. In true mountaineering style we doused the damp wood liberally with shellite. In true mountaineering style the shellite burnt away leaving a heap of damp and charred wood. In true mountaineering style we gave up the fire and resorted to our choofers. Away at last, the short but exhilarating climb up Timbertop was soon over. A rest on the summit while we admired the view of Charlie's, and other well known landmarks. Then off on a leisurely stroll along the ridge to our campsite - a small saddle about three hours away from the summit of Buller. With the tents up and lilos out we again attempted to light a fire. Without even one drop of shellite it started. However, a short while later we looked on with dismay as our precious fire sank through the snow to the ground beneath, but it was soon coaxed back to life.

After a comfortable and warm night (we were forced to drink Tom's ice cream next morning) we set off on our conquest of Buller. Armed to the teeth with ice axes, staffs, and even a pair of crampons, we slowly crept forward. Approaching the summit we struck dissent in the ranks! The leader had kicked steps in the snow over a rock slab. After the first few had passed over no trace of the steps could be found and all that remained was a smooth and slippery inclined slab. The unfortunate leader was the object of much abuse and many snowballs. The rioting was soon quelled and we set about the important task of conquering Buller. On the summit we rested, had lunch, and surveyed the scene of hundreds of skiers schussing or tumbling down the slopes in brilliant sunshine.

The invasion was rather a flop as we were hopelessly outnumbered. We managed to claim a few 'hills' though as unsuspecting skiers hurtled into our steps, soon finding themselves sprawled helplessly in the snow. A rapid retreat to Mansefield was followed by dinner. After a cry of Argus Tuft to the locals, causing much bewilderment, we set out, weary but happy for Melbourne.

(continued over)

One of the things achieved on this trip was that we taught the 'Navy' that rock climbing is not the only facet of mountaineering.

Also we learnt that to conquer Buller we need greater numbers, especially girls. If you are one of the four hundred odd club members who were not on this trip I hope you will decide to come along next year. The views are simply magnificent and the company scintillating. It is a never to be forgotten experience. We hope to see YOU there next year.

Michael Feller.

EXTRACT

In an attempt to capture the emotion of some of the finer aspects of mountaineering we have selected an extract from the writings of one of the masters of the mountains. It is from the famous mountaineering autobiography 'Adventures When High', written by that veteran of countless overhangs Cinus (The Tiger) DuQuincey. Upon meeting Du Quincey, the great bard of the mountains, C.J. Quill, was inspired to write;

"A lesser man is swinging an axe
Whilst such as he, asleep in their sacks."

"..... And so I knew the time had come, I must leave the safety of a firm stance and cross that thirty treacherous feet without a single hold for my hands, a precarious feat of balance. My companion patted my shoulder and smiled grimly. I knew, and he knew that I knew, and I knew that he knew that I knew that he was relying on me, on my experience and judgement, to see him safely back in camp that night. If I was to fall during that thirty perilous feet neither of us would find our way back. Such are the dangers one must face when high, dangers that create that well known comradeship when one is forced to entrust his care to a companion. Yes the spirit of the day burned brightly in our eyes.

My first steps out onto that holdless void were tentative, cautious and unsure, but quickly I gained confidence in that all important awareness of balance. With confidence in balance one can almost dance along with little or no support for the hands, even when very high. Quickly I reached the foot of a steep wall where I could rest. Having overcome the first obstacle I grinned reassuringly back at my companion.

The wall looming above me was causing concern. At first glance it was vertical, but on closer examination it appeared overhanging, then vertical, then overhanging, then vertical, until looking at it made my head swim.

Traversing along the foot of the wall, using whatever holds afforded themselves, I reflected on the joys of being high. Not for us the drudgery of being earthbound, for we have learnt to float upwards, upwards to the misty heights, the worries of work, unpaid bills, and man's bitterness being left far behind. To be high; a worthy ambition, surely the most worthy ambition that can fill a young man's soul.

I came to that all important break in the wall and wedged my back tightly against a solid projection whilst surveying the route ahead. Once more I was confronted with an holdless void. Once into it I would be out of sight of my companion so I gave him a forced grin before facing the perils beyond.

At this stage I suffered a mental blackout, well known to those who have been high. My heart raced, pumping will and courage through my limbs. The one thought was to reach my goal before I lost the strength to hold on. In this state one can muster great strength and will to overcome seemingly impossible obstacles. It is times such as this that experience and training are not enough, an inner strength must be called upon.

Then before me I saw it. A vertical gleaming sheet of (wait for it) stainless steel. I had made it; made it from the Bellfield bar to the Mens. Now I could concentrate on the difficult task of unzipping my

In June of this year Bob Taylor and members of the V.C.C. attempted the difficult south to north traverse of the peaks of Geryon in the Reserve Tasmania in winter conditions. This traverse was first done by Reg Williams and John Moore in January this year. Unfortunately they were not able to carry out their ambitious plan due to the difficult ice conditions.

Confucious say: "It is best to learn to climb on an old route"

MT. FEATHERTOP MEMORIAL HUT PROGRESS REPORT

It is some time since a report on the hut appeared in The Mountaineer. This report is to inform those who aren't up to date with developments and to give some information about the future of the project.

The last work party was on 24 - 26 June and there will be no more work parties until the summer.

