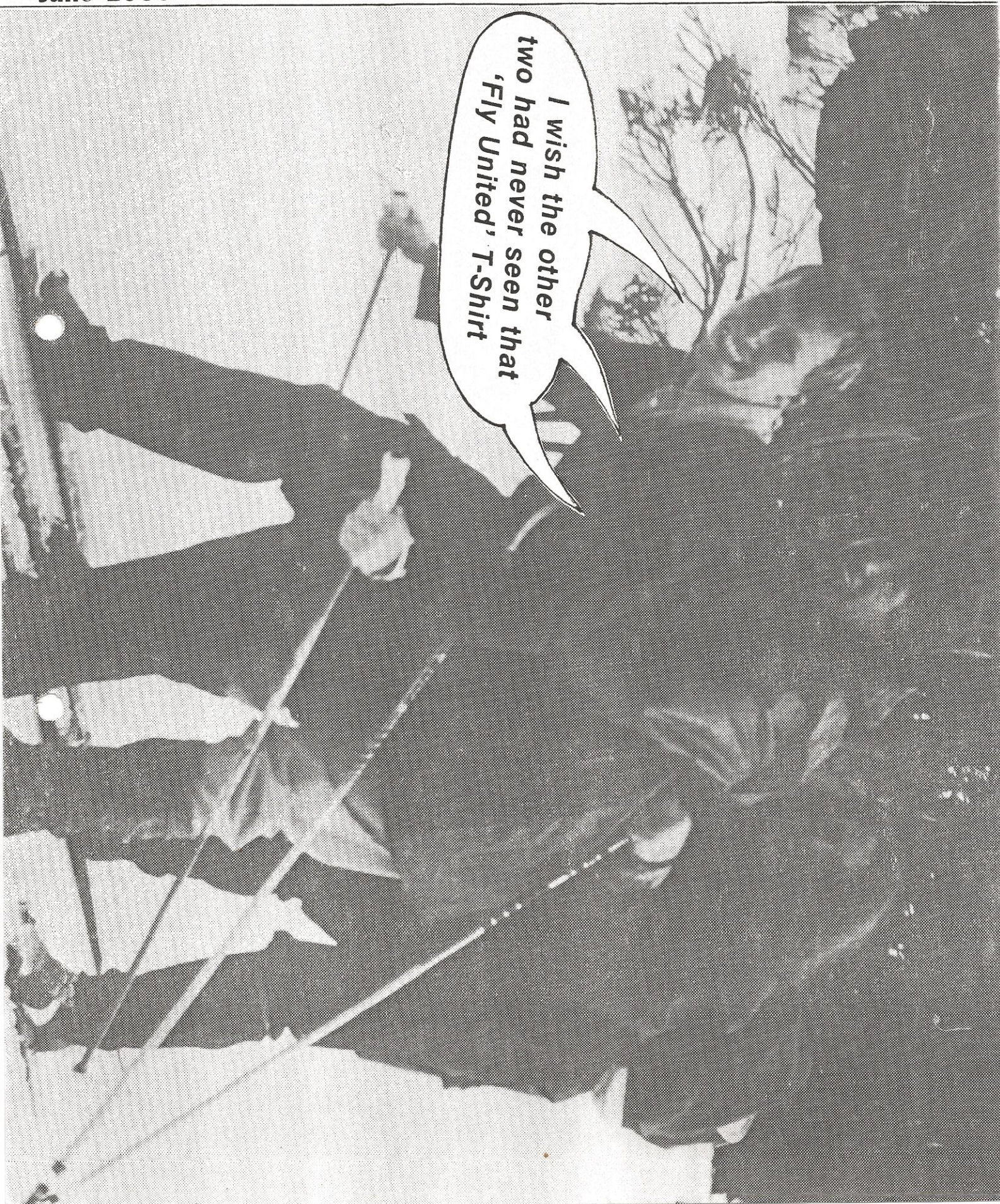


# MOUNTAINEER

The magazine of the Melbourne University Mountaineering Club

June 1988

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FOR the budget conscious mountaineer with more than basic experience, the Cordillera Blanca region of the Peruvian Andes provides a culturally enriched and politically adventurous alternative to New Zealand and the well trodden paths of Nepal.

The region contains several 6000m+ peaks, including Nevado Huanscaran (6900m), the second highest in the Andes chain.

Many gringos flock to the town of Huaraz (population: 50,000) for the climbing and, more popular, the trekking potential of the area. Don't expect isolation - from March to August you meet endless climbing teams, trekkers and Quecha (Indian) farmers tending their cattle.

We arrived at Huaraz in early April after an all day bus trip from Lima (including the mandatory three hour breakdown) and, at around 3050m, broke our personal altitude records.

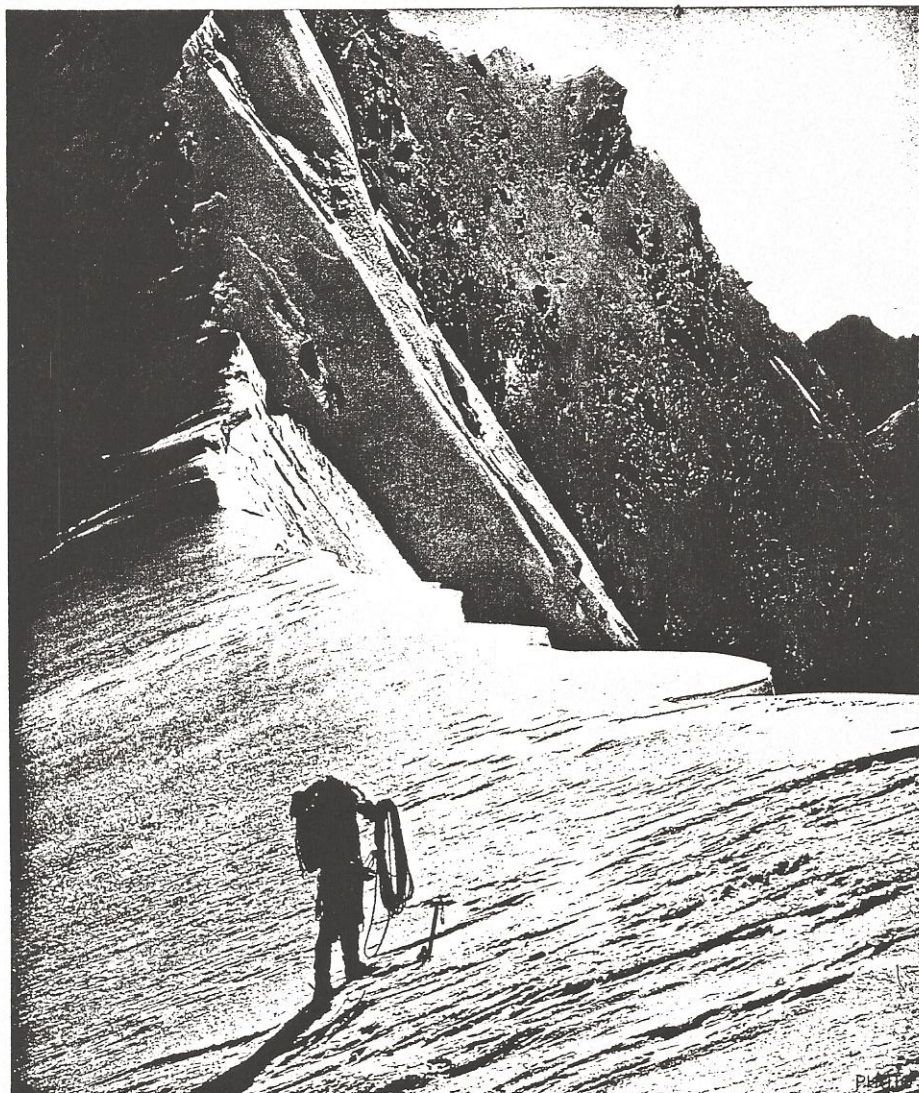
After a day of buying food and sussing out the local climbers' hangouts, we headed north on foot to the Quebrada Cajup. A three day trek to the foot of a glacier below the beautiful sculpted ice wall of Palcaraju (6274m) left us feeling breathless and lightheaded but inspired.

These Quebradas are wide canyons (or high altitude cow paddocks) which finger the western slopes of high Andes, and provide quick access to most key climbing areas' base camps.

