

# THE MOUNTAINEER .

Registered at the G.P.O. Melbourne for  
transmission by post as a periodical.

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March 1968

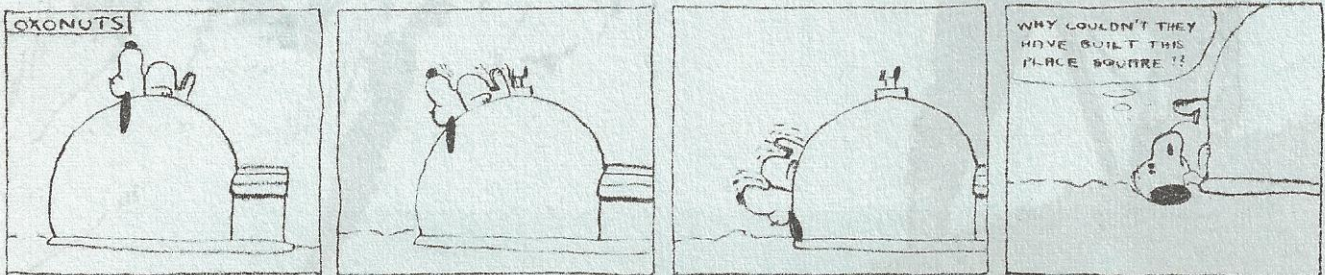




# THE MOUNTAIN

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# The Mountaineer

MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

Official Journal of the Melbourne University Mountaineering Club.  
Registered at the G.P.O. Melbourne for transmission by post as a periodical.

Correspondence@ Beaurepaire Centre, University of Melbourne, Parkville 3052

Number 1 March, 1968

Page 1.

Price 5c

Members will be pleased to know that the Editor has returned from New Zealand, having made a special effort to avoid crevasses and other pitfalls, and is now back in her position of power and censorship, residing beside her handmaiden, the duplicator, in the gloomy depths of Aikman's Road. However, the Editor is soon to give up this position and is inviting other members to consider taking on this job. If a prospective Editor could become immune to the constant greeting "When's the next Mountaineer coming out?", he could probably survive the experience and find it rewarding.

## New Zealand Photos Missing

Some of the photos of New Zealand peaks, donated by the late Professor Cherry, have been borrowed. Their return would be appreciated.

Annual General Meeting. March 29th 1968, 7.30 p.m. NOTE CHANGE OF DATE.

Sisalkraft Theatre, Architecture Building.

Notice calling for nominations for

- (1) President
- (2) Vice-President (one or two)
- (3) Secretary
- (4) Treasurer
- (5) Assistant Secretary
- (6) Stores Officer
- (7) Editor of "The Mountaineer"
- (8) General committee members (two)

Nominations should reach the Secretary not later than one week prior to the meeting.

Postal voting is allowed. Applications from those people unable to attend should reach the secretary no later than two weeks prior to the meeting, and ballot papers must be returned by 7.45 p.m., April 5th 1968.

Editor of the Annual Journal

The position of editor has been taken by Harry Schaap. The committee has decided that this responsibility is not to be that of a vice-president, as stated in the last "Mountaineer".

Mountaineers - Room available

at 171, Park Drive.

A graduate is preferred.

Contact Les Southwell.

Heard at last committee meeting:

- "there are a higher proportion of mules in this club than in most others".

Good News for Club Songsters

The new Mountaineering club songbook is now available (to members only) at Aikman's Road. 160 songs for only 50c. No mountaineer is fully equipped without it.

Nobody is perfect and it is quite possible that some copies will have blank pages. It should be possible to replace these from spare pages at Aikman's Road.

Thanks are due to Sue Walker for the typing, Clive Parker for a vast amount of work on duplicating, and the thirty other members who put the 61,200 sheets of paper together.



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29 MARCH (FRIDAY)

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

To be held in the Sisalkraft Theatre, Ground Floor,  
Architecture building at 7.30 p.m.  
Additional entertainment will be provided by  
Bill Bewsher who will give an interesting talk about  
a fascinating topic.

31 MARCH

## PRESIDENT'S OPENING DAY WALK

MT. TUGWELL - MT. BRIDE - BRITANNIA CK - BRITANNIA CK. FALLS

Leader - the new President

Standard - Easy

Distance - 10 miles

Transport - Van, leaving top of Batman Avenue 8.15 a.m.

Fare - 1.50

Cancellation Fee - 50c.

Map - Lands Dept. Gembrook A.

3 APRIL (WEDNESDAY)

## ROCK CLIMBING COURSE - INTRODUCTORY TALK

To be held in the Sisalkraft Theatre, Ground Floor,  
Architecture Building, at 7.00 p.m.

This talk is COMPULSORY for all those wishing to attend  
the climbing course.

6-7 APRIL

## ROCK CLIMBING COURSE - SUGARLOAF WEEKEND

Leaders - Climbing leaders

Transport - Private

12-16 APRIL

## EASTER WALKS - MT. BULLER AREA

(Two 3-day walks, two 5-day walks)

1. Howqua Road - King River Hut - Mt. Cobbler -  
King River Hut - Howqua Road (3 days)

Standard - Easy - Medium

Distance - 12 miles

2. Howqua Road - Stanley Name Spur - Mt. Howitt-  
Crosscut Saw - Mt. Koonika - King Spur - King River  
- Howqua Road (3 days)

Leader - Required

Standard - Medium

Distance - 20 miles

3. Woolly butt Saddle - Mt. Stirling - Stanley's Name  
Spur - Mt. Howitt - Crosscut saw - Mt. Cobbler

Leader - Pat Dugan

Standard - Medium

Distance - 32 miles



4. Woollybutt saddle - Mt. Buller - Little Buller -  
Howqua River - The Bluff - Mt. Louick - Mt. Howitt -  
Crosscut Saw - Mt. Cobbler - King River - Howqua Rd.  
(5 days)

Leader - Michael Feller

Standard - Hard (Fit walkers only!)