The done is virtually complete except for a few joints which still have to be sealed. The entrance, door, floor and flue are in place; the rock wall is almost complete and the windows only require finishing touches. Although by no means finished, the hut is now habitable and reasonably weatherproof. It seems to be standing up well to the weather.

For those who are impressed by figures we guesstimate that over ten tons of materials have been carried in, \$800 worth of food eaten, and 6,000 man and woman hours worked. This in itself is a remarkable achievement.

It is rather unfortunate that we could not finish the hut before winter. However we will finish it next vacation, provided everyone lends a hand. There will still be plenty of jobs to do, although many of these will be quite minor. No special skills are required - in fact it's a good chance to learn some. (Have you noticed how our mild mannered Treasurer's vocabulary has developed?)

The hut fund is looking a bit sick at the moment and any alms, bequests, spare change or tax refunds would be welcome

Even though the hut is not finished it is habitable and I think it is up to us to establish good habits in its use right from the start. So anyone using the hut is asked to respect it or its surroundings in any way. There is a broom in the hut - use it! There is also a rubbish pit nearby. Do not leave any food scraps in the hut - it already has one resident beastie. Leave wet parkas etc. in the entrance section. Stamp the snow and mud off your boots on the grid and try to keep the interior dry. Do not disturb any tools or building materials left in the hut. There is a log book in the hut. Please use it so we can chase you up if you leave a mess.

Up to fifteen people have cooked and slept in the hut for one night. We would be very interested to hear any comments on the performance of the hut, especially with regard to leaks and draughts.

(continued over)

A new map of the area, 4" to the mile, is available at Aikman's Road, price 50c.

On Friday 16th. September there will be a hut night at Ormand College. The idea of this is to inform people about the project. Bring yourself, friends and relatives along. See the mighty epic production in glorious colour, magnificent wide screen, 8mm., starring a cast of thousands of well known oxymetric personalities, ravishing beauties, sun-bronzed slaves.....

Rumblegutze

CLIMBS FOR THE CONNISEUER

by H.P.

The climbs selected for this column are not chosen for their difficulty, but rather for excellence of line, character, or technique.

TOURIST DIRECT BUTTRESS (Mt. Rosea) Victoria's introduction to artificial climbing, lead by Herbert Slipper and Greg Lovejoy, and now regarded as a classic. The two artificial pitches are straightforward, but the climb up the swinging etriers to the lassooed rock nose on the 2nd. pitch is delightfully exposed, likewise the free climbing.

KESTRAL (Mt. Arapiles) Originally graded V+, but after gardening V. One hundred and fifty feet of fine bridging come chimneying. No move is particularly difficult but each must be thought about and carefully executed.

SPRAGGIT - SPEIGLEMAN'S ROUTE (Nth. Jawbones) Some unusually strenuous climbing for the 'Bones, followed by a beautifully clean, square crack, one of the best pitches on the face. An excellent climb in itself, or as a warmup for Greg's Direct.

Note: Unfortunately our chef and wine conniseuer is on holidays.

From 'Mountaincraft', published 1920, the section on "Costumes For Women" by Miss Bronwen Jones.

"The skirt is still often looked upon as a necessity in the Alps, but it is discarded early in the ascent."

I guess we started climbing a generation too late.

An account of great zoological interest.

THE HAGGIS INDUSTRY

In British walking circles the Haggis is as much discussed as the Yeti is in the Himalayas. Our undercover agent, camouflaged by a slouch hat, went on the rounds of the Highland Pubs and the Lake District Taverns to discover the truth about its life in its natural habitat.

The Haggis is a shaggy off white animal with a black face, about the same size and shape as an Australian sheep. It frequents the bracken and heather of the moors, and the rocks and peaks of the highlands. It startles the lonely traveller with its staring white eyes and derisive "Baa-aa". It thrives on mountains.

Haggi never have four legs all of the same length. If the two left legs are shorter than the right, the haggis can only stand in one direction on the mountain; That is facing horizontally around the mountain in an anti-clockwise direction. Those haggi with the right legs shorter are just the opposite.

The breeding habits are most interesting. When a clockwise and an anti-clockwise haggis meet on a mountain they mate, and their offspring may be any of three kinds.

There is the uphill haggis, with short front legs. He is destined slowly uphill till he arrives either at the summit of the mountain, or at the base of a difficult cliff. This explains why British climbers can be sure of a soft landing when they fall, and why peaks in England and Scotland are always wreathed in cloud on cold days; the cloud is haggis breath.

There is the downhill haggis, with short hind legs. He walks downhill slowly, and is caught in the nets the locals place around the base of hills for this purpose. The haggis is a major Scottish export; and fine specimens can even be bought, tinned, in department stores in Melbourne.

Finally there is the unstable haggis. This unfortunate creature has two diagonally opposite legs short, and he cannot stand on a flat or sloping surface. The most common fate for an unstable haggis is to be caught in a downhill haggis net, but there are a few which manage to escape. These are the few which, while rolling downhill, find a stable footing diagonally across the top of a spur or the bottom of a valley. There they stand till their dying day, either being blasted by icy winds, or the run off of melting snow.

(continued over)

Next time you come across one of these poor creatures, soften your heart a little and feed ~~it~~ with your Youth Hostel lunch. Both you and he will be better off.

