

ETTREMA - SOME NOTES

Several mining exploration leases have been approved in the Ettrema area. Mining is not a new venture for the area but obviously has again become of major importance as the legal wrangling goes on.

I define the area as being bounded by the old Wool Road (Nerriga-Nowra), the Endrick and Shoalhaven Rivers, and Yalwal-Boolijang Creeks, all this being located some 70 km west of Nowra. Ettrema Creek is one of the streams that flow within this boundary - a tributary of the Shoalhaven.

Probably the first thing one notices about Ettrema is that it is so unlike the Budawangs on the other side of the road, so to speak. No double cliff lines, no outstanding peaks (Pigeon House), no unusual outcrops (like the Castle). What is there to draw one to this area? - If any comparison is to be made, then the Grose Valley would be the best example. To me, Ettrema means clear sparkling pools on warm days, good walking routes (except for that bloody hakea) and peace. Peace is what Ettrema means to me.

Most walkers to the Shoalhaven River know of the ruins that were Tolwong Mines. Located early this century, a company was floated and spent \$23,000 installing aerial cableways down the steep sides of the river, and one across the river itself. A machine power plant was installed to run the cable, as well as supplying power to the mines. Also constructed was a modern smelter and buildings. Unfortunately little time was actually proving the mineral outcrop.

It was found that despite all their work, the lead did not warrant all that expenditure. The ore (containing arsenic, copper and lead) also had a high proportion of tin, which made treatment difficult. Tin was also fetching a poor return on the markets, so it was not too surprising that the company went into liquidation (1912).

Over the years, other miners have looked at Tolwong Mines, but limited reserves of ore, difficult access and a complicated ore seem to have deterred development. This is one of the sites where the current application applies.

A second application has been held on Jones Creek - a tributary of Ettrema Creek. "Considerable interest was aroused" by the discovery in September 1907 of a lode which assayed 51 oz. of silver per ton. A company was formed to mine this lease. This outcrop was situated in a deep valley, and access was to be set up via a railway or an aerial ropeway.

By 1911, 400 tons of ore had been extracted but not treated. The previous rich value of the ore had not continued, and further assays had shown the principal metal as zinc. With the problem of access, it was decided to try for overseas capital to support the mine. The idea was to set up a flying fox up to the escarpment, then build a branch line out to the proposed Federal Rail Line (Canberra to Nowra).

From 1908 to 1913 work had been spasmodic. The capital situation was exhausted, so one of the company directors had gone overseas, but the outbreak of war stopped that idea. Leases have been taken out over the years, but all appear to have done no more than prospect.

Endrick River -

A track leads to Wileys or Willys Creek, where extensive gold workings were located. This was discovered when a bullock driver went looking for a stray. About 3 km downstream from the falls was a pinnacle of white quartz over 30 metres high (the only deposit in the neighbourhood) in which copper had been found (1847). Copper traces can still be found in the river but not the pinnacle.

Ettrema Creek -

It appears on Major Mitchell's map of eastern NSW in 1834 where it was also named. Most of its course appears recorded so that it would seem that at least it had been visited round that period. The Rev. W.B. Clarke looked at the district between Ettrema and the Endrick River in 1860.

Bundundah Creek -

There is carboniferous granite on Bundundah Creek near Yalwal which is considered to be the source of mineralisation on Jones Creek and Tolwong Mine.

In 1883 it was reported that a Capt. W.R. Reynolds had started a copper mine on the creek. Six years later, a silver lode (Silver Dell Creek) was being prospected, but returns were not encouraging.

Still higher up the creek, Selection Creek was the site of Jane Atkins sixty-acre holding. At the foot of the ridge is the remains of a stone hut (base only) and accumulated rubbish. Unfortunately, no dates can be ascertained on this lonely site.

Yalwal -

The waters of Danjera Dam cover the old mining town of Yalwal. Today it is a peaceful valley, and the only threats come after rain when brown water tumbles over the spillway and down to the Shoalhaven.

