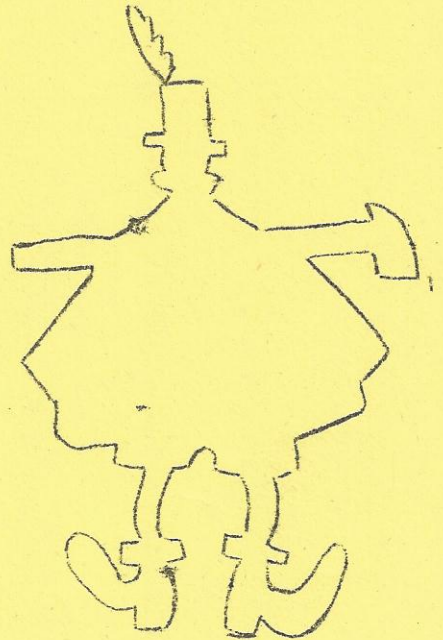
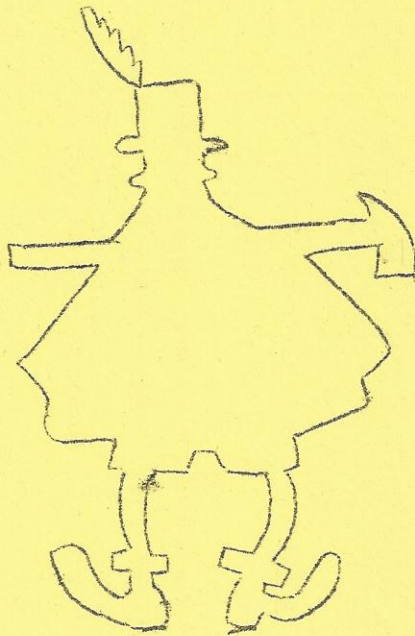
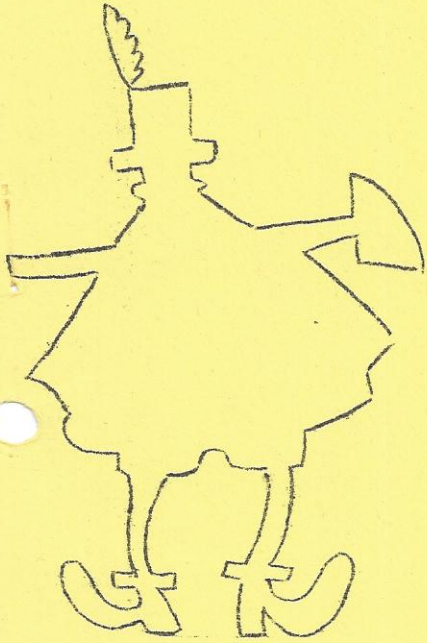


JUNE 1981



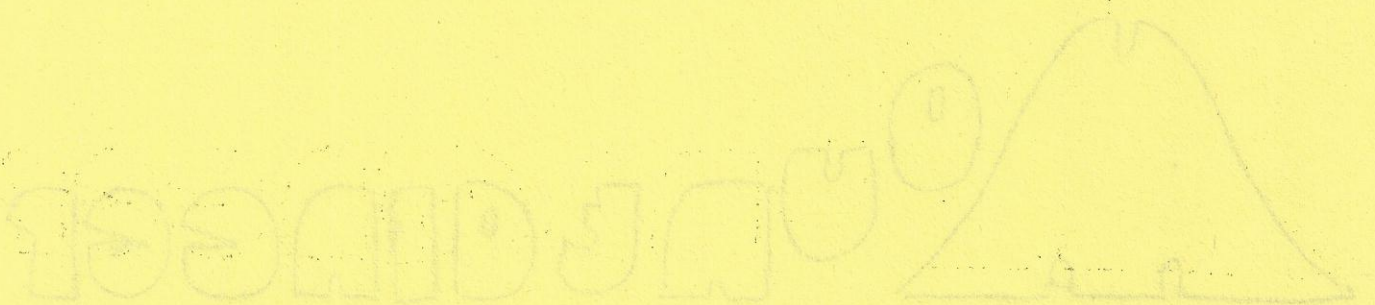
Mountain GINGER

20¢ [FREE TO MEMBERS]

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CATEGORY 'B'.



JUNE 1891



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CATALOGUE

THE MOUNTAINEER

JUNE 1981

Official Journal of the  
Melbourne University Mountaineering Club

All correspondence to:

The Editors

'The Mountaineer'

Melbourne University Mountaineering Club

C/- Sports Union

University of Melbourne

Parkville, 3052

### CANOE POLO

A team is required for Thursday night-competition for the next season, from August to November.

The competition is played in a heated pool at Latrobe University; we only play one game per night lasting for under half an hour sometime between 8 pm and 10 pm. The standard is novice - if you're interested you'll probably get a game. All enquiries to Tim Beriman, 459 3478.

\* \* \* \* \*

Another plea rings out for contributions from club members for the magazine. Write us a spiel on absolutely anything relevant and I daresay we will print it. (Within limits of course!) See Andrew Wilson or Janet Rice, drop it into our file, post it to us, or send via carrier pigeon - we don't mind.