Hamish

P.S. It is believed that the species is perpetuated by the meeting of uphill and downhill haggi, but there is no reliable confirmation.

A trip report with a difference.

THE CRAYDEL MOUNTAYNE TALES

OR THE RESERVE : 26/12/65 - 1/1/66

LEADER : PHILIP SECOMBE

ROUTE : TOURIST DIRECT

With apologies (and thanks for inspiration) to Chaucer, and to David Swain who wrote the Cantbeworthy Tales, and between them wrote the first verse of this saga.

Whenne that Decembre wythe hys showres swoot
The drought of monthes hath perced to the root,
And bathed in every veyn in suche licour,
From whyche vertu engendred is the flour;
So pryketh then nature in thir corages:-
Thenne longen folke to goe on pilgrimages.

Methinketh it accordinge to resoun
To telle yow som of the condicioun
Of certayne folke who as it semes to mee
Enliveneth our Strange Societee...

A ledour hadde wee ther who gotte uppe late
Or longe tyne in hys tente at morne hee sate
Or toke tyne ovre meles or com what naye
But neuer lefte erlye on any daye.
Forsothe, hee sayd, wee muste see nom are lefte,
That we are note of nombres here berefte.
Wee muste renayne to see that alle is welle
For wee wille catche them uppe at nexte bigge hille.

Alle chundrous fyttte was hee, and musclye toe,
And didde noe thynke that othres wer note see,
For whenne thay stoped to brethe or wette thir throte
Hee didde note stope but ranne lyke mountayne gote.

Som saye a gode ledour is note lyke hee
and tryes note to gette rydde of hys partye.
For byrned thys ledour offe hys unfyttte frendes
Tille thay wer sorelye doubled wythe the bendes.

And thenne hee hadde a gefle to clynbe a rocke
 For canera, and it sorelye cracked and shoke
 And felle doune mountaynesyde (the rocke I saye!)
 But sadde was hee, for sche hadde saved the daye
 Bye clynbinge to the othre syde, and rounde
 To wher sche colde see rocke falle erthwarde bounde.
 And thenne on nor wher pyne forest is founde,
 And Pelyonne Weste, that stepe-syded rocke mounde,
 An ankle ther was sprayned, that wente alle fatte,
 And hee colde note leve ouner at Frogge Flattes
 Because of leche and flyinge dragouns snalle
 That woulde hav sucked hiir blode and eten alle.
 (But onlye that hee wolde hav bene in stryfe
 If one of hys partye hadde loste a lyf!)

For toke hee us through boges of pete alle thynke
 And owre mountaynes wher wee colde note picke
 The stones from skye for neithre colde wee see
 For bothe alle undre watre sened to bee.
 Yit tolde hee us it was alle drye thys yeare
 Because once stucke in boge wee colde stille fre
 Our thighs and knes and ankles and our fete
 That wer alle stucke in thys unfathred pete.
 (And sothe to saye one ther didde euen sitte
 Athence didde weare nenne's pantos that didde note fyttte.)

Of othres ther, ther was a gerle who wor
 Note verye muche at alle that othres saw,
 A litel two pece gaimente and a shorte
 That padded uppe hir shuldres whenne packe herte.
 For lyke ledour and sche who wer nenne's shortes
 Fulle sixtye poundes on hir backe sche didde porte.

And whenne at Pelyonne Gappe was wette wythe rayne
 Sche travelled on wythe partye to Ducane,
 And putte on pantos alle brightlye frilled and pinke
 Note caringd what alle othre folke myte thynke.

Alle bigge and stronge sche was, but note muche fyttte -
 Yit fyttte enow th chase ledour, and hytte,
 And throwe in prykle bushe whenne hee didde saye
 Rude thynges to hir at ende of firste daye.

Four gerles ther wer who eche morninge didde ryse
 At horrid erlye houre (wee didde surmyse
 Because wee wer note uppe to see then thenne
 But alwayse thay wer gon befor the nenne.)
 Fulle erlye thay didde goe and erlye reche
 The hutte ahede, to fynde a bedde for eche,
 For puttinge uppe a tente is sore harde worke -
 To fynde a hutte a profytable lerke.

One morninge in the shade of Pelyonne Weste
 Wee founde then bye a creke as sauvages drest,
 Wythe pyggetales dorke, and derte uponne thir clothes,
 And visage redde, and warrepaynte on the nose

(Whyche proved to bee no nor thanne whyte sinke creme
And derte from alle the mors wher thay hadde bene).

Yit lokinge backe uponne thys scene i knowe
That to eche othre wee muste alle loke soe.

A manne ther was of figure thynne and talle
Who was distinguished welle among us alle.
Wee colde note thynke hym someone else for een
Hee wor uponne hys hede a cabbage grene.
And ate hee mete that wee alle thought was badde
For thys was alle the mete that thys manne hadde,
Yit suffred note, for alle its gangrene huc -
Hee is alive todaye as mee or yow.

Four othres travellinge wythe us wee didde fynde
Who though our gwestes wer note of Oxo-kinde,
But fendes of ledour (who it semes hadde som,
Although at ende of trippe twas lykelye non.
Though rayne and mudde wer note hys fault I thynke
Hee toke us out ther juste to see us synke!)

