



THE MOUNTAINEER

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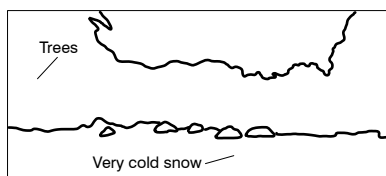
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Campsite at the Cricket Pitches on Mt. Stirling, with a few
souls rising early. Photographed at dawn by none other
than Steve.



ABOVE
Sarah, Charles, Alison and Miriam photographed by
Lincoln, skiing up to the summit on the second day of the
Mt. Stirling Overnight Tour.



LINCOLN SMITH
President

PRESIDENTIAL DECREE

As twilight's soft glow begins to enshroud your presidency, you start to wonder whether you've actually achieved much, with all that running around. Surely there is more you could have done to support and encourage people, to provide more, better opportunities for them to get out and involved in the club...

I must sometimes remind myself that this is (largely) pointless worrying. MUMC is a volunteer organisation, and so moves with the grace, and speed, of a slightly lame tortoise. People may take advantage of what you place before them, or they may not. They may infect others with their seemingly boundless enthusiasm, or their excursions may be forever limited to the adventures of others.

Rather than worry common misgivings, here are some random musings:

After the parched winter of yesteryear, ex-member Joel Bartley's tree-shortened Canadian skiing odyssey has led to a skiing bonanza. Yea, I have even heard "Cup weekend" and "Spring corn" being uttered over the odd pot of beer.

In a similar vein, the kayakers have been faced with an unusual conundrum: what do you do with rivers—normally considered good at 2m—that flood to above 8m? Err, you go paddle something less terrifying, get a car bogged, and so have to camp in the mud at the top of a 4WD track, and come back for the car in a fortnight's time. In a slightly less EPIC vein, kayaking convener Jen Sheridan has done a stellar job of getting the pool sessions back up and running, so if the idea of running rapids upside down doesn't appeal, there's no excuse not to learn how to bob back up.

People have been climbing. I don't know why; it's cold, and there's snow.

MUMC hut on Mt. Feathertop has finally received its new toilet, in preparation for Midnight Ascent festivities. Apparently it's pretty good, and I, for one, am keen to take it out for a spin.

As always, many thanks go to Steve Chan, our IT and Publications Officer, for his selfless, tireless work on the club's website, and the Mountaineer. There are grand plans afoot to revamp the club's main website, making it easier for people to find out what's happening, and advertise their own crazed conceptions. Thanks also to all those who put in again and again, to make MUMC work.

There's so much to do OUT THERE, and it's been great to see some new faces making a regular appearance, but I know there's a whole lot more of you out there. My advice: take a breath, grab yourself by whatever part of your anatomy seems appropriate, and throw yourself in at the deep end on a trip, or five. I haven't looked back since.

Lincoln Smith
President

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Find out more about the Club and how to join by visiting our website.
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FROM OUR CLUB CONVENORS

Skiing

Alison Thomson

ski@mumc.org.au

We're currently experiencing the best snowfalls in ten years, so if you haven't been on a ski trip yet, what are you waiting for?

It's been terrific to see so many skiers, of all ability levels, making the most of the snow. A special welcome to anyone who tried skiing for the first time this season (including our toy lizard)—fun, isn't it?!

The 2007 season got off to a good start, with skiable snow on the ground on the first "official" day of the season. At the start of June Lincoln and I ran an information session about clothing and equipment needed for ski touring, something that I hope will become an annual event.

There was an overnight ski-tour to St. Gwinear (Baw Baw Plateau) where the temperatures plummeted to at least -8 degrees. A record-breaking 21 people joined this trip!

We quickly followed up with a teaching daytrip to Mt Stirling. The totally inaccurate and very gloomy snow report kept everyone away, and even though there was only unskiable slush at the carpark, after a gruelling ten minute walk to skiable snow, we enjoyed having the entire mountain to ourselves, with terrific snow on the practice slopes and the upper trails. A huge thank-you to ex-MUMC president and ski convenor Alan Daley, who shared both his finely honed skiing skills and sense of humour with the beginners and also had me doing my first ever telemark turns. Charles won the award for falling over the most, thus usurping Sam (this time in boots which were the correct size) who mastered the snow plough in no time.

By the next weekend, numbers had dwindled to a "mere" 15 people as we returned to Mt. Stirling, this time for a beginners overnight snow-camping trip. A big thankyou to Lincoln, Steve and Sarah, for their very patient coaching.

The fresh snow on the trees gave me the feeling of being in a magic forest, amplified by the real snowflakes which were falling (as against the sleet which in desperation we Australians call snow). Alaster got his kite going on the summit...or the kite got Alaster going, depending on how you looked at it. I met several ex-MUMC members on the summit, including Joel disobeying his doctor's orders, but did my best turns on my very last run because no-one was looking at me.

Charles made the same discovery as Sam about boot sizes, and hence improved out of sight in a single trip. Jeanne displayed impressive determination and as a result got her snow-plough happening very nicely. The MUMC reunion continued on the practice slope near the carpark, where my ego took a beating, but of course the heavy, chunky snow was to blame, rather than my technique...

Next I headed off to Bogong on an intermediate/advanced trip with Greta, Pete and Lincoln, while Grace and Eugenie debuted as trip leaders by running a beginners trip to Lake Mountain. Judging from all the photos of people smiling on the MUMC gallery, it was a big success, so well done! I hope it inspires you and others to organise some more ski trips, because this season the possibilities are pretty much endless.

Meanwhile, the walk up Bogong was both easier (on Friday night) and worse (on Saturday morning) than I remembered, with snow levels well below Bivouac Hut. On Sunday we were treated to crystal clear skies and a spectacular 360° view which extended all the way to the Main Range. The telemarks completely eluded me, but I savoured making first tracks down Hell Gully (which might sound hardcore, but is far less steep than the name suggests and the easiest run off the summit). For the first time I managed to descend from the summit back to camp without taking my skis off, albeit sideslipping the whole way, with Lincoln escorting me by "grooming" the snow ahead. I proudly announced that this was the first time I'd managed to sideslip properly without falling over, and then...promptly fell over on flat ground.

