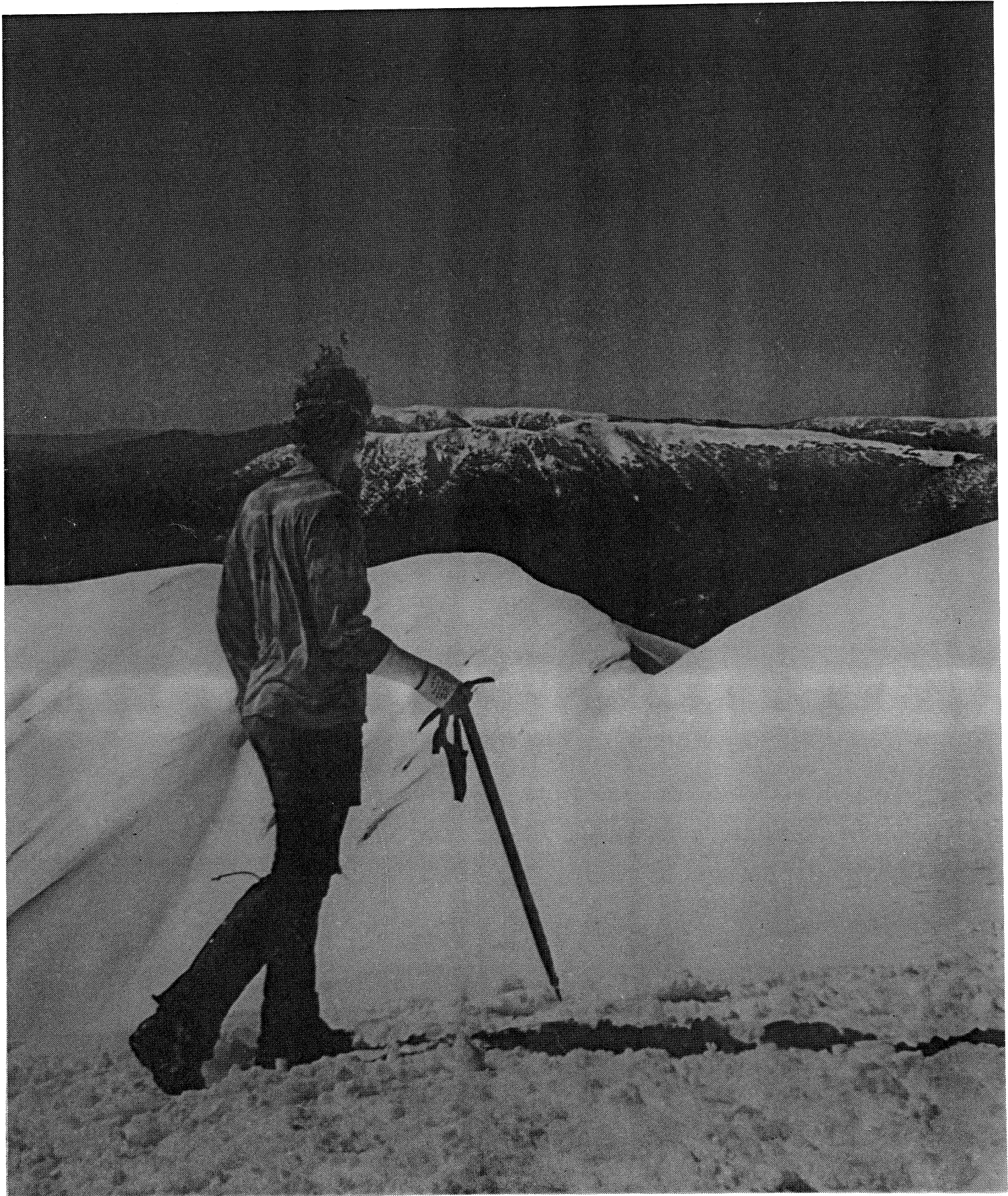


MOUNTAINEER

THE MAGAZINE OF THE MELBOURNE UNIVERSITY MOUNTAINEERING CLUB
SNOW EDITION SEPTEMBER 1995





Editorial

Toot! Tooooooot! Welcome on board the Mountaineer for another mad-capped and zany fun filled year. Hey, just like a crappy American sitcom, but without the canned laughter.

Apologies for the late arrival of this Mountaineer. Technical difficulties, you understand. At least now Dylan, Andy and I know how to bromide. Due to the long delay, there has been far too many article to put in a single Mountaineer, so my adored sub-editor and I decided to split them into "snow" and "no snow" stories. This then is the Snow Mountaineer, in celebration of those heavenly white flakes. And.... the next edition is nearly ready to arrive, so get all last minute articles, photos and slush to me right now. In the time interval between the last Mountaineer and this one, things have been trundling along well in Oxoland. There has been an AGM and a change of president. Dan Colborne showed that if you really want to be president, it is worth shouting everyone to scotch and cokes before the election. Richard Kjar led the MUMC kayakers to another IV win at Goolang Creek, and another Midnight Ascent has gone by without a hitch but with heaps of powder to ski in.

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Prizes

Dylan Shuttleworth won a prize for his photo of Bec and Steve and the other prize from the AGM Mountaineer will go to whoever took the front photo of Steve in Tasmania. See Dan soon.

Front Cover - Dylan Shuttleworth on Mt Feathertop looking toward the Fainters.

Back Cover - Nigel Prior on the Fainters with Mt Feathertop in the background. Go Go Gadget Legs.

❄️ ❄️ Prez's Rave. ❄️ ❄️

snow snow snow snow snow snow snow snow snow snow snow snow snow snow snow

It was here!

Finally after two years of waiting, we had decent, respectable snowfalls. So much so, that in the front of the rockclimbing folder, a particular climber well known for a prejudice against the cold and wet has written 'gone skiing'. Then it melted.

Welcome to an action packed time of year! The last of the snow provides skiers with something to do, the rivers are yet to start pumping, and the rock is still warming up. What a good time of year to go caving!

And what a time to go on your first trip! Remember that the path to those epic tales and legendary adventures (hyperbolæ?) started out when we went wandering timidly into the clubrooms to sign up for our first beginners trip! Come along, ask one of us about the trip, a trip, any trip, past or future. We don't bite unless you ask us to. Go skiing (now)! Go paddling! (now, and as the snow melts) Go climbing! (When the snow melts) Go caving! (It doesn't snow underground) Go walking! (with or without snowshoes). It's all happening!

On the social front, Pie 'n Slide night gave people the chance to show everybody their [lack of?] photographic skills. And if you can't remember the Midnight Ascent, (for whatever reason!) we'll go formal again! At the current rate, we'll probably go along to someone else's Ball- it's easier than organising our own! Stay tuned; if it's anything like the last one we crashed....

And to prove for the third successive time that MUMC is the life of any party involving other university clubs, there will be a joint bludge walk with the other unis, somewhere north, near the permanent rogaine course on Mount Dissappointment. It will be bigger than the thermal ball, guaranteed!!

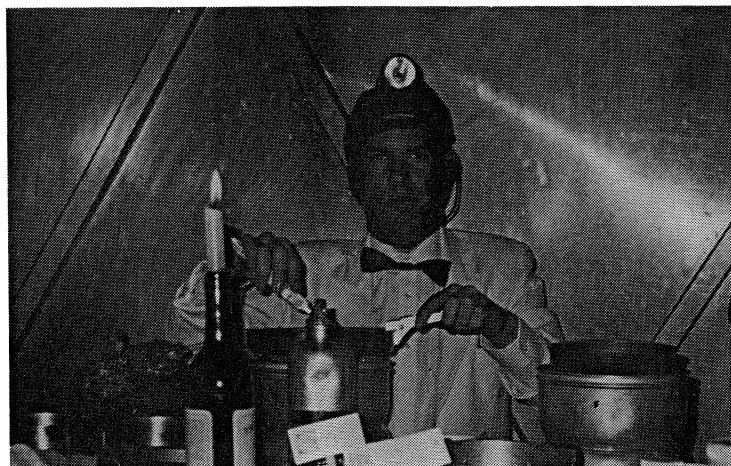
Discovery day happened with the usual skiers and paddlers (and Andy Gaff!) battling gale force winds down the side of the Redmond Barry, and Andy S.S. going up. Those young, impressionable year twelves were in awe as worried parents looked on. Thanks to Cuan and his helpers, Lisa, Dan H, Scott, Simon etc.

The Snowgaine was a success, contrary to what the number of 1.00am phone calls would suggest. Congratulations to Alan Daley and Nikki Munro for getting it all going, and to the many others like Anton Weller who helped out in catering, placing and retrieving markers, course checking, course vetting and admin. These are names that I know, but there are many others!

And it's about now that you should make plans for your summer epics! Tassie's a bit passé now, with 25 club members there hiking last summer. By the sounds of things, it's going to be that way in the NZ alps this summer....

Anyway, here's to the snow and remember to get away from the banality of study - take advantage of this weather, and come on a trip!!

See you backcountry,
Dan



Dan and The Suit cook an evil broth at Midnight Ascent

Scroggin.

<http://www.cs.mu.oz.au/~matthias/mumc/mumc.html> is the site of the MUMC homepage.

Congratulations and Goodbye to Dave Wilson, MUMC hut warden, who recently left Australia to work on an oil rig in Indonesia.

Also, well done to Andy Hook, who has landed a plum job at one of the big oil companies. (Why is it that a disproportionate number of MUMC people end up working in the oil business? Didn't you people learn anything during your time with us?)

Congratulations to our very own Peter Kriesner for winning Monash Bushwalking Club's prestigious 'Knob of the Year Award'! But we still love you Peter, honestly!

Richard Kjar wangled a free trip to Darwin over the semester break. While there, he attended a conference on Aboriginal health.

Steve Curtain says there has not been many Good Food Guides put into the GFG folder. Come on everyone, put in some effort.

Litz Mosbauer has landed a job as a guide on the Overland track in Tasmania. Apparently, the people she leads get to drink wine every night while on the walk. That is roughing it.

Get better vibes go to Anton Weller who broke his ankle at Araps the other weekend. Hopefully that will slow up his photo taking.