At the end of our first trek we were tired but feeling stronger. After two days' rest and resupply, we teamed up with Rowan Marshall, an ex Army/Navy Aussie with muscles on his farts, and took a colectivo (local bus resembling a WWI ambulance but painted for work in a circus) to Paltay, where we began the long haul up the Quebrada Ishinca.

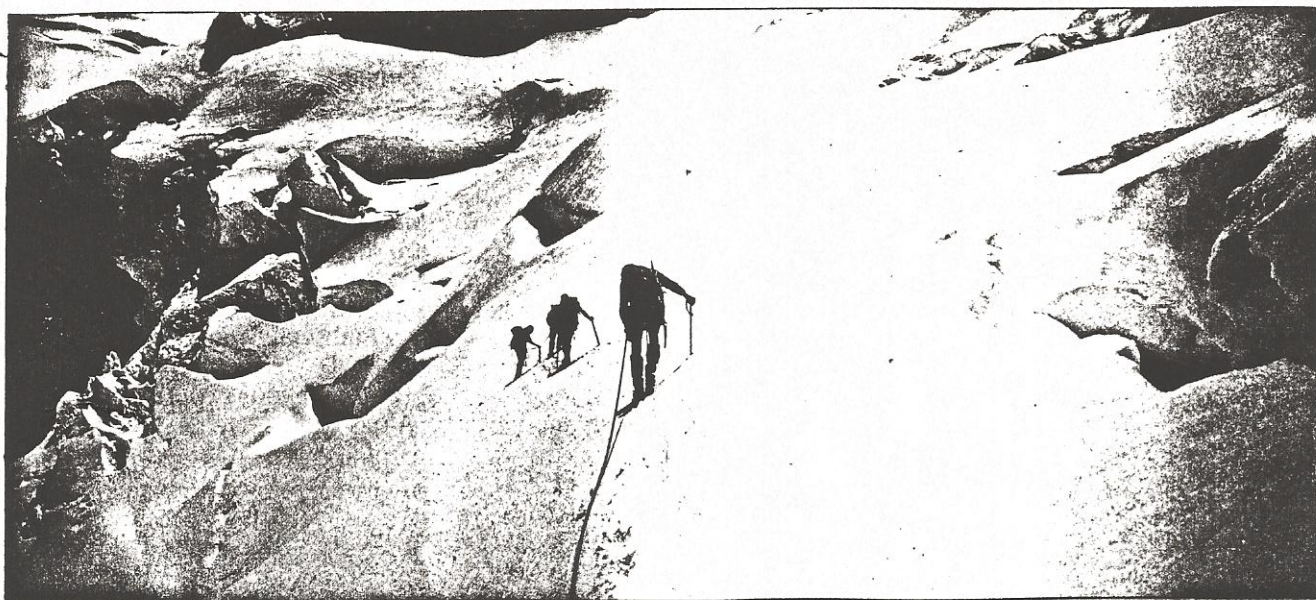
# THIN GRINGO

(A sequel to White Limbo)



"We often commented on the uncanny resemblance Peru had to the photos in the Alpine Guides brochure for Mt Cook in New Zealand"





After reaching base camp on the first day (22km, 1600m) we climbed to the hut near the foot of the Ishinca glacier, where we spent the rest of the day playing on the ice and adjusting equipment.

The next day, we climbed from base camp to 5200m on the flank of Urus before heavy snow prompted us to erect the Geoff Wyatt bivvy coffin. It kept the snow off us, more or less, but almost suffocated us as the thing became completely buried.

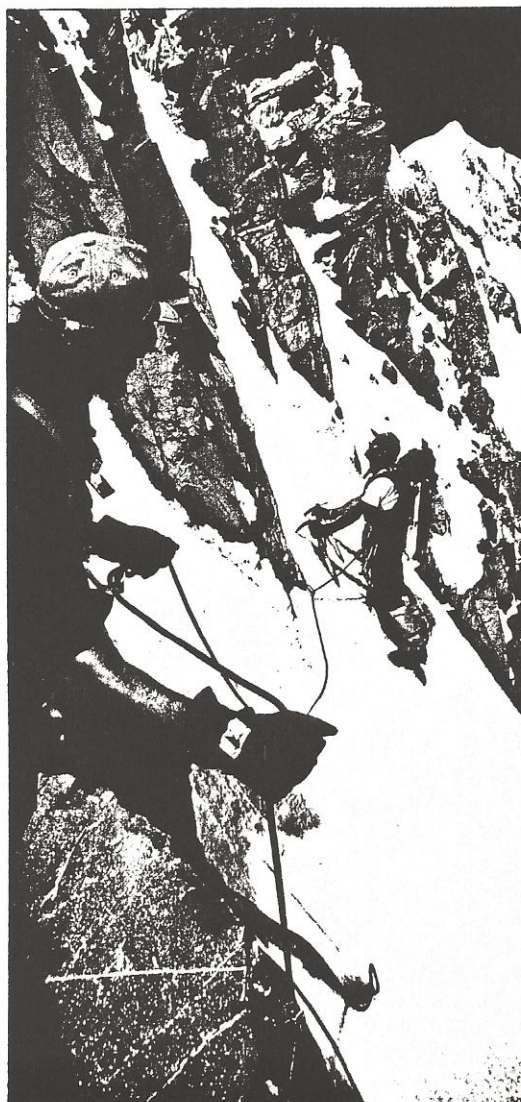
An uncomfortable night (our highest so far) was had by all, and we decided to sell the bastard back in town.

The next morning, the scene around us had transformed. The 300m of rock between us and the summit was covered in snow and the neve we were camped on no longer had any crevasses, or so it seemed.

Basking in the brilliant morning sun, the steep wet rock looked pretty uninviting, and as we'd left the rope at base camp (nice going boys) we descended, taking in the wonderland alpine scenery around us.

Our next jaunt up the hills was an attempt at the immensely popular Pisco (5800m), which involved a picturesque walk walk in to base camp in the shadow of Huascaran's daunting north wall.

Leaving at 5am the following day, we hadn't gone very far when I was struck by the dreaded gut bug. Watery groggins behind every second rock marked my trail, as my strength steadily weakened. Once again we left the peak without our grubby paw marks on it.





Wrung out and disillusioned, we hit the coastal village Huanchaco for eight days of R&R. Fresh food, swimming and thick air and we were ready once more.

Taking a more cautious approach to acclimatisation, we planned carefully for a 10 day effort back up the Q. Ishinca. A three day trek with a dopey swiss chick up the Q. Cayesh and Laguna Cherub (a scenic lake and a stiff walk), plus some local crag climbing and we felt well and truly ready.

The walk from Paltay to the hut took us two days, carrying 35kg each. We met 12 Canadians who had walked half the distance we had, with 15 mules to carry their gear. Our budget wouldn't stretch to cover taxis and mules, so we did it the hard way. "Somos burros" (We are mules) we would tell the laughing Indians chewing Coca leaves on the side of the trail.

After a rest day we left at 5.30am to climb Ishinca (5600m), which was straightforward ascent with an 8m ice cliff just below the summit as the only technical problem. An exciting climax with Mark later downclimbing unprotected with a yawning shrund below.

The value in this climb was in the way we climbed as a smooth organised team, and our speed and teamwork was a boost to our confidence. The climb also gave us a good view of the eastern face of Rarrapalca, a beautiful mountain which broke the magic 6000m (20,000ft) barrier.

This was our next goal despite the unseasonably poor snow conditions.

The next morning we leisurely packed and rocked up the saddle between Ishinca and Rarrapalca's NE ridge. We made camp at 5500m, and the Macpac Olympus proved to be worth its weight in beer coupons - despite high winds, heavy snow and freezing temperatures, we had a very comfy night. And I'm not being paid to say this either.

Next morning, after waking at 5am it took us two hours to prepare, then crossed the ridge onto the east face and into the sun to thaw. We climbed for three hours on very steep snow with a good mixture of fracture lines and hidden crevasses. As the sun softened the snow, progress became slower and more dangerous, so we decided to bomb down. We estimated ourselves to be 200m short of the summit ridge.

This was to be our final attempt in the mountains. We were worn out after a week at 5000m+, and our tucker was running low - don't believe altitude kills appetite, we ate like six bastards. We packed up and descended to base camp, passing teams of Germans, Swiss and Americans with guides and mules on the way down the quebrada. At least what we did achieve, we achieved alone and at a fraction of the cost.

