

the

MOUNTAINEER



february 1975

20c

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Hullo, we have returned from wandering around the factories of Europe, and occasionally the sights, and even more occasionally the hills. The main purpose was to visit existing suppliers and supply a face, however unprepossessing, to fit to the name appearing on the bottom of our letters over the years. Most suppliers seemed pleased to see us and we shall gratefully remember their excellent hospitality. So the number of new items we came across was not great; but then we did not see a great deal new at the Trade Fairs we visited, nor at the retail shops where I made myself at least as great a nuisance as any of you do at mine. We did see a couple of new, neat gas stoves and will have some in due course.

I saw, and promptly ordered, the famous Dachstein mitts, and expect to have them about the end of May or early in June - I expect them to be rather dearer than normal mittens, but their boiled felted wool seems to keep out much more water - mind that Australian conditions are much wetter than seems usual in Europe - I walked around in the snow for $\frac{1}{2}$ hour in my town shoes and was able to simply brush the dry snow off my still dry socks afterwards - I was looking at the superb north face of the Eiger on a beautiful day.

I spent much time looking at boots, particularly with a view to getting the best range of fittings for Australian feet; we were able to inspect the Galibier and Raichle factories and it was most interesting to watch them putting together complicated mountain boots - the methods used by each were very similar, likewise the leathers. We feel sure that comparable styles from both, or from Brixia, our other main European supplier, will provide similar satisfaction. All work with climbers and walkers who advise on and help develop boots. It may be of course that our efforts with boots will be in vain - their import is currently choked off by Government action, despite our pointing out that the types we wish to import are not produced here. Switzerland has a population of less than $\frac{1}{2}$ Australia's and is in the midst of large industrial nations; yet we found that Swiss tariffs were of the order of 3-12% where Australian are 25-50%, and Switzerland is surviving world economic problems better than most. What is more the Swiss have just refused to grant their Government greater central powers over their economy.

Cagjacs are going well, and walkers who have been using them for periods over a year still give us good reports on them. We now have some of our ski gear and will have a list out soon.

Cheers



*Suppliers of high-quality practical clothing & footwear for all Outdoor People
Gear & Books for Bushwalkers, Campers, Canoeists, Cavers, Mountaineers,
Rockclimbers, Ski-tourers*

THE MOUNTAINEER

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FEBRUARY, 1975.

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This "Mountaineer" was edited by Nick Reeves, with help from Cathie Saccombe, Reg Marron, George Kuczera and the duplicating assistants. The emphasis in this issue has been placed upon both news of club activities, and on subsequent articles about them. If further 'Mountaineers' are to continue it is up to you to write about your experiences in the mountains. Copy deadline for the next issue will be June 13th.

CLUB COMMITTEE

President:	Mark Spain	850 3175
Vice President:	Gill Hume	385 986
Secretary:	Laurie Patrick	387 3764
Ass. Secretary:	Darren Fawkes	53 4245
Treasurer:	George Kuczera	
Editor:	Nick Reeves	335 1272
Stores Officer:	Clare Morton	69 4622
Trips Secretary:	Jol Shelton	25 4324
Canoeing Rep.:	John Templer	38 6201
Climbing Rep.:	John Chapman	41 3885
Caving Rep:	Sue White	328 4154
Ski Touring Rep:	Greg Davies	99 3338
Orienteering Rep:	Not yet appointed	
Conservation:	Mike Feller	

NON COMMITTEE POSITIONS

Delegates:

FVWC Delegate:	Harry Schaap
Observer:	Andrew Walker
FVWC Tracks & Huts Delegate:	Harry Schaap
FVWC S. & R. Delegate:	David Caddy
Observer:	Iain East
V.S.A. Delegate:	Nick White
V.O.A. Delegate:	To be appointed
V.N.P.A. Delegate:	Marg. Henderson
A.C.F. Delegate:	Andrew Kelso
C.C.V. Delegate:	Ros Wood
	John Terrell

Other:

Club Contact: Ph. 38 5986
 Equipment Testing Sub-Committee Convenor:
 Librarian:
 Maps Librarian:
 Hut Warder:

Publication Sales Officer:
 First Aid Officer:
 Duplicating Officer:
 Assistants:

Assistant Stores Officers:

24-hour Walk Organiser:
 Assistant:
 Caterers:
 Dinner Dance Organiser:
 Assistants:

Catering Officers:

Social Activities:
 Computer Programmer:

Gill Hume
 Rex Niven
 Tony Bishop
 Tony Sherwood
 Andrew Walker
 Hedley Thompson
 Robyn Fraser
 Rex Niven
 Liz Brown
 Cathie Seccombe
 Julie West, Steve Glen,
 Fiona Milvain,
 Marie Francken,
 Eileen O'Meagher
 Dave Caddy, Lainie Murray,
 Hedley Thompson, Rex Niven,
 Bruce Rigby, Andrew Rothfield,
 Iris Jahnke, Greg Davies,
 Iain East.
 Rex Niven
 Andrew Rothfield
 Sue White, Claire Morton
 Robyn Fraser
 Marie Francken,
 Eileen O'Meagher
 Iris Jahnke, Marie Franken,
 E. O'Meagher
 Arnold Wheeler
 Bob Cannon

NEWS

(i) Antarctic Expedition. - More details have been received from Murray J. Rich, Convenor of the "International Antarctic Expedition". The aim of the expedition is to "pursue mountaineering, on suitable objectives in the Cape Hallett area, in conjunction with scientific programmes that can be undertaken in the time and with the equipment available." The expedition departs from Hobart on December 29th, 1975, and arrives back on February 15th, 1976. The minimum cost per person is \$500.00, and it is up to each group of participants to furnish their own gear and to decide on, and carry out, their objectives. Further details, and application form, are available from the club secretary.

