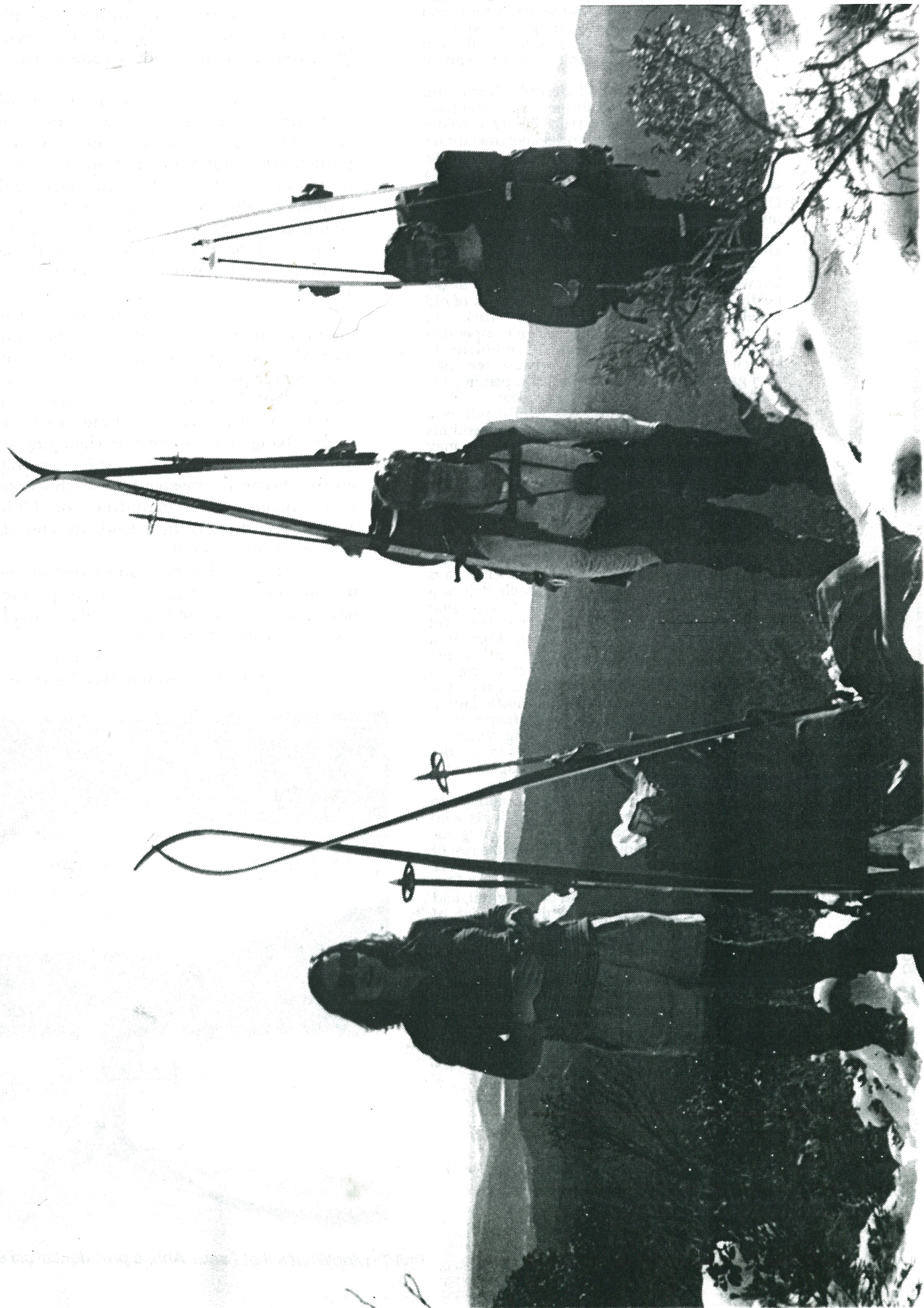


# MOUNTAINEER

YEAR EDITION JULY 1994

The magazine of the Melbourne University Mountaineering Club





## FROM THE EDITORS

Things are on the busy side of things around here. I turned up yesterday with my glue and scissors to do some remedial cutting and pasting and ended up writing the editorial because Steve and Russell were totally flat out doing a million other things for this Annual Mountaineer.

Perhaps I should describe Steve and Russell for the benefit of those of you who have never seen or heard of the pair. Firstly, consider Steve. Nicknamed Soggie, and reknowned for his kangaroo embryo impersonations, Steve is a true softie. Yet beneath that squishy exterior lies a selfless soul with a heart that knows no fear. Only the noblest of mortals would volunteer to impersonate a frozen chicken for the benefit of his friends by crawling into a garbage bag and allowing all the air to be sucked out with a vacuum cleaner. What a guy! Steve is well known for his extensive lists of 'Things to do' neatly written in tiny capitals on the back of old envelopes, and of course, his great artwork. As winner of the MUMC T-Shirt design competition in both 1993 and 1994, Steve's ambitions to launch 'Curtain's Curtains' - because we Kjar' after graduation may well be realistic, pending the cooperation of a certain Baby Kjar Bear.

So what about Russell? Russell is a dedicated student who has chosen to extend his Arts degree over six or seven years so he may reach his full potential and maturity in his studies. He could politely be described as a much respected MUMC Elder. The first thing to say to Russell when you meet him is "Midnight Ascent 1993" because this phrase has a very special significance to Russ that he must not be allowed to live down as long as he's associated with MUMC, and perhaps afterwards as well. Russell always leaves before everyone else, Russell drives a Subaru, and Russell drives very fast so that Russell and passengers always arrive first. Yet despite these thrill seeker tactics, Russ is a tranquil fellow with a uniquely untroubled approach to life. In the process of churning out this Mountaineer, Russell managed to get part of a disk jammed in the drive of his \$4000+ laptop computer. After shaking it a bit some fragments of metal fell out, but otherwise the thing remained pretty well stuffed up. Russell closed the computer up and put it back in his bag and said 'Oh well'.

Much credit and thanks should go to Steve and Russell, two brave individuals who voluntarily assumed the task of co-ordinating our Year Edition of the Mountaineer while the rest of us were preoccupied with freaking out over exams. Also lots of thanks to Richard and Dan who helped with typing in and printing out, and all the others who assisted in the huge job of photocopying, folding, stapling and enveloping. Lastly, a big thanks to all our contributors for their articles - keep them rolling in! Hope you enjoy the end result, and hope to see you around the clubrooms in Semester 2.

Cheers,  
Kate Bradshaw,  
Steve Curtain,  
Russell Smith.

## Presidents thing 1994

Howdy mountain type people,

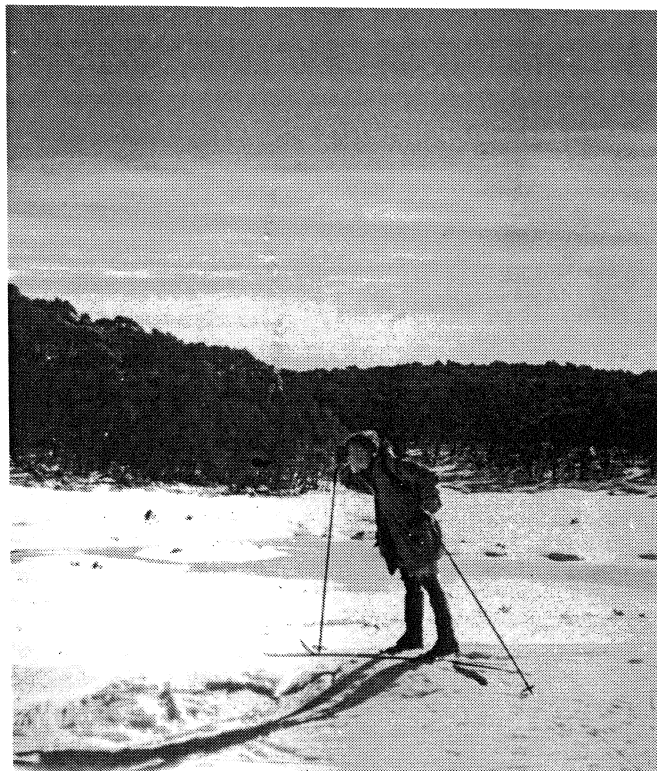
As another AGM draws close it's time to look back over the achievements of the current committee and welcome in a new one.

I guess one of the most notable activities over summer was moving clubrooms again. The new clubrooms are particularly salubrious, and apart from a poltergeist with a fetish for electrical appliances, they are the best of the three clubrooms MUMC has had since I've been around. I would like to thank those involved in the move one more time. Thanks.

The club seems to have been bubbling along fairly nicely in the first half of this year. As always plenty of beginners trips. Now comes the winter of our content: buckets of snow, torrents of water in the rivers, some serious bushwalking and the climbers champing at their bits for warmer weather or heading north. Second semester is also chockers with social events including the 50th anniversary dinner, the bushdance and of course midnight ascent.

The club has been so successful for the last 50 years because so many people have got out there and had a wild time. I encourage you to do the same.

Phil Towler  
MUMC President (Well sort of!)



Phil Towler: What's that I see? Ahh, a presidential ski slope.



# MUMC - THE HOW AND WHY.

For those of you that knew a little about the club last year, you've probably noticed something a little different - we've moved!! For those that have joined us this year, you've still probably noticed something a little different - the new MUMC clubrooms are huge!

## WHERE ARE THE CLUBROOMS?

The new clubrooms are located on campus, adjacent to the cricket pavilion by the cricket oval and colleges. (near Ormond and St. Hilda's) Just look out for the large sign and OXO symbol pinned up outside...you'll know it when you see it. We're open every lunchtime, 1-2pm and Tuesdays from 7-8pm.

## HOW DO I GET ON TO A CLUB TRIP?

Get in early. There are several trip folders in the clubrooms for each of the activities accordingly. With a trip per sheet, write down your name for the particular trip, noting: the leader's name and phone number, trip location and dates, the standard, equipment required, approximate cost and most importantly, the trip meeting - this is usually held in the clubrooms at lunchtime.

If you do not attend the meeting, it will be assumed you are not going, unless of course you contact the leader before the trip meeting. This is to make way, in fairness, for other members to attend the trip. If at the last moment, you can not go on a trip, contact the trip leader immediately.

In all activities, the club offers extremely cheap gear hire for participants on trips including tents, sleeping bags, jampers, stoves, gaiters etc, as well as

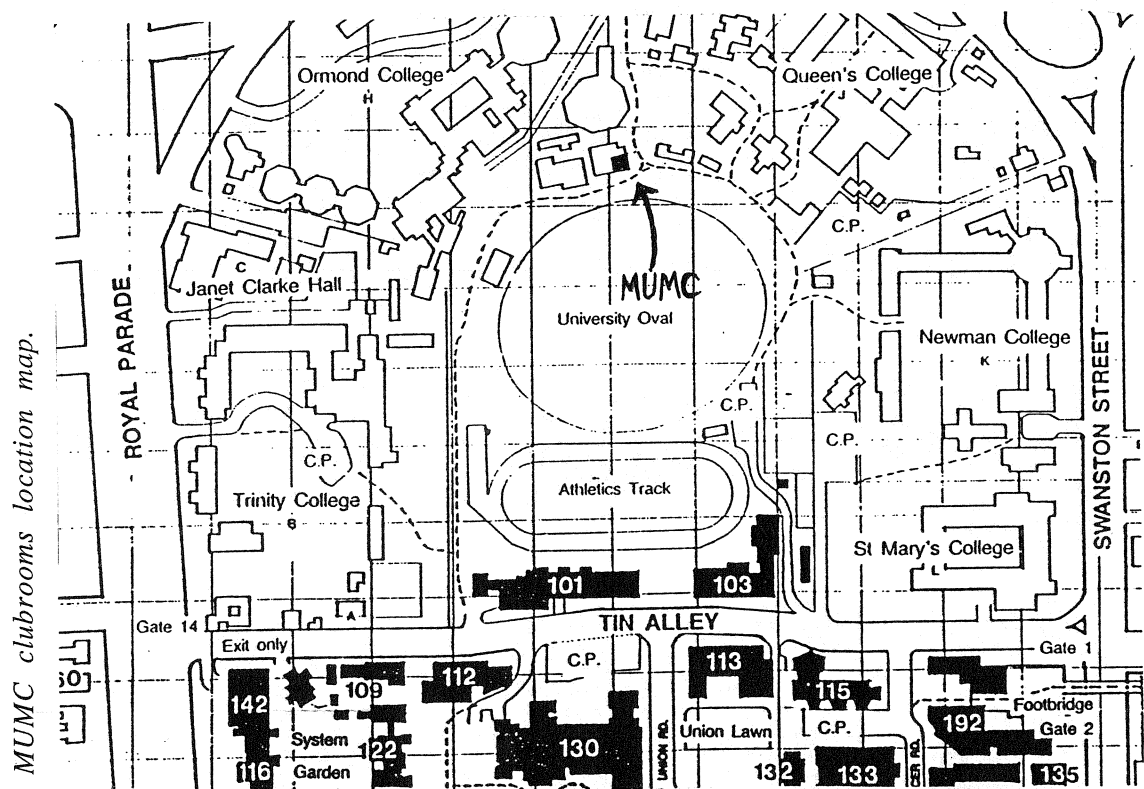
all XC skiing, rockclimbing, caving and canoeing gear.

NOTE: The hiring of gear must be for MUMC use only, that is only on MUMC trips.

## ANY QUESTIONS?

If you ever feel the need to say something, or would like to contribute to the club in some way - no matter how small a role you may think it is - or **WHATEVER**, tell someone! In addition, if you have any suggestions on how to alter/change/improve the clubrooms or would like to see trips run to various locations, let people know or even chat to someone at lunchtime.