\* \* \* \* \*

Any members interested in buying or selling any gear should be interested in an Equipment Auction being held by LMS at Latrobe Uni, on Wednesday June 17 in Glenn College. Any items for auctioning should be brought along between 6.30 - 7.00pm and the auction will commence at 7.30pm. A 10% commission would be taken on items sold. Prior notification of items intended to be put up for sale would be appreciated. Ring Andrew 459 1765 A.H.; Ian 861 6782 A.H.; Jim 861 7773 A.H.

### NEWS

- \* Please note the following alterations to the Committee positions 1981:

Caving Convenor: Sue White, 123 Manningham Street, Parkville. 328 4154 (H)  
This was omitted completely. (Apologies, Sue)

Mark Porter's address was incorrect. It should be 295 Napier St., Fitzroy.

Andrew Wilson's phone number, also incorrectly listed, is 824 665.

- \* There are still some copies of Mountaineering '80 waiting to be collected in the clubrooms. If you were an on-campus member last year and haven't collected your copy yet - go to it! Postal copies should be arriving soon.
- \* Talking of collecting and posting things, the situation regarding The Mountaineer is, as always, that if you are on campus during the term you collect any editions that came out during the term. Some new members who are at Uni during the term had elected to have their copy posted - please note that this will be the last copy you'll receive courtesy of Australia Post.
- \* Rod Costigan's 'Basher Shock'
- \* The club's annual photo competition and Pie Night is on Thursday June 25, at 5.30. Slides can be dropped off in the clubrooms in the week preceding the night. This is usually a great night, so come along and join in.



- \* We've been waiting all ears open to hear what people think of the idea of a bush dance later this year. Not a sausage. Is anybody interested out there? We've tentatively thought it would be later this term, so please give us some indication of whether you're interested.
- \* As you'll see elsewhere in the magazine, entries are now being accepted for the 24 hour walk on June 20-21. This is another very big annual club event and is always a good weekend. If you don't want to walk, consider helping - volunteers are needed.
- \* The Tasmanian Wilderness Society have had a series of talks going in the Sisalkraft Theatre, Grand Floor, Architecture Building, Melbourne Uni. The next one is on Friday June 26 by Gary White, and is entitled 'Islands of the South-West'.
- \* The canoeing team finished second at Intervarsity held on the Nymboida River in northern N.S.W. during the May vacation. More details later.

#### EASTER VAN TRIP

Seven o'clock or thereabouts on the Thursday before Easter, it was. Forty or so people had themselves organised and we were ready to head off, with a bucket of M.U.M.C. songbooks, two tin whistles and at least one mouth organ to keep us occupied on the trip up to Sheepyard Flat. Yes, on the four and a half hour trip up there we did manage to make a bit of noise.

We headed off in four different directions after hot cross buns the following morn, being intrepidly led by Richard Serpell, Jo Richards, Peter Smillie and Roger and Tim Hatten. The walk I was on (the latter) including clumbs over Eagle's Peaks and The Bluff, two excellent campsites, and virtually perfect weather proved to be a most memorable way to spend an Easter Holiday.

The trip back on late Monday afternoon due probably to a more relaxed (no not exhausted) feeling was even more uninhibited noise-wise than the trip up. Lots of singing i.e. lots of noise including an enthusiastic song contest between enthusiasts in the front and the back of the bus. No rules, just both songs sung as loudly as possible simultaneously, with both sides unofficially declaring themselves the winner at the songs' completion.

In cliched completion, a good weekend was had by all.

\* \* \* \* \*

### EASTER SHOCK

The leader of an Easter trip to the Victorian Alps has been forced into hiding after one of the most shameful incidents of M.U.M.C.'s recent history. Two members of this group were found to have cut short their afternoon's walking by HITCHING A RIDE IN A 4-W.D. The pair include a prominent member of many years standing who has been heard to refer to himself as "a hard-line conservationist".

Although Captain Blunder's offence deserves condemnation, it is overshadowed by that of another "walking" party believed to be from Y.H.A. which was seen using a 4-W.D. on a STEEP, ROUGH, ISOLATED FORESTRY TRACK. One supposes that the 4-W.D. was used in the name of "access to the area". However the M.U.M.C. leader (now in hiding) was plunged deeper into despair by this act as he could not see any distinction between this and 4-W.D. touring.

\* \* \* \* \*

### AN ANTHEM

to "Jerusalem"

And have those feet in recent times  
trudged through Australia's mountains green?  
And was that holy feathered cap  
on Bogong's lofty ridges seen?  
And has that silhouette grotesque  
stood high upon our clouded hills?  
And was there formed a club of mountaineers  
where lives the Oxo spirit still?

Give me my ice-axe for me to hold  
Give me a rope to break my fall  
Reload my film - oh, clouds unfold!  
The peaks I see, I'll climb them all.  
I'll walk the ridges with no rest,  
My 'axe will not sleep in my hand,  
Till I have climbed Mt. Everest,  
- a pilgrim to the Oxo-Man.

- Anon.



FOOD FOR THOUGHT - AN M.U.M.C. RECIPE BOOK!!!