(ii) A Report in the Wagga "Advertiser" on 10th April, 1975, gave details of a proposed mono rail system, costing \$100 million, to link Cooma and Thredbo, via Perisher Valley. A company, "Kosciusko Alpine Railway Company", exists, and its Chairman, a Mr. Brayshaw, is quoted as saying that "We have gone quite a long way in design and preliminary studies have been made." Representatives of the company are expected to meet with officials of the N.S.W. Parks and Wildlife service soon.

To have such a railway through the Kosciusko National Park is a horrific proposal, and while it could be doubted that such a project is feasible every effort should be made to prevent the idea from emerging out of fantasy.

FURTHER CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES PROPOSED!!!

Constitutional Meeting - Thursday, 12th June. Sports Union, Small Entertainment Room, 7.30 p.m.

Those of you who were at the A.G.M. will be aware that in essence the changes to the constitution outlined in the last edition of the Mountaineer were passed. The major addition to those changes outlined, was the inclusion of an Orienteering representative on the committee and a clause which states that:

"The Orienteering Sub-committee shall be responsible for the formulation of the Orienteering programme and the organisation of the 24 hour walk."

Certain minor changes still need to be ratified by a general meeting. There may also be other changes you think necessary. Down at the clubrooms there are copies of the constitution as it now stands which are available to anyone who wishes to read them. They are only photostats and copies of the new constitution will be run off when it is finalised.

The meeting is to discuss what the minor changes are and any other changes that people desire.

The committee will most likely have to call a special general meeting during second term to finalise the whole matter. As well as the discussion a speaker or slide show would be organised. At least 30 people are required to attend so that points of order are valid!!!

CANOEING REPORT

JOHN TEMPLER.

So far, many beginners have come on the Yarra weekends. Great! However, as the number of people we can take decreases over the next few months, please do not be discouraged if trips are full. Numbers on future trips must be less, as on harder trips it is just not safe to take more than about 10 boats, and also the experienced to inexperienced ratio must be greater. We could ease the situation on weekend trips somewhat if we had a different group each day, but I wonder how many people would drive 150 miles to Mansfield or Licola just for the day. In short, we want lots of canoeists but please book early as numbers will be limited.

For those who missed out, there will be another beginner's day in June, if there is enough interest. (Water is colder then.) A worthwhile book for beginners is "Lets Try Canoeing" by Stuart Ferguson. It gives good pictures and other basic information. If any-one is interested in making a boat see me or some experienced canoeist. Cost of materials would be about \$65. Extra items such as life jackets and paddles, plus stack hat, mean another \$17. It would take about a weekend to make the boat.

CLIMBING REPORT

JOHN CHAMPMAN

(1) The club had a very fine season in New Zealand this last summer, despite the poor snow conditions and the indifferent weather. In particular, Nick Reeves and George Kuczera had fine seasons, completing some hard Alpine climbs together. At the head of the Tasman Glacier they climbed the rock of the North Buttress on Mt. Darwin (9550') and later, they celebrated Christmas Day by climbing the superb, icy, Mount Tasman (11,475'), via the Silberhorn ridge. Later, Nick teamed up with N.S.W. climber, Ross Vining, to ascend the Bowie Ridge on Mt. Cook (12,349'). This was a significant effort upon a hard, rarely ascended route.

Mt. Cook was ~~also~~ climbed by Greg Martin when, during an epic-strewn three days, he completed a Grand Traverse via Earles Ridge.

Reg Marron also had a good season. After climbing the East Face of Mt. Green (9,250') with Nick Reeves, he, with N.Z. climber Barry Biggs, put up a hard new line upon the Cleddar face of Moir. This climb, in the Darran Ranges, took two days and was graded 17 A3.

(i) George Kuczera completed a fine season when he, together with Gill Home, climbed Mattebrun (10,450') via a West Ridge Variation. Gill also climbed the extremely beautiful Mt. Aspiring (9,985') by the North West Ridge.

(ii) Back in Australia, rockclimbing was not neglected. In Tasmania, John Chapman led some 18's and 19's, and he followed Joe Friend up "To the Crux and Beyond" (20). A new cliff, 'Cathedral Mountain' in the Cradle Mountain Reserve, received its first route 'Exit Peals' (16), and it is over 1,000' long.

(iii) In Victoria, climbing continues as a strong club activity. Many fine climbs were done before Christmas, such as Nick Reeve's lead of 'Conscientious Pontius' (17) and V.C.C. climber, Ian Sedneman's lead of 'The Great White Hope' (18), when he was followed by John Chapman and Keith Egerton. After the break, Keith began well by putting up a new grade 17 route in the Grampians. He also led 'Androcles' (16) at Werribee Gorge, taking one fall. A new climber, Tony Marion, led 'Big Ears' (16) which was a fine effort. Later the "strong" (!!!) team of Kuczera, Reeves and Chapman, bumbled their way up the "fantastic" 'Debutante' (15) at Mt. Rosea.