Distance - 48 miles

Transport (for all trips) - Van, leaving Union Car Park  
6.15 p.m. on Thursday

Fare - 4.00 (3 day trips)

4.40 (5 day trips)

Cancellation Fee (for all trips) - 1.50

Map (for all trips) - W.M.T.C. Watersheds of  
King, Howqua and Jamieson Rivers.

20-21 APRIL

ROCK CLIMBING COURSE - MT. ARAPILLES  
WEEKEND.

Leaders - Climbing Leaders

Transport - Private

N.B. There will be compulsory belay practice before this  
weekend - see Aikman's Rd. for details.

25 APRIL (Thurs.)

ANZAC DAY WALK - KINGLAKE AREA

Old Chum Ck. Rd. - Toolangi - Smedley's Falls - Castella

Leader - Meredith Crawn

Standard - Easy

Distance - 10 miles

Transport - Van, leaving top of Batman Avenue  
at 8.30 a.m.

Fare - 1.20

Cancellation Fee - 50c.

Map - Military Survey - Yan Yean

4-5 MAY

WEEKEND WALK - DEN OF NARGUN

Leader - Pat Dugan

Standard - Easy

Distance - 18 miles

Transport - Private, or Van, leaving Union Car Park  
6.30 p.m. on Friday.

Fare (if Van is used) - 5.00

Cancellation Fee - 1.50

Map - Forests Commission - Barmah Forest



- 11 MAY (Sat.) NIGHTWALK AND BARBEQUE  
A social trip. More details in next "Mountaineer".
- 15 MAY (Wed.) CAVING COURSE - INTRODUCTORY TALK  
To be held in the James Crow Theatre, First Floor,  
Architecture building, at 7.30 p.m.  
This talk is COMPULSORY for all those wishing to  
attend the Caving Course.
- 18-19 MAY CAVING COURSE - BUCHAN WEEKEND  
Leader - Nich White and others.  
Transport - Private  
N.B. There will be a limit of 25 people on this trip.
- 25-29 MAY (5 days) WALK IN FAR N.E. VICTORIA  
Suggan Buggan - Ingeegoodbee River - Tin Mine huts -  
The Pilot - The Cobberas - Suggan Buggan  
Leader - Michael Feller  
Standard - Medium - Hard  
Distance - 50 miles  
Transport - Private  
Map - M.B.W. Southern Snowy Mts.  
N.B. If there is enough demand, a two or three day  
bludge trip based on a fixed camp at Suggan Buggan  
will be organized. Would anyone interested in such  
a trip please contact the Trips Secretary,  
Michael Feller, as soon as possible.
- 1-2 JUNE CAVING COURSE - BUCHAN WEEKEND  
Leaders - Nich White, Bob Chappell and others.  
Transport - Private  
This trip will also be limited to 25 people.
- 8-10 JUNE (3 days) QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY WEEKEND WALK - MT. COLE FOREST  
Two trips.
1. Fern Tree Waterfalls Reserve - Ben Nevis - Fern Tree  
Waterfalls Reserve  
Leader - Peter Griffiths  
Standard - Medium
  2. Fixed Camp at Fern Tree Waterfalls Reserve  
Leader - Required  
Standard - Easy  
Transport - Van, leaving Union Car Park  
6.15 p.m. on Friday  
Fare - 3.50  
Cancellation Fee - 1.00  
Map - Forests Commission - Mt. Cole Forest



6-7 JULY 24 HOUR WALK - Don't miss this!

ROCK CLIMBING TRIPS - For further information about these trips call in at the Club Rooms (Aikman's Road) any lunchtime.

BOOKINGS: There are only TWO ways to book for a trip -

- (a) enter your name, course, etc. in the booking-list at the Club Rooms (Aikman's Road) any lunchtime;
- or (b) telephone Michael Feller on 20.2232 any evening.

DO NOT enter your name on the list on a Union notice board - this DOES NOT constitute a booking.

DO NOT turn up in the evening just before a van is due to leave - book BEFORE you turn up.

CANCELLATION FEES - These must be paid by anyone cancelling less than 48 hours before a trip without a good reason.

TRIP LEADERS are required for many of the forthcoming trips. Would anyone wishing to lead a trip please contact Michael Feller as soon as possible. There can be no trip without a leader!

This year each trip leader will be issued with an information sheet entitled "Duties of Trip Leaders". The following extracts from this sheet are worth noting.

"An official club trip is one which has the full approval of the General Committee. To obtain the Committee's approval and for the purpose of properly advertising the trip, trip leaders must submit the following information to the Trips' Secretary at the earliest possible opportunity:

1. Leaders name, phone number and address
2. Dates of trip
3. Proposed Route
4. Travel arrangements - private, public van, etc., time and place of departure, overnight stops if any.
5. Relevant maps.
6. Difficulty of trip, whether for experienced walkers only, and any restriction on number.
7. Approximate time of return.

In arranging trips the following points should be noted:

1. The club's Map Library contains an up-to-date collection of maps of walking areas all over Australia, together with magazines published by various Walking Clubs.



2. Visitors are welcome on all trips unless transport is limited, in which case preference is given to members.
3. Trip Reports - Leaders are requested to submit a full report of their trip for addition to Club Records and for possible publication in the "Mountaineer". Reports should, besides giving an account of events, provide information useful to other members intending to visit the same area, i.e. huts, track notes, times and distances, firewood, water, campsites, maps, etc."