Coming up this weekend, we have new recruit Chris, old hands Kathryn and Oli, and Canadian import Dave heading out onto the Bogong High Plains. Dave was initially worried that he'd left his avalanche transceiver back in Canada, resulting in some amused jealousy from me—If only we had enough snow that we had to worry about avalanches! Lincoln, Ben, and I are dutifully heading off to the Baw Baw Plateau for Search and Rescue Winter Practice.

In the pipeline is a telemark clinic at Baw Baw with ex-MUMC skiing guru, Joel Bartley. Greta has her eyes on the Razorback, Lincoln on the Fainters, and I'm keen for a Buller-Stirling traverse.

To those of you who have already done a handful of skiing trips with MUMC, I'd love to see you get out there and have a go at organising a ski trip yourselves. I have many more ideas for ski trips than I can fit into a single season, and I can suggest several terrific trips that cover easy terrain.

And finally I can't resist sharing an extremely important piece of advice for overnight ski touring, even though I admit to stealing the idea off a climber (thank you Dave Ellis)...

Fried haloumi cheese is the perfect start to your evening meal.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**THURSDAY
AUGUST 30**

IT'S THAT TIME of year once again! As you have no doubt guessed from the obscure heading above, the Annual General Meeting is happening on **Thursday August 30 at 6:30pm** in the Pavilion at Melbourne University. See below for a map.

All members of the Club are invited to attend as a new Committee will be voted in.

Nominations for Committee Positions

Nominations are hereby called for all voting positions on the Incorporation's Committee of Management. Nominations are submitted in writing and must be signed by the Proposer, Seconder and the Nominee, and must be placed in the Nominations Box which exists in the Clubrooms, or handed to the Returning Officer, Joel Bartley. **Nominations must be submitted by 5:00pm Tuesday 28th August.**

If you would like more information regarding any of the positions please consult the current holder of that position, or contact the Secretary via email (secretary@mumc.org.au).

Agenda Items

There are no special motions to be attended to. Any Business other than Ordinary Business to be included on the Agenda must be given **in writing** to the Secretary via the Mountaineering mailbox in the Sports Centre, or by **email** (secretary@mumc.org.au), **no later than 7 days** prior to the meeting—i.e. no later than **7pm Thursday 23rd August**.



NOMINATION FORM

Voting positions

President
Vice-President
Treasurer
Secretary
Assistant Treasurer
Publications Officer
Bushwalking Convenor
Canoeing Convenor
Caving Convenor
Mountaineering Convenor
Rock climbing Convenor
Ski Touring Convenor
Conservation Convenor
Gear Store Officer
General Member

Non-voting positions

Canoe Polo Convenor
Canyoning Convenor
Rogaining Convenor
Hut Warden
IT Officer



Nominaton for Committee position 2007/2008

I,, a member of Melbourne University Mountaineering Club Inc., hereby nominate
.....to be elected to the Incorporation’s 2007/2008 Committee of Management
in the position of

Signature of Proposer:

Signature of Seconder:

Signature of Nominee:

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS AGM

MUMC Annual General Meeting: 15 Aug 2006

Meeting opened 6:45pm, Alison Thomson presiding, Joel Bartley returning officer

Apologies

Andrew Oppenheim, Mark Patterson, Sean Griffiths, Matthew Adams, Ben Cebon, Lachlan Hick, Leah Jackson

Present

Kate Abel, Joel Bartley, Michelle Bassett, Mac Brunckhorst, Marina Carpinelli, Steve Chan, Oliver Clarke, Shannon Crack, Isabelle Damiani, Felix Dance, Samuel Flewett, Rhonda Hastie, Kate Heskett, Pete Hield, Stuart Hollaway (not voting), Bronwyn Hradsky, Richard Lovett, Simon McKenzie, Grace Phang, David Rochwerger, Ned Rogers, Grant Schuster, Jen Sheridan, Su Li Sin, Ben Singleton-Polster, Lincoln Smith, James Southwell, Dale Thistlethwaite, Matthew Thomas, Alison Thomson, Kathryn Whalley

Minutes from previous AGM

LINCOLN: Andrew Oppenheim said Niall Brennan's name was misspelled, and Andrew's speech was left out. He has a copy which he will forward to the committee.

AL: I motion that last year's AGM minutes are a true and accurate representation of what was said.

DALE: Second

All in favour

Reports

IT

STEVE: 2005 was a good year for IT. We released a new website. Photo galleries of our own were built, under full control. It allows the return of the Davy Digest (weekly summaries of upcoming trips etc), which haven't been used but are available. New forums plus a new flyer for O-week were produced. The only problems were technical, and beyond the scope of this report. We have a hosting service donated by Creative Contingencies. Thanks to Al and Lincoln for putting up with the constant barrage of questions as the new site was being developed.

AL: I'd like to point out that there's also a new background database too, and that what Steve has produced is a very professional website.

Caving

SHANNON: Many trips, we're actually more active than the VSA (Victorian Speleological Association. We've done combined trips, and have made overseas club contacts which may allow for more international collaborative trips. There's been 1 trip since the return of Shannon, and Latrobe is still interested in more trips. Planning SRT trips and practice for all members.

Hut

MATT THOMAS: We have a new toilet, but it's in Bright. Will be flown in in October. Planning on getting floorboards flown in for the upper deck, so big hut maintenance trip after the toilet is flown in.

RHONDA: Can we have a 2-way mirror in the new toilet so we can still enjoy the views afforded by the old, freestyle toilet?

Skiing

PETE: Well, skiing... (laughter) Not a complete disaster, as there have been 3 trips, and we hope to have some more snow. We've tidied the ski store, and are hoping to obtain more skis, but are having trouble with quotes.

MATT THOMAS: Thanks very much for Pete taking on the job, doing inventory etc at a time when we were fearing that we would have no ski convener at all.

Canyoning

AL: Jac Cutter ran a successful trip to the Blue Mountains, and will go back. There was also a trip last September where some members went canyoning for the first time.

Mountaineering

DALE: Mountaineering excellent. Had 7 members actively mountaineering in NZ, 6 successful ascents of Mt. Aspiring. Heard very good independent reports from people met in NZ about MUMC members. Moved the gear into the caving store due to the climbing store being too full of gear (all those shoes!) Also writing a Mountaineering resource booklet, where to stay, flights, routes to climb etc. Otherwise, I hope lots of people go over this season.

STUART: Any upcoming instruction trips?

DALE: Funny you should mention that, as we are going to run one. Rope techniques, alpine instruction weekend coming up.