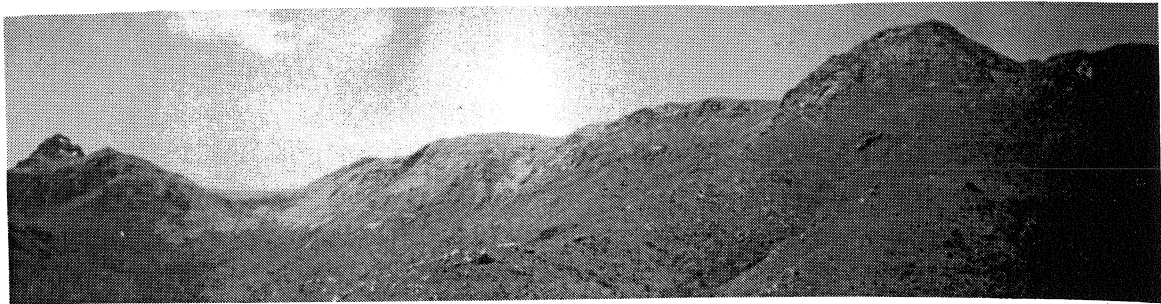
Attending one of our committee meetings could be an interesting experience to say the least (held every 4 to 5 weeks) but apart from this, it's a great chance to see the running of MUMC, having YOUR say, and getting to know the regulars and not so regulars. Feel free to drop in anytime and chat. OXO!







"There will always be wild places



for those that make the effort



to reach them..."





## BUSHWALKING CONVENOR'S REPORT

Once again MUMC members have dusted off the old boots, and headed off to all sorts of exciting places. Steve Curtain and Sam Rollings led a large expedition up Mt. Feathertop, Deb Rossel led an epic trip to Mt. Cobbler, and Anton Weller has excelled himself leading trips to Lerderderg Gorge, The Cobberas, the Serra Range in the Grampians and many more.

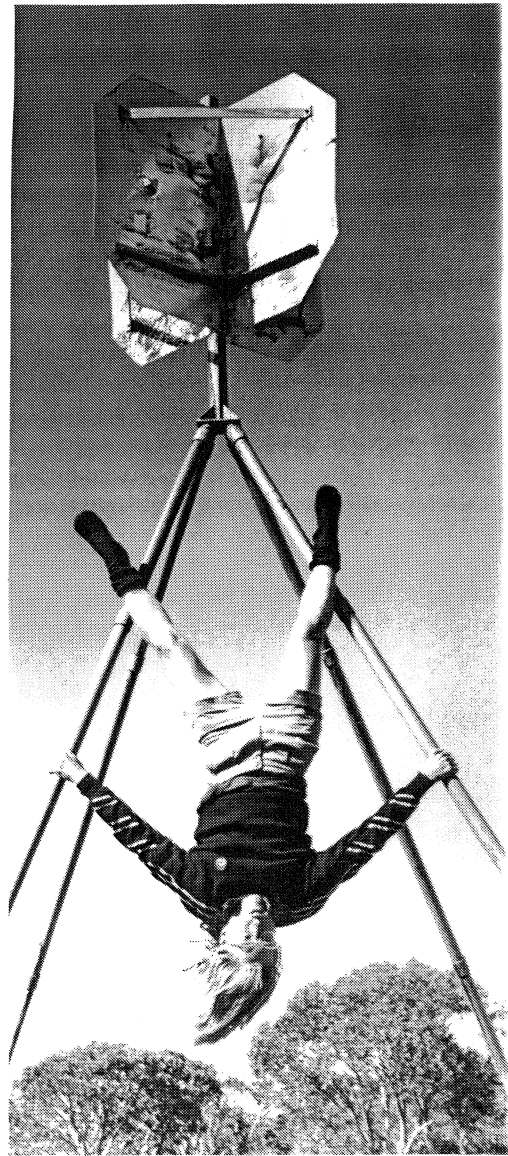
Now that winter is approaching, and our favourite walking playground, the mountains, is becoming covered in snow, walking trips become fewer, as most of our walkers don skis instead. There are several solutions to the ski season however. Ray Burgess is going to move interstate to go walking on the Heysen trail, near Wilpena Pound, for a week or so. Anton Weller is going to brave the cold and continue walking in the High Country, but this time using snowshoes. Geoff Sinclair is going to have a bet each way and has advertised a trip as "walking/skiing". You can't go wrong with that combination.

There are several important trips to keep a lookout for, as soon as Uni starts again. Leadership weekend is coming up on the 22 to 24th July. This is the perfect weekend for all people wanting to learn a few leadership skills, and to find out how to be leaders in the club (always looks good on a resume). There is the annual Alpine Instruction weekend, which is a must for those intending to go mountaineering (in those real mountains only found overseas). This year there is going to be a standard and an advanced weekend, run by Derek Fabel. And then, when the moon becomes full,

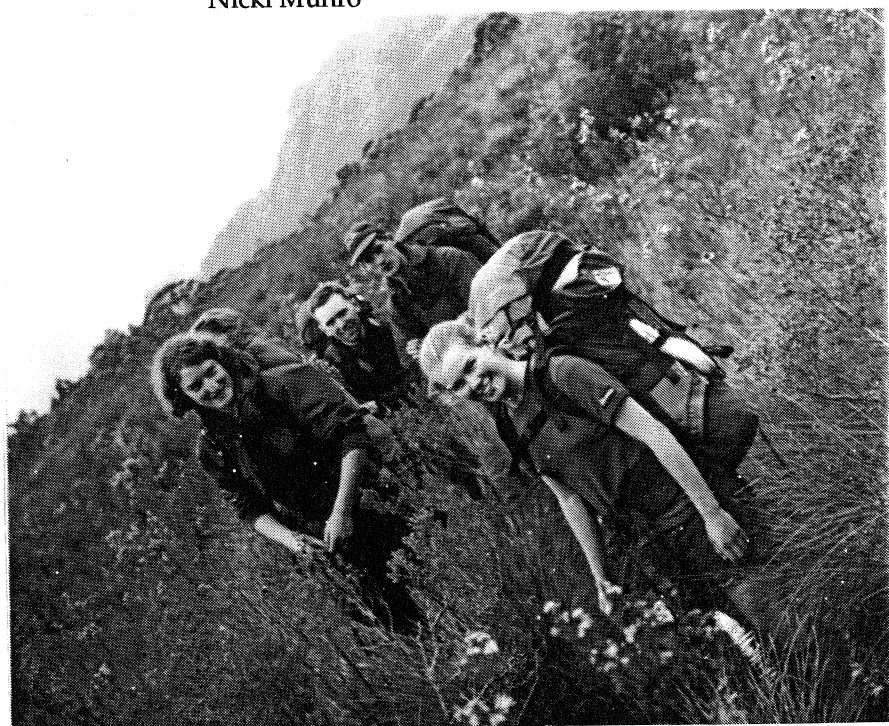
and we all become insane (for those of us that are not insane already!) there will be the annual pilgrimage up Mt. Feathertop at midnight. Commonly known as Midnight Ascent, this awesome weekend involves dressing up in evening attire and eating a decadent dinner in MUMC hut. This year there is an optional cross dress, so that guys have the option to dress up swishy and girls have the chance to be warm for a change.

There has also been a 6 hour and a 24 hour Vic champs rogaine, with MUMC members putting in a good effort. In the 6 hour, Helen Birchall and Nicki Munro came third in the womens, despite numerous mistakes, Deb Rossel and Anton Weller did very well coming third in the mixed section, and Sam Rollings and her partner Justy did quite well. In the Vic Champs, Anton and his partner came about 5th overall, while Jenny and Cora Wolswinkel came second in the womens. Winter rogaines include the Winter 6 hour, Metrogaine and Snowgaine, so keep your eyes peeled for these up and coming events.

So come and join us on a walk - guaranteed to be an epic.  
Nicki Munro



*Nicki's meditation antics.*



*"When we're in the Western Arthurs....."*



**SKI TOURING**  
**CONVENOR'S**  
**REPORT**

Ski touring or Cross Country skiing, is about travelling with the utmost grace or alternatively, learning to fly...With only a day or two's experience, even if you've never been skiing, finetuning basic turns and balance, you could be gliding almost effortlessly or skating furiously across snowplain flats. Although 1993 was a disappointing year with no prolonged snow depth ever being established, trips took members to: Mt. Bogong (an amazing 10 oxocubans on the mounatin at one time but on two separate trips!), where there was sufficient snowcover to tour the surrounds with brilliant views to the Australian Alps; Mt Stirling and Lake Mountain, both providing excellent conditions at the very beginning of the

season but quickly deteriorated later in time; and the Bogong High Plains, where several huts provided shelter for the weary in some very ordinary weather. Trips to other locations were forced to cancel due to lack of snow.

Fingers crossed for 1994. Traditional venues will be reacquainted : Lake Mountain, Baw Baw Plateau, and the lower slopes of Mt. Stirling are excellent in terms of learning, with only the occasional steep slope being a threat. Experience the swish - swish in amongst amazing snowgums. Late in May this year, there was sufficient snow depth at Baw Baw for some eager (extremely desperate) tourers to satisfy their insatiable thirst...

Some overnight bushwalking experience + ski touring = can travel to more absurd and remote areas. But hey, it's fun.

Opportunies for overnight ski - tours are ENDLESS.. While Lake Mountain offers snowcamping opportunities, a greater range exists at Baw Baw and Stirling, with brilliant touring and awe inspiring views to tantalise.

Surely the best touring area in Victoria must be the Bogong area within the Alpine National Park. From the mostly treeless wide expanses of the High plains, from the smallest day trips to extended trips, all offer unbelievable vistas across the Australian Alps. These include the Cobberas in Eastern Gippsland, the Crosscut Saw near Mt Howitt and as far as Mt. Jagungal in the Snowy Mountains, over 100km away. Keep a look out for upcoming day and weekend trips.

Here's hoping that 1994 's snow is more like the conditions we are more used to - deep and huge!

Steve Curtain



*Where's the style? Where's the telemark? C'mon Steve, stop that snowplowing!*

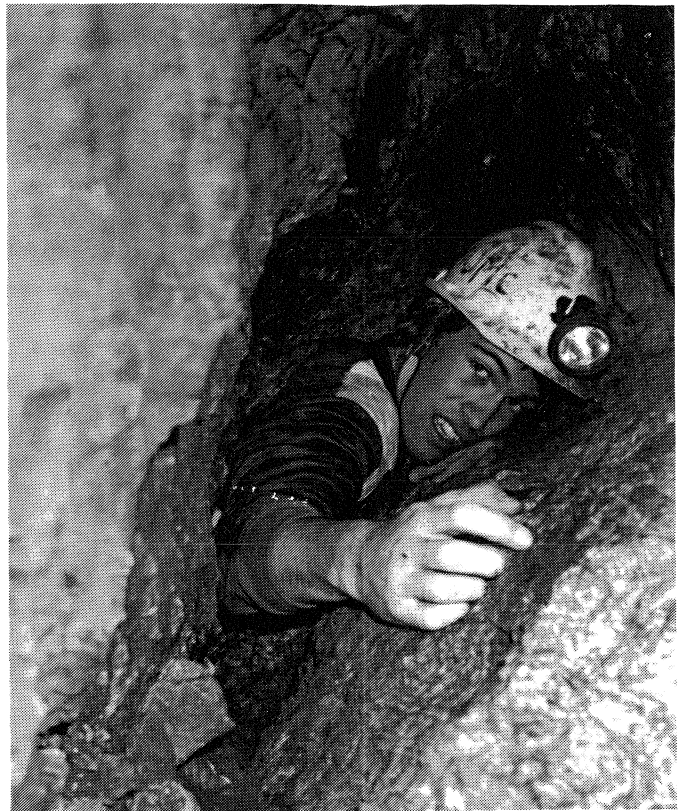


## CAVING CONVENOR'S REPORT

1994 has seen a slow but beneficial start to the caving year, with only 2 beginners trips so far. However with winter coming up and many other sports finishing their season, we may see a few more trips running. The first trip of the year was a small, cosy trip to Buchan, in East Gippsland, with very keen beginners who enjoyed themselves immensely (despite previous reservations about the "tight squeezes" that were often mentioned). (See Photo 2). Our second trip was larger, again to the faithful old Buchan (please someone find us a new spot!!!!), the only mishap being one carload not arriving until Saturday morning due to a slight run-in with the law.

For all those keen would-be cavers, here's a bit of information about the sport in general. Caving can take any of three forms: horizontal, vertical or underwater.

Most MUMC beginners trips involve horizontal caves which require minimum skill and equipment, while vertical caves are reserved for intermediate to advanced cavers with SRT (Single Rope Technique) skills.



Underwater caving is extremely technical and rarely undertaken by MUMC.

Caves can range from only a few metres deep or long, to systems that are hundreds of kilometres long or over 1000m deep (unfortunately these are not found in Victoria).

Limestone caves contain some spectacular formations including stalactites, stalacmites, helictites, shawls, columns and flowstone (See Photo 2) formed by water flowing through the cave.

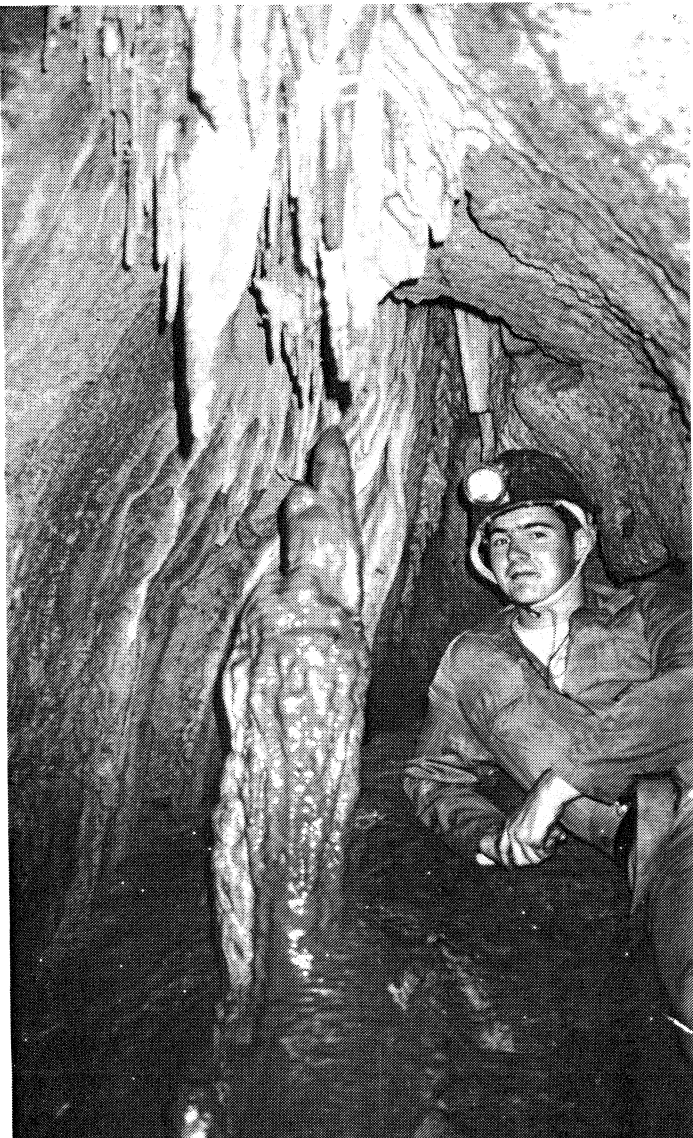
Some caves around Buchan even contain numerous marine fossils from the time when Gippsland was below sea level. Caving can be safely undertaken during the night because it doesn't make any difference to the amount of light in the cave (ie. none).