The next two months were spent travelling through Ecuador, Peru and Chile, experiencing the Amazon, coastal desert strip and, of course, the Inca Trail and Machu Picchu.



GREG ABRAMOVITCH and MARK DE-LA-WARR



## THE 24 HOUR WALK: AN ORGANISER'S PERSPECTIVE

AS Antony and I were setting the course for the 24 hour walk, we would go down a particularly dodgy spur, place the checkpoint on something memorable (like a burnt tree), look at each other and say 'They're going to hate us!'

As it transpired, we ended up hating each other because after all the effort of bashing through the scrub to place the difficult checkpoints, not one team went to them because we (well, I) had underestimated the difficulty of the course.

This was merely the first of many things that didn't go according to plan for this year's 24 hour walk.

On the weekend of the actual event, we began on the right foot by loading the two buses with not only packs and people but also skis and rockclimbing rescue equipment! We told the (by now) concerned competitors that the skis were included 'because it looks better on the coroner's report' which put everyone in an optimistic frame of mind.

We left Melbourne only an hour late (which is positively early, by MUMC standards). By the time we arrived in Pakenham for a pizza break, I realised that the master maps containing details of the checkpoints and navigational descriptions were involved in a separate navigational exercise of their own on the floor of my bedroom, as were the cards that competitors had to carry around with them to mark at each checkpoint. For the former, our memory and spare maps sufficed (sort of) and for the latter, the pizza shop provided (for 26 cents each!) two pizza boxes which, when dissected by a pocket knife, made quite adequate cards.

Still, for a partly Henzell-organised effort, this wasn't really too bad.

In true MUMC tradition, having left late we arrived even later - 3am at McFarlane's saddle - where we watched the clouds go through the campsite and began to pitch our tents before it started to rain again. Some of the lazier people - that is, competitors wishing to conserve their energy for the next day - slept in the buses, and I personally discovered that I was 170cm tall, and the bus's front seat was 160cm wide.

The non-arrival of the two cars coming privately to the event and the lack of sleep caused the llam start of the 24 hour walk to be delayed by an hour.

Particular concern was raised for the welfare of Buck and Nat, whose car had last been sighted near Licola. Their eventual explanation - that they got lost on the road up - did sound a bit sus for a team entering a navigation event, but that was their story and they were sticking to it.

We later discovered that the other car had died of mechanical complications somewhere near Warragul.

Having been incredibly close to snow the previous weekend the 24 hour walk competitors set off in perfect conditions, which continued for the full duration of the event.

Apart from overestimating (by about a factor of six) the ability of the gun teams to do the course, the previous week's not-so-perfect weather had changed the course considerably.

Before, our major problem while setting the checkpoints was a lack of water. Now the situation was exactly the opposite and what had been a checkpoint on the edge of a placid pool in a creek could now only be reached by wading through a two foot deep raging torrent (or so Adam claimed).

With a full 15 minutes to spare, the leading eight hour team arrived back at 8.45pm and was placated for their ordeal by twig snapping, sausage burning, heat absorption and port consumption (not necessarily in that order). Having been the only team in the event, we thought we could award them the bottle of port without the formality of waiting for official confirmation. The team shared this trust by passing the bottle to Fiona and I occasionally.

A late night spent consuming not inconsiderably therapeutic quantities of port was indulged in before we retired and waited for the first 24 hour walk teams to return.



As a consequence of the non-arrival of several teams, there were (or had been) only six teams competing for the five bottles of port. With the eight hour team, 24 hour womens team and 24 hour mixed team already decided by only having one team in each category, the only places being contested were the open 24 hour walk prize and the best tale of hardship.

The latter was fairly incongruous because being the only team not to win a bottle of port would probably have been a prizewinning tale of hardship. Discussions with the salad makers resulted in a 5kg bag of washed potatoes being awarded for the Least Convincing Tale of Hardship.

As teams returned to base camp between 11am and noon, the positions became clear and the winners were:

EIGHT HOUR EVENT: Kate Smallwood, Sonya Niklaus, Sally Doyle and Piglet (a mixed team?).

24 HOUR WOMENS TEAM: Nadine Cubberley, Nadia Castleman and Niki Kolokathis.

24 HOUR MIXED TEAM: Kevin and Catherine Sonnemann.

24 HOUR OPEN TEAM: Rob Zaar and triathlete Tony Keeble.

BEST TALE OF HARDSHIP: Won without a word by Russell Newman, Fab Phil Towler, Chris Jones and Steve Carter by returning to camp with one of their party in a stretcher!

LEAST CONVINCING TALE OF HARDSHIP: Adam Leavesley won this with his tale of 'I fell out of a concorde'.

Well done to all involved. Special thanks to Antony for setting such a good course (the winning teams collected 109pts, 109pts and 104pts) and for putting up with my protestations that we should hold the event this year.

Thanks also to Stephen Henzell, Jamie Orr and Jenny, Fiona Robertson, Kate Smallwood and the legions of others who contributed to this event but whom I've offended by omission!

JOHN HENZELL

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## SKI TOURING WITH MUMC 1988

### INFORMATION NIGHT:

Thursday June 21  
in the clubrooms.

"Everything you wanted to know about cross country skiing but were afraid to ask" will be answered at this meeting, such as how skiing operates in the club, what to expect, what to bring, helpful hints and ideas to get you going.

### SPECIAL BEGINNERS WEEKEND:

July 8 and 9  
Snowy Plains.

Learn how to ski on the gentle rolling Snowy Plains. We will be based at a camp on the Wellington River, well below the snow line, which means hot showers, beds and dinner provided on Saturday night.

As well as both of the above, there will be trips going each weekend (as soon as the snow comes) with extended trips during the September vacation. See the trips book for full details.

Beginners trips will be run early in the season. These should be taken advantage of so that progress can be made and you'll be able to undertake extended trips later in the season.

JAMIE ORR  
Ski touring convenor



# Loving the wilderness to



The singing birds, the clean fresh air, the crystal water, the challenging landforms and the unique greenness. ~~and~~ All this we are losing to death. The rise in popularity of outdoor recreation has led to an increase of people visiting natural environments which, in turn, has led to a rise in damage done to these areas. I would like people to become more aware of what they do to the bush, so that it can be preserved naturally for us, and everyone, now and in the future. (sounds really cliché huh??). Below are a few points to think about. ....

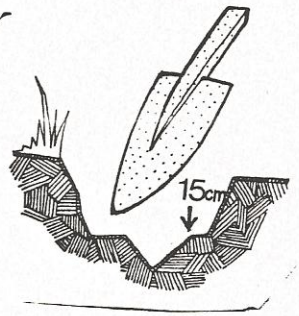
## The Humble loo



Believe me there is nothing worse than when you are dying to go to the loo and you rush behind the nearest tree and you find that it is the local loo in the area. Not nice!!! Faecal waste (shit in other words) should be buried because it could lead to ~~gastro~~ gastro (diarrhoea and vomiting) and it destroys people's wilderness experience. When in the bush the following points should be remembered. Where there is a loo use it!!! (easy isn't it!!) In areas where there is no loo bury your faecal waste. Choose a spot at least 100m away from your campsite and water courses. Dig a hole

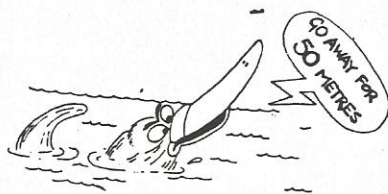


15cm deep within the soils organic layer (so that the micro-organisms can break the shit down.) and bury faecal waste and loo paper. Some people esp. in sensitive areas (alpine areas etc) ~~the~~ burn <sup>the</sup> loo paper. It can be burnt in the campfire (if there is one) or it can be burnt at the loo site.

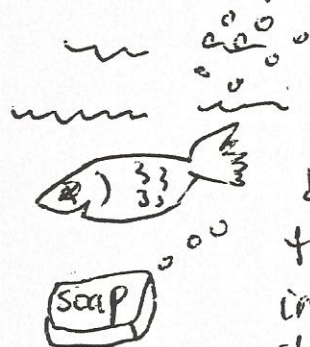


Sanitary pads and tampons should be carried out. In caves all human wastes should be taken out also.

Note that the club will soon be providing shovels so leaders don't forget to grab one for your trip!!!!