Bushwalking

FELIX: Bushwalking has been plodding along. Have been less active than I had liked, but Uni and job interviews were a problem. Many day walks happened, plus a few larger walks, Lara Pinta, Vic Alps, NSW Alps, beginner trip to Feathertop (14 people), although some people found it a little more arduous than people expected.

We must think about total fire ban contingencies at Cathedrals, as we were stuck for places to go (ended up at Lake Mountain). Midnight Ascent went well—not many bushwalkers, not many leaders. This led to directional issues on the way up, with more than ½ of the group getting there at about 7:30am. Snow excellent, weather fantastic, theme well followed.

Marina, Ned, Andrew ran many trips. Many beginners coming. Often, too many people come! Matt Thomas' Baw Baw trip had 20 people on it. People are out there, and very enthusiastic, so next convener has lots to do.

Conservation

BRONWYN: 6 trips, 3 Benalla tree planting trips with regent honeyeater project, nest boxing with same group, checking out endangered squirrel gliders, then track clearing at Tarli Karng, moss beds on the Bogong High Plains with Parks Vic. Collected \$60 for VNPA's red gum appeal. Will be tree planting in 2 weeks.

AL: Most active conservation convener we've had for a long time. Congratulations.

Gear Store

OLIVER: Gear store—people borrow gear and generally return it. Need a new inventory and general clean up in the next few weeks, and repair work has been done.

Publications

KATE H: Went for 2 larger issues, as 4 would have been too small. Thanks to Simon for doing the mail merge stuff for our sendout edition. Last year, we paid Australia Post to do it, so bonus if we can do it ourselves. Thanks to Timmy for some document conversions.

Articles were good—we need more, though! Advertising—working on it, as we have the Farrago advertisers' list. Expecting only small money for that. Suggest putting advertising money into prizes etc for good articles. Would result in higher quality articles, and more professional appearance etc.

Most important thing—we need to get people to write more articles. This can include interest articles, like gear etc. Not just trip articles.

Climbing

SIMON: Lachlan Hick was our climbing convener this year, and we have many new leaders, thanks to Lachlan and other leaders being very active. While Mt. Arapiles was the major destination of trips, many trips went ahead closer to Melbourne, including Ben Cairn, Beckworth, You Yangs, Werribee Gorge... Also, thanks go out to Al, Lincoln, Dale, Stu, and anyone else I forgot. Much props.

Kayaking

MAC: Paddling—Cataract race, good. Many trips, Sarah in concrete classic, excellent. Many members joined the freestyle championships—Grant, Pete Lockett, Kylie and others. Not necessarily winning, but good fun.

Went to Cairns too (boat loss incident there). Sarah went to the Nimboia in northern NSW. There was also a beginners' course, very successful. Kat has increased her skills an awful lot, and will be going to Uganda with Sarah and Kylie.

JEN: Beginners' trip for Sarah had 15 beginners on the Goulburn, went down very well. Planning a follow-up some time. Pool sessions going

very well.

AL: Thanks to Mac and Sarah for arranging the pool sessions etc, which is a thankless but very necessary task.

Canoe Polo

DUNCAN: Had a pretty strong team last year, last semester. Dominated the field, only lost 2 games. In F grade, we only have team in at the moment. Missed the grand final, started new season 3 weeks ago. Tom still playing, as is Alaster, Luke White. The rest are not students or club members. Have had to recruit new members from other Unis. Moved up to E grade, so more competition now.

Rogaining

LINCOLN: Alaster's not here, but as the person who wrote the cheques, I know the most about it. Wrote 2 cheques—2 trips, one for the Australian championships, one general. Alaster has organized good teams for rogaining. Good to see, since rogaining is an MUMC creation.

MAC: MUMC came 2nd in the Pubgaine.

DALE: Continuing a proud tradition.

Vice President

MATT THOMAS: Vice pres—easiest position on the committee. As outside viewer, I see all. Thanks to Al in her term as President. Good technique of leadership. Good at conflict resolution etc.

Something we need to work on—how do we get more leaders out of our members? Well, it seems that we put leaders on a pedestal, so it makes it difficult for people to see themselves as able to perform to the same degree as these people. Many people are capable of leading simple trips, and we must get a new generation of leaders in the club. Shouldn't have people not running trips because they're not the hardest or best people in the sport. It's all about learning. People will improve if we have faith in them, and let them improve.

AL: Thanks to Matt. If you think I've been around for a long time, he's been around for longer. He has so many skills and much experience. Thanks for staying with the club.

General Member

DALE: General Member (Leah) has gone well and above the role of General Member. It was originally a position for a younger member to provide a youthful outlook for the club, from times when the club was more graduate-oriented. Leah arranged Cathedrals and many other things, including O-Week stalls, Pie and Slide night, counting/sorting memberships, etc. Thanks very much for all the work you've done.

LINCOLN: She's still willing to help out this year, which is surprising given the amount of unthanked work she did.

Secretary

SIMON: Secretary is essentially an admin role. I took minutes, wrote keylist. Had Sean (Assistant Secretary) on campus to handle correspondence, so good.

Treasurer

LINCOLN: Items of interest in the attached report: Al contribution is an amount taken from the operating account, which was at \$40K. We rarely draw from it, so we have moved \$10K to Australian Ethical Investments.

AL: Al is THE most ethical investment group around.

LINCOLN: Point 2—The club used to have a conservation account, which was closed. These funds have only just come back into the operating account. Miscellaneous income is from donations for the Redgum appeal etc.

BRONWYN: Why are there items that don't add up?

LINCOLN: Previous year's items are only included for comparison, so they don't necessarily add up to the total. Interesting items from expenditure: Money spent by the climbing convener (Lachlan Hick) on gear when that money had not been allocated to climbing.

Fortunately, climbing collected a lot of gear hire money. Addressing the misappropriated funds, this money is to be subtracted from climbing's allocation next year. Gear hire: good to see that people are paying for gear. All other activities are doing well with gear hire.

Most sports have improved in terms of money collected for gear hire. Looking to the next financial year, we see that we've made a substantial profit. Good for backup against what we expect to be a great loss of funding with the advent of VSU. Climbing, for instance, is almost able to pay for itself in terms of gear hire vs. expenditure.

PETE: What is the total of unclaimed cheques?