No experience in caving or climbing is necessary for a beginners caving trip with MUMC, you just have to want to explore, crawl around, and enjoy. No expensive equipment is needed either, just a sturdy pair of boots, overalls or old clothes, a small torch and candle and matches (your spare light sources). To find out about any up-and-coming caving trips, beginner or intermediate, please feel free to come to the MUMC clubrooms and browse through the Climbing\Caving folder.

Lisa Flew

*Above: a beginner enjoying the squeeze (common caving practice).*

*Left: Time out with a view.*





## ROCKCLIMBING CONVENOR'S REPORT

The past year has been a relatively successful one for MUMC climbing with numerous trips to cliffs both in Victoria and Interstate. Participation has been relatively high with some of the larger trips to Arapiles attracting 20 to 30 climbers at a time, over \$1000 was collected in gear hire, more than any other activity in the club. A number of climbers within the club have pushed themselves up the grade ladder and are leading harder climbs as their experience grows. Most importantly they are passing their knowledge onto the less experienced members, this is the only way a club like ours can remain viable.

A refreshing change has been the increased participation of women on trips laying waste to the myth that strength is more important than style in climbing. Earlier in the year we saw Dagmar and Helen taking the sharp end of the rope up numerous climbs but unfortunately we lost both of them, Dagmar returned to Germany and Helen went off to play some dumb game with sticks. Luckily for the club ( and sanity on trips ), Lisa, Deb, Nikki and Claire decided leading was the only way to climb, they grabbed some bucks from the Sports Union, got themselves some quality instruction from "The Climbing Company" and are now confidently leading in style.

What about the guys you might ask ? rumours are about that Peter Kreisner is to be sponsored by Maglite Torches (in view of his regularity in finishing climbs in the dark). Stuart is off to the U.S and South America for a mega climbing/mountaineering holiday, the SES plans to give Phil discounts on his next debacle ( valued customer ! ) and I'm off to Queensland where they don't believe in winter.

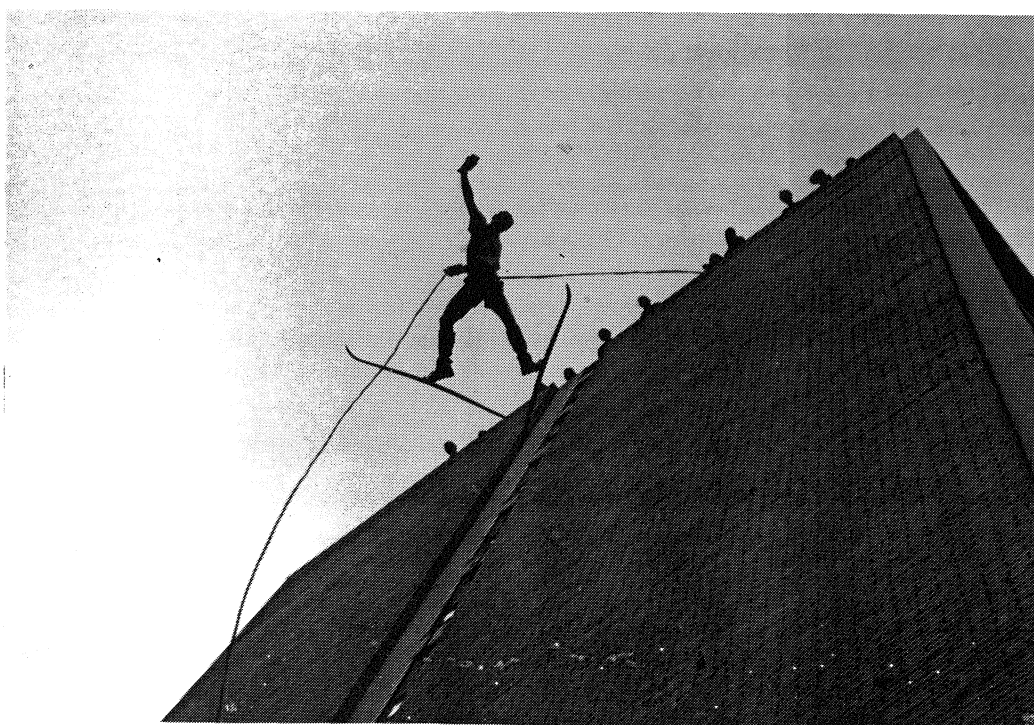
With the onset of winter, climbing trips are becoming more infrequent as most cliffs are unsuitable for climbing during these months. Some trips may be run to the climbing gyms on the occasional weeknight, check the trip folder for these. More frequent trips to cliffs will occur towards late August/early September.

Thanks to : Alex, Steve B, Matt and Peter for helping with beginners instruction trips ( we need more help from others with these trips ! )

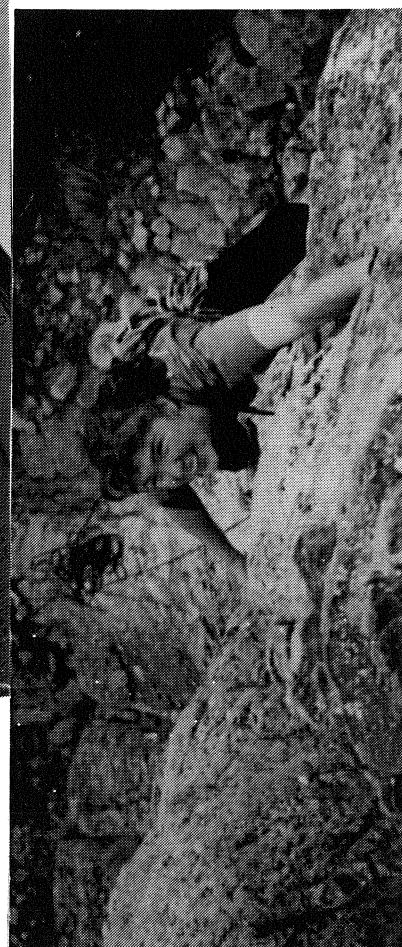
Scott Edwards



*Scott taking time out from teaching beginners to do some climbing of his own.*



*Above: Steve learning to fly - for when those slopes become that bit too steep.*



*Right: Dagmar leading at Araps.*

## CANOEING CONVENOR'S REPORT

The past year has seen many new faces appear regularly on kayaking trips. With so many up and coming paddlers participating, a good future for canoeing in the club is possible. It is also good to see the more experienced paddlers keen to help on beginners trips as well as planning more advanced jaunts such as the NSW trip for the semester break and a New Zealand trip for the end of the year. Intervarsity for canoeing was held in Tasmania last December on the Forth River. Our team finished second overall. It would be good to see more participants this year as it is to be held in Victoria.



*Richard Kjar and Stuart Richardson  
having a spa on the Mitchell River, Victoria.*

Since then, a few club members have been competing regularly in local competitions in Downriver and Slalom, with one competing in Europe in the Australian team at the moment. see some more people competing occasionally as it is beneficial for both skill development and our IV result. The club currently has three canoe polo teams who are experiencing mixed success in the local competition. Generally we have had a fairly good year even though a lack of water has seen us waiting for Mother nature to rain down on us. I would like to thank the other trip leaders especially Richard Kjar and John Wells for their help through the past 12 months.

Peter Gargiulo

## MOUNTAINEERING CONVENOR'S REPORT

Due to the nature of the underlying topography and geography of this fair and beautiful country of yours (mine is New Zealand and I am pleased to say there are real mountains there), most of the great expeditions of the club into the foray of mountaineering are overseas to greener, or should I say icier and snowier pastures. However, as the saying goes, all good things start at home and the club runs some amazing hands-on, stimulating and challenging weekends in the Victorian Alps where beginners (and not-so beginners) can learn new skills such as how to survive in a snowcave, walk and climb efficiently in snow and ice, how to navigate a glacier and rescue your mate from a crevasse. All this often leads to bigger, better and of course HIGHER things

than you've ever possibly done in Australia.

The closest place to climb real mountains is of course the land of the kiwis across the Tasman and this land of many peaks can offer more than a few challenges (of course I am not biased in any way at all when I say the views are stunning and the climbs superb). Last summer Ben Palich and James Allan headed to NZ and took an alpine course followed by some further climbing at the head of the Tasman glacier. Also Angus Campbell and Andrew Roberts made an attempt on Mt Aspiring but had to make use of a helicopter evacuation as Angus obtained a blood clot in the groin. My own exploits over in NZ have included numerous peaks including the famed Mitre Peak in Milford Sound. Next trip I hope to attempt Mt Tukuto in the same region.

Other places club members have conquered are of course South America, North America and Europe. In fact our new mountaineering convenor, the esteemed Derek Fable, has recently participated in a magnificent climb on Mt. St Elias in Alaska; at the time of printing of this report the result is unknown, but let's hope it was successful. Of course the purpose of the club's mountaineering section is to teach all you up-and-coming enthusiastic mountaineers the basics and then to equip you to go off and climb the world (provided you bring the gear back of course). So if this little article has whetted your appetite for adventure, then join up for the Alpine Instruction weekends in late August and let's get this club into some serious climbing!!!

Luke Mahon



### IN A WILD PLACE

Setting off after a quick breakfast, Joe and Mark had attained the Staircase spur's midpoint at Bivouac Hut. A few small cakes of snow lay in amongst the snowgrass. Although the journey so far had taken 6 hours - a slow time by Mark but few complaints from his companion - both were none the less sorry as sleep came fitfully. The hut was a sturdy shelter, sheilding all within from the elements. First heavy rain, some time later a small drop in temperature and the splattering on the tin roof ceased as it lightly snowed. An hour later and clearing somewhat, the sun was allowed to shine for a brief moment, but soon once more, the rain became furious.

Inside the silence of the hut, both walkers lay in the relative comfort of their sleeping bags, dozing and awakening, dozing and waking again. The old cast stove offered a soothing, gentle heat. Occasionally the trunk of a snow gum would rub the outer of the hut, disturbing the silence inside...the weather had cleared. For now.

Mark felt excitement in his body, but also apprehension. The prospect of making a night ascent and crossing the huge rolling summit plateau would be worth it when the warmth and safety of the hut would be reached on the south side.

A hearty meal and the pair left just on 8pm. Although the near full moon began to rise in the east over Mt Wills, presenting some comfort, the cloud rising from the valley immediately below was not a good sign.

One of the pair quickly reminded the other about travelling in snow, let alone white-out, wind and atrocious blizzard conditions. A quick clothing change into full weather gear in snowgums below, and Mark and Joe emerged from the treeline into the true, exposed alpine area. In the lower reaches of this region, walking in snow was around knee depth resulting in a slower but a gradual and more consistent pace. This which was needed in order to travel comfortably. The wind simply increased in strength as height was gained.

The sight high above was truly surreal. A photo taken from the rocky outcrops of Castor and Pollux attempted to capture the mysterious and overwhelming size, awe, and majesty of Bogong's north face - it failed. The many bands of rock - recently covered with a fresh dump - appeared simply as black masses in amongst the walls of snow. These rocky masses fell from view into a black void of the gully below, as moonlight was interrupted by the spur's crest to the east. Although the time was pushing near 10pm, the scene was moon-lit and offered good conditions to trudge through the undermass of white.

The quick scroggin mouthful does wonders.

Kicking in steps was essential above the saddle, to avoid slipping slightly and dropping a foot or so. Time and time again however, concentration would lapse as Mark and Joe steadied to balance their burdening loads.

By 2am, it had taken an hour and a half to travel about hundred metres on a consistent slope...

The wind had strengthened four or five fold since the saddle and the likelihood of attaining the summit crest was looking doubtful - the hut was out of the question. "If the wind is next to fury down here, what the hell is it going to be like on the summit?" Joe mulled over his thought.

Trying to walk upright was hopeless; the wind was ridiculously strong so that one side of a rucsac was being forced off its carrier's shoulder, skis would nearly slip from their fastened straps. The only realistic option was to crawl. Slowly.

It seemed the crawl would be slow progress initially, but the alternative was to face the funnelling effect of the wind down the gully head; no more than a moment or two upright, and the blast would be too much.

Hunched over and moving slowly upward, there was only the need to think ahead to the next snowpole. Thoughts wandered. Nearing the summit ridge, Mark turned to Joe and shouted into the whiteout. Joe did not turn towards him. He was less than a body's width away. Again, Mark shouted but louder. Still no acknowledgment. Mark shook Joe's arm.

"Ah, finally," Mark thought. Joe raised his head slowly to avoid the onward stream of ice particles trickling down his front, and faced Mark. The spindrift whipped across the surface of the snow.

"Whaaaaat...?"

Mark finally gave his message to Joe by shouting an inch or so from his mate's ear, "Look, I thought we would have some chance, but this is really baaad....we've reached the summit area..we're not actually at the true summit cairn, it's over there." He pointed. "...let's try and head back for the hut or I thought we could pitch down a bit.."

"Let's get outta here."

However, the only way down was to almost haphazardly slip, crawl and slide all at the same time, as had been on the way up. Sighting the next snowpole down the slope was difficult.

The cry of a snowpole: a lone survivor of many harsh winters, released its call collectively with others, as the wind whipped through its holey metallic head. The resulting moan provided an almost supernatural guide as they moved from pole to pole, but the pair always nervously questioned their accuracy.

Although the occasional thinning of cloud signalled a momentary 'bright' patch of snow illuminated, it would quickly disappear.

The moon was completely obscured. There was only a dull greyness now.

There was only frustration then despair in Mark's mind. He had just watched a ski slip from his grasp, down the slope. He hadn't even attempted to go after it - it just slipped into the whiteout and disappeared. Mark questioned his own apathy - he didn't know why.

It was hard to believe that at this very moment, below this raging storm, locals were sinking more than the occasional ale in the town pub in the valley. Any likely view of the town, let alone the far off glow of regional towns on the border, was non-existent. Down the spur, sight was simply obliterated.

"Should I let go of the other one? It's no use to me now.." He pondered on this for what seemed several minutes, but were only seconds. Joe looked out into the grey blanket and said nothing.

"No, I'll hang onto it."

Numbed in mind and body by the cold, mind games and physical exertion, the tent was pitched on a snow ledge, sluggishly dug. The tent, positioned in the lee of a huge boulder, rocked and swayed uncontrollably, but the wind in this position was a little weaker. Mark and Joe did not bother with food, but dropped into a sleep that was pure relief from the ravage outside. 4am - they had been going for about 22 hours.

A peek outside the tent at 8am revealed ongoing whiteout conditions, but more importantly, a significant drop in the wind. It was little more than a slight blow every now and again. The two recollected their thoughts as the feast of biscuits and chocolate began. 8:30am - another look outside and the view was amazing. It had actually cleared.

Joe sighted a glint about 200 feet up the deep gully - could it be? Mildly refreshed and happy, the two had begun combing the area of the lost ski, an area adjacent to their precarious campsite, but within the gully depths. Mark and Joe had similar thoughts to one another, but did not speak. The panorama itself was enough. They found it.

*Steve Curtain*





## MT STIRLING UPDATE

**"GROLLO SET FOR DEAL ON WILDERNESS MOUNTAIN...Mt Stirling in Central Victoria will be developed as a downhill resort ski resort..."** 18 March THE AGE.

This headline shell shocked many people, none more so than MUMC. The Grollo property developers, planned for a downhill ski resort including numerous chairlifts on the Stirling's south side, a cable car linking Stirling to adjacent Mt Buller, and a new village. One could easily imagine freeway -type tracts of downhill runs cutting swathes down the mountainside. Following this announcement by the Kennett Government in conjunction with Grollo and the Alpine Resorts Commission (ARC), a huge wave of opposition surged from many interest groups and individuals. Following this initial outrage, MUMC was involved with others in a Wilderness Society organised rally, one of several first steps taken by concerned and angered groups in publicising the plight of Stirling.

Within the Mountaineering Club's context, as with many others, it meant that if the proposal has the 'go ahead', it would destroy for many walkers and ski-tourers alike, the values and memories of a beautiful and 'relatively untouched' mountain. The nature of the mountain's alpine and sub-alpine environment - its natural system of interrelated floral and faunal species - would be 'altered' to say the least.

For many years, Mt Stirling has been the perfect venue for numerous day and overnight walks and ski tours - more so, with the approaching winter, Stirling offers beginner XC skiers an excellent range of terrain and experiences to enjoy. Be this learning the basics down in silent, towering alpine ash forest, to experiencing the 'wild' thing from the exposed summit with incredible views; Mt Stirling's character and natural appeal would only be lost with the introduction of yet another downhill resort in the Victorian Alps.

Stirling is currently used for many other activities apart from cross country skiing: bushwalking, mountain-biking, horseriding and four-wheel-driving being some - but no long-term development plan (other than the downhill proposal) has been written. Although Stirling has been zoned for development for some time, it is not highly developed like Mt. Buller and, given the range of activities conducted on Stirling rather than Buller, this seems to be attractive to many people.

Question of the mountain as a 'wilderness' has no argument. Indeed, as has been quoted in the media and by downhill ski resort supporters, that Mt Stirling is a 'wilderness' mountain or is a wilderness area, is incorrect. The mountain is hardly a pristine wilderness - it has been logged, has an extensive network of 4WD tracks and is used by a large number of people. However, it instills and retains wilderness values in its recreational users and activity base. There is also an appreciation of true 'wilderness' areas, designated within the surrounding Alpine National Park.

A local community group, MT STIRLING COMMUNITY TASKFORCE from Mansfield, was established in the winter of 1993 after it became obvious that the idea of development on Stirling had re-emerged having been dormant for some years, and now posed a very real threat. The Taskforce is arguably the major driving force against the downhill ski proposal and the ARC, the government body responsible for 'managing' alpine resort areas. The whole questioning and debate of the proposal has taken two forms - whether a downhill resort is the most appropriate development, and whether Mt. Stirling should be developed at all. In a letter from the Taskforce's Chairman, Alan Kerr, 30 May 1994, he outlines the unfortunate truths behind the whole issue:

*"In our opinion the reality is this: if appropriate initiatives to promote tourism do not occur on Mt Stirling then the various planning authorities involved will be persuaded by the (albeit superficial) economic arguments of the ARC and the Mt Buller Lift Company. We have a detailed knowledge of Mt Stirling and a great affection for the mountain. We give environmental and aesthetic factors the highest priority but also believe that with minimal impact initiatives, Mt Stirling will tolerate some appropriate development without compromising the character, environmental or natural appeal of the mountain."*



Any realistic hope of 'saving' Mt Stirling and its environment in the opinion of the Taskforce, therefore, it is not a matter of a 'wild' area at all costs versus a downhill ski resort, but instead the appropriate *form* of development taking place, not the *existence* of development. Development based on natural activity and eco-tourism may be the "only way to prevent inappropriate (downhill resort) development."

As much as MUMC would like to see Mt Stirling 'left alone' and untouched, this option is certainly one to consider seriously. Others may see differently.

It has been argued that a downhill resort will complement existing uses of Mt. Stirling. The fact that Stirling is currently so popular despite the lack of facilities compared to Buller only serves to undermine this argument. The mountain's attraction is that it provides for such a wide range of users at all times of the year, not just through the winter period. To provide for diversity in the use of Victoria's alpine areas, groups other than downhill skiers should be catered for through preservation and enhancement of such values. In doing this, can facilities for the rapidly growing ecotourism market be promoted and developed for example, sports such as XC Skiing and mountain-biking, which are currently minority but are also rapidly growing.

How can such development be achieved? Experience in the US and Canada suggest that a XC ski resort with properly constructed and maintained trails and facilities will attract enthusiastic use both in winter, for skiing, snow-shoeing and tobogganing, and in summer, for activities such as bushwalking, mountain-biking and horseriding. At the same time, it would provide year-round local employment and, if the experiences of Lake Mountain, the US and Canada are any indication, be very economically viable. As of late June, the latest news on Stirling included: an announcement at another Taskforce meeting, that the "ideas of eco-tourism, horse safaris and new facilities were to be encouraged", thereby "bringing prosperity to the district." Although the whole issue has been played down by the Government most recently (early-mid June) after announcing an inquiry into the running of the ARC and the possibility of an Environmental Effects Statement, one can be definite that all is not as it seems.

If the Mt. Stirling decision is hopefully based on rational debate, we will be sure to have an outcome which will be beneficial for aspects of both local and outside communities.

**Your opinion can make a difference if you make it known.** The best way to do this is to write a letter. Unfortunately, the date for the ARC internal inquiry submissions has since past, but you can still write to your local member expressing your opposition to build a downhill ski resort at Mt Stirling. Write to:

- Mr Geoff Coleman, Minister for Natural Resources  
7th Fl 232 Victoria Pde, East Melb. 3002                      and
- Mr Mark Birrell, Minister for the Environment  
8th Fl 240 Victoria Pde, east Melb, 3002

If you need any help, talk to a club committee-member or consult the "You-Beaut Guide to Letter Writing" on the conservation noticeboard in the MUMC clubrooms. One letter is said to be equivalent to fifty signatures on a petition. Just think how much difference the five hundred members of the MUMC, including you, could make! Later in August, MUMC will be having an update at the Pie & Slide Night - fingers crossed.

Mt Stirling is a special place. You can help save it.

*Geoff Sinclair & Steve Curtain*

*The view from Mt. Stirling to  
the Alpine National Park : Grollorised?*





## WOMENS LEADCLIMBING INSTRUCTION WEEKEND

A few weeks ago four girls, Deb Rossel, Lisa Flew, Clair O'Driscoll and Nicki Munro, had the chance to learn some tips on leadclimbing, from Louise Shepherd. (Leadclimbing is real climbing they tell me!). Louise showed us the basics of pro placement - there is more than I thought to putting a nut in crack, or getting a friend in on the right angle. To a biologist like myself it sounded a bit too much like physics to be comfortable, but Louise made it sound very logical.

I did my first lead on a very easy grade 6. The other three had all led quite a bit before so they waited patiently below, and practiced pro placement. You could have had a tea party in the time I took to do that climb! For the rest of the weekend we lead various climbs with Louise seconding, dashing back and forth between climbers giving advice and encouragement. Deb Lisa and Clair all pushed their grades, under Louise's guidance. Deb led Howling Wolf (18), Lisa shot up Libretto (15) and Clair whipped up Puppy Love (15).

Many thanks to Louise for her expert instruction and to Deb for organizing the whole weekend, we had a fantastic time.

*Nicki Munro*

## **CONSERVATION NEWS FLASH**

M.U.M.C. has just received a \$3030 grant from the Department of Conservation and Environment to undertake maintenance and erosion prevention work on the Tom Kneen track (Stoney Creek section) leading up to the MUMC Hut on Mt. Feathertop. Many thanks to Anouk who put in a huge effort to get this application together.

We plan to do this work during second semester and over the summer break so stay tuned for more details or keep an eye on the Conservation noticeboard in the clubrooms for news on how to get involved. Your help will be much appreciated.

# What's Up...

## **FLYING HIGH**

Earlier this year, MUMC, in association with MOUNTAINCRAFT, was involved in a Cadbury-Schweppes promotion. Guided and supervised by Mountaincraft, MUMC members held a formal lunch, dressed in formal attire and surrounded by luncheon table fittings but with an added interest - hanging 40 metres above ground level from ropes off the Redmond Barry building! A special mention of thanks must go to Rob Meates for all his help. It was well appreciated and the function was enjoyed by all.

## **CHEAP SECOND HAND GEAR**

In making way for the purchase of new gear and retiring our older gear supplies, MUMC is currently selling selected bushwalking items, including sleeping bags, tents and stoves. Also available from the XC Ski store are a very small number of skis, boots and poles. Equipment items for sale are at extremely cheap prices, so be quick!

See Nicki Munro /Steve Curtain

## **FOUND : ONE PAIR PRESCRIPTION 'OAKLEY' SUNGLASSES**

*Page 13* - See Nicki Munro / Steve Curtain - lunchtime in the clubrooms.

## Don't argue, just paddle : EASTER PADDLING TRIP

The annual Easter paddling trip was on again! We all (Anouk, Richard, Stuart, Shelly, Andrew, Lara, Russell, Rebecca, Sam, Tim) congregated at the boatsheds, and after much discussion as to the merits of a dancer in which useful things such as sleeping bags, clothes, food, tents etc can be fitted as compared to a reflex which is easier to do nose stands in, but is not exactly the 'family holiday throw it all in' type boat, we hit the road. Two cars, each with five boats on the roof, and five people and their gear inside! Not far had we gone, before people decided they were hungry, and we stopped off at a horrible place where they sell pieces of cardboard stuck between two bits of foam. This stop was only made slightly worthwhile and memorable when Stuart decided to drive "Nugget" (his small brown rabbit poo car) up the footpath, and leave it parked there. The next stop, in Newborough, the last town before we headed into the hills, involved procuring Easter eggs, massage oil, snakes, jelly, and sambucca.

Eventually we arrived at the Thompson. While Stuart and Russell did the car shuffle (Stuart faster than the Nugget, or his driving skills could handle, the result being a bank and a cliff both coming towards Stuart very fast as he tried to get round a corner, succeeding only in facing back the way he had just come), the rest of us settled down to the task of packing our boats. Packing boats is one of those things that involves much swearing, yanking, kicking, pushing - and then you end up pulling it all out and starting again. Any way, we did manage to pack everything in, and at last found ourselves paddling down the beautiful Thompson River, feeling very happy to at last have got away from work and study. We all had lots of fun practicing ferry gliding, nose stands, surfing, rolling etc. That night we camped in a dry and very rocky creek bed. It was with a feeling of great trepidation that we heaved things back out of our boats. Had everything survived the wet, or was there a hole in that garbage bag? Would we have to spend the next three days in wet clothes, a wet sleeping bag, and with sloppy, moulding food? Fortunately, all was OK, and we settled down around a cosy fire, to wile the night away.

The next day we repeated the packing exercise, and then floated off down through the Thompson Gorge where it sometimes appeared that people actually found swimming down rapids preferable to remaining in their boat. After many hours of tiring paddle paddle paddling, we finished! and then drove up to the Mitchell River, where we met up with Curtains Curtains, Pedro, Scott, Nigel, Stu F., and Johnno.



*Peter Gargiulo (Pedro) showing us how it's done.*



Pedro's car decided to kark it, and we left it there, happily cogitating under some nice shady trees, while we all (rather a lot of us now) once again set off for unknown adventures. Actually, there weren't many adventures to be had, but we did have a lovely relaxing paddle.

On arriving at our campsite that night, Anouk discovered that One of the Most Horrible Things That Can Happen to You on an Overnight Paddling Trip had happened - her peanut chocolate biscuits now looked like fresh cow turd (they still tasted OK though). The campfire this night had a distinctly different feeling, with Johnno and Stu F. becoming more and more obnoxious (is that possible?). The partying went on for many hours, with Rebecca's massage oil once again coming into use. Pedro, Johnno, and Stu F. crawled off to spend what I am sure was the most uncomfortable night of their lives, under a strange construction of plastic and sticks, which they assured us was fine (lucky it didn't rain!).

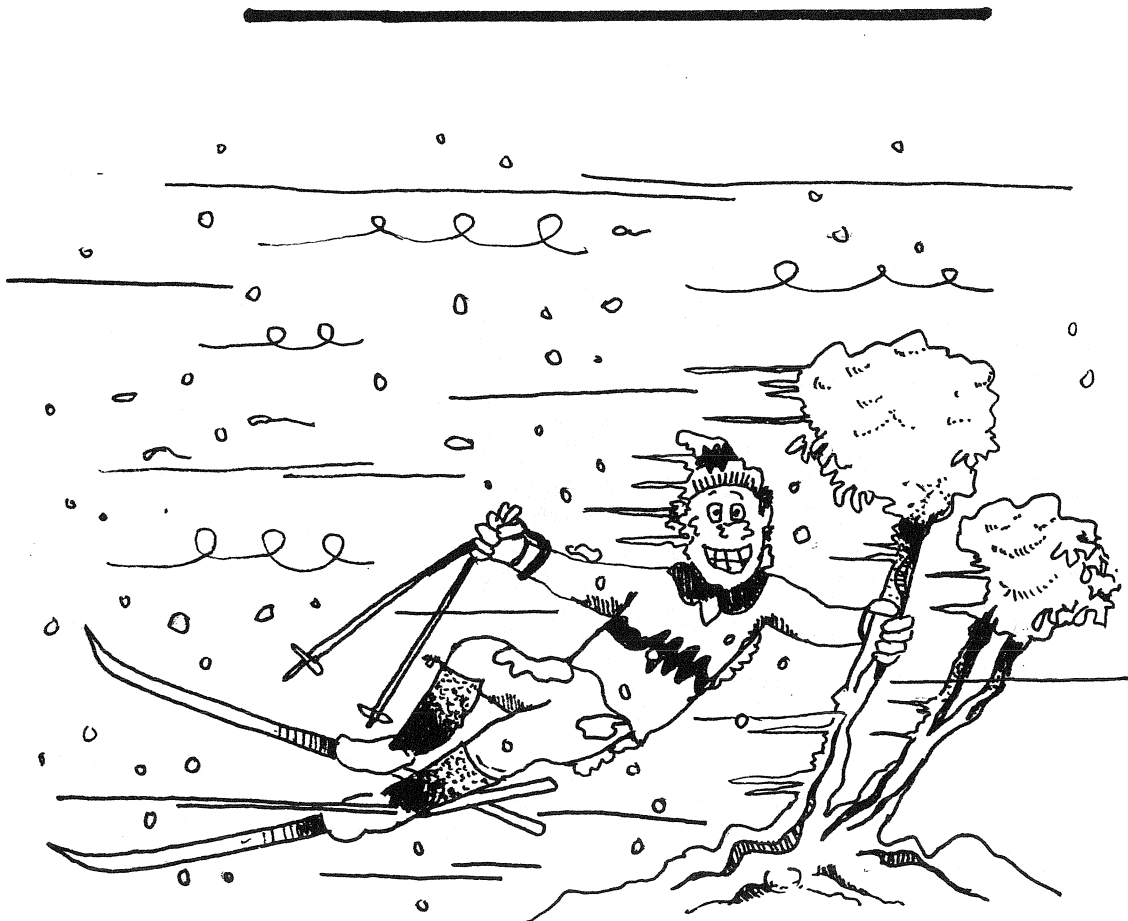
The last day of the trip dawned glorious and sunny, and we all quickly shoved our belongings into the boats, a task becoming slightly easier due to a distinct lack of food, and the fact that everything could now get wet, and it didn't matter.

The Amphitheatre caused some excitement, as we all got out to have a look, before attempting this most exciting rapid(!). However, most people got down without any hassle, and we continued on our way, finding a spot to nose stand, and a spot where Anouk could wedge her boat between two rocks - and just sit there.... Hmmm.... maybe not such a good idea!

By the end of the day, we all felt rather tired, but still had enough energy for some hacky sack, and a wild game of football with a therma rest pillow.

All in all, it was a great trip, where we had heaps of fun, and also managed to improve some of our paddling skills.

Lara Ross



## NAMADGI

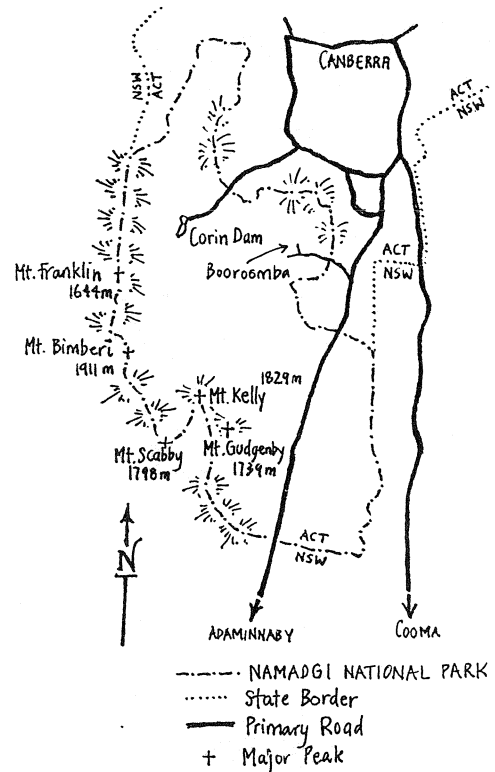
The cold bites as we descend into Bogong Gap. Frost-laden Black Sallees, billy buttons and tea tree form one of the most beautiful alpine sceneries I have ever witnessed as the sunlight, struggling through the morning fog, sparkles on the ice crystals. Climbing quickly to keep warm, we reach a point on the Scabby Range. Mt. Kelly's granite peak, from which we had watched the sunrise after a fitful 4-hour bivvy at Sams Creek, is resplendent in the sun. Extra care required by the iciness of the scramble to the summit of Gudgenby is rewarded by views of Mt. Scabby, Cabramatta Plain, Booth Range, Clear Range and across to The Tinderrys.

The air remains dead still yet bitterly cold while we munch Mars Bars and swig water. A couple of hours walking down Bogong Creek and through Boboyan Forest leads us to the car at 10am, 12 hours after we left it. The ranger, starting early to check Boboyan Woolshed, is surprised by our presence and informs us that the overnight temperature was 10 below. No wonder the water bottle froze. He thinks we are crazy. We smile. The hot shower at home beckons, half an hour away, as Canberra stirs to a Sunday morning.

Namadgi was proclaimed a National Park in 1984. Bounded by the Murrumbidgee River, Scabby Range Nature Reserve, Kosciusko National Park, the Bimberi Wilderness, Brindabellas and Tidbinbilla, it covers 94,000 hectares - forty percent of the ACT.

It is Australia's most northerly alpine environment, and uniquely beautiful. From a quick stroll to Square Rock to a rugged epic incorporating Franklin, Bimberi, Yankee Hat, Gudgenby and The Sentry Box, walking in Namadgi is excellent, as is climbing at Booroomba, Orroral or Gibraltar Peak. Ski touring is possible in a good season. Access is through Canberra or Adaminaby, and there are great opportunities for extended walks into Kosciusko National Park. And it's bloody cold in winter!

Geoff Sinclair



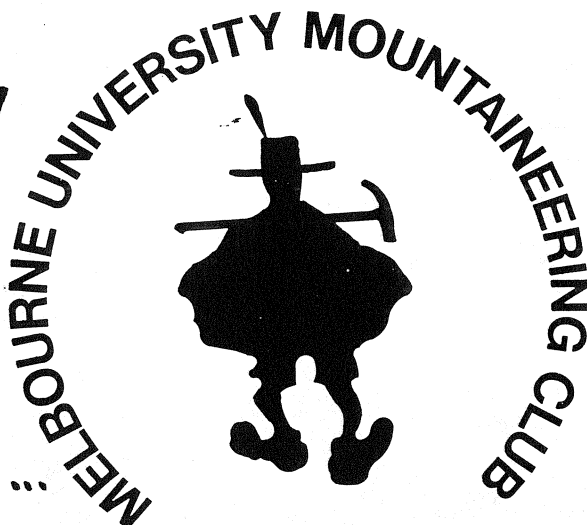
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AVAILABLE:

from Clubrooms at  
lunchtime. See Lisa Flew,  
Steve Bird or Steve Curtain

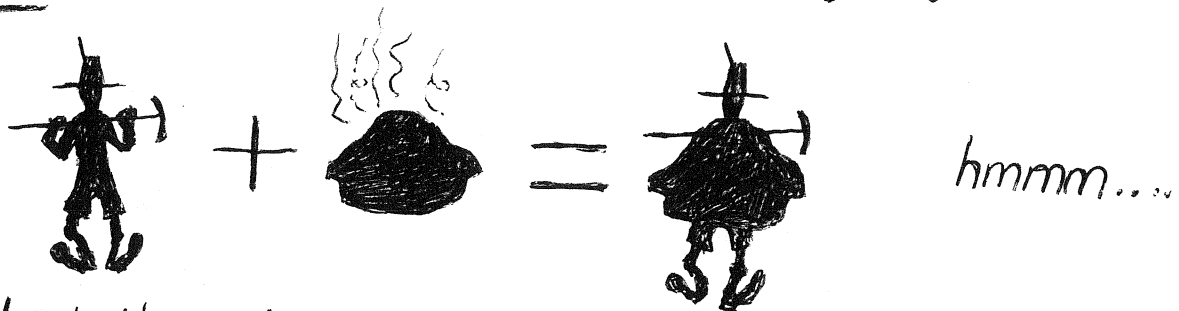
**BEWARE ALPINE CLIMATE**  
**FREEZING CONDITIONS YEAR-ROUND**  
**BLIZZARDS MARCH TO NOVEMBER**







THEORY: Is OXO really just carrying a bloody huge pie?

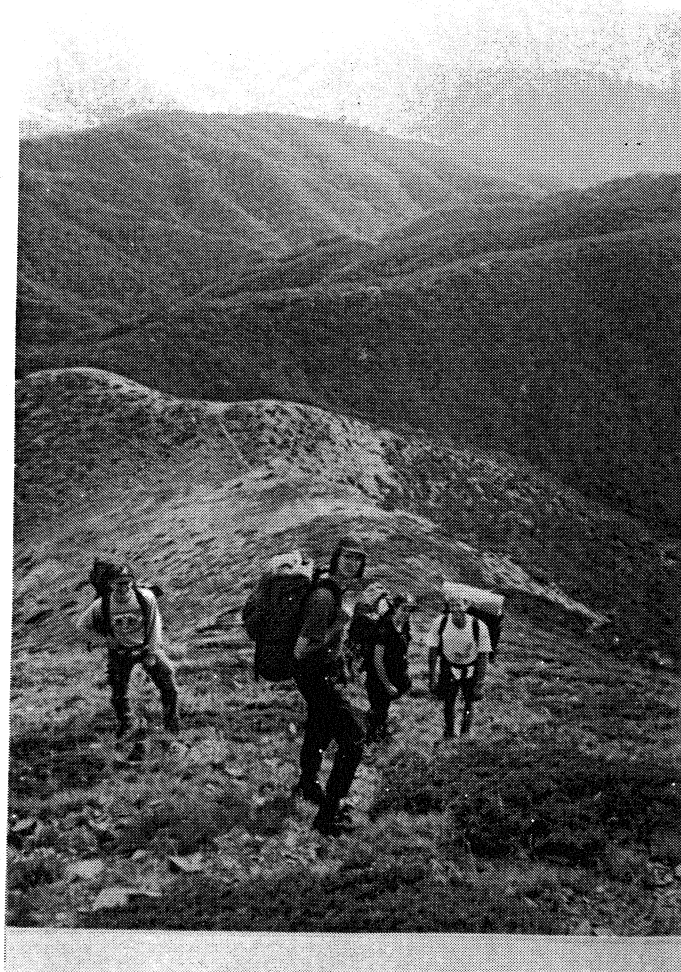


I think there's something in there for all of us...

Tim McIver, Richard Hewitt,

Tessa Letcher and Mike Ratcliffe on Mt. Feathertop

Jenny Wolswinkel at her cleanest.



## VIETNAM

In March and April, Rohan Schaap and I went walking in Cambodia and Vietnam. These are a few tips for anyone who thinks they might like to walk there in the future. Actually, writing an article of this nature is really just a cover-up of what a debacle our walking trip was.

1) Don't even think about walking in Cambodia. When we were there, it was O.K. as long as you stuck to well walked upon tracks. That is, of course, unless you were in Cambodia specifically to look for land mines, or you had some reason for wanting to separate your legs from the rest of your body. Now though, the Khmer Rouge has taken a liking to foreign tourists. This is a real shame because Cambodia is such a wonderful country. Great food, great beer (they have V.B. and the local brew is also made by Fosters), great people, and the ruins of Angkor are incredible.

2) Make sure you get a Vietnamese entry/exit card and customs declaration as you go through customs. Vietnam is a communist country and the Vietnamese love bureaucracy, but somehow Rohan and I managed to get in without any of these vital bits of paper, or even a stamp in our passport. We had a little bit of trouble leaving Vietnam, since we never officially arrived in the country to begin with.

3) Don't bother going to Dalat no matter how inviting the cooler climate may seem after Ho Chi Minh City. "Beautiful forests" they said. The Americans took care of them, and what they missed has been cut down to make room for domestic tourists. Dalat is a favourite Vietnamese honeymoon spot. "Wonderful waterfalls" they said. Well, I guess that depends if you like your waterfalls with little swan shaped pedalos, miniature sailboats, and Vietnamese dressed as cowboys. I'll have mine without thanks. "Great food" they said. Where was it? Thankfully the strawberries and the strawberry wine were good. Like good mountaineers, we wanted to walk up a mountain in the area and Mount Lang Biang (2500m) was our choice. "Too touristy" they said, "we'll take you to a beautiful non-touristy mountain nearly as high". What we walked up was a hill. A bald hill. We did talk to the bus load of Vietnamese students on the top though.



*Local detail.*



4) Following from point three, don't listen to any advice that the Vietnamese give you. If you know nothing at all, then you know infinitely more than them.

5) If you want to do some overnight walks, then head straight to the town of Sa Pa in the north near the Chinese border. Take with you everything that you might need, sleeping bag, tent, stove, and Australian food. There is no food at Sa Pa suitable for hiking, and this was our downfall. O.K., that and the stove. And the tent. And no map, but no-one has one of those. Remember that the birds ate Hansel and Gretel's crumbs so try something a bit longer lasting. The best walk would be to climb Vietnam's highest mountain, Mt. Phan Si Pan (4190m). We estimate that the trip to the summit and back would take 7 days in the warmer months. The mountain is only 30km away as the crow flies, but there's a lot of ups and downs and river crossings (watch out for those life-threatening bamboo bridges). We were told the walk takes between 2 and 14 days by different locals i.e. none of them have climbed it (see point 4). If you plan to be there in winter, then take your skis because it snows on Phan Si Pan.

For a lot of walks in the area, a tent is not needed because you will be able to sleep in Hmong Tribal villages although the local Vietnamese will tell you that you can't (see point 4). The Hmongs are what the Vietnamese call an ethnic minority. They also call them savages (see point 4 again), and treat them really badly. This group of people are absolutely gorgeous, so good that we were looking for a wife for Dr. Sex (club legend) amongst them. They all wear a wonderful navy blue embroidered costume and are friendly than even the Tibetans. The part that Rohan liked the most about them was that they are all only 5' 3" or less, so he felt like a giant. The Hmongs are very new to tourists and stare at you as much as you stare at them. Unfortunately they don't speak any other language except Hmong, so communicating with them is all in signals. If you manage to work out their hand signals for money values, then please let me know, I couldn't.

There are other ethnic minorities in the area besides the Hmongs but they are not as numerous. The most brightly coloured are the Daos with their big red hats. A day walk to one of their villages is worthwhile. We saw 4 other minority groups but never found out

their names. It's best to be in Sa Pa for the weekend market to see them all.

6) If you want to see animals, Vietnam is not the place to go. Years of war, tonnes of defoliant, and the use of dried animal parts in traditional Chinese medicine, especially the bits that are supposed to give a longer erection (I guess that is in terms of space and time), have wiped out most of the animals. However, it seems that leeches are immune to agent orange, taste horrible, and do nasty things to the libido, because they are still around in large numbers. On our hike through Cat Ba National Park on Cat Ba Island, they were the only animals we saw. Most times we didn't even see them, but they sure tasted us.

So, go to Vietnam if you want to walk in the North with the Hmongs or you are a leechophile. It really was a great experience- we met some cool people and ate some yummy food, but watch that snake wine, it's lethal.

Amber Mullens



## LEADERSHIP WEEKEND

23/24 JULY

Remember your last bushwalk, or other MUMC adventure? Was it a relaxing weekend or a real epic? Did you meet lots of new and exciting people, and see places you never have before? What did you get out of the trip? Now, think of the leader. What did they get out of the trip? - the chance to go to specific places they want to, the thrill of introducing newcomers to the activities they love, and much more. Would you be interested in running your own trips, and experiencing that warm and fuzzy feeling that comes with leading people on trips? The Leadership Weekend is an action packed two days designed to give you the confidence and skills necessary to lead your own trips with MUMC. Although the weekend focuses on the issues involved in running a bushwalk, it has general application to other outdoor activities, such as those run by MUMC. The weekend includes a 6 hour first aid course (specialising in remote areas), bush navigation tuition and an orienteering course, group discussions on leadership theory, individual responsibility, group dynamics and dealing with difficult trip members, talks on making your trip successful, the practical issues of planning, organising and running a walk, and lots more.

See the green bushwalking folder in the clubrooms if you are interested in attending. The time and date of the meeting will be written in the folder closer to the date.

## ALPINE INSTRUCTION WEEKEND

13th/14th AUGUST

Although Mt. Feathertop could never really be compared to 'classic' alpine environments, with associated conditions and features - for example, New Zealand - it is certainly an excellent stepping stone towards bigger and better things...For many years, the Alpine Instruction weekends run by MUMC have prepared its members with fundamental skills and knowledge often as the prelude to mountaineering in courses in New Zealand over the following summer. Basic rope skills, rescue techniques, snow travel and survival are the highlights of what should be a thoroughly enjoyable and productive weekend, as has been in years gone by.

## MIDNIGHT ASCENT

The Midnight Ascent is MUMC's most established oxometric. First conceived by Tom Kneen many years ago, this tradition has become a religious pilgrimage that all good OXO-women and OXO-men should undertake. It all begins on a cold moon-lit Friday night. After making plenty of noise to annoy the Trout Farm owners, thirty-three or-so MUMC members gather in a huddle and wait for midnight. Then, in self-contained groups, they head off up the North-West (Tom Kneen Track ) Spur of Mt. Feathertop, where, by morning, they shall find snow, sun, the legendary MUMC mansion hut and, hopefully, Mt. Feathertop. After sleeping through the morning, these good OXO people dig out from their rucsacs, dinner jackets and evening dresses ( being gender specific is questionable this year...), and gather for a photograph in the snow. Back inside the hut and some thermals, the feast begins. Dinner is a thirty course decadent delight of fondue, caviar, smoked salmon, curry, pasta, trifle, chocolate mousse, Tequila, geto-blaster, dancing, singing, and guitar-playing. On Sunday morning, hang-over permitting, an ascent of the fabled Mt. Feathertop is in order, followed by a descent of the spur in order to reach Porepunkah Pub.

The weekend is quite demanding so be prepared for the cold, the wet, and exhaustion. You must have been on an overnight MUMC trip before, as well as spent enough time in the snow to know its wet, cold and potentially dangerous if unprepared. (A day-trip skiing with the club is fine.)

Trip Date: Weekend of 20/21 August  
Meeting: TBA  
See Trip sheet for details.



## MEMOIRS OF AN I.V. LONG GONE (WELL SIX MONTHS AGO ANYWAY.)

Exams had finished, end of year beers drunk and the water levels were low. Why then were there 16 fired up paddlers loading inordinate numbers of boats onto 4 cars on a Friday in December and getting very excited in the process? This is why, IV '93!! 16 paddlers, 4 cars, 23 boats, 1 waveski and heaps of beer swilling, fun having potential rolled out from beneath that ominous tunnel of the Sports Union to recreate paddling history.

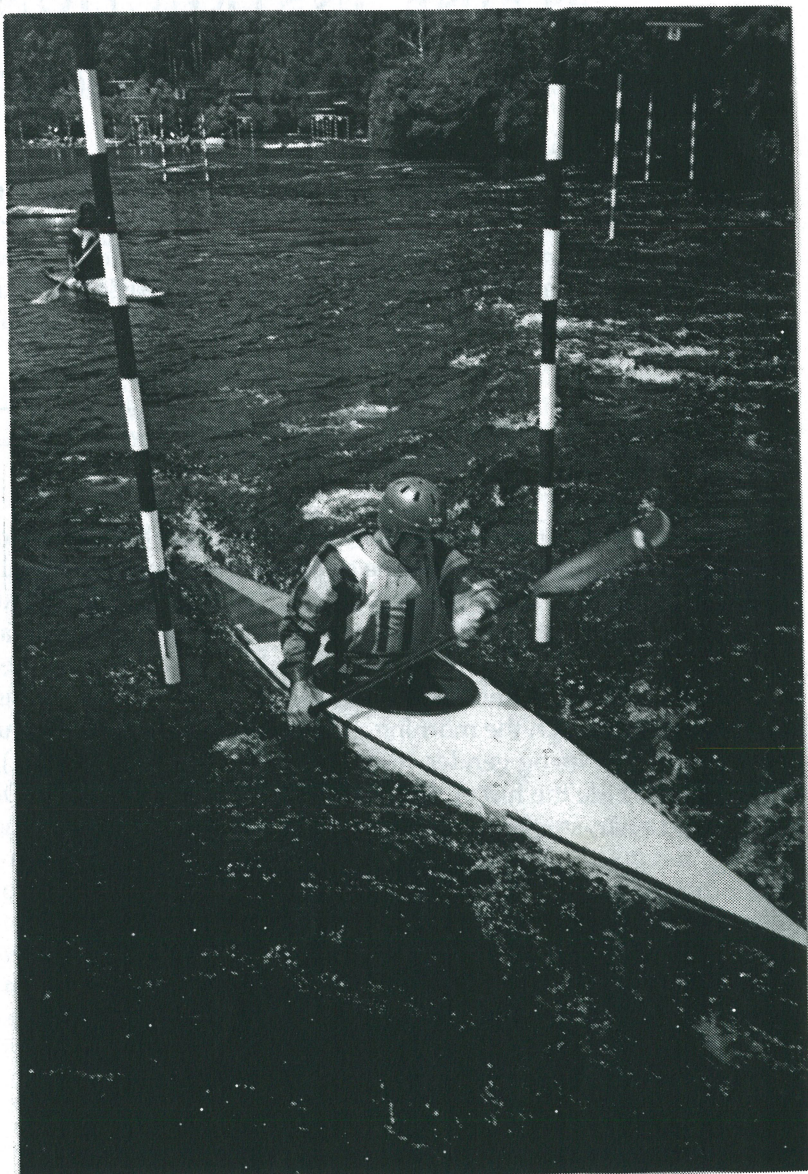
Our first destination, La Porchetta's, saw lunch in the middle of the road, our last decent meal until we hit dry land on the other side of Bass Strait. We trundled down to Station Pier, to wait in a queue for about three hours, sucking up exhaust fumes and gaping at Sydney's trailer. Amidst much cursing and swearing we finally made it on (although Stu stole all the tickets, boarded and left the rest of us to smuggle ourselves on). Soon enough most of the ticketing nightmares were sorted out (Thanks Kent!!!, (extreme sarcasm), our friendly %&\*\$#@ travel agent, who manage to stuff everything up), although I managed to be S. Polard for the entire journey!!

The boat rocked and rolled its way across the ocean to the sounds of one very terrible band, who mimed every song and finished them all with a very appropriate "uggh!". Whilst the IV windsurfers danced about in their sombrero's and a couple of them practised horizontal dancing, MUMC, proudly represented by Stu and Anouk, developed a new style of dancing, forever remembered as "like a tiger" as they clawed at their own reflections in the ceiling mirrors! Much beer was drunk and it was the beginning of a great relationship between MUMC and alcohol. Finally we arrived the next morning and managed to somehow all get off the boat and meet up, do some shopping in Devonport (to purchase more beers of course) and then head up to the slalom course and campground, where most people slothed (Why does my spell check keep trying to change this word to sloshed? -Ed) off and a few went paddling, and much recovering was

done. That night was a typical one, vast quantities of beers, much debauchery and topped off with Monash arriving in the depths of the night to come and crash our fire and generally lower the standard of people there altogether.

The next day, Sunday, was yet again more slothing, some paddling and generally doing nothing as more people arrived from all over the country to this grassy and secluded slalom site. Apart from this life was not particularly wild, apart from the occasional trip to the airport to pick up Eugene and Russell, Eugene complaining bitterly because they wouldn't serve him drinks at 10 am in the morning. (Note: somewhere around this

time events seem to be a bit blurry, probably due to time, nothing to do with beers drunk at the time). That night was reasonably cool too with most of MUMC creating/continuing the reputation of wild/fun loving people who enjoy a drop or two. The Monday was the first official race day, although it was only practice, with people now becoming much more proficient at paddling all sorts of craft, including the C1, C2 and of course Kev, the K1. Somewhere round here Laz decided to eat some rocks underwater and chipped her tooth, and Melissa decided to realise she needed her arm in plaster, but also some surfing was attempted. Mad Mike's surf-



*Richard on one of his sober mornings, at IV paddling.*



board was launched and numerous people attempted to ride the wussy standing wave that was part of the slalom course with very little success. That night again was reasonably rampant, sculling bottles of port becoming something of a habit.

Downriver racing was the order of the next day, with some very impressive performances from Chris (2nd mens K1), Andre (5th mens K1) and Pedro (6th mens K1). The weather continued to be fine and for most of the day people were to be seen paddling, swimming (Jono!!) and lazing about on the bank. The night passed uneventfully, with most people residing around Sydney's fire. The following day, Wednesday, was the day of the rapid race, which saw MUMC again dominate. Later that day was the paddles up slalom, with Pedro's and Rich's beer consumption rising yet again. Also that day Jono nearly managed to kill all the occupants in his car by turning sideways on a very steep hill, right in front of everyone! That night was a rip roarer, vast quantities of beers were consumed and a great time had by all. Exceedingly large amounts of alcohol were disposed of, including a bottle of Kahlua and inordinate numbers of beers by the MUMC girls. Entertainment was provided by particular MUMC members on this night, obnoxious fire dancing being the order of the night. This climaxed in the MUMC orgy, again all members of this party shall remain nameless. Eugene had a stroke of luck, resulting in him deserting the Orgasmadome for more private quarters.

Thursday, the day of the slalom was extremely busy, with people helping everywhere, paddling and having a great time. Kathy K. did superbly, winning the womens K1, and also winning the womens C2 with Laz. Late in the day MUMC mens C2 team (Pedro & Richard) succeeded after much training (what for I'm still trying to work out). Amongst huge controversy, the Morals Convenor, Melissa, was also seen to be breaking her own guidelines, and was quickly brought into line by a series of long and dark looks from the older members of the club. The next day dawned bright and sunny, for the polo, which



*Lara making new friends at IV.*

was held in the nearby Devonport Pool. The MUMC Girls did really well for a team in which many had never even sat in a polo bat before, and managed to defeat one of the Monash Polo teams and winning three of their four matches. The MUMC guys, with a youthful but useless team did rather poorly, except for Rich managing to be green carded when he wasn't even on the field. Perhaps the funniest event of the whole day was when six boats slid off Pedro's car down the windscreen, down the bonnet and then down the road when he went to stop at an intersection.

