



ROB JUNG, CLIMAX PEAK, OLIVINE ICE PLATEAU. FEB. '78.

the

MOUNTAINEER

REGISTERED AT THE G.P.O. FOR TRANSMISSION
BY POST AS A PERIODICAL CATEGORY "B"

MAY 1978

20¢

BUSHGEAR ML



"KAREN ROBERTS NEAR MT. NELSE"
Jol Shelton

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

THE MOUNTAINEER

MAY 1978

COMMITTEE 1978

President:	Neil Currie, 12 Alfred St., Richmond. 429 3413	2 Presidential Conversation
V-President:	Jane Landman, 162 Fitzroy St., Fitzroy. 41 2551	3 Constitutional Amendment
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Climbing:	Peter Martin, 12 Westbank Tce., Richmond. (contact Neil Currie)	
Conservation:	Michael Feller, 14 Reynard St., Coburg. 383 2853, 341 7170(W)	
Orienteering:	Tony Kerr, 5 Beleura Av., Vermont.	
Ski-touring:	George Raitt, Lot 35 Helene Gr., Boronia. 762 6335	
The Journal of M.U.M.C.		
Correspondence: The Editor, "Mountaineer", c/o Sports Union, Melbourne Uni- versity, Parkville. 3052.		

PRESIDENTIAL CONVERSATION

Neil Currie

G'day, I' Neil,

If you're a new member of MUMC you probably don't know me from Adam - this can readily be rectified by actively seeking me out and introducing yourself to me. I can then inform you about how the club can best assist you in your pursuits. I'm at the clubrooms (b/w St. Mary's & squash courts in green wooden building "Aikman's Road") most lunch times and can often be contacted at home on 429 3414. Beginners are most welcome on all but the hardest trips - if you are in doubt about putting your name down please contact either the trip leader or me to clarify the position.

If, for reasons academic/social/apathetic you haven't yet made actual contact with MUMC or the relevant convenor of your area of interest, do contact them and discuss your interest with them. To attend a trip, all that is required is that you print your name etc. in the orange-covered "Trips Book", resident in Aikman's Road. Next seek out the leader to check such details as transport and equipment needed for your activity.

MUMC has an amount of gear available for hire: sleeping bags, tents, parkas, choofas (small spirit stoves), cross-country skis, boots, stocks, packs. Some items of specialized food (dried fruits, chocolate, dehy and freeze-dry, dried veges, HEALTH BARS, etc.) which, contrary to popular belief, is for sale, not hire! This above bloody mess is now under the auspices of one John Stone.

The store is now open on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday lunchtimes and Tuesday evenings. The food store will only be open on Thursday and Friday lunchtimes and Tuesday evening. Equipment hired from the store will require no monetary deposit for a trial period of 4 weeks from 26th April. Your membership card will be held for the duration of the hire period.

Specialised equipment is the responsibility of the convenor of the activity i.e. Canoeing - Bill Cruickshank; Caving - Sue White; Ski-touring - George Raitt; Climbing - Peter (Jex) Martin; Bushwalking - Neil Blundy; etc. as their consent is required before the gear is used.

Two items of general interest: T-shirts are soon to be produced in sizes to fit people other than Jol or Lyndee, and several people are now de-bugging the computer run for the membership list.

A word of warning needs to be directed towards the use of containers for carrying both fuel and drinks - it is everyone's responsibility to clearly label fuel bottles so as to minimize the confusion concerning their use - have you tasted shellite lately!

I would like to congratulate Andy Rothfield on his recent election to President, W.C. In so accepting the position, Andy has resigned his secretary position with MUMC. To solve this problem Ms. Debbie Tyler has agreed to be co-opted as in-term secreatry until the Special General Meeting which is to be called in 2nd term, to discuss the Treasurer's Report and the Audit now being completed by George Raitt. At this meeting nominations for the position of Secretary will be called for and an election held to fill this gap in our committee.

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING - 7.30 PM. 21 JUNE 1978

Recommended alterations to the club's constitution (arising out of the audit).

Clause 25: A full report of the assets and annual income and expenditure of the Club in the immediately preceding year shall be presented at the A.G.M. and shall be known as the Treasurer's Report.

Proposed alterations to Clause 25: By inserting the words "ended 31 December" after the word "year", and by inserting the words "provided that for the year ended 31 December 1973 the report shall cover the period 16 April 1978 to 31 December 1978" after the word "report" where last appearing.

Proposed new clause: Clause 25A. "The committee shall appoint an auditor each year to audit the Treasurer's Report of the assets and annual income and expenditure of the Club, and the Auditor's Report shall be presented to the A.G.M. with the Treasurer's Report. Provided that the A.G.M. or special general meeting called in lieu thereof to consider the Treasurer's Report may resolve that no auditor shall be appointed by the committee in respect of the next succeeding year ending 31 December."

Proposed: George Raitt.

Clause 10: The governing body of the Club shall be a Committee of enrolled members which shall consist of the following elected members -

- (i) President
- (ii) Vice-President
- (iii) Secretary
- (iv) Assistant Secretary
- (v) Treasurer
- (vi) Bushwalking Convenor
- (vii) Stores Officer
- (viii) Editor of the club Journal
and a special members appointed by each of the
following Sub-committees -
- (ix) Conservation
- (x) Rockclimbing
- (xi) Caving
- (xii) Canoeing
- (xiii) Skitouring
- (xiv) Orienteering

Proposed alteration to Clause 10: "That the Bushwalking Convenor come under the list of special members appointed by Sub-committees instead of elected members."

Proposed: Neil Blundy

Proposed alteration to Clause 10: "That the position of 'Publications Officer' is incorporated as an elected member of the Committee.

Proposed: Andy Rothfield
Seconded: Debbie Tyler.

Clause 11: The elected members of the Committee shall be elected at the A.G.M. On the notice sent out in respect of the A.G.M., as provided in Clause 29 below, the Secretary shall invite nominations, which shall be returnable in writing, signed by the nominee, proposer and seconder at least seven days prior to the A.G.M. At the A.G.M. the President shall appoint scrutineers to conduct such ballots as may be necessary, in the manner they see convenient or desirable.

Proposed Alteration to Clause 11: "Insert after 'at least seven days prior to the A.G.M.' - 'Provided that if not more than one nomination is received with respect to any position the nominations shall be called for that position at the A.G.M.'"

Proposed: Nick Reeves

Proposed new clause: "Clause 20A. The appointment of any person as an Editor of a club publication by the Committee shall be subject to the approval of the A.G.M."