Are you tired of dehyds and instant puds?

- Those tasteless, rubbery concoctions that torture the bowels?

Well you need not suffer anymore - "with your help" M.U.M.C. is putting together a Recipe Book, to make life in the bush more enjoyable.

We need your ideas on creative cooking round the fire. Anything from pancakes to scroggin!

Put recipes in the envelope on the bushwalking board in clubroom.

\* \* \* \* \*

PIE NIGHT & PHOTO COMPETITION

THURSDAY 25 JUNE, 6 p.m. at the SPORTS PAVILION

(North end of oval)

This eventful night has lots to offer if you want to gorge yourself on a selection of home-made pies; hear all about the M.U.M.C. 24 hour walk over a beer, get in with the "uphill" skiing scene and see some high quality (?) slides and photos.

So its up to you ....

ENTER your slides, colour or black and white photos in the competition. These can be related to bushwalking, rockclimbing, canoeing, skiing, alpine climbing, caving, orienteering, rogaining, trekking etc.

(P.S. There are prizes to be won!)

Just fill out this entry form and hand it in with your named slides/photos at the clubroom from June 1.

NAME :

NO. OF SLIDES :

SUBJECT :

NO. OF B/W PHOTOS :

SUBJECT :

NO. OF COLOUR PHOTOS :

SUBJECT :

### Murphy's Law as Applied to Bushwalking

1. Anything that can go wrong will.
2. Any length of walking is more demanding and takes longer than expected.
3. The next crest is never the top.
4. Just when morale is high, it rains.
5. When morale is low, it rains.
6. Just when you reach a river after a hot day, it gets too cold for swimming.
7. If you are short of water, every big river is low; every small river turns out to be intermittent; every intermittent river turns out to be ephemeral; ephemeral rivers are a hoax anyway.
8. If you have plenty of water but desperately need to cross a river, it floods.
9. On the days that fires are easy to light, there is a total fire ban.
10. You have always forgotten to bring something.
11. You have always remembered to bring something this time that you forgot last time. Last time you needed it. This time you don't.
12. A dozen weightless articles weigh a ton.
13. You are carrying food that you will never use.
14. Your map is inaccurate, incomplete or both.
15. If you are alone you are probably using your compass incorrectly.
16. In a party, everyone knows a reliable way to use a compass but each way is different.
17. You spend more time arguing about the use of your compass than you would have lost by not using one.
18. Most good views are in some way obscured.
19. You have run out of film anyway.
20. Your photos are never as good as you expected.
21. Someone always runs out of paper.
22. Fool! You have always set off on another walk before you remember Murphy's Law as applied to Bushwalking.

Footnote: Canoeists, ski-tourers, rockclimbers, cavers, Dont Laugh!  
Your Murphy's Law has twenty-three corollaries! At least this  
page has no mention of drowning, freezing, plummeting or  
asphyxiation.



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## THE NEED FOR A NEW TRIP PAYMENT SCHEME

Jonathan  
Miller

### 1. INTRODUCTION: The inadequacy of the present system

M.U.M.C. trips depend almost exclusively upon private cars for transport. Presently the only reimbursement the car-owner (who will be assumed to be the driver for the purposes of this article) receives from the passengers a proportional split of the petrol money. However the cost of petrol is only a small part of the expense of owning a car and even if the driver pays none of the petrol he is heavily subsidizing his passengers on each and every trip. Companies were typically paying 22 cents per kilometre to employees using private cars for work purposes over last summer. Recently the R.A.C.V. announced the results of a survey ( "The Age", 22/4/81 ), which revealed that fuel costs made up only 17% of the costs of owning a vehicle.

In the following discussion I will outline the components of the total costs associated with car ownership, and indicate why they should be included in a trip payment scheme.

### 2. THE COSTS OF RUNNING A CAR

The total costs may be split into 'operating costs' and 'standing costs'. Operating costs are those incurred when the car is driven and are therefore roughly proportional to the total distance travelled. Standing costs are those costs which are paid irrespective of the distance travelled, and are calculated over a period of a year. Passengers frequently consider standing costs imaginary, or at least inappropriate to be included in a trip payment scheme. In fact standing costs do have a noticeable effect on the bank balances of car owners, and must be paid before a car is available for a club trip.

The following modified cost finding formula has been taken from the 'Shell Answerman' series.

#### (i) Standing Costs:

Depreciation (see notes below)	:
Registration fee and compulsory	:
third party insurance	:
Comprehensive insurance	:
Interest (see notes below)	:
(motor organisation membership)	:
(Driver's licence)	:

---

TOTAL STANDING COST FOR YEAR

---

(ii) Operating Costs:

Fuel: (a) Average consumption in litres/100km :  
(b) Total kms per annum divided by 100 :  
(c) Average price per litre :  
Total fuel cost = a x b x c :  
Oil: Cost of oil plus filters :  
Parts & Service: The cost of any parts and labour :  
required for service and maintenance :

Total operating cost for year

Total Cost = Total standing cost & Total operating cost =

Divide this figure by total km per annum  
Overall cost per kilometre =

3. NOTES ON COST COMPONENTS:

a) Depreciation:

