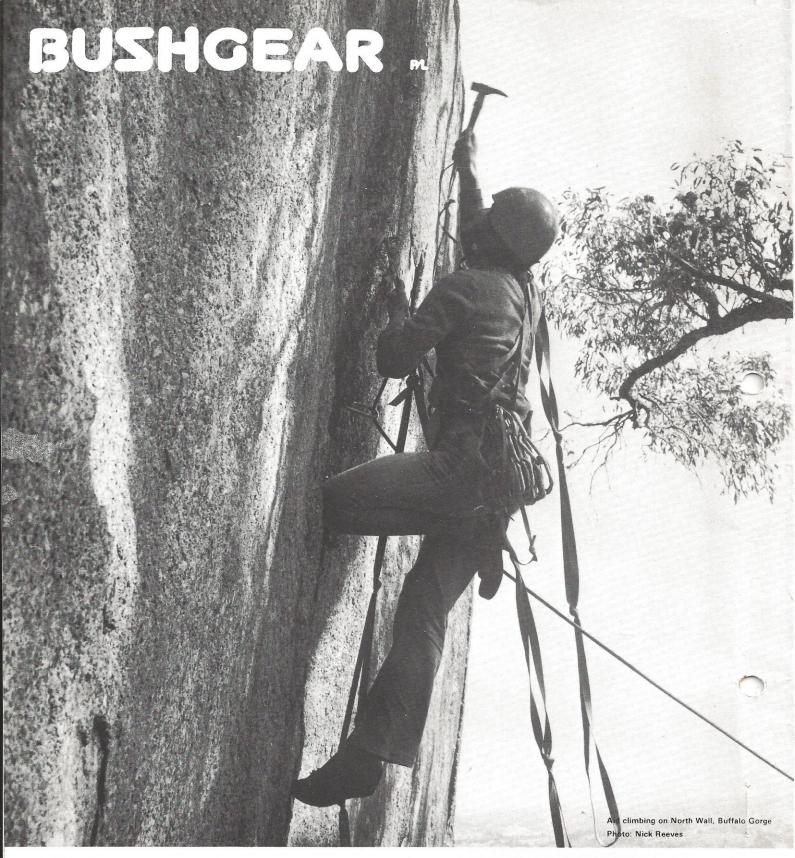
ANDUNTAINEER JANIMERY

Morning Mist - John Chapman

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

- The Annual General Meeting will be held at 7.30 p.m. on Wednesday 28th March in the Sisalkraft Theatre (located in the Architecture Building).
- 2. The Federation of Victorian Walking. Clubs survived its November Special General Meeting when more than 50 per cent of the members clubs attended. Andrew Rothfield was made head of a sub-committee to consider constitutional amendments to restructure the FVWC. Subsequently Gerry McPhce was elected the new President.
- 3. The Western Australian Caving Conference is being attended by several MUMC cavers. They intend doing trips to caves in the south-west and across the Nullabor.
- 4. The report prepared by Peter Martin on the proposed climbing wall for the end of the Squash Courts has been submitted to Mr. Boosey for consideration.
- 5. MUMC orienteers are preparing new maps for Hepburn Springs and Steiqlitz and are remapping Borhoney Ghurk.
- 6. Neil Blundy has resigned as Bushwalking Convener and the sub-committee has yet to elect his successor.
- 7. Peter Megens, Cathie Seecombe, Jane Landman and Debbie Tyler are all spending their vacations in Indonesia but are expected back soon. Mike and Evelyn Feller preferred Europe for their summer (winter?) holidays. Peter Cockerill has left to go ski-touring in Kashmir and then proceeding to other parts unknown.
- 8. Mountaineering 179 is available at the Clubrooms or on mail order for \$2. This is MUMC's own journal and features articles on the Snowy River Gorges, Federation Peak and Mt. Aspiring National Park.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

The last two issues of "The Mountaincer" have contained reports on the club's objections to a proposed development in the ovens Valley on land crossed by the start of the North West Spur Track. After reading both these reports, I find myself wondering what it is that the club is objecting to, and whether the club's actions have really been in its own best interests.

As I see it, the prime interest of the club (and of the mountaineering community in general) lies in maintaining right-of-way for the track, preferably with the friendly co-operation of the owners of private land which it crosses. In the first report it was stated that this was not threatened, so what is the fuss about? Provided our right-of-way continues, perhaps with some modifications to the route, we have no reasonable basis for complaint, nor any need to complain.

Secondly, we seem to be in the absurd position of apposing the building of a bridge which would be very useful to us, because of what is really a rather minor technicality, and not really our business anyhow. The North West Spur track starts with a crossing of the ovens River which is a choice between a rickety footbridge and a couple of old beams from some previous log bridge. Both bridges are dangerous and the latter has been gradually disappearing. A couple of years ago the FVWC had informal discussions with the Lands Department about a new footbridge at the start of this track. With MUMC apparently opposed to a bridge here, how can such discussions continue?

It seems to me that the possible bad effects of the development have been exagerated. It has been portrayed as a threat to lit. Feathertop. I suggest that it is nothing of the sort, and that it is a perfectly I legitimate use of the land in the valley floor. The land concerned is confined to the valley floor and the development is unlikely to affect the mountain or its setting. We might not like it, and it might prove to be a poor example of a tourist development, but this does not give us any right to object to it as a threat to the mountains. Within fairly bread limits, the owner of the land has a right to do what he likes with it. What right do we have to prevent him of it, if it has at most only a minor influence on our activities?