Proposed: Nick Reeves.

ELECTION

Nominations are hereby called for the position of Secretary. Nominations close one week before the SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING, to be held on 21ST JUNE, at the Sisalkraft Theatre, Architecture Building at 7.30 p.m.

OUR LAST CHANCE TO SAVE THE ALPS...

The L.C.C. have said "No Alpine National Park." We must reject this... ACT NOW:-

ATTEND the public meeting in the Lower
Melbourn Town Hall at 8 p.m.
Tuesday, 23rd May.

CONTACT Victorian National Parks Assoc. for further
information: 324 William St.
Melbourne 3000.
Phone: 3295377

It was early February and I had just returned from a mountaineering course based in the West Matukituki River valley of Mt. Aspiring National Park. I was sorting through my gear outside Geoff Wyatt's house when Greg called around from the Wanaka Motor Camp.

"Ready for the Olivines?" queried Greg.

"Well, he's a bit of a liability, Greg!" interposed Geoff.

Despite this unfavourable introduction I was certainly keen to do a quick trip into the area and after dinner we were soon involved in the planning of a 10 to 12 day trip. There were soon three of us (a little different from the vague proposal settled on in Australia) - Greg, Tom and myself, with Andy to accompany us for the first day and a half, partly to act as "Sherpa".

The Olivine Range is a wilderness area (i.e. no huts or well defined tracks) on the western side of the Mt. Aspiring National Park. Our goal was to do some climbing in the highest portion of this region - the Olivine Ice Plateau. The peaks of the Ice Plateau were christened with some tantalising names: Intervention, Tower Ark, Blockade, Destiny, Climax, etc. First we had to reach the Plateau! and unlike another N.Z. National Park, we had to walk to reach our climbing base which was not a snug hut, but a snow cave. There was no likelihood of getting help within much short of a week should an accident occur. But then, remoteness and isolation is part of the attraction of this area.

The next day (Sunday) was spent buying, sorting and packing food, writing postcards etc. before boarding the bus to Queenstown. Somehow I managed to carry all my gear - one very heavy and bulky Super Expedition Mountain Mule loaded to capacity, one large nylon dilly bag, plus a full climbing pack, from the motor camp to the bus stop in one trip. The others were similarly laden. It is loads like this which tend to put one off climbing in New Zealand.

Overnight accommodation in blatantly touristy Queenstown was at St. Peter's Church Hall. It's major advantage was that it was adjacent to the bus terminal. Sleep in the large dormitory was made very difficult by the carryings on of two drunk "gay" types.

Early Monday, after freighting our excess gear to Te Anau we boarded a taxi to Paradise in the Dart River Valley. In the sunny early morning the mountains to the north were reflected by the tranquil waters of Lake Wakitipu. Our approach route was to be by the easiest route which was Beans Burn - Olivine R. - Forgotten R. route rather than a transalpine route such as the Margaret Glacier approach. The first day's walk was up the Dart to Chinamen's Flat then up to the head of the Beans Burn. Since Andy wasn't doing any of our load carrying, I was glad to be able to give him the climbing rope!

Lunch was spent in the sun at the River Dart-Beans Burn junction, gazing up at the Western side of the Earnslaw Massif. Crossing the icy, turbulent Dart to reach this spot proved to be easy as the river was abnormally low. The clear aqua-blue waters of the Beans Burn contrasted with the grey, glacial debris laden waters of the Dart. Much of the day's

walk along the Burn was through beautiful beech forest. Later in the afternoon three of us became separated from Greg - we went one way around some large rocks near the stream and he, (only a few yards behind us) went another way. After spending some time searching the area, we continued on assuming that he had done the same. He had, and we were re-united at the superb bivvy rock at the head of the valley. Minor separations also occurred later in the trip symptomatic of the complexity of the country (particularly where there were boulders) and our eagerness to gain our objective.

Another sunny day followed as we struggled up to Fohn Saddle grateful to Andy who took several kilos from each of our packs for the climb. At this spot we left Andy, who returned the way he had come to catch his plane flight home at the end of the week.

After reaching the Upper Olivine River we attempted to find walking pads indicated by Moir's Guide. We soon became disillusioned with this approach and used our own route sense, which was mostly to rock-hop downstream, crossing where convenient. With eleven days food and climbing gear my legs didn't have quite their usual spring for this activity. Camp was pitched on a grassy flat just downstream of the slot gorge from which the Forgotten River emerges, as it enters the Olivine Flats. A swim was in order in the cold blue pool.

With Sirrus clouds passing across the sky (fine but for how long?) we reached Forgotten River Col (6000 ft.) late on Wednesday afternoon. We found a snow cave at the Col and following a few modifications this was occupied. The mist closed in at sunset and the next day there was a white-out with fine drizzly rain falling, so we rested and read. We didn't like the look of some of the roof section of our cave, so late in the day another section of the hillside was quarried and part of the front section filled in. Overnight the rain opened a hole in another section of the snow cave roof and this signalled a major restructuring of our cave. With our sleeping gear moved into yesterday's quarry, we carved out another hole, and used the blocks to build a wall. Chief miner was Greg, while I was the ice-mason and Tom provided expert architectural advice. New standards were set in climate degradable housing.

Meanwhile the weather was active. The clouds were clearing and by midday we were lunching in the sun thinking about climbing. Over lunch the weather changed our plans! The clouds came in and soon we were back inside our sleeping bags as a strong gale blew down the plateau. Imagine my surprise later at 8.30 pm. when I next emerged, that the sky had cleared and the snow surface was icing up in the bracing cold southerly. Plans were quickly drawn for an early start on Mt. Climax (7980 ft.), the highest point in the Olivines.

A little before dawn (Saturday) we walked the kilometre across the plateau. We donned crampons and experienced the delightfully easy sensation of walking up steep frozen snow slopes. Under superb conditions we climbed to the top without needing to rope up, although one pitch near the summit required some front pointing using the ice-axe pick for support. The summit view was superb, taking in the other peaks of the Olivines, Destiny, just below Mt. Aspiring, the Tasman Sea (cover photo) and the Joe Glacier, Barrier Range and Earnslaw in the other direction. It was an appropriate climax to our trip.

Later in the day we walked down the plateau and climbed Little Arc, which gives a quite different perspective. Features such as the big seracs of the Andy Glacier icefall and the attractive Pic d'Argent, which resembles a silver crown, were of particular interest. After returning to our snow cave we climbed up to some rocks and cooked dinner in the warm late afternoon sun. As we watched, the Wellington university student group, which we had met on the way in, dug out their snow cave.