## Washing

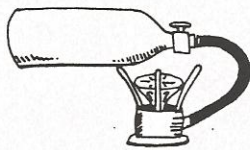


Washing under a waterfall with Nöise at hand - however romantic - is not a good idea!! Detergents, toothpaste, and soap (even the biodegradable types) are harmful to fish and the water ecosystem. Also remember that in most situations you will be drinking from it as well!!! Whilst washing, go 80m away from lakes and streams and scatter washing water so that it can filter through the soil before returning to the stream. (avoid leaving food scraps - esp. in waterways.) Using gritty sand or a scourer ~~instead~~ instead of detergent to clean dishes.



# FIRE

Fires are great at night to have a few <sup>around</sup> yams but in such areas as the highlands (where growth rates are slow and firewood is scarce) or rainforest (where the community is esp. sensitive to fire) or popular areas (where again firewood is limited) no fires should be lit. Fuel stoves should be used in such circumstances. Also orange peel, plastics, silver paper shouldn't be thrown in the fire as these are not totally broken down.



The aim not only is to have a good time (P) but to leave the bush in the same state as you found it!!!! - or even better by removing rubbish and dismantling unnecessary or unsafe fireplaces. You must carry all your rubbish out!!!!



Looking after the bush is a very personal thing. I believe that the above points are basic beginnings in doing this. Let's respect and live in harmony with the bush ..... that which brings us all so, so much love. ♥

Nej 13  
XXXX.



## THE BIGGEST, LOWEST EASTER TRIP

THE biggest MUMC kayaking trip ever began at 7.45am on Good Friday. Thirty two people in 10 cars set off for the Mitchell River.

After the traditional stop for death burgers and petrol at the Billabong, we set off for the Slalom rapid campsite.

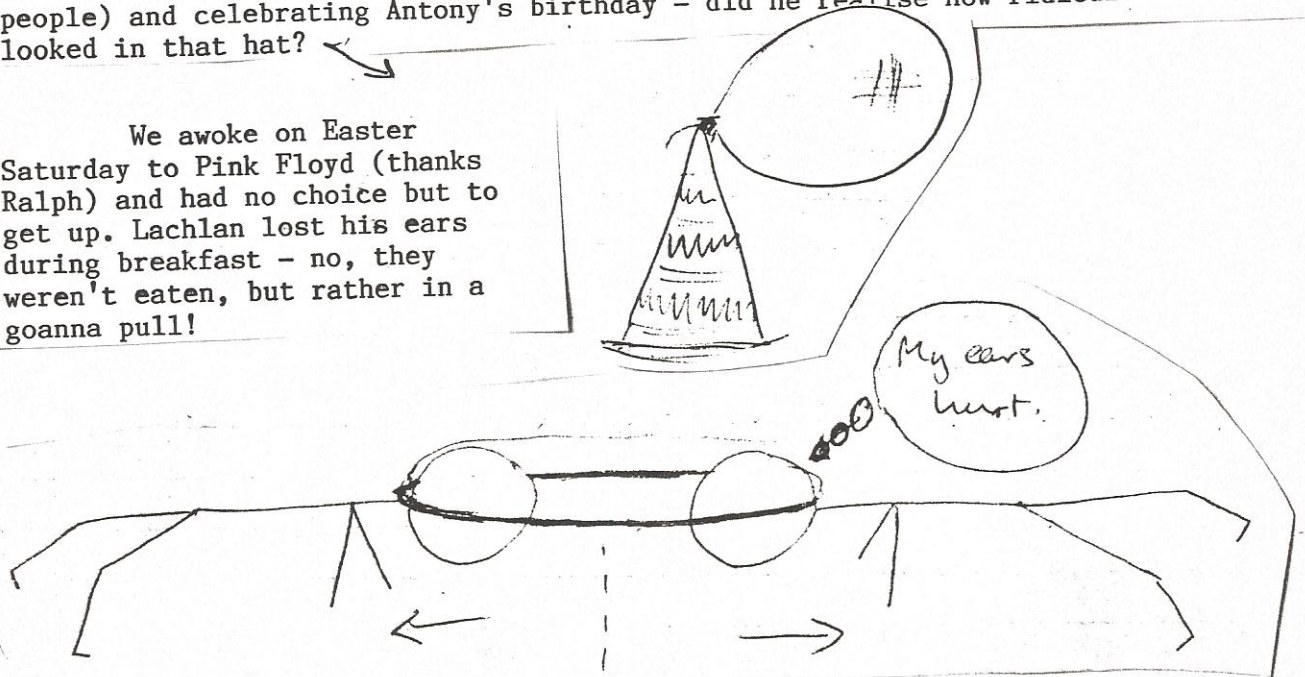
We arrived to find that the river was totally still - hardly even a trickle went through the rocks. Inspection of the Slalom rapid confirmed our prediction - the Mitchell River was almost empty and here were 32 people all set for a mega trip.

The alternatives of driving a further two to three hours to the Mitta or going to the sea didn't sound too good. The decision was made to stay on the Mitchell - paddling (perhaps), walking and portaging.

Friday afternoon was spent leisurely swimming in the knee deep water, paddling a bit (Jocelyn had to try out her NEW paddle) and generally relaxing. This turned out to be the general trend of the whole trip.

The evening was spent around the campfires (one fire is not enough for 32 people) and celebrating Antony's birthday - did he realise how ridiculous he looked in that hat?

We awoke on Easter Saturday to Pink Floyd (thanks Ralph) and had no choice but to get up. Lachlan lost his ears during breakfast - no, they weren't eaten, but rather in a goanna pull!



Everyone then launched into a full on garbo stuffing race. All gear was stuffed into garbage bags, garbage bags and yet more garbage bags then stuffed in boats (hopefully minus air).

We finally hit the water at midday - not a bad effort considering we were aiming for 10am. We started paddling in the usual manner with legs in and spray decks on but after the first boat pull through a rapid, it was just a case of sitting on top with legs hanging out. This made it a lot easier to straddle the boats through the rapids - feet were a very useful technique for steering.

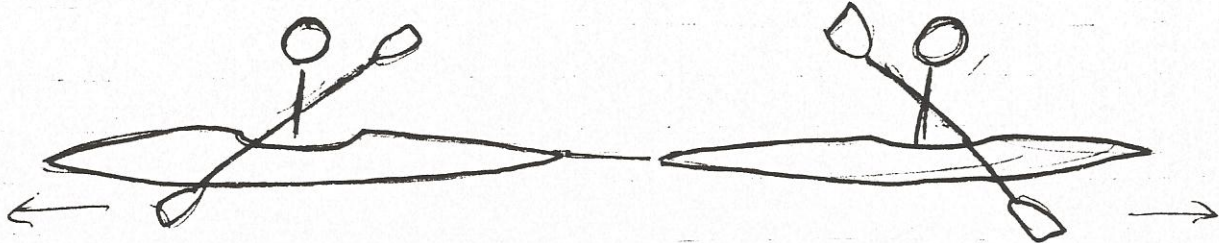
After an extremely relaxed day of paddling, we camped in a cosy sandy site. Those who arrived first grabbed the South Yarra and Toorak posies, while others proceeded to move further and further into the suburbs - some as far as Bendigo!

The 'cosiness' of the campsite created some difficulties in finding the public conveniences. It was another beautiful night, with more goanna pulls between campfires one and two.

Thank goodness we didn't have cars on Easter Sunday - no alarm. Wow! The Easter Bunny had even managed to find us all the way here.

While we waited for everyone to finish packing, a new competition was invented - kayak pulling. With two kayaks tied together by their end loops, the aim was for both people to paddle to their own side of the river.





The roar of the Amphitheatre could be heard around the bend. With trepidation, we left our kayaks to inspect the rapid and discovered that, with rocks everywhere, it was going to be a long and difficult trip through the rapid.

Two hours later we had 32 people through and, what's more, 32 dry people!! Not having anyone swim in the Amphitheatre must be unique, although was probably due to the fact that everyone portaged. There was great display of teamwork with everyone on the 'kayak line'.

The 30 degree heat failed to faze us and fires were still lit and jaffles made. Although nobody managed to score a perfect 10, how could they with such harsh judges? The discovery of another campsite meant some eager beavers had to dismantle and reassemble tents.