Part of the objection centres on the proposal for a deer farm, and the objection is based on the fear that deer will escape. I think this is unlikely. An agricultural writer has recently published a book called "Gold on Four Feet", pointing out that deer are valuable animals amd farming them offers a potentially profitable industry. Deer are too valuable to be allowed to excape and this is the reason for high and expensive fences. Do we really have anything to fear on this score?

But the aspect of the whole question that most concerns me is the approach. Our objection seems to be an example of over-reaction based on excessive conservationist zeal and supported by legal heavyhandedness. If the objection succeeds, it will be a very minor victory, perhaps a pyrrhic one, and if it fails we will only have made enemies. Fighting the good fight is all very well, but it is surely important to choose the battleground carefully so as to win both the battle and the war, and to have allies both before and after. It seems to me that it is absolutely imperative that we have the goodwill of the people in the ovens Valley if Feathertop is to be protected. A heavily legalistic approach is not likely to succeed in this, especially if we are seen as outsiders. I have recently heard that the club is having problems with right-of-way on the track. If this is so, I can not say I am surprised. The landowners would have to be more than ordinarily tolerant to put up with people tramping through their property after the legal harassment we have given them.

I think it is time we took a more positive approach to this sort of issue. The Club's resources are potentially quite large; it is time we used them to back up our opinions. We could have bought the land in question. This would have allowed us to protect the track and would have given us a direct economic stake in the valley, which would have made our position far more credible. Our present position is like that of a dog chasing the tourist buses as they pass. It is likely to be just as successful.

Yours faithfully,

Ton Kneen,

As the two people most involved with the club's activities concerning the proposed development at the base of Mt. Feathertop's North West Spur, we wish to comment on the letter by Tom Kneen.

At the outset we wish to say that we regret Tom's confusion as to what the club is objecting to as we had hoped that this had been made clear in past issues of the "Mountaineer" as well as at the last Annual General Meeting where Tom, had he been present, would have had full opportunity to participate in a debate on the club's involvement. We will state again the reasons for our objections -

- 1. The development will be one which is objectionable to us, the current users of the area, as it is a commercial tourist development which will introduce large numbers of people, cars, signs, rubbish, plus deer farm, trout farm, various buildings, the possibility of kiosks, a sugar cane train from Queensland, etc, etc. into what is currently a quiet and peaceful part of the valley.
- 2. Developments such as this invariably grow larger more people require more facilities. More people start wondering further and further up the Northwest Spur. First the start of the Northwest Spur track is spoiled for us, then the track itself (the lower portion has already been used by the developers as a logging road along which cut trees were hauled) then eventually the hut.
- 3. It only requires one tree to fall across the fence enclosing the deer paddock and the deer will be able to escape. What harm they can do to the bush is completely unknown they may do none, but they may do a lot. Deer attract hunters. Should deer escape then there would be the distinct possibility of hunters roaming the slopes of Feathertop. If Tom likes to go into the bush with hunters around we suggest he tries bushwalking in the Howqua Valley during the hunting season.

Now to Tom's detailed comments - Tom is unfortunately wrong in one of his first statements. The prime interest of the club is <u>not</u> in maintaining right-of-way for the track, but rather in maintaining on expanding the recreational opportunities available to its members. One aspect of these "opportunities" is the maintaining of a right-of-way for the track; another aspect is the maintaining of an environment in which club members will enjoy their recreation. There is little point in the club trying to maintain a pedestrian right-of-way down a city street because that is not in an environment in which most of our members enjoy recreational walking. This is an extreme example, we admit, but the principles are the same.

Tom appears confused over our opposition to the construction of a bridge across the Ovens. We objected to the proposed road bridge because it is part of the overall tourist development and it would also destroy an existing foot bridge which is in good condition and exists in harmony with the surrounding environment. We have never opposed the construction of a footbridge which is what Tom appears to confuse with a road bridge. However, with two perfectly good foot bridges and several good fords already existing in the area in question, we fail to see why we need, for our purposes, any new bridge there.

Tom then considers that the bad effects of the development have been exaggerated and that it is not a threat to Mt. Feathertop. We disagree entirely for the reasons given at the start of this letter for our objection to the development. Would Tom have stated, twenty years ago, that the construction of a ski lift at Falls Creek would threaten the Rockey Valley area, or that some alpine ash logging near Mirymbah would have threatend Mt. Cobbler or the head of the Warrangatta, or, even 10 years ago, that trail bikes would threaten the enjoyment of bushwalkers or snowmobiles - the enjoyment of cross country skiers? All such developments are like a cancer, starting in a relatively small and unobvious way, but growing uncontrollably larger and larger until something is destroyed.

Concerning deer, as we stated previoulsy it only requires one tree to fall across the deer fence and the deer will be able to escape. There are many large trees near the deer fence.

Tom then continues, concerned about our approach to the development. We certainly agree that the club could have profited by buying the land in question. But we were never informed that it was for sale. The first we learnt about the development was when things started appearing in the area. We were never informed of anything by the previous owner, the new owner, or the Shire Council. One day a big water filled trench appeared crossing the existing track, the next a dilapidated shack and old tram, the next a trench was dug across the traditional car park in the area, rendering it useless as a car park. No-one told us anything. Well, we lost our case and undoubtedly made enemies of the family, proposing the development. But were they ever our friends? We should point out that we made enemies in the Ovens Valley the day the M.U.M.C. hut was built on Mt. Feathertop. Many locals regarded it as an ugly intrusion spoiling their view of the mountain. This is why the club has recently painted the hut in an effort to disquise it. Incidentally, the club has never had any right-of-way problems with the track up the Northwest Spur, contrary to what Tom heard.