LINCOLN: There's 1 uncashed \$1K cheque from the 60th anniversary. We have taken over that account, so it's essentially written to ourselves.

DALE: Why the decline in T-shirt sales?

LINCOLN: No new t-shirt design, so we really need to move these shirts. Thinking of giving them away.

AL: this is the 3rd time this has happened. What can we do?

DALE: They were all too big! Nobody in the club needs XXXL.

RICHARD: What's the deal with VSU?

LINCOLN: Waiting for the Uni to tell us. They're restructuring memberships, which will probably be good for non-students. We'll see. Expecting about 1/3 of our current subsidy.

MAC: What about competition entry etc?

LINCOLN: That all comes from our subsidy, which is currently about \$15K.

DALE: We need more members to help us get through.

AL: Membership numbers seem to be relatively static, considering that we have the abseil going again. The reason could be that sports clubs got relegated to under the sails this year at o week, meaning that many students didn't know that we had a stall. All MUSA clubs reported reduced numbers this year. It seems that more older members are among the active, and less students.

DALE: We need more students on the table at O-week.

BRONWYN: We have a lot of conservation people in 1st year. Bushwalking etc is seen as less intimidating, as less people are willing to go climbing/paddling immediately.

DALE: having the abseil back on is a major coup. Many thanks to Al for getting it going again.

AL: Many people deserve thanks. Dale, Matt Thomas, Lincoln, Lachlan, Matty Doyle, Simon.

LINCOLN: Any more financial report questions? Move that financial report accurate.

MATT THOMAS: Second.

All in favour, motion passed.

Other items

MATT THOMAS: I'd like to thank Andrew Oppenheim for taking care of the library. Have received contact from ex members and ex club members' families during this past year. Received a book about Nick Reeves, book about Faye Kerr, an old hut logbook from late 70s to early 1992, which was interesting because it talks of what happened in 1983 when a club member died on the cornice of Feathertop.

Received an offer from Rod Costigan, an ex MUMC president, who has Mountaineer magazines from 60s, 70s, 80s.

AL: Thanks very much to Linc for doing the club finances. Excellent job, but I'm biased.

President

AL: Website, O-week abseil are the big projects in my mind which we did. The first aid kit revamp has been done, but we've not yet bought the gear. Still outstanding, so the new committee must get onto this so that Brendan Pearl's work and Ben Cebon's work is not lost. Thanks to all our club leaders. A rival bushwalking club was set up, but we went to their meeting and took their members. Ha ha.

VSU: We're in a very good position, but we need a better emphasis on gear—condition and monitoring borrowings etc. It is not the job of conveners/officers to take care of the gear, but it's everyone's job.

The way forward is no make ourselves a terrific amateur club, in the best sense of the word amateur. Not a bunch of hacks, but we want less of this elite, professional-style culture with a concept of "us" and "them". We want trips to be cooperative, not leaders and beginners all the time. In order to create this positive amateur club, we need constant learning, and a progression of skills. Conveners need to be thinking of the bigger picture—how do we develop people all the time? There are people even now, who have the skills, but are not running trips, possibly through feelings of intimidation. Our intermediates need to step up to the mark, helping out on trips, not running trips immediately, but certainly taking on leadership roles. Mistakes in organization are acceptable, as it's all learning.

Please excuse my rant! Having been up n the high plains in perfect weather over the last 2 weeks, I see how fortunate we are to live where we are, with the beautiful rivers, world-class climbing etc. While you have the opportunity, do as much as you can to enjoy our beautiful surrounds and to help others to enjoy them too.

Changing membership fees—"That the committee be authorised to set membership prices for 2007 without having to call a special general meeting. Further, that the amount decided on by the committee be not greater than \$50." Lincoln: It takes a general meeting to change membership fees, and since VSU can come in any time, I suggest that the committee be able to set this amount at some time during 2007 to a value no greater than \$50.

DALE: Second.

GRANT: Will it still be different for non students?

LINCOLN: No

SAM, RHONDA: Will it be cheaper for student union members next year?

LINCOLN: Unknown.

AL: Eligible non student fee may be set at \$50 from Sports union.

MATT THOMAS: That assumes that the sports union will continue to require Eligible Non Students to pay the \$75 to join the sports union. What's suggested is that graduates would pay less overall, but more would go to the club, if this requirement is relaxed.

LINCOLN: MU sport wants to have nothing to do with our membership, so we suspect that it's unlikely that students will have to pay extra if they don't join the union.

RHONDA: Insurance?

SHANNON: Should be OK for public liability.

SIMON: Be aware that club insurance is not great. We encourage you to have ambulance membership and possibly private health, regardless of what happens regarding the Uni's insurance policy.

MATT THOMAS: The motion is very vague simply because we don't know what's going to happen.

All in favour, passed

Elections

AL: All positions are open.

Voting Positions

President: Lincoln Smith
Vice President: (Vacant)
Treasurer: David Rochwerger
Secretary: (Vacant)
Assistant Treasurer: Jane Davy
Rock Climbing Convenor: Simon McKenzie
Bushwalking Convenor: Marina Carpinelli
Canoeing Convenor: Jen Sheridan & Mac Brunckhorst (joint)
Caving Convenor: Shannon Crack
Skiing Convenor: Alison Thomson
Mountaineering Convenor: Dale Thistlethwaite
Conservation Convenor: Bronwyn Hradsky
Publications Officer: Steve Chan
General Member: Mark Patterson
Kathryn Whalley
Gear Store Officer: (Vacant)
Non-Voting Positions
Canyoning Convenor: Alison Thomson
Canoe Polo Convenor: (Vacant)
Rogaining Convenor: (Vacant)
IT Officer: Mark Patterson/Steve Chan
Hut Warden: Felix Dance

Election of General Member: Kathryn Whalley vs. Mark Patterson (absent)

KATHRYN: I'd like to do it to be more involved in the club, I have free time, and see this as a good way to help out.

Vote

Kathryn won

Election of IT Officer: Steve Chan vs. Mark Patterson (absent)

STEVE: I wrote the site, I have 2 jobs that don't pay, and I have no social life. Nothing better to do.