The non-lazy members of the group walked up the Amphitheatre gorge in the afternoon. Some of us found the path difficult to follow so we took the direct route - up the rockface. The view from the top of the gorge and surrounding mountains was spectacular and well worth the effort. The walk down was much easier - a bum slide in the dirt, hopefully avoiding the logs, rocks and sticks.

Another fantastic evening was spent singing around the fire, with Jeremy and Lou keeping us entertained. Alex learnt about the importance of proper garbage bag packing when he cooked dinner - wet spaghetti forms a soggy mess that doesn't separate on cooking. Jo had the choice of this or nothing, so with a grimace managed to swallow a plateful.

Yet another superb morning dawned on Monday - swims all round then garbo bags were packed for the last time. Surprisingly enough, we were able to paddle most of the rapids and everyone was able to make it through successfully, with Jenny doing it in more style by adding a roll.

No sooner had we set off than we reached our final destination - Glenalddale. We prolonged lunch as long as possible in anticipation of the gruelling trek with packed kayaks to the cars. With great pleasure the garbage bags were ripped apart for the last time.

Gear was loaded into cars and boats onto roof racks. With everyone looking clean (well?) and tidy(?), we headed off to a pub in Bairnsdale. The night was enjoyed by all - a great finale to a fantastic trip.

Thanks to Rodger, Rodger, Alison, Ali, Al, Tony, Tony, Antony (what an original bunch), Dave, Davo, Lachlan, Lou, Jim, Carol, Simon, Jo, Alex, Jenny, Julie, Rob, John, Danny, Jocelyn, Peter, Ralph, Jeremy, Peter, Ewan, Nadine and Stephen for such a great trip! Extra special thanks to Rodger for organising it.

SONJA and SALLY

---

## Slush!

"It was awful - I got groped and it wasn't by the person I wanted to get groped by!" - lonely male paddler.

"Get the man on your chest" - club legal secretary (we hope she was talking about the OXO shirts).

"Why are you taking skis?" - competitor's query as the buses were loaded before the 24 hour walk.

"Because it'll look better on the coroner's report if someone dies" - organiser's explanation.

"If I'd met you out on the course, they'd have taken you home in two ambulances" - competitor's claim to course setter.

"And piglet did the whole walk" - proud claim of the first women's (mixed?) team back in the eight hour event.

"You've worn a flat spot in your rear wheel bearings. Have you been carrying any big loads or driving on any bad roads lately?" - mechanic's question to an MUMC driver.

"That's gorgeous" - slide viewer commenting on a sunrise photo from an Easter trip, as slide host's sister walked past.



MIDWEEK

EXCLUSIVE

# Truth

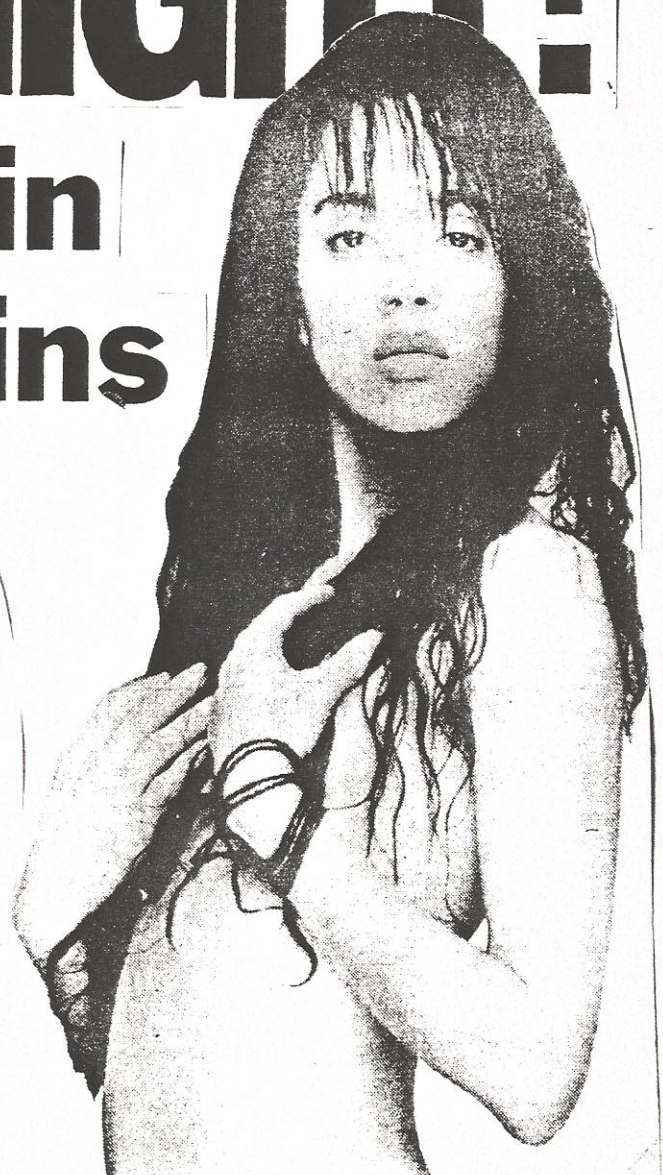


# FEATHERTOP — BY NIGHT!

## It's torture in the mountains

At 11pm on Friday night four trekkers tired from a hard week's work and in need of a weekend in the fresh air and bush views, headed through the outskirts of Melbourne in a car loaded with supplies and packs.

Our destination: Harrietville, 350km from Melbourne. We arrived and set up camp at 3am.



FULL STORY PAGE 2



By 8.30am, Dave, Jim, Antony and I were enjoying a hearty breakfast and packing up camp. It was fine weather with a little cloud and temperatures in the low 20s. It would be a warm day, although the top of Mt Feathertop, our goal the day, is renowned for quick weather changes.

10am saw us following the Stoney Ck valley to the base of the North West spur, which is a climb of two kilometres vertical over 6km. The walk up to the MUMC memorial hut, which is 1.5km from the summit, was broken by a well earned 50 minute lunch break two thirds of the way up.

The trek up the spur is very enjoyable, and as we made our way up, the views of the valley below us opened up and the views of the neighboring peaks and plateaus provided spectacular views as they disappeared in the haze.

On arriving at the hut at 3.15pm, we had a well earned cuppa and chatted to some of the other people there, which included an original hut builder. While Antony and Dave completed the condition report on the hut for a maintenance weekend planned for late June, the wind had picked up considerably, which caused a bit of concern as our original plan was to camp on the summit - if it was blowing hard at the hut, it would be too strong to camp on top. So that left us with several new choices, which we decided on as democratically as possible.

The choices were: 1/ Stay the night in the hut, with a trip to the summit before dinner; 2/ Stay at the hut and walk out via the summit the next morning; or 3/ take our packs now, leave them at the junction of the summit track, climb to the summit and back, then camp on the razorback, which was part of our walk down Bungalow Spur.

After a quick selection of option 1 and a cry of 'Let's do it!' we walked up the spur into increasing winds for 10 minutes before realising that option 1 meant we would have to walk this track three times and have to rise early the next morning to complete the walk down one of the spurs from the Razorback, which was a consideration as we all wanted to be back in Melbourne at a reasonable hour on Sunday.

In light of this revelation, it was obvious that option 3 was the way to go. So again, with the cry 'Let's do it!' we had a quick walk back down to the hut to collect our packs.

On the walk from the hut Antony was particularly conscious of the wind and with each lull would remark that the wind had dropped, which would promptly bring on an extra strong gust to teach him not to be overexcited by lulls.

The evening sun bathed us in the most beautiful golden light as we arrived at the junction of the Razorback and summit tracks, where we dumped the packs and donned some protection from the wind, which was estimated to have reached gale force.

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Our timing was excellent and we reached the summit after a 40 minute haul, just in time for the sunset. It felt like an achievement reaching the summit in the wind that was buffeting us all the way up, so it was a group hug to say well done, a quick look at the view and then back down the track. A few moments were taken for a play in the wind on the way down such as finding out how far into it we could lean. I think 60 degrees was achieved and Dave was having a ball jumping up and forward into the wind and landing in the same spot.

That was a brief stop and soon we were at our packs, sitting in a lee and watching the changing colours on Mt Buffalo while munching on the snickers bars which thanked Jim dearly for carrying.

So it was soon on with packs and off to the next junction along the track, where the Bungalow spur track left the Razorback, to look for a campsite.