A look at the weather early on Sunday morning convinced us that now was the time to move off the plateau, as the forecasted Nor'wester (the other group had a radio) was nearly upon us. Descent from the Col to the Forgotten River valley was much more taxing than the ascent, because of the strong wind which buffeted our movements along the largely rocky route. Crampons were useful for descending to the rocks. The most hazardous obstacle was a five metre wide crossing of a slippery rock-slide waterfall under the blustery conditions.

It was raining by the time we reached our campsite of the previous Tuesday on the Olivine Flats. We collected our 3 days food dump and set up camp whilst I tried to light a fire. With some help from Greg a morale-boosting blaze was achieved, and we cooked dinner successfully as the drizzle set in. Towards the end of dinner the tempo of the rain increased to a torrential intensity. It was a pathetic scene as the fire was quickly quenched and we tried to extract the sleeping contents of our packs without allowing too much water to penetrate inside. Our "tent" - a Bergen's Ignell tent fly (chosen partly to minimise trip weight) - proved barely adequate under these conditions as substantial leaks appeared along the seams. Nevertheless, we all somehow managed to squeeze into the damp volume inside, deflecting the worst drips with parkas and bivvy bag covers. By dusk (9.30 pm.) the Forgotten River was a terrifying sight and rocks could be heard moving downstream. It was certainly not the time for a crossing! During the night the rain stopped and by morning the river had dropped to a more normal level. We were away early to attempt possibly the most uncertain section of the trip, through the wilds of the Lower Olivine Gorge. We were hoping to reach Alabaster Hut on the lower Pyke River by nightfall!

The route followed was more or less as described in Moir, but the blazes described were difficult to find and there was no track, just a weaving route through a sodden (raining again), mossy beech forest. By lunchtime we found ourselves approximately en route on a shoulder about 1000 ft. above the true right bank of the Olivine River. Lunch was immediately preceded by some Western Arthurs style climbing on vegetated, near vertical slopes, with our packs. How we cursed the ice-axes, crampons, shovel etc. which tangled in the vegetation. Nevertheless the rainforest was much less abrasive than a Tasmanian forest, as we were all comfortable in shorts and sandshoes which were the normal clothing for the trip (except on the Ice Plateau).

Morale improved as the weather cleared during the afternoon and we found a lot more blazes (but no track as there is none). Eventually, just as the sun was moving below the hills, we emerged to the river flats and camped beside the Olivine near its junction with the Pyke. We easily built a pleasant warm fire on the stones. It was a good night to sit back and recap on our trip.

Tom decided it would be a good night to sleep under the stars, but unfortunately the stars went out during the early morning, and he succeeded in further wetting his sleeping bag in the heavy ground fog. By this stage lassitude was settling in and a leisurely breakfast was spent as we watched the fog lift. I spent much of this time trying to photograph the effects. Eventually the sun emerged (along with the sandflies) and a little before 11 am. we were off, this time following the luxury of a track.

We reached the northern shore of Lake Alabaster (and Fiordland National Park) for lunch. The lakeside walk, with the sun shining off the water and backlighting the ferns and other vegetation, was beautiful. Sandfly proof Alabaster Hut was a welcome luxury after nine days. A further two days was taken over remaining walk along the relatively civilized Hollyford valley to the Milford road junction.

(Report of trip to New Zealand by Greg Craven, Rob Jung, Tom Miller and Andy Walker, February 1978).

SLALOM CANOEING REPORT

Prue Dobbin

At last MUMC is getting a slalom canoeing section into action. For those vast numbers of people in the past who have said or written that a slalom section has no part in mountaineering, I would like to state the opposite case. As with orienteering, slalom canoeing can be competitive, where the will to win is the main aim of the exercise. However, as has frequently also been said about orienteering, one does not have to be competitive to enter and enjoy slalom. Slalom canoeing is an excellent way of improving one's skill - if a tourer could go down a grade 5 rapid using the same degree of skill as a slalomist uses in every competition, he would be doing very well. The claim that a slalom paddler's skill would not be equal to a grade 5 rapid is wrong - the amount of skill a good slalom paddler has is phenomenal.

There would be very few good canoeists who would say that they did not like playing around in rapids. Slalom is a good way of improving skill in such games. For the inexperienced person, slalom practice (remember, a slalom is held usually on one day in every two weeks or so) is a brilliant way of improving and getting to know the boat and water conditions.

Some say that slalom canoeists do not appreciate the scenery as they paddle. I argue that on most big water touring trips there is never time to get out and explore except in the evenings anyway. The paddler in both slalom and tours appreciates the power, beauty and intricacies of the water and environs (i.e. rocks, trees etc.).

Another point is raised by some in MUMC that the original idea of slalom was to satisfy one's urge to nip through gaps in rocks - you cannot undercut rocks, but you can undercut slalom poles meant to serve as rock - therefore cheating. However, I see undercutting as part of the high skill you develop by slalom canoeing. Undercutting does require considerable skill.

Some argue that you don't have many races in a day, and have to pay a lot to enter. This is part of any sport and probably you'd expire if you had more than a few over-exerting runs.

Many say that slalom canoeists wouldn't be able to go down a rapid as a tourer would i.e. they couldn't read the water. Most of the slalomists are downriver racers also and many practise by touring on nearly all the rivers we go on, for example, Upper Mitta, Delarite etc. They like to be known as "Whitewater paddlers" now.

SLALOM ACTIVITIES IN MUMC

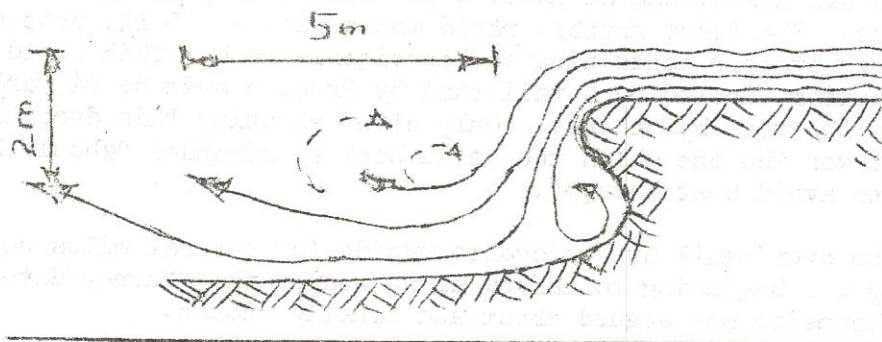
Several canoeists have been training on a slalom course set up on Doncaster swimming pool on Wednesday afternoons and this should continue. The pool is open every day and it costs 50¢ to get in. Each evening other people arrive, but see the clubrooms for details.