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The response to the questionnaire which accompanied the last "Mountaineer" has been quite gratifying with over 150 replies, some of which are still coming in. We would like as many as possible and urge those of you who have not yet sent one in to do so as soon as possible. Remember - it costs you nothing but a few minutes of your time.

#### M.U.M.C. LIBRARY

Members are reminded that the Club has, at "Aikman's Road" a small collection of books on Mountaineering which are available for loan. There is also a collection of Australian walking and climbing magazines, as well as various Club circulars, but these are not available for loan except in exceptional circumstances and with the Committee's permission. However, a number of these magazines, in particular issues of "Walk" and "The Melbourne Walker" are at present missing from the Library. Could anyone possessing these please return them as soon as possible, so that other members may use them.

#### MURMERS FROM MAWSON

The monthly Newsletter from Mawson for January, 1968, reports that Ian Thomas, Tony Kerr and two others made the difficult climb up Mount Henderson, to examine the parallax camera aerial - "An astounding view could be seen - a panorama of the vast ice sheet and in the distance a glittering emerald sea studded with icebergs. Ian and Tony report that they are exceedingly pleased with the scanning photometer which has been a most important instrument in the auroral programme this year. The results obtained in their investigations should keep them busy for some time on their return".

There is also a report of a competition for the shapeliest legs! Tony and Ian don't get a mention.

OUR SCOTTISH CORRESPONDENT REPORTS: Three superbly fit climbers from Manchester's Karabiner Mountaineering Club are at present time attempting to be the first to top every one of Scotland's 276 peaks over 3,000 feet in one mighty walk. Their first and most northerly peak was Ben Hope and this was followed some time later by an assault on the Cuillins in Skye. Even at this early stage they had worn out 2 pairs of lightweight boots after well over 400 miles of bogs and rough country. During this remarkable effort the 3-man team are continually being replenished with extra mitts, socks, and additional rope.



GUIDE BOOK TO THE VICTORIAN ALPS.

Plans are now under way for the publication of the Club's latest book, A Bushwalker's Guide to the Victorian Alps.

The book will have a similar format to the Geehi Club's "Snowy Mountains Walks", and is intended to embrace the following areas:-

The main divide from the Governors and Mt. Skene through Mt. Howitt, the Barry Mountains to Mt. Delusion; the Bogong High Plains and adjacent peaks; Mt. Buffalo; the Ben Cruachan - Tarli Kang - Mt. Kent area; the Mt. Useful divide, and the Baw Baw plateau.

The preliminary organisation is being handled by Dave Hogg. Much information concerning the area is already on hand, and the Club's trip programme is directed towards gathering more information with trips to the Governors area, Snowy Bluff and the Bulb - Howitt- Cobbler area.

However, we still want:-

1. More people to assist with the actual production of the book.
2. Any track information that any members can supply about walks in the area. Also information about conditions of huts, now and proposed jeeptracks, map inaccuracies etc., and information of general interest e.g. the early history of the area.
3. Any member planning a private trip to the area to assist in the compilation of information, and preferably to contact us before the trip in case there are any specific questions we want the answers for.

Any member who can assist in any of these ways is asked to contact Dave Hogg, either at "Aikman's Road" or phone 329.8484.

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THE COMPILATION OF WALKING INFORMATION

With the Guide Book to the Victoria Alps becoming a major Club project this year, leaders of trips to this area will be asked to take comprehensive track notes. Those who have not had previous experience in this field are advised to refer to the Melbourne Walking Club publication, "Notes on the Compilation of Walking Information", which is very informative in this regard. (A copy is in the Club library). Some important points made in this booklet, together with a few other hints, most of which are just commonsense are listed.



1. The "function" of track notes is to indicate the best walking route or routes between points. ("Best" in this regard may mean "easiest" or "most interesting", and in some cases, there may be two or more "best" routes depending on how one considers them). Notes should be concise, comprehensive and not ambiguous and quite suitable for use by someone walking through the area for the first time.
2. The following items in particular should be noted:-
  - a. Track junctions, indicating which track should be followed, and the type, condition and dissection e.g. jeep track, overgrown walking track etc.
  - b. Water sites, noting whether the water is perennial and if not, at what seasons it is dry or stagnant.
  - c. Suitable campsites and lunchsites - these will depend to a large extent on water, but also availability of firewood, suitable tent sites, etc.
  - d. In high country, where ridges or spurs rather than tracks are being followed, the nature of the spur being followed (e.g. wide or narrow, scrubby or open), its direction, and, where spurs branch, which branch should be followed.
  - e. Signposts, snowpoles, blazes, marker plates or tapes and any other devices used to indicate the direction or route of a track. It is useful to record the exact wording on signposts, and where snowpoles are numbered, to note the number of the pole nearest a track junction or landmark. The general condition of pole lines should be noted i.e. whether poles are missing, also the average distance between poles.
  - f. Huts, their condition, whether they are locked, how many people they will accommodate, proximity of water and its direction from the hut.
  - g. Any points of historical or scenic interest, particularly if they are a little way off the track and would normally go unnoticed.
  - h. Approximate distance and times between points. These are not necessarily proportional and depend on the steepness of the track, the amount of scrub, the rockiness of the ground, the hotness of the weather and the fitness and enthusiasm of the party.
  - i. Map inaccuracies and omissions, which are common even on the most recent maps.

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HIGH PLAINS MISCELLANEY

During January I was fortunate enough to spend some time on the staff of the Victorian Outward Bound School at Howman's Gap. Most of the staff were mountaineering-type people of one kind or another (including five members of this club), and during the course we were able to learn about some features of the area that might be missed by people spending a short time there. We were unable to check many of these, but these notes might be of interest to anyone doing trips in the High Plains area.