Just on dark at 9pm, we arrived at the crossroads, which was aptly named because it was a turning point in the trip. We were discussing camping at the crossroads but shelter was sparse, so there were suggestions of camping at Federation hut. On walking further along the Razorback, Dave said 'Lets go to the Harrierville pub; we've got a couple of hours to do it'. Two of us jokingly voiced our dissent but then Antony said that a day tripper had made it down in 25 minutes. The mood changed and it was almost an unspoken agreement so that we could hardly say 'Let's do it' before we were off running down Bungalow spur.

I still thought we might have a change of mind as we came to Federation hut, but it was less of a surprise to me as to the Kew Bushwalking Club, to see four people run past the hut and off into the darkening bush, calling to each other to keep ourselves together and to point out obstacles on the track.

As we pushed on with the twilight fading into dark and the bush closing in, the calling to each other became more intricate with each member numbering off in order and the calling out of logs or rocks on or across the track.

Antony's night navigation was excellent, and we didn't lose the track once. When someone asked where he was going, I replied 'Don't ask dumb questions, just follow.'

As we descended, the run (which was more like a Cliff Young shuffle) slowed to a fast walk and a couple of short breaks for munchies, water and clothing adjustments.

About halfway down, the track became difficult to follow and a torch was brought out to confirm that we were on the track. Once we used the torch once, we had to keep using it because of the time it takes for the eyes to readjust to the natural light.

Some might think we were crazy but the feeling of running down that spur in the dark, following a blur in front of me, where concentration and reactions had to be so quick one seemed to intuit where to step and move was incredibly exhilarating.

I think we all wanted a challenge and to push ourselves. We didn't really anticipate a run down Bungalow spur but that was what presented itself and with food, tents and warm clothes, we could always bivvy for the night if we became too exhausted.

We ran along listening to the calls of Antony and passing his messages back of 'Rock left', 'Log', 'Drop', 'Rock' etc until in the blur of rocks and logs we heard a couple of 'Locks' and 'Rogs'. That undid us and we laughed for a long while over that.

Eventually, with aching knees and ankles from the pounding of the downhill slog, we arrived at Harrierville right on 11pm. For me, a steady walk for the last kilometre was all I could manage, but Jim and Dave, with the taste of a beer so close, managed a run. A pleasant chat over a beer or OJ was had before the 5km cool down walk (essential to stop legs seizing) back to the car.

After a pleasant stroll, which it was for the stars were out and the temperature was mild, we arrived back at the cars. While we made camp Dave cooked a stupendous meal of soup for starters, a main course of prawns, noodles, pineapple, cheese and mushrooms, followed by cake and custard. Almost too much to eat, but we managed to get through it before crashing into our tents at lam.

Sunday was another great sunny day and at 8.30am we woke and did some gentle stretching of the legs, cooked breakfast and headed back to the big smoke of Melbourne, after a very enjoyable stroll in the High Country!

Rob Sharrock



THE ROB TAYLOR MITCHELL TRIP THAT WASN'T A MITCHELL TRIP THAT WASN'T A MITTA MITTA TRIP THAT TURNED OUT TO BE A WILSONS PROM TRIP. April 23-25.

YOU really know you're in Leongatha when within two minutes of leaving the car you receive a torrent of abuse from a passing motorist and then several minutes later the local weight watchers contingent outside the pizza shop woofs at you as you go past.

A strange form of local ritual? Rodger suggested we should have replied in kind and cocked our legs in their direction.

The sea kayaking and surfing weekend at Wilsons Prom had indeed commenced.

After an early morning wake up call from the rev heads up the road, Saturday dawned big on sun but not on surf and so a day's sea kayaking was proposed. Leaving Norman Bay behind us, we headed out beyond Pillar's Point - a colorful flotilla off to brave the swell.

Amidst the thump thump of the plastic boats, Ali and Rodger's sea kayaks quietly and smoothly streamed through the waves. Just when we thought we'd begun to get the hang of it too, the suggestion was made to head back towards the shore, so that we could experience going with the swell rather than through it.

A more curious sensation of going nowhere with effort had yet to be experienced! The swell picks you up, carries you forward ever so slightly and then continues on towards the beach, leaving you behind with little sense of achievement when in fact you have moved forward.

With this experience behind us, and the odd sea shanty to bide the time, we headed off back out to sea through the somewhat larger swell beyond Pillar's Point. The view of the coast was superb, with people on the beach mere dots in the distance. Some of us wondered however, whether we'd still be going up and down once we reached Terra Firma again!

Lunch was eaten in a beautiful secluded bay and then it was time for a wee nap in the sun. Concern for the local wildlife aside, I hope the crow that ate my large block of cheese dies of cholesterol poisoning.

Squeaky beach was our next point of call, with most paddlers off to brave the surf. The first break was quite far out, as Louise discovered. One minute she was there the next minute she was surfing into shore!

Returning to Norman Bay was interesting as the swell had picked up. Obviously we hadn't gone far enough for some paddlers because as soon as we got to shore some of us considered it was time for a little surfing and the odd swim.

On Saturday night the canoeists' prayers were answered by a torrential downpour. Analysts (psychoanalysts? - Ed) queried whether this had something to do with Jocelyn and Tony's strange dance to the Angel's Take a Long Line. A primitive act revived?? Or merely an indication of poor musical taste?

On Sunday, with the surf at Squeaky Beach too big for plastic boats for polo bats, it was back to Norman Bay for some surfing.

Rob took the lead and showed everybody that he'd had enough Nutri-grain (like a polo bat with holes) and Weeties for breakfast by carrying both a dancer and a polo bat to the beach at the same time. Gosh... and then, just after this momentous feat, the torrential downpour resumed. Are these two events linked? Or was it the strange dance of the night before still in effect? This would probably make a good PhD topic if anyone's interested.

The beach was deserted except for dedicated surfies and MUMC paddlers and sheets and sheets of rain. With the weather too dangerous for plastic boats, it was bat surfing only, with Jim showing great form, when we could see him through the rain. The odd swim and nose stand aside, it was a great end to really good trip, somewhat abbreviated by the weather conditions.

Many thanks to Rob for organising such an interesting and enjoyable weekend, and to Rodger and Ali for letting us invade their house with pizzas on Sunday night.

KATE SMALLWOOD





## RANDOM OXO NOTES

THEY'RE trying to take away our clubrooms! The Sports Union is planning to demolish the clubrooms to build boat storing facilities. The options available to us include:

- 1/ Fight like hell to get the SU to abort the entire plan;
- 2/ Fight to get the room under the board room as gear store and a meeting place for lunchtimes; and

- 3/ Move the kayaks from under the oval scoreboards and into the new buildings where the clubrooms are now and use that room as the new clubrooms.

The fight has just begun.

DESPITE local newspaper reports that the State Government was planning to reactivate plans to dam the Mitchell River to provide an additional water supply for Bairnsdale, a Department of Water Resources spokesman said such plans were 'just talk' and the government lacked the money to go ahead with the project.

THE new club membership cards are finally here! If you've been getting by with one of the ratty photocopied temporary cards, you can now change your card over in the clubrooms at any lunchtime.

EAST Gippsland Coalition has been given a two month extension on their loan from the club because of 'cash flow problems' until the next round of government grants arrives.

MEL and Antony have accepted the EGC's invitation to drinks with David Bellamy before the premiere screening of the EGC's new film Carolin And The Frog, which MUMC was one of the guarantors for.

MONASH Bushwalking Club managed to roll a hire bus on the same weekend as the 24 hour walk. The fact that Kate Smallwood and Antony Harvey avoided a similar fate during the six hour slog back to Melbourne after competing in the 8 hour event and collecting half the checkpoints (respectively) is a tribute to both their driving ability and to the right-of-way inducing bull bar on the front of the buses!

THAT essential fashion accessory for the environmentally sound young MUMC about town - trowels - are now available in the gear store and the boat shed. The trowels are made of metal so they can dig the requisite 15cm down into even the hardest surface. Every trip should have one!

AND to help people learn the rest of the environmentally sound wilderness techniques, the club has bought the video 'Walking softly' (done by the same people as the article in the last Wild) which is available for viewing as soon as we can find someone with a video.

THE latest fashion in Tasmanian hut logbook grafitti is to change the numerous OXO signed entries into POXO...

WITH a great surplus of food left over from the 24 hour walk (as well as a \$500 debt), the club's organising a barbecue for the start of next term, probably Thursday June 16. Keep an eye in the clubrooms for details.