The main slalom competition for MUMC each year is the Intervarsity held in NSW this year in mid-May - results of our team will be in the next "Mountaineer". However, there are many other slaloms on throughout the year - held by the V.A.C.A., with whom we are affiliated.

We have many good and potential slalom paddlers in the club, so I hope MUMC soon comes to the fore as one of the premier canoeing clubs of Victoria.

White water canoeing can be a dangerous sport. Moving water is very powerful and when flowing over obstructions in the river-bed creates numerous strange phenomena - standing waves, stoppers and holes. The hydraulic forces present in such phenomena can be quite over-powering and capsize even the most skilled canoeists. The dangers inherent in such situations are all part of the thrill of white water sport. Unfortunately there is often a very fine line between thrill and terror, as I discovered when attempting Big Fall on Tasmania's Franklin River.

Viewed from the bank, the rapid looks relatively straight-forward but somewhat larger than usual: a two metre drop into a large and powerful stopper. The bulk of the water, for five metres below the drop was highly aerated and flowing back into the drop itself.



Being the last significant rapid on the river I decided to try my luck on it. I paddled straight down into the stopper to disappear completely. Whilst still underwater I was tipped upside down. I surfaced only to be swept back into the drop. I got out of my kayak to again be sucked back into the drop with no chance of catching my breath. I was in trouble; in fact I was terrified. The thought flashed through my mind that I might not get out alive. The river was treating me as a toy: I could not resist its force.

Faced with this situation I remembered reading that the only possible escape was to dive deep in the stopper to reach the dark, smooth-flowing water beneath the rapid. This was now the time to put theory into practice. I dived down to be spun around by the foaming water. Again I surfaced, still trapped by the river. Clearly the technique was not easy so I made another, more determined, effort. This time instead of remaining in the white water I was being swept along the dark water close to the riverbed. This time I thought I was alright. I had only to relax and wait.

The rest of the group watching from the bank were quite frantic. They had seen me being rolled around and around and this time I had not reappeared. For what seemed an eternity there was no sign of me: could I have been caught by a submerged log or pinned against a rock? They had no way of knowing. There was nothing they could do. I finally emerged some thirty metres downstream after hitting the rocky bank underwater and dragging myself to the surface. I was lucky to be alive!

"THE MURRAY GATES"

Bill Cruickshank

An MUMC Canoeing First Descent
Indi (Upper Murray) River, NSW.

The Indi was a river we had all heard about via tales of huge rapids in an incredible gorge, so finding ourselves with Easter approaching we resolved to paddle it and find out the truth.

The party met up early on Good Friday morning at Corryong after an overnight drive from Melbourne. After a light breakfast we were on our way as far as possible up the Biggara Road alongside the Indi, where we set up the car shuffle. A slow grind over the Alpine way led back to the Indi at Tom Groggin and the usual gear packing rush began.

We paddled off downstream at about 1 pm. with a trip of unknown duration ahead of us. The first notable rapid was a nice 4 - 5 ft. drop complete with a large stopper containing the inevitable rock. This rapid caused much acrobatics, including a tailstand by Prue, a swim by Di, and several unlikely manoeuvres by others. Only after shooting this drop did we realise it was the one which the guide book recommended "should be portaged to avoid boat damage".

Paddling on over small but enjoyable rapids for several miles we noticed the valley was beginning to narrow as we neared the "Murray Gates" gorge and so a campsite was argued about and finally chosen.

A series of crocodile bunches down the steep bank heralded the next day's canoeing. Within a short time we reached the area burnt out by a "controlled burn"!!! in February. The hills were bare and the shades of brown and black were quite impressive with cliffs and scree slopes revealed amongst the devastation. Piles of rocks and debris marked the junction with side valleys which were scoured down to bedrock as a result of flash floods. Turning a bend we suddenly entered the gorge and approached the rapids. The first rapid set the standard for the next two miles. A series of drops involving tricky turns led down at a steep gradient between large river-worn boulders.

After minor indecision the fun? began as we all shot the rapid in turn. Several swims resulted (Di, Sandy, David) and almost everyone else required help in escaping from a tricky gap between rocks into which the water was deflected.

Twenty yards of flat water led to the 2nd rapid which was of the same high standard. More style was shown here and we moved on down the gorge to similar sized rapids.

A lunch stop was made on an island where Judy's helmet was washed away. We found it again about 2 miles and 3 hours later below the gorge.

Most of the gorge rapids of grade 4-5 were led on sight involving significant skill, confidence (madness) as in most cases only a small portion of the river ahead could be seen. In such a case, fast manoeuvres were essential as rocks appeared from nowhere due to the extreme gradient of up to 200' drop in one mile.

In all cases the first few successful paddlers of each rapid became the rescue crew to extricate the others as in most rapids someone became caught on a rock, went for a swim or just required navigational directions.

After the gorge was completed the party spread out over good grade 3 water but were surprised to find Harry in midstream with his kayak wrapped around a rock underwater, in an easy rapid. A great deal of effort later the kayak was rescued but quickly declared written off and unpaddlable and so discarded, to join the other hulks we had seen. Harry continued the trip on his lilo in great style.

We camped soon after on a burnt out sandbar which the Easter Bunny found. Next morning we continued on down the river through consistent small rapids to finish at the bridge on the Indi where we had left a car, just after lunch.

Whilst the car shuffle was done the rest of the party set up camp and recalled the trip highlights.

Numerous other notable events occurred on this trip but have been disregarded to protect the guilty.

The defendants:

Prue	(hang on to your paddle)	Dobbin
Di	(swim for it!)	Coon
Jol	(snake bait)	Shelton
Craig	(I'll just tape up this scratch)	Price
Harry	(but lilo's are fun)	Burr
Ross	(can I have your job?)	Seedsman
David	(supercool)	Danks
Sandy	(but its easier upside down)	Morrison
Judy	(where's my helmet)	Downe
Garry	(what a photo!)	McKay
Rob	(keep your eye on it)	Jacobs
Bill	(but it wasn't my fault?)	Cruickshank

----- Tear out and post today -----

HAVE YOU GOT YOUR JOURNAL?