Gold had been found in the various streams, but the source of this alluvial remained undiscovered till August 1872, when Griffiths and party located the main lode. Soon leases were pegged on both sides of Danjera Creek. The main period of mining occurred between 1872 and 1890. It continued spasmodically till boosted in 1931-8 - the depression years. Initially, shafts were driven into the hills, but later were made into open cut mining.

The tranquil and unhurried way of life of today belies the thriving village that once lived, worked there - the batter of stamps worked 24 hours a day, stopping in a deafening silence at midnight on Saturday. A small over-

grown cemetery on a grassy hill records the deaths of the three Payne children from diphtheria - one, aged 1-year old, died 17th May 1911, the others, aged three and five, died the next day.

The great fires of "Black Saturday", 14th January, 1939, burnt nearly everything, and Yalwal was never rebuilt. The fields always had litigation problems, declining mineral supply and the depression tended to hinder any real progress.

Summary -

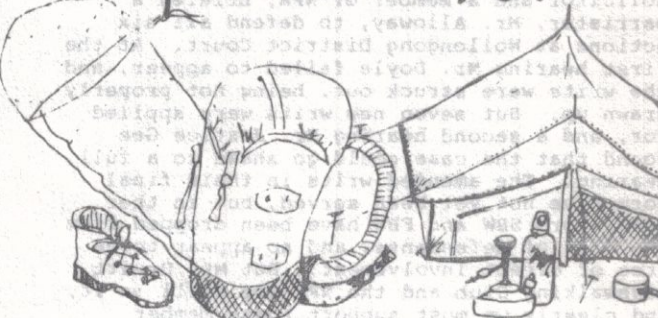
Most of the recorded history of the Ettrema area is mining. Probably there is still some wealth hidden, but every mining venture has ended as being overall uneconomical. An exploration company did a survey in the late 1960's of the Shoalhave and feeder streams. They were reportedly working for a very big mining company. It is probably significant that no leases were taken out to protect those sites mentioned above.

I personally don't find the actions of individuals to prospect objectional, but obviously large-scale mining, with road access and thundering lorries, is not what I want to see (or hear) in any park or park proposal. Previous mining operations tend to confirm - access very hard for poor returns.

CLIO

CROWS NEST and CITY

The rucksack sport specialists.



Mountain Equipment

17 Falcon St, Crows Nest. 62 Clarence St, City.
439 2454 29 4840



Himalayan Walking

TREK NEPAL

Enter the silent world of the highest peaks on earth. Experience the majesty and serenity of walking many miles from life as we know it.

We specialise in organising small group walks to the most remote regions of Nepal. Here, local villagers welcome you with genuine warmth and hospitality, and you are unlikely to see other Europeans.

To walk as the locals do makes you feel a part of this timeless land unmatched in beauty and cultural interest.

Walk with us, and see and feel for yourself the magic the Himalaya presents. For program of expeditions we invite to contact:

AUSTRALIAN HIMALAYAN EXPEDITIONS,
3rd floor, 28-34 O'Connell Street
SYDNEY, N.S.W. 2000
Phone: (02) 231-6050 (Mon-Fri)

PADDY PALLIN FOUNDATION

The Foundation has announced the grants for this year. They are as follows:

The Budawang Committee for publication of "Pigeon House and Beyond"	\$1,000
The Colo Committee for studies in the Colo/Hunter Wilderness	\$ 600
Mr. Martin Curtis	\$ 25
The Colong Committee	\$ 500
South-West Tasmania Committee for the films on the South-West Tasmanian Wilderness Society for salary of a project officer	\$ 500
The Federation of Bushwalking Clubs (N.S.W.) for production of S. & R. pamphlet, member club lists and for other purposes	\$1,500
Rozelle Ramblers	\$ 800
for equipment hire	\$ 75

Applications for grants in 1980 close on 29th February.

REUNION REPORT

The 1979 Annual FBW Reunion was held at Gunderman Creek in Charug National Park. Attendance was a meagre 70 persons.

Mountain Equipment prize vouchers for \$25 and \$12.50 each were awarded for campfire acts (Mt. Druitt Bushwalkers 1st and 2nd) and the Tug'o'war (Ramblers 1st, Sutherland 2nd).