Finally, Tom states that our present position is "...like that of a dog chasing tourist buses as they pass...! This is probably so but it is healthier than lying back and doing nothing. When the dog grows larger and is joined by hundreds more than we may force the buses to stop or change direction.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Feller

FUTURE CHOCK

I woke late to a throbbing headache. The Sierra sky was already bright through a haze of smoke and suspended dust, and I had to squint. I sat up and looked around groggily, rubbing little chunks of yellow crust out of the corners of my eyes. The pits was like a battlefield. Zonked bodies lay everywhere in the dirt, some in sleeping bags, others sprawled grotesquely where they'd passed out. Scattered wine bottles and beer cans dully reflected the embers of dwing, dismally smoking bonfires.

A bevy of pre-teen girls, wearing green vinyl Junior Wilderness Scout uniforms, saw me enter and giggled.

Glancing around self-consciously, I spotted Yale Thermit in the cafeteria queue about 75th from the door, next to a huge potted fern. Yale and I'd had some good times back when were both beginners, sharing a cookpot in the Pits and thrashipg up the 5.10 training solos. But then Yale had made it, in a minor way at least, by kissing ass and doing tawdry little climbs for the amusement of certain wealthy socialities with odd tendencies. Not that I could really blame him. Here he was in the Lodge cafeteria line, Tourcard tucked snugly in the hip pocket of his fashionable, nylon taffeta climber's whites, while I was still groveling in the Pits. I walked over to him in the line, ignoring the politely disgusted glances from the pepple around him.

"Yale," I said.

"Hey, old buddy", he said coolly, extending a manicured hand. "What brings you here? still sleeping in the good old Pits, I see".

I glanced down at my disheveled clothes. "Yeah", I admitted. "the good old Pits. Well, you know how it is..." I shrugged. "Man, you should have been there last night, though. The Lost Arrows came in andithrew a really wild one, must have been 40 bikes". I winked knowingly. "You remember what their chickies are like, eh?" I added, nudging him in the side with my elbow. Actually, I had washed down a couple of phenobarbs with some Koolaid and grain and zonked out. I hated the Pits and everyone in them. "But anyway," I continued, "I'm clearing out. Know any rides back to the Coast?"

Yale looked at me in amazement. "You're leaving?" he asked incredulously, "You can't be serious, not when everyone else is just getting here. Don't you even know who's here?"

Shamefully I wagged my head "no."

"Harold DeMegalo is who, that's all". He sounded almost pitying.

"Man, for somebody who's supposedly trying to make it, you sure don't seem to know what's happending. I'm auditioning, myself".

DeMegalo. That was big news, indeed. Harald Deligalo was the biggest producer of climbing adventure tapes in the country. His very first production, "Duel on the Rock", had sold over a million video cassettes and had made overnight stars of both featured soloists. Low on art, maybe, but high on bucks. Someone like De Megalo could very well be my ticket out of the Pits, if I could only somehow get to him.

"You say you're auditioning?" I said to Yale. "How'd you swing that? Where's he staying?"

"He's staying right here at the Lodge, of course, but forget it, old Pits chum". He smiled smugly, and I hated him. "You'll just have to get out on the rock like everyone else and hope you get noticed".

I was about to press him for more, but a plastic-booted Cruddy Co. guard had spotted me and was bearing down fast. I bid goodbye to Yale, asked him to put in a good word for me with DeMegalo, and hurried over to a nearby public vending plaza. Mon-tourists were allowed in the Lodge complex only if engaged in a legitimate business transaction.

A ragged der provied listlessly, sniffing at back-packs and dirty pots, here and there a dusty, beat-up tent symbol of affluence in the Pits, sagged from limp guylines. I staggered to my feet, bushed the sand off my clothes and shouldered my tattered ruck-sack.

The Yosemite Pits. One thing about the Valley, you could always count on a place to bag down. If, that is, you weren't too choosy about your neighbors. The Pits had been the Park Service's final answer to people pullution - a vast, bulldozed tract, lifeless and harren, with free and unlimited camping. Created under the NPS Revision Act of 1996, it had become the park's overflow dumping ground for all the punks and dopies from the cities, the outlaw hikers, the bums and winos. Not to mention the down and out climbers like myself, who, lacking tourist credientials, were not allowed in the other campgrounds. Not that I could have afforded it, anyway.