Vote

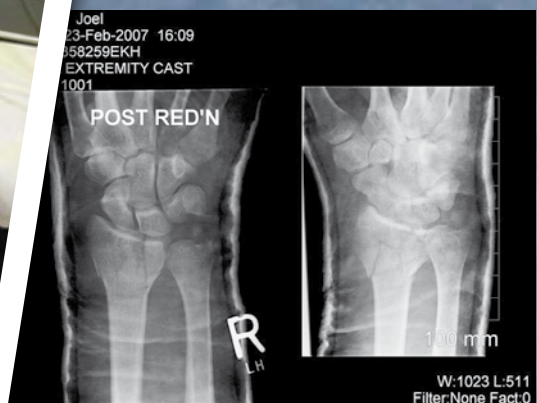
Steve won

JOEL: After this meeting, the new committee will set a date for the next committee meeting, at which time people can volunteer for any empty roles. It is the responsibility of the committee to manage these roles until people are found to fill them.

Meeting closed 8:30pm

THANK YOU, JOEL BARTLEY

...for your selfless sacrifices to appease the snow gods!





BY STEVE CHAN
WITH EXCERPTS BY ALISON THOMSON
ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY BY LINCOLN SMITH

THE TRIP TO Mt. St. Gwinear reinforced the well-known fact that I am not a morning person. We left at the inhuman time of 6AM—though I’ve left earlier on bushwalks with Andrew—and fumbled for a considerable amount of time fitting chains. Unbeknownst to us, we were a mere 30 seconds’ drive from the Gwinear carpark when we finally started moving again.

After the usual preparation with sun-screen, gaiters (which were kind of useless when using plastic ski boots) and stuff, we headed out. I’d just bought a new sleeping bag and was keen to see how good it was; after all, I did recommend the exact same model to Dan, after Matthew Thomas recommended it to me.

There is a well established grand MUMC tradition of injured skiers bringing good snow, and skiers who buy new ski gear keeping the snow at bay. It seems that Joel Bartley’s snow sacrifice (of two broken wrists) has paid dividends, overriding the risk I ran by purchasing a new alpine sleeping bag just before winter.

—ALISON THOMSON
CONVENOR

As it turns out, Joel’s mighty sacrifice offset the purchase of both sleeping bags on the trip; we were blessed with snow *and* utterly clear weather for the entire weekend. We shuffled up the trail to the summit of St. Gwinear, where I was entertained by the antics of Uncle Paulie, Julia and Helen; I had a brief chat to a nice fellow who’d been skiing the trails for some time, and he pointed out the various landmarks in the distance at a lookout point. I noticed the tracks of a creature that took six steps then a jump, then another six steps, as it travelled down the mountain.

The summit of St. Gwinear stands at approximately 1500m and is a beautiful place to rest in the snow, admire the scenery and wonder how the hell one gets down the slope to the campsite. This downhill section from the summit to the Gwinear Flat campsite flummoxed a few of us straggling at the back; a popular method of descent was to just keep falling down. Many Steve/Julia/ Uncle Paulie/Helen imprints were left in the snow and are so deep that they will remain there for all time.

Joel Bartley on a gurney in Canada, after his accident, with an X-ray of his broken wrists. (left).

Campsite at Gwinear Flat, with the clearest skies in the history of the planet. Clear skies equates to freezing cold nights, when we discovered that thermometers can stop working at -10 degrees (main).

Eventually everyone made it down to camp at various times in one piece. We set up tents near a creek and throughout the afternoon and evening I discovered where not to stand; more often than not I would take a step and suddenly fall into a giant hole, snow-covered vegetation attempting to consume my very soul. Humming the *Rocky* theme song did not help at all.

There were a lot of us camped at Gwinear Flat. A lot.

We probably broke an MUMC record on the first ski trip of 2007, with no fewer than 21 people ski-touring overnight on the Baw Baw plateau. This certainly pushed our number of snow tents to the limit!

—ALISON THOMSON
CONVENOR

Once we'd set up our tents and scoffed some grub for a rather late lunch, we practiced on the nearby slopes. I'd discovered the wonders of skiing in plastic boots—I'd formerly preferred leather, for the flexibility in righting oneself after an inevitable crash—and everyone was having a rather good time messing around till dusk.

Grant did some impressive turns (and a very impressive face-plant) on his Alpine Touring gear, providing some nice photographic material for Lincoln. Sam won the award for falling over the most (not his fault, but due to ill fitting boots) but to his credit this did nothing to dampen his enthusiasm. Greta, Pete, and Lincoln showed me up with their telemark turns, and I reminded myself the hard way that linking turns works a lot better with your upper body oriented down the slope.

—ALISON THOMSON
CONVENOR

I tried that, but invariably I found my body oriented *in* the slope, and had to extricate myself from an impossible tangle of skis, poles, and pride. Nevertheless, from the play slopes (of varying degrees of iciness) there was a magnificent view of our campsite. The view was better when one's face wasn't mashed into the snow like a potato. Eventually we all had enough and retired to camp for dinner.

Tom had dug out some snow furniture for us to use (thank you) and we utilised it to its fullest potential. As the sun dropped

Tumbling down the hill to Gwinear Flat. Uncle Paulie, a bystander, almost got destroyed by Helen as she skied down. Unshaken by the near miss, Uncle Paulie successfully made it to camp (top).

At the Gwinear Flat campsite. Greta and Kate in the foreground, Julia and Helen set up their tent (middle).

Alison and Lincoln on the play-slope above camp, just before the sun really started going away (bottom).





below the horizon the temperature plummeted and continued to plummet well into sub-zero figures—Alister's thermometer stopped working at -10. I struggled desperately trying to find my spork in the dark.

We sat around gibbering like lunatics and someone toppled over whilst trying to look at the stars. Somehow I was last into bed and everyone faced the cold Himalayan night ahead.

We skied fresh snow and camped in -8 degrees under a perfectly clear sky and yes, the new sleeping bag passed the bivvying-in-the-snow test with flying colours.

—ALISON THOMSON
CONVENOR

MORNING BROUGHT A WONDERFUL surprise for me and Dan—chunks of ice in our tent! During the night, moisture accumulated in the tent corners and froze into actual, throwable pieces of ice (no, Alister, neither of the pieces were yellow, so it's not my fault this time). Like Alison's, my sleeping bag kept me alive and hale through the night.

Other things that froze included Dan's socks, the Camelbak I slept on, Powerade, and most people's sunscreen. Fortunately, as the sun rose, so did the temperature, and soon life became bearable again as we took off toward Baw Baw.