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TREKKING IN NEPAL

Steve Bennett

A unique cultural and environmental experience

1. WHEN TO GO?

- (a) Best weather with clearest skies (Sept.), Oct., Nov., (Dec.).
- (b) Next best is Feb., March, April.
Monsoon influence extends May, June, July, Aug.
December and January can be very cold.

2. TRANSPORT - VISAS - EXPENSES?

- (a) A.U.S. has flights to Katmandu via Bangkok. Approximately \$850 return.
- (b) In Bangkok a Nepalese visa for one month can be obtained (\$5).
Landing in Katmandu, only a one week visa can be obtained.
- (c) Visa Extensions: for number of days required must have converted \$5.U.S./day into Nepalese currency. So, if you obtain a Bangkok visa you can theoretically stay 4 weeks without changing money. If you change \$150 you can thus stay a total of 2 months, or \$300 for 3 months. It is difficult to obtain more than two months of visa extension.
- (d) For private trekking including food, accommodation and occasional internal flight you can budget at around \$5 per day, depending on your lifestyle. Katmandu hotels average around 50¢ to \$1.00/night for the cheapies.
- (e) Trekking Permits - cost about \$2. per week of trekking.
Most important message is to take as much money in American Dollar Travellers cheques as possible. Always have enough for a plane flight home, or on to Europe, should you suffer illness. Don't put yourself in the position of waiting for money in Asia. It may take months to receive money, and it may never arrive at all. If you plan an overland trip to Europe it is best to take enough to get you through.

3. HOW TO TREK?

- (a) Organised with Trekking Company.
Costs \$25 - \$30 per day, includes all equipment, food and porters and guide. Advantages: easy for trekker. Disadvantages: expense, nature of trek tends to cut one off from the interesting culture; schedule is inflexible.
- (b) Hire your own guide and porters either through a Trekking Company or privately.
Costs about \$3/day for a porter who will carry about 30-40 KG.
This would cover most of their own food costs.
Advantages: cheaper.
Disadvantages: still hassles, especially if the sirdar is not the best. There have been instances of trekkers being ripped off by their porters recently. So, if you want to have it easy, it is possibly best to pay for quality.
- (c) Solo: cheap, flexible, maximum experience of the culture and chance to meet fellow trekkers.
On none of the three major treks is it necessary to have guide nor porters. For experienced walkers I recommend (c) strongly.

4. TREKKING GUIDES, MAPS?

- (a) NEPAL, a travellers guide - Prakash A. Raj (Londy Planet Pubs.) - a good introductory book to Nepal and is excellent for hotels/restaurants/things to see in Katmandu.
- (b) Maps are available for each of the major treks from trekking shops in Katmandu.
Route guides are also available.

I will arrange for my set of maps and guides to be put in the club library to give you an idea of what is available and to help you plan your trek.

5. THE POPULAR TREKS

- (a) Pokhara - Jomoson - Mukturath: Return takes about 20 days. Is a possibility of flying back from Jomoson.

Passes between the Annapurras and Ohaulagiri, said to be the world's deepest river valley. Ohaulagiri towers 18,000 above the river. Mukturath is a shrine visited by many devout Hindu and Buddhist pilgrims. It is near the border with Tibet (now occupied by China) and gives one an idea of the topography one could expect in Tibet. At Pukhara is a Tibetan Refugee Camp. Spectacular New Year celebrations here at the end of February.

- (b) Annapurra Sanctuary: can be incorporated on the return from Mukturath or can be done as a separate trip taking about 10 days return (note: a tent, food and stove are required in the sanctuary. February and March can see it still inaccessible because of snowfalls).

- (c) Langtang - Gosainkunda Lakes - Helambu: Two interest valleys, connected by a 15,000' pass, usually free of snow pre and post-monsoon. Close to Katmandu, surprisingly less popular than Everest or Pokhara Jomoson. Consequently food and accommodation is more primitive (or underdeveloped if you like). This can be a reason, for, or against this trek, depending on your expectations.

- (d) Everest Trek:

Classic route from the road to Base Camp requires about 18 days to ensure adequate acclimatisation. Can return from Lukla.

It is possible to fly in and out of Lukla Airstrip (Approx. \$30 each way), one day's walk below Namche Bazaar. I feel the most interesting part of the trek is above Lukla if you have already been on one trek. From Lukla one should allow at least 10 days to give time for acclimatisation.

6. WHAT EQUIPMENT IS REQUIRED?

- (a) For those travelling via S.E. Asia or on overland to Europe: All equipment can be hired or bought in Katmandu. Through S.E. Asia it is best to travel as light as possible. But bring plenty of film as it is very expensive (if available) in Asia. Unless you are a fanatic, a small camera is best carried. A reflex with assorted lenses can be an incredible hassle because of the risk of theft.

- (b) Trekking holiday only: More convenient to have your own gear.

- (i) Tent: unnecessary. Even near Everest Base camp there is a local "hotel" providing food and accommodation. Should you decide to visit remoter areas, a tent can be hired in Katmandu.

- (ii) Pack: most comfortable is a high frame pack with padded hip strap. e.g. The Karrimoor Orienteer Frame. This frame has three adjustments, the lower one being useful for travelling to avoid the risk of frame damage.
- (iii) Boots: light mountaineering boots best. e.g. Scarpas. Sand-shoes are quite adequate for most treks. Army basketball-type boots can be bought in Katmandu for about \$3.
- (iv) Sleeping Bag: recommend a walled, snow bag, especially near December/January or at high altitudes.
- (v) Clothes: down jacket useful but can be hired.
 : woollen pants/shirt/pullover.
 : long johns.
 : light, long parka (seldom used)
 : folding umbrella useful if near monsoon.
 : balaclava, gloves, goggles (for high altitudes).
- (vi) Sealed-cell foam:
- (vii) Stove and Billy: unnecessary but nice at times.
 Gas stoves: difficult to obtain spare cylinders in Katmandu.
 Petrol: e.g. Optimus, Primus, Svea.
 Light and run well enough on standard petrol.
 May require a change of jets at high altitudes.
 Kerosene: heavier stoves and kerosene is available but has many impurities.
- (viii) Food: traditional dehydrated foods are scarce and expensive. Adequate meals can be obtained on all treks. Chocolate and dried fruits are very expensive so bring your own. The local diet of dal (lentil soup), baht (boiled rice), thakali (vegetables) and chapatis is cheap and nutritious. Sampa (toasted barley flour) can be taken with a cup of tea, or made into a tasty porridge. "Chewra" a flattened rice is eaten in lower valleys with tea. Eggs are readily available and occasionally one runs into one of the Yak-milk cheese factories set up with Swiss assistance. Delicious yak cream cheese.
 Probably safest to avoid meats.
- (ix) Water bottle: 1 litre sigg bottle ideal.
- (x) Medical Kit: see travel guides for complete list.
 Include: U.V. screen.
 : water purification - Puritabs.
 : Lomotil, Kaolin, Codeine.
 : phosphate (for the management of diarrhoea).
 : antimalarials - commence two weeks before travelling to endemic areas, and continue for one month after leaving area. e.g. Paludrine, 1 tablet daily, or chloroquine, 2 tablets once a week.
 : aspirin/codeine tablets.
 : insect repellent.
 : band-aids, tapes.
 : ankle bandage.
- (xi) Miscellaneous: Bic-type disposable lighter is useful, for Nepalese and Indian matches are of poor quality.
 : Nail scissors.
 : Scotchbrite scourer for billy.

