

the
MOUNTAINEER



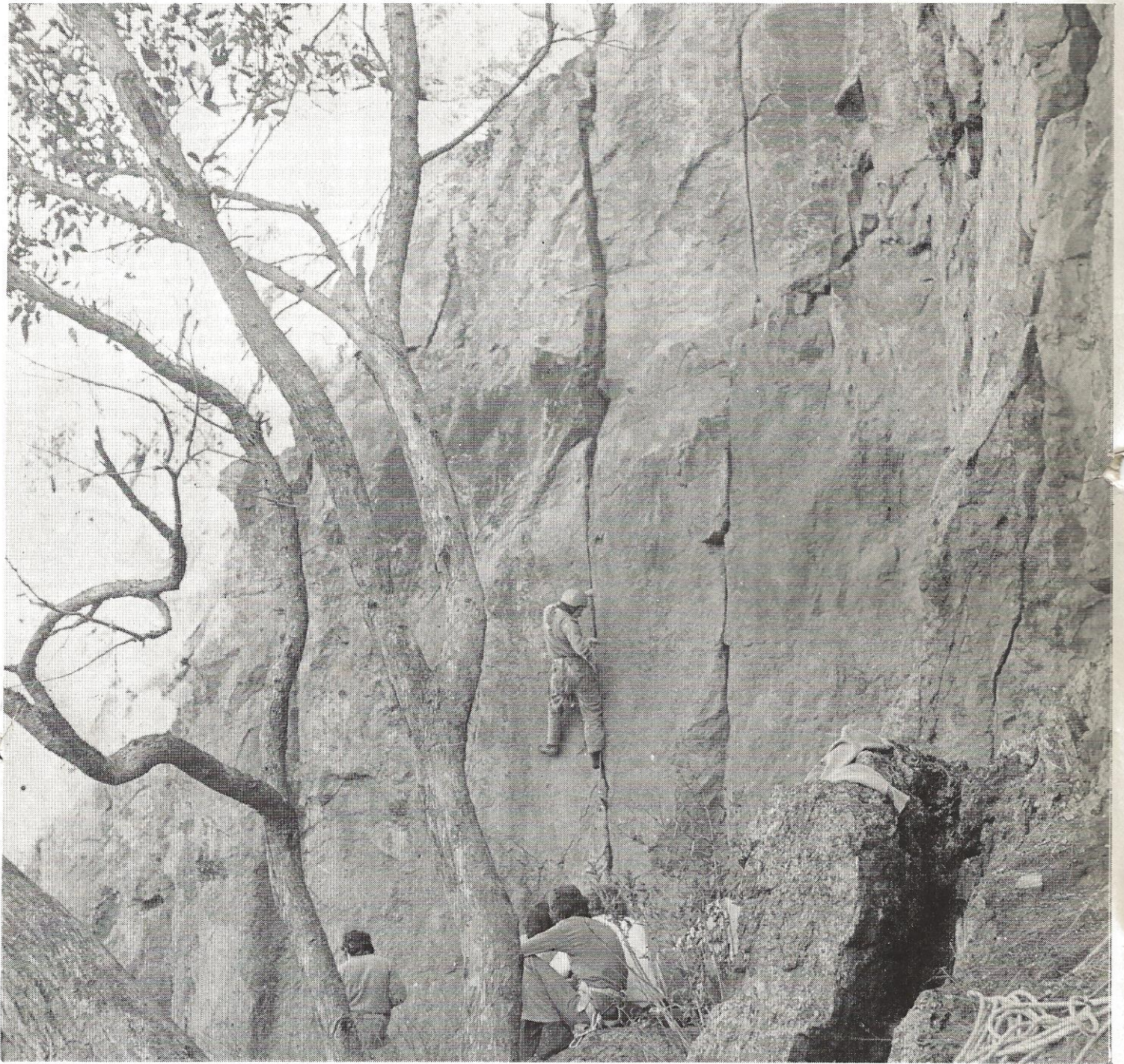
CLIMBERS ON THE HUMP, MT. BUFFALO
Photo John Chapman

DECEMBER 1977

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CLIMBERS AT WERRIBEE GORGE
Photo John Chapman

**SUPPLIERS OF BUSHWALKING,
ROCKCLIMBING, CAVING, SKI-
TOURING AND OTHER
OUTDOOR EQUIPMENT
46 HARDWARE ST. MELB.
PHONE: 67 3354**

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The Journal of M.U.M.C.

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This Mountaineer was edited by Cathie Seccombe.

Copy deadline next issue: January 27th

TESTIMONY TO CAIRNMAN'S ROAD.

At last it has been decided definitely that M.U.M.C. is to move from Aikman's Road, by the beginning of 1978. Our new club rooms are on campus, in the old Meteorological Workshop.

It is not until such a move is forced upon you that you begin to realise the value of what you already have. The B.B.Q. in November, for example, was held in a 'secluded garden setting'; had it been held at the Meteorological Workshop we would have been sitting on an asphalt drive-way. Then again Aikman's Road, with a little help from climber's hammers, boasts a number of fine climbing routes; these have occupied many a lunchtime. Any attempts at trying to climb the Meteorological Workshop and it will probably fall down!