Easter saw Reg Marron's magnificent first solo ascent of Ozymandias Direct (M5) on the north wall of Mt. Buffalo. It took 3 days to complete and it is the best solo and ascent in the State to date.

(iv) The Beginners Day Trip began well with pouring rain at Nth. Jawbones, and a shortage of gear and leaders. However, some climbs were done, such as Direct Junglescope, Speigals Overhang and Traverse of the Gods. Unfortunately some climbs were completed rather late with the result that the entire course was benighted at the base of the cliff.

The full weekend at Mt. Arapiles saw perfect weather and good climbing. 'D Minor' (13) and 'The Bard' (12) saw several ascents. All agreed that both trips were successful, and it is to be hoped that the beginners will continue to climb. An open invitation is always extended by the climbers to any beginner to come along and show us up. Climbing trips are usually organised down at the club at short notice.

TRIPS PROGRAMME

This programme is tentative and may be subject to violent and ruthless alterations. The trips book at Aikmans or Jol Shelton (25 4324) should be consulted to get up-to-date information.

Bookings can be made through the trips book or with Jol Shelton.

Club contact is Gill Hume (38 5986). Whenever a trip is overdue or plagued by some other misfortune, it is the leader's responsibility to notify the club contact. The club contact should also be informed once the trip has arrived home.



Bushwalking trips are classified as follows:-

Difficulty: Easy - Medium - Hard
Distance: Short - Medium - Long

Club Classics

Activity: 24 Hour Walk
Date: 21-22 June.
Venue: Secret.
Standard: Easy to Impossible
Transport: Vans

Activity: Alpine Instruction Course
Date: 16-19 August.
Venue: Mt. Feathertop
Standard: Cold, long.
Transport: Private.

For Social and Armchair Mountaineers

Activity: Social weekend.
Date: May 30th - June 1st.
Venue: Sorrento
Leader: Marg Henderson.
Standard: Real rugged - the instant pudding contest always was!

Activity: Light orienteering on Saturday afternoon, followed by folk dancing, fraternising and drinking?
Date: 7th-8th June.
Venue: Blackwood.
Transport: Private.
Cost: \$2 per person for hire of cottages.

Activity: Mike Feller's talk and slides of mountaineering in N. America and Canada.
Venue: Sisalkraft Theatre (7.30 p.m.)
Date: 11th June.

Bushwalking

Area: Cobberas to Kosciusko. Two trips: one northbound, one southbound to avoid car shuffle.
Date: Approx. 12-19th May.
Leaders: George Kuczera and ...
Standard: Medium - Long.
Transport: Private.

Area: Grampians, Victoria Range.
Date: 10th-11th May.
Leader: Rex Niven.
Standard: Medium - Medium.
Transport: Private.

Area: Purgatory (ouch!) Spur, Mt. Hump, Tarli Karng.
Date: 10th-16th May.
Leader: Jol Shelton.
Standard: Medium - Medium.
Transport: Private.

Area: Unknown as yet.
Date: 14th-16th June (Queen's Birthday).

Area: Sports Union Activities Room? 24 Hour Talk.
Date: 17th June, 7.00 p.m.

Area: Secret.
Date: 21-22 June.
Leader: Many.
Standard: Easy to impossible.
Transport: Van.
What is it: The 24 Hour Walk.

Area: Mt. Cole State Forest.
Date: 5th-8th July.
Leader: ?
Standard: Easy - Medium.
Transport: Van.

Area: Mt. Feathertop: Annual midnight ascent to the summit this time.
Date: 26th-27th July.
Leader: Jack Frost.
Standard: Cold, long and dark.
Transport: Private.

Area: Mt. Feathertop again: Alpine Instruction course.
Date: 16th-19th August.

Climbing

There are trips almost every weekend and some extended trips interstate will be on during the vacation. As these trips are arranged at short notice, it is advisable to annoy the climbing convenor, John Chapman (41 3883) or consult the trips book.

Canoeing

Naturally canoeing is dependent upon water levels in the rivers. Consequently these venues are tentative.