A tricky one. Best thought of as the reduction in resale value over the year. Depreciation is an accounting tool for spreading the initial purchase cost over the life of the vehicle. Watching the prices of vehicles sold using newspaper advertisements is a way of assessing the resale value. There are several formulae used to determine annual depreciation for, say, taxation purposes and one of the more convenient is 22½% of the assessed value of the vehicle at the start of the year. I suggest using 20% for simplicity. Time depreciation along with repair costs allow for the 'wear and tear' on vehicle body and parts, which can be excessive on rough mountain roads.

b) Registration and Compulsory Third Party Insurance:

Generally increases with the power of the engine. In the range \$140 - \$200.

c) Comprehensive Insurance:

Remember that the car owner that does not insure with a company is accepting the consequences of any possible accidents, and he should therefore set aside some \$100 - \$300 each year to allow for the average accident costs each year. He is effectively insuring himself, and this includes the possibility of having the car written-off: possibly by someone who cannot pay for the smash repairs.

Most University students should allow about \$150.00 per year, depending upon the value of their cars.



It seems appropriate to mention the possibility of an accident occurring on a trip while someone other than the owner is driving. If everyone in the car is paying an insurance component in the trip payment scheme then the onus is on the owner to organise his own insurance. If there is no insurance component paid and the car is not insured with a company, then there are embarrassing questions after a \$2,000 accident. It would be best if an agreement were reached before the non-owner started driving: and his financial responsibility should probably be the same as if the owner were driving (complete responsibility). Indirectly, paying the insurance component has the benefit of encouraging sharing of driving!

d) Interest:

This is income foregone by the owner of a car. The owner of a \$1,000 car is foregoing \$80.00 - \$90.00 that he would receive if the money were invested in a building society at 8 or 9%. This interest payment is just as real, if smaller in size, than those paid by buying under hire-purchase. Allow 9% of the assessed value of the car. Note that this does NOT overlap with depreciation.

e) Motor Organisation Membership and Licence Cost:

Probably not applicable to a club trip payment scheme; included for completeness.

f) Fuel:

Well understood. Presently about 37c/litre.

g) Oil:

A rough working figure is a change every 6,000 km costing \$4.00 for oil.

h) Service and Maintenance:

Includes 5,000 km and 10,000 km services, replacement of worn out parts, tuning, alignment and labour costs. Many students would do part of their own servicing and would be prepared not to charge for this labour. Service and maintenance costs will vary greatly, but a rule-of-thumb figure might be \$200.00 per year.

Also in this section, allowance should be made for tyres. Assuming they are steel belt radials with life-times of 50,000 kilometres at a cost of \$180.00 for a set of 4, then allow an annual cost of  $\$180.00 \times \text{kms travelled per year} \div 50,000 \text{ kms}$ .

If in doubt about annual distance travelled, allow 16,000 km.

4. A NEW CAR PAYMENT SCHEME

In section (3) were listed the components of the costs of owning a motor vehicle. Bearing these costs in mind, it is now necessary to devise a scheme that adequately reimburses the driver's expenses.



There will no doubt be those who question including one or more of the above costs in a scheme. This hints at the owner getting more advantages from his car than simply a means of transport. e.g. such intangibles as prestige and sexual allure. This may be true, but these are impossible to quantify in dollar terms. I would suggest however, that the PRIMARY SERVICE A CAR PROVIDES ITS OWNER IS THE MEANS OF TRAVELLING A CERTAIN NUMBER OF KILOMETRES PER YEAR. Therefore if a car travels half its annual distance each year on M.U.M.C. trips surely the owner should recover half his total vehicle costs (both operating and standing costs) from those travelling in the vehicle (here the driver pays an equal part of the split of costs).

Clearly there is a great variation in vehicles that go on club trips, and a concomitant variation in costs/kilometre. Since on most trips all available cars are required, it would be unfair to penalise owners of vehicles with higher associated costs. The underlying principle for any scheme adopted must be to reimburse the driver for all appropriate costs incurred. (In the case where a vehicle is owned and/or paid for by someone other than the driver, generally a parent, and only petrol costs need be split by those on the trip, it should be realised the parent (or whoever) is in effect making a large financial contribution to the trip expenses. This is NOT an argument against the payment of non-petrol costs).

Three alternative schemes might be envisaged:

- (i) Each driver works out his or her kilometre expenses using a pre-determined formula (not necessarily the one above).
- (ii) A fixed rate per kilometre for all cars for non-petrol costs is added to the petrol costs on the trip.
- (iii) A fixed rate per kilometre for all cars is charged. The progression from (i) to (iii) represents increasing use of 'rule of thumb' or average figures. The advantage of (i) is that it most accurately repays the driver his costs. The disadvantage of (i) is that many costs are unknown or hard to assess. Scheme (iii) solves that problem but takes no account of the variation in running costs between cars. Pooling of costs between all cars on a trip is preferable and would be especially so if scheme (i) were introduced, so all on the trip paid the same amount. Scheme (ii) is a compromise, which has been used by the Monash Bushwalking Club. If desired all three schemes could be developed, and drivers unable to determine their costs sufficiently to use scheme (i) could use either scheme (ii) or (iii).