Three Paddy Pallin prize vouchers for \$25 each were awarded for the photographic print competition as follows:

ADRIAN TEAGUE - best picture any date
IAN OLSEN - best pre and post 1970 comparative pair
THE RAMBLERS - best nostalgic picture(s) pre 1970

Many thanks are due to the NP & WS for their site; Paddy Pallins and Mountain Equipment for their generous donations; to Catholic Bushies for arranging keys and parking; to the Ramblers for the loo; to Sutherland Club for firewood; Jan Wonters for touting the attendance book and to those who brought or sent photos.

In spite of their efforts, the response was disappointing, and it was resolved at the April General Meeting:

"That there be no Annual Reunion in 1980, unless written objections are received from six Clubs by the June General Meeting."

MURRAY SCOTT

HELICOPTERS & SEARCHING

Here are just a few comments from someone who was lucky enough to have a ride in Dick Smith's helicopter during the last Search & Rescue practice at Medlow Gap on 26th & 27th May. And many thanks too to Dick for his very generous provision of such a useful machine.

1. It is surprisingly difficult to spot walkers from the air even when the helicopter flies low and slow, and the bush is relatively open such as in the Wild Dogs.
2. By far the greatest single aid in spotting people is colour contrast - bright yellow, orange or red. The usual grey/green/brown clothes of walkers are almost totally invisible from the air. This applies even from only a hundred or so feet elevation and a couple of hundred yards distance.
3. Vigorous movement is also a great aid to spotting.
4. The only way to be sure you will be seen is to make a signal that will penetrate the tree cover, i.e. a big smoky fire. Smoke flares are no good because they don't have enough heat to carry the smoke above the trees.
5. If you are the object of a search and a helicopter flies straight over without seeing you, don't be surprised. Get out your bright coloured gear, find the clearest spot within a hundred yards, and work flat out building a big smoky fire so that he will find you when he comes back for a second look a little later.

Conclusion: A helicopter, flying low and slow with skilled observers aboard (i.e. bushwalkers) can be a tremendous aid to searchers. But its chances of success are still slim unless the lost party makes a correspondingly big effort to be seen.

Remember: bright colours, vigorous movement and lots of smoke.

NAMOI VALLEY DOWN RIVER

Narrabri Bushwalking Club's annual canoe race will be held on 15th July. Various classes are included, such as opens and juniors, men and women. Entries close on 8th July.

For further information contact

GRAHAM NELSON,
P.O. Box 94,
Narrabri 2390
Phone (067) 92-1440

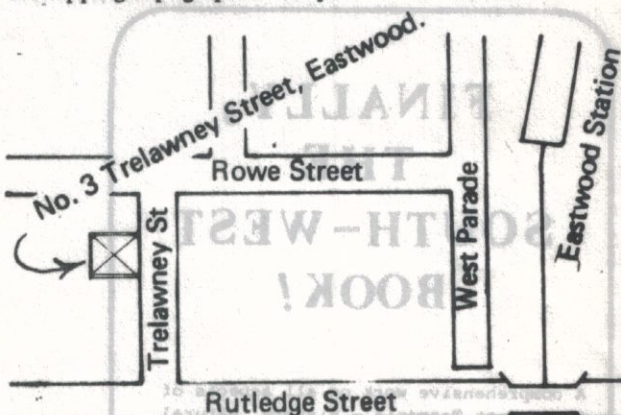
Entry fee is \$2 for open events and \$1 for juniors. Trophies will be presented on the day of the race.

EASTWOOD CAMPING CENTRE

ALL THE USUAL GEAR:

Fairydown sleeping bags, abseiling gear, parkas, packs tents, boots, groundsheets, lightweight food, AND MUCH MORE.

Agents for Lands Department and Division of National Mapping topographical maps.



EASTWOOD CANVAS GOODS AND CAMPING
SUPPLIES
3 TRELAWNEY STREET, EASTWOOD.
PHONE: 858-2775