7. HEALTH

- : Require smallpox and cholera on Vaccination card.
- : Worthwhile having a tetanus booster, another dose of polio-vaccine and perhaps a typhus immunization.
- : Hepatitis Gamma Globulin. Effective probably only for one month. Currently its place is disputed.

- (a) Diarrhoea: the commonest problem. Contaminated food or water is the main source. Endeavour to only eat in clean restaurants in Katmandu, avoid salads (can be contaminated by amoebic cysts), drink only boiled water, tea or water purified with Puritabs or Iodine.

Generally the food the locals eat themselves is clean. It is only when they try to provide western-type dishes that the risk increases. Yoghurt or curd is safe as it is boiled in its manufacture.

Management of Diarrhoea:

- (i) Fast and drink only boiled fluids. Rest.
- (ii) If cramps or frequency of diarrhoea is distressing take LOMOTIL strictly according to the instructions. Remember, LOMOTIL does not cure diarrhoea; it paralyses the bowel and so relieves the symptoms. An alternative drug is codeine phosphate.
- (iii) Avoid antibiotics. These are only used once a diagnosis of parasitic or amoebic dysentery is made.
- (iv) Once diarrhoea is settled recommence with light foods such as yoghurt.
- (v) If the diarrhoea is persistent or the symptoms severe or blood is passed, attend a good Western Hospital for investigation and treatment. e.g. The U.N. hospital, Shanta Bawan, outside Katmandu will perform a stool test and advise treatment.

Don't accept continuous diarrhoea as part of the norm of Asian travel. Amoebic dysentery is common in Nepal and can be serious if untreated.

(b) Altitude Sickness:

- : This is seen in two forms - cerebral oedema (water on the brain) and pulmonary oedema (water in the lungs). It has killed many trekkers unnecessarily.
- : The exact mechanism is unknown, but it is caused by going too high, too fast.
- : The best cure is a return to lower altitude. The use of prophylactic diuretics is advised against. The best prevention is to acclimatize properly.

Early symptoms are headache, difficulty sleeping, breathlessness, visual difficulties, fall in urine output.

The danger is that in one's enthusiasm to make it to Base Camp, such symptoms are passed off as being due to smokey rooms.

1. LAND CONSERVATION COUNCIL

All LCC publications - reports and recommendations - are available only at the Government Printer at 7A Parliament Place, East Melbourne (3002), or the Community Services Centre Bookshop, 356 Collins Street, Melbourne.

The LCC Proposed Recommendations for the Alpine Study Area were released in early April. They are disastrous, to say the least. More details later.

2. THE NORTHWEST SPUR APPROACH TO MT. FEATHERTOP

At the December 1977 meeting of the Shire of Bright, the Shire Council issued a permit to Mr. Harrop to develop "a trout and deer farm, incorporating a log cabin, workshop, and carport, toilet block, hatching shed, settlers cottage and blacksmith shop" on his land at the bottom of the Northwest Spur. The permit was subject to a number of conditions relating to access, car-parks, landscaping, etc. and included a requirement to remove the dilapidated tram from the area. Nick Reeves, acting on behalf of MUMC, lodged an official appeal against the permit with the Town and Country Planning Appeals Tribunal and we are presently preparing our case which is unlikely to be heard until May at the earliest. The MUMC appeal was not made lightly because at that time it was believed that the Club could incur costs of several hundreds of dollars. However, we believed the proposed development will have an extremely adverse effect on the bushwalking and scenic values of the area and are prepared to fight the development by all legitimate means. We have since been able to obtain the services of a barrister. Free of charge, so our financial commitment will be minimal.

An integral part of Mr. Harrop's development is a bridge across the Ovens river which would be on crown land. The Lands Department has approved the bridge and lodged an application with Bright Shire for a permit to build the bridge. This was granted at the February 1978 meeting of the Council and, because it is part of the proposed development, MUMC lodged an appeal against it too.

One disturbing aspect of the case is that although the Shire did not give a permit for the development until last December (and this has now been frozen by our appeal), a number of developments have occurred in the area - an ugly 3 m. high wire fence encloses the "deer" paddock, a diversion ditch has been dug from Stoney Creek for some distance to the fish hatchery site where fish are being raised, two sheds (one dilapidated) and a dilapidated old tram have all appeared. Work had even begun on the access road to the bridge and on a toilet block.

The development appears much more than just a deer and trout farm - it appears a purely car-based, tourist-oriented, development which is totally out of place in that particular part of Victoria.

With all this occurring, the fate of the start of the Northwest Spur track is in the air, although access to the Northwest Spur is guaranteed because a public right of way exists in the area.

3. THE PROPOSED NEW SKI-TOW NEAR ROCKY VALLEY

The application to build this tow was rejected by the Bright Shire Council last December on the grounds that "the proposal is premature in the absence of the Land Conservation Council Alpine Study Area final recommendations". However, the proponents of the tow applied for another permit which was considered at the March meeting of the Bright Shire Council. Michael Feller attended this meeting representing the FFWC and MUMC. Following a long (one and a half hours) and heated debate, the council voted 7-5 in favour of the tow. The following points are noteworthy:

- (a) The newest application involved shifting the base of the tow about 30 m. higher up the slope. This apparently satisfied the nordic skiers at Falls Creek.
- (b) The base of the tow is still outside the designated Falls Creek development area but plans to enlarge the area to include the base of the new tow are underway.
- (c) One of the major proponents of the tow is also a member of the Falls Creek Tourist Area Management Committee which must approve of any new developments before they can occur.
- (d) Michael Feller was the lone objector at the Council meeting, facing about six supporters of the tow, most of whom were members of the Falls Creek Tourist Area Management Committee. If bushwalkers or cross-country skiers want to get any land set aside for themselves and protect their interests, they must appear IN FORCE at such meetings. The cross-country skiers were conspicuous by their absence.
- (e) Although apparently dominated by commercial interest there are at least some members of the Bright Council who are supporters of wilderness. THEY NEED OUR ASSISTANCE.