It appears Alister, Dan and I travelled the furthest, wondering where everyone else went, because they were ahead of us, and then mysteriously vanished. We messed around at Phillack Saddle, where I tried to improve my skiing abilities. I actually nailed a vaguely artistic half-telemark which was my crowning achievement for the entire weekend.

The route back was intriguing as we ended up following the alleged snow poles which weren't there; eventually we followed part of an old blue run followed by a trail that followed a creek. Alister was a road hazard to everyone, though mostly to himself, as he sped down the slopes and getting stuck on the occasional embankment. I laughed, then I got stuck in exactly the same place. We met up with everyone else for lunch and then started heading back. **M**

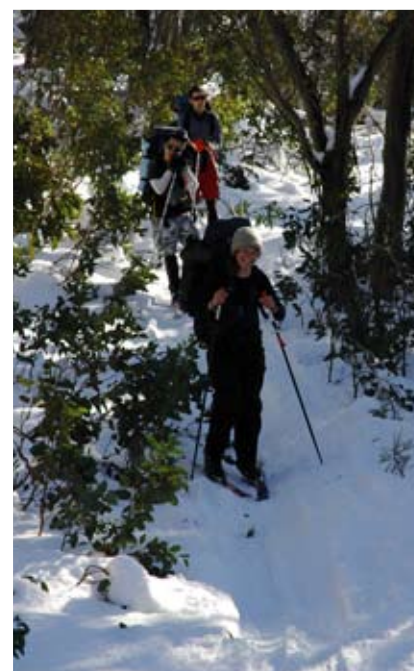


Dan holding two pieces of ice that we found in our tent on Sunday morning, after the night plunged into the region of -10 degrees. Everything froze (top).

Julia, coming down a hill near camp (middle).

Yet another thought-provoking sequence, recorded at Phillack Saddle. This was an ordinary stay-upright-attempt-telemark exercise that somehow went horribly wrong beyond comprehension (bottom).

PHOTOS: JOEL BARTLEY (INSETS); LINCOLN SMITH (MIDDLE); DANIEL HEARNDEN (BOTTOM)



Everyone gets set to go skiing at the Gwinear Carpark. From left to right: Uncle Paulie, Peter, Sam the Kiwi, Helen, Alaster, Julia, Kate, Tom, Grant (obscured), Jen and Kat (top).

Making breakfast at camp, despite everything having frozen solid overnight (above).

Uncle Paulie, Steve and Julia descending St. Gwinear. The trail was a little tougher to negotiate in this area, with extra shrubbery and holes to contend with (above right).



Julia, Alaster, Jeffrey and Dan, chilling out after a day's skiing (above).

Sam the Kiwi's first time on skis, making him a Skiwi (above right).

PHOTOS: LINCOLN SMITH (BOTTOM INSETS)



STIRLING DRESSED IN WHITE

THE X-COUNTRY SKIING season started with a few beginners trips including trips to Mt. Stirling on two weekends in a row. Sitting right next to Mt. Buller, this back country has some very friendly terrain with easy navigation. Most trails have gentle slopes and are dotted with sign posts, maybe with the exception of the summit.

The Day Trip

ON THE FIRST day trip, about twenty of us arrived at Stirling and stepped on some very slushy snow at the car park but it didn't take long for us to find some skiable snow. Previously, I only did one cross-country ski trip. It was the memorable and stimulating Fainters trip led by Alison and Matthew last year which had a tough start because of the awful lot of walking that we had to do to find snow in the first place!

THERE WAS A PROMINENT sign posted at the entry with "The summit is not for beginners" in red font. The beginners practiced their skills at King Saddle while the more confident ones headed off for the summit trail. Despite the drizzle our spirits were not dampened. We were running up and down the slope of King Saddle until we were starving for lunch. I was still marvelling at the fact that I was skiing on real snow since I learned basic downhill skiing on icy man-made snow in Beijing. However, the people who attempted the summit that day were not so impressed by the snow and weather conditions up there.

The Overnight Tour

IT WAS A DRAMATIC difference to see Stirling again after more than 20cm of snow was dumped over the week. We literally started skiing as soon as we got out of the cars. It was another big skiing trip with about 15 of us. Alison allowed me to take a pair of brand-new skis from the club so I felt very spoiled and I paid extra attention not to ski over any kind of branches; sometimes quite tricky on the ungroomed sections.

Once again we played around at the King Saddle then we headed for the Cricket Pitch Hut via Fork Creek Trail. After setting up the snow tents, a few of us wandered off to the summit trail pretty late in the afternoon

Alison practising near the summit of Mt. Stirling, the intermittent cloud cover deteriorating as the afternoon wore on. The snow poles lead to a track intersection a few metres from GGS Hut.


but had to turn back just before the GGS Hut. Attempting the summit in the dark was not a very good idea even with head torches.

It was snowing throughout the day and well into the night. The next morning we woke up to find a nice fresh layer of snow to ski on. I also discovered that the lenses of my sunnies were contorted and they fell out of the frames. Greta's car had to depart early, so her group was the first to ascend the summit that morning. There were five of us—Greta, Emily, Jules, Ali and me.

After passing the GGS Hut, we came to an exposed area at the top. The weather up there was a bit rough as there were strong gusts of wind and low visibility. The trail turned into a pole line. We were following the tall wooden poles all the way to the end and completely missed the summit on our right.

It was a lovely detour to some beautiful and untouched steep slopes. Some of us have not quite mastered the art of snow-ploughing yet and were making a variety of face and body imprints in the snow with each fall, occasionally breathing in or eating a mouthful of snow. The snow was more than knee deep and it was certainly an effort to pull our bodies up. We went on a quiet trail that continued to descend, so we soon figured that we need to backtrack slightly and depart from the pole line.

For a while we were surrounded by magical whiteness. There were no poles or vegetation around. The whiteness of the snow blended in beautifully with the grey-ness of the sky smudging the horizon. There was nothing in sight except for the people in my group far ahead of me, which were tiny silhouettes that seemed to glide among empty mist and air. I only knew that I was going in a general upwards direction and that I had to keep up with the others as they were my indicators.

Without notice we arrived at the summit, marked by an alien four legged pod. A small part of the sky cleared for a few brief seconds and I had magnificent view of the other mountains, which disappeared before I could take out my camera. We hurriedly took one of those typical victorious pictures on a summit as we were all already in the "let's get out of here" mindset. There was not much playing around the summit under such conditions but it was the best part of the trip nonetheless. 