These peple lived outsyde in tentes of grene
In spacious pryvate confort it wolde seme
Y-slept uponne soft grounde and note harde bedde
Wythe alle the othres as wee didde instede.

Two othre peple ther who slepte outsyde
Rathre thanne share bunkes that wer thre fete wyde
Wythe othre peple, possumes and the derte
Wer a younge marryed Oxo-couple girte
In propre walkinge clothes, unlyke the reste
(Or son at leaste) who wer impropelye drest!
Trowsres, whyche in batel hadde bene used
Whych kepte snakes out but verilye wer abused
Whenne clymbinge uppe the clyffe-syde in grete hete,
Twas deneed for thys thycke trowsres wer note mete.

A nanne ther was wythe rounde poetic name
(Ther is a lakesyde mountayne called the same)
Who spente myche tyne pursuinge fayre younge mayde
(Who spente muche time the younge manne to evade)
Who finallye in derke despayre to drowne,
Hynselfe y-caste at nyte in watres browne,
Y-sanke benethe the watres of the Lake
But rose agayn, our derke and dryppinge rake,
For een on Newe Yeares Eve hee didde note dare
Contanyne the watres of Saynt Clayre.

A nanne ther was who slowlye walked behynde
Who nayd hys own pace and didde note mynde
That othres wer ahede, for nede's muste runne
Whenne walkinge's faste enow? It spoils the funne!

Thys manne didde staye soe clene in alle the boge
That othre folke that wallowed ther lyke hoge
Dide angrie noises make to throwe hym in -
But soilinge suche clene clothes wolde bee a sinne!
Soe thay didde note, but lefte hym ther, alack,
To crosse the strappes netelye on hys rucksacke.

A manne mayd violente bye suche litel thynges
As clene frendes, crossed strappes, walkinge rounde in ringes
In thycke scrubbe wythe a manne hee thought didde knowe
The pathe (but didde note) came to Craydel toe.
Alle angrie was hee thenne, or laughinge lowde,
To putte into hystericks the whole crowde,
For stoped hee ther in swampe or bushe or hille
And verilye hee laughed hys propre fylle
Tille alle the partye wythe hym felle in fyttres
Lyke compaigne y-stonden of halfe-wyttes.

A gerle ther was wythe countenance fulle gaye
Welle lyked bye alle the folke who wente awaye
Who carryed weightes fulle heavye on hir backe
For tenne dayes fode hadde sche in hir rucksacke
Strange fodes from othre landes sche carryed ther
That aromattick war, and all such fayre
As garlicke hadde, and othre herbes alle highe,
And cheses olde, and brede mayd out of rye.
For alle thys weighte sche neuer walked the laste
For sche was bigge and stronge and colde walke faste
(Besydes, the ledour alwayse helde thys playse
Soe sche colde note, wer sche to goe snail's payse).

And sothe to saye, sche mayd alle folke fele gladde
No matter if condiciouns wer badde
For sche hadde joye in lyf whenne sche didde live
Soe alle joye to hir memorye wee give.

Marg. James

THE FALLEN ANGELS CLUB NEWS

There have been two recent additions to the Fallen Angels.
Ian Speedie fell 15" while putting up a new route on the
southe side of D Minor, Mt Arapiles. He was dangleing of a
shark hook while putting in a bolt when the rock holding the
shark hook shattered. The falle onto a bollard runner was
held by Garry Kerkin who was injured in the process.

Phil Seconbe fell 30" at Mt. Buffalo when he stepped back
onto a faulty piton. The piton below came out, the one below
that had no crab on it, and the one still further down was a
channel and held. A good effort Phil.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

A rumour has been circulating round the club to the effect that certain members of the committee do not like the habits of climbers in the club. In fact one such person is reported to have said "They actually go to Poynton's to drink beer." It seems to me that this is yet another resurrection of the so-called "Climbers vs. Walkers Slanging Match", by people who regard themselves as bastions of walking tradition in the club. In the same vein climbers have been designated and accused of "lack of club spirit" and social misbehaviour.

In answer to these :

1. To my knowledge there is only one person in the club who has made a name as a climber who has not also been tried and tested as a walker. Some have tried both and prefer climbing, while this one joined the club purely to take up climbing. Surely it is their privilege to make this choice.

2. As far as club spirit is concerned, on almost every day in recent weeks, the people at Aikman's Road during lunch hour have been predominantly climbers. That they are interested in club activities is evinced by the number of different climbers that have done trips of all types, even day trips, during term.

3. 'Mountaineers' are not known for their abstinence from alcohol or smoking. If it is good enough for Sir John Hunt, who was knighted for mountaineering, quibbles by any club members I will ignore. On a more familiar plane however, I have invited and taken girls to Poynton's nights many times and not once has their innocence been assailed. I have never heard a song sung there, let alone a lecherous one, and I have not seen anyone intoxicated. I am sure Peter Poynton will attest to the good behaviour of the climbing fraternity as he sees it.