4. LOGGING IN THE ALPS

Due to the controversies surrounding logging in the alpine area and to avoid potential problems while the LCC is studying the alps, the Premier established a committee in 1973 to determine what areas in the alps can be logged and roaded. This committee is called the North-East Alpine Areas Working Group and has had three series of meetings to determine allowable logging and road construction activities for the year or two ahead. The committee is chaired by Mr. A. Mitchell, the Chairman of the Soil Conservation Authority. It currently consists of two timber industry representatives - T. Brabin and T. Burgess; one Forests Commission representative - R. Grose; and three "conservation" representatives - Geoff Moseley, Ken McInnes, and Michael Feller.

Much heated debate followed the activities of this committee a few years ago (See Victorian National Parks Association Journals Nos. 101 and 102 in 1975) with claims that the Forests Commission had acted secretly in defiance of the Committee's recommendations in the Moroka region. The Forests Commission replied demanding a public apology, which they got. Today, the battle for the Moroka continues, as does the battle for most of the other beautiful parts of the alps. The Moroka, the West Kiewa Valley, the Tea Tree Range, the Jamieson River, and many other areas will all be subjected to continued logging. As a result of this year's deliberations of the committee, bushwalkers and wilderness lovers should be aware of:

(a) The Gains (or Rather-Not Losses)

- (i) Deferment of roads (two wheel drive) linking eight mile saddle to Bindaree hut around the Bluff, and linking Mt. McDonald to Upper Jamieson Hut.
- (ii) Deferment for 12 months, proposals to build a road around Mt. Reynard and log the Long Spur area, to log Bogong Hill (near Little Bogong), Kent Creek to within 1 km. of Moroka Gorge, the lower part of Wild Cattle Creek near the Moroka River, and parts of the Upper Dargo Valley near Conner's Creek.

(b) The Losses

Logging - almost to Lovick's Hut from the Jamieson valley, continued in the Upper Macalister, Valencia Creek, the Moroka - particularly around Little Kent, around Mt. Sarah in the Tea Tree Range, the West Kiewa (under the Niggerheads and almost to Bogong Jack's Saddle. The Big River almost up to the T-Spur, although it was stopped along a spur 2 km. east of T-Spur, and around Mts. Gibbo and Hope in the far NE.

Thus, many more chunks of our natural heritage and remaining wilderness areas will be eaten away and disappear within the next two years.

5. NEW ROAD IN THE UPPER WONNANGATTA

During the bushfires of this last January, the Forest Commission pushed a new fire access track from the Mt. Despair logging area right down the Wonnangatta to link up with the road network in the Wonnangatta Valley creating for the first time a road link between the Mt. Cobbler - Mt. Speculation - Mt. Despair roads and those of the lower Wonnangatta. This new road cuts right through the heart of one remaining small piece of wilderness, destroying much of its value as wilderness. The road does not appear to have been necessary to fight the relatively small fire which occurred towards the Wonnangatta station end of it where there was an existing dead-end fire access track already. Only a month or so after the new road was put in, blackberries are appearing in force helped by the extensive soil disturbance, and once vehicle drivers hear about it they will undoubtedly appear in force also, further lowering the value of the area for wilderness.

The area in question - the upper Wonnangatta - is one of the most sensitive in Victoria from the viewpoint of wilderness. We are going to do our utmost to express our objection to the road's construction and to get it closed and revegetated. We need all the assistance we can get and therefore ask every single club member who is concerned about the road to write to the Minister for Forests (the Honourable F. J. Granter), Parliament Buildings, Melbourne, Victoria, stating your objection to the road and asking for it to be closed permanently, then ripped up and revegetated.

If you don't do this then we may never again experience wilderness in this area.

6. DEVELOPMENT OF HARRIETVILLE

It seems likely that Mt. Feathertop will not be turned into a downhill ski area so the proponents of this development now have a large amount of land near Harrietville. This has been subdivided and sold, block by

block, to provide low level accommodation for those wish to go skiing at Hotham. About 113 blocks are involved, including the land adjacent to the car park at the bottom of Bungalow Spur track up Feathertop.

Work began on an access road to some of the blocks near the car park this Easter. Bulldozers have cut a great swathe through the bush there. It won't be long before Harrietville will be a very crowded, noisy place and the Bungalow Spur approach to Feathertop will start in suburbia. We have lost yet another piece of bush and one day will wake up to find that we have none left.

7. DEER IN THE VICTORIAN BUSH

A letter was sent in November 1977 to the Victorian Fisheries and Wildlife Division seeking information about deer in the Victorian bush. A reply was finally received this March. From this reply we learn that:

- (a) there are 2 deer release programmes currently operating in Victoria, both supervised by the Fisheries and Wildlife Division, One involves the trapping of hog deer from Snake Island in Corner Inlet and releasing them in the Dutson Downs - Seacombe Area south of Lake Wellington. The other involves the release of fallow deer into an area of pine plantations near Corryong.
- (b) Only one study has been carried out into the effects of various species of deer on the forest environment. This was into the effects of deer on young pine trees. It concluded that deer were unlikely to cause any significant economic loss in young pine plantations. Another study has just begun into the effects of animal (including deer) grazing on the vegetation of Snake Island. There have been no studies at all then, of the the impact of deer on our native forest environment.

8. WILDERNESS SYMPOSIUM

A wilderness symposium/workshop concerned with the planning, management, and uses of Australian wilderness will be held at the Canberra College of Advanced Education on 20-23 July, 1978. The organisers are looking for people who will actively contribute and are prepared to face four days of hard work.

One major snag is that participants are expected to remain resident on the C.A.E. campus for the duration of the symposium and will have to pay a fee of \$110 which includes all accommodation and meals. Some financial assistance may be available for organisation representatives.

Further information is available from:

Wilderness Australia,
c/o Division of Natural Resources,
School of Applied Science,
Canberra College of Advanced Education,
P.O. Box 1,
Belconnen. A.C.T. 2616.