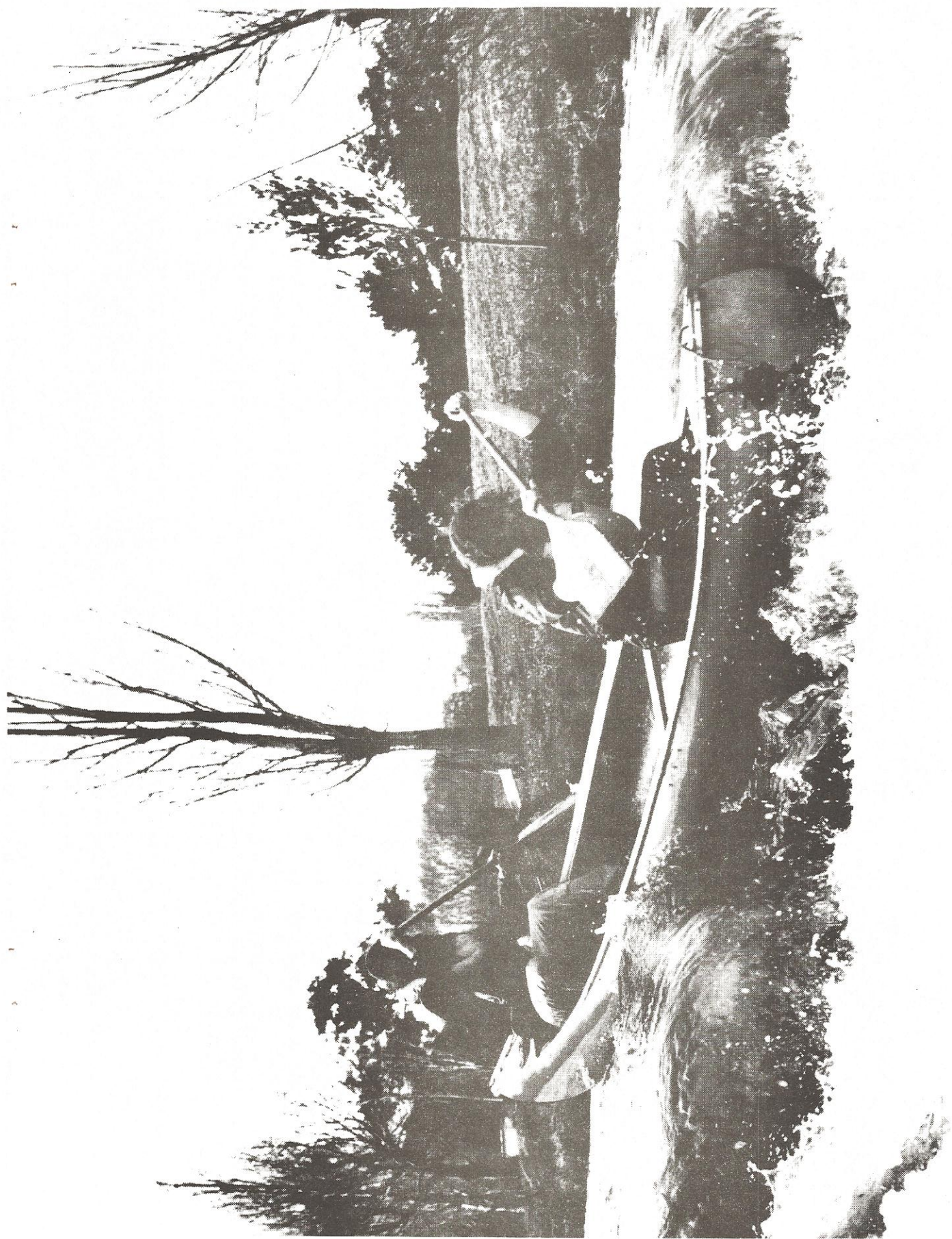
Doyen of canoeing: John Templar (38 6201).

Venue: Beaurepaire Pool (Melb. Uni). Eskimo rolling practice.
Date: 21st May.
Leader: Eskimo Nell.
Standard: Wet.

Venue: Delatite River.
Date: May 31st-June 1st.
Leader: Tim Hughes.
Standard: Experienced canoeists (grade 3+)

Venue: Delatite River.
Date: 14th-16th June (Queen's Birthday)
Leader: Karen Roberts.
Standard: Grade 2-3; experience not absolutely vital.

Venue: Thomson River.
Date: 28th-29th June.
Leader: Peter Cameron.
Standard: Experienced Kayakists only (Grade 3-4).



More trips are planned. Some day trips on the Yarra suitable for beginners will be also organised. (See Trips Book.)

Orienteering

Any keen orienteer should contact either Ian Moore (82 6029) or Ian East for further details or seek out the Trips Book.

25th May	Bayside
8th June	M.U.M.C.
15th June	Aust. Championships
6th July	Yarra Valley
20th July	Red Kangaroos
27th July	Latrobe Uni.
3rd August	Tuckonie
10th August	Bayside

Caving

Contact Sue White (328 4154) for details. Trips are planned on 10th-11th May, 7th-8th June and 14th-16th June (Bats Ridge, Buchan).

Snow Walking and Ski Touring

No dates can be finalised until they proclaim winter and snow falls from the heavens. Beginners trips will be organised. Watch the Trips Book or contact Jol Shelton (25 4324).

Addendum

- 17th-18th May: Feathertop Hut Work Party.
Leader: Andrew Walker, 860 2592 (W)
- 31st May- 1st June: Feathertop Hut Work Party.
Leader: Andrew Walker, 860 2592 (W)

CANOEING DOWN THE SNOWY

JOL SHELTON

The Snowy River flows through a part of Victoria rarely seen by bushwalkers, but which is a favourite summertime haunt of white water enthusiasts. The river has cut a deep gorge through igneous rocks leaving numerous cliff faces which glow red in the morning and evening light. Periodic floods have cut a swathe through the eucalypt forest removing all mature trees for about 30 feet above normal water level. Up to this level the vegetation is a brilliant green contrasting with the dul green of the eucalypts. Along both banks of the river are enormous sandbanks in which numerous animal tracks are clearly visible. Kangaroos abound and can be seen drinking at the water's edge in the early morning.