THE merging of Melbounre Uni and MCAE should see a boost in the number of MUMC members and, hopefully, a corresponding increase in Sports Union funding.

AFTER intense deliberations, the activity codes for bushwalking, rockclimbing, kayaking and cross country skiing are (more or less) finished. The codes were requested by the Sports Union for each of the 'dangerous' clubs after a Underwater Club diver died on a trip.



JULY 30/31 proved to be a popular weekend for trips, with the Midnight Ascent, the Federation of Victorian Walking Club's winter Search and Rescue weekend, Wildtrek and (most important of all) the second annual cross country ski and wine tasting weekend all being unwittingly organised for the same weekend. The Midnight Ascent will now be September 24/25 (to allow Antony to lead it after his return from the winter ascent of Federation Peak) while the skiing is rescheduled for July 16/17.

THE club has received yet another renewal of registration for the famous trailer we don't own! The previous committee went as far as signing a statutory declaration to prove the non existence of the trailer but nothing seems to have

got through to the Sports Union. To quote the minutes from the last committee meeting: Michael Lynn (the relevant Sports Union person) has the mind of a duck!

THE famous MUMC bushdance is on! Set aside July 1 for a night in the luxurious Union buffet to hear the Bandicoots (the band, rather than the feral university wildlife).

AMALGAMATION with the Mulga Bill's Bike Club (with their one pathetic bike) has been universally rejected by the committee.

EFFORTS by Kate Harper and Jocelyn Allen to clean the clubrooms, and Natalie Stavovy to organise the library, received the eternal gratitude of the committee - and clubroom users as well.

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#### WHO'S RESPONSIBLE

LITIGATION it seems is all the rage these days. There is a general trend for individuals in society to seek to blame someone else for their problems - sometimes justified but many times not.

The fellow who trips over a crack in the footpath sues the council rather than accepting that he was a stupid bastard and not watching where he was going! Don't laugh, it happens all the time.

The reluctance of people to take responsibilities for their own actions has repercussions for clubs like ours. The requirement by the Sports Union for safety codes for each of our activities has forced us to look at the degree to which our leaders are responsible for individuals in their groups.

The codes are generally realistic if, by necessity, a bit conservative, and should provide a workable safe framework within which to run trips. The question of individual responsibility is not really tackled by the codes but it is vital that each give it some thought.

Many a time a new canoeist will ask the trip leader if they should attempt a particular rapid. The leader is put in an extremely awkward position.

The conservative answer is: 'If you need to ask, don't do it' but in order to improve, one's personal limits must be pushed and even exceeded - and this involves some risk.

The burden of such decisions should hardly be that of the leader. Each person must assess the risks and act according to their own psyche and assessment of their own skill. The leader may veto such a decision if group safety is at stake, but the crux decision must be taken by the individual and accepted as such.

We must all recognise that the activities of the club are dangerous and there is always a risk of serious injury or death - without these risks, the activities would probably lose some of their attraction.

As new club members gain experience, they need to keep in their mind that the degree to which they are responsible for their own actions will increase and their reliance on the leader for guidance will decline. Despite the group structure of trips, our activities are very much personal challenges and the bottom line is the buck stops with you!

RODGER GRAYSON



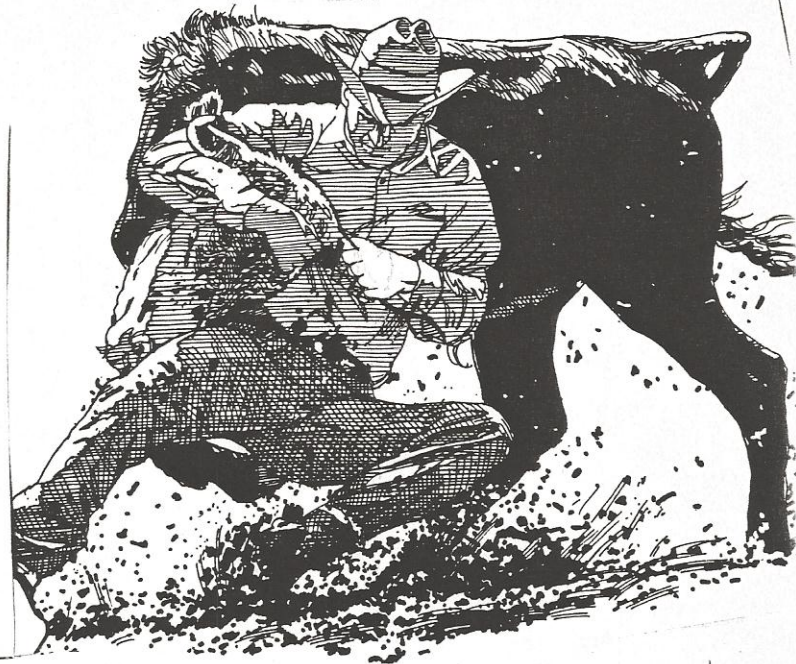
# The presidential 'Grabbing the metaphor by the horns' column

ON Thursday may 7 at 5.45am the new national parks for East Gippsland were passed in the Upper House of the Victorian Parliament.

This is one of the most momentous conservation achievements ever in Victoria. What does it mean?

1/ Most of the world heritage status forests in East Gippsland will be protected in National Parks.

2/ Most of those area outside the new national parks which are possibly of world heritage status will be protected from logging until the World Heritage Study is completed later this year.



So what! One up for the greenies. Why should the average MUMC care? Well, apart from the significance of East Gippsland's forests to the biological survival of this planet, the forests offer excellent opportunities for paddling and walking.

This is wilderness at its best; heaps of possibilities for adventure and exploration. For information on the forests there are copies of two guidebooks (Errinundra Plateau and the Rodger River) in the clubroom library.

What this issue also raises is the role of MUMC in conservation. I've heard it argued many times around the club that our conservation efforts should be practical (IE: minimum impact bushwalking) rather than political. The question is, don't we need both? What good is practising minimum impact bushwalking on a highway? I've deliberately gone overboard with this last question but the reality is that as our ever hungry society expands its wants, development is encroaching upon our significant natural environments. For example:

MT STIRLING, the only easily accessible advanced XC skiing mountain in Victoria, is to be developed as a downhill ski resort.

MT FEATHERTOP will be ringed on all sides by major roads if plans to link Mt Beauty with Mt Hotham through the West Kiewa valley goes ahead. Imagine counting cars from the top of Feathertop.

A MITCHELL RIVER dam proposal has surfaced again and threatens our use of this multi-purpose low level bludge to high level kayaking epic river. A Department of Water Resources spokesman says it's just talk.

These areas aren't marginal. They are superb areas in which MUMC members base many of their activities. With increasing demand on natural resources we are going to have to speak up for what we have or we may lose it.

I'm not suggesting that we blindly preach conservation but what we need to do is become aware of the political and land management contexts relevant to MUMC and to then assess what action is required as issues arise.

This ideally would be combined with trips run on the principals of minimum impact on the environment, teaching MUMC people to care and respect the environments we presently use and providing an example for other bush users to follow.

Such a dual approach to conservation shows that we care about the places we visit and that we are prepared to work at conserving them for ourselves and others. Through this we can gain respect and credibility so that we'll be listed to when the need arises. To sit back and apathetically wait is asking for trouble.

ANTONY HARVEY



## CAVING AT BUCHAN April 8-10

WELL, what can I say? What an absolutely great weekend. Caving was my first weekend trip with the club and may many more follow.

Driving down with too many cars on the Friday night, some of us were going just a little too fast for the local police, right Jane? Homeleigh was our home in Buchan and here we met the LaTrobe University Mountaineering Club and Victorian Speleological Society members who were to join us.

Saturday morning involved splitting the group into two and exploring a couple of the 'easier' caves, and involved the only accident of the trip.

We returned for lunch to find the other group covered in mud (for their complexions, they claimed) from their first cave.

Our group then went down the Honeycomb, which was a cave filled with such great names as 'Monica's Leap' and the unforgettable 'The Bar', which featured a stalacmite 'bottle' on a flat ledge. After a few hours here most returned to Homeleigh whilst a few of the elite (albeit even more crazy) went underground again and missed out on visiting the Buchan Pub (and meeting members of the Buchan Cavemen football team).