Huts: Fitzgerald's, Kelly's, Johnston's, and Roper's huts are all in good condition. Batty's Hut on the New Country Spur seems to be almost unused and is showing signs of wear. The old Tawonga Hut collapsed some time ago, but there are four huts nearby, two of them habitable. Blair's Hut is like grandma's axe. It's 40 years old now, and has a new roof, but the log walls are rotting at the corners. There is a new hut, the Charles Derrick Memorial Hut, on Swindler's Spur, and Diamantina Hut has been replaced by a new shelter about 50 yds down the road. Spargo's Hut on a spur of Mt. Loch has an interesting history. Spargo was for many years host at Hotham Heights and during that time employed a couple of prospectors to search for the lode he felt sure existed in the area. It is said he used to get them up at six every morning and make them run to the workings. They eventually found one of the richest mines in Victoria, the Red Robin on the Machinery Spur, and the claim was sold to the Livingstone brothers after Spargo had made his pile. Two of the instructors found a couple of old prospector's huts on Dibbins Divide. These were quite untouched, even to a half-empty bottle of gin on the table.

Lakes: The two artificial lakes in Rocky Valley and Pretty Valley are well known, but the new 4" to 1 mile map shows two very small lakes just off the edge of the High Plains. One is about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles west of Mt. Jim, the other about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles south of Mr. Jim. I haven't visited either, but I would guess they are dry at the moment.

Waterfalls: There are quite a few waterfalls in the area, although many are not very high and others are not well known. Howman's Falls on Mt. Bogong are well worth a visit. We suspect there is another fall a short distance downstream. A signposted track from Pretty Valley Bridge leads half a mile to the Fainter Creek Falls. The track continues on, but we don't know to where. There is another fall just below Falls Creek, about 20 yds. off the road, and another near the foot of the Diamantina Spur on a creek that runs off the Niggerheads. Some suspected locations are: near junction of Rocky Valley Creek and Spion Kooje creek; headwaters of Big River, near junction of Whiterock creek, and also upstream: Reef creek; Wildhorse creek; Nelse Creek or Nelse North Creek.



Pole Lines: Most of the pole lines, other than the S.E.C. routes, are showing signs of age. The lines from Jin junction to Weston's Hut and Tawonga Huts, and Round Plain Knob to Batty's Hut are in very poor condition. The pole lines on Mt. Bogong are excellent, having been replaced recently.

Tracks: There is a newly cut track from Mt. Arthur to Bogong Creek Saddle. The route from there up the Quartz Ridge starts near a creek a couple of hundred yards down towards the Big River. At first it is a good track, but this is left after about half a mile. As far as we know it leads to an old guaging station on the Big River, near the junction with Cairn Creek. The bottom of the Duane's Spur track is pretty vague, at least when going down. The track along the Long Spur is a little overgrown, but provides a good route to Mt. Bogong. Near the junction of the Mulhauser and Middle Ridge Spurs there is an overgrown section that looks as if it was once benched. There is a new track from Spion Kopje to Howman's Gap.

Cliffs: The rock climbing part of the Outward Bound course was done in three places: on some outcrops above Pretty Valley, in the Niggerheads, and on Mt. Fainter (West side). Most of the rock is granitic but it is very shattered and any attempt to remove all the loose rock would probably lower the mountain a few feet. The kataballistic possibilities are endless! The routes are mostly fairly short, (120' was the longest) but there is plenty to look at. There are quite a lot of other outcrops and cliffs in the area that might be worth investigating, such as Quartz Knob, east side of Mt. Fainter, Damsite Hill, perhaps parts of Mt. McKay and Mt. Wills.

Maps: The new Lands Department 4" to 1 mile contour sheets cover much of the area, and are useful. There are a few errors and omissions. For our purposes more details and a smaller scale would be helpful. The F.C.V. Feathertop sheet has quite a few errors (over 30), is rather hard to read, and does not show pole lines, but is still useful. The F.C.V. Tawanga sheet still hasn't appeared.

Other: Rocking Stone Saddle on Mt. Bogong is named after a rock formation which is or was nearby. The rocking stone is about the size and shape of an emu egg and rests in a deep hollow in another rock. It is supposed to be in the gully due east of pole 72, although Charles McCubbin and Robin Hunt were unable to find it. I have seen a photo of it.

There seem to have been some attempts to establish exotic trees in the Rocky Valley area, presumably for soil conservation purposes. I can't say I am very happy about this since, if they survive, much of the unique character of the High Plains would be lost.

Tom Kneen.



A SUNDAY SCHOOL PICNIC WHICH BECAME A SURVIVAL EXERCISE FOR  
NON-CHURCH-GOERS

With their two-piece swimsuits, cases of make-up, pairs of flimsy shoes and insufficient food (can't they read?), two gorgeous dolls accompanied by a stately English squire in brand-new gym boots decided to hold a nature walk through the Cradle Reserve. Their guides consisted of a placid leader, another girl whose beautiful legs were marred by ugly black boots, (a precaution); a silent partner, and a loquacious, blond, sherpa.

This weird mixture of beauty, dirt and colonials reached Waldheim late November by Maxwells 'trolley service' after a ball on the POT.

Remarked the English squire "My God; this ridiculous colony has snow in summer", and, while looking at "blizzard" stricken Hanson's Peak, "Sorry, I have not brought my climbing boots".

All these overstated understatements, together with an irresistible longing for Melbourne caused a party of four to return from Windemere hut, after a two-day winning battle with deep snow-drifts.

So we lost our shapely beauties, except the one in ugly boots. And we lost our heroic leader, and just to keep the record straight, old England also departed.

These unfortunates returned via Waterfall Valley, in weather such as to impress even old England and induce the comment "I believe you NOW, when you say the weather can change dramatically"; where His Lordship was chased up a tree by the two dolls (bless them), because they felt, correctly, that he belonged there.