This suggests the question of why the club should adopt any scheme at all, since the driver can charge whatever he likes. The reason is that if the driver had the gumption to ask for more than petrol costs, at present, the passengers would either feel badly done by, or refuse to pay. Without an accepted scheme allowing for non-petrol costs the driver may not ask for such expenses to avoid feelings of animosity. With such a scheme as outlined above, both sides know what is expected, and fair.



## 5. WHAT NOW?

The reactions and opinions of club members are sought, and for this reason a questionnaire has been included. This is a fundamental issue and a high rate of response is desired. The issue will be discussed and decided at committee level, unless there is sufficient contention to necessitate a general forum. I emphasize that this is not a constitutional issue, and that any scheme does not bind the driver to accept it.

## 5. APPENDIX: COSTS FOR TYPICAL M.U.M.C. VEHICLES

These have been worked using the formula given in section 2. An annual distance of 16,000 kilometres was assumed.

### Costs in Cents Per Kilometre

<u>Vehicle</u>	<u>Petrol</u>	<u>Total Operating Costs</u>	<u>Total Standing Costs</u>	<u>Total Costs</u>
'65 Falcon	5.1	6.2	2.1	8.3
'70 Kingswood	4.4	5.6	3.8	9.4
'75 Corona	3.5	5.1	6.6	11.7
'81 Corona	3.6	6.5	16.0	22.5

\* \* \* \* \*

### QUESTIONNAIRE:

You are asked to fill in as much of the following as you are able or can be bothered to, and to return to the envelope in the clubrooms, or mail to:

M.U.M.C., C/- Sports Union, University of Melbourne, Parkville, 3052

Incomplete questionnaires will still be of great assistance.

#### PART ONE: TRIP PAYMENT SCHEME

- Q.1: I (i) possess my own vehicle  
(ii) have access to a vehicle for club trips  
(iii) do not have access to a vehicle for club trips

If (iii), go to question 10.

- Q.2: The vehicle alluded to in question is a \_\_\_\_\_  
(model and year)
- Q.3: An estimated resale value is \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Q.4: The vehicle is covered by (i) Comprehensive insurance  
(ii) Third Party property  
(iii) Compulsory Third Party only
- Q.5: An estimate of annual costs of service, maintenance and oil \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Q.6: An estimate of distance travelled each year \_\_\_\_\_ km
- Q.7: Estimated fuel economy \_\_\_\_\_ litres/100 km (or \_\_\_\_\_ m.p.g.)
- Q.8: Maximum number of passengers which may be carried with packs and equipment \_\_\_\_\_
- Q.9: Total cost per kilometre as determined using the cost finding scheme in previous article \_\_\_\_\_ c./km
- Q.10: Have you any further comments about the structuring of a new trip payment scheme? In particular, do you believe any cost component is inappropriate to such a scheme?



## SO WHAT IS THIS TWENTY-FOUR HOUR-WALKING?

Rodney Costigan

The Twenty-Four Hour Walk was first held in 1947 and has been an annual event since then. This year's "24" will be the thirty-fifth.

The first event was held near Donna Buang. That year five people entered in two teams of two, with the fifth unsure to which team he should attach himself - until the result was announced perhaps! However, numbers grew quickly in subsequent years and it became a popular annual event.

There are many stories told about past "24's", and many versions of each story. One of the most suspect results was in one of the earliest events when the organiser judged himself the winner. Who hasn't been in a "24" and spent half an hour looking for a checkpoint in the wrong gully? The 1965 event was declared "no contest" because so much disruption was caused by one misplaced checkpoint. (In those days it was against the rules to skip a checkpoint.) Competition between the best few 24 hour walkers became so fierce that handicapping was introduced and in 1960, one particularly strong team was given a five mile handicap of its own and was required to do a lap of the Hanging Rock race course before finishing. There are no handicaps and more and all hazards are shared fairly. In one recent event there were so many electric fences that even the organiser got zapped.

The rules have changed a lot since the 1940's and 50's when it was little more than a race through the countryside. But even today it retains its linear nature, that is, having everyone walking the same route in the same direction, although it now has more emphasis on navigation. It is mainly this linearity which gives it an identity still distinct from that of the new "Rogaining" events now being held.

Just what is this "24" thing?

If you haven't been on a "24", you will need a little education..... The idea is simply to find your way around a set course for twenty-four hours and to have found more check points in that time than anyone else. It is just a long treasure hunt.

The start occurs around lunchtime on Saturday and the finish is at the same time on Sunday. If you have not returned to the starting point (called the Hash House) by then, boy, are you in trouble?! Any team which is late back loses points so fast that it will probably end up in debt!

So you have probably gathered that you must enter in a team. This way the organisers keep tabs on people who have fallen down mineshafts and been mauled by bulls. It also stops you getting lonely which is even more important.

You will also have gathered that you get a certain number of points for finding each checkpoint. The value depends on the difficulty or ease of physical access and of actually finding it (navigation).

How do you know where to look and how to get there? You are given a map and a list of grid-references, each with a clue e.g. GR 567234 - on a fallen tree. There is always a master-map so you can check that you got the grid-references right.