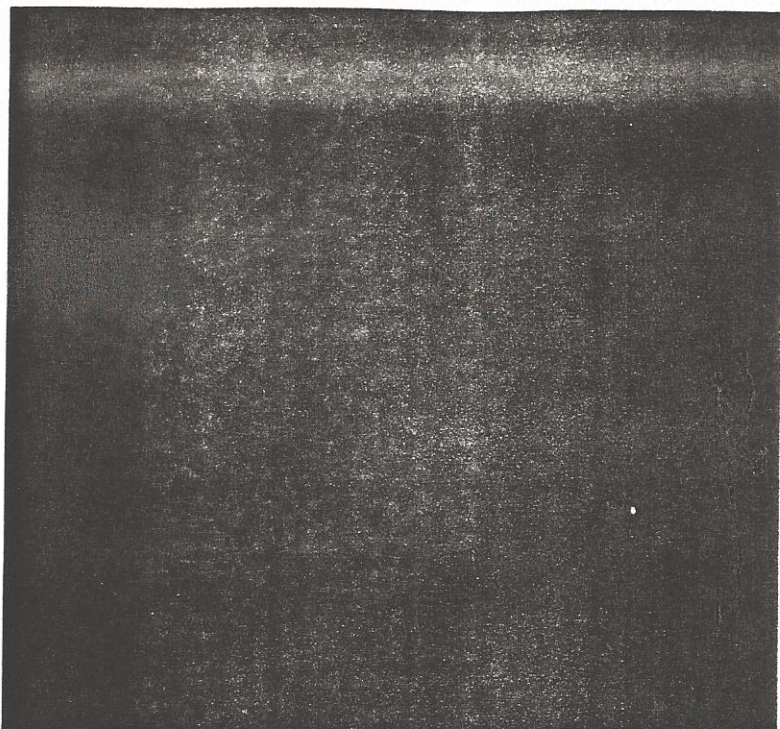
Saturday night involved various activities, such as sucking port out of a certain female caver's belly button, drinking (by more conventional methods) and cards. Well, OK, that's not all that happened but the Mountaineer is supposed to be a family magazine and the rest is unprintable.

Sunday meant heavy heads, very sore and bruised bodies and the difficult decisions of either serious caving, tourist caving or sleeping.

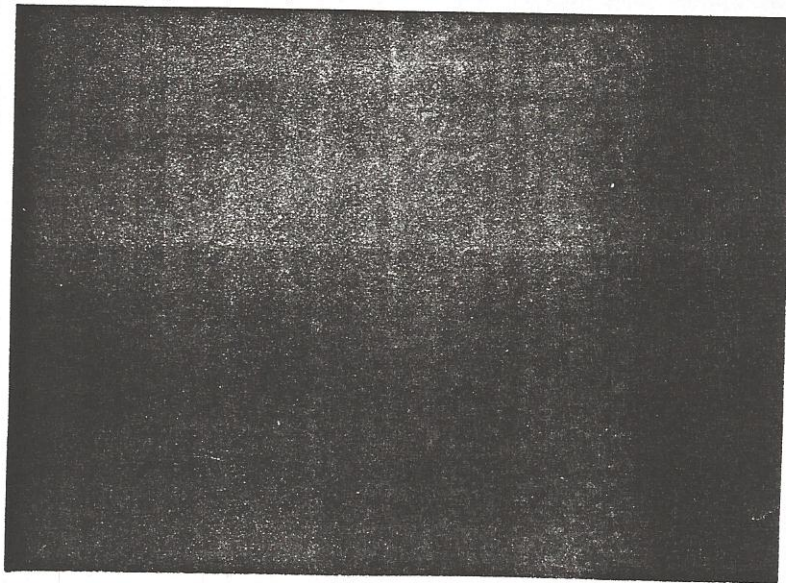
I went serious caving down Razor, which I soon discovered was named because of its narrowness. Cave coral also conspired to tear at clothing, almost wrecking an infamous pair of hot pink lycra tights, but not quite, sorry to say.

I can now see the advantage of caves being dark - you can't see the bottom of the holes you're supposed to be climbing or sliding over. And what a great way to get to know people, wriggling and squirming all over one another in a 'jam' is just another exciting activity that most participated in.

I'd like to thank Mezza, Kate, Dan and Mike for leading us and doing a great job.



Above: Honeycomb Cave Below: Wilson's Cave  
All photos from the bag - John - Russell - flash - for - his - CAMERA - find)



RUSSELL NEWMAN



NOTICE OF MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of The Melbourne University Mountaineering Club Incorporated will be held at the Boardroom, on Thursday, 30 June, 1988.

All Club members are actively encouraged to attend to elect new Committee members, have the odd quiet ale and discover what other people have been up to during the year. (hi!)

VENUE : The Boardroom (see location guide stuck on Clubroom door)  
TIME : 7.00pm  
DATE : Thursday, 30 June 1988

SEE YOU THERE !



## ELECTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The following committee positions are up for election at the Annual General Meeting to be held on Wednesday, ~~22~~ <sup>29</sup> June :

- : President
- : Vice-President
- : Treasurer
- : Secretary
- : Assistant Secretary
- : Publications Officer / Editor
- : Bushwalking Convenor
- : Canoeing Convenor
- : Caving Convenor
- : Orienteering / Rogaining Convenor
- : Rockclimbing Convenor
- : Ski Touring Convenor

Nominations for these positions are to be on one of the nomination forms available for that purpose and are to be signed by TWO MUMC members AND the person nominated.

Nominations are to be placed in the sealed box provided in the clubrooms or sent to Kate Smallwood at 577 Drummond Street, North Carlton 3054.

NOMINATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY WEDNESDAY 15 JUNE

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### NOMINATION FORM

I, ..... (name of Proposer)

nominate ..... (name of candidate)

or the position of ..... (specify Committee position)

DATED this            day of            , 1988.

Signature of Proposer .....

Signature of Secunder .....

Signature of Candidate .....

NB: Nomination Forms to be placed in sealed box in the Clubrooms or posted to Kate Smallwood, 577 Drummond Street North Carlton 3054 BY NO LATER THAN WEDNESDAY, ~~15~~ <sup>22</sup> JUNE.



HERE COMES OUR  
BUSHMANCE !!

FRIDAY

I

JULY

with the

BANDICOOT'S

Put it in your  
diaries now!

\$10 and \$14

Union Buffet

Tickets on sale clubrooms at  
lunch times  
(2nd term)



AND PIGLET WALKED THE WHOLE WAY!!!

It was with some trepidation that I agreed to leave my friend Chris and go on my first eight hour walk. But as we were the only entrants in that event and therefore automatically won a bottle of port, I could hardly refuse. Also, I was walking with a group of stunning young ladies, namely Sally, Sonya and Kate !

We commenced the great trek an hour after the 24 hour entrants and soon found our very first checkpoint! Gosh! This was of course a great chance and excuse to leap into the scroggin, even though we'd only been walking for about 45 minutes. .... I must introduce Pooh to this nutritious blend of dried fruit and raspberries and snakes and freckles and jellybabies.

Our ambitious aim to find 13 checkpoints in the eight hours soon became obviously just that. We searched high and low for one checkpoint only to discover that we had not walked as far as we thought we had, apparently a common problem in this event. However, we did not get lost once! And having eventually found this troublesome second checkpoint and having the celebratory delve into the scroggin, we were off again.

The day was just superb with wonderful views of Tali Karn ?? (help w/ spelling plis JH ) although the ground was very wet., Walking down several of the tracks was like walking down a creek bed and I was lucky that I had Kate to carry me. One checkpoint which had been set on dry ground was now across a raging torrent! My suggestion that we play Pooh sticks in the water was ignored.

All too quickly we found that evening was drawing nigh, as was the deadline of return to base by nine o'clock or lose ten precious points a minute. Two checkpoints on the way home had to be bypassed in order to reach the port, fire and food (in order of priority). This was the main problem we had on the eight hour walk - time shortage, and we would all recommend that the walk be extended to at least ten or twelve hours next time.

Many thanks must go to John Henzell and El Presidente for a wonderful event. Words fail to describe the hot fire and cooked dinner that awaited our return. Our very enthusiastic effort to win the bottle of port awarded for the best hardship story unfortunately failed, but I just have to say that the mud so carefully placed on knees and faces before we crawled into camp must have deserved a close second.

My thanks to my fellow walkers,

Piglet.