Remote areas first aid course will be held on 22nd October. Don't forget.

Dan is holding the President's Breakfast also on the 22nd October. The breakfast will follow Dan's Fantasy Party (!?). Keep that Friday night free and you're advised to stock up on glitter early.

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Gear Store Officer - Joel Bartley

Conservation Convenors - Marcel Geelan and Catherine Kent

MUMC Hut Warden - Dylan Shuttleworth

Midnight Ascent - The Straight Report

by Alan Daley

There were 32 people who committed themselves to go on this year's midnight ascent, and, to make a change from other trips this year, only one person piked!! Steve Curtain was in charge of the operation on Friday night; the ascent began at 1am. Dan C, Lara and I had been making cynical remarks to that effect for several hours as we drove up late, and for these negative vibes, which must have affected Nigel's car, we pray Lisa's (designated morals convenor) forgiveness. Dan, mountaineer, and Anton, photographer, were the only people to complete a continuous ascent of Feathertop, arriving at the summit for dawn. I think everybody else reached it at some stage during the weekend, Andy G included - his first winter ascent!! If Steve Bird didn't, it seems he spent most of his time much higher anyway. The skiing was absolutely scintillating for the eleven people who took skis, especially on south-eastern facing slopes. Some back-country skiers, whom Jen and Cora Wolswinkel met on Bogong a few days later, were most peeved at the completely carved slopes that greeted their "intrepid" journey on the Monday following. The Saturday evening gourmet extravaganza was sublime. No attempt to list the courses would be complete: I left an unexhaustive list in the log book. Not too many people got too drunk to be too embarrassed about it; there was a (commented upon) sense of inclusiveness, although the paucity of waxing left many things desired: Todd left most of it on the floor, although this may add grip and protection. The lament of the club losing the bushdance tradition this year was manifested by the dozen people performing the nut bush dance, trying to change a snow gum into a, well, a, nut bush. Don't ask. Nigel, however, showed that while some traditions fade away, there are others to replace them: the first aid course takes on a whole new meaning when you watch Nigel snuffing a candle out with his mouth in order to demonstrate graphically an emergency abortion. Dylan braved a broken arm to climb the NW spur, and seemed to take the whole climbing thing to extremes when deciding this meant he should demonstrate how to climb through the joist hole in the hut; I think Steve Bird wafted through. Peter K braved plastics up and down the spur, with silent forbearance, never even once being heard to cuss or swear. The descent on Sunday probably demonstrated how this year's midnight ascent worked: we were there to enjoy Saturday night together, and the other things we wished to have fun doing in our own ways were also valid, thus, Samandbrother Maffett went down early so they could help Nigel push his car up Mt. Beauty to collect their vehicle, several people skied down Bungalow Spur, and the majority were boring and lay around in the sun 'til 3:00 before lumbering down the Tom Kneen track, most excellently preserved from the creek crossings. Thanks to everyone, you all made the weekend go very smoothly, and make it something nobody really had to get stressed over.

I had fun. Hope you did.



Alan in full flight with the helpless Alex, Catherine, Andy and Dan.

Alpine Instruction II

How much fun can you have at Mt Feathertop? HEAPS! Especially when the trip is Alpine Instruction II run by Dan Colborne (who didn't actually come) and Gus Campbell and his little off-sider, Secret Squirrel.

Friday night saw a merry band of potential mountaineers struggling up through waist deep snow to MUMC hut. OK, so I've exaggerated a bit. There was really very little snow, and most of us hit the hust before we realised we were above the snowline.

On Saturday we threw ourselves down steep slopes, only to stop ourselves sliding. You might think this is a pointless exercise, but then so is mountaineering (and life in general really). When we'd slid and stopped often enough to feel quite comfy with both, we then made ice bollards. We tested them by pretending to be the Greatest American Hero learning to fly.

We roped up and wandered up to the summit where we looked a bit daft and "over the top" in our mountaineering finery next to a couple of relaxed bushwalkers and skiers sitting on the grass. After so many weeks of fine, hot weather, the Northern side of Feathertop was mostly devoid of snow. We could stand on the grass and admire the cornices a few metres away.

We bivvied for the night down from the summit. It started to snow in the middle of the night, so those of us without bivvy bags

got up and set up tents. We also housed those who didn't bother to bring up a tent or bivvy bag.

Sunday saw us back on our umbilical cords, and we did a traverse of avalanche gully. Some patches were icy and we had to scramble over avalanche chutes and debris, which gave us a bit of a feel for the "real thing".

Undoubtably the highlight of the day was glissading and bumsliding back to our bivvy site. Can one have too much fun, Gus?

We packed up, had lunch, fended off snowballs, and bolted down North West spur, and I can still feel my muscles from this last activity three days later.

Thanks Gus, and Secret Squirrel (or was it Bashfull Bandicoot?). We all had an ace and memorable trip.

Nicki Munro



Look! Sam Maffett takes a break from the skiing.

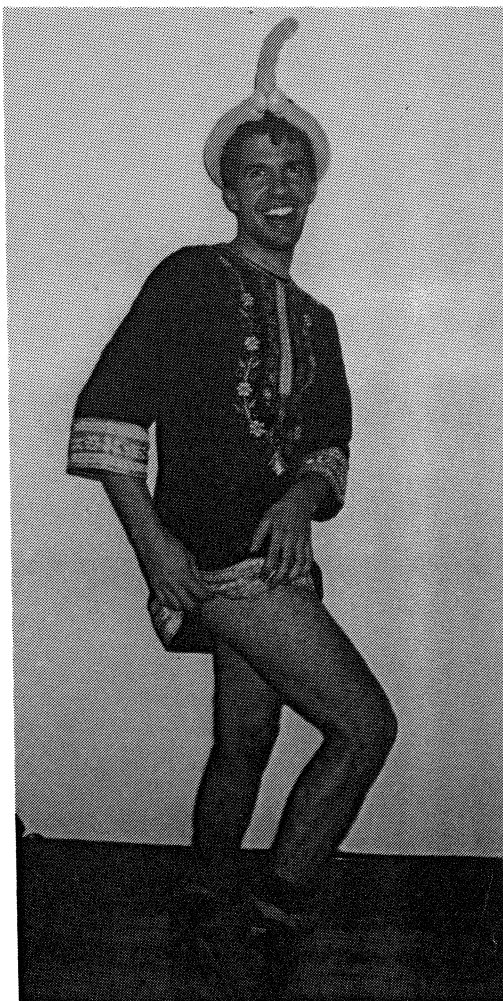
A wild experience. - Dan.

There's snow at the carpark! We can ski from here! It was 10.30pm. Nikki Munro and myself on the first ski trip for the year. Headlamps on, packs on our back, we skied in the peace and beauty of the alpine ash. Slowly on firm, icy snow we skied upwards. The peace and silence rang in our ears. The only sound being the swish of skis. It was moonlit too. The alpine ash slowly gave way to snowgums, and our goal, the summit came into view; it looked windy, but not too bad. Wisps of cloud swirled around it; the moon had a halo formed by the low cloud. Past a couple of slumbering tents, oblivious to the beauty of the alpine environment under bright moonlight, and onwards to the summit.

The summit plateau reached and the cloud level dropped, and at the summit we were above the cloud. Euphoria. Pitching the tent by the trig. point, the first telemark run was at 12.30am, down the north side of the mountain. The snow was firm, and a bit icy. The wind was dry and bitterly cold, but bearable. After a few more runs, we sat beside the tent and counted the peaks that poked through the tops of the brilliantly lit clouds: To the northeast, Mt Buffalo; to the east, the two humps of The Twins, the Razorback ridge to Mt Feathertop; a little further south the highest points of the Crosscut Saw peeped into the beautiful night. Immediately to the southwest lay the horrific scarred massif of Mt Buller with its swathes cut through the delicate alpine forest. Lights from resorts of people cosy in their suburban developed wilderness concept twinkled callously and uninvitingly. Machinery, pollution, and attitudes.

We turned our backs, got into sleeping bags and slept with the tent open; in the wild looking east out to the wilds of the alps. Hoping.

Hoping that my children can enjoy this experience on Mt Stirling.



Dan, a wild experience?



Gratuitous arboreal wombat.

Mt Loch XCD

by Scott Edwards

Team members : Steve Curtain, Scott, Brendon "The Don" Eishold, Marty Meyer, Lara Ross, Audrey Staples, Simon Whithear

The first obstacle to our trip was the Monash Thermal Ball on Thursday night. Dollar Stubbies, topless dancing, sojourns with the "Mullers and Packers", hot waxing, MUMC "8 in a Mazda 323 through the backstreets and early morning drinking of Monash beer left everyone stuffed. Sleep.....did anyone get any ???

You take the high road

The plan was for Steve, Marty and I to leave the clubrooms at 2.30 p.m, pick up the Don at 3 p.m and therefore beat the rush hour traffic. The other party members were leaving later at 6 p.m. 3 p.m rolls along and I finally convince Steve to leave the Clyde to do some food shopping while I go home to pack. Brendon turns up wondering what is going on, then realises we are running on "Steve time". Anyway, we eventually meet and leave the clubrooms for Dons' place so he can pack! We enter his flat to be confronted by a stronger than usual stench emanating from his room. Don cleans out last weekends meal from his billy while the rest of us polish of his flatmates' cream liqueur.

By the time we set off the traffic is abysmal and moving at snails pace. After a significant distance the Don thinks he has left the back door open. A screeching U-turn follows and we head back to the flat. The back door was closed (of course!) and again we head off into the thick traffic. After spending half an hour trying to travel 200m down Brunswick Rd, we eventually join the freeway which

is slightly faster than snails' pace. The open road at last and our first stop, the "free tea and coffee break" sponsored by the Seymour S.E.S. Steve stuffs as many free Kit Kats as he can fit into his smock jacket and spills most of his coffee down the front. Anyway, hours later we reach Mt Loch car park and just as we are getting ready the other car turns up. Nice timing, pity we were supposed to leave 3 hours before them.