Aikman's Road, despite (or because of) the dirt and dampness, gives the club a unique identity. We are physically separated from the University and even have our own enclosed garden. In the Meteorological Workshop we will form one more anonymous mass in a sea of buildings, over-shadowed by the Redman Barry Skyscraper and the modern Sports Union building.

Despite the losses there are, believe it or not, some advantages to a move such as this. But I will leave you to discover the advantages for yourselves. Let's hope that the Meteorological Workshop is a success, but just remember at the same time all that we are losing.

NEWS & OTHER ODDS & ENDS

1. New Fees - subscription rates for M.U.M.C. membership are to rise in 1978:-
\$ 2.50 for Sports Union Members.
\$ 3.00 for non-Sports Union Members.
\$ 4.00 for couples.
2. New Address - Daren Fawkes has moved to 1/13 Walker Street, W. Fitzroy.
3. Insurance Claims - For any accidents/injuries that occur on a club trip you may make an insurance claim through the Sports Union. The claim must be made within a week of the accident. (If possible see the President, Nick Reeves, or the Treasurer, Neil Blundy before making a claim).
4. Trip Reports - Forms, to be filled in after any bushwalking trips in the Victorian Alps region, are available from John Stone or Nick Dow, 121 George Street, Fitzroy. The forms are to be used in the updating of the new edition of "Bushwalking in the Victorian Alps".
5. Feathertop Stove - The original stove was removed from M.U.M.C.'s hut on Mt. Feathertop over a year ago. The decision as to whether to replace the stove was voted on at the last committee meeting. The majority voted that no stove was to be put in the hut.
6. Store Sub-Committee - After much criticism of the running of the store, by the stores officer and his assistants, it was decided to form a sub-committee to look at the present system and ways to improve the functioning of the store. Anyone interested is invited to sit in and give their ideas to the sub-committee. (Contact Nick Reeves).
7. Otways Study - The Land Conservation Council's recommendations for the Otways have been published. The date for submissions from the public closed in November.
8. Transport in S-W Tasmania - If any party planning a trip to the 'South-West' this summer is having trouble arranging transport to the start of, and from the end of their walk, contact Reg Marron of "Outdoor Equipment", 212 Liverpool Street, Hobart, Tasmania. Ph. 346213. He may be able to help out with a van.

CLIMBING REPORT

Little climbing has been done due to exams but on a recent trip to Eastern Wall in the Grampians Julie West, Bileen O'Meagher, Mary Egan and Neil Blundy completed a number of routes including Hu Flung Dung, Chop Suey and Chop, Chop, Cheem Nee.

A second trip to the Grampians at the end of November was made by a number of members including Hugh Foxcroft and Nick Reeves who climbed Samuri. Peter Megens did Sam Pan at Eastern Wall (11) with Cathie Seccombe and 'Mixed Climb' (11) at Mt. Rosea with Don Hird and John Searle. John Chapman, Robyn Storer and Tricia Seccombe similarly completed Hu Flung Dung. Jim Mitroy and Jim Pitt climbed Harri Karri (14). Andrew Kincaid and an outsider 'Don' did the Commando Climb (8) at Mt. Rosea. On Friday Peter and Hugh completed Debutant (15) and on Monday, Gerontiam (16) at Mt. Rosea.

CAVING REPORT

As with climbing there has been little caving activity over the last few months. As soon as exams are over a trip will be organised (Contact Anne Donnelly, 236 Palmeston Street, Carlton, for further information).

Six new boiler suits have just been purchased for caving. So come and use them on the next caving trip!

CANOEING REPORT

The past month has seen a dramatic decline in the number of canoeing trips undertaken as the onset of the end of year exams becomes evident. The post exam period should however, see a revival in canoeing interest, despite lack of canoeable rivers.

Several club canoeists are going surf kayaking at Tidal River, Wilson's Promontory, followed by trips on the Thomson and Snowy Rivers in December.

M.U.M.C. in combination with Whitehorse Canoe Club, with which we have strong ties, are running canoe trips to Tasmania to paddle rivers, such as, the Pieman and Franklin.

In February and up until the rivers start flowing again I will be running continuous surfyaking trips to the Ocean Grove, 13th Beach area, and anticipate that the club's new surfyak will be in demand. Surfing is a great way to improve canoeing skills, especially eskimo rolling and is recommended to all.

IMPORTANT

The canoe sheds are in a confused state with much jumbled equipment, both club and private. In order to overcome this I would like all privately owned gear to be named and set aside from club gear in the places indicated. All privately owned kayaks should also be listed on the sheet provided if they are considered usable and/or wanted.

All gear which is not moved; named or listed will be considered club equipment and used, or disposed of, in any applicable manner, with no warning to previous owners.

Canoeing Convener,
Bill Cruickshank.

CONSERVATION REPORT

The Shire of Bright was the focus of conservation activity early in November.

Feathertop

The club wrote to Bright Shire in September objecting to an application by Mr. Harrop to build a bridge across the Ovens with a car-park on the other side to service his proposed tourist development at the base of the Northwest Spur. During a trip to Feathertop in early November it was discovered that Mr. Harrop had commenced work on the bridge, completely fouling the access to the existing log bridge in the process. The club had received no notification from Bright about the status of Mr. Harrop's application. Following an urgent letter to Bright and a telephone conversation with a representative of the shire it was learned that Mr. Harrop's application had not been acted on and that he had started work without permission. He has since been told to stop pending consideration of his application. We will do all we can to stop Mr. Harrop further fouling the environment at the bottom of the Northwest Spur. We may have to pursue this case right through to the Town and Country Planning Board Appeals Tribunal.