Probably the main characterisation of climbers at the moment is their 'go-ahead' nature. They meet with people from other clubs regularly, discuss equipment, technique, design and experiment; they explore new areas and extend old ones. The rancour of some of the older walkers could probably be traced to jealousy of their success. In the 1950's this club was noted as one of the major exploring bodies on the Eastern Arthurs. Where has this renown gone? In the time that I have known the club, almost all the exploring of new areas (for walking and climbing) has been led by climbers. That the club is still capable of innovation has been admirably demonstrated by the design and erection (very

largely due to walkers) of the Feathertop Hut. When this is completed I hope this spirit is carried onto the more usual club activities.

To conclude, it is my hope that the club spirit itself causes the cessation of this type of dispute. Personally I am neither climber nor bush-walker to the exclusion of either, but a member of M.U.M.C. who enjoys all the activities of the club and recommends that others attempt to do so too.

R.N. Webb

Editors Note : Comments made at the Alpine Climbing Course lecture serve to promote the above antipathy. Perhaps there are too many who never quite made the grade as a climber, socially as well as on the rock. Try coming to Poynton's some time, you might even enjoy it.

DEATH IN A SLEEPING BAG

(From CORESEARCH. No. 90, Melbourne, Sept. 1966)

A sixteen year old boy died recently in a sleeping bag which had been dry cleaned with perchlorathlene in a commercial unit.

The bag was received from the cleaners in a roll and put straight into the car boot. It was unrolled inside a hike tent and the boy slept in it for eight hours.

He did not regain consciousness and was in convulsions when found. Autopsy showed death was due to the cleaning solvent.

This sleeping bag had not been properly aired, and there was sufficient residues of perchlorethylene to cause death.

All sleeping bags need through airing after cleaning and again before being put into use. The filling is bulky and removal of the final traces of solvent is a slow process. The unaired bag is particularly dangerous in the confines of a small hike tent.

"Getting benighted is not a pleasure, and it is rarely necessary. It has been given a false halo of romance by the practice and the picturesque descriptions of a number of mountaineers, who first render it inevitable by attempting what is beyond them, or by carrying great weights, and then seek to convince themselves and the world that the consequent night out on a lofty ledge forms an essential and agreeable part of mountaineering."

Yes, it is the second epic ascent of the North Wall of the Buffalo Gorge.

MT. BUFFALO

28th. August - 2nd. September

Party: Ian Guild, Chris Dewhurst, John Moore and Phil Secombe.

The two Volkswagens arrived at the summit chalet in the early, and not so early, hours of the Sunday morning, whereupon the occupants bedded down in the nearby shelter shed and acted as curiosities for the mid-morning tourists.

About midday a tourist-type Speedie, who was there for the skiing (pronounced as in "Snow Bunny") showed us the wonders of the Gorge and conducted us down part of Comet Ramp where we fixed two abseil ropes. Comet Ramp had about two feet of snow on the rampy parts and we were treated to regular attack by an ice barrage from the wall near the Emperor line. A few well aimed snow balls helped to clear the more unstable ice sheets.

After giving of wise counsel Speedie left "to find some snow". He said he expected great things of us and drove off with a devilish grin on his face.

We spent the rest of the afternoon selecting various other routes in the Gorge which we could tackle after completing the Sicile line, which would be acting as the familiarisation route for Buffalo granite. All up in two days at the most.

Early Monday morning we lugged two climbing packs and an H-frame containing about half a ton of equipment to the top of Comet Ramp, and committing ourselves to the mission, abseiled down. This, at times, involved using the J.D.s self-climbing line, which Phil thought was No.4 but was in fact the most fallen on rope in Victoria - a bloated, frayed, aged, boiled in red dye No.2.

After 500' of descending dripping chimneys, slabs and snow ramps we arrived on the terrace at the base of the Sicile line where we dumped the gear, brewed tea and prepared equipment. The straight up line was deceptively wide and so we picked a corner and flake line slightly to the right, which angled back to the straight up line at about 200'.

Vegie and John elected to start off and sped up 70', mainly on pegs, with a few worthless bolts thrown in for good measure, while Beast and Phil sipped Twinings and looked for comfortable bivouac sites on the terrace.

After a few contentious hours attempting to lead through on a hanging belay, John and Vegie came down for the night. Beast and Phil were going to show them how to climb artificial at a hot pace tomorrow.

With a preliminary spiel on the forces acting on the support when a body is raised using a pulley, Phil rocketed skywards uttering an anxious plea for added rigidity for the worthless Vegie bolt above. The creakings from the pulley and the vocal support from the native power below did nothing to alleviate the situation.

On arriving at the 70' mark Phil thankfully sewed himself to the cliff and then proceeded up another 30' of alternative pegging and gardening. Beast led through on a hanging belay into the overhanging corner. He stopped after 50' under a roof, complaining eloquently about a pulped thumb which had evidently received more attention than the bolt drill, and questioning the legitimacy of the belaying bolt, had Phil lead through again on the last 60' to the junction with the straight up line which looked a respectable bivouac cave.

However, 30' out Phil decided he would prefer the comfort of the terrace for the night, and parting company with his peg landed back alongside Beast with a delighted 'Snorkler', a flurry of red beard and a jangle of ironmongery. Beast at that moment had come of his perch to see what was going on, and it was questionable who was the most surprised. By this time John and Vegie had arrived with Beast after a prolonged prussik with depegging. Without a word to Vegie, who wanted to bivouac on the face, Beast, John, and Phil abseiled rapidly to the terrace. Where the Hell are you off to asked Vegie to the Beast as he sailed past.