"Hard work!" "Discomfort!" "Mental strain!", I often hear the masses cry. Well, how hard it is depends on you. First, YOU DON'T CARRY A PACK or WEAR BOOTS. All you carry is waterproofs, torches, snacks, etc. But if you want to prove your theory that canoeists suffer from lack of pedal co-ordination you will probably walk briskly all afternoon, night and morning. If you are a canoeist and are offended by this slander, you will probably do the same. But if all you want is a weekend in the country and some nice people to talk to, you might stroll around in the daylight hours and sleep most of the night at the Mash-House. Either way, you are pampered with a sumptuous dinner served at your third and fourth command in exquisite plastic bowls, with a hot or cold breakfast (do you have hot or cold milk with your Weeties?) and with lunch after the finish.

The M.U.M.C. "24" has the honour of being the mother of orienteering in this country and of rogaining. Both these sports have a following of hundreds, possibly thousands, around Australia. Although participation by club members has traditionally been high in the "24", members of the Victorian Orienteering and Victorian Rogaining Associations and the general public have dominated entries in the last two or three years.

Nevertheless, through its thirty-four years it has always been both a popular social gathering and an opportunity for friendly competition between members. For active members it is a chance to indulge legitimately in the rivalries that are more commonly expressed verbally in the clubrooms; for members who are now aged, married or crippled it has been an annual reunion and a chance to feel as stuffed as they did in their heyday.



(The organisers generally disapprove of competitors who, in meeting rockclimbing types on the course, tell them outlandish tales about the locations of checkpoints. It is considered unsportsmanly to take advantage of these inoffensive but dim-witted and helpless chaps by sending them miles off the course. Only subtly implied and moderate misinformation is allowable.)

A detailed history of the Twenty-Four Hour Walk is in David Hogg's Club History which is in the Library.



MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY MOUNTAINEERING CLUB

35TH ANNUAL 24 HOUR WALK (ROGAINE)

20th; 21st JUNE, 1981

Start 1 p.m. Saturday.

Finish 1 p.m. Sunday

A 24 Hour Walk (or Rogaine) is an activity involving cross-country navigation by foot for an extended period around a course of previously set checkpoints. Competitors must find as many checkpoints as they can within 24 hours, using only map, compass and resourcefulness.

This year's event will be held in beautiful, undulating countryside, and only 60-90 minutes drive from Melbourne.

The course is centred on a small hall in a quiet country town so that weary walkers will be served their meals in warmth and shelter.

Entries are invited from teams of 2 to 6 persons. Teams will be entered as:            Mens            Womens            or Mixed

These classifications are for placings only and all teams will use the same course. Nevertheless, the course has been carefully designed to be suitable for competitors of any standard.

Equipment - compass, pens/pencils, torch, spare batteries, good footwear (sandshoes should be adequate), warm and waterproof clothing, sleeping bag and tent, snack foods, Saturday's lunch.

Cost - \$10.00 per person for entries received before June 17.  
         \$13.00 per person for entries received on or after June 17.

Enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope for posting of final instructions prior to the event.

Enquiries - preferably by mail to the address below. Otherwise to  
             -Rodney Costigan            370 6987  
             -Richard Serpell            20 3781

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ENTRY FORM - MUMC 35TH ANNUAL 24 HOUR WALK 20TH-21ST JUNE, 1981

TEAM MEMBERS (First named will be team contact)

Name	Address
1. ....	.....
(Phone No. ....)	
2. ....	.....
3. ....	.....
4. ....	.....
5. ....	.....
6. ....	.....

Selection: Mens/Womens/Mixed

Does your team include one or more experienced rogainer or 24h.walker?  
Yes/No

Enclose cheque or money order  
for \$ ..... for total entry fee  
made payable to MUMC.  
For Final Instructions, enclose  
one stamped self-addressed  
envelope.

Send to:

The 24 H.W. Organiser,  
MUMC,  
C/- Sports Union.  
University of Melbourne,  
Parkville            3052







## LITERARY CORNER

### A BUSHWALKING EPIC - D.H. LAWRENCE

Two days ago it began to rain. When I think of it I wonder. The gutter of the heavens hangs over the Tyrolese Alps.

Yesterday I admit it was fine in the afternoon and evening. We made tea by a waterfall among yellow-dangling noli-me-tangere flowers, while an inquisitive lot of mountains poked their heads up to look, and a great green grasshopper, amoured like Ivanhoe, took a flying leap into eternity over a lovely, black-blue gentian. At least, I saw him no more.

They had told us there was a footpath over the mountain, three and a half hours to Glashutte. There was a faint track, and a myriad of strawberries like ruddy stars below, and a few dark bilberries. We climbed one great steep slope, and scrambled down beyond, into a pine wood. There it was damp and dark and depressing. But one makes the best of things, when one sets out on foot. So we toiled on for an hour, traversing the side of a slope, black, wet, gloomy, looking through the fir-trees across the gulf at another slope, black and gloomy and forbidding, shutting us back. For two hours we slipped and struggled, and still there we were, clamped between those two black slopes, listening to the water that ran uncannily, noisily along the bottom of the trap.