Falls Creek

Bright Shire received an application in late October from Alpine Developments (Holdings) Pty. Ltd. for permission to construct a new ski lift near Falls Creek, running from near the edge of Rocky Valley reservoir up towards the current Falls Creek ski area. The construction of this lift would ruin one of the major ski-touring access areas to Pretty Valley, it would also be highly visible and audible from the Rocky Valley part of the Bogong High Plains, and would be an eyesore for most of the year when there is no snow cover. In some ways, however, it represents the tip of an iceberg. The runs it would service would only be of beginners standard yet beginners would find great difficulty in reaching this run from the existing ski area, other than by using the road from Falls Creek to Rocky Valley. Thus, were the lift to go ahead, then there would inevitably be strong pressures to upgrade this road and add a car-park near the reservoir, all of which would greatly degrade the area for ski-touring. It was for the above reasons that the club sent another letter to Bright Shire opposing the application.

It is interesting, but very depressing to note that the application was also opposed by a building company because they have plans to build flats and car-parking facilities near the reservoir and the lift would go through the area they plan to develop! It is an unrewarding and ceaseless battle - where are our reinforcements?

The Shire Council, at its November meeting, decided to refuse a permit on the following grounds; "The proposal is premature in the absence of the Land Conservation Council Alpine Study Area final recommendations". However, a notice of rescission was given so the ski lift will be discussed again at the Council's December meeting.

Cont....

CONSERVATION REPORT (Cont.)

In a letter to M.U.M.C. sent in July 1977, the director of the Ministry for Conservation, responding to a letter sent to him by the club objecting to the initial Rocky Valley development proposal, stated that the development would have to be considered both by the L.C.C. and the Ministry before it could go ahead. This letter resulted in another letter to the director of the Ministry for Conservation, sent in early November, requesting the Ministry to intervene in the current proceedings to ensure that the ski-tow proposal is considered both by the L.C.C. and the Ministry. The director replied that the ski-tow was a different development to the initial proposal and that he was not going to intervene. In fact both proposals have significant environmental impacts, both are controversial, and both involve government departments. The actual proposals are different but why does the Ministry for Conservation require a detailed examination of one but not the other? This appears to be yet another example of the lip-service approach to conservation issues in Victoria.

The Alps

The L.C.C. received over 1500 submissions over the alpine area and is currently working on the Proposed Recommendations, due out in the first half of 1978. This number was greater than for any other study area but still reflects poorly on bushwalkers. We must be one of the most apathetic, politically naive, and ignorant groups in society. To have any chance at all of reserving significant amounts of the Alps for own activities we must ALL put in a submission, and influence 10 others to put in theirs, when the time comes to comment on the Proposed Recommendations.

Nick Feller

GETTING LOST IN THE BUSH - WHAT TO DO

Prevention - Each member of the party should have a map and know the intended route.

- Trips should be of small parties so that the leader can get to know everyone.
- If you take a side-trip leave packs in a conspicuous area so that they can be easily found again.
- Each member of the party should carry an individual emergency kit.

If You Are Actually Lost - Stop and think, KEEP CALM.

- Use the map to try and work out where you are. For example, try to remember the last known spot.

- If necessary start rationing food.
- If you move mark your route with paper, broken twigs etc. Leave a dated note at each camp and give details of your condition i.e. any injuries, how much food you have.

- Stay near a major feature, eg. a rock or hill, and light a fire.

Searchers always do a 'feature search' of creeks, rocky outcrops, and hills first.

- don't walk at night, it is dangerous and uses up too much energy.
- If you hear searchers give 3 whistle blasts, light flashes etc.

If a Member Of The Party Is Lost - The party should stop walking.

Wait a night before doing anything if he/she is experienced and well-equipped.

- Work out where the member was last seen and therefore roughly where he/she may be.

- One person should stay at the present spot and everyone else set off to search with a definite time to return by.

- If you are unable to find the lost member send 2 people for help to the Forest Commission/National Parks Association or police.

- Remember that each situation is different so you must logically think out what to do. It is important to also watch other members of the party for exposure.

To Join The Search & Rescue Team -

1. You should be a reasonably experienced bushwalker.
2. You should be able to navigate and use a compass.
3. Be prepared for harsh conditions e.g. bushbashing, snow.
4. Be prepared to be rung up at all hours of the night (although you may refuse to go on a search if you are doing something else) and be reasonably prepared to leave in a hurry.
5. Own your own equipment including such things as a pack, sleeping bag, stove, compass.

Anyone interested in joining Search and Rescue should see the delegate, Nick Dow.

(taken in part from a talk by Doug Hurley).

"A PIKER'S GUIDE TO VICTORIAN ROCKCLIMBING"

Preliminary Drivelling A piker's lot is not always a happy one. Few people realize the hard work required, over years of practice to make a truly skilled piker. Piking is indeed an art!