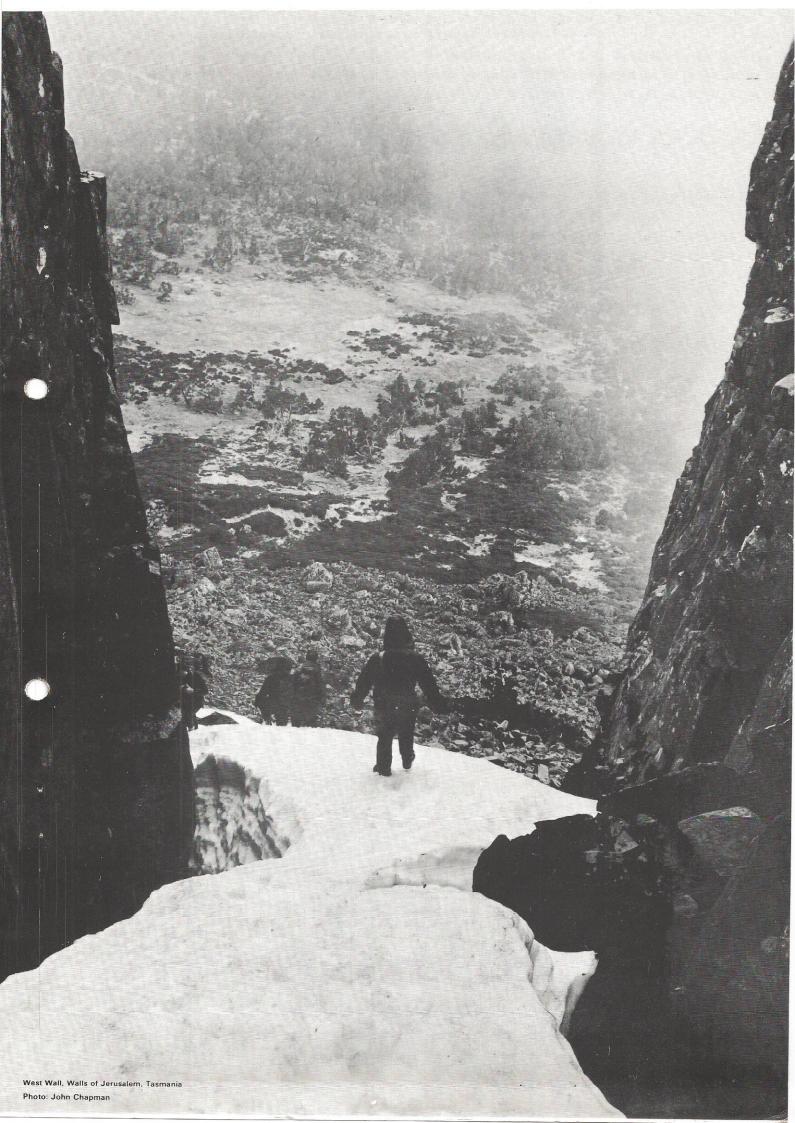
I plodded out across the flat expanse of the Pits toward a distant line of pines, kicking up dust as I vove my way around snoring bodies, toppled motorcycles, a shattered conga drum, a couple of empty half-kegs. The smell of vomit and urine was overpowing as the sun began to bake the odors out of the dry, sandy dirt. At the end of the season, I knew, big, yellow government dozers would come through, scrape the surface clean and then spread fresh fill dirt over it all. Good as new.

The dog that I'd seen proviling snarled at me as I passed and snapped weakly at my leg. I kicked it aside and walked on, the pine woods growing larger, looming ahead of me like a spiritual oasis. What the hell, I was getting out, going home. I'd had all I could take for a while.

Out at the loop road I hitched a ride with a tourist heading into the Lodge complex. Touries don't usually pick up the non-tour climbers, but this one had a "Climbers Do It In Slings" bumper sticker on his truck camper and sported a chrome plated bolt hanger for a key ring. He took me all the way to Inner Fringe Parking, activating the automatic gatepost with his plastic Golden Tourcard. I got out and nodded thanks. The tourie stepped over into a shuttlebus line, Tourcard clutched in his hand. I started hiking the remaining half mile to the Lodge.

The Yosemite Lodge was a marvel that never failed to impress me. Approaching along the plasphalt valing-way from the parking lot, I could see several of the huge hotel turrets in the distance, rising above the treetops like outsized silos. The turrets were all capped by observation domes that glittered on their tops like giant soap bubbles. You could, it was said, sit in a restaurant under one of those airy bubbles at night, 200 feet off the deck, and nibble prime filet while gazing out at a spectacular 360 degree view of the moonlit Valley. Giddy catualks connected the hotel turrets with each other and with other taller, more slender lookout spires, forming an intricate structure of great:strength and beauty. The entire complex gleamed dully whiteein the brilliant California sun. It was Plastic Oz, the Magic Kingdom and the Pearly Gates.

I slunk through an entry arcade into the spacious courtyard in the center of the complex. Swarms of tourists with cameras dangling and screaming children in tow bustled everywhere. Lines of people in shiny, bright-colored outfits sprouted out of buildings into the courtyard, waiting patiently to be seated in restaurants or be admitted to the shops.





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62 CLARENCE ST., SYDNEY. 2001. Ph. 29 4840. I flopped my rucksack down, pulled a couple of rumpled twees from the flap pouch and ran them through the changer for a hondful of aluminum Gruddycoins. The grand strode up to the edge of the plaza, folded a pair of thick arms across his brown naugabyde tunic and glaned. I fed the tokens rapidly into an autofeeder and punched in my order. A preheated can of chili clunked out of the slot. I posped the lid off and began eating with the little white spoon that had dropped out with it. The guard sauntered up to me and peered in my face as I chewed. He did not look friendly.

"What do you think you're doing here; toad?" he smarled. His right hand went instinctively to the shiny black butt of the holstered pelpistol at his waist.

Tear tweeked at my gots. Although I knew that by federal ruling the concessionaire guards could use only non-lethal nubber pels in their automatic weapons, the Cruddy Con had monaged to get permission for a particularly painful type of rapidfire cartridge on account of the climbers, who were notoriously pain resistant. I did not care to give the guard an excuse to use it.

I smiled blandly. "Officer," I said politely, "I'm sure you'll find me to be in full compliance with NPS Reg 175. Section 3c as revised 1996, which allows that persons with non-tourist status shall have full use of all open-air facilities within concessionaire operated compounds, so long as said non-tourist persons.