- 9. It is absolutely imperative that you know I am returned from the wilderness: I have married.

TRIPS PROGRAMME

- MAY 14 - 17 CLIMBING
Ben Nevis - Grampians - Mt. Arapiles
Leader: Peter 'Jex' Martin (contact Neil Currie)
- MAY 17-- 19 CANOEING - INTER-VARSITY
Wyangla, Lachlan River, N.S.W.
Leader: Bill Cruickshank. 80 3719
- MAY 19 - 21 BUSHWALKING
Crosscut Saw, Standard: medium/hard
Leader: Ian Moore 82 6029
- MAY 27 - 28 BUSHWALKING
Jamieson Area, Standard: medium
Leader: Neil Blundy. 347 7905
- MAY 27 - BUSHWALKING
JUNE 4 Howitt-Wonnangatta - Viking - Howitt
Leader: Rod Gregory. 509 4241
- JUNE 1 24 HOUR WALK (24th - 25th June)
Bookings open at Clubrooms
- JUNE 3 - 5 CLIMBING
(Queen's Birthday) V.C.C. Pig Roast at Mt. Arapiles
Leader: John Chapman
- " " BUSHWALKING
Grampians
Leader: ?
- JUNE 9 PROTEST MARCH
Bushwalk through the streets of Melbourne protesting
against the L.C.C. recommendations. Meet at Club-
rooms at 4 p.m.
Contact: Andrew Rothfield. 20 8500
- JUNE 21 SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING
7.30 p.m. Sisalkraft Theatre,
Architecture Building.
Called to discuss Treasurer's Report and result of
audit. Constitutional amendments will also be raised.
- JUNE 24 -25 24 HOUR WALK
Bookings to open 1st June
at Clubrooms.

ROCKCLIMBING REPORT

Peter Martin

Since the last Mountaineer was published an enormous amount of climbing has taken place. All MUMC members who ventured to New Zealand in search of snow and ice have returned safely; however Neil Currie has just revealed a broken wrist, the result of a small fall over two months ago!

The Beginners' Weekend at Mt. Arapiles in late March was again a success. Diapason (5), Trapeze (10), Camelot (9), Minimus (11) and the shorter climbs on Declaration Crag received innumerable ascents. It is pleasing to see so many beginners have continued to climb. A follow-up trip to Mt. Arapiles organized over the Easter break was very well attended.

Neil Currie and Lyndee Beattie climbed Watchtower Crack (16), probably one of the best natural lines at the Piles. A large number of climbs including Piccolo (12), Didgeridoo (10), D Major (10) and Cunrak (13) were completed by Andrew Walker and Tom Millar. Beginners Nick Tapp, Richard Moore and Howard Cooper climbed well, succeeding on the Bard (12), and D Minor (11). Many hard climbs have been done by the ever-increasing number of MUMC "heavies" (?). Tony Marion, continuing his spate of hard, technical climbing, led Christian Crack (21) with two rests after three falls, Eurydice (18) with John Stone seconding, Swinging (17) and top-roped Squeakeasy (22). Nick Reeves shook the snow and ice from his boots leading Claw (18) and climbing Brolga (16) and Virginia (17) with Ed Neve. Golliwog's Cakewalk and Brickdust (both 17) were led by John Stone (with Jane Landman seconding). Jex Martin and Peter Megens (Cathie Seccombe seconding GC for her first (17)). Peter also led Moby Dick (17). To keep pace with the high standard of climbing the powerful (??) team of Martin and Foxcroft completed Skink (17), Eurydice (18) and Morphydd (19) (1st pitch) in one day. Joe Lynch showed good form leading Jason (18) and Aristocrat (17).

The Grampians have also received some attention from MUMC climbers. On Rosea Jos Verbaken has led Dianne (17), and Peter Megens, Don Hird and John Stone had an epic on Heretic (16). Beginners Richard Serpell and Mark Moorhead have done Commando Climb and at Mackey's Peak climbed The Trog (10), and Psychotic Reaction (8). At Bundaleer Tony Marion, with VCC climber Chris Peisker leading, removed aid from Dagon's Temple (2) and Ostler (24), both climbs now being completely free. Hugh Foxcroft and Peter Martin ascended Heretic (16) and The Fiddler (20) (Jex's first).

Werribee Gorge has been top-roped into submission by ever-increasing numbers of climbers. Of note was the ascent of Big Ears (16) by Ross Stephens, Lyndee Beattie, Howard Cooper and Jane Landman. Nick Tapp led Marcus Schaevola (15) and Rob Storer led well on Cicero (14). Short trips to Werribee mid-week or at weekends have become very popular and the experience gained at this crag is undoubtedly one of the reasons for the tremendous increase in the standard of rockclimbing in MUMC.

Ben Nevis, a series of large granite slabs near Ararat was visited on Anzac Day. Foxcroft, Martin, Reeves and beginner Peter Darby braved wind and rain to climb the lovely Anne (15). Climbing at Ben Nevis is a delightful experience well worth repeating: gently sloping slabs overlooking green cultivated pastures make a pleasant contrast to the arid aspect of Mt. Arapiles.

I have tried to keep this report short and in doing so I must have omitted a large number of very worthy efforts by MUMC members. Climbing is still a growing activity and it is becoming increasingly difficult to keep track of ascents. It would be appreciated if climbers returning from trips would place a note of any good climbing in my envelope in the filing cabinet.

Remember: it is never too late to start climbing. Trips are usually organised at short notice and trips sheets are usually placed in the Trips Book three or four days before leaving - don't let this deter you!

CAVING TRIPS

May 20- 21 Buchan Work Party

Leaders: Brian Franz Ph. 387 1086

Rudi Frank Ph. 489 1447

27 - 28 Beginners' Weekend at Buchan

Leaders: Tom Whitehouse Ph. 91 1468

Sue White Ph. 328 4154

June 3- 5 Buchan (Photography) : Queen's B'day Weekend

Scrubby Creek: Federal and Royal Caves

Leader: Nick White Ph. 3284154

10- 11 Buchan

Duke's and Federal Caves

Leader as yet undecided

Fri. 17th V.S.A. Annual General Meeting and B-B-Q

8 p.m. at 134 Fordham Ave., Camberwell

The Caving Convener is Sue White, if you want any further information about the above trips (Or just caving in general), she may be telephoned on 328 4154.

Paddy Pallin

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