Ugly boots, photographer Phil, silent as his photos, which are great; and hot-boots Harry strolled on as planned, hiking through thick snow, freezing rivers and brilliant sunshine, having a tremendous time.

Besides literature by candlelight, baths by torchlight, and toilet by moonlight, we climbed Pelion East, Byron Gap and ambled into Pine Valley. At this hut M.U.A.C. was formed with the Ambler in ugly boots as President.



As a consolation we met our long-lost beauties, the squire and leader back at the POT, after hitch-hiking, via Queenstown, to Devonport in about 10 hrs.

After a smooth trip back, under the shocked gaze of numerous old, well-dressed tourists, the party disembarked in rowdy, cosmopolitan Melbourne, some with unseemly haste, in their eagerness to be home and to have their skis marked forever, "Not for Langlauf".

Harry A. Schaap  
Peter J. Griffiths.

#### EXTRACTS FROM "SPUTNIK"

May, 1967. "Motorised Mountain Climber - Higher than Mont Blanc on a Motorcycle"

Motor cyclist Alexei Berberashvili rode up Mt. Elbruz, (5,595 metres) the highest peak in Europe. His first attempt in 1963 got him only as far as the foothills. In 1965, he teamed up with a mountaineer called Kahian: and reached the 5,150 metre mark where he was stopped by a blizzard.

The motorcycle was flanked on each side by skis to prevent its sinking in soft snow, the tyres had spikes impregnated in the rubber, and the motor was specially built for heavy duty work in mountainous areas.

"Thus, on the third attempt, he detoured cliffs, traversed crevasses and zig-zagged at 50° up the steeper slopes and finally reached the Eastern summit" where it is still parked "just to prove it was possible".

#### ibid

"The Polymer Research Institute in Erevan has developed a pliofilm that can serve in place of a refrigerator. Because of its crystalline structure, the pliofilm is impervious to oxygen but lets in carbon dioxide. Consequently fish, poultry, meat and other perishable products can be kept fresh for a long time. The film is durable and stretches easily. It is unaffected by water, oils, acids or alkalis. Apart from its being a boon to housewives, campers, and so on, the food industries will benefit from the new product".

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A BRIEF EXCURSION TO THE SNOWY MOUNTAINS

(Australia Day Weekend, 1968)

We left Melbourne at 4 p.m. and headed up the Hume. The others followed later. We were in Wangaratta at 7.30 and Wodonga at 9 p.m. Here we turned east to follow the Murray Valley Highway to Talangatta and Corryong, crossed the Murray into N.S.W. and continued on to Khancoban and Geehi. We reached Geehi at 12.30.

Geehi camp consists of a few huts and a dog. The latter resembles a cross between a Labrador and a Dingo, and barks at anyone so impudent as to camp within earshot. After half an hour of this earbashing we move further down the road and bedded down in an open machine shed.

At sunrise we returned to the Geehi gate and settled down to wait for the stragglers. A small red car rolled up. On the passenger's side a face emerged languidly from beneath a mop of blond hair. "Oooh, lavvies", said the face wearily, and trotted off with singleness of purpose.

Shortly we were all assembled - three cars and seven bodies. The first creek along the road was our destination for breakfast. One car found the going too steep, but after some ferrying, and slight compression of bodies, we all arrived at Leatherbarrel Creek, which made an excellent breakfast site.

After a rather late breakfast, seven people and seven packs crowded into six car seats and headed up the mountain again, reaching Dead Horse Gap at eleven o'clock. Here we renounced the luxury of motorized transport and turned to the freedom of the hills.

A steep climb brought us to the summit of the South Ramshead in time for lunch. The Ramshead and Kosciusko were visible to the north, and behind us was a fine view down into the Crackenback valley. After an unhurried meal we set off northwards over a broad saddle, covered with tussocky grass and low, heathy shrubs with an infinite variety of wildflowers. We traversed the western side of the Ramshead, and after a quick dash to the summit continued on to lake Cootupatamba. The strong sun had warmed the waters of this shallow glacial lake, and several people swam. We reached Seaman's hut for dinner and after a hearty meal five weary bodies distributed themselves among four bunks, one slept on the floor, and another outside under the stars.



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SKULL ROCK

Eight or so miles S.S.W. from Tidal River, a huge lump of granite one quarter of a mile square rises almost vertically out of the sea for 300 feet. On its South eastern side the 250' cliff is overhanging for its whole height. On its North western side, there is an enormous 'cave', with its floor 40-50 feet above waterlevel and overhanging the sea. 100-120 feet above the floor the roof overhangs even further, so that the cave is known as 'the Music Bowl' by locals. The floor is covered with tussocky grass and a herb carpet where it is visible from the sea.

This island is officially named Cleft Island and is locally called 'Skull Rock'. To examine the flora and possible fauna of this island I elicited the assistance of climbers who were available and interested in an attempt to make a landing.

In December 1966 and January, 1967, there were two attempts involving Jan Nevill (as she was then), Bob Chappell (weilding several cameras at once), Phil Secombe and myself as climbers. Two people, Mick James and Keith Neylands, who were holidaying at Wilson's Promontory at the time became interested, and transported us out in an 18 foot fibreglass runabout (with a 75 h.p. outboard motor). Because of the type of craft, we had to wait until the weather was calm and the sea dead flat.

At the second attempt, a landing was made. This consisted of jumping overboard and swimming over to the rock, between seals from a nearby colony, waiting until a friendly wave surged up and then hanging like the limpets around me on to finger tip holds as the swell receded. In this manner I actually managed to get about 20-30 feet above sea level, when the wind sprang up from the North west, making instant retreat imperative.