A very tired group set off for the midnight trek to Mt Loch, skis were carried as the snow was solid ice. Wishing we had crampons, we slipped and slid our way to a lovely patch of snowgums on a slope below the summit area. Sleep, aaahhh.

Big Saturday

The next day we awake to find ourselves in XCD heaven, long sweeping slopes and steep gully runs abound. A delightful light powder covered a deep base of packed snow and offered surprising quality considering the degree of melt in the last few weeks. After a morning of carving telemarks we set off for a ski tour to the little visited Quintet Mine Huts on the adjacent Swindlers Spur. The "gully runs" off the spur have to be seen to be believed. Most are horrendously steep and full of powder, it's like having a heap of Stanley Bowls (Mt Stirling) stacked together. Despite the Don and my protestations that we were XCD'ers and not ski tourers, we all dropped off the spur to check out the historical huts. Built in the early part of the century by gold miners, they still contain the remnants of the past such as clothing, bedding and cooking utensils (Steve gets off on that sort of stuff).



Dylan, Joel, Lara, Todd, Amber and Anton on the summit of Mt. Feathertop.

Thankfully, we returned to the usual carving of the slopes, although Steves' faceplant straight off a cornice provided some added amusement. A full day of awesome skiing and a sunset ski off the summit wiped everyone out so we retired to the camp for some gourmet dinners. Audrey, our token American, went straight to bed, she was probably sick to death of Don's constant American jokes. The rest of us were bored, so there was only one thing to do, GBD, Garbage Bag Downhill! The slopes below camp were beautifully iced with a couple of sick drop-offs. Single bag slides gave way to the group bonding of the six person "train". Everything was going fine until we started turning sideways towards the drop-off. In a split second our finely tuned train turned into a mass of rolling, flying bodies skidding and tumbling over ice. Blood on the snow alerted us to the fact that Marty had lost some skin from part of his face. Oh well, onto the "catamarans", a more complex arrangement where two people face each other, lock arms and legs and head down sideways. After picking up speed the "catamaran" tends to just spin and spin and spin. The connoisseur of GBD will find the four person version to be inferior due to the increased drag (except in steep ice conditions). The novelty wore off after a few hours as limbs stiffened and bums became sore due to the friction.

Sleep was welcomed after such an adrenalin packed day, but unfortunately Steve, Lara and I were sharing the 2 person Macpac Celeste. A significant amount of party flatulence fuelled by a fiery Thai Red Curry set the tone for the night. On a positive note it kept the tent warm as Lara constantly complained about the cold despite wearing full

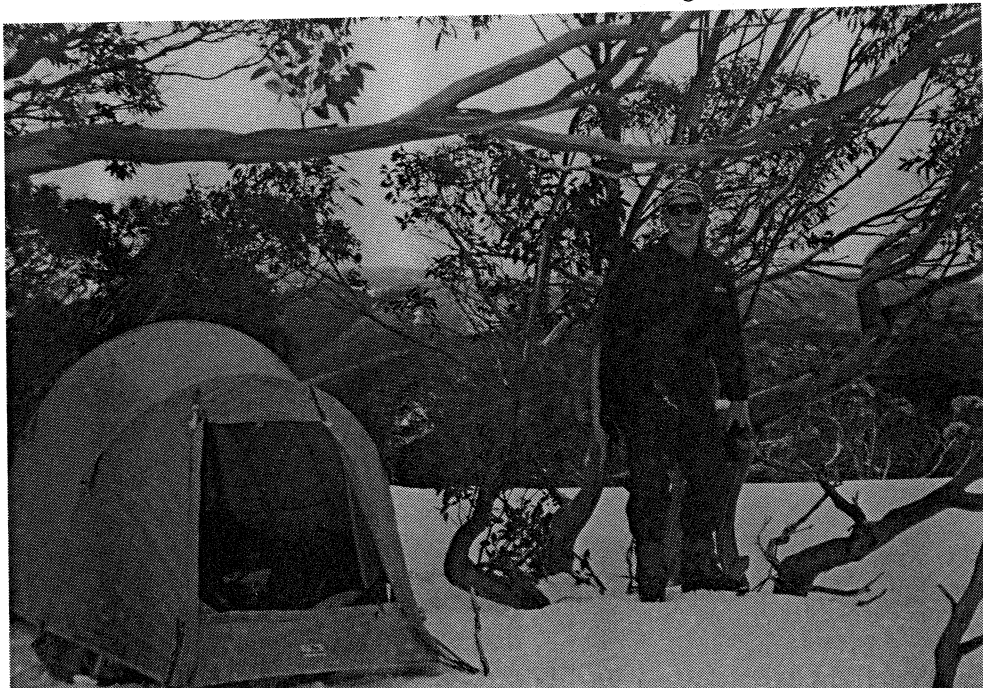
thermals, wool pants, wool jumper and down jacket in a Kathmandu Rumdoodle sleeping bag (900 gm fill !!!).

Crash and burn

No surprises as to what happened the next day, telemark after telemark after telemark. Everyone managed to find their ideal run and the slopes became littered with characteristic "S-patterns". Every trip must have a major debacle and Steve was not about to disappoint us. On one of the steep runs that lead right down to the valley floor the snow gave way to ice. Steve crashed on a turn and started accelerating down the slope while Simon and the Don just pissed themselves laughing. The slope turned into a chute and Steve tried to self arrest on his stock but the force snapped it in two. By this time he was heading face first towards a picturesque snowgum but somehow managed to spin and push off it with his legs. Curtain Muncher Creek in the valley was fast approaching with a ten foot drop onto rocks so he dug in his hands for dear life and miraculously pulled up a few feet from the edge. 100+ metres of sliding over corrugated ice had taken its toll, bruised ribs, grazed skin, strained hand and a stuffed ankle hampered the walk out. There was only one thing to do, once Steve was safely back at camp and in the tent, we left him to get some more XCD quality time !!!

Every trip must come to an end and besides, nature was calling and no-one wanted to dig a shithole. A fast run back towards the shithole that is Mt Hotham and a marvellous vista of the Razorback and Mt Feathertop capped of a truly awesome weekend. Every time I see Steve, I smack him across the back of the head for not telling us earlier about the XCD extravaganza that is Mt Loch.

Rohan Schaap at Mt. Loch
(ed. hugs and kisses hubby,
dinner's in the microwave).



Midnight Ascent

By Kim Ely

Snow, a full moon, crisp air, perfectly clear skies, not a breath of wind. Magic. So many cliches. The 1995 Midnight Ascent was under way. Arrival at MUMC hut was rewarded with the richly coloured dawn skies. On the summit ridge, silhouettes of the three dawn summit crusaders were visible: Dan, Anton and Anton's tripod. As the sunrise got a bit boring people disappeared into the loft for a well earned snooze. Apparently Lisa, Scott E., Amber and Andy G. know the identity of the early bird window clearers that captured everyone's attention.

Snow, bright sunshine, warm air, perfectly clear skies, not breath of wind. Magnificent. Whoops, it happened again. Spent a few hours feeling like I was at the beach, in the deck chair, but with glorious mountain views. Those with skis went off to cut some turns. The Maffett Bros. (Sam and Andy) Alan, Brendon and Marty displayed fine form by making pretty patterns in the snow in clear view of the hut, for people to take arty photos of. The plebs without skis enjoyed the walk up to the summit. I hope everyone checked out the groovy snow CAVE under the cornice. Basically, a day of just flaking in the snow was enjoyed by everyone.

Soon the race to take a group photo with about 35 different cameras before the sun set was on. Andrew Maffett did a fabulous job of playing a foreign tourist, "I take photo, ja?", with 15 cameras hanging around his neck. The inaugural MUMC ski jumping competition was held. Amber was disqualified from a medal placing for wearing a non-approved, performance enhancing dress. Video replay showed that she got 15 cm extra lift from her petticoats. Scientific testing has also indicated that it is vile mint green that gives you a faster approach, not red as previously documented.

The glasses theme was embraced by Dan and Amber, who wore fashionable designer pieces, apparently exclusively available at St Vincent de Paul. Their clothes were also from this exclusive designer and were certainly one offs. I was most impressed by Amy's state of the art, really techo, folding glasses. Legendary.

Dinner preparations began in earnest to cries of "Who's got a stove I can use?". Replies were few and far between, but we managed. We dined on delicious morsels of salmon, dips, cheese, other nibbles, 'roo satays, gnocchi pesto, vege stir fry, beef curry and especially Charlie's Algerian avacado dish (a secret recipe from his grandmother). However, the spread didn't satisfy Alan and Steve C., for they wanted...wait for it... "chicken tonight". I'm sorry, it wasn't really worth waiting for. The "desserters" excelled, with a delightful array of pancakes with berries and rum, caramel slice, chocolate Bavarian cake and pavlova. A complete, not broken and not even cracked pav, thanks to Damien's masterful pack carrying technique. The Gluhwein flowed, everybody sang, danced and was merry. Apparently an ancient MUMC initiation rite is the waxing ceremony. Todd, Joel and Alan were subjected to this treatment. There were no volunteers to wax Dan. Steve B THE WAXMEISTER. woke up the next morning with wax drip down his shins. "Nige" demonstrated his obvious disapproval of this ritual by persistently extinguishing all of the offending candles by putting them in his mouth.

When our repertoire of songs ran dry and Nigel succeeded in putting out all of the candles, it was time for an exercise in team work. Some crap about a multifaceted group dynamic. (Thankyou Joel). A game of Suck and Blow was initiated by???. Hmmm. Quite entertaining from a spectators point of view. It was quickly apparent that some people are very good at this (Sam you don't have to bend the card so much), and some people are not so good. Every knows what happens when you aren't very good at suck and blow, don't they Peter?

In due course this game was mastered (or maybe the card became too soggy). A testosterone pumped competition of who could get up into the loft without using the ladder began. Silly, silly boys.

I do recall a flood of slush flowing. It was very, very funny at the time, so I wrote some of it down. On reviewing these quotes I found what I could actually decipher to be absolute utter crap. Obviously there was a wire loose in the recording process.