"Yeah, yeah," the guard interrupted, "...and long as said non-tourd scum is engaged in a legitimate activity and blah, blah, blah," He misquoted the reg but he had the general idea. I held up any chili can and spoon and rolled my eyes up at the open sky above the courtyard to emphasize my point. The Tourist-Crady Co. Establishment despised us non-tours, but that didn't stop them from greedily goobling up our small bills.

working himself up. "Why don't you shave your chects and wear plastic clothes like everybody else?" He gestured to my fillly patched cotton whites. Those pants look like you barfed on these. I had, in fact, three days before. "Just finish that grot you're eating and clear out. Stinking Pits zombie".

I needed time to think. Somehow I had to get to Delegalo. I are slowly, chewing each mouthful of the synthetic orange slop for as long as I could hold it in my mouth without gagging. The guard's yes followed my hand from can to mouth and back with a lock of witer revulsion. He was losing patience.

A bold idea occurred to me. It was still early in the day. If
DeMegalo was indeed staying at the Lodge, he was very likely there right
that minute, perhaps in the New Seasons finishing up a leisurely breakfast
with his entourage, or high above in one of the turrer bubbles lingering
over imported champagne and croissants. The central courtyard where I
stood was visible from just about anywhere in the Lodge complex, so
chances were that any commetion in the courtyard would come to DeMegalo's
attention, wherever he was. And being human, he would look. No one,
not even Harold DeMegalo, could resist a riot.

I glanced up at the imposing wall rising behind the autofeeder machine next to me. The vending plaza was tucked against the base of one of the great hotel turrets. The vast sweep of the turret's cylindrical flank soared smoothly 22 stories above the courtyard. This particular turret, I knew, was capped by the bubble dome of the swank Winnebago Room, one of the lushest and most exclusive eateries in the Valley.

Briefly I studied the turret's structure. It was like a towering stack of monster checkers, each checker representing one story. At the junction of each story a small lip, formed by the floor joint, ran around the circumference of the tower. A line of tall, narrow slit windows, probably delineating an emergency stairwell, ran straight up the turret through rows of normal sized picture windows. I would go, I decided, right up that line of slit windows. It was dead vertical and smooth, though, and it would be long, hard and chancy. I might slip out of one of those slit windows 200 feet up and tomato back to the pebbly concrete at the feet of the guard. On the other hand, if I made it to the top. DeMegalo might see me, offer me a contract, and I'd be fated to glory. In between...well, I'd never set foot in the Valley again, that much was certain.

I made up my mind. Looking directly at the guard, I said in a loud, arrogant voice, "You know, I'm getting sick and tired of you standing there staring at me like that". His heavy features twitched with a mixture of puzzlement and alarm. "It doesn't help my digestion much to have an ape slobbering at me while I eat. Didn't they feed you yet?" I sneered. "Here, eat this." I up-ended the chilican and shook it. The contents splattered onto the pavement and over the guard's immaculate, buffed boots.

There was a stunned moment of shock as the guard stook slack-jawed taking this in. The thousand faces of the milling crowd turned toward us. I glimpsed Yale Thermit's smug face contorted in amazement and disbelief. He was probably mortified that he'd been seen talking to me. I felt that exhilarating rush of irrevocability that comes when you finally decide to go for it.

"Why, you lousy stinking chalkhead"! the guard screamed. He lunged for me with outstretched hands. I was ready. I whirled deftly, reached high and placed a hand on top of the bulky auto-feeder and executed a graceful one-armed mantle to a standing position on top. The guard groped wildly for my foot. I lunged off the top of the machine for the turret's nearest slit window, which was about 10 feet to the side and a little above my head. I caught the sill with one hand and swung crazily. For a horrible moment & thought I was going to lose it and drop back down to the enraged guard, but the slippery grip held. I wished I had my chalk bag.

The guard was unsnapping his chunky pelpistol from its holster, cursing steadily. I relaxed my mind, focused all my energies on the immediate climbing problems and started up. The guard had his gun out and was aiming it directly at my head. I mantled up into the narrow window slot, squirmed an arm and shoulder into it and locked myself in. The guard fired a long, full-auto burst. He was a good shot. I winced in agony as the barrage of pels slammed into my ear and cheek, knocking my head sideways. Blood trickled down my neck from painful welts. I thrutched frantically up the slot until I could reach the small lip running along the outside of the floor joint. Getting both hands on it, I pulled up hard, keeping a heeltow in the window slot below and lunged for the sill of the next window. I made it, completing the first of the repetitive cycle of moves that would take me to the top. If, that is, my strength held.

The guard was now directly below me firing straight up. Burst after burst zipped up my legs and into my crotch, many of the pels burning directly up inside my pant legs. My lower body was seared with pain. I moved up another story. More guards were converging below, loping toward the base of the turret shouting and madly waving pelpistols. One was lugging a bulky automatic pelrifle on a tripod.

The crowd was in an uproar, just as I'd hoped. Horrified tourists ran back and forth below like stampeding rabbits, screaming and gawking up at me. I only hoped Deligalo was seeing this.

I slipped into the strenuous rhythm of the climb, moving up floor by floor through the biting hail of pels. Reaching the eighth floor, I cleared the tops of the surrounding buildings and the Valley opened up around me. The majestic Upper Yosemite Falls came into view, the stark gray finger of the Lost Arrow to its right.

Between them was the huge, neon "CLIMB" sign, inviting the tourists to let themselves be led up the cliffs by smiling, nylon-clad Cruddy Co. guides. It blinked dully pink against the gray wall, urging me upward.

By the 19th floor I began to have serious misgivings. My arms ached, my head pounded and my hands were greased. My pants, shredded by continual pel blasts, flapped loosely around my bloody, lacerated legs. Red smears marked the trail of my ascent up the clean white surface of the tower. My legs began to shake, and visions of myself plunging helplessly downward into the frenzied pack of guards floated through my fatigued brain.