Take a look at Anus McRaves, for example. Anus is a totally inept, low quality piker who tries desperately to spread an image by constantly writing his name down on trips (usually as leader) and then not going. Or what about Patagonia? or West Irian? This is not what true piking is all about; it is merely inefficiency and ineptitude. True piking requires commitment, the ordinal by fire, the feeling of a job well done as yet another crux is avoided, another day's climbing recedes into obscurity with no climbs done. Of course the true test of piking ability comes when one is coupled with a fellow piker for the day's climbing. The endless battle of wits, the pre-climb planning, the psychological warfare all seem worthwhile when your partner languishes on the crux of some absolutely horrendous grade 12, and suddenly yells "watch me" and plummets backwards.

Some Memorable Pikes By far the pike with the most sheer quality and class of the last few years was executed by Dave Lia when he took a beginner up "Yo-Yo" (15) at Mt. Arapiles. The beginner on his first climb finished up leading the two crux pitches, after Dave had piked off them both.

Another pike displaying just a touch of class was Ken Taylor offering the excuse of 'jet-lag' for not climbing at Mt. Arapiles one week-end after a flight from Perth.

How You Too Can Become A Piker (Warning: Before you make the decision to join the piking elite take a good look at yourself. Are you man (or woman) enough to become a piker? It requires dedication, skill, eternal vigilance and plenty of damn hard work! But remember, in the words of that famous philosopher:- "It is better to have piked and succeeded, than to never have piked at all").

A standard method of piking is to find some excuse for not climbing before you actually approach the cliff. The most common (and unoriginal) excuse is that it is hailing, raining, drizzling, might rain or might become cloudy and then rain. Rumour has it that a complete club trip to Mt. Difficult in the Grampians piked to Mt. Arapiles after inadvertently being sprayed on by a garden hose in Ballarat. Besides rain there are numerous other possible excuses for not gracing the crags with your esteemed presence. Following is a list of suggestions only. The best excuses are always original:

Cont.....

"A Piker's Guide to Victorian Rockclimbing" (Cont.)

- (i) Your climbing partner is a well known poofter (Rule 1, 2, 3, 4, etc. 'No Poofsters)
- (ii) Jet lag.
- (iii) Your climbing partner is Anus McRaves.
- (iv) Jet Lag.
- (v) Your climbing partner is the climbing convenor.
- (vi) Jet Lag.
- (vii) The weather - i.e. too hot, cold, wet, windy, cloudy, sunny etc.
- (viii) Jet Lag.
- (ix) Too late. (Due to the fact that you arose at 4 p.m. with hang-over trouble).
- (x) Objective danger from tourists (Useful on weekends, public holidays, Easter etc. In fact whenever you are likely to be climbing).

Neil Blundy

Next Month: Some of Victoria's best pikes will be described. All guaranteed by the author of this article. Don't miss it!

TRIPS PROGRAMME

Dec. 3rd/4th

Bushwalking: Beginners WelcomeMitchell River - Den of Nargun

Leader: Fiona Richards

Standard: Medium - easy.

Transport: Private

Dec. 3rd/4th

Bushwalking:Mt. Bogong Circuit : Village - Summit - Ropers -
Spion Kopje - Village.

Leader: Andrew Rothfield Ph. 347 6269(W)

Standard: Medium - hard.

Transport: Private

Dec. 3rd/4th

Bushwalking:Mt. Daring - Wonnangatta Station - Bryce's Gorge

Leaders: Peter Cabena/Marilyn Morley.

Standard: Medium

Transport: Private.

Dec. 10th/11th

Bushwalking:Beveridge Station - Mts. Selwyn, Murray - Beveridge

Leader: Andrew Rothfield

Standard: Medium

Dec. 31st/2nd Jan.

Bushwalking:Reedy Creek Gorge

Leader: Rob Jung

Standard: Medium

Dec. 31st/2nd Jan.

Bushwalking:Otways Coast Walk

Leader: Geoff Lay

Standard: Medium

Jan. 14th/15th

Lilo Bludge Trip:

Leaders: Ian Moore/Ralph Neville.