Only half a mile of the return trip was covered when the outboard stripped its gears. Fortunately another holiday-maker, Don Van, had accompanied us in his boat and he towed us back to Tidal River through very rough seas. Such as it was, this was the first known landing on Cleft Island.

On December, 27th 1967 with Kevin Sheehy as climbing partner, four boats went out with the same owners and another, Geoff Lee, went out for another attempt. This time, the chosen route was up a chimney on the North eastern side, although the mode of landing was the same. (It was only much later that I learned that white pointer sharks love cruising through seal colonies).



In proper climbing footwear the climbing standard would be 'severe', but because gymboots had to be worn to protect the feet from sharp-shelled limpets, the wet soles made it feel like 'Hard severe'. There is a ledge at the bottom of the chimney at low tide and a belay point (jam nut) about 50 feet above that, 110 feet above the belay is another large belay ledge. The top of the chimney is another 30-40 feet higher from where it is a walk to the top, but I had only just reached the end of the chimney when the fleet reported that the weather was getting bad. Fate was against us. I shoved a specimen of everything within arm's reach down my shirt, dropped a prusik loop, and reversed the climb.

As luck would have it, a blankety-blank jellyfish 15 inches across was floating right where we had to jump into the water. After some hesitation Kevin jumped, swam to the boat and pulled the pack after him when he had reached it. That left me with 60 yards to swim in gym boots and a safety helmet throttling me, slings tangling me up and one hand holding the specimens into my shirt.

I never again want to come so close to drowning.

We got back safely, and half an hour later the squall blew itself out, leaving the sea dead flat for the rest of the day. Skull Rock is still unconquered, but it will keep until next year, and this is one climb the J.D's can't pirate.

Rowan Webb

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#### F.V.W.C. Search and Rescue

Membership of the F.V.W.C. Search and Rescue section is open to all experienced male club members. M.U.M.C. makes up something like a third of the A priority group of the section, but we always need more members so you are urged to join. All that is required is that you keep yourself and your gear in readiness for a call; in practice this is no difficulty. There have been several near calls in the last year. Further information is available from Don Allison (phone 36.3221) and there are application forms at Aikman's Road.

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STRADBROKE CHASM

In the 'Rock climbing Guide to Victoria', Stradbroke Chasm is mentioned in the following terms; "although not yet climbed [Hanging Rock and Stradbroke Chasm] appear to offer the climber considerable potential".

That Stradbroke Chasm has not yet been climbed is not quite true. John Bechervaise is believed to have taken his ubiquitous schoolboys up it in the dim and distant past, and as recently as 1966 and 1967 two successful assaults were made.

In March, 1966 a group of Botany III and associated students (including Dave Parkhurst) on an Ecology excursion under Dr. D.H. Ashton struggled up it and on March, 1967 another group of students and staff again under Dr. Ashton penetrated the Chasm. On this latter occasion I belayed a "tramline" of seventeen people (including sixteen who had never even seen a climbing rope before, one chap almost sixty years old, and eight delightful young ladies, three of whom subsequently joined M.U.M.C.) up a climb later referred to as 'Lady Chatterley'.

Although the Chasm itself is about 200 feet high, as seen from Middle Mountain on the other side of the Suggan Buggan River, the 'floor' or innermost recess is not very deep.

← To Stradbroke Mtn and Black Mountain Stations

→ EAST

Figure 1.

B

A

→ To Suggan Buggan River

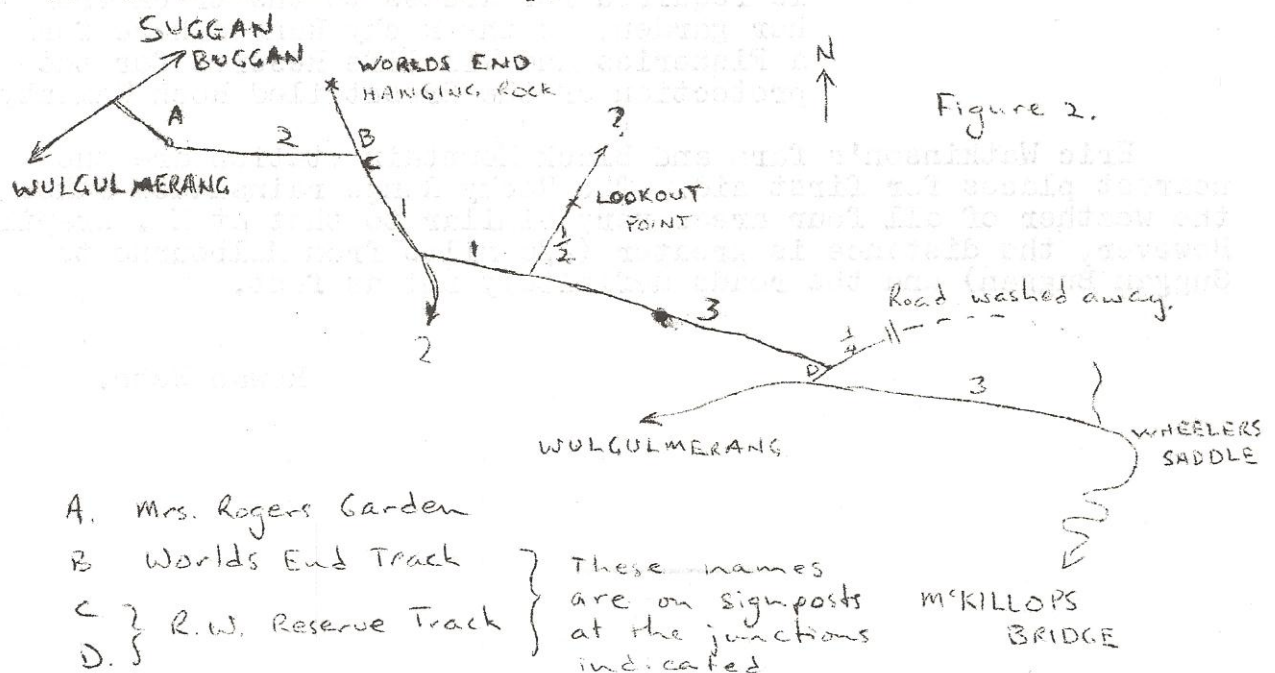
Figure 1. illustrates a side view of the chasm. The climb A to B can be done in two ways. As the base of the chasm is penetrated, if you keep to the south side then A-B becomes a scrub-bash up the side of a slab (standard 4- or 4). If you cross to the north side you come to a cul-de-sac overhanging by the chasm's north wall. Climbing out of this to the left would take you up "Lady Chatterley" (standard 4 to 5- depending on the route taken). The North wall overhang is about 60 feet high with fairly rotten rock categorised