We grew silent and hot with exertion and the dark monotony of the struggle. A rucksack also has its moment of treachery, close friend though it seems. You are quite certain of a delicate and beautiful balance on a slippery tree root; you take the leap; then the ironic rucksack gives you a pull from behind, and you are grovelling.

And the path had been a path. The side of the dark slope, steep as a roof, had innumerable little bogs where waters tried to ooze out and call themselves streams, and could not. Across these bogs went an old bed of fir-boughs, dancy and treacherous. So, there was a path! Suddenly there were no more fir-boughs, and one stood lost before the squalor of the slope. I wiped my brow.

I found another track, but I entered on it delicately, without triumph. We went in silence. And it vanished into the same loudly-snorting stream.

"Perhaps we're supposed to go across," I said meekly, as we stood beside the waters.

The opposite bank was very steep and high. We were swallowed in this black gorge, swallowed to the bottom, and gazing upwards I set off on all fours, climbing with my raincoat over my rucksack, cloakwise, to leave me free. I scrambled and hauled and struggled.

I reached the top, and looked down. I could see nothing. So I crawled over the edge and sat in the gloomy solitude, extinguished.

Night was coming on. It was too wet and cold to sleep out of doors in the woods.

"We must find a place to sleep in," I said. And my utter insistence took effect.

Anita realized that I was lost among the mountains, as well as she, that night and the cold and the great dark slopes were close upon us, and we were of no avail, even being two, against the coldness and desolation of the mountains.

### A Bushwalking Epic (cont'd)

So in silence we scrambled upwards, hand in hand. Anita was sure a dozen times that we were coming out. At last even she got disheartened.

Then in the darkness, we spied a hut beside a path. We struggled out on to a small meadow, between the mountain tops. The hay hut stood big and dark and solid, on the clear grass.

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It had snowed terrifically during the night; not down at our level, but a little higher up. We were on a grassy place, about half a mile across, and all round us was the blackness of pine-woods, rising up. Then suddenly in the middle air, it changed, and great peaks of snow balanced, intensely white, in the pallid dawn. All the upper world around us belonged to the sky; it was wonderfully white, and fresh, and awake with joy. I felt I had only to run upwards through the pine-trees, then I could tread the slopes that were really sky-slopes, could walk up to the sky.

The snow all above us was laughing with brightness. But the earth, and our boots, were sodden.

We ran ourselves warm, but I felt as if the fires had gone out inside me. Down and down we raced the streams, that fell into beautiful green pools, and fell out again with a roar. Anita actually wanted to bathe, but I forbade it. So, after two hours running downhill, we came out in the level valley at Glashutte. It was raining now, a thick dree rain. We pushed on to a little Gasthaus, that was really the home of a forester.\*

And it continued to pour.

\* Black humour.

This story is brutally edited from "A Chapel and a Hay Hut Among the Mountains" by D.H. Lawrence.



Ever done the Route Burn Track? Well if you have you probably had a great time but still overlooked some wonderful walking. From the "Lodge" where the Route Burn Track begins, there is also the start of another track leading over an open pass into the valley of the Rock Burn .... and yet another which leaves the Kinloch Road and will lead you up the famous Dart River. If you are down that way, don't go past.

\* \* \* \* \*

I walked this route in late January with one companion, Dave, taking five days. Six or seven days would be more suitable as we both regretted not having had time to climb any of the rugged peaks overlooking these valleys. For planning the route and following it we used Moir's Guide which was reasonably accurate and very useful.

The travel was physically demanding on the whole, being mainly in either thick forest or rather awkward tussock country. However we both felt that it had been our first experience of "real New Zealand" - whatever that may mean. Of nine weeks in N.Z. these are the five days I value most.

\* \* \* \* \*

The first day - an ordeal. There was a crowd of tourists at the Lodge waiting to catch the bus after their guided walk over the Route Burn, and we had to repackage our food in their presence. For some reason I find the incredulous curiosity of people unused to "the outdoors" is oddly embarrassing. Then their guides started warning us sternly about anything that entered their heads. Why are local walkers anywhere so often patronizing? By the time we started walking nothing but rain could have put me in a worse mood. It rained.

The marked track over Sugarloaf Pass leaves the Route Burn after a few hundred yards and climbs steadily for 2000 feet until it reaches the treeline. Once out of the forest it becomes indistinct and we lost it without immediate consequence. Orange stakes lead through the pass itself which is very open and exposed to the weather. The strong wind, driving rain and lightning made this a Why-do-I-do-it? time but I suspect that it is very beautiful in fine weather. A mountainside was visible ahead but only its faint outline and its long white streaks of falling water could be distinguished through the rain.

It took a long time to find where the track re-entered the forest, and we soon lost it again anyway. This track is well marked in one or two short stretches but poorly in others and is treacherously steep in parts. We gave up the track only after a long and fruitless search. Travelling constantly upstream and downhill, we finally reached the Burn. Seeing N.Z. creek after a bit of drizzle would put any cock-sure canoeist in his place. The burn was fast and furious.