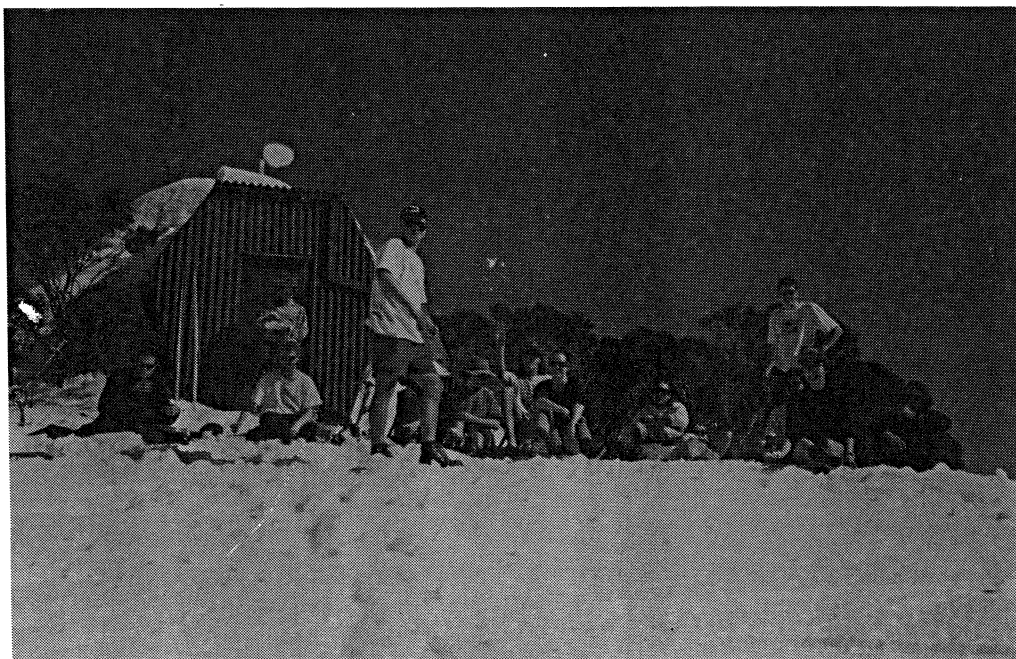
The need arose mid morning Sunday to escape from the very hot and smelly loft. Quite some time was spent sorting clearing and cleaning, before again, flaking in the snow. Charlie, Alex and Nige entertained us with a demonstration of the fine art of somersaulting and backflipping in the air before landing in the soft snow. Is this some sort of hang over cure?? Nice theory guys, are there neck braces in the First Aid Kits?

Apparently conditions are highly variable and can change rapidly in the alpine environment. All of a sudden it was very cold and snowing very heavily. Wait a minute, there are no clouds, I'm in the remains of Steve B.'s snowCAVE, and people are kicking snow onto me. EXCELLENT!

Special thanks to the trip leaders, Alan and Steve C. for ensuring nobody got lost, to Lisa Flew, our righteous Morals Convenor, and to Brendon for organising the magnificent weather (he's a meteorologist, you know!!!).



Midnight Ascent. The Night (and the day after).



St(e)irling Snowgum Snogaine 95

Alan Daley and Nicki Munro decided to promote a bit of MUMC tradition and organise the VRA Snowgaine. In early April, Steve C, Geoff, Don and Alan were sitting in the Clyde when they had the crazy idea of setting this year's snogaine: they thought in the Bogong High Plains. Having rung the VRA, Alan found that two days earlier, Prue Dobbin had been asked to do it, and she had chosen Mt. Stirling as the site. MUMC then "unwittingly" offered to co-ordinate/check/cater/vet/ administer/take unearned credit for it. Before the event Alan spent a few days stressing, and organising application forms, while Nicki conned Cora and Jenny into helping to buy food, and Kim and Jenny into chopping veges. Also, Alan, Nicki and Anton, and a few others spent the preceding weeks skiing around Mt Stirling, trying not to have too much fun, checking, vetting and putting out markers for the rogaine.

It was held at Mt Stirling on the 19th August. Alan had sold himself completely to the devil and numerous jars of marmalade to a myriad of deities. The big day arrived, not only with a full cover of hard-packed snow, but blazing sunshine and not a breath of cloud, (couldn't do much about the wind up top, Aeolus sends his apologies). Unfortunately for us, in the admin tent, this implied that people might turn up in droves and we would be short of thingies. Maps. Well. Um. Sorry. We printed 120, and there were (nominally) 128 participants, 132 of whom turned up! One might say that additions on the day (and late entries), make our life HELL. Just quietly, of-course. Still, everybody gave us the most accommodating patience, for which we were most thankful.

The relaxing thing about a snogaine, is that after the start, (and for another hour as four more teams turn up a bit late), you can go skiing. Leaving David Markus to rue rollerblading's evils- he is recovering from a broken leg- Alan set off up the Bluff Spur Trail, to catch participants on film; in fact, Alan caught lots of non-participants as well. Most seemed to be enjoying themselves; to the others, all I could say was, "Suffer!"

We faced an obstacle as vetters/checkers, in that we were nowhere near the setter: any disagreements were settled by vague attempts at description relying on two interpretations of memory that was a couple of days (weeks) old. Also, Alan have never met Prue, to this day.

The event ran smoothly, and enjoyment was had all over the mountain. Most checkpoints were in the right spot, and only a few teams got lost. Snowgum supplied fluffy hats and things for spot prizes. There were minimal complaints about the food. It's a pity most people didn't bring bowls for the yummy soups we had provided, but that just meant more for us.

Thanks to all those who helped - Kim H, Enmore, Dylan, Anton, Jenny, Cora, Prue and all the VRA regulars that helped set up and dismantle the Hash House. On the day, did anyone see Alan put up tents? Or Nicki stir any pots of food? Ahh, the joys of delegating! A special thanks to Alan for organising the event in the first place.

On Sunday Nicki, Jenny and Anton had to do more skiing to collect some markers - dam!

Nicki Munro and Alan Daley

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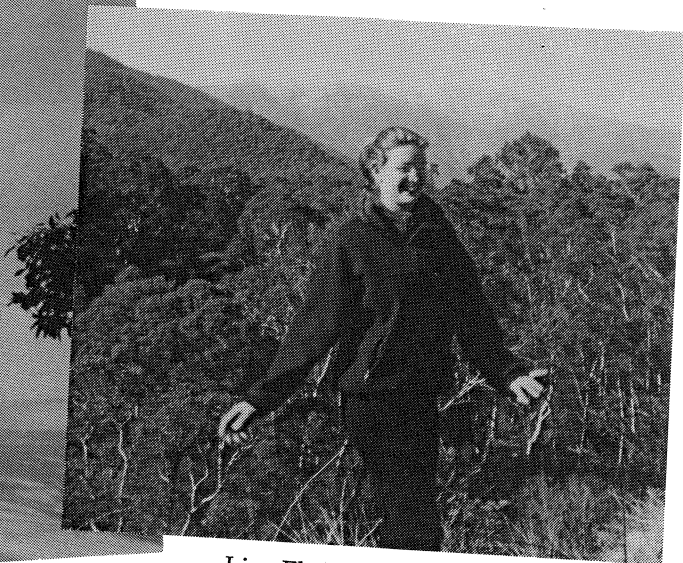




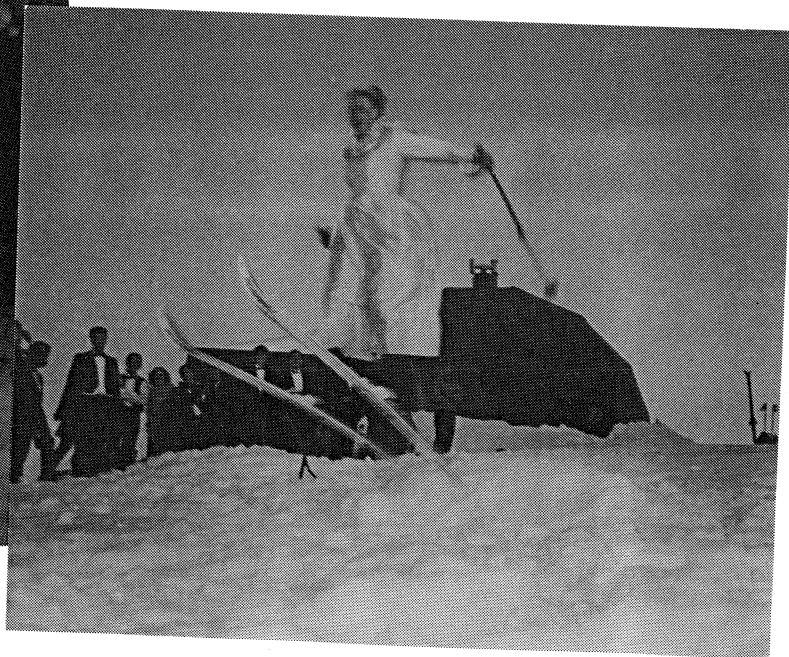
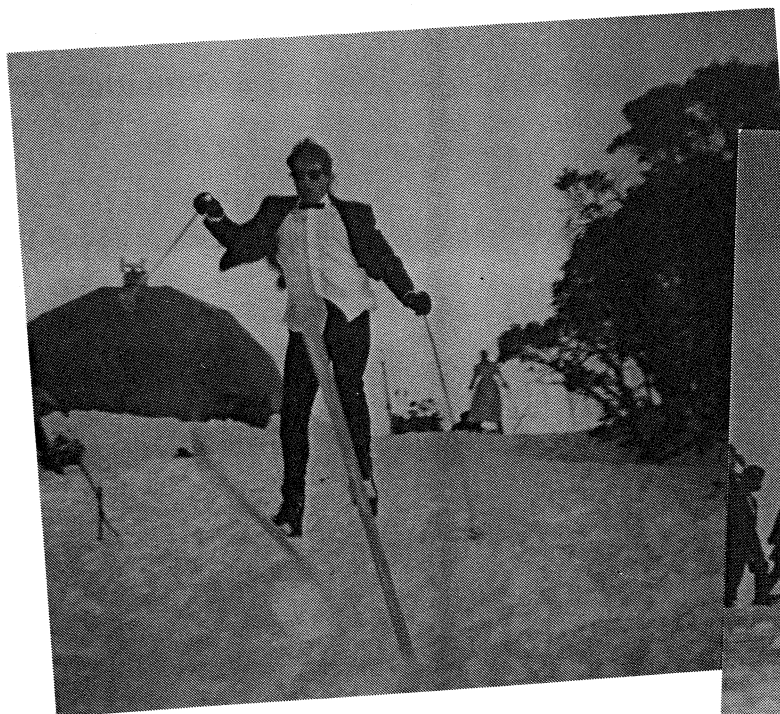
MIDNIGHT ASCENT PICTORIAL EXTRAVAGANZA.