Standard: Incredibly Easy

Transport: Private

MOUNTAINEERING EDIBLES

THE FOOD OF THE ABORIGINES

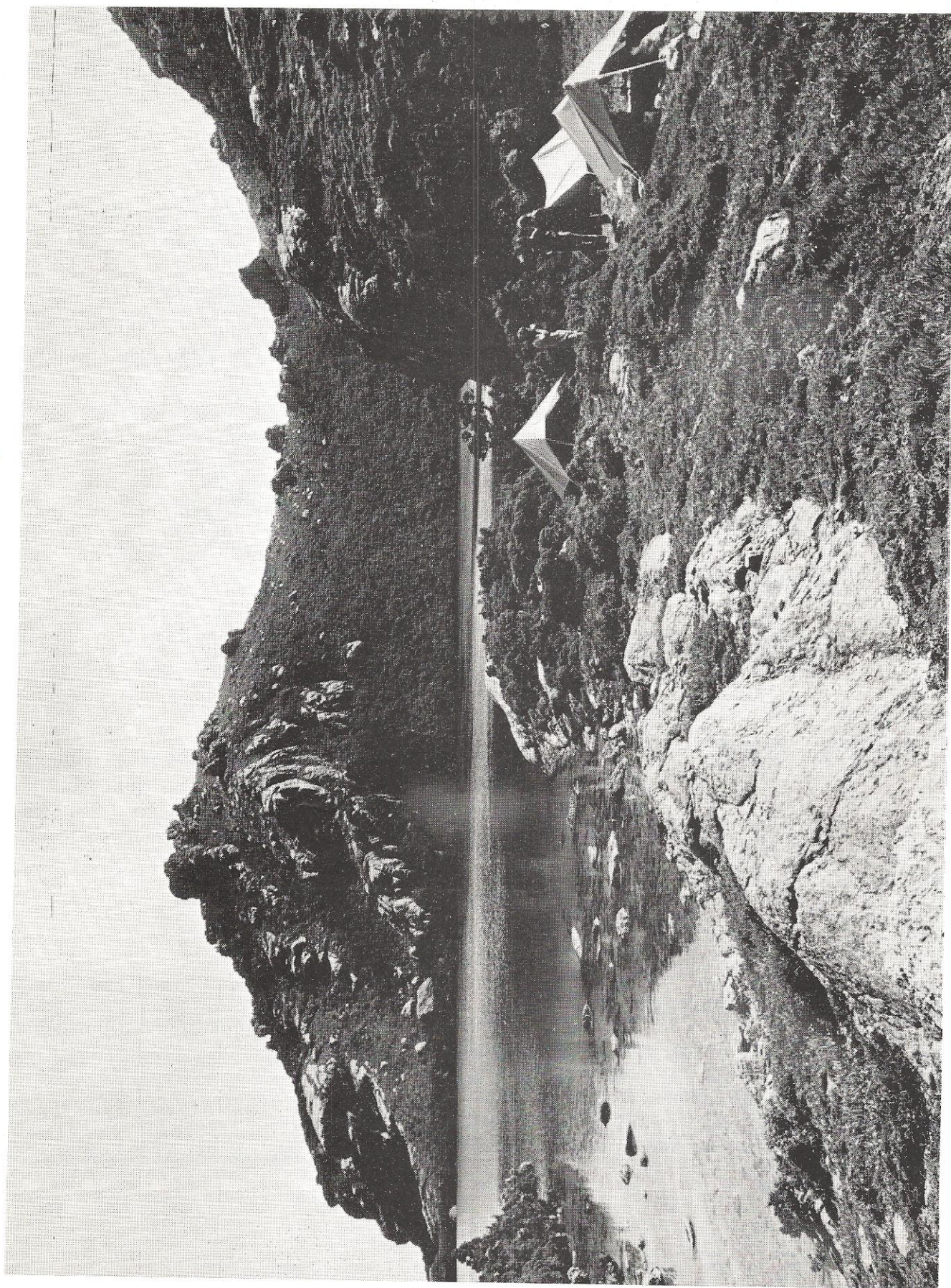
(Reprinted from "Bill Harneys Cook Book"
Pages 53-57)

"Everyone knows that the Australian Aborigines have never been a crop-growing people. How was it, then, that they never contracted vitamin deficiency diseases before the white man came?

One food that they found to be not only edible but extremely nutritive was the Nymphaea Lily. Every bit of this water plant can be eaten..... The big stalks that grow in every pond can be eaten raw or cut up and eaten in a white sauce like any other vegetable. The tender ends are chopped up and boiled in a little water, and the sauce is simply made with milk and flour. They are very essential as green vegetables. Many a time I have seen the native people coming in from dry areas with their breast-fed babies, and the mothers with hardly sufficient milk to keep the infants alive. After 3 or 4 days at the big lily lagoons the women's breasts would be full of milk again, and the babies would start to thrive.

The common Fan Palm (Livingstonia) is an intensely valuable article of diet. The cabbage-like inner part at the crown of the tree is an excellent food and is eaten by the natives of the Northern Territory.

Wild honey is a staple food of the Aboriginal diet, but they always see that it is thoroughly mixed with bee-bread, which turns it creamy. When the honey is eaten raw, it is best to do as the natives do: mix it with certain edible grasses. They suck the honey out of the grass, so that the saliva mixes sufficiently with the honey to make it digest easily in the stomach. Honey plays an important part in Aboriginal ritual. As most people know, the Aborigines do not believe that the father plays any part at all in the conception of the child. After elaborate ceremonies, in accordance with the ancient beliefs of these people, a young woman is judged pregnant, that is, a spirit child has passed into her womb. It is then the father's duty to give her some wild honey to eat. They believe that the spirit child will like the taste of the honey and stay happily where he or she is."



LAKE OBERON, WESTERN ARTHURS
Photo John Chapman

Kimpton SLEEPING BAGS

arctic bag

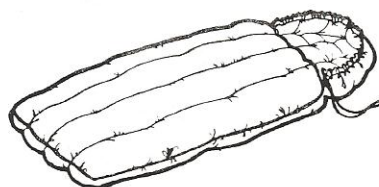
For sub zero temperatures and high altitudes. Cellular walls form lengthwise flutes, this stabilises the filling, ensuring even insulation and maximum resistance to cold throughout. There are no cold spots on the stitching, not even on the side seams because of these walls. The quilted flap hood is fitted 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.

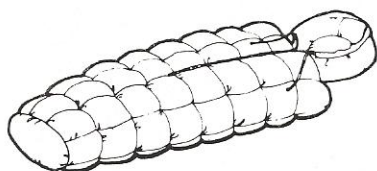
Body of bag cut 6'6" long x 32".
Total weight of bag 5¼ lb.