Suddenly an awed murmur arose from the crowed and the pel guns went silent. The crowd, I saw, was starting not at me but at a point beyond, higher up the turret, I looked up. A figure had appeared on one of the catwalks connected to the top of my turret. It was the figure of a large man, imposing and resplendent in fashionable red Gortex Lederhosen and tanned, hairless chest. A seductive girl in tight halter and skitight slacks clung to his shoulder, one hand toying suggestively with his suspender.

DeMegalo! I would recognize him anywhere. His picture had certainly appeared in Rock Tripe often enough. Harold Deliegalo leaned over the railing of the catwalk and surveyed the scene below him with cool, regal amusement. The girl gaped down wide-eyed, her bosoms hanging over the rail like two grapefruits in a belay seat. I hung there for a micro-eternity staring up at them. Finally DeMegalo's eyes met mine and he broke into wolfish grin. 'Damn good show, kid," he said. "I liked it. I admire guts. Now get your ass up here and join me in the Winnebago Room".

With that he turned from the railing and swept into the turret, the girl trailing behind clinging to a suspender. I was left stunned. I could scarcely believe what had happened, even though it had been my plan all along. Tears welled out and mixed with the sweat that was already stinging my eyes.

I recovered from my shock and started moving up again. Fresh, bright energy surged through me, making the moves seem effortless as I swarmed smoothly up the remaining floors to the top. Delegalo had noticed me, and I was on my way. Goodbye Pits. Hello Winnebago Room. By God, I'd made it!

C L I M B I N G Peter Martin

With the end of exams more people are again climbing. Several trips to Arapiles have withered in the sweltering heat, being reduced to short climbs in the shade or, the more desirable alternative, long drinks in the pub.

Nick Tapp continues to consolidate his leading with fine ascents of Minimus (13), Muldoon (13), Harmots Mall (15), D. Major (9). The ghost of Melville (13) and Cunrack (12). Richard Hoore seconded all of these routes as well as leading Horn Piece (12), Pedro (10), Piccolo (11) and Sundowner (13).

The intrepid pain of Tapp and Noore also climbed a curving crackline in Campbell's Kingdom producing their first new route and grading it 6 or 7.

Craig Morgetts seconded one or two of Nick and Richard's leads before alternating leads with Jenny Schlager on Tiptoe Ridge (3). Jenny also seconded D. Major (9).

Mark Moorehead another 1st year climber is climbing extremely well as shown by his cool lead of the intimidating Lornplighter (14) on the back of the Pharos pinnicle.

Pedro (10), The Bard (12) and Muldoon (13), three of Arapiles best climbs at the grade were, lead in alternating pitches by Robyn Storer. She later lead Didgeridoo (10) and top-roped Marmots Mall (15). Cathy Seccomber also top-roped Marmots Mall (15) and seconded Didgeridoo (10).

The "heavies (?)" were also climbing at Arapiles. Tony Mariou completed a number of fine routes, his best being his lead of Sandpiper (23) with one rest and the difficult Frenzy (20).

Nick Reeves is pushing high in the computer wankings with his seconds of Beezlebub Direct Start (22) and Saturation Point (21). He also lead the tricky Swinging (17).

Peter Magens returned to the climbing front after a long spell to climb well, with leads of Decibel (15), Howling Wolf (18) and Virginia (18).

Despite climbing with Merg's Jex managed Golden Fleece Stout steps out and Death Row, all (18).

The hot weather at Arapiles forced trips into the Grampions where even there the heat slowed most people down.

Hugh Foxcroft climbed consistantly well to head to rest of Regulem (19), Old Man of the Sea (18), Not Spur (16) and R.I.P. corner (18).

Nick Reeves lead Chancery Lanc (18) and Diane (17) despite the snow and cold conditions!???

Tony Marion seconded Heavy Seas 21 after helping Greg Child free Manic Depressive Australia 2nd grade 26!

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IS THE SPECIALIST BUSH WALKING SHOP OF THE EASTERN SUBURBS for

PACK — Karrimor, Bergans, Hallmark, Flinders Ranges, Paddymade, Mountain Mule, Berghaus.

TENTS — Bushgear, Paddymade, Freetime, Bergans.

SLEEPING BAGS — Paddymade, Hallmark,

Puradown, Starlite, Mountain

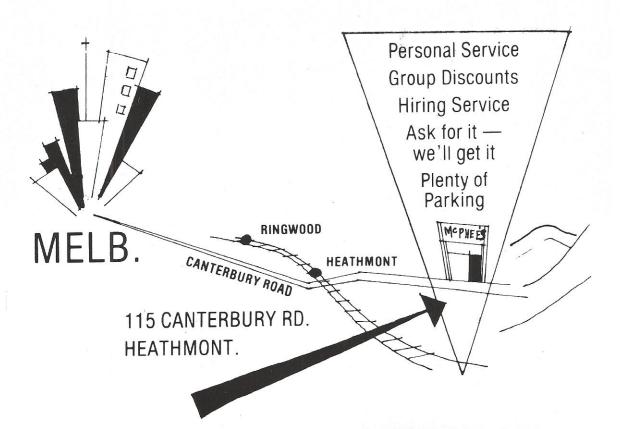
Designs.

CLOTHING — Japaras, Cagjacs, Woollen Shirts, Jumpers,
Socks, A Large Range of Boots, Gaiters, etc.

FOOD — Dehydrated, Freeze Dried, Ration Packs.

MAPS & BOOKS — Algona, V.M.T.C., Forest Commission and Nat. Maps.