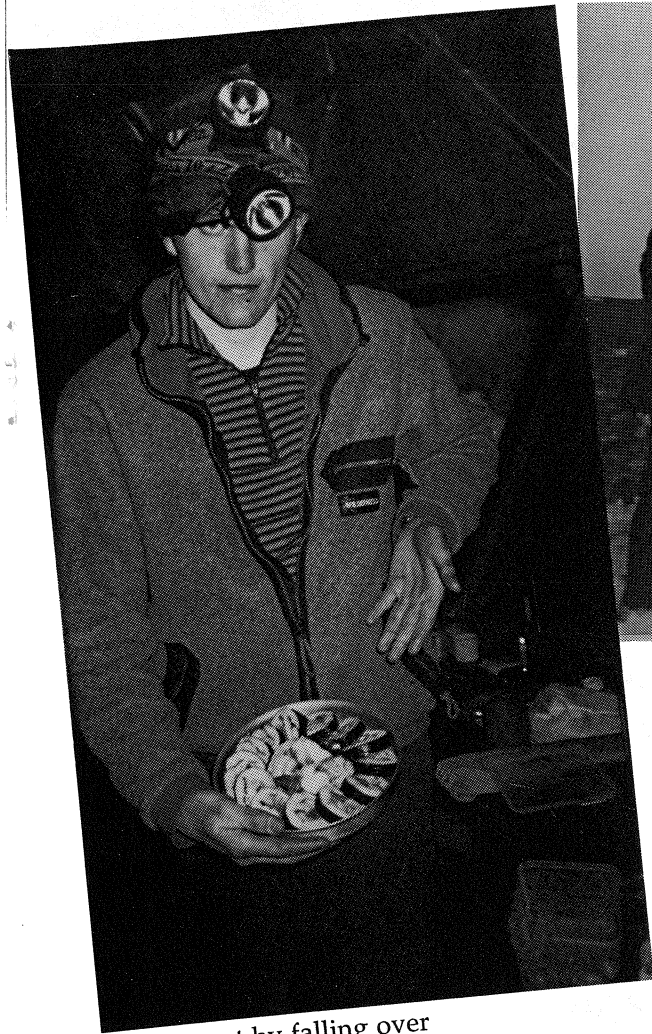
A tranquil MUMC Memorial Hut as Scott, Amber, Lisa and Andy found it. All set to create more memories.



Lias Flew, part of the advance Midday Ascent /Bakery Crawl Party, with Feathertop in the background.



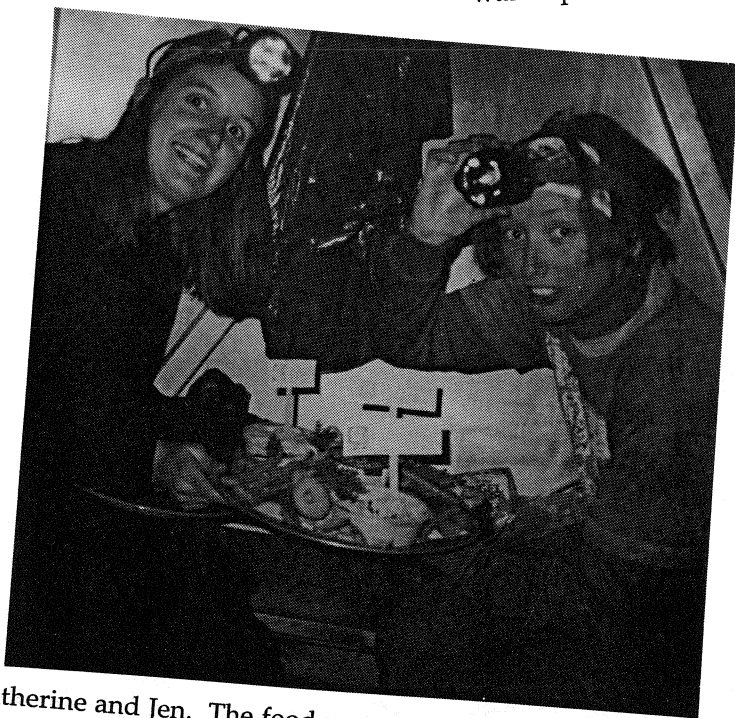
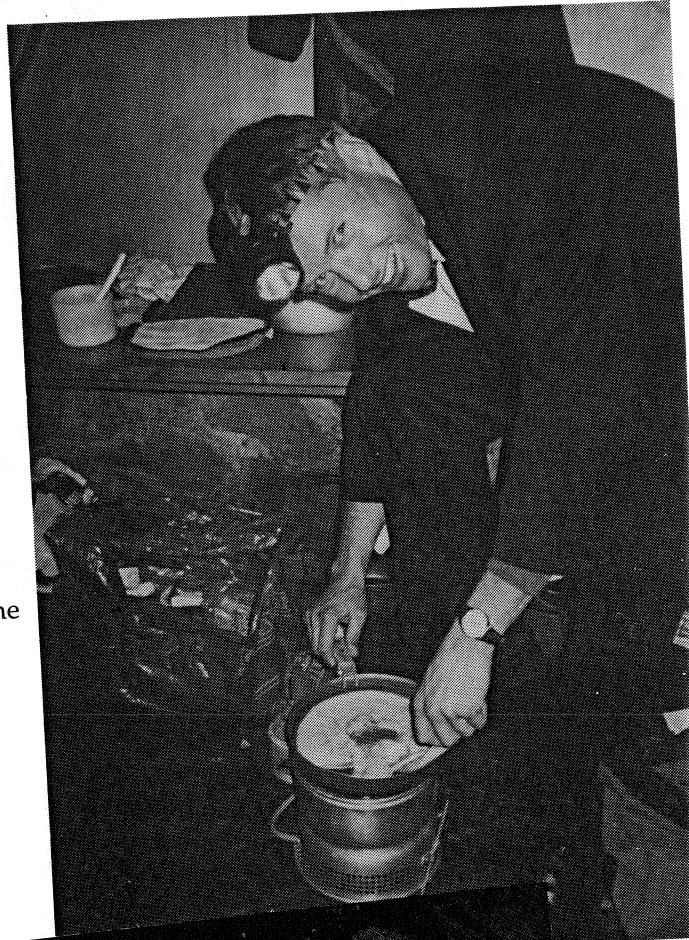
Scott and Amber - The MUMC Precision Formal Ski Jumping Team - perform for the crowds. There was a third member in the team - Andy Gaff - however, he suffered life threatening injuries in a fall during practice. He landed on his jaw.



Nige, still upset by falling over during the 'Nut Bush', passes around his sushi. How many head torches does he need?



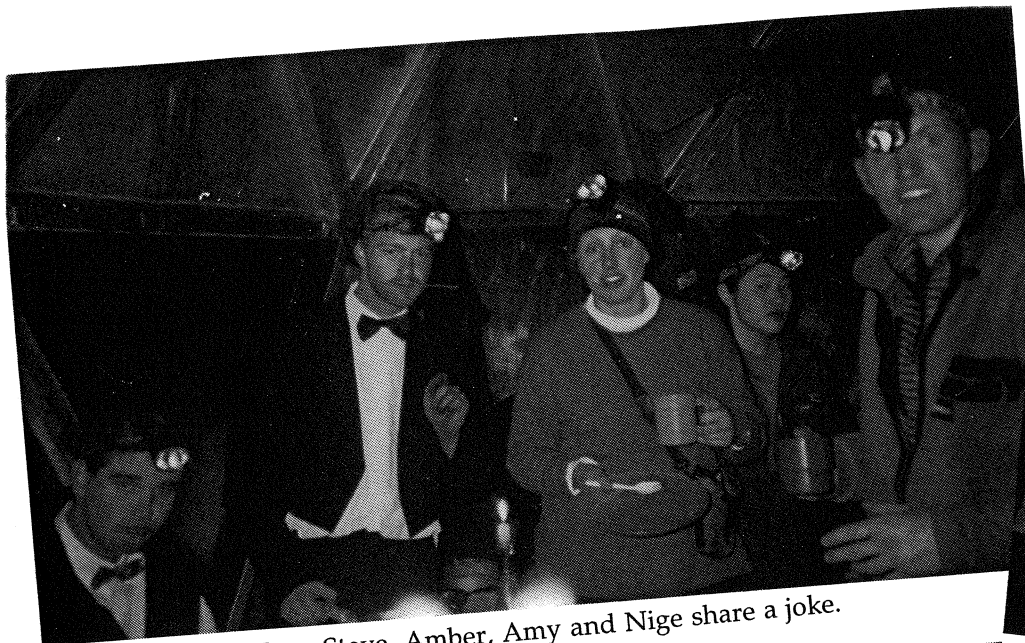
Peter realised that his berry pancakes were a bit boring, so he threw metho over them and set them alight. Everyone was impressed then.



Catherine and Jen. The food was ordinary, but the signs were great.