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

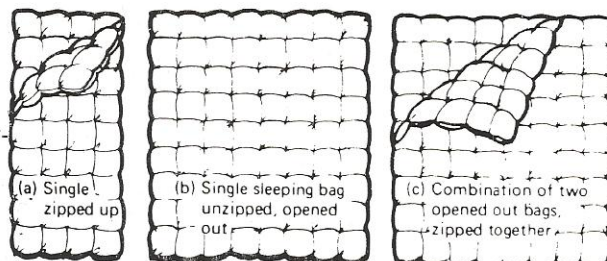
snow bag



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.



Economic Down Quilt Co.

39 Sackville Street, Collingwood, 3066.

Phone: 41 4878

BUSHWALKING IN VICTORIA'S DESERTS

KEY

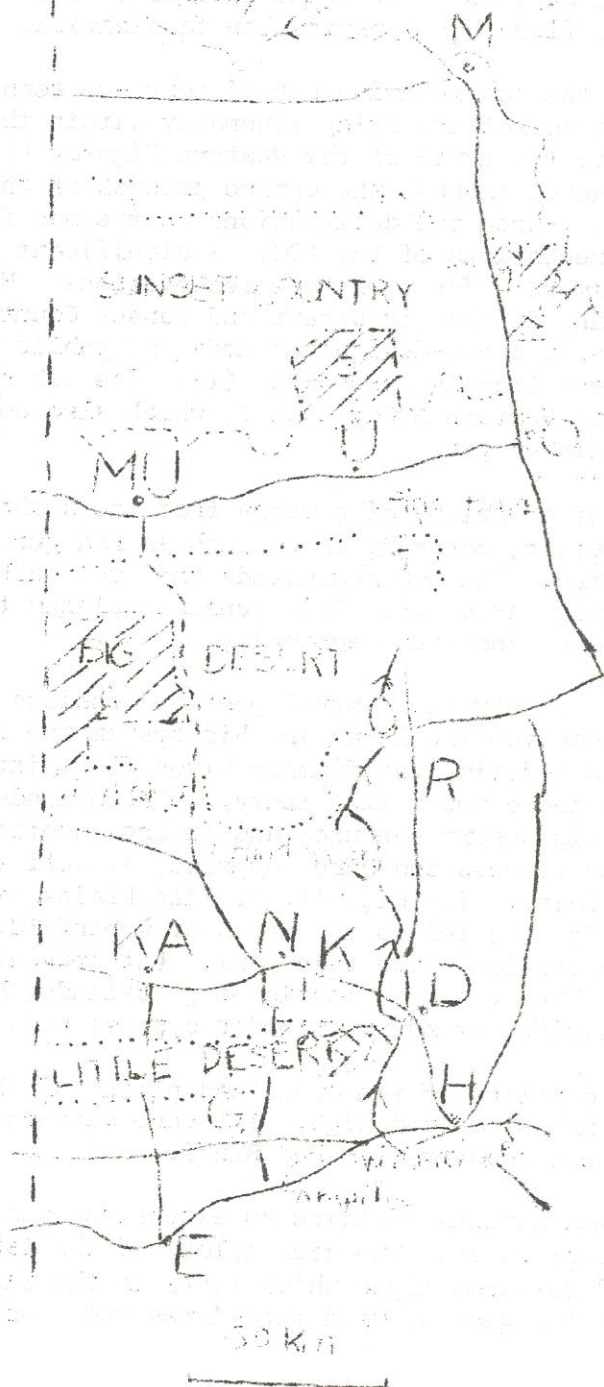
- Public Land boundary
- .-.- Reserve boundary
- River
- Road
- Existing national Parks
- Recommended extra Reserve

RESERVE

1. Hattah Lakes N.P.
2. Hattah Kalyktyne N.P.
3. Pink Lakes N.P.
4. Wyperfeld N.P.
5. Possible future incorporation into 4.
6. Big Desert Wilderness
7. Little Desert N.P.

TOWNS

- M Mildura
- U Underbool
- R Rainbow
- E Khill
- D Dimboola
- H Horsham
- MU Murrayville
- O Ouyen
- KA Keady
- A Kiata
- G Gympson
- E Edenhope



BUSHWALKING IN VICTORIA'S DESERTS (Cont.)

Walking in Victoria's desert country provides a different kind of experience from other areas we might visit. Generally the topography can be described as unspectacular. However, the presence of big sandhills and sandstone ridges and bluffs mean that the area is not flat. The flora and fauna which has adapted to these regions is of great interest. The variations in the pattern of the flora has a particular fascination.

The desert regions are shown on the accompanying map of north-western Victoria, with areas of interest to walkers lying generally within the public land sectors. The area to the north of the Western Highway (i.e. North of Kaniva) has recently passed through the entire process of the Land Conservation Council (LCC). Hence the designations on the map for that region are the final recommendations of the LCC. A significant area of the Big Desert has been recommended for park type reservations. However virtually all the uncommitted land in the Big Desert and Sunset Country, which is most of the remainder of the non-designated areas of public land, is recommended for use in military training exercises (1). The LCC report covering the Little Desert (South Western Study Area 2, which also covers the Grampians) has not been published yet.