SKIS - Nordic & Downhill.



Neil Rimms, from the general of Tiptoe Ridge (3) at Arapiles with Mary Egan stuggled to clean the gear off The Ogive 114 which Jex had the misfortune to wish to aid.

Humming to the tune of "where you lead I will follow" Cathie Seccombe seconded Peter Megens up Jolly Roger (14) before they both got lost in the descent gully!!

All in all the climbing has been somewhat lethangic. Trips are going quite frequently but unfortunately not all appear in the Trips book. If you want to go climbing contact either myself, Neil Currie or Hugh Foxcroft. There is no time like the present to learn.

MT. BUFFALO GORGE - THE NORTH WALL

One of the scenic spots at Buffalo, the North wall, just opposite the chalet, is perhaps the greatest rock climbing challenge in Victoria. General early attempts which included personalities such as Bob Jones and Fred Mitchell had in the frost, managed to climb about 100 ft. of the 600 ft. wall before retreating. On an extra long weekend embracing cupday, four climbers, Ted Batty and Reg Williams from the V.C.C., and Mike Stone and Ian Speedie from the M.U.M.C., began the 1965 attempts.

The wall is composed of enormous, absolutely holdless granite slabs, joined by sharp cracks, corners and aretes. About 200 ft. from the bottom, of the near vertical wall, is a large grass and tree covered ledge. This represents the first objective. Beyond this is a central series of cracks leading to a 150 ft. chimney, and then 150 ft. of exit cracks, this constituted the main route.

The Saturday was spent in reconnisance, climbing to the bottom of the gorge in the afternoon to determine a route to the ledge. The following day, rising early, the party began climbing at 9.30 on an apparently straight forward corner (diedre) to the ledge. This was reached by midday following some hard severe grade leading by Reg. On the ledge, following a snack, the seemingly simple flake, at the foot of the main line was found to require artificial aids, and took 2 hours of high grade climbing. By this time it was obvious the route would not 'go' on this day, so Nike and Ted set off to pioneer an escape route up the obvious ramp, to the left of the ledge, leading to the top of the wall, while Reg and myself moved up the main line as far as possible to reconnoitre the main route, and study the immediate problems. Retreating back to the ledge at 5 p.m., we followed like and Ted, using the fixed ropes they left behind for direct aid. This apparently simple ramp, began with an unprotected 100 ft. 'hard severe' chimney. This was a fine lead by Mike and we were glad of the rope left. The party of 4 moved on at top speed in an attempt to escape before dark, but were stopped 60 ft. short by a completely smooth vertical wall just as darkness closed in at 7.30 p.m.

A fire was lit and a rest taken, during which it was decided to "bott bash" the 30ft. vall. This was commenced at 8.30 p.m., by torch light, each member placing a bolt and retreating to rest, whilst the following members took their turns. The last bolt (8th) was placed, at 2.00 a.m., and from the ledge so reached, we scrambled to the top.

On leaving ghe North wall, we had an excellent view of the comet recently discovered by the Japanese astronomers, and so named the escape route, - "Comet Ramp".

On our return to camp, we removed the ice from our billies, and had some food before retiring at dawn. The main route, at present half climbed, will be attempted again in the near future. It promises to be mixed artificial and free climbing of high standard.

CONSERVATION

Michael Feller.

1. Woodchipping in Tasmania

The Tasmanian Forestry Commission recently conducted an economic study of the woodchipping operations in eastern Tasmania and presented the results in a report entitled "Financial Analysis Forestry Commission operations in Concession of T.P. and F.H." published in 1978.

The study did not consider any of the environmental costs of the operations but considered only the direct income and expenditure involved in the project by the Tasmanian Forestry Commission. It concluded that the Tasmanian Pulp and Forest Holdings Ltd. (T.P. and F.H.) woodchipping operations were costing the Tasmanian Forestry Commission (i.e. the taxpayer) between 1 and 2 million dollars per year!

The report concluded: "The general conclusion of the analysis is that revenues from the T.P.F.H. Concession are insufficient to meet all the costs of the project. While royalty rates are sufficiently high to offset the direct costs of forestry operations, such as regeneration and fire protection, revenues are inadequate with respect to the cost of management of the forests for wood production. Some administration and management costs would have been incurred irrespective of the development of the T.P.F.H. project. However, staff time at all levels is involved in the management and supervision of the project and the cost of this time is an appropriate charge against the project. Revenues are insufficient to meet these management costs".

We now know that woodchipping operations in southeastern N.S.W. (Eden area) and Tasmania (East Coast) are costing us taxpayers millions of dollars per year. Do we want to see another such operation in East Gippsland which will probably not only cost us money but also some of our few remaining wilderness areas?

2. Southwest Tasmania

M.U.M.C. now has for sale a number of publications concerning Southwest Tasmania. Members are urged to buy now before our limited stocks are exhausted. Sales of these publications will aid the Tasmanian Wilderness Society and assist in the attempts to preserve the wilderness values of the Southwest.

For sale are -

- 1. Tasmanian Wilderness Calendar 1979 \$3.75
- 2. Tasmanian Wilderness Society Journal, June 1978. \$0.60¢
- 3. The Franklin, Tasmania's lost wild river.