Food was a bit low and John nobly offered to get more. We didn't expect him back down Comet Ramp until the morning, in fact some factions actually hoped he wouldn't be seen at all that night for reason of the extra space and sleeping bag and so the reception for John as he appeared out of the darkness was a bit luke warm for his efforts. However, the quality, and quantity, of the loot he had bought soon erased any bitterness.

A 150' prussik faced everyone in the morning, with Phil leading off to make up for his reluctance of the previous night. You look ridiculous going up and down on the ground like a yo-yo taking up the stretch in 150' of rope. Phil had a strange preference for well driven chrome-moly channels and bolts that day to get him to the cosy bivouac. This turned out to be an evil, saturated, moss encrusted recess. Beast leading through was the only relatively dry one. He sped up 50' to the vicinity of the sole ledge on the climb. With Phil bolting satisfying bivouac bolts all over the ledge, and the others engaged in ascending to the ledge, pack hauling, and tangling the 250' of pack hauling line, we managed to find ourselves fed and reasonably comfortable in sleeping bags by 9pm. All we lacked was water, which had dissasterously descended to the terrace during the last stages of the pack hauling. This gave us meditative material for the endless night.

After breakfast, and photographs all round we packed up, skillfully managing to avoid dropping anything. It's rather unnerving, putting on boots in free space 500' above the ground with only a diminutive terrace in the way half way down.

Vegie led off with an aesthetically pleasing bolt line in rapid time to take him to a large tree at 65' out (or 335') and after John had pushed the line another 60' Vegie followed him up. It became obvious that the J.D.s were intent on reducing the number of applicants for the honour of the ascent for from a short distance up Vegie let loose an enormous boulder (or so it appeared from beneath) which came crashing down the line almost clearing up Beast and Phil, leaving a visiting card of a tattered red sling in the belaying bush.

It was about 4pm. when Vegie finally reached the top after an array of psychological pegs, and dusk by the time Phil, last in the line of seniority was allowed up.

The last 100' had been a watercourse and our condition was that of pathetic saturation. No wonder the doctor who picked Vegie up on the way to the Chalet asked the condition of the ones that had fallen.

The only events that can be remembered with any certainty that evening were an angry Park Ranger disturbed at our disappearance for four days, and an Austrian ski instructor who entertained us at the Chalet. He had climbed most of the North faces of the Northern Alps including the Bonmatti Pillar and the Dru and was going to go to our rescue if necessary. His address book read like a climbers 'Whos Who'. He was very kind to us. We added our names to his address book.

Phil Secombe

* * * * *

THE HIGHEST PEOPLE IN VICTORIA

Tawonga South State School shelter shed is quite a nice place to spend the night, but since it is only thirty feet from somebody's back yard we left early and had breakfast at Mountain's creek. Then with the weather trying to decide whether or not to rain, we started the long climb up the Staircase Spur to Mt. Bogong.

There seems to be a great controversy over how many steps the Staircase has, estimates varying from too many to not enough. After the first four or five they started getting bigger and we lost both interest and count. We struck the snow, old and crystalline, a little below bivouac Ht where we stopped for a brew which grew to an early lunch. Another hour and a half of plodding through very wet snow brought us to Summit Ht and another brew. The weather was

still indifferent but the cloud parted occasionally to give views of much of the high country. I'm fairly sure I saw a reflection from the hut on Mt. Feathertop. And so with light snow falling and only a few inches on the ground, we followed the snow pole line to Cleve Cole Memorial Hut.

Cleve Cole is a very impressive stone hut that shows what can be done if a hut is looked after and respected by those who use it.

Ay, twas a braw bricht moonlicht nicht and the snow froze, so taking ropes and ice axes we went around the gullies on the side of Bogong and spent the morning trying to learn some snow techniques. We arrived again at the summit in time to see the C.W.C.V. storm the mountain carrying every conceivable device for travelling over snow. In the afternoon we returned to Cleve Cole, picked up the Yeti (who had stayed there because savage snow buyips were on the prowl), and wandered over the falls and Maddison's Hut.

Next morning we left early (for us) with packs for Summit Hut. By now the snow was completely frozen and required hard kicking to make any impression. We did some more climbing and walked out to the Hooker Plateau. Father Nick and Yeti were even able to use their crampons. In contrast to my previous visit to Bogong, when we couldn't see a thing from the summit, the weather was still fine and we could see almost every high mountain in Victoria and Southern New South Wales, from Mt. Buller in the west to the Main Ridge in the east.

The snow was wetter and softer than ever, so we left the summit and went down the Staircase Spur at about twice the speed we had come up. We celebrated a mighty weekend in the usual way. I think I'd go back for a week next year, but in the meantime we leave you with this thought: Remember, happiness is a dry pair of socks.

Rumblegutze

Partly to be in with the latest trend in the club, but mainly to provide sufficient copy for the last page of The Mountaineer, the editor would like to tell of a Bogong trip he was fortunate to be on in 1963. The trip was an extension of the club trip and on it were Jules Hilman, Gwyn Davies, Fred Mitchell, Don Thomas and the editor.