The Hattah Lakes area consists of a variety of country from the Anabranch lakes of the Murray River floodplain, carrying trees such as red gum and black box, to sandy mallee country. The LCC recommends that the Kulkyne Forest area be added to the Hattah Lakes N.P. This sensibly places the whole Hattah Lakes unit, under one management authority.

Wyperfeld is similar to Hattah, in that the central portion consists of the Wimmera River floodplain. However the lakes in this system are less frequently filled - about once a lifetime the Wimmera River flows into Wyperfeld N.P. The surrounding areas are mallee in type. Recommended enlargements include some wild Big Desert sandunes and an area containing the pleasant yellow gum, slender cypress and scrub cypress, as well as a portion of the important Pine Plains. The majority of Pine Plains, an area of Wimmera River "floodplain" located to the north of Wyperfeld, is recommended "for eventual incorporation" into this park. (At present it is held under grazing leases.) The area is a mosaic of grasslands, black box, woodlands, red gum and beautiful stands of slender cypress (2).

The Big Desert Wilderness Area consists of the dunes and plains of the Big Desert. Some of the dunes are steep and high. The rare western whipbird occupies the Mallee Broombush country near Red Bluff.

The Pink Lakes State Park recommendations contains an extensive area of salt pans, saltbush flats and copi rises. The pink colour of the lakes is due to the presence of a red coloured algae which lives in the saturated brines. The area also contains a region of wild sand-dunes and grassland plains.

The Little Desert National Park (LDNP), has the Wimmera River as its eastern boundary, but otherwise largely consists of desert banksia and brown stringybark heathlands. It is drier and less varied than the Little Desert to the west.

Cont....

BUSHWALKING IN VICTORIA'S DESERTS (Cont.)

These areas are termed "deserts" partly because of the climate and partly due to the soils (2). The mean annual rainfall, which fluctuates significantly from year to year, varies from about 250 mm (10") in the Sunset Country to 500 mm (20") in the Western Little Desert. Most rain falls during the cooler months of the year. The sandy soils present are of poor quality for agriculture as they lack important trace elements. However they support a thriving diverse flora, particularly during Spring.

Although during the cooler months (from about May to October) walking in the area could be described as physically easy, certain points need to be considered when planning a trip. Water is frequently not readily available and may have to be carried. With fresh food and not too hot weather one can manage quite well on half a gallon of water per day. Obvious sources of water include anabranch lakes and billabongs filled by occasional river floods; claypans (the water usually looks muddy but it's satisfactory for cooking or in tea); soaks and bores. With all these sources one should be prepared for the possibility that the water may be too saline (a salty taste is a useful guide to unsuitability) and that the water may be contaminated by animal use (be prepared to boil your water). The availability of surface water in claypans is dependent on heavy rains in the area in the weeks preceding the trip. The more resourceful can exploit techniques used by the early explorers (12), such as catching rainfall in waterproof coats or plastic sheets. Natural depressions and nylon tent flies make useful catchment areas. Raindrops, dew and frost on tents and vegetation can also be trapped with sponges, although some species of acacia give the water a disagreeable taste (12). Other techniques, such as sucking the roots of certain plants, are not recommended.

Personal equipment is not critical. A good tent fly would suffice as shelter for most of the time. A warm sleeping bag could be useful for the frosty clear nights. Gymboots or tennis shoes are adequate footwear in this region. For an extended walk through mallee country a pair of loose fitting, long cotton trousers is useful to protect legs from the tough and abrasive scrub. For a weekend walk a pair of shorts is adequate. The thickness of the scrub is very variable (12).

Photographers will find an SLR camera with a macro lens, extension tubes or close-up lens useful in Spring, and a long telephoto (400 mm+) lens useful for photographing the wildlife - kangaroos, emus, many different flighted birds, foxes and rabbits.

If you are camping outside a national park be very careful with campfires. (Generally fires are only permitted within the tourist areas of National Parks). These areas burn only too readily. The portion of the L.D.N.P. nearest Dimboola should be visited to see the effect of the wildfire in February 1977, which burnt out the eastern half of the park.

What areas are worth visiting?

In this section I will only give a few ideas on places to go for easier trips. Experience and careful planning are normal prerequisites for rewarding larger trips into the Sunset Country and the Big Desert.

Cont....

BUSHWALKING IN VICTORIA'S DESERTS (Cont.)

The Hattah Lakes - Kulkyne area is a good place to start, in any case the train trip with a group of your friends is definitely fun! The presence of water in many of the lakes makes it an easy introduction to the mallee. It is worth spending at least a long weekend in the area. This is time enough for a trip from Hattah station across the mallee to the lakes, skirting their periphery and camping at say, Lake Mourmpoul and Lake Kramen. The Algona Guides map (3) and "100(120) Walks in Victoria" (4) are useful for trip suggestions. The Ranger of Hattah Lakes National Park, Ron Musker, is also quite helpful. The Forests Commission map (5) is a better guide to Lake and floodplain boundaries and vegetation zones within the Kulkyne area. National Parks (6) put out a number of useful free brochures on Hattah as they do for Wyperfeld and the Little Desert. While you are there visit the nature trail near the park entrance.

