

# BUSHWALKERS OF NEW SOUTH WALES

The Federation of Bushwalking Clubs N.S.W.

G.P.O. Box 2090, Sydney, 2001

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## 1984 FBW ACTIVITIES

Jan 17	FBW Meeting
Feb 21	FBW Meeting
Mar 10/11	FBW Reunion
Mar 20	FBW Meeting
Mar 24/25	S&R Activity
Apr 11	Optional lecture on bushwalking *
Apr 14/15	Introductory Bushwalking *
Apr 17	FBW Meeting
May 2	Bush Safety Evening *
May 5/6	Bush Safety *
May 15	FBW Meeting
May 26/27	Bush Navigation *
Jun 19	FBW Meeting
Jun 23/24	S&R Practice
Jul 7/8	Rockclimbing *
Jul 17	FBW Meeting
Aug 4/5	Cross Country Skiing *
Aug 21	FBW Meeting
Sep 15/17	Snow Camping *
Sep 18	FBW Meeting
Sep 21	Federation Ball
Sep 23	Introductory Abseiling *
Oