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MOUNTAINEER

THE MAGAZINE OF THE MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY MOUNTAINEERING CLUB.
ORIENTATION WEEK 1995

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Editorial.

Welcome to the first edition of the Mountaineer for 1995. Traditionally, the first edition of the new year is the "Look what I got up to over summer" magazine. Unfortunately, for this edition, everyone is still on their epics in New Zealand, Tassie or Europe. That had better mean some highly exaggerated tales of debacles and super-human feats of endurance find their way into my file for the next edition or I'll be really pissed off.

I'd like to thank Andy Gaff and Alan Daley for helping to photocopy the last edition of the Mountaineer. Too bad you're not around for this one guys. Just how do you get the photocopy machine to work double sided? Ahhhhhh!

On a more serious note, do all you can to prevent forests being turned into woodchips.

-Amber.

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Dave Wilson on the summit of Shingo Peak (6025m), Lhaul Valley, Northern India.

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Peter Kreisner leading XI (19) at Mt Arapiles.

FROM THE PREZ :

This is destined to be another all-amazing, absolutely sensational year of MUMC.
Join in as many MUMC activities as you can.
Don't miss out on the action.
Go on lots of trips.
Have fun.

Banana Bradshaw.

MUMC Committee Members.

President Kate Bradshaw.
Vice President Scott Edwards
Treasurer Russell Smith
Secretary Sam Rollings
Assistant Secretary Rebecca Starling

Rockclimbing Convenor Lisa Flew
Caving Convenor Dan Colborne
Skiing Convenor Geoff Sinclair
Bushwalking Convenor Alan Daley
Kayaking Convenor Richard Kjar

Conservation Anouk Fawns
Publications Amber Mullens
Safety Andy Gaff
Gear Store Manager Charlie Buttery
General Member Nicki Munro
MUMC Hut Warden Dave Wilson

Amendment.

Big mistake in the last edition. Steve Bird helped with the organisation of Discovery Day along with Lisa and Scott. Thanks heaps Steve. Hopefully you were wearing a helmet at the time. The thanks given to Alex has been rescinded, especially as he wasn't even there on the day.

Achievements.

Congratulations to the MUMC people who beat Monash and brought the Kayaking Intervarsity Trophy back to its rightful home at Melbourne University. Melbourne also won the Down River Trophy and the Rapid Race. Well done to those people who really were fab kayakers and did really well in their races and also to those people who either couldn't kayak to save themselves or who were learning but who put in a great effort and scored a few extra points for Melbourne. Unfortunately, MUMC put up a poor showing in the Barff Road Classic. The Women's boat race team made it to the semis but the lousy Men's team were knocked out in the first round. Congratulations must go to Litz though, who competed admirably in both teams.

Well done to and thankyou to our team manager, Richard Kjar and also to Kate Bradshaw, Dan Coulbourne, Anouk Fawns, Andy Gaff, Peter Gargiulo, Marcel Geelan, Andrew Lean, Brenton Marshall, Scott Marshall, Litz Mosbauer, Amber Mullens, Keira Perrott-Smith, Stuart Richardson, Lara Ross, Steve Simmons, Russell Smith, Lucas Speed, Rebecca Starling, Andy Waters and Scott Wiltshire. It was good to see Nigel Prior and Johnno turn up for the dinner (and help in the search).

Congratulations also to our oldest undergraduate, Russell Smith, who pulled the big 53% and 70% out of the bag for his final exams and so finished his arts degree and made his grad. dip. legal. Russell has also managed to pay off his Visa card thanks to another stroke of luck - a truly remarkable feat.

Congratulations to Kate Bradshaw who made the Dean's Honours List for being in the top 5% of students, proving that not only is she a great president and champion kayaker, but that there's a brain somewhere as well.

Congratulations to Rohan Schaap, Dave Wilson and Steve Carter on their successful attempt at Shingo Peak (6025m) in Northern India. They also attempted Hanuman Tibba (6200) with Dave Kjar, Dave Burnett and Nick Gust but, apparently, bad weather stopped them.

Well done to Litz Mosbauer on being accepted into the Antarctic course in Hobart. We'll all be sorry to see you leave, but we hope you break your paddle if ever you compete against MUMC at IV. Bye Litz. Don't forget to get a house big enough to accommodate us when we visit.



Dave Clarke, Rohan Schaap and Dave Wilson on the summit of Mt Bogong after a day of skiing.

The First Timers Guide To The Galaxy Of MUMC.

At MUMC, we understand that first year Uni can be a bit daunting. That's the sort of caring sort of guys we are (I should point out that new first year girls should learn to discriminate between caring MUMC people and those predatory MUMC males waiting to snap up young things, for example, Dan and Phil). What do you do at lunchtimes and on weekends when you don't know anyone new and you want to ditch those friends from your old school who know too much about you? Where can you go without being hassled by the religious or political nuts? If you make your way over to the MUMC clubrooms, you will meet other lonely, desperate people like yourselves. No, no, I didn't mean that. You'll meet people who get a kick out of living, who enjoy the wild places and the wild times that can be had. Anyway, you've paid your membership, so you may well check the club out or that's \$15 down the drain. It's up to you to make the first step but this guide will help you understand the goings on of MUMC and make life a lot easier. Fear not, most MUMC members end up graduating, so it is possible to mix club life and study.

The Club.

The Melbourne University Mountaineering Club (M.U.M.C.) was founded 51 years ago by a group of students and academics. It is one of the biggest clubs on campus with over 500 members. M.U.M.C. is an amalgamation of a number of individual sports, the major ones are: skiing, bushwalking, mountaineering, rock climbing, kayaking, caving, and rogaining. Sea kayaking and mountain biking are also gaining in popularity. Rogaining is a sport similar to orienteering where you have a certain time (usually 24hrs) to find some checkpoints. It was developed by the club some years ago and is now international.

The clubrooms are found on the far side of the cricket oval. Just walk past the cricket nets near the sports union and keep going until you reach the light green buildings. The clubrooms are open every lunch time and also on Tuesday night between 7 and 8pm. Head over and pull up a seat, find out the latest gossip, or have a game of hackie sack. If the door is still locked, just hang around until someone with a key turns up.

The symbol of the club is a solid black figure of an old style alpine mountaineer carrying an ice axe. This is the "Oxo Man" and his picture should be drawn in any log books when you make your entry. This lets other people know (warns) that members of the Melbourne University Mountaineering Club are in the area and that they should probably move else where if they want to have a good sleep.

Trips.

So you want to learn to rock climb or whatever...In the clubrooms, there are a number of green folders that contain the dates and details of upcoming trips. There are normally several trips happening every weekend. A lot of trips at the start of the year are pitched at beginners and you should definitely go on these trips to learn the tricks from more experienced people and to meet everyone. If you want to rock climb, grab the rockclimbing folder and flick through the pages until you find one that suits you. Take note of the standard, the date and importantly, the time of the trip meeting. Write your name down and then go to the meeting. This is a must. Often, too many people put their names down for a trip. Don't be discouraged if the trip limit is 10 and you are number 20 on the list because a lot of people don't turn up to the meeting and are crossed off the list.

The trip meeting will decide things such as who's coming, who's bringing a car, who's bringing the beer, what else you have to bring, and often hiring out the equipment you may need. All of this gear is kept at the clubrooms except the kayaking stuff which is kept in the boatsheds. The boatsheds can be found in that tunnel that goes between Tin Alley and the tennis courts. If you have a car, we will really like you. Car owners get reimbursed wear and tear money so don't be afraid to bring it. This money is worked out on the basis of some mathematical formula that seems to have been devised by Einstein or someone like that.

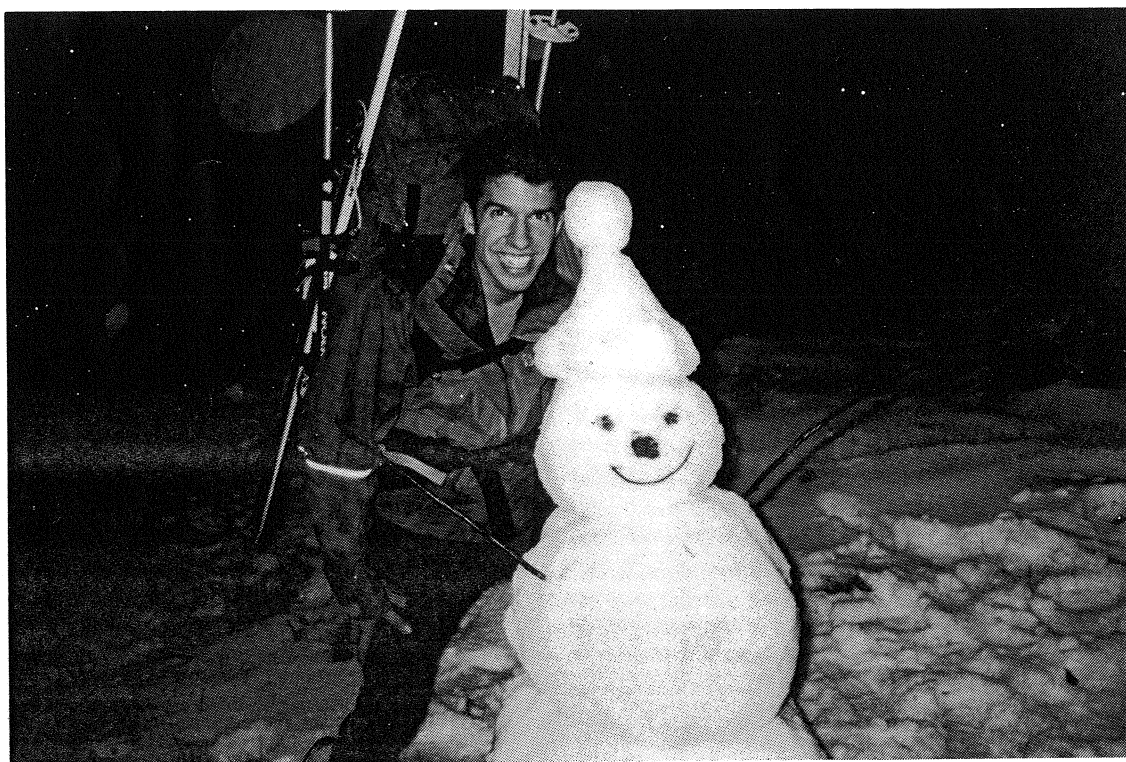
On most day trips, you should not leave home without these; a change of warm clothes; a water bottle; food; extra food; matches; map and compass; sunscreen; toilet paper; a hat; a gortex; a sense of humour; a visa card.

The Committee.

The committee is elected in July at the Annual General Meeting (AGM), therefore it is very important to turn up on this night, and anyway, we go to the pub afterwards. A trip meeting should not be held at the same time in order to pick up a few extra votes. There is a convenor for each of the major sports, a president and vice pres, a secretary, as assistant secretary, a treasurer, a person each for publications, conservation and safety, as well as a gear store member and two general members. The committee meets every month but anyone else is welcome to turn up. We usually go to the pub or out for a cheap meal after them too.

The Mountaineer.

The Mountaineer is the official magazine of the Mountaineering club. All articles and photos on any facet of club life are needed as well as any slush comments and gossip. Stories should be apple format if possible and placed in the publications file in the filing cabinet top drawer. It is published once each 6 weeks as long as I'm in power and a crappy prize will be given to the photo that I think should go on the cover. Bribes and nepotism help. The Mountaineer is available from the clubrooms at no cost. In the middle of the year, a bumper edition is sent to your home which will inform you of the coming AGM.



Dan Colborne and friend on a midnight ascent of Mt Stirling.

Calender of Events.

The start of the mountaineering year really kicks off with O-week. Check for social events that may be planned for this time. Snap up the T-shirt, have an abseil, sign up for heaps of trips and watch out for those sleazy guys..

The next big event is probably the type in night where as many people as possible type the details of the members into computers. Very boring, but then we all head out for free pizza and then to the pub.

A first off combined Melbourne/Monash/Latrobe event in April will see us head out of our safe area and into enemy territory near Monash. The plan is to hire out a surf rescue thingo. MUMC members should come armed with ice axes and the like in case it is a trap.

The Annual General Meeting is followed by a big night at Naughtons. Scotch and cokes on Russell's Visa.

The bush dance occurs at some stage and is not as daggy as it sounds. Come and laugh at the unco-ordination of your friends.

Pie and Slide night involves bringing your favorite slides of your trips and getting prizes if they're any good. Photos of guinea pigs are not normally accepted unless there are exceptional circumstances. The judge is normally someone from outside the club who knows something about photography, but like all MUMC social events- don't take it too seriously. (Well, I thought Phil's photos were good).

Without doubt, the social event of MUMC is the Midnight Ascent. Unlike other clubs who have their ball at some cheap, scuzzy place (that MUMC may attend anyway, and show off the 'beer jug down the ducted heating' trick), this formal event involves a midnight walk up to MUMC hut on Mount Feathertop at the time of the full moon in August. The next day is spent recovering or skiing or looking for Russell's group. Come Saturday night, everyone dresses up in all their finery and feasts upon succulent dishes and then drinks as much as they managed to carry up. This normally occurs with a number of debaucherous games. Obnoxious people are tied up, and this may or may not be part of a game. Places for this event are limited to 30 so you must be quick and able to carry a slab up for me.

The second annual President's breakfast will occur at some stage after the AGM, if the new president decides to keep up the tradition that Kate started.

A big social event that involves participating in a sport is the Kayaking Intervarsity. This event goes for a week and culminates in a dinner. Games of Hide and Seek should be kept to a minimum. The 1995 IV is being hosted by Sydney University possibly in northern NSW. Start saving your pennies. MUMC reclaimed the trophy from Monash Bushwalking Circus in 1994, so we have to put in a big effort to keep it. Naturally, it helps if you can kayak a bit, but come along even if you can't. Girls especially should make the effort because they seem to be our weak point in all events except the Boat Race where the men put up a pathetic performance. Guys who can skull a beer and paddle are desperately required.

The final event for the year is the Christmas BBQ. It usually involves the normal BBQ things if someone remembers to bring a BBQ. Special dishes of wax, jelly or avocado may appear.

CAR TIPS

From Kate,
your friendly MUMC car expert.

Car Tip #2: Long Drives.

Many MUMC trips involve a long drive. Some people object to long drives, especially when the hours spent in the car exceed the total hours spent at the final destination. However, as a general rule, the greater the amount of time invested in fuming up a freeway, the nicer the area for the eventual trip. A long drive can be endured, or it can be enjoyed. Below are some suggestions as to how you can maximise your enjoyment of a long drive.

1. Talking.

Talking to the other people in the car definitely helps pass the time. If you can't think of anything to talk about, utilise one of the MUMC Standard Topics of Conversation. These include: Other club trips you've been on, Other people in the club, Other club trips other people in the club have been on, Who's going out with who in the club, Who's secretly in love with who in the club, Gear, Other people's new gear, Russell getting lost on Midnight Ascent. It should be noted that if you are in a car with a certain Mr A. Gaff, then you will be spared the onerous burden of choosing a topic of conversation, since one person in the car will be talking, and everyone else will be listening.

2. Music.

When you run out of things to talk about, it is a good idea to listen to music. Music for a club trip is generally loud and obnoxious. Ensure your radio is tuned into an appropriate channel before you turn it on. If your radio is switched to 3TT when you turn it on then your reputation within MUMC could be seriously marred. Unless you are prepared to survive Country Radio - '101 Great Truckin' Favourites', or 5 hours of singalong with Kate and Lara, tapes are definitely an advantage.



Richard Kjar, Lara Ross, Litz Mosbauer, Anouk Fawns and Russell Smith, South West Tasmania.

3. Driving.

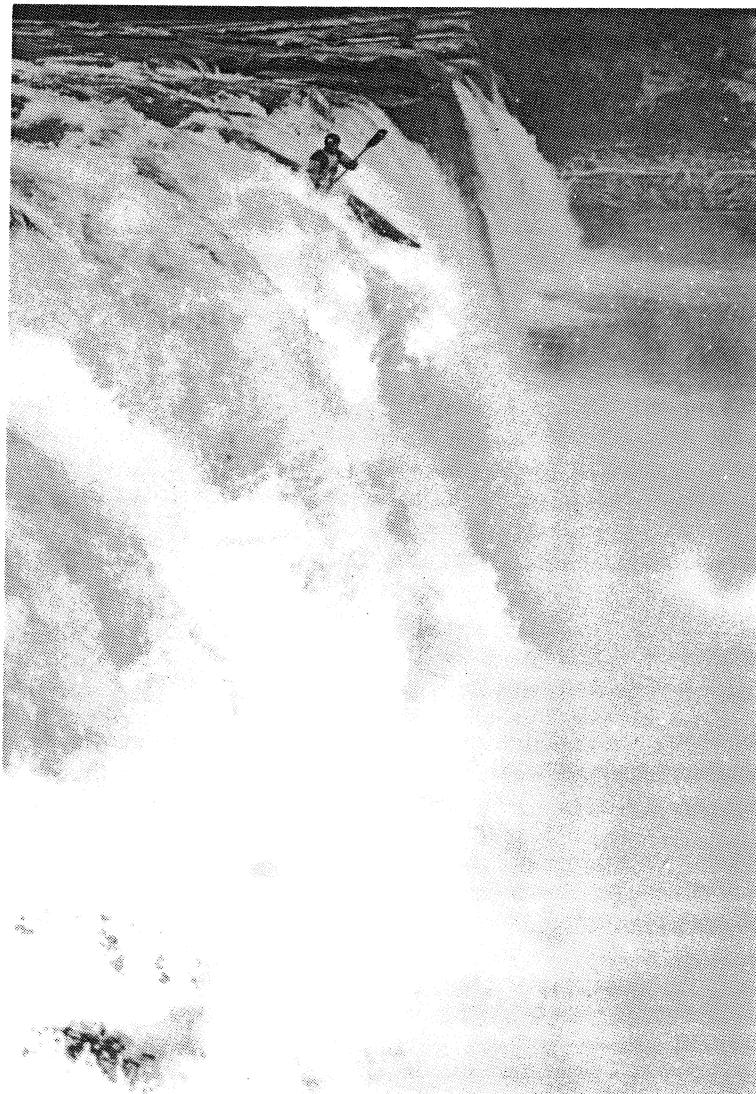
Driving the car often delays the onset of boredom, especially if you're not entirely sure where you're going. Nonetheless, being the driver is usually not a popular option at the end of a club trip when everyone is tired. If you are selected as driver in these circumstances, experience suggests that if you pull over often enough to walk around and stretch - say every ten minutes - someone else will probably offer to take over the wheel.

4. Eating.

When you sit motionless and look out a car window for many hours without a breather you get pretty hungry, so it is important, for safety reasons, to eat a lot of high energy food when you're on a long drive. Don't be lulled into thinking you're not hungry. You may feel completely fat after eating \$2 worth of chips in Euroa, but lack of appetite is likely to be a hormonal response to a severe drop in your blood sugar level.

5. Quiet Times.

Every long drive has its quiet times (except possibly if there's a particular person in the car whose identity shall remain open to speculation). Quiet times are usually spent thinking or sleeping. The most obvious thing to think about is what you've forgotten to bring, and whether it matters - usually it won't. Even if it does matter it is unlikely that there's anything you can do about it. You could also think about how to work out car costs - my next favourite topic after keys. Sleep is probably a better use of this time.



Dave Kjar paddling Maruia Falls, New Zealand.

MUMC Odds and Ends.

The big news is that there are now tampons in the first aid kits. Now we'll all get toxic shock syndrome....

New T-shirts are available as you read this. Don't be seen on club trips without them. Snap them up at the O-week table or see someone at the club rooms. Surprisingly, Steve Curtain drew the winning design. Just how many petzels does that boy need. He will have to be handicapped next year to give the rest of us a chance. For some reason, MUMC does not accept Visa, so bring along plenty of cash to buy the shirt and maybe a few stickers. No self respecting car leaves home without an MUMC sticker affixed to the back window.

Phil would like us all to know that "OXO" is contained in word 'obnoxious'.

We have already spent half of our \$3000 government grant on restoring the track at Mt. Feathertop. The remainder of the money will be used next year.

New tents have been purchased for climbing and kayaking trips, so now there is no excuse for taking a snow tent on these trips. They are beautiful and silver.



Dan Colborne and Lisa Flew leading a caving trip at Labertouche.

A Pill For Every Purpose

PART ONE OF DEBACLES INTERNATIONAL'S GREAT INDIA EPIC

By David Burnett

I didn't know what to expect, so I expected the worst.

This was a good move, it made everything that happened better. Even being kidnapped by a fleet of surly tuk-tuk drivers an hour after arriving in the country had a kind of manic hilarity. Being driven round the streets of Delhi at warp five at two am after seven hours on a plane was a gas! The air was hot and fetid; the streets were lined with (sleeping) bodies; the road was littered with rocks, rubbish and monster pot holes; donkeys would amble out from between a burnt-out car wreck and a speeding bus, causing our kidnapper to swerve violently in his screaming path, choosing for no obvious reason another dark side-street filled with shadows and menace down which he took one pissed off Kjar Bear and a giggling Burnie. The idea was to frighten us with a night time tour of the sinister lanes of Delhi, after which we would be only too relieved to pay an obscene amount of money to sleep in some sleazy hotel in the sticks run by the tuk-tuk driver's cousin. When Rohan and Nick had had their bus stopped on the road from the airport two weeks previously they had cleared a path through the melee of gangsters with a couple of ice axes. We were unable to pull the same trick, loaded down as we were with much of the MUMC gear store; we didn't feel much like carrying it five kilometres into town in 35 degrees heat and 100% humidity.

The bastards won. Not only did they get our ride, but we did end up paying an obscene amount of money to stay at their cousin's sleazy hotel in the sticks. Fuck.

The road to the end of the world does not bypass Delhi. Even at dawn a trip through its streets is like riding a microwave with a view, though at least the view is interesting. We weren't going to hell – we were heading straight for heaven and we wanted to get the hell out of Delhi, no fucking around. With this in mind, Steve, Bear, Cruise –control (sophisticated auto-pilot) and Burnie gathered at the bus station to find someone to make our day. The six am bus didn't exist (as if it would) and our attention soon turned to the throng of cab drivers snapping at our heels.

'Where would you like to go sir?'

'Manali'.

'No problem sir. I myself drive there every day sir.'

'Yeah, right. How long will it take?'

'Five hours sir. Maximum five hours. I myself drive there every day sir'.

'What?! Manali is at least 14 hours away!'

'Yes, that is right sir. Fourteen hours. That is how long it will take. Sixteen or seventeen. Quite correct.'

'Where is the cab and the driver?'

'Just right over there sir, that fine vehicle driven by my very own son. The best driver in Delhi. Please sir, give me your bags. I will escort them personally. Everything is fine'.

After the boss-man arranged for one of his flunkies to load up our bags, we found ourselves chugging northward out of Delhi (with, needless to say, a completely different man behind a completely different wheel). We were four big boys and a driver in an old, smoky Ambassador taxi and weren't going to stop for anyone. All across the Indian plain we chugged and swerved, ducked and weaved. If India was a smell it would be the bitter sweet of diesel fumes; if it was a sound, it would be the blaring of a car horn, Doppler-shifting past you at high speed. Up into the foothills of the greatest range on earth we chuggered and chuffed, grinding through passes and past engineering works that make the Snowy scheme look like a broken water-main; we pulled over twice for Cokes, the latter in a half-hearted attempt to prevent our nodding driver from sending us plummeting into a ravine. Our driver and his contraption were clearly beasts of the plain and had almost certainly never seen an incline greater than that of a Delhi driveway (if such things exist) before. We averaged 12 kilometres per hour, for hour after fucking hour. The damage he was doing to Bear's sense of driving elan (not to mention his own gear box) almost saw him unseated in a coup d'etat, even Steve could have driven better. Instead, Bear took the only sensible approach – a couple of caps of codeine helped to ease the pain and float us to our destination....

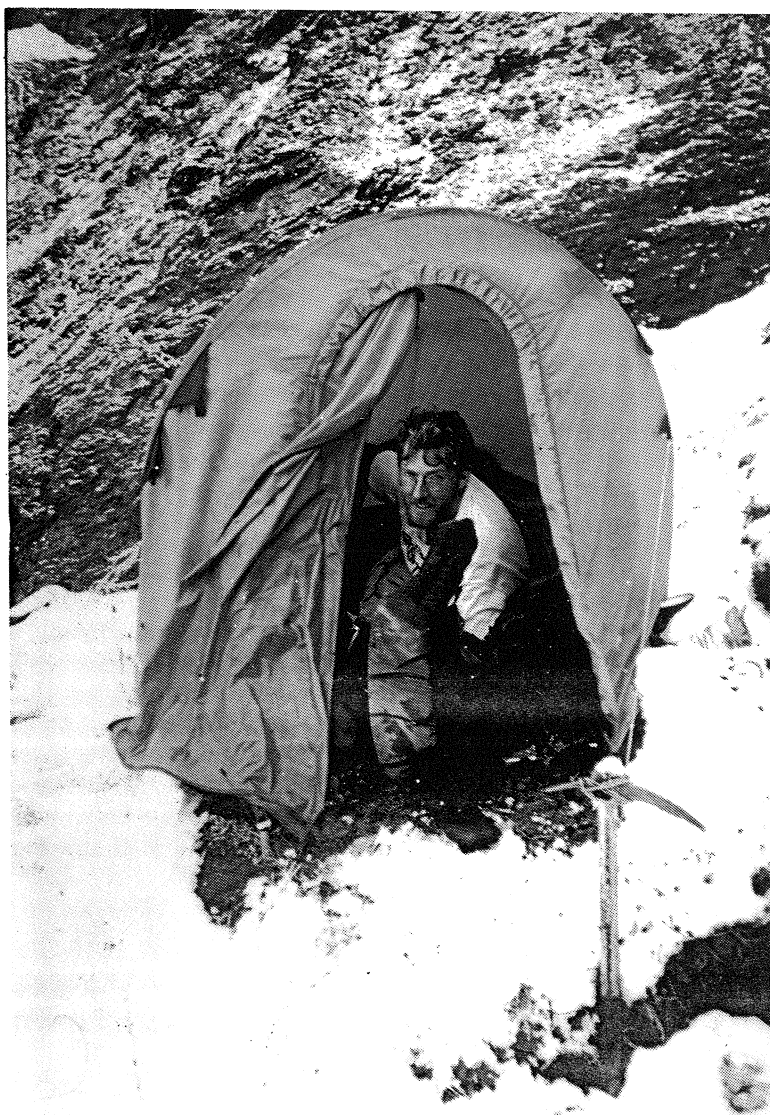
...which was Manali.

Down to old Manali (where the streets are paved with pot)
and the post-monsoons is balmy (tho' it can get rather hot)
Came a band of OXO mountaineers
Popping pills and drinking beers
Eyes affixed upon the peaks
Hurry now, we've just three weeks.

The view from the third storey balcony of the Hotel Everest in Manali is particularly pleasant when experienced at dawn from the depths of an arm chair with a plate full of breakfast and a head full of chemicals. Above the tangle of shoddy houses and 'hotels' which rolls and froths along the milky-green course of the mighty Beas River, the first angelic breath of sunlight catches a layer of mist millimetres above the steep, green ridge of a casually 6000 metre peak nestling on the far side of the sleeping Kulu Valley. The busy little town of the night before is quiet now, tho' not for long, and the occasional crow of a crow can be heard echoing down from the ancient temple gardens a little way up the hill behind the hotel. On the pavement three flights of rickety stairs below our rooms are the chalky black gunpowder stains that are a reminder of our attempt of the previous evening to burn down a town of 8000 people with fireworks. Next to me on the balcony our new companions -Nick and Rohan have been here for two weeks -are recounting how many times they've had a crap in the last fortnight while Steve lays out tens of thousands of dollars worth of climbing gear in the beautiful morning sunlight and the hotel owner -who has just sheepishly brought us all apple juices -attempts to restore the electricity to his establishment by poking the top of an adjacent power pole with an insulated spanner and feather duster.

Ahh...life in Manali.

A couple of days 'acclimatisation' at 2000 metres was definitely in order, thought Burnie. Steve had other ideas: hours after meeting our local guide and porter we were unexpectedly on our way again, pushing as far up the Kulu Valley as the road would take us, shuddering up some of the busiest, most unstable, steepest, poorly made, highest, most insane roads in the world in a tiny Japanese mini-van with wheels the size of a Tonka toy and an engine that sounded like it was lubricated with sand. (The previous week -Rohan cheerily told us - while returning across the high pass to the north of the valley, he had been in his 'best crash yet' when the truck in which he was hitching ran head first into a fuel tanker and came to rest with two wheels dangling over a 1000 meter precipice).



The vehicle disgorged us a few hours walk from the arm of the valley that would lead us to the towering amphitheatre of our Base camp. That day the six of us slogged up the wiggly path, each acclimatising at his own rate: Rohan who had just spent 15 nights above 4000 metres, felt distinctly trippy from the abundance of oxygen at low altitude; Burnie who had a worrying bout of altitude sickness a short distance from the Trout Farm at Harrierville (altitude 500 metres) two weeks before thought he may have left his lungs in the Hotel Everest along with the spare Kerosene. That night was spent amongst the boulders at the foot of the huge glacier which empties out of the cirque of peaks into which we were heading. The following day we would have to cross this glacier, but that first night under canvas (or Gore-Tex) in the Himalayas we had other concerns. The group's dynamo, Steve, was groaning, ashen-faced, in the door of his tent. Burnie, Nick and Cruise-control were making periodic trips into the night to re-unite their meals with the cosmic mandala. The solution, as always, was to swallow pills. Steve took a random dose of everything in his 'bowel kit' and little tabs of codeine, paracetamol, iodine and fuck-knows-what-else flinted dully in the night. The evening dose of Dymox -the anti-altitude wonder drug- was distributed to everyone except Bear, who said he would stick with Panadine Forte.

The author, 'Dave 'Burnie' Burnett,
at Camp 1, Haunman Tibba,
Himachal.

Next day, Steve was up and at em again. Not far behind our camp the track climbed steeply, zig zaging endlessly up the moraine ridge that marked the edge of the glacier. Trudging up the slope of grass and wild strawberries –sweating and gasping for breath in the thinning air –it was easy to believe that it was an ordinary hill. Reaching the top with some relief, (Burnie thought he was going to Die), the truth revealed itself. The glacier itself was littered with enormous, teetering rocks suspended above sheets of dirty ice and melt pools. The whole contraption would occasionally groan under its steady progress down the valley and the frequent sound of stones tinkling down an ice slope made it sound as if we were being followed by a stealthy goat. The path through the maze of rock and ice was so well blazed that Rohan, Beer and Burnie only got lost once.

Dropping off the glacier was like tip toeing into the guts of a big cathedral. To our right ran a 300 metre high ridge of rocks and grass. This curved away to become the skyline if Shittidar (5800 metres), the summit ice-field of which swept down to meet the green of the amphitheatre by a round, still lake. Left of this the horizon broke into a series of nested ridges and peaks before climbing steadily up above an arm of the glacier to become our objective: Hunuman Tibba (6020 metres). The battlements of that mountain thrust into the pond from near its summit and then fell dramatically to meet the glacier 2000 metres below. We all looked at it and thought: "You have got to be kidding!"



Rohan Schaap,
Steve 'wired' Carter
having a break on
the ascent of Shingo Peak,
LaHaul Valley,
Northern India.

As the sun plummeted below the rim of mountains and the temperature plummeted with it, we pitched our tents and swore at our stoves.

The slog up the glacier had demonstrated one thing: we needed a touch more acclimatisation. Having moved from Delhi (50 metres in elevation) to Manali (2000 metres) to Base Camp (3200 metres) in three days, not even a supercharged team of street-monsters such as ourselves could do without a day or so of red blood cell production. On our second day in the amphitheatre we hauled ourselves up a grassy ridge that rose endlessly ahead of our weary eyes to meet the summit snow field of Shittidar. Because there are no trees at that altitude the only way of judging size and distance is by guessing the size of rocks or trying to spot a lost goat or human figure somewhere amongst the looming landscape. As everything is also bigger there (big rocks, big mountains, not big goats), this usually means that you under estimate just how far that 'nearby' cliff is. You can walk for 20 minutes and the bloody thing doesn't get any closer.

The day was perfect; the air was about 5 degrees, the sun was warm on our sweating backs, we were unencumbered by packs or ice gear. Each fifty metres of altitude gained opened up new panoramas of giant mountains. We finally slumped to a halt in a fabulous alpine meadow at 3800 metres. That night, as it would be every night we were at base camp, a pea-soup mist surged up the valley right on dusk, creeping stealthily but with deceptive speed over the chaotic stones of the glacier and swept us up in its gloom.

The following morning the weather was slightly less orgasmic, although still pretty damn nice. Setting out fully loaded, we hoped that we wouldn't see Base camp again until we'd summited. The morning wheeled into the afternoon as we skirted the upper reaches of the glacier, followed a steeply plunging water melt stream up the dirty and unstable moraine and finally slogged up and rounded, mercilessly climbing the ridge that slowly narrowed until, at about 4200 metres, it was little more than a couple of metres wide. Here we hacked a couple of tent platforms out of the earth,

glancing worriedly at the plunging slopes below us and wondering how we were going to take a crap without tumbling to our death on some crazy, Sound of Music vertical meadow. This delicate operation, along with trooping over to the spring for water, required the use of an ice-axe and our first serious self-arrests were performed with our pants around our ankles.

Late in the day, Steve and Burnie pressed on up the ridge to where it angled violently upwards and became a buttress of the summit ridge. By sneaking off to the right of the buttress, we found ourselves peering up the new narrow ice gully which slashed up towards the snowfield on the ridge. This was to be our route the next day. Venturing only a few metres into the gully, it looked nothing less than the gates of hell; a hell not reached by plummeting descent but by breathless uphill slog. We returned to our precarious Camp 1 as snow began to fall. And fall, and fall. The monsoon was supposed to be over, but someone had forgotten to turn off the snow machine. Next morning everything was dusted with frozen sleet and the ridge behind us swept up into the clouds. Our day's objective –the gully– was fleetingly visible through the breaks in the mist, but it was obvious we were going nowhere that day. There was nothing for it but to cook and eat and pop altitude pills while the sun crept below one ridge and the next. Late in the day we played dress-ups, donning all of our colourful high-altitude gear and sliding down the steep pitch of ice in the gully to our left, practising self-arrest and kidding our selves that we would remember what to do in the case of a death plummet from high on the mountain. The snow continues to piss us off, and we holed ourselves up in the three little bubbles of warmth pitched high above the Hunuman Tibba glacier with the lights of the shepherds at Base Camp bobbing in the valley below.



Dave 'Cruise Control'
Wilson 'caving' under
Hunuman Tibba Glacier,
Himachal.

Waking up at 4.00 am to find it was still snowing was a real shit. Although we were fit and reasonable well acclimatised –only Bear was having any problems with the altitude –we could not spend too long on the mountain. By attempting the peak in single, alpine style push we were limited in our ability to carry food and fuel for more than six days away from Base Camp. Another day's wait would give almost no margin for error if the ascent took longer than planned. Everyone except Burnie decided to give the gully a shot. After climbing the last of the ridge, the five of them traversed to the base of the of the gully. Alternately between cramponing awkwardly up 50 degrees ice and scrambling over icy rocks, they breached the mountains initial defences. Rocks and ices shards would occasionally spin down the gully; the slog across an intermediate ice field –during which the sun momentarily appeared –seemed to go on and on. As the day reeled on the going got tougher, Bear and Dave Cruise control began to drag; Bear was now struggling under a horror headache. Upon reaching the ridge in deteriorating weather it became clear that he would have to go down. Dave would go too. But neither would be able to rig any ice belays with complete confidence: someone would have to go down with them. Hmmmmm... I think they drew straws. Nick lost, and the acclimatised Rohan and wired Steve would continue to Camp II on the far side of the summit ridge while Nick escorted the others back down the gully.

The descent was a nightmare. The afternoon sun had softened the snow causing missiles to plummet down the gully after them. The exhaustion produced by the early start and the strain of the climb began to show. The three finally struggled back to camp I late in the afternoon, Bear swallowing pills by the handful to quell his aching head and the rest of us trying to remember how long it takes to die from cerebral oedema...

A thousand metre above us, camped by the side of a frozen, alpine lake in the far side of the mountain Rohan and Steve listened to the snow whispering on the walls of their tent, thinking only of the summit, still 1500 metres above them...

To be continued....

An Alpine Safari.

I've heard the Eskimos have thirty different words for snow. By the end of our Alpine Safari paddling trip we would have thought of, felt, endured and survived at least that many types of **cold**. Yes, this trip was damn cold, and every river exuded its own characteristic coldness. Scott W., Lucas, Stu R. and I left on a Tuesday evening, bound for the Mitta Mitta, our first destination. Before we had even arrived at the first river, the fatal first signs of boat hypothermia were becoming apparent; they had ice on their noses just from driving through the mist!

We arose the next morning to a panorama of white, everything was covered in thick layer of frost. That night it was -15°C at the river, and it was the coldest temperature ever recorded in

Australia just over the range at Charlottes Pass, at -23°C . As we were driving the car shuffle we noted that the puddles on the side of the road were frozen solid. When we returned later in the day, nothing

had changed. The river was bitterly icy, the reeds on the banks were iced, and Lucas and I found a 40 cm long icicle formed between two rocks. Even late in the day the frost on the banks hadn't melted. We were saved that day by Lucas'



Rich tailstanding on Snowy Creek.

thermos, a saviour with its contents of Dinosaur chicken noodle soup. We were frustrated by frozen hands and even those with paddle mitts and fibreglass paddles were not spared.

The river was paddled with no hassles, although we were all frustrated by the lack of playing we had done, due to the hypothermic conditions. As we drove the car shuffle across the Omeo highway we had to contend with snow on the sides of the road before arriving in the township of Mitta Mitta. Here we frequented our first pub open fire, going in, having one beer and enjoying the warmth for an hour or so. Stu amicably discussed with the lady at the bar the virtues of cask port, which he then proceeded to purchase!

a river that we were not planning to swim on, yet still wore wetsuits, 2 cags, 2 sets of thermals and polarplusses, they sure needed that fire with these beginners swimming, and wearing only a wetsuit, thermal and cag. Crazy I'd say, but at least someone else was experiencing the cold!!! That day the cold experience was emphasised by frozen wetsuits, thermals and polarplus, all that had to be painstakingly thawed over the fire, and also the testing of a variety of hand warmers, ranging from Stu's goretex overmitts to Scott's dishwashing gloves!.



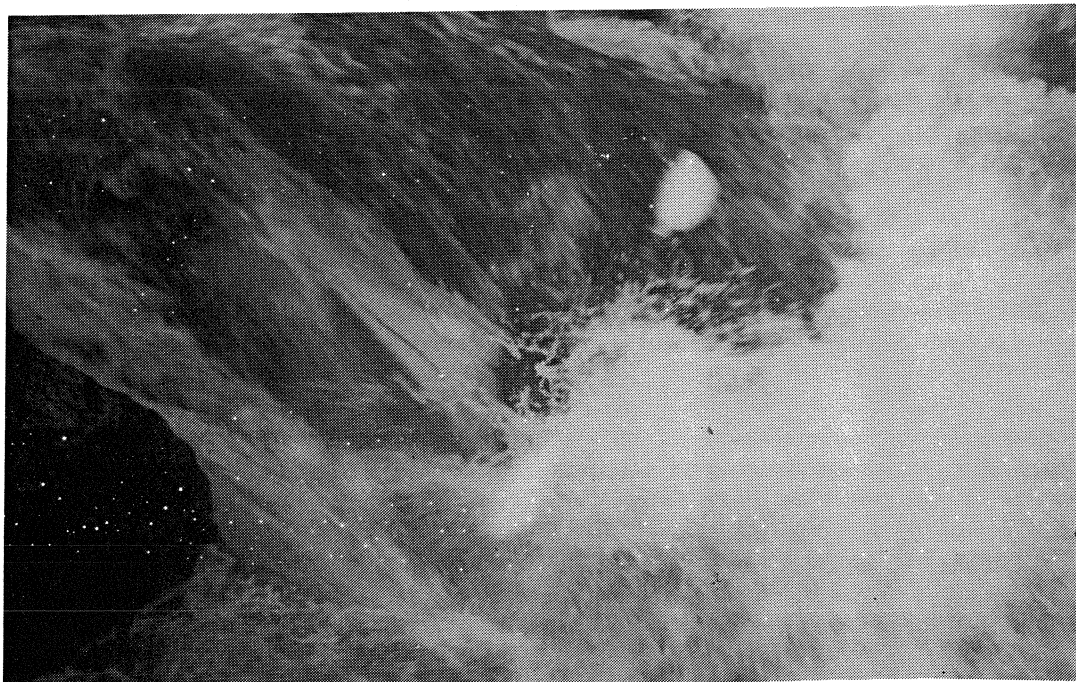
Rich and Stu somewhere on the Alpine Way.

Thursday we were awoken by a huge Army truck with sixteen yellow Dancers trailered behind and a gaggle of skinny, 15 year old Army apprentices to paddle them. Before we had even had breakfast they had paddled a section of Snowy Creek, which we were to paddle that day, and quickly took over our fire as the hypothermia professionals came into action. On

Some more driving that evening saw us at Khancoban, where we were to become something of regulars over the next few days. We stopped in the pub for an OJ and a warm up, and then continued to the bottom of the Swampy Plains. Here the cold really hit me and I was feeling very ill on top of it, sleeping the night in a -20°C bag, with all my clothes on, and I was still cold. The

next morning saw us at the top, ready to face one tremendous river. Behind us lay the Main Range, resplendent in snow and ever present every time you faced upstream. On either side lay the gorge walls, small frozen waterfalls of ice running down them into the river. Downstream lay the most amazing river, a river choked with enormous boulders, ranging from car size to house size, the river coursing a twisted and tortuous path

boulders, we skated over their icy tops and smashed ice from the puddles that was 2cm thick and about 40cm in diameter. This river provided very enjoyable paddling but it was a relief to jump into Stu's car at the end and warm up again. Things began to really get exciting after we had collected Scott's car from the top and had our daily OJ in the Khancoban pub. We now went to defy the impossible and find the highest pullout on the Indi,



Scott disappears on the Mitta Mitta waterfall.

of deadends and narrow leads, no room to turn, no room to make a mistake or take a bad line. The boulders were caked with ice and occasionally a log lay across some of the river, enabling Stu to earn his reputation of as Limbo Boy!

Halfway down the river becomes impossibly choked with boulders and a 400m portage was necessary. As we dragged our boats over these immense

supposedly accessible only by four wheel drive, a task that had never been achieved on a club trip before.

Some intrepid navigating and a bit of thrashing of Stu's car saw us there (despite the 20cm of mud and 5 km of hideously slippery track). We gobbled some tinned fruit and baked beans for tea, piled four people, four boats, tents, food and gear for us all into Stu's shitbox Corolla and hammered it up a very

slippery and steep hill. As we came over the brow of the hill we concluded the only reason that we ever succeeded was that the road was frozen solid, providing more traction than the mud!



Lucas surveys the cold at the Swampy Plains.

We awoke to the sound of tour buses passing our tents on the way to Thredbo, and the occupants gawked at us as we thawed our throw rope and cracked the ice from the inside of the boats. I just hope I don't ever have to put frozen Speedos on again. The Indi has a reputation as being a pretty awesome river, **the** river to paddle and so our adrenalin was pumping as we entered the start of the Murray Gates, the best and hardest

section. It was some of the best paddling I have ever done, although the level was rather low. Stu demonstrated his prowess by doing an upside down nosestand in Hole in the Head rapid. It is ironic

however that the most trouble all day came from a grade 2 rapid that had a tree across it, rather than the much harder stuff that had preceded it. We reached the bottom, and slid, slithered and slushed our way back out to Khancoban and onto collect Stu's car.

Stu and I saw Scott and Lucas off at Khancoban that night. They were to return to Melbourne, while our adventure continued. After a quick meal in the Khancoban pub (to use their fire) we rocked up to the Backpackers

Hostel. It was built in the days of the Snowy Mountains Scheme and could sleep at least 200 people. There was just Stu and I in residence in the mammoth building. We whiled the night away, each in our own adjacent baths, sipping away at the port Stu had bought all the way back in Mitta Mitta.

Rising the next morning we discovered a problem with Stu's car;

half the muffler had fallen off. We soon tied it back on with wire and headed back up to Perisher, where we spent a great day skiing about and enjoying ourselves, although the snow was not the best. That night we camped by the Thredbo River, which was so cold that a little backwater had frozen so solid Stu was considering ice fishing naked from on top of it. Luckily nothing came of it and we settled into a delicious dinner of nachos that would have rivalled the Clyde's.

We spent the next day riding the

River, for a rendezvous with Marcel and Russell and whoever they could drag along. We flagged Melissa, Lara, Litz, Rebecca, Marcel and Russell down (with the remainder of the Port cask) and settled into the fire, enjoying a quiet port or ten, but unfortunately it all ran out too soon and we retreated to bed.

The morning saw us out of bed and almost on the river before breakfast, but unfortunately we had to coax (drag) Russell out of bed, using mandarins as bait, and this delayed our departure somewhat. The river



Two Alpine Safari team members happy but tired! King River.

tows of Thredbo, trying to telemark and generally killing ourselves. Stu managed to bend his skis and I managed to bend myself into every position possible when stacking!!! We left and headed back down the Alpine Way for the eighth time in four days. I now know every turn and bend on Scammells Spur! We arrived late that night at the King-

was OK and Laz, Stu and I returned in the afternoon for a photo shoot and show off session. We headed home that night and arrived in Melbourne ready to tell the world about an awesome but bloody freezing Alpine Safari!!

Richard Kjar

ALPINE INSTRUCTION WEEKEND II

August 26-28

No 'Dry slab avo', but plenty of other stuff to brag about.

Alpine Instruction Weekend II got off to a smooth start with only one trip member out of fifteen forgotten. But no hard feelings - the forgotten Andrew managed to catch us driving out Tin Alley and then he had the pleasure of Phil's exclusive company, and delightful puns, all the way to Euroa. You could say there's always a bright side if you take a *philosophical* approach. After we'd all munched our way through huge mountains of chips in Euroa it was on to Mt Feathertop. Phil was pulled over for a breath test. Our main concern, however, was not the quality of Phil's breath, but that The Ship of Fools - Deb's car and crew - might spontaneously combust in front of the police because the smell of burning rubber inside the car when we stopped was quite alarming.

The night was perfectly clear, and we headed up Bungalow Spur at a cracking pace. The slightly more energetic element of the group bounded on ahead like greyhounds, leaving the others to assume a more leisurely 'St Bernard' pace. Due to the beautifully clear conditions, the not-so-fast group decided to continue on past Federation Hut and sleep the night out in the open on the summit. The snow was covered in an icy crust and did all kinds of clever sparkly things with reflections of the moon. The night sky was absolutely chockers with stars galore. We lay in our sleeping bags saying 'wow' at various intervals until we dropped off to sleep. Some hours later we all opened a bleary eye to admire the rosy colours of sunrise over the mountains. At this stage, Andrew Wettenhall decided the day had begun and packed up his sleeping bag and bivvy bag, only to unpack them again half an hour later when everyone else had evidently gone back to sleep.

On Saturday morning there was a major scare because Gus went missing. We were particularly concerned about his safety because his food and gear were with us at the camp. Derek started planning a search operation. Then miraculously, just as the first search party was about to leave, Gus appeared out of nowhere. He had been under our feet the whole time, asleep in his amazing 'camo' bivvy bag, which blended in perfectly with the snow. After that episode, Gus guaranteed that he would not do any more disappearing acts by wearing obnoxious lycra tights inspired by 'Joseph's Technicolour Dreamcoat', or possibly Easter egg wrappers.

Well the time had come to do something serious. We started the day learning the basics of glacier travel, traversing up and across the mountain while 'roped up'. The remainder of the day was spent practising crevasse rescue. Taking approximately three hours to haul out each person, we demonstrated that we all had a lot of practising to do before we visited any serious crevasses. Concerned that Derek may be getting bored with helping us construct pulley systems, Deb generously threw her pack down the steepest slope she could find, thus providing Derek with the perfect opportunity to explore one of the less frequently visited gullies of Mt Feathertop. Matt, in a similarly good-natured gesture, threw his Thermarest down the same slope soon after Derek had returned. This kind act was for the sole benefit of Gus, who then had an excuse to hike down into the gully to rescue the Thermarest and thereby establish that he was every bit as good as Derek. As Saturday drew to a close, we watched a fabulous sunset from the summit of Mt Feathertop, and then slept the night on a balcony dug out of the snow under another huge sky crammed full of stars.

Sunday morning arrived. Another clear day. We brushed the ice from the outside of our sleeping bags, and enjoyed breakfast in bed in its most fundamental form. (ie. when getting out of bed is a really major, cold, exercise). Derek and Gus sang a heart-rending version of Pink Floyd's 'The Wall' which should be commended as 'very ambitious'. Throughout the day we practised self-arresting techniques, went climbing up a steep snow face on belay, simulated anchoring your partner when he or she falls into a crevasse, had a serious snow fight, and learnt that you go very fast when you slide down an icy slope on a snow shovel. We headed back to the summit ridge by mid-afternoon and headed for home through the increasingly sloppy snow. All in all, it was an absolutely ace weekend, and everyone had fun (well, I did - and everyone else seemed pretty happy as far as I could tell). Heaps of thanks to Derek and Gus for being great leaders and for attempting to show us a thing or two about the fine art of Mountaineering.

Kate Bradshaw.

Slush.

"I've got a huge pole between my legs", -Marcel Geelan.

"Gee Phil looks like Mick Jagger". - Rohan Schaap.

"Why am I so vague?", -Anouk Fawns.

What is the gossip between two members who took themselves off on a private bushwalk? Close friends of both people who would normally have also gone were not invited.

And just what is the real story behind an old member, his girlfriend and his work mate? Friends have been (unsuccessfully) sworn to secrecy. We hear three is not such a cosy number on trips. What was his old nickname again?

Who was left behind at the 50th Anniversary Dinner because nobody noticed that they were still in deep conversation with a toilet bowl?



Phil Towler, Jane Mackenzie, and friendly paramedics at a Debacles house party.

ROCKCLIMBING CONVENOR'S REPORT

The past year has seen numerous well-attended climbing trips, of all standards, to our favourite crags around Melbourne and throughout Victoria, and to a few new places.

A large beginners trip was run at Mt Arapiles last September, as well as day trips to Black Hill, the You Yangs and Altona Climbing Gym, with one of the Black Hill trips boasting about 20 people. Also in second semester was the "Women's Climbing Weekend" where the club received sponsorship from the Sports Union (to promote women in sport) to send four of us, myself, Deb, Claire and Nikki on a leading weekend with Louise Shepherd of The Climbing Company. We all gained much knowledge from this and have continued to use this experience. Of note was Deb's effort to push her leading grades to 18 before flitting off to Sweden for summer.

Along with Scott, Alex and Jen, I migrated to Queensland over winter due to a lack of decent weather in Melbourne, where we spent a very relaxing 3 weeks at Frog Buttress. The climbing however was not so relaxing. Being Arapiles spoiled climbers we were horrified at the crack world before us. We proceeded to find all the face climbs between the ugly cracks.

After exams, about 10 of us discovered a secluded little crag in the South East Grampians, boasting a soft, grassy campsite beside a sparkling creek and pool. To reach the cliffs all we had to do was boulder-hop up the creek, and we found them, sweeping almost into the creek. Perfect for hot summer weather!!!

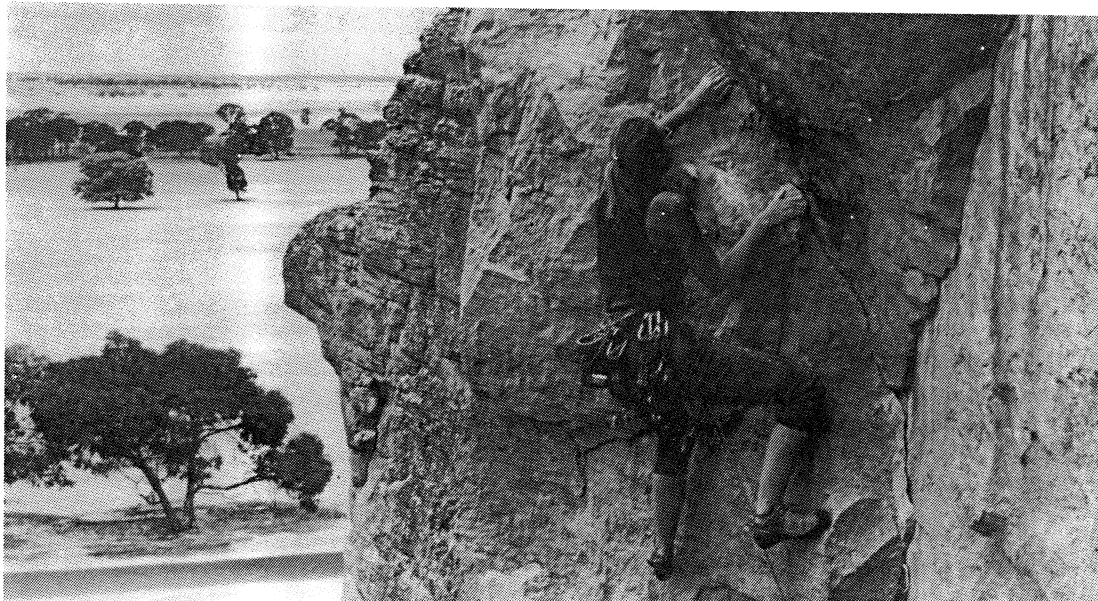
Over summer, a few of us became permanent residents (some prefer to call us hippies) in the gums, the camping area at Mt Arapiles, our favourite crag. This magical place has much going for it (as well as its many classic climbs) such as being only 20 minutes from Lake Toolondo, a huge freshwater lake with a white sandy beach, which we visited often. A few climbers pushed their grade limits, but mostly we just relaxed and appreciated the social scene at Araps, the mecca of climbing.

It has been pretty exciting to be the first female climbing convenor for many years (maybe ever - apologies to any we don't know about) and I hope my experience has encouraged and will encourage more women to become involved in rockclimbing.

CLIMBING TRIPS

We will be attempting to run trips of varying standards on many weekends throughout the semester, although we do have a shortage of experienced leaders to instruct on beginners trips at the moment. Keep checking the green folder in the clubrooms, especially for the huge Easter beginners trip to Araps. For those of you who have climbed before, intermediate and a few advanced trips will also be run throughout term. I hope to see some new faces around the clubrooms inquiring about climbing!!!!

- by Lisa Flew.



Lisa Flew leading Little Thor (20), Mt. Arapiles.

Letters To The Editor.

Dear Editor,

It has been brought to my notice that much conservation information does not get through to individual bushwalkers. The Federation Of Victorian Walking Clubs Inc. conservation sub-committee needs support from 'grass roots' bushwalkers. I would like to draw your attention and the attention of your members to conservation issues.

Feedback suggests that bushwalkers often see much abuse and misuse of the environment. They tend to comment to each other, deplore what has happened and leave it at that. I have often requested reports of these matters so that I can follow them up, but nobody bothers after they come home. Please take these requests more seriously and we will try to do something about it. My telephone number is 758 4802 or you could ring Elizabeth Doery on 859 8554.

Yours sincerely,

David Rimmer.
Conservation Convenor.

Another lady wrote asking for photos of mountain huts, that she is willing to buy, for a book she is writing. If you can help, see me or Kate.



Dave Wilson and Amber Mullens at Mt Kosciusko after a bit of spring skiing.