The most frequented part of Wyperfeld N.P., the area around the main lakes system, is similar to Hattah, except that the lakes are normally dry. During the last two years visitors have been fortunate enough to see the rare sight of water in Lake Brambruk, caused by heavy rains in the Wimmera River catchment in 1975. This is now fast drying up and should be completely evaporated before the end of this coming summer. Visitors to Wyperfeld are encouraged to base their stay at the Wonga Hut camping ground and do day trips, but overnight trips are possible, camping say at Pine Plains. Useful introductory walks are described in Walk (7). The Algona Guides map (8) is useful as is Ros Garnet's book (9).

Trips away from the sheltered environments of river flood plains, which is most of the region, require more planning since in these areas surface water is usually absent and navigation more difficult. Published maps of these areas - the Mildura, Ouyen and Horsham 1:250,000 sheets are of little value except to mark access routes. Sketch maps and aerial photographs (10) are useful guides to these areas.

Short (weekend) trips to features such as Red Bluff in the Big Desert, Broughton's Waterhole, Mt. Turner, Chinaman's Flat and the Crater in the Little Desert give a feel for authentic Victorian Desert walking. Sketch maps and information prepared by the author have been inserted in the club library. (The Trips Report File) (11). The features described for the Little Desert are not in the L.D.N.P. but are found in the area to the west bounded by the Kaniva - Edenhope and the Nhill - Gymbowen roads. Keith Hatelly of Kiata, is worth contacting on any aspect of Little Desert natural history.

Readers may recall that some years ago two bushwalkers, Warren Bonython and Charles McCubbin became the first people to cross the Simpson Desert in Central Australia on foot. They did this by pulling behind them a trailer containing essentials such as water and food. The same sort of approach is possible in the open park-like (*C.priessii* country) areas of the Sunset country. The author is interested in trying a trip of this type next winter-spring.

Cont....

BUSHWALKING IN VICTORIA'S DESERTS (Cont.)References and Notes

- (1) Map C and pp 71-2, LCC Final Recommendations Mallee Study Area, (1977)
- (2) LCC, Mallee Study Area Report (1974)
- (3) Algonia Map No. 117, "The Kulkyne State Forest and Hattah Lakes National Park".
- (4) Tyrone T. Thomas "100(120) Walks in Victoria".
- (5) Forests Commission Victoria, "Kulkyne State Forest", 4" = 1 mile Dyeline (\$2-00).
- (6) National Parks Service, 1st Floor, 240 Victoria Parade, East Melbourne.
- (7) Fred W. Halls in Walk, 27, pp. 79-83 (1976).
- (8) Algonia Map No. 116, "Wyperfeld National Park and approaches".
- (9) J. Ros Garnet, "Plants of Wyperfeld", (V.F.N.C.), out of print.
- (10) Aerial photographs are obtainable from Department of National Resources, 280 Thomas St., Dandenong, phone 791 5555. The scale is normally 1:80,000 and a waiting time of about 3 weeks is required. They are coded using the 1:250K map sheets.
- (11) Red Bluff, Big Desert Track notes (1976).
Notes on the (1977).
Map of the Little Desert National Park.
- (12) William Lockhart Morton, "Notes of a Tour in the Wimmera District, June/July 1861". National Parks Authority Reprint (1966) (Available in Ministry for Conservation Library, 6th Floor, 240 Victoria Pde., East Melbourne.)

MARYLOU'S BUSHWALKING EXPLOITS

'Twas Marylou from Jindavic,
Who caught the walking craze,
She joined the mountaineering club,
To learn about it's ways.
She attended Caddy's lecture,
To learn what she should pack,
Then headed off to Bushgear,
To buy her new rucksack.

She strode purposefully into Bushgear,
And pointed to a pack,
The man behind the counter,
Was rather taken aback.
He eyed her tight blue levis,
Her shirt was rather scamp,
Then he asked her very politely,
Excuse me, "Can you tramp?"

See here young man, she gravely said,
A gleam rose in his eye,
From Toorak through South Yarra,
There's none can walk like I.
I've walked from University,
Right here to centre town,
I've walked down Redmond Barry,
Twelve floors from top to ground.
I've walked from Bailleau Library,
Right over to Aikman's road,
The only thing I've yet to try,
Is walking with a load.

She bought the pack and went on home,
to pack for her big trip,
She packed her nighty-nighty,
And the clothes that she thought fit.
She packed the food she thought she'd like,
She thought it was so small,
Then she weighed it on the scales,
Twas eighty-four pounds in all.

She struggled into North Court,
To meet the other members,
Who could only gasp at the size of her pack,
Because it was so horrendous.
They gasped at her elegant outfit,
Unfitting for the track,
And wondered which would go first,
The seams of jeans or pack.

Cont....

MARYLOU'S BUSHWALKING EXPLOITS (Cont.)

Twas Marylou from Jindavic,
Who got up early next morn,
And started on the ghostly track,
Before it was even dawn.
The going was hard and tough,
She tried to make not a sound,
But with every step she strainfully took,
She sunk into the ground.

They found her an hour later,
A hundred yards along the track,
Up to her waist in gravel,
Her pack still on her back.
They eased the weight considerably,
By sharing out the load,
And for dinner that night they had caviar,
And chicken a-la-mode.
They returned a few days later,
The walk was a lot of fun,
And there was Marylou,
Still gravel up to her bum.
They hauled her out, and took her home,
But her story's not yet done,
'Cause I saw her at Aikmans Road yesterday,
Signing up for another one.

Paddy Pallin

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