That night however was a completely different story. As it was the final night for on the Forth and the end of the competition, there needed to be a celebration and this occurred at the Forth Pub. Stu started off superbly, before we even got there by mooning out the back of a ute, being videotaped doing it, then announcing to all the others in the ute that, "That's the first time I've done that." Once in the pub MUMC held up very well in the guys boat race, Pedro putting in a superb effort, and the girls kicked the proverbial butt, winning their race! However after all the prizes were awarded (boxes of left over Weetbix!) there was more fun to be had which included bashing particular people around the head with a newspaper, (why do I still have concussion?) and other fun games like that. Apparently that night it was an-

nounced that MUMC came second overall, a great effort from such an inexperienced team. Many people slept soundly that night, although Lazza's gaddy champas that she found outside the pub kept some people up, and not just drinking it either!!

Saturday saw us pack up camp and head towards Hobart, to a party that night where all the IVs were going to meet (there were four IVs in Tassie at the same time; Windsurfing, Diving, Kayaking and Climbing) and have a huge time, which we all did. The night began with a round from Russell of 15 scotch and cokes, and once we wore out the welcome of the Union at the Uni of Tas we moved onto Trav's nightclub, where Andre and a Macquarie guy attempted to steal a table. Hmmm. After this died out the party moved back to the Sandy Bay Motor Inn, where Chris could be seen sharing a bed with Laz!! and Pedro melting out in the cupboard. Two pizzas, including one at five in the morning (and the other at 5.30) kept everyone going to the Sunday, whereupon IV '93 finished with some of us staying in Tassie, and others heading home. There is only one thing left to say, and that is, "See you there next (this) year!!"

Note: IV this year is being run by Monash in Victoria, therefore there is no excuse, you have to come and help us kick Monash's butt.

*Cheers!!!  
Richard*



## (VICWALK) Search and Rescue (S&R).

In the past year or two, there has been a renewed acquaintance between MUMC and 'Federation Search and Rescue'. Under the discretion of the Victorian Police who also have their own S&R, the Police call upon the Federation of Victorian Walking Club's ( known as 'Vicwalk' or the 'Federation' for short ) S&R section to aid in the searching of lost persons in bush regions, commonly in mountain areas.

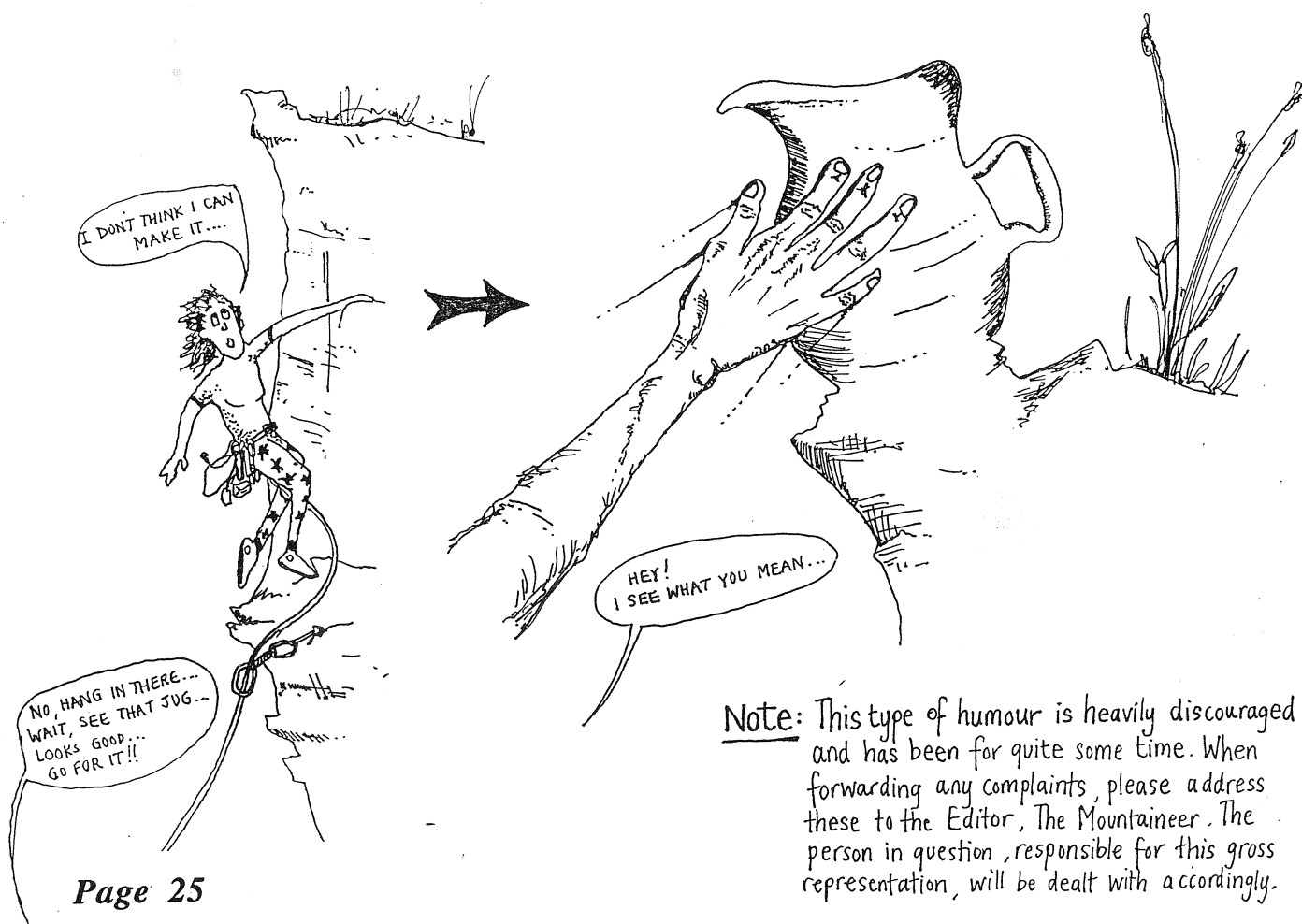
From the Federation, comprising around 55 walking clubs from around Victoria, exists the pool of highly experienced bushwalkers, ready to respond to a call out at very short notice. There are about 200 names listed on the call-out sheet, of which 20 are from MUMC. Traditionally, winter has been the busiest time for S&R, so the approaching snow season may be no exception.

While this past (financial) year has been unusually quiet due to a poor snow season, MUMC was well represented at the numerous practices conducted throughout the year in conjunction with the Police S&R squad. The highlight of the year was the prolonged and successful search for Commissioner O'Shea.

On 31st April/ 1st May 1994, a workshop / practise search was conducted in the Mt. Disappointment area, located only about an hour away by car north of Melbourne. Over 50 members - new and experienced alike - attended, participating in search techniques, steep slope rescue, bush stretcher making and general portable radio familiarisation and communication techniques. Surely the highlight of the weekend was the arrival of a police helicopter - members were informed of the real possibility of being winched into and out of bush areas, as well as being introduced to the helicopter's statistics and capabilities. The exciting demonstration of being winched from ground level to the helicopter was bestowed upon a most fortunate MUMC member!

Membership for S&R is open to any member able to meet the standards set by the Federation. Apart from taking part on searches, it provides the opportunity to meet many other people across a wide age range with very similar interests to your own. Whether you qualify or not, you are always welcome to attend the practices and workshops. Feel free to speak to me anytime for information. Upcoming events include the 'Steep Snow and Ice Rescue' on Mt Buller in August.

*Steven Bird, S&R Delegate*



Note: This type of humour is heavily discouraged and has been for quite some time. When forwarding any complaints, please address these to the Editor, *The Mountaineer*. The person in question, responsible for this gross representation, will be dealt with accordingly.

CLICK YOUR Heels and  
get on down to The

MUMC.

# BUSHDANCE



(REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED: BYO DRINK)

LOWER DINING HALL  
2<sup>ND</sup> SEP. (FRIDAY)

8 o'clock START, TICKETS  
ARE \$10, AT THE DOOR.

DRESS IN  
YOUR BEST  
BUSH GEAR!

## *A letter from W.A.*

I couldn't quite believe David's spectacular stance. He moved around a bulge in the cliff on a disappearing ledge, with the expansive Southern Ocean cutting a sharp horizon with a blue sky behind him. This was the first move onto Albatross (150, a classic climb deserving three stars, but only given one in the guidebook.

"Some absolute classics must remain knowledge of the locals" John Hurn, president of the climbing Association of Western Australia (CWA), remarked to me as I belayed David around the bulge. Even Western Australians admit their parochialism.

Now David was out of sight, and the two ropes disappearing around the bulge were my only reminders of his existence. I heard a sudden "woosh" which I was later to discover was the sound of the wind hitting him.

Unlike Esperance and Fremantle, which both have their respective seabreeze doctors, this wind was the result of "the west coast trough", causing raging easterlies. The wind was cold - exaggerated by the south facing cliff that never hosts the sun. When David was ready to belay me from, well, somewhere round the bulge, I was shocked by the wind. It left my hands cold and stiff - unpliant to the shapes of the rock. My wind breaking jacket was inadequate to make me comfortably warm. I found myself pushing flat against the rockface to avoid the main wroth of the wind.

There were several things about this cliff, called Peak Head, that reminded me of New Zealand. It had tremendous atmosphere that, up to then, I had only experienced in the hills of New Zealand. There, the constant sound of the wind and avalanches cracking always reminded me of the environment outside my focus on climbing. Peak Head had wind, but instead of avalanches, crashing waves at the base of the cliff.

South across the ocean, huge cyclones grow and decay in the atmosphere, generating large sea swell that

travels across the water to become broken waves on the granite. As I climbed higher, David now in sight, the spray of the thunderous waves seemed to reach up and nearly touch me.

The climb itself was spectacular. One that lent itself to the environment, involving delicate moves, forcing me to look down at every foot placement, and look further down to the seaspray and waves. The granite was not sharp and crystalline like the You Yangs. It was smooth, with incredible friction, almost soft to touch. Once I had traversed through delicate slabby moves, I jammed up a crack to David to lead the second pitch. More jamming up the same crack.

Perhaps the most spectacular climbing was on the third and last pitch. The sun was able to reach us and we were further from the reach of the spray. We could concentrate on the crux pitch (with no runners).

\*\*\*\*\*

Not much else done that day. Having finished the climb, we were content to lie and enjoy the sun at the top of the cliff. The sound of sea all around. No long weekend crowds hoarded the cliff. In a state that barely has more than a hundred serious climbers, there is no crowding at all. Adventure climbing, as even the locals like to call it. Peak Head is part of an "Adventure Climbing Zone" meaning strictly no bolts allowed. It's interesting to see the routes being done on natural protection. Serious stuff. Oh - if one does put up a bolted route, it won't be written up in any future guidebooks. That's the unbroken local law of the land.

Anyway, I'd better be on my merry little way. Hope you are enjoying the new clubrooms. Regards,

*Andrew Roberts*

## **"It's nice once you're in..."**

If you thought soprano was a good night out at the opera, think again. A visit to the sub- Antarctic waters of numerous creeks in the Alps, only reconfirmed the much awaited study of how to gauge the intensity of cold inflicted upon one's body....or freezing one's buns off.

### COMMENT

- |                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| - Ambient           | You're not sure whether to laugh or cry.            |
| - Cool              | You know that it's on the cool side of warm.        |
| - Cold              | Hey, it's cold.                                     |
| - Fresh             | You start to laugh, then cry.                       |
| - Refreshing        | Slight shivering is a bad omen.                     |
| - Bloody refreshing | Gee, it's nice once you're in.                      |
| - Invigourating     | What's that about hypothermia?                      |
| - Soprano           | You've just made it to the Australian Junior Choir. |
| - Enlightening      | You meet God for the first time.                    |

So next time someone asks you in for a swim on a trip, don't knock 'em back, show them how enlightened you can be.



# MUMC

LIMITED 50TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

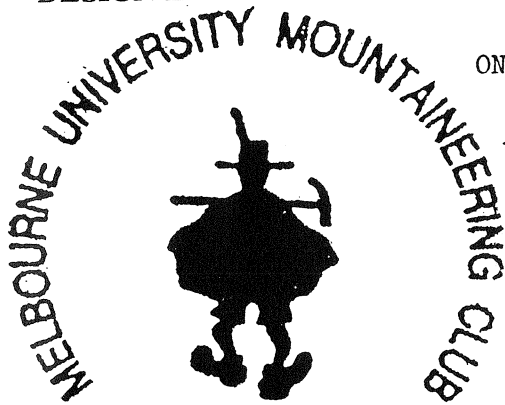
## T-SHIRTS

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SHORT SLEEVED \$15  
LONG SLEEVED \$17

AVAILABLE IN THE CLUBROOMS FROM 1 PM TO 2 PM  
T-SHIRTS ARE ALL WHITE.

FRONT DESIGN IS IN RED AND GREEN. BACK  
DESIGN IN BLACK



ONE SIZE FITS ALL  
(EXTRA LARGE  
ALSO AVAILABLE)

STRONG COTTON  
100%

FRONT >  
< BACK



# MUMC

**Sun, sand, wind, surf and driving. A four day circuit walk along a beach...What?**

During the Easter Break, Croajingalong National Park played host to four walkers, one each from MUMC, Monash BC, Latrobe and RMIT - all casual staff at a certain city gear store. Having worked/been at uni on Thursday, the prospect of the nine hour night drive to Croa in the Easter traffic was intimidating to say the least. Thus the start was delayed for a few hours' sleep. Finally at 3.30 am, in pouring rain, the journey began...

The lure of sand skiing had been in Dan's mind since January when mega trips were cancelled by others' employment at gear stores. It was, however, slowly coming together by Easter. This trip was used as a reconnaissance for future expeditions. The largest sand dunes in Victoria and NSW lie here - beyond Mallacoota where the border between the states meets the sea at Cape Howe. Forty metre high dunes, fifty metre high dunes? This is the place to be.

Access, however is a problem. So is water. So are snakes. So are ticks. So are stinging, scratchy, native vines. So is coming to work on Easter Tuesday, having just been in paradise for the previous four days.

Debates raged in the car on the way down as to access. Do we brave rips and sharks to swim across Mallacoota Inlet? Do we brave the locals for a lift across (or more importantly trust them to pick us up on Monday afternoon)? Or do we take a two wheel drive car and try to drive around the top of the inlet? In the end, in keeping with club tradition, the latter option was decided. Driving past the Vic / NSW border we turned off the Princes Highway onto some old logging roads. We were using maps, many of which were quite recent, on which the same road was marked in different directions on different maps. When they did agree, they failed to show the difference between an unnavigable track and a well made gravel road!!!