Most of the crew practising on the play slope at King Saddle, under Lincoln and Alison's tutelage (top).

Emily snow-ploughing sans poles (middle).

The campsite at the Cricket Pitches, at late morning, just before we set out for the summit of Mt. Stirling (bottom).





Following the snow poles to the summit (top inset).

Greta, Julia, Emily, Ali and Eugenie, on the early descent from the summit (middle inset).

Alaster and his kite, subjected to the whim of conditions at the summit (bottom inset).

Peter, about 50m from the summit, just as the clouds really started to roll in. Fortunately it was only misty and windy, and not particularly cold (top right).

Julia and Alison on the play slope outside King Saddle Hut (right).

PHOTOS: LINCOLN SMITH (MAIN, BOTTOM INSET);
EUGENIE CHUNG (TOP AND MIDDLE INSETS)



WALKING THE WINTER WONDERLAND OF LAKE MOUNTAIN

BY EUGENIE CHUNG
ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEVE CHAN

ON MY SECOND trip to Stirling, Al suggested that Grace and I should help organise a beginners cross-country skiing day trip, under the guidance of the more experienced and resourceful Steve, on the following weekend that could run concurrently with the more advanced trips to Bogong and other places. Grace and I certainly did not want to waste such a good ski season, but we were not too sure if we were experienced enough to organise anything. I had only been on three x-country skiing trips, while Grace had only done it once.



An unusually synchronised rest break where everyone parked on the side of the trail. Daniel, heading off into the distance on the left, was having none of it and skied off down the *slow*. (top left).

Kathryn and Charles duke it out at the bottom of a slope along Jubilee Trail. Both were flummoxed at the same spot and it was a true battle to get moving again, much to everyone's amusement (top right).

The crew sans Eugenie at one of the junctions; from left to right: Steve, Kathryn, Charles, Miriam, Grace, Sean and Daniel (above left).

Grace and Sean (above right).

Nevertheless, the two of us excitedly pop up in the clubroom on Tuesday night. The excitement of falling snow could be felt in the air through the hustle and bustle of people organising trips and trying out gear. As others were busy, we hung around until Kathryn and Dan came to our rescue—because we could do nothing more than enjoy the idea of snow without the cars. Then everything started to fall into place. We pulled out a trip sheet and started signing people up. I have to admit that part of the process of handling equipment was a bit disorganised. At least everyone had been fitted with skis. Just as we thought the logistics were already done and over, we realised we had more things to worry about—snow

chains, roof racks, octopus straps, keys and the usual problem of people pulling out or joining late. Argh, organisational skills!

The people on the trip were pretty much running the trip by themselves. Everyone had at least either done some basic downhill or x-country skiing before. Lake Mountain was even more beginner friendly than Stirling. In fact, the terrain could be described as flat. Yes, the Echo Flat Trail was indeed flat! We soon got bored with the easy green ski trail, so we got on to the more difficult blue run. Honestly, it didn't differ much. It was still a piece of cake!

Wanting something a bit more challenging, we took the courage to give the 'most difficult' Jubilee Trail a shot. 'Black

diamond' was the classification, but the downhill slopes certainly weren't adrenaline pumping. Nevertheless, it was certainly a crowd-free trail in comparison, and it ended up to be a great confidence boost to the beginners. Surely, we can't be the most hardcore people around here? "We can call ourselves 'advanced skiers' now," Steve joked.

Well, there was certainly more walking on skis than we would have liked, but we were still having a good day out. The occasional snow showers brought in fresh snow and the tree-tops were glistening with white flakes. It was a relaxing "walk in the winter wonderland". M



MAIN RANGE

“Ice cream! Is gonna save the day!”

BY SU LI SIN

Who? Jasmine, Sven, Kat, Derek, Su Li.

Where? The Main Range... from Munyang Power Station to Thredbo.

When? A week in July.

What? Skiing and snowcamping.

Peaks bagged: One; Mt Kosciuszko.

Huts visited: One; Seaman's Hut.

Lakes visited: Two; Club Lake, Blue Lake.

Peaks bypassed: Many. Mt Twynam, Mt Anton, Ramshead...


Types of snow skied on: Packed powder, loose deep powder, ice, crunchy crust.

Weather encountered: Blue skies & still air. Blue skies and light wind. Blue skies and stronger wind. Cloudy and light wind. Cloudy and stronger wind. Cloudy and gale force wind.

Degrees of slope met: Flat contouring. Slight uphill/downhill touring. Exciting rocky knolls. Even more exciting groomed resort runs at the end.

Food consumed: Noodles. Nuts. Soup. Pasta. Cous-cous. Porridge. Rice. Lollies. Cous-cous. Chocolate. Pasta. Burnt water. Did I say cous-cous?

Number of holes dug: Many.

Number of tents sunk: Almost two. 



Sven with the mountain tops covered in cloud/windblown snow in the background (top). One of our 'favourite' activities—hole digging. Sven's (failed attempt) at Rawson's Pass (middle). Skiing across the Rolling Grounds (above).



Derek, left, and Jasmine (I think) at Rolling Grounds on our first day above the treeline.



Snowblown view of the area outside Seaman's Hut.

WHERE KAYAKERS WOULD RATHER BE

BY JEN SHERIDAN

SITTING ON THE side of the road with a heavy pack, a daypack, a bag full of kayaking gear, a paddle and my boat—*Teduardo*—I suddenly questioned the wisdom of this solo trip. I sat staring at Ted as the bus drove out of Murchison, leaving me and my mammoth pile of baggage alone, and with no idea where the campground was. But, this being Murchison, within five minutes someone had pulled up, offered me a lift to the campground (boat? No problem! Just chuck it on the roof racks!) and asked if I wanted to go paddling later in the afternoon. As soon as I was at the campground I found Timmy and some other paddlers, and within a few hours of arriving I was on harder water than anything I'd done before. Ahh, sweet, sweet Murchison, the mecca of drought-stricken Australian kayakers.

MURCHISON LIES AROUND four hours north of Christchurch, New Zealand, and is surrounded by some great rivers. It's also the home of the New Zealand Kayak School, a world-renowned rip-your-technique-apart-and-give-you-a-bombproof-roll school which runs courses for all levels and all types of boating.