Such scenery, combined with the warm water, makes the Snowy ideal for bludge trips and so five M.U.M.C. members ventured forth to McKillop's Bridge last December, bound for Dargan's, about 50 miles downstream.

The first few miles were uneventful; the large flow of water covered most of the rocks without making the rapids excessively difficult. Naturally there was the occasional spill, but then the sun was hot and the water pleasantly warm. Our main concern was when we would meet the famed Tulach Ard Gorge, marked by 3 rapids of grade 4-5 standard. Having only a 1:250,000 map to navigate from we soon lost track of which bend we were at. Since the map didn't have the gorge exactly pinpointed anyway, we kept up the leisurely paddling and took the river as it came.

The cliffs in the valley were getting larger and closer to the river; we were obviously approaching a gorge of some sort. The rapids were getting a little more difficult; the pressure waves and stoppers were large enough to make the adrenalin flow freely. Naturally the canadian was swamped. Was that a grade 4 rapid? The consensus was yes; we were thus in the gorge and two more rapids of the same difficulty would mean that we had passed the dreaded gorge. We camped high up on the river bank well satisfied with the day's progress. Somehow something seemed wrong; the gorge had not been as fiercesome as we had been led to believe.

The next morning we discovered what the Tulach Ard Gorge really was. The cliffs came right down to the water's edge, the sandbanks disappeared and the rapids were altogether more terrifying than before; not just simple large drops with stoppers and pressure waves, but a series of rocky ledges with water foaming over them. They were both difficult and dangerous. The first rapid claimed one kayak and the canadian. Then the river was almost completely blocked by boulders (See P.134 The Alps at the Crossroads). A narrow channel on the left bank avoided a portage.

We had done one of the three big rapids. The next was soon upon us. The comments were as could be expected. PHAAAAARQUE. This was no longer a bludge trip; this one was serious. The saner majority portaged, leaving Tim to attempt the kamikaze act. He survived, but not before disappearing completely in white water. After surfacing he quickly pulled into the bank only a few yards short of the next drop. A quick survey and then down he went. Again he emerged upright.

This still left one more rapid; naturally it had to be the most difficult. We were not disappointed. It was well into the grade 5 class. Inspection from the bank revealed a main chute of about 40 yards with a drop of 30-40 feet. The water boiled over the rocks with every sort of turbulence imaginable. This one was not for us. A small flow of water through boulders on the side avoided portaging. The canadian was roped down, except for a few yards when the rope broke.

We had finished the Tulach Ard section and the bludge trip could resume. Classic sandbank entries were made into the water the next morning. Grade 2 and 3 rapids were negotiated before the car was reached just next to a grade 2 rapid where some cavers were drying out, and naturally they wanted some photographs. Tim obliged with his version of the Eskimo roll; his first spill for the trip.

A short rest in Buchan and the four of us went onto Omeo to canoe the upper Mitta-Mitta and Tambo Rivers before returning to Melbourne.

Canoeists: "Rapid" Rob Marshall; Harry "Speedy" Burr.

Kyakists: Ross Seedsman; Tim Hughes; Jol Shelton.

Jol Shelton accepts all the honour and none of the blame for this article.

"A CLIMB IN THE CANADIAN ROCKIES"

M. FELLER

The British Columbia Mountaineering Club had scheduled its 1974 summer (July) climbing expedition to attempt Mt. Waddington, a spectacular, remote and difficult 4,000 metre peak in the coast mountains of British Columbia. The eight members of the expedition gradually assembled by the little general store in the tent-house town of Tatla Lake, most of whose inhabitants were Indians. After an ice-cream and a light meal at the local cafe we drove our three dilapidated cars down a valley to a lake.

The last part of the drive took us through incredibly beautiful scenery, typical of the east, or lee, side of the coast mountains - old wooden fences and log cabins nestling at the edges of emerald green meadows and mixed poplar and pine forests. Myriads of deep scarlet and yellow flowers dotted the roadside. Glacier-capped mountains soared above. One could remain out of the car admiring the beauty for only a short time, however, as hordes of mosquitoes rapidly homed in. The Canadian mountains below the snowline become incredibly inhospitable every summer, as all sorts of biting insects from tiny no-see-ums to huge elephant flies attack one mercilessly.

We spent the night camped by the lake. Next morning our small plane arrived, and, after an airdrop and two trips, we all stood beneath the snout of Tellot glacier, having been dropped beside the lake near the snout.

We staggered slowly up the north side of the glacier, up a rotten moraine wall, to a pleasant lunch spot near a small ice-berg filled lake. A short drop to the glacier then, roped up, we began a long march up the glacier. For hours we plodded up through increasingly soft snow, plunging in up to our knees for the last few hundred metres. Around 8 p.m. we reached a hut and collected our airdrop boxes which had become intimately mixed up with those of another party. At those high latitudes, darkness did not arrive until after 11 p.m., which makes for much more leisurely climbing.

Next day we dropped about 700 metres down to the Tiedman glacier, then up a snow dome called Rainy Knob which, fortunately, did not live up to its name, then camped. A rope of four set off to find a route through the icefall of another glacier but returned with the depressing news that the glacier was completely cut off by a large crevasse and that the steep ridge to the south offered our best hope.