as "Snowy River Volcanics". The chasm is an oasis for flora (such as tree ferns, filmy ferns and blue gums) preferring damp conditions. As the surrounding region in the Suggan Buggan Valley is dry, red stringybark forest with an annual rainfall of only 21 inches caused by the Rocky Ranges creating a rain shadow. Above the chasm the flora is sub-alpine woodland.

The easiest way to reach the chasm is to contact Eric Watkinson, the occupant of the farm at the bridge across the Suggan Buggan. With his permission to cross his paddocks (far better than scrubbashing up the river). Leave the main road at his paddock on the North side of the road (about one mile short of the river), walk parallel with the scarp till you come to the third ridge. Climb up the North side of this ridge. The correct gully is otherwise difficult to locate, but it may be recognised by the fact that it has blue gum and native hazel growing in it.

Concerning Hanging Rock: in the interest of reducing confusion, I propose that the East Gippsland Hanging Rock be known in the future by its alternative and more picturesque name - "World's End". It can be reached from two directions as shown in the sketch map.



Numbers are distances in miles

The Landrover track from D to C is quite steep in places and not to be recommended for use by ordinary cars. The track from Mrs. Roger's garden to B is not much better, but it is much flatter. The World's End Track comes virtually to the rock face itself. The scenery is well worth the effort.

World's End overlooks another area with climbing potential, the Ballantyne Range, north of World's End itself. The range has three large pinnacles, like expanded versions of Castle Crag and can be reached by leaving the Suggan Buggan road where it crosses the first saddle after it has begun the descent into the Suggan Buggan Valley. Follow the spur east from the saddle for almost two miles. The pinnacles are quite visible and obvious.

APPROACHES to the climbing venues in the area.

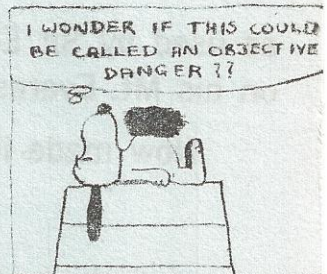
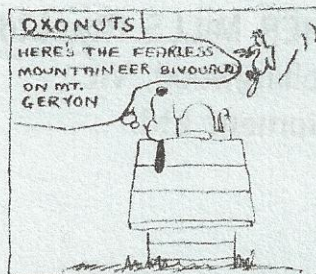
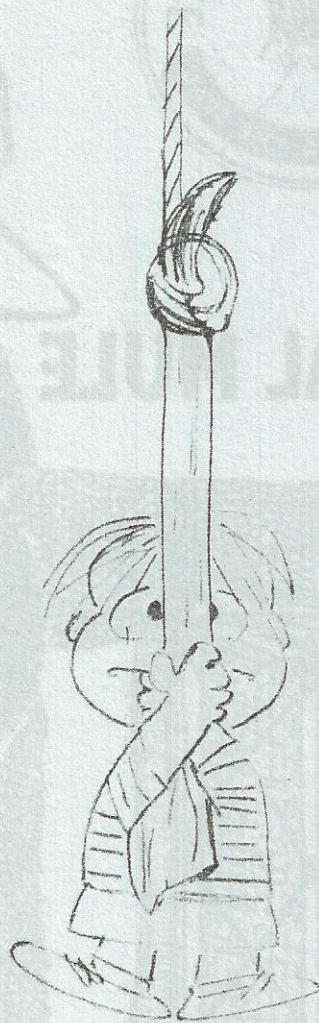
1. Little River Gorge - as in the "Guide"
2. Stradbroke Chasm - as described above
3. Ballantyne Peaks - as described above
4. World's End. Contact Mrs. Keith Rogers at Black Mountain Station (on the plateau above the Suggan Buggan Valley - the station is east of the road, along the only turn to the left before descending into the valley). Her permission is required for access to the track from her garden, as the Rocky Ranges here form a Fisheries and Wildlife Reserve for the protection of the Brushtailed Rock Wallaby.

Eric Watkinson's farm and Black Mountain station are the nearest places for first aid. The Rocky Range rainshadow makes the weather of all four areas very similar to that at Mt. Arapiles. However, the distance is greater (276 miles from Melbourne to Suggan Buggan) and the roads definitely not as fast.

Rowan Webb.