The courses aren't cheap, but it's worth every penny to realise a few weeks later that the "oh shit, I hope my roll works" feeling when you flip over on a river no longer happens. Instead, a smooth slice roll with minimal effort and very little chance of injury pops you back up again.

I spent a bit over a month kayaking in NZ early this year, and while I could quite happily give you a blow-by-blow description of every move on every river, for everyone else's sanity I'll limit it to a few highlights.

NZ Kayak School

LIKE I SAID, BEING able to trust your roll feels awesome. Four days of mammoth amounts of paddling and a few hours of rolling every morning made me a far better paddler with a wider repertoire of strokes, and also worked me so hard that I saw stomach muscles I haven't seen since I was a pre-pubescent runt of a gymnast. Luckily, NZ has the best beer ever, so another four days and they were fast-fading memories covered with amber-fed blubber again.

Maruia Falls

"SO, YOU GOING to run Maruia Falls?" Grant asked before I left.

"Yeah, of course!" I replied.

So I did. It's a waterfall (of debatable height, estimates range between seven and eleven metres—I think eight to nine is about right) just outside of Murchison with a super-easy lead-in and very few consequences if you stuff it up; just fall off the edge and roll up at the bottom I'd been told. No wucking forries, I thought. And it turns out that it was quite easy, but it was a pretty spectacular feeling to freefall for long enough that you feel the spray engulf you before you hit the bottom.

I had a killer sinus headache for the rest of the day though; I don't know why I thought wearing my nose plug would do anything to stop the water going up my nose. It was also nice to be told by Timmy afterwards, "You're the only girl we know stupid enough to do that!"

"I thought everyone did it when they were here!" I replied. Now I understand why Grant laughed so hard after that initial conversation.

Hokitika

HOKITIKA IS A FEW hours west of Murch, right over on the coast. It's the gateway to creeking (as opposed to big rivers like in Murch), and is famous for having a smorgasbord of rivers and creeks, many of them with no access except to fly in by helicopter. I was lucky enough to do the Lower Hokitika, which was my first fly in. That was amazing, and I really enjoyed it, but for me the west coast highlight was the Lower Toaroa.

It has a horrible hour-long walk in, and those twenty kilos of plastic really start to hurt your shoulder. But the river was probably my favourite because I got to lead it except for one or two grade four sections. It was one of the most challenging rivers, and I swam on it (one of only two swims of the holiday, which I was quite proud of), but it felt like there were good lines that I could see and just enough hard stuff without too much scary stuff. Looking back on the photos I can't understand why I preferred the Toaroa to the Hoki, because the Hoki looks like a cool river, but I guess it just proves that sometimes it is just about how you feel on the day, and I ended that day really happy with what I'd done.

OVERALL IT WAS an incredible experience which did more for my paddling than anything up until that point. Now it's just a matter of saving up to do it again! **M**

LABOUR DAY AT WERRIBEE GORGE

BY KATE HESKETT

IT'S A DAY OFF. Except that we're all students, so despite technically not having the day off Timmy, Alice and I are up at eight and planning a day of climbing at Werribee Gorge while the rest of the Footscray house are preparing for early morning classes. On our way there we observe that the fruit pickers of Bacchus Marsh haven't been given the day off either. Despite Timmy knowing the way there, we circle around Bacchus Marsh for about half an hr, looking for an elusive fish and chip shop Alice kind of remembers before eventually finding our way into the State Park.

I have been informed that I'll be leading a three-star 10. The thought makes me queasy. Or maybe it's the tail end of my Saturday night hangover. I can't be sure.

After finding our way to the cliff, complete with fancy new boardwalk, Alice starts the day with *Big Ears* (16) and I remember how to belay a lead climber. Yes, it's been that long that I actually have to think about it. Alice completes the climb with style. I complete it with considerably less style. Alice gets a nut stuck. As a result Timmy swears a lot, makes his knuckle bleed and has to ask strangers for a bandaid.

Back on the ground, I stand bewildered while Alice and Timmy attach bunches of gear to my harness. After a feeble attempt at some excuses, and knocking back the offer of some Easter bunny shaped lollies (*They're all different! Look!* says Alice) I reason with myself to take up the opportunity to do my first real lead.

The climb does look nice. Straight forward, juggy, not too long and on the friendly side of vertical.

Instructions: Find a nice place to stand, place some gear.

As I go to place my first piece I'm vaguely remembering how to place a hex. Surface contact, constrictions, threading, threaded hex, that sounds familiar, but won't help with this crack.

I place my first nut, surprisingly calm. Timmy climbs up beside me to have a look and Alice yells encouragement. Whilst Timmy assures me that it's a good placement (no death for me today!) I can't help but notice that while I'm shitting myself he's more than happy climbing to the same place without any gear, good bad or otherwise.

The rest of the climb is largely uneventful (which translates to good for anyone who doesn't experience the paralyzing effects of fear). When I do come to a place without Kate-approved hand holds and no obvious gear placement there is some heavy breathing and my usual catch cry of 'I remember, I hate climbing!' said with complete conviction. Luckily one of the Kate's in my head is keeping her cool and decides it's better to place something less good and keep climbing, as there is better gear about a half metre away.

At the top, much to my surprise, I actually remember knots and some basic theory behind setting up an anchor. Playing on the munitions factory's bluestone wall yesterday actually paid off, despite all the good citizens and their dogs staring at the people tied into a wall while standing on the ground.

In conclusion: I get to jot down *SPQR* as my first lead, I think I may even have enjoyed it.

Alice lead a 17 crack (*Veni Vidi Vici?*) with complete finesse, one I can't even grunt my way up, and a 20 (*Snatch and Grab*) I content myself to look at. I have no recollection of what Tim was up to on the day, but he did take some nice photos.

I also second an 11, and actually fall off an 11. Now you may understand why I get scared. (As a side note, a month or so later I took my first convincing lead fall on Sweet Chariot, another 11 at Werribee Gorge and sliced Gus' rope convincingly in half, sorry Gus!)

At the end of the day my knee looks like a mouldy piece of bread and I have bruises all up my arm from refusing to hand jam (due to a previous scar) and trying instead to arm jam (in retrospect, maybe not the brightest idea). Thus started my climbing career. There's nothing like an Honours year at Uni to get you out into the great outdoors. **M**



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