The following day we were up early, making good use of the frozen-up steps left by the recede party. Once off the steps, however, we would break through a crust and sink in up to our knees, and occasionally up to our waists - snow conditions which were to plague us for almost the entire trip. Avalanches came down throughout the night, testifying to the dangerously high temperatures.

We spent most of the morning trying in vain to find a route up the glacier. A huge serac collapsed less than 2 metres from one rope. Finally, after several false leads up steep porous ice we were left with only one alternative - to traverse beneath a serac and an avalanche gully and then climb up the vertical rock face at the glacier's edge. Leaving his pack behind, one bloke slashed across to the wall, then found an "easy" route up the face to a nice belay ledge. One by one we followed, the snow giving way on one bloke as he was stepping across the hole between snow and rock. With his heavy pack he was unable to jumal up and began to black out. After freeing him of his pack, he shot up. Three pitches of easy to moderately difficult (Canadian class 3 to low 5) rock had us on a small snowy col where we camped. From the col a narrow snow arete led up to the rocky ridge crest. Three of us kicked a set of steps up the arete to facilitate travel the following day.

After another warm night we set off in ropes of two, gaining the top of the ridge through waist deep snow and a variety of moderate routes. Upon reaching the crest, we found steep snow, corniced on the south with a narrow platform of rocks on the north. Due to the poor snow conditions the only route was on the rock platform. We moved slowly, one at a time, belaying continually. Near the end of the platform we heard the leader of the last rope desperately shouting for help as his second had fallen.

As rapidly as possible, still belaying continually, we returned. Rounding a corner we saw the leader with a solid belay. The right rope disappeared behind a rock wall. Beyond the wall was a steep snow gully. The second had slipped on the rock platform at the top of the gully and pendulumed down about 15 metres into the rock wall.

We set up an abseil and our medico descended with our first aid kit. He needed assistance so another bloke went down. The bloke who had fallen became unconscious and was lowered to a rock ledge, about 7 metres down. A pack with warm clothing was lowered. He was put into a sleeping bag, but died, mouth-to-mouth resuscitation failed.

A debate then ensued regarding what to do. Eventually we cut off a piece of climbing rope and tied his body to a piton in the rock. When a slow and uneasy retreat, with two abseils, to our last campsite. We didn't relax until we were all at the site. One of our tents had been in the dead bloke's pack, which had fallen to the glacier below, and the fly for the other was used to wrap around his body, so we rigged up a tarp. over a hole in the snow in addition to our remaining tent.

The next day we slowly retraced our route, abseiling back to the glacier, then traversing over Rainy Knob and climbing back up to the hut where we used our radio to call in a rescue helicopter.

The next few days were spent soul-searching, lazing in the sun, giving statements to the policeman who came up by helicopter, and waiting for the rescue helicopter, which eventually came and removed the body, after some superb piloting. We didn't feel like climbing.

After a two day walk out we reached some mosquito-infested jungle, then a lake into which we plunged to clean ourselves of the dirt and sweat, but never the memory, of the preceding week.

The coroner declared that death resulted from head injury. The inquest concluded that a hard-hat should have been worn. On the day of the accident none of us were wearing hard-hats as the weather was warm and we were on a ridge top with no danger from above. Under those conditions very few people would wear hard-hats. Internal injuries around the waist also occurred, probably caused by hanging from his waist loop at the end of the rope. A seat harness would probably have minimized such injuries and the general feeling of our own party was that the use of seat harnesses should be strongly promoted.

M. Feller.

ICE UPON MT. TASMAN

GEORGE KUCZERA

The Cessna plane banked to the left and climbed sharply to pierce the cloud that seemingly never went. We couldn't believe it - brilliant sunshine! As our senses recovered, the effects of the warm weather became obvious. The eastern faces of Mts. Cook and Tasman were scarred with avalanche furrows and debris. Upon landing, we bade farewell to the pilot, and guiltily walked half an hour to the hut. What pikers! - We didn't even know the way down. Still, it only cost \$8 each. So we plough through the snow to "Seven Plateau". On stepping into the "Gun" Hut we were overcome by the mess of dishes, bodies, debris, and by the smell - did not know that "Gun" climbers smelt like that!

Seven o'clock radio sked. Forecast fine and shithouse - a 10,000 ft. freezing level. Somebody once said that 99% of Alpine climbing is waiting. We were about to embark upon the other one per cent. Mt. Tasman was our target. However, the route was still rather nebulous. Someone suggested that the direct start to the Symo ridge was the safest way and reasonably quick.

After one hour of fitfull sleeping, we awake to the gloom of early morning. Our stomachs rumble with disgust as the muesli is shovelled in. We stagger out of the hut and sink above ankles in snow. Three quarters of an hour later we stop to put on crampons. 'Optimist!' I say to myself. Nick curses the crampon straps for the hundredth time. Half an hour later we come to a halt. A mammoth crevasse stands in our way. A collapsed snow bridge suggests a way. We belay - a strange experience - and with ice axe in one hand and a snow stake, we surmount a sugary wall only to find ourselves on a splinter of ice between two huge slots. We bridge down a small slot tip-toe clumsily across a fragile snow bridge, and then chimney up an ice crack to more reassuring ground. Our hopes rise as we approach the couloir that leads to the Syme ridge itself. "Shit Nick! - there's an overhang in it!" So, we traverse out of the couloir on rock of doubtful quality and move up a small crack to avoid the overhang. No runners - only a crude bollard belay. Well, we are on an ice climb, aren't we? We move over mixed ground - soft snow and weet-bix. The couloir steepens and the snow softens. Nick is gripped, and I give a wide friendly grin. Usually it is me! Snow stakes are useless as belays so we swim up. The sun strikes the slope and a few rocks dance past. For once Nick and I agree - lets get out of here!