Eventually at about 1.00pm the Corolla (not Dan's, that broke down thinking of the trip) was stopped by unpassable track and a three hour walk to the beach followed. The last section was through a waist deep swamp ravaged by mosquitoes, but surprisingly, no leeches - well, none that we found anyway... The weather was very humid, and hot, and, bursting out onto a gently curving beach from horizon to horizon with wild surf, no wind and humidity haze omnipresent, we were surprised not to find a sign saying "Paradise - please enter".

There is a lot of history along this rugged and desolate coast line. Old posts from the days of a relay link from Gabo Island Lighthouse to Mallacoota and shipwrecks on every beach and point. Shipwrecks range from a twisted bit of metal sticking from the water, to boilers in the sand, to whole boats beached in the sand dunes (!) or, at the actual point of Cape Howe, rusted metal structures and engine parts strewn through the rocks.

Further along the beach, about level with Tullaberga Island, a gap appeared in the sand dunes. Thinking that it would provide a perfect campsite we investigated. Climbing up sand couloirs and spurs and along ridges, I was reminded of Mt Feathertop - in snow. Conditions were similar in the consistency underfoot. Soon, after much scrambling, the most spectacular view opened up. Turning our backs on the surf, the sand dunes, just pure white sand, swept for hundreds on metres into the low swamplands, which cower downstream of East Gippsland's largest freshwater lake. Beyond Lake Barracoota soared the Howe range. At less than 500 metres high, it's not overly huge, even by our standards, but everything else is so flat.

The water of Lake Barracoota is cool and clean - perfect for drinking. Later that night, a choice campsite with spectacular views in every direction was destroyed by a thunderstorm, forcing us lower down in the lee of a fierce wind. Walking the next day was easy with the strong wind behind us. As anybody who has done a beach walk knows, sand gets in everything, sleeping bag, pack, food, water, eyes, mouth... Especially if it's windy. Ultra-light packs made walking easier on the soft sand, a far cry from the old days of starting out with twenty kilo packs.

Fresh water is a problem in Croajingalong. Somewhat ironic since everything is seen in relation to the sea. Laden with eight litres of water between two would see us through into the next day, in time to refill at the Lake Wau Wauka outflow. Turning around the Gabo Island spit, where there are sand flats hundreds of metres long and wide, the real sand dunes came into view. Growing bigger and bigger they gave the impression of another world, somewhat surreal. Just the four of us in a void uninhabited by anything else.

After the photo session at the now bizarre cairn that marks the border (the sand dunes have blown out from underneath it) we slid toboggan-like on our packs down into NSW and to a 'normal' beach in a cove formed by fifty metre high sand dunes, thick impenetrable scrub and a rocky cliff running up into NSW. An amazing sheltered campsite, a beautiful respite from the howling gales that persisted all day.



The next morning was an inland walk - parallel to the coast we had just walked, but along the junction between the sand, scrub and forest. It was a desolate moonscape with a sea view. At times, the tops of swallowed forests poked out of the barren sand. Aboriginal middens abounded on the clear ground between some of the dunes. After a short scrub bash, we were left facing a thirty metre high dune with a gradient of well over 45 degrees. On all fours and sliding back down with each step, we eventually reached the top, only to be at the foot of a spur of another dune!

Returning to the Lake outflow for water, we discovered that it was salty from some wild storms! Impenetrable scrub meant that we could not walk upstream for it to be fresher. After much consternation, we decided to check a 'puddle' we had just passed between the dunes. About the size of a bedroom and about an inch deep, it was to provide the only hope of finding water so that we could continue on and climb the Howe ridge. Otherwise we would have to continue back to Lake Barracoota and miss out discovering Gippsland's best view. After killing the algae with iodine tablets, the water was just like your tap water - only crunchy and with a horrible taste!

After a dip in the wild surf, we headed inland on a sand blast into the forest to try and find the ridge. Contour navigation with a map with forty metre contour intervals kept our navigational skills busy. An thick scrubby, mosquito ridden climb of about two hours was brought to a sudden halt with some tricky rocky sections necessitating pack hauling. The view west from the summit of Howe Hill is spectacular. White curving beaches, Gabo and Tullaberga Islands, Mallacoota inlet and the headlands all the way down to Cape Conran on the very horizon.

A rocky and vegetated campsite was found (look there's a tree in the vestibule) for the last night in paradise. After straining the algae out of the drinking water by filtering it through our four day old t-shirts (I still don't know what was worse) we stargazed until it grew too cold. The next day farewelled the view for a ridge scrub bash through a uniquely vegetated part of Victoria (this ridge is the southernmost limit for many plant species on the East Coast). There were many unfamiliar trees and an unfamiliar vine (thank goodness) which was akin to a single strand of blackberry snaking its way through the forest, so it was invisible until it was too late...Four scratched hours later we rejoined the track which led us back to the cars, after a black snake and a navigational adventure reminiscent of Dan and Phil in the 1993 Victorian Rogaining championships...

Back near the cars real water!! A cool mountain stream! At about 2.00pm we headed back towards Melbourne. But just near Lakes Entrance,...scratch ...scratch ...scratch. "Um Scott, can you pull over and get out the metho, I've got a tick. Pull over somewhere private so no-one can see" I need not elaborate, and it should be obvious that ticks like warm humid places on the body. Bush ticks are unavoidable, but they do not often provide any problems.

All in all, the perfect walk if you have four full days to spare, and if you're into photography, it's paradise. Have a reliable car though, it's 1100kms return. Take mosquito repellent if you are going to camp inland anywhere, the beach is O.K. Take a five litre water bladder too, don't even think about taking bottles. Inland, good gaiters are a necessity because of the snakes. Keep your eyes peeled on the trip folders in the clubrooms, I'm going back this winter sometime.

*Dan Colborne*



*Croajingolong's beautiful coastline.*

### **The A to Z of Paddling**

**A** - is for Amphitheatre, the rapid on the Mitchell that can be quite exciting, especially at 3.0m (see also T)  
**B** - beers, the essence of any paddler, to be consumed in vast quantities, and preferably skolled. B is also for boat race, the ideal location for beer consumption.  
**C** - stands for crazy, which we paddlers like to think we are, also for the Clyde, the best place for B.  
**D** - debacles, debauchery, dislocations, frequent activities on club kayaking trips.  
**E** - stands for eddy, that thing that always make you fall in and look really stupid. E is also for excellent, what paddling really is.  
**F** - is flat, the bane of all paddlers, and also for fat, another nightmare.  
**G** - stands for gnarly, the only way to describe a trip to any other club member upon return to Melbourne, even if it was a nightmare.  
**H** - is for huge, also useful when used as in G, and also for Hopkins, one river I suggest you don't bother paddling.  
**I** - Indi, the river to paddle, also I.V. a great opportunity to meet other paddlers, have fun and consume lots of B.  
**J** - is for jelly, which paddlers must have a fetish for and enjoy rolling around in.  
**K** - is for kayak, the things we paddle, and also for the King, another river we paddle.  
**L** - levels, the curse of the paddlers and what we all hang out for in anticipation of a rise.  
**M** - stands for Mitta, Mitchell, Murrumbidgee, all great rivers. It also stands for munched and middle aged, two of a paddler's biggest nightmares.  
**N** - is for nightmare, to be used in the expression "what a nightmare", often used to describe getting to and from the trip, or all the flat on the Mitchell. Nosestand is also what N stands for.  
**O** - is for obnoxiousness, a virtue of all paddlers.  
**P** - paddling, the subject of this ridiculous article.  
**Q** - is for quiet, the opposite of O, something kayakers are not likely to be.  
**R** - stands for rapids, the objects of a paddlers desire.  
**S** - stopper, a perfect companion to T, S is also for surf kayaking, which is great fun.  
**T** - is for trashed, very similar to munched, something to be avoided when paddling.  
**U** - is for unreal and unbelievable, which all paddling trips are.  
**V** - is for vendetta, which some other people seem to hold against us.  
**W** - woos, whitewater and waterfalls, the first one not mixing well with the last two.  
**X** - is for XXXX, the beer that is drunk when I.V. is in Queensland.  
**Y** - stands for Yarra, the drain near Melbourne that we run beginner trips on.  
**Z** - ZZZZZZ, something you will tend to do after a paddling trip. Z is also for zebra, which you are not likely to see on a paddling trip.

### **Canoe Polo (Autumn 1994).**

It was good to see the enthusiasm at the start of this year towards canoe polo, with three MUMC teams entered into the Canoe Polo autumn competition, in C, E and G grades. It was also pleasing to see an all girls team (of whom only one member had played before) try their luck against the masses. What was even more scary (than an all girls team) was that they actually started winning more games than the other two teams all of whom had played at least one season before. Unfortunately, their winning streak seemed to end when, and I won't mention any names, one of them thought they might have a better time in Tonga, sea kayaking.

The E grade team also started off well, winning five games in a row (its a miracle), with the first goal being scored by our goalie, Jono Wells. For each of those games we had a different five or six members play each week. Once everything started to settle down and we had a steady team, we started losing (don't ya just hate that). To top everything off, one team member tried to run over a car on his bike and broke his arm, and the canoeing convener, Pedro, thought that it might be a good idea to get suspended for dislocating his shoulder in the pool.

Of course the debacle didn't end there, one of our E grade team members thought it might be a good idea to go to the Clyde before games, of course I don't need to mention what happened as a result of that. Funny that he started doing this at approximately the same time that the girl mentioned above went to Tonga. We were all surprised that he didn't either get sent off or beaten up in the car park outside for all the obnoxious comments that were made to the opposition.

It was good to see the "C" team keep up with the club tradition and having lost almost every game, good work guys, keep it up. Its a shame that some of the beginners who appeared to be improving at the start of the year, have either lost interest or lost contact with the more experienced paddlers, we expect you all back this semester. Any one else who has the will to be drowned, rammed, pushed, hit and have a good time, come along to trainings on Tuesdays and make yourself known. Of course you could just come to 7 eleven afterwards for the mandatory group slurp on a slurpee, or on the colder nights, milkshakes/pizza at Twins or beers/scotch and nachos at the Clyde (after the game RAK, not before)!

Marcel



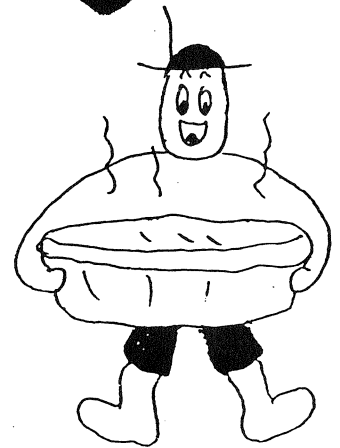
See what mountaineers do away from Uni..... caught in action and preserved on film, at the

MUMC annual

# PIE & SLIDE NIGHT



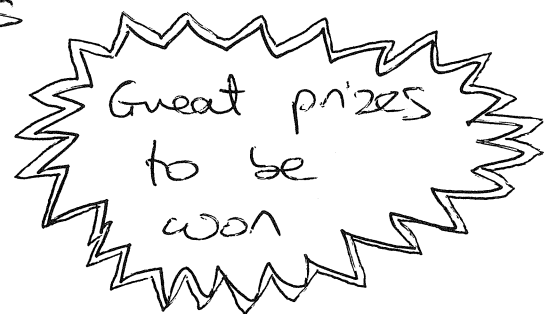
\* WEDNESDAY 24<sup>th</sup> AUG.  
AT 6pm - BOARDROOM.



Slides can

be entered in the following categories

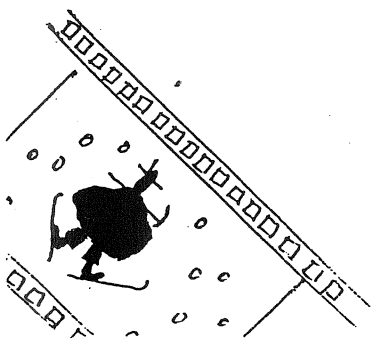
- people in the wilderness
- personalities
- landscape
- action
- flora and fauna.



ALSO - Photo collage.

+ Speakers from the Wilderness Society and Ski-Touring Ass. of Victoria, and guest judges.

Cost only \$5





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15% discount for MUMC  
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All your outdoor needs  
including  
tents, rucsacks, boots, stoves,  
socks, thermals, ropes, rock  
gear, sleeping bags, and on and  
on....



**Melbourne University Mountaineering Club**

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**GEAR HIRE CHARGES**

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**New Gear Hire Rates as from May 1994**

CONDITIONS: Gear may only be hired on club trips

Upon hiring gear, a gear hire form must be correctly filled out, and a student card, MET concession card or licence must be left. A phone number must be left on the gear hire form.

Upon returning gear, gear must be clean and innersheets washed.

Maximum fees exist so that those who need to hire large amounts of gear do not suffer financially. Skis/poles/boots must be paid for ON TOP of the existing maximum fee.


---

ITEM	WEEKEND/DAY RATE	WEEKLY RATE
Packs	\$3	\$5
Daypacks	\$1	\$2
Coats	\$1	\$2
Goretex Coats	\$2	\$4
Stoves	\$1	\$2
Fuel bottles	\$1	\$2
Tents	\$4	\$6
Snowtents	\$5	\$8
Sleeping bag + innersheet	\$2	\$4
Snowbags + innersheet	\$3	\$5
Gaiters	\$1	\$2
Overpants	\$1	\$2
Overmits	\$1	\$2
Sleeping mats	\$1	\$2
MAXIMUM FEE	\$10	\$18

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Compasses and Group First-Aid Kits are FREE.

A group first-aid kit and manual must be taken on all trips!



· FIFTY YEARS ·

The

**M.U.M.C. 50th**  
**Anniversary Dinner**

will be held on  
the 8th of October

at th

**Albert Reception Centre.**

The cost for student members  
of M.U.M.C. is \$45.

For non-members, the price is \$50.

This includes all food and drink.

The dinner starts at 7pm.

Dress is neat casual.

See Amber for tickets.