Then we had to find our way through the "gorge section" before walking on upstream to Theatre Flat. This short section took over an hour and was exasperating. The valley wall was spotted with open cliffs which had to be avoided by traversing the more scrubby cliffs and slopes. Our method of climbing these mossy rock-faces by standing on branches and reaching for roots above is fun to look back on - but was no treat at the time. What made it all worse was that nothing seemed solid. The ground and cliffs were covered in spongy moss which might have been an inch deep or a foot, and everything beneath it was rotten.



We didn't make it to Theatre Flat - the Route Burn guides had been right in predicting that - so when it was too dark to walk we threw out our sleeping bags against a boulder where there was no possibility of rolling down-hill. The sky had cleared at dusk and we both slept like babies on the thick moss.

Sure enough, Theatre Flat was just a few hundred yards further on and a suspension bridge was just around the next bend. This is the first of three river flats all surrounded by huge valley walls and long narrow waterfalls streaming down their grey cliffs. The upstream limit of Theatre Flat is a band of forest with a superb floor of sphagnum moss growing in smooth unbroken undulations of green.

Finally the head of the Rock Burn rises above the beech forests and before its highest bend we left it to climb through Park Pass. There we crossed into Fiordland N.P. and the valley of the Hidden Falls Creek, a tributary of the Hollyford River. As we stumbled down through the tussocks, Dave introduced me to a pair of Keas (the first I had seen) which were happy to introduce themselves anyway. The valley seemed wild and empty despite the presence of a blazed trail from the tree-line to the "creek". The blazes led through an enchanting forest of tired and twisted beech.

We camped near (but well above) the river. Dave found a recipe on our prune packet for "Devils on Horseback" and was so inspired that he then read every food packet we had from "Cut Here" to "Pty. Ltd.".

Next morning: trudged upstream; wispy lichens weeping from old beech trees; blankets of moss over bouldered slopes; open scree; more blasted tussock-grass; eventually at Cow Pass. The weather was threatening to close in but our route went upwards - to Fiery Col, beyond which lies the Olivine Valley. A thousand feet at a slow trudge brought us up to a rocky shelf and it was time for lunch. Only five hundred more and we were over the Col.

A wide grassy shelf follows the valley up from the gully of Fiery Ck. This is the Olivine Shelf and at its far end in a field of boulders we found a cairned rock bivvy. As daylight faded the sky remained cloudy but innocuous. It had been a short relatively easy day but the next was to be a real humdinger!

Our next goal was Fohn Pass - just another pass, we thought. We followed the creek which drains the Fohn Lakes high above. Onwards, upwards, our tramping fell into a steady routine now, and the shelf was well below when we left our gully with the Pass in our sights. Corrina and Sunset Peaks, behind the Fohn Lakes, became visible as cloud cover finally broke into patchy mist and a camera-stop was inevitable. Then again onwards, upwards; into the narrow, stony pass; the steepness eased off and ... an enormous valley; a huge avenue of jagged peaks; a vast basin below!

After a quick side-trip into the stark scenery around Fohn Lakes, we glacaded out of the pass and into this valley of the Beans Burn. The grassy flats by the burn go on and on, and it is impossible not to slip or stumble sometime on this accursed tussock. Nevertheless, the walk is a great pleasure because one is surrounded by snowy ridges and small flocks of duck which fly about the flats. Further down however the slopes rise right from the waters edge and are heavily timbered. The bush is similar to that of the Rock Burn - say no more! Several hours after entering it we stopped to pitch camp on a sandy bank at the only big flat below the tree-line. With sand-flies coming out in swarms we were quickly driven inside - we needed the rest anyway.



Our last day was no lazy saunter out to a road, no wistful good-bye to this peaceful valley ..... No, the race was on to get Dave back to the "Lodge" for the two o'clock bus. We had a marked track but followed it downstream only as far as a suspension bridge leading to the wrong side of the Burn. There we began another desperate bash down to the confluence with the Dart River but when we reached it we found that the burn would have been easy to re-cross anyway as it fans out over the broad valley.

If the Beans Burn is beautiful, the Dart is stunning. Following the true right bank downstream we crossed expansive rock-beds, grassy flats and again the edges of forest and as we did, the main streams appeared and wound away again, time after time. Further downstream the main channel swept through the valley until it flowed against the base of a cliff and there we were forced to climb. Somewhere beyond is the site of an old mine from which runs a rotten tramway which we followed to the Kinloch Road.

We arrived at the "Lodge" at five o'clock (on the last day of the daily bus service). No account of this walk would be complete without mention of the best hitch-hiking luck you could imagine. As Dave prepared on the following morning to walk to Kinloch to start hitching, his parents drove in - by pure coincidence.

\* \* \* \* \*

Sounds like hard work, eh? So what was so good about it, apart from the obvious beauty of the Dart and the view from Fohn Saddle? Well, there was all that water cascading into the Rock and Beans Burns; the beech; the distant mewling of the Kea; the empty loneliness of the Olivine Valley ..... all you bushies will understand.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### STOP PRESS

#### Mountaineering 81

-Yes it has arrived and is ready to be picked up at the clubrooms, free to all members. Postal copies will be arriving in the near future, with your copy of Mountaineering 80 if you were meant to get one and haven't received it yet.