With immense relief we gain the ridge. The angle relents and a beautiful knife-edged ridge climbs towards the sky. The loneliness and bareness, the quiet and peace of the mountain are usually meaningless words - for those brief moments those words assumed reality.

Six hours had elapsed. The sun had risen, but too absorbed in the climb to pause and watch the birth of a splendid new day, we slugged on. It is our loss and retreat was in our minds. We had moved too slowly to take advantage of the freeze higher up. There was a long way to go. So we descended by the usual descent route, over the "Mad Mile" which lies underneath the ice cliffs of Tasman's east face. Ten o'clock and we are back at the hut, thoroughly soaked, somewhat disappointed, but elated by our unique experience. A pleasant afternoon of eating, talking to real Kiwi's, sun-baking and feeling sorry for the fools wading in the snows of the Linda Glacier route on Cook.

One-thirty next morning. The agonising ritual begins again. Grumpy, half awake climbers fumble, moan, and groan, whilst yesterday's triumphant men sleep on regardless. There is no freeze, so for variety we decide to climb the Silberhorn ridge of Tasman. As we plod in yesterday's elephant-like steps, the futility of this obsession seems all too real. Far below we hear a drawn-out Anglo-Germanic wail "Oh Fuck. Oh Fuck! This snow is too soft! I'm going back to the hut." Our misery is complete. We leave yesterday's tracks and plough on upwards. Fortunately, the monotony is continually broken by slots that block our way. The ridge becomes more pronounced and occasionally we find ourselves front pointing on rock with only an inch or two of snow above it. The heavenly firmament begins to lose its brilliance as dawn approaches. Enormous schrunus decorated with stalactites of ice delight our thawing senses. A fiery orange ball creeps above the jagged silhouette of the Mallebrun range - dawn has come! Within an hour we are standing upon the confluence of three ridges - the summit of the Silberhorn. However, we barely notice it. The incredibly beautiful corniced ridge linking it and Mt. Tasman overshadows all else. A cornice leaves little doubt as to our route - an ascending traverse above the Balfour Face.

*What a tremendous place to monter snow stake belays! Eleven pitches of front pointing over ice 45° - 65° steep. The sharp ridge finally gives way to an ice-fluted, flat topped summit. What a weird place, we are far too excited to savour the hazy view.

Out descent is initially cautious. However, once we reach Silberhorn the serious climbing is over. Insanity takes over. We literally fall down the ridge, frontpointing backwards, sliding on our bums, staggering drunkenly in knee-deep snows and enthusiastically leaping over one slot only to find ourselves almost in another. Suddenly we stop. Just in front a huge serac topples over. An avalanche sweeps over our intended path. As at a railway crossing we wait, and then we dash through the settling debris. Soon we are on the Grand Plateau and safe. It is a plod up to the hut and will we be in time for Christmas dinner?

A ROOT ROTTER IN THE BUSH

GRETNA WESTE

Those who spend weekends and holidays in the bush have probably noticed areas where green grass trees change to yellow, then to a rich cinnamon brown. These are signs of death due to a root rotting fungus in the soil. The grass trees begin to droop, and finally the whole crown of leaves folds down and collapses like a broken umbrella. As the grass trees die, other shrubs turn yellow, branches die back and in a while only bare ground and sedges remain. About 12 months later the trees show disease, some die suddenly with brown leaves attached, others gradually die back from the outer branches. Tolerant and resistant trees remain apparently unaffected.

Nobody knows just how the cinnamon fungus first reached Victoria, but it was originally isolated from cinnamon trees growing in the mountains of Western Sumatra. As early as 1882 Queensland pineapples became diseased. We do not know whether the pathogen crept steadily southwards or whether it arrived in soil or on the roots of infected plants. So many Victorian native plants are susceptible that the fungus is unlikely to be a native organism. In order to survive for hundreds of years in the presence of a pathogen, native plants must show a high degree of tolerance to that pathogen or be eliminated in the competition for survival. Many overseas plants show this tolerance, but not Victorian natives.

The cinnamon fungus produces tiny microscopic swimming spores which are water dispersed. The swimming spores are attracted to sugars and amino acids excreted by the plant root which thus seals its doom. The spores penetrate fine roots, grow through and decay them. When its fine root system is rotted the plant dies from water and mineral shortage. Spores which can survive for long periods form in the soil and in the dying plant root. In the presence of free water, sporangia form on the edge of the root and produce more fine swimming spores. Disease is thus spread rapidly by the swimming spores in water or wet soil. Resistant chlamydespores and fungal threads present in either soil or gravel or plant roots also spread disease, but more slowly.