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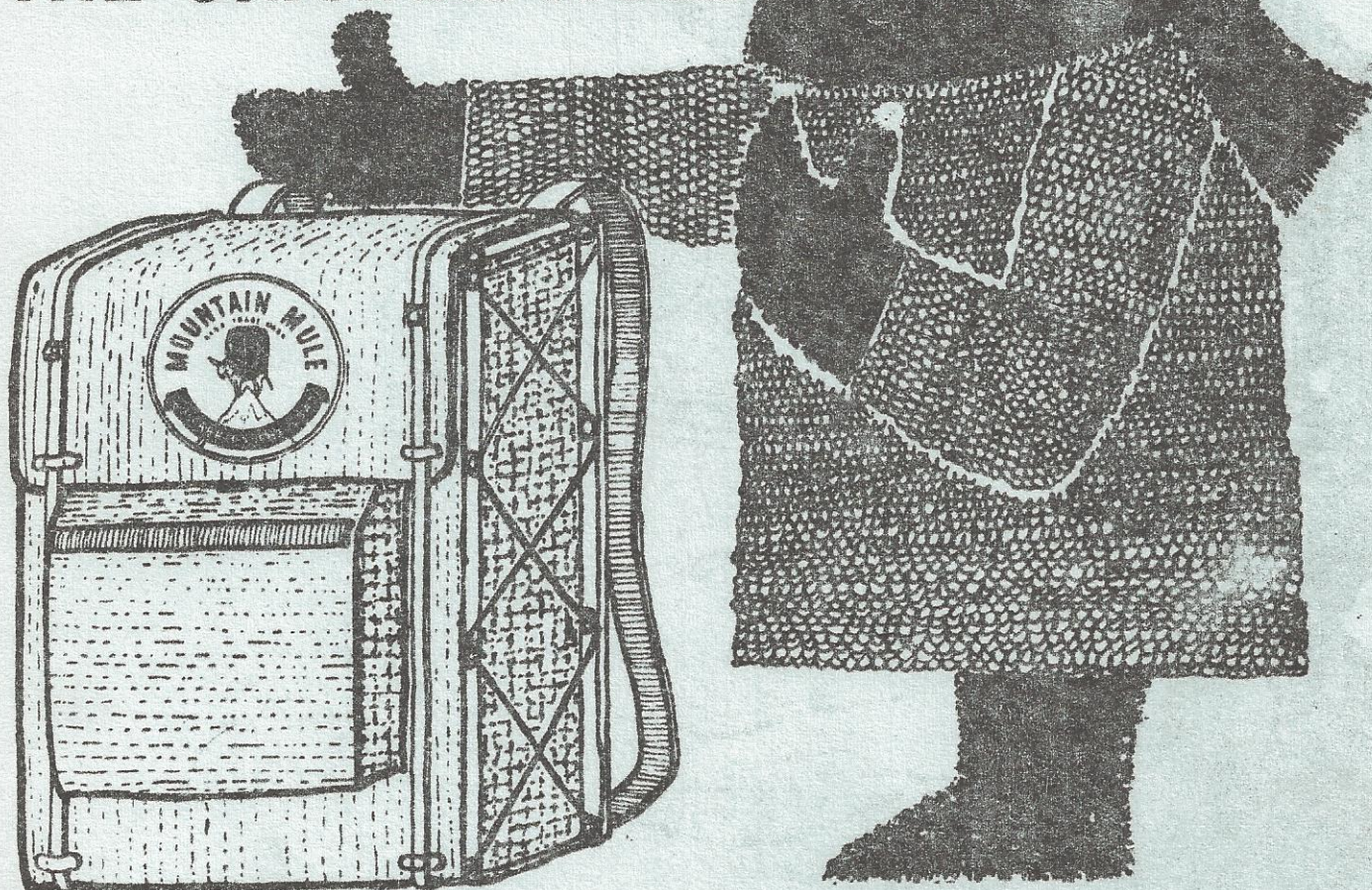








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THE CLUB CONTACT SYSTEM

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING CAREFULLY AND LEAVE THIS INFORMATION WITH THOSE AT HOME.

It occasionally happens on a Club trip that an unforeseen delay occurs, resulting in the party arriving back in Melbourne much later than anticipated and thus causing some worry to anxious parents. There is also the possibility (although this is fortunately very slight) that a party may not arrive back at all. For these reasons, it is the policy of the Club to have a Contact System, which operates as follows:-

Before a trip, the Trips Secretary or the leader gives the contact the details of the trip (i.e., intended route, mode of transport, when expected back, any anticipated difficulties, etc.), together with a list of names and phone numbers (or addresses) of those going on the trip. As soon as the party returns to Melbourne, or in the case of a trip being overdue, as soon as the party reaches civilization, the leader notifies the contact. If the party is long overdue, the contact makes arrangements via the Federation of Victorian Walking Clubs Search and Rescue Organisation for a search to be initiated.

This procedure applies primarily to van trips. For trips involving a large number of private cars, (e.g., climbing or caving trips), arrangements are made among the party to ensure that every car arrives safely at a main road, and should any mishap occur (e.g. mechanical breakdown) thereby delaying the return to Melbourne, it is the responsibility of those in the car to notify the contact who can then notify the parents of all concerned.

ALL ENQUIRIES BY PARENTS AND OTHERS CONCERNING THE SAFE RETURN OF A TRIP SHOULD BE MADE DIRECTLY TO THE CLUB NUMBER 1 CONTACT, (OR IF HE CANNOT BE REACHED, THE NO. 2 OR 3 CONTACT), WHO IS THE PERSON MOST LIKELY TO HAVE ANY INFORMATION. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD THE POLICE BE CONTACTED AS THEY GENERALLY KNOW NOTHING ABOUT THE TRIP AND SUCH ACTION COULD RESULT IN DAMAGING PUBLICITY.

The contacts for the M.U.M.C. are:-

- No. 1. DAVID AND SANDRA HOGG, phone 329 8484.
- No. 2. NICK AND SUE WHITE, phone 33 3749.
- No. 3. BILL BEWSHER, (who is also Field Organiser of the F.V.W.C. Search and Rescue Organisation), phone 25 3667.



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