The weather was doubtful when we left Bivouac Hut on the Sunday, and had deteriorated to a near blizzard by the time we reached Summit Hut. Fred and Don helped those on the club trip down to the tree line while the editor and the girls tried to make the hut habitable. By the time Don and Fred returned five lilos were spread out across the sleeping bench and tents tied to the walls to keep out the wind and

There was a good supply of wood and we found we could light a fire in the stove with tar paper. Unfortunately the chimney was blocked and the smoke rather acrid. After an early tea it was too cold to sit round so we retired to the sleeping bench with a bottle of rum and sung the Engineer's Songbook from cover to cover, Alternating the verses and all joining in on the chorus.

Monday dawned beautiful and we spent the day, under instruction from Fred and Don, trying to learn snow technique. Upon returning to the hut Fred swapped a tin of spaghetti for a tin of baked beans in the emergency food store and we went through the aphyxiating process of lighting the fire for tea. Again we retired early, this time with a bottle of brandy and a three hour joke session.

Tuesday was fine and we spent the day strolling to and from Cleve Cole, watching the skiers on the slopes. Back at the hut we brought the seat out onto the terrace and sipped brandy with a drop of lemon juice while watching the sun set. Fred was obviously deep in thought. Finally he announced that as he had put the tin of spaghetti into the emergency food store the night before it was his to take out, and did so. Quite a moral issue.

There was some discussion as to whether we should risk aphixication by lighting the fire again, or cook on choofers. "If you light that bloody thing once more....." We didn't light the fire but retired early with a bottle of vodka. This was particularly effective as we found it quite difficult to find our way out for what is less unpleasant at 10pm. than 4am.. It was suggested that a urinal be built for the men in one corner, but the girls objected strongly.

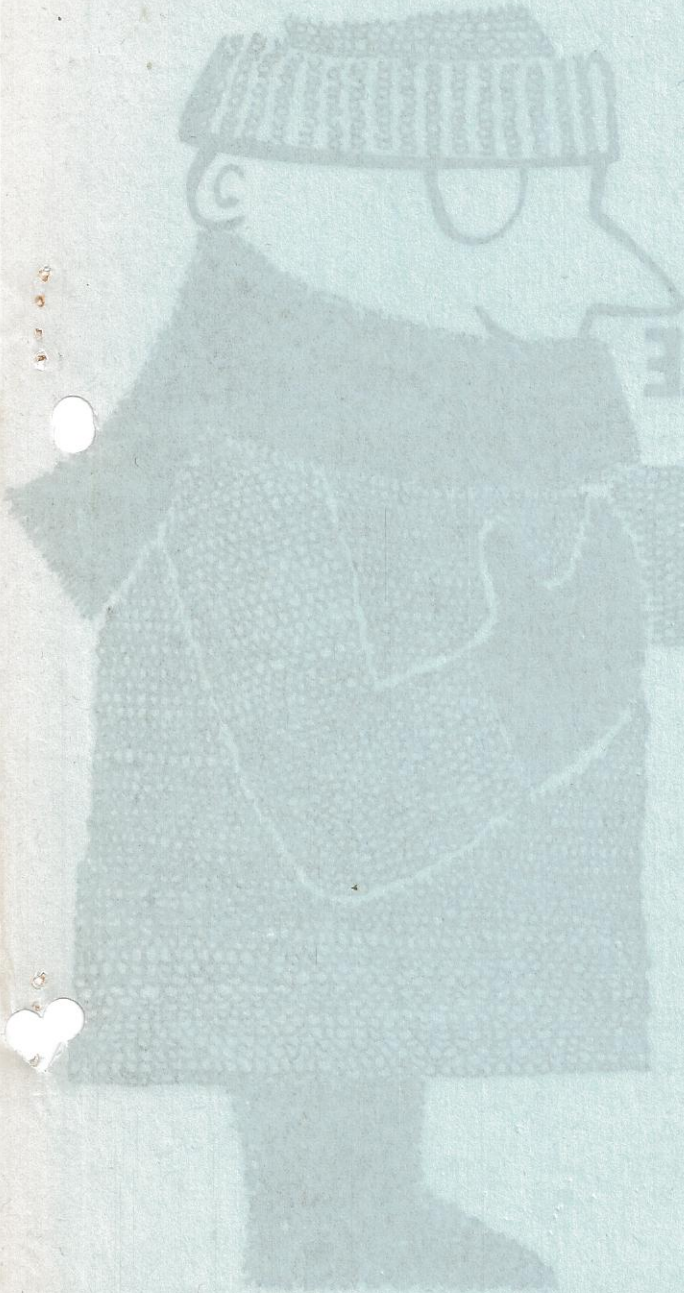
Wednesday morning we had to say farewell to Bogong, and Fred and Jules who were staying another few days. It was with sad hearts we rolled the half dozen empty spirits bottles down into the valley and made our way down the frozen upper section of the Staircase, whistling a bar from 'Cafoozalum', a memory from the night before.