In Western Australia jarrah forests the cinnamon fungus has caused death and disease in huge areas, killing both the jarrah and the associated wild flowers. The East Gippsland coastal flats were probably the first Victorian areas to become diseased. Nearer Melbourne...

down the Vereker Spur to Corner Inlet. Before the pathogen was recognised contaminated gravel was used on the Tidal River road, the old lighthouse track and the Oberon road and disease spread from this gravel. In other areas some Country Roads Board gravel sources became infected, and the fungus was dispersed with the gravel. In the Acheron Valley, Narbethong, and in the army camp, Puckapunyal, disease originated from infected nursery seedlings in the same way as in our gardens. Many National and Forest parks contain small diseased areas, for example, Kinglake, Lerderderg Gorge, Angabrook and the Grampians. Dieback disease is present along the Great Ocean road near Anglesea and in one place on the edge of Sherbrooke Forest.

From any source of infection disease is spread rapidly by water, at about 400m. per year on a downhill slope, but spread from plant to plant or through the soil is very much slower and depends on the soil type, contact between roots and susceptibility of the vegetation. Disease spread is rapid in the Brisbane Ranges where soils are shallow, drainage impeded, through the soil by a clay layer near the surface, and the vegetation is very susceptible. Whereas most other fungus diseases affect only one or two plant species, such as rust on wheat, or Irish blight on the potatoe, the cinnamon fungus has 754 hosts, over 400 of which are Australian.

Because of the nature of this beastie, the cinnamon fungus is easy to spread - particularly by people or vehicles which leave the roads for the bush. Thus soil carried on boots may spread the fungus. We cannot accurately state that a "fistfull" of soil will spread disease. The fungus is entirely microscopic, so theoretically any amount of soil may spread disease. Of course a larger amount of soil will increase the probability that the fungus will be present. In any diseased area there is at least eight times as much fungus around plant roots as in the soil between plants, so that if you dig up a plant you are very likely indeed to spread disease.

Once the cinnamon fungus is present in the soil eradication is practically impossible. We speak from bitter experience here. We have triekd, and almost succeeded in eliminating the pathogen from very small areas of bush by drilling in fungicide, but in so doing we have destroyed everything else which was alive in that soil from nearby. It is possible to control or eliminate the pathogen from cultivated soil, but not from native forest. So we aim to slow down and prevent the spread of disease as far as possible. Bushwalkers can report signs of disease such as dying grass trees and the exact location. In each case we can only be sure the cinnamon fungus is involved by visiting the area, noting all the symptoms and isolating the fungus from samples of soil and roots. Fortunately the pathogen is easy to recognise under the microscope.

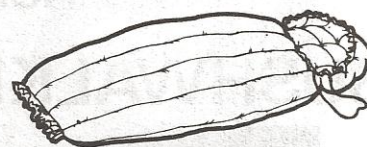
Therefore, unless you want "every bloomin' campin'-ground exactly like the last", will you please take care if you leave the road to clean the mud off your boots, your jeep or trail bike and not carry the soil from one area to another, in case you are also carrying infection?

Gretna Weste.

Kimpton SLEEPING BAGS

arctic bag

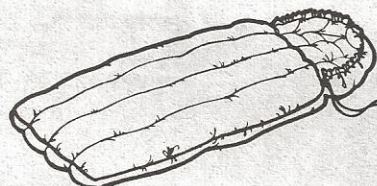
For sub zero temperatures and high altitudes. Cellular walls form lengthwise flutes, this stabilises the filling, ensuring even insulation and maximum resistance to cold throughout. There are no cold spots on the stitching, not even on the side seams because of these walls. The quilted flap hood is fitted with a draw tape and permits almost complete envelopment of the sleeper except for a small breathing aperture. When tied, the end allows no heat loss, however, in hot weather, the down can be compressed to the bottom and the end left open for ventilation, this makes the Arctic a dual purpose bag.



Filled with 2½lb. superdown.

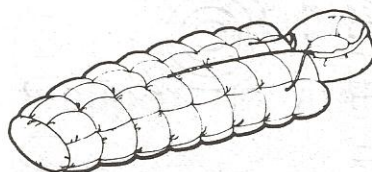
Body of bag cut 6'6" long x 32".
Total weight of bag 5¼ lb.

walled, hooded combination bag



Walled construction, the same as our Arctic bag. This hooded bag unzips to open into a blanket. Or, you can zip two bags together to make a double bag. Superdown filled

snow bag



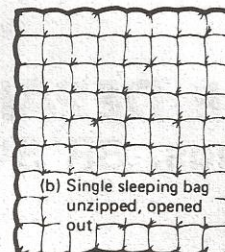
For skiers, bush walkers and sportsmen who want warmth without weight: Fitted with an inside closing zip and adjustable hood. An added feature is the heavily padded, circular foot panel, for protection in cold conditions. Supplied with our special waterproof container bag.

combination sleeping bag

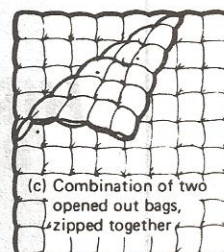
opened out to make a 6' 6" x 5' warm, light eiderdown, equalling the warmth of two pairs of blankets. For caravanning or camping purposes, it is simply zipped together, forming a single sleeping bag, or two bags opened out, can be zipped together, forming a perfect roomy double bag, capable of accommodating two adults or three children. Needs no bedmaking.



(a) Single zipped up



(b) Single sleeping bag unzipped, opened out



(c) Combination of two opened out bags, zipped together

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