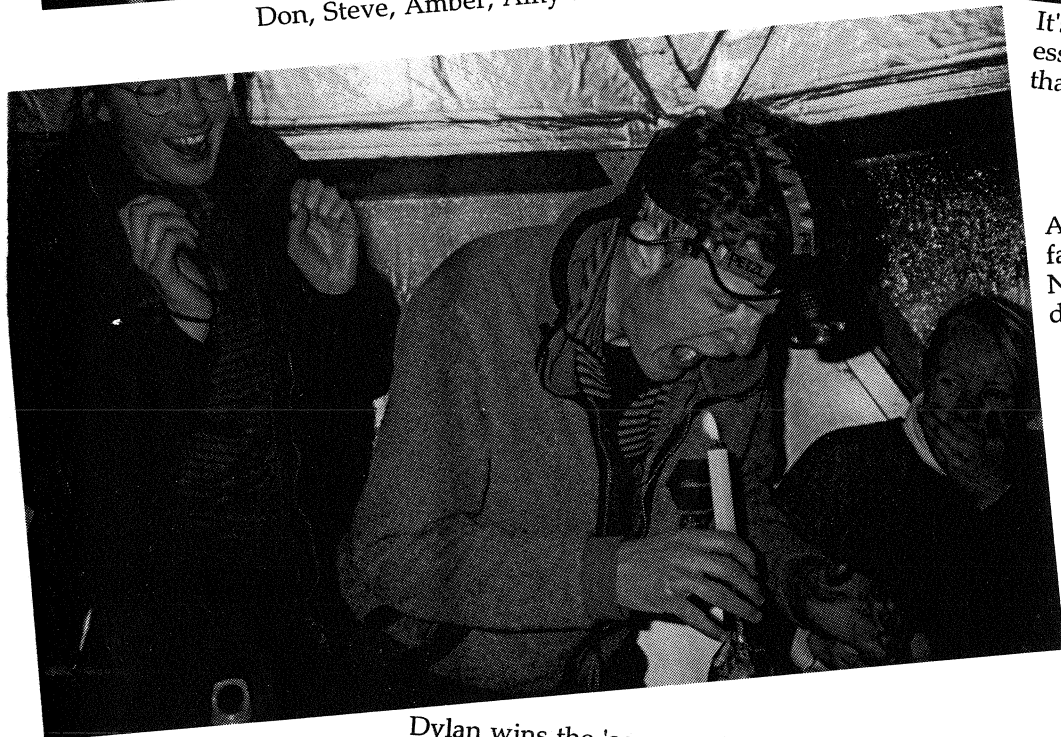
Is Lisa saying, "Leave my friends alone", or "Really! Have you been to Canada?"



Don, Steve, Amber, Amy and Nige share a joke.

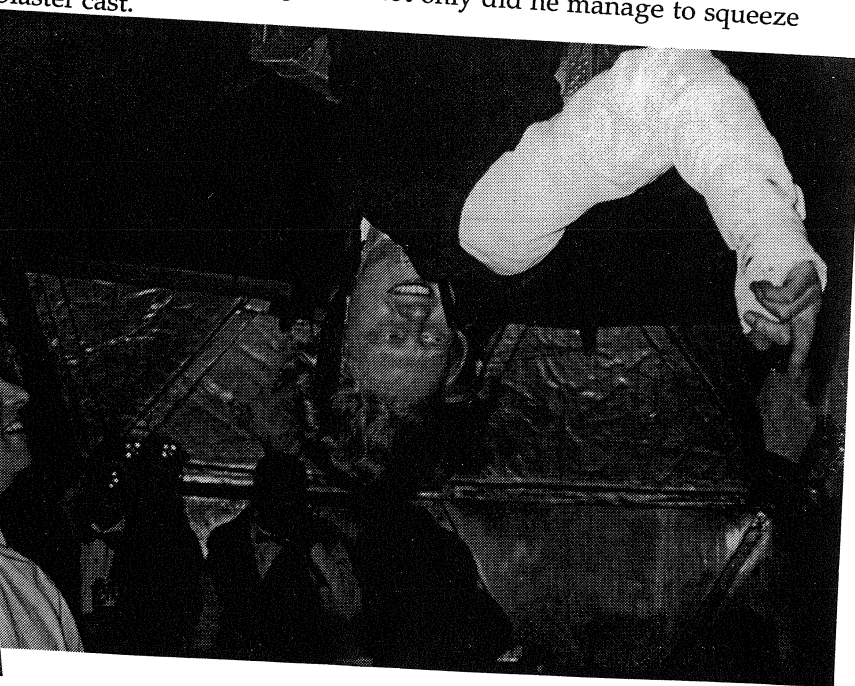


It's good to see Jen only packed the essentials. A three foot long straw that doubles as a pair of glasses.



Amber suffers from a burnt mouth after a failed attempt at candle eating, while Nige demonstrates to Lisa how it is really done.

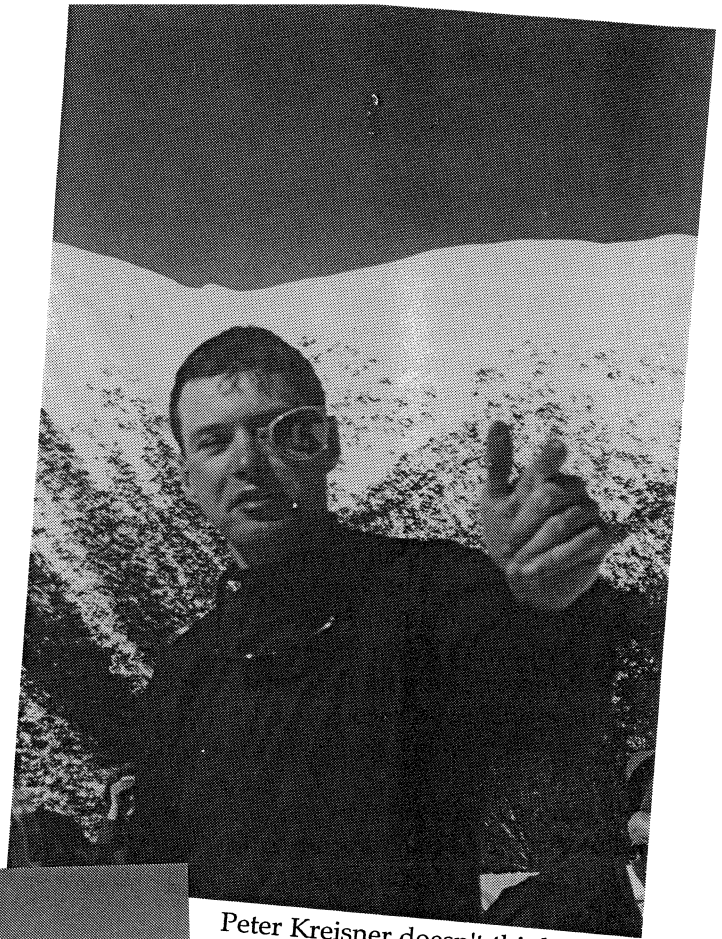
Dylan wins the 'squeeze through the chimney' game. Not only did he manage to squeeze through, but so did his plaster cast.



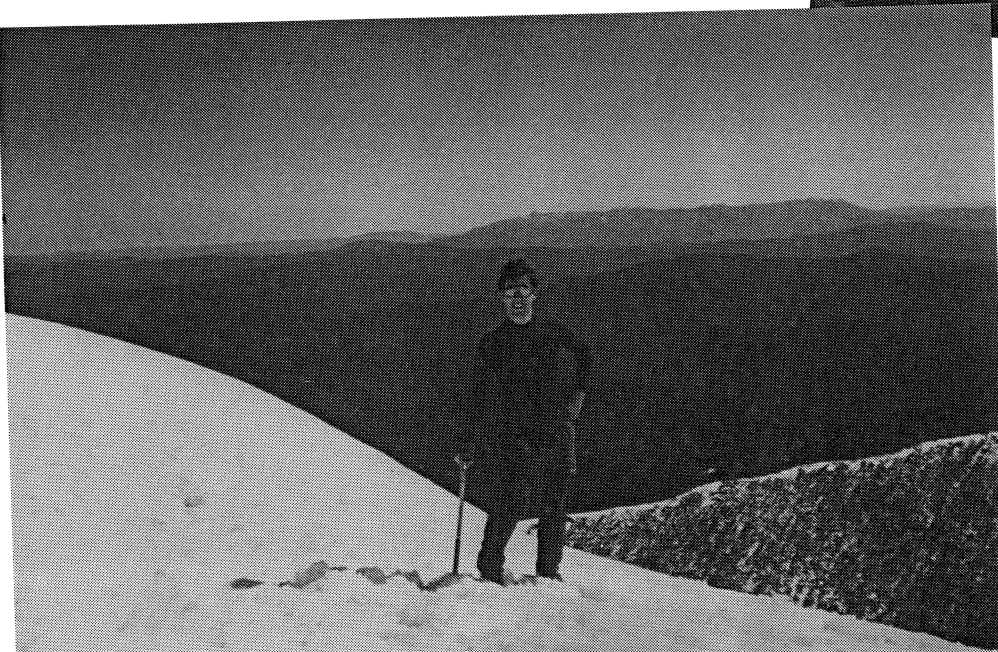
A hot new twist on the 'pass the business card' game - 'Pass the lit candle'.