The Editor would like to apologise for:-

1. Poor spelling and typing
2. Indistinct e's, g's and A's.



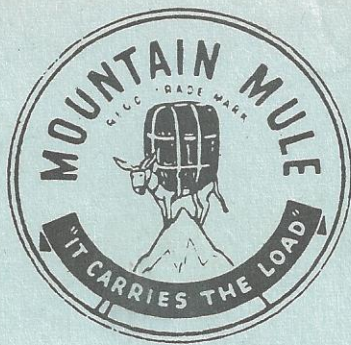
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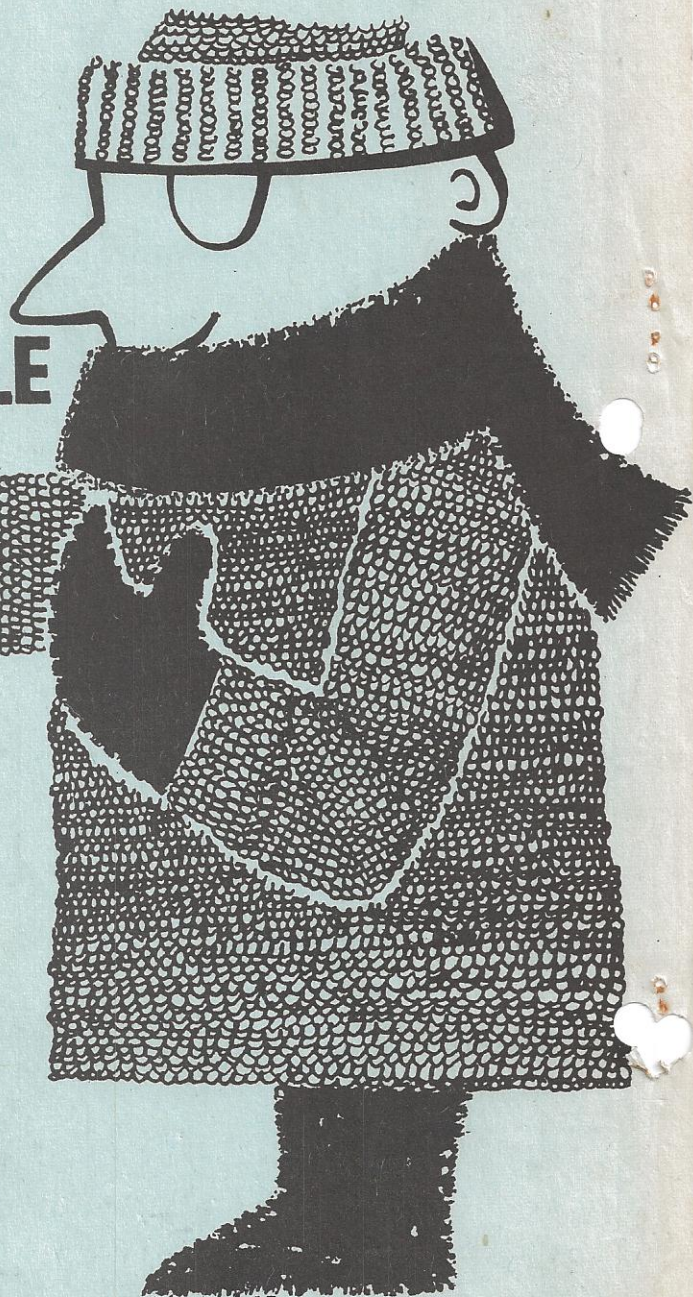
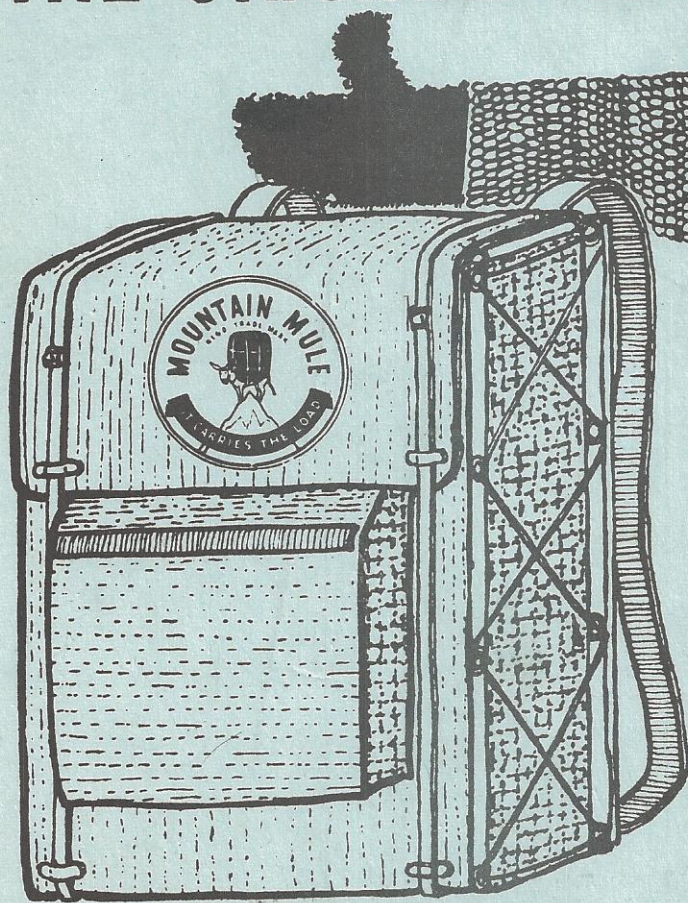
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