 Lots of facts and information about the Franklin \$1.00

3. New Snow pole line on the Bogong High Plains

Having been led to believe that a new snow pole line was going to be constructed from Pretty Valley to the Mt. Jim area, a letter was sent to A.R.D.A.C. (Alpine Resorts Development Advisory Committee) who for some reason have taken it upon themselves to move out of the alpine resorts and construct pole lines in the alpine areas. The letter opposed the construction of the pole line on the grounds that wilderness users need to go somewhere in winter and that currently they are not being given adequate consideration by the wide assortment of Shire Councils, government departments and organisations which have some say in the management of the Bogong High Plains area. We pointed out that none of these groups have much expertise in managing land for outdoor recreation and stated that we looked forward to the time that management of the alps will be taken out of their hands.

As a result of a subsequent meeting with representatives of A.R.D.A.C., S.T.A.V., and F.V.V.C., which was organised by Michael Feller, the following snow pole line construction activities will occur this summer:

- Renewal of the pole line from Madisons hut to the summit of Bogong via Cleve Cole.
 - 2. Remarking of the Duane Spur T. Spur route from Ropers hut to Madisons Hut.
 - 3. Possible renewal of the Eskdale Spur pole line on Bogong.
 - 4. Removal of the remains of the pole line from the summit of Bogong toward West Peak and Quartz Ridge.
 - 5. Removal of the remains of the pole line from the Ropers hut line to Timms Lookout.
 - 6. Removal of the remains of the pole line towards Youngs hut ruins from the Dibbins Line.

Another, minor victory for wilderness lovers !

6 66666

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - 7.30 p.m. Wednesday, 28th March, Sisalkraft Theatre, Architecture Building.

Nominations are called for the 1978 committee to be elected at the Annual General Meeting for the positions fof President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Stoves Officer, Assistant Secretary and Editor.

Nominations should be given to the Secretary in writing with proposers/ seconders signatures, 7 days before the meeting, and must be signed by the nominee.

Constitutional amendments must be posted on the notice board at the Clubrooms at least 14 days before the meeting.

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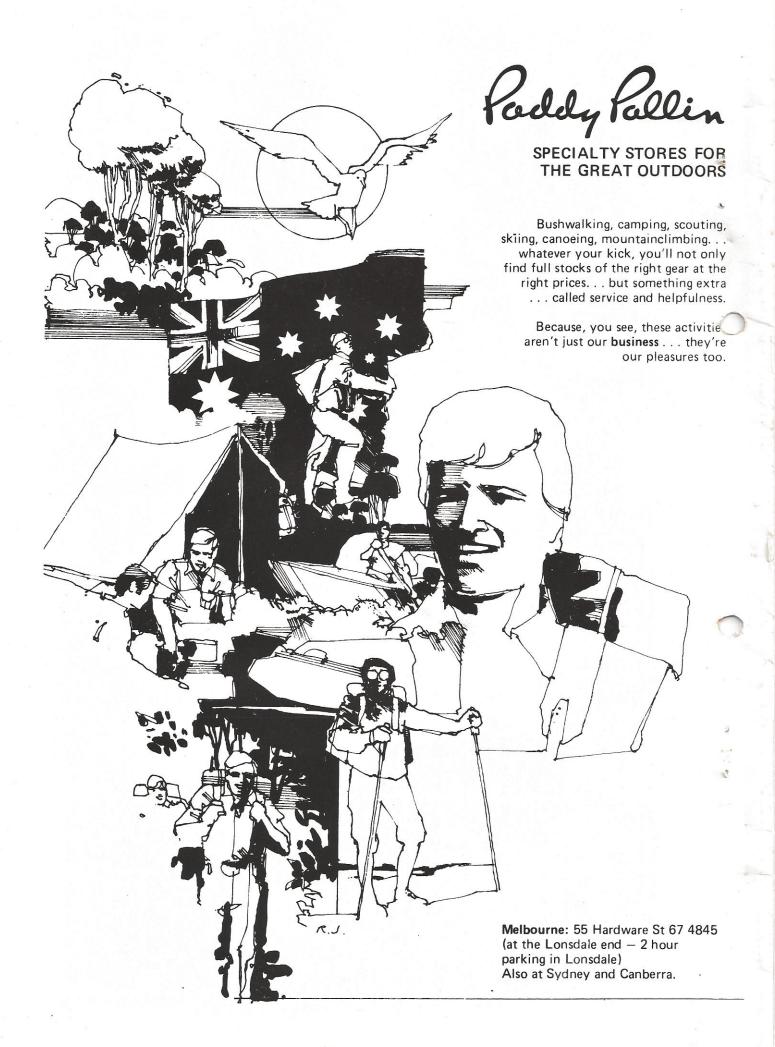
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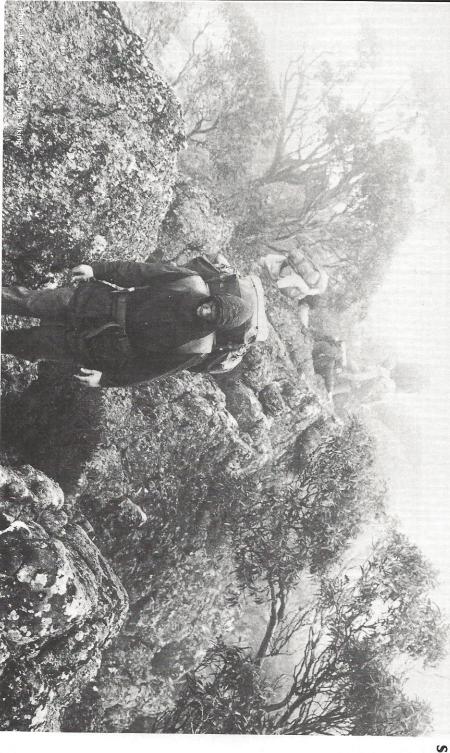
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