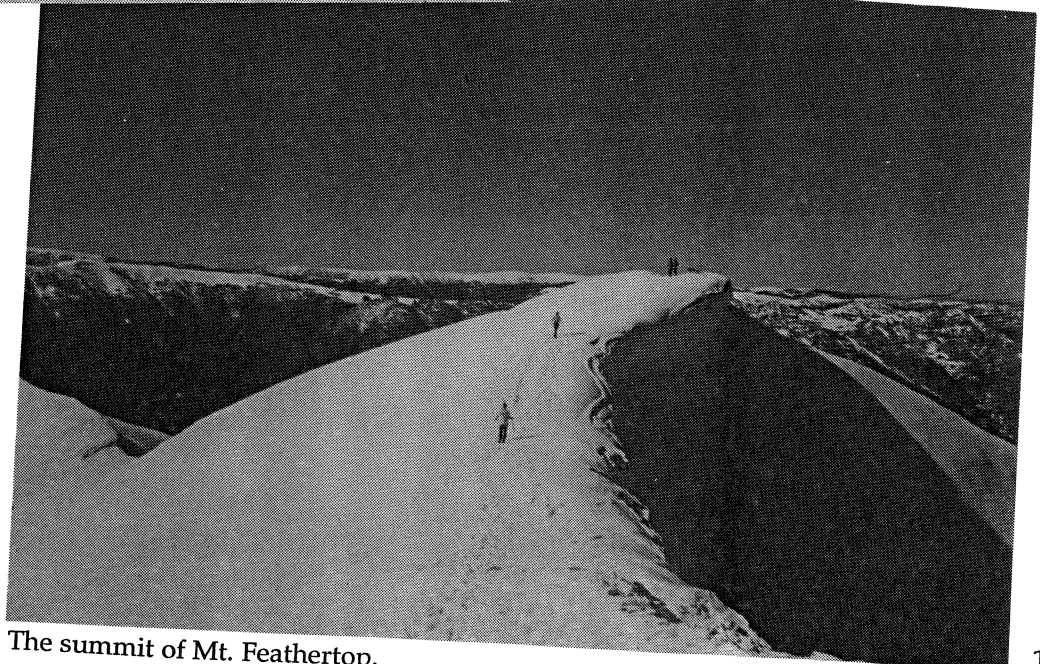
Steve Bird, the Waxmeister himself.
High up in MUMC Hut.



Peter Kreisner doesn't think the sun
is half as bright with these
sunnies on.



Andy Gaff near the summit of K2. Oh,
that's right, Feathertop. Altitude
does strange things to the memory.



The summit of Mt. Feathertop.

A Relaxing Weekend At Home

Friday, 3.30pm, The Clyde, before going to work.

Amber - "So what are you doing this weekend?"

Dylan, - "Probably nothing interesting... catching up on a little work."

Saturday, 11 am, phone.

Alan - "So, I was thinking of going up to Mt Stirling to pick up some checkpoints. I need to have them in Melbourne by this evening. I just have this little transportation problem."

Dylan - "Today???"

Alan - "Um, well, yeah."

Saturday, 11.15 am, phone.

Alan - "Ok, I've got a broom-broom."

Dylan - "Cool. See-ya in about an hour. Oh, yeah, I'm about size 7.5 shoes, 200cm skis."

Saturday, 1 pm, Surrey Hills.

They arrive, after taking a tour of Doncaster. Um, Surrey Hills is SOUTH of the Eastern end of the Eastern Freeway. The car was Melway-less.

2pm, Radio Shadow, somewhere.

Alan - "So Enmore, was it you or me who was going to ask Dylan for tapes?"

3.15, After Yea.

Dylan - "So, you do have a map of where the controls are?"

2 minutes later.

Alan - "I'm still thinking about that one."

4pm, TBJ

Bloke with rip-curl T-shirt - "I'll do you a deal: \$10 for the 2 pairs of boots." {Who didn't return the ski-store key} Hire boots aren't suited to what was about to happen, especially light, track boots.

Alan - "Ok, you take these 4."

Alan - "Ok, you take those 5."

Enmore, Dylan - "Which 5?"

Later.

Enmore, Dylan - "Well we could be at this creek, or this one. And the one we passed before could be that one, or something."

Later.

They find a check-point, are quite happy knowing where on the map they are.

Later.

Enmore - "Where are we?"

Dylan (unconvinced) - "Well the track is that way, and the marker is on that spur over there."

Sunset.

Dylan - "I don't suppose you brought any food?"

Enmore - "Yes, 1/2 a muesli bar."

Both - "Yum."

Later.

2/5 moon starts making distinct shadows, that look a lot like bark, rocks, etc. They find a marker in Howqua gap hut.

Dylan - "Ok, that's five. Lets get back."

Enmore - "Don't we have to get that other one, down that spur?"

[poignant silence.]

Enmore - "I'll be quite pissed off if we have to get that other one."

Dylan - "Um, I *think* Alan said 50-something was the one we didn't have to worry about."

Later.

{As Dylan encounters pseudo-shadows: rocks, bark, sticks, mud; and furrows, ridges and other strange features in the ice; }

Dylan - "Ouch!, XXXX!, @*#%!"

8pm, TBJ, ski patrol shelter.

Alan - "Oh, you're back. We thought it would take you this long. I was back at 6, in the last light."

They leave at around 8.30.

The Mansfield fish'n'chips are all closed by the time that they decide thermals might look out-of-place in the Commercial Hotel bistro.

Later.

Petrol light is on.

Alan - "Should we get petrol in the BP ahead, or in Yea?"

All - "Yay, Yay, Yay..."

All the petrol stations are closed in Yea after 10pm on a Saturday night. And in the following few towns. The glow of Melbourne in the sky starts to become brighter. So does the petrol warning light.

Dylan - "So what time did you have to get these back to Melbourne by?"

Alan [very quietly] - "9pm."

We arrive back at the clubrooms at around 11.30pm, and dump a couple of pairs of skis.

See an article in one of last-year's Mountaineer, for another story of what happens when you try to have a quite week-end at home, and are found out... I think it was called ``????-plains farce". At least this time it was only the door-lock that froze, and not the battery. The police were different too, being a booze-bus in Mansfield instead of suspicious goons in Carlton. Remember to close the car boot when getting stuff out. By the time you are 1/2 way to Yea, it is too late. Enmore can ski better than Dylan can, especially when Enmore is the only one on a trip to bring a torch. (& food)

dylan shuttleworth.

Russell Smith and Litz Mosbauer
do the penguin thing at Mt. Stirling.



It's moments like these . . .
that you need
Minties.

And yes, we went through a shit load of minties. Our last paddling trip for the hols, it was going to be huge, one that would be talked about for years to come, but we didn't know how true that would be. In this trip report I have constantly used two words, these two words sum up the trip extremely well, every M.U.M.C. paddling trip uses these words however not usually to this extent. These two words are familiar to us all . . . Nightmare and Debacle.

It all started when the time set to meet was 7 am, the alarm set to full blast at 6 am, I thought that would give me plenty of time to get there, unfortunately I made the fateful mistake of hitting the snooze and then sleeping through the radio once it turned back on. When I eventually awoke at 7.30, I threw everything into my car and was caught in peak hour traffic . . . Debacle.

O.K. so I was late, this was normal, we are talking about paddlers here. There they were, Russell, Rebecca and Tim patiently waiting for me. Russell shouted out "Hurry up, throw a boat on your roof, I'll meet you in Taralgon (this was a town we were all going to become very familiar with) I am picking up Lara." He rang her at 7 am and told her that she was coming paddling and had 5 mins to get ready, no questions asked.

After doing a large number of U turns, reading maps, etc we managed to reach Licola, that's O.K., it was only 3 pm, we still had plenty of time to do the paddle. Russell and myself raced to the top and proceeded with the car shuffle. "O.K. Russell, which way do you want to go, the muddy, narrow road with lots of corners or the way we just came." I don't think I need to state the reply.

And so the nightmare began . . .

Russell managed to guide his car into the cliff, bending the front axial, which in turn caused the tire to rub against the hub. So after spending an half an hour trying to get the mud guard off to give more clearance, he slowly drove the car back to Licola to call a tow truck . . . big Debacle. We then drove to meet the others, the time now 4.30 pm, "Well if we are going to paddle this we had better get a move on." A minimum of a 2 hour paddle, does this have the potential to be a nightmare, or what?. The guide book lied, DO NOT attempt the Macalister river at .85, unless you like grabbing the rocks under your boat and doing pelvic thrusts to move, this only added to the time.

Yep, we ended up paddling the last hour in the dark, hitting rocks that you can't see and only hearing the roar of the rapids, not too much fun. Finally we came to a spot where the road meets the river, about 1 km from where the car was parked. Rebecca and I totally freaked out by this experience, bailed; while Tim and Lara continued to get the car. However by the time they found where Russell had left it (as he was with the tow truck), changed, Rebecca and I had walked to the car.

Tim and I went to pick up the boats, using the headlights to put the five boats on, and repacking the car to accommodate two more passengers (those of you who know the size of my car, this is some feat). As this took some time I forgot about that battery thing under the bonnet. Yep a roll start was the order, after we turned the car around, using a petzel to see where the car was being pushed it started but as I couldn't see very well, I ended up in a ditch, no damage, maybe finally our luck was changing. Don't be silly, this is a paddling trip.

Somehow we caught up with Russell in Hayfield, just before he was planning to walk into Taralgon because we were taking so long. He had organized a hire car so that we could do the Mitchell river. After finding the only crappy place open for dinner in Sale we slowly made are way to Den of Nargun to camp (once again after making numerous U turns). Arrival time about 2.30 am.

The plan was an early rise so that we could enjoy the river, mellow out and de-stress. But of course if you know Rebecca and Russell this is an impossibility.

After seeing a huge eagle glide across the valley we put on the cold, smelly, wet thermals and started paddling at 12.30 pm . . . it was going to be a long day. The only thing going for us, was a nice warm sunny day.

The paddle up until lunch went well, with only Rebecca finding out how cold the Mitchell really is. Lunch started off great, the smorgus board of food lay out in front of us, sun shining, relaxing with friends, away from Melbourne, what could be better. I decided to use my finger as a chopping board. "Russell, that 1st aid kit of yours, can you get it!". . . Debacle. After weighing my finger down with bandages and the sun slowly setting we headed off to the Amphitheater.

"Hmmm" was all I could say after seeing this for the first time. After a discussion of how to navigate the rapid and whether or not we wanted to get cold and wet, Russell casually commented: "If you fall out here, the last thing on your mind will be the cold, believe me!!!" and proceeded to show us his skill. Rebecca and Tim wanted to pike out and portage around it, which left Lara and I looking at each other. Ladies first. Lara, jumped in, unfortunately this rapid claimed another victim by turning her boat sideways in the very first stopper. We onlookers could see Lara swimming and Russell chasing her boat down stream . . . Nightmare. Lara appeared O.K. This shattered my enthusiasm, but Tim offered some advise "Just paddle like shit!!!"

It was definitely the biggest buzz I had ever had from paddling, I felt like I could take on the world and I almost tipped in shaking my paddle above my head. However I then found out that Lara's foot was twice its normal size and the color of her cag, she had smashed her foot against a rock . . . nightmare. She managed to walk downstream to her boat, and in the darkening light we paddled home. The last rapid was, how should I say interesting in the dark, Russell said it was only a small drop . . . he lied.

Somehow Lara and Russell (who had sprained his foot showing off his gymnastics at Wilsons Prom. a few days earlier, but that's another debacle) walked up the steep hill, to the cars with their boats.



Marcel's car, before the trip....

Finally we were all alive and in dry clothes. It was about 9.30 when we had finally packed up and started driving. Its funny, you don't really think that if you leave a river at 9.30 pm that you would caught in peek hour traffic on the way home, but this is a paddling trip.

After finding some other crappy place to eat, we had all a sing-a-long to the dance music in the restaurant and ordered twice as much pizza as needed, we had decided that a visit to the Taralgon hospital might be a good idea to check out Lara's foot and my finger (as once we were out of the cold water both of our injuries were swelling and hurting). After the nurses had a good chuckle at our expense and asking what sort of paddling trips we ran - I wanted to answer "debacles, always." As I walked into the waiting room Lara was filling in her form and had tears in her eyes from laughing so much; the form had asked:

"State exactly where the accident occurred, suburb, street etc . . . "

Lara wanted to put:

"Mitchell State Park, Mitchell river, Amphitheater rapid, third rock from the left (or was it the forth??)."

They put us opposite each other so that we could laugh at ourselves. Unfortunately they were too busy to x-ray her foot and told her that she should get it looked at tomorrow (sorry later on today, and we did discover that it was broken), they took my bandage off (which they said was very good, thanks doctor Russ) and let it pulsate blood everywhere (sorry if you are eating while reading this) the nurse said that it needed stitches but the doc said not to worry, so I went with the doc. However the bastard did give me a tetanus injection.

Time: 2.30 am.

Russell had returned the hire car and packed my car while we were in hospital, we all piled in, held our breath and thought, finally we can get out of this god forsaken town.

"Hang on guys can you just turn the music down for a sec. I think I heard something??" . . . debacle.

Bullshit, this can't be happening, what else could possibly go wrong??

From all the added weight (from more truth questions we totaled the weight at 650 kg, my poor little Gemini is not supposed to take this) the left shock absorber had busted the retaining bolt. My god this is something I can fix, it would be cheap, it would be quick, all I needed was another bolt. A simple task . . . not.

Tim and I ran down to the service station where Russell hired the car, it's a service station, it must have one simple small bolt - no such luck.

"Try the other one just around the corner." the attendant had suggested.

It's a service station, it must have one simple small bolt - not.

R.A.C.V. time . . . nightmare.

"I'll be there in 20 mins."

....Marcel's car, after the trip.



So here is the situation, the car is on a jack, wheel off, parked in the Emergency lane in the Taralgon hospital and as we were waiting over 45 mins we had sleeping bags and thermo-rests out. Well it made a great photo anyway. We were discussing what else could go wrong, it is amazing how after all this had happened all we could do was laugh, and we thought we might get kicked out for waking up the patients. But then again this is what we wanted.

Of course the R.A.C.V. man was brilliant.

"Well its happened because you've overloaded the car." . . . no really?!

"How many kayaks have you got there two!" . . . hmmm FIVE maybe!!

"Can't you put some of that stuff from the boot into the kayaks to make more room??" . . . well maybe they're already full.

And of course he didn't have a bolt.

"And it would need to be a special bolt." and as Russell was about to reply,

"Yeah, one with a &%\$#@ nut!!"

All he could suggest was that we took it out completely. Lara had suggested this in the beginning but I explained that with about 200 km to go, and with all the extra weight it would be extremely dangerous.

Time: 3.30 am.

Oh well at least we were finally traveling towards Melbourne.

Russell made one more final comment before we left "Marcel, if one more thing goes wrong I am catching the train home."

T.A.C. ads flashing through our minds, "White Line, White Line, White Line, White Line"

Time: 5.30 arrival at boat sheds.

Marcel: "I don't believe I have to go to work now!!"

Russell and Rebecca: "I am going to sleep all day!!"

Lara: "Mmmmm I think I might go to casualty!!"

After dropping everyone home, I saw the sun rise and was listening to the traffic reports on the radio.

Its funny how romantic the sun setting is and how pissed off you feel when you see the sun rise.

Oh well, any one for a mintie.

Even after all that, everyone agreed it still was an awesome (there must some new definition in the dictionary that I haven't come across yet) trip!!!

Summary.

Well let's see now what have we got:

2 rivers paddled in the dark;	2 people in hospital;
2 cars broken down;	2 non injured people;
2 R.A.C.V. calls;	2 days of stress;
2 people on crutches;	2 days of debacles;
2 left feet twisted or broken;	2 days of nightmares;
1 left wheel busted;	2 days of awesome fun;
1 left shock absorber busted;	5 people extremely tired and thankful to
1 left finger cut;	be in Melbourne (alive);
1 tow;	

Marcel.

An Icy Slope

by Steve Curtain.

Running across Lygon Street in an attempt to beat the oncoming traffic had always been a bit of a buzz. Not quite like the 'Atari' video game of Frogger where Kermit makes the most feeble of attempts to cross a freeway at full hilt, but hey, he gets runover and a new game begins. Jumping into a black void is a different story I think. Well, not quite. Using one's face as a really shit handbrake down a icy steep incline doesn't work. I know. I tried it last weekend up at Mt. Loch, near the magnificent Bogong High Plains.

Don't get me wrong, this is not a synopsis on life after a near death experience. But the glimpse of life at warp speed doesn't really turn me on; at least not with my face at ground level. Telemarking this rather icy, south facing slope was a mistake from the beginning. It was mid morning, but the snow surface was still very cold and icy. But hey Steve, let's ignore that. and ski right on down anyway...

A moment later, and my body was flailing down the slope. Attempts in arresting myself with the ski pole proved useless. Here I was, gunning down this incline under the guidance and wondrous effect of potential energy, and my only hope of slowing just flew out the door. I could swear time slowed. I watched my telescopic pole bending into a most sculpturesque position and staying that way. My mind was not flying up until this stage. When I saw the rapidly approaching snowgum, and knew that the chance of creating a new hybrid species was pretty high, then my brain jacked into overdrive.

What was worrying was the sudden narrowing of the broad gully into a v-shaped ice chute and the great difficulty I would have in escaping injury. Numerous snowy mounds pounded my chest and ribs and I skittered down the slope like a speed boat across waves. Somehow, I managed to twist one hundred and eighty degrees to be again facing upslope. In a freak event of anything logic, I missed the tree. Be it because my mind was still at the top of the slope, outside my body or whatever, pain did not register as my left ankle writhed in an unnatural position to narrowly miss the trunk of the tree. However, as a consequence I spiralled with the plummet of my skis in a jumbled mass of body and gear. Like a script from a movie, I did not notice my next objective danger until I had escaped the clutches of my last. Pure fear pulsed through my body as I noticed the large drop at the foot of the chute into the creek below. It was simple: either I stopped or I went head first mashed into the collection of rocks of the cascading creek. This was truly an interesting situation. I pawed at the ice with all my might. Remarkably, I slowed until I lay face down, my hands battered but thankfully effective in their pathetic attempt.

I lay still. The drop into the precipices of the creek lay but four or five feet away. I peered upward at my paw marks scratched in long, continuous lines down the chute. In an instant a million neurons burst with pain, my breath was irregular and shortened by the fall.

There was an overwhelming relief of being ALIVE.
It was no fall from some majestic Himalayan peak or spur, but the instant of thanking God for my bikkies was just as real. A moment later, I furiously curse and swore at myself for being so incredibly stupid and dangerous. When Brendon stuck his head over the crest of the spur, I replied with only a hand gesture.
I knew I was in shock, but there was now time to breathe.
Like I said, it's not a case of life after death, but something to think about. Watch yourself and avoid jumping off the deep end.

SLUSH

"Me and my big mouth." Uttered by a funny surnamed, long haired climber trying to dig himself out of his hole which he had dug by recommending blackberry flavoured condoms over strawberry ones, because "the strawberry ones taste yukky." This same climber was also heard to recommend Scott as his mouthpiece. Hmmm.

"I didn't have time to pack light" Peter 'petzl' Kriesner.

"The purpose of this trip is to provide good grope".... Alan Daley

Hmmmm, what nasty surprise greeted the members of a recent ski trip when they arrived at the club rooms early one morning to collect their gear? Two active members were caught "caving" in a shared sleeping bag. Protests of hypothermia and an accident on the bouldering wall just didn't seem right. The moral of this story is that if you really must, please check the trip books for early morning arrivals.

Coincidentally, the same two very active members were rescued from the caving store not too long ago. Dan and Amber heard cries of "Help!" when they unlocked the front door. They noticed that a stretcher had fallen across the doorway of the caving store, locking the love birds in, who emerged red faced and dishelved. Their excuse was that the non-caver had wanted to "check the gear" and they had become entombed. This does not seem a very feasible story. Why was the door closed? What does checking the gear mean? What sort of activity must have been taking place inside for the stretcher to come lose from the outside wall and lock them in? We may need Mulder and Scully for this one.

Dan Colborne to a female, - "You wear too many clothes."

Slush hears that Dan finds glitter and baby oil hard to wash of in the shower, especially when two people have to fit in the said shower. It has been reported that the cleansing takes hours!

Kim Ely, - "I don't do naked things in the club."

Dan Colborne thought he had struck gold on the phone to a certain organiser of a certain event. It was lurve and their phone calls were so hot, they melted the super-optic cables. Alas for Dan, you can't judge a book by its telephone manner, but the boots were a nice touch.....

Richard Kjar to Dan Colborne, - "Dan, how will we fit all our polar fleeces in your car?"

Nigel Prior, - "Speaking of big yellow balls, there's something I have to do right now".

For Sale

White tuxedo, 20 cm too short
Original designer Gluhwein and
wax motif on jacket
Call Dan 386 2991

Steve says, "No way, I'm not buying touching anything that Dan has worn, especially not a tight polyester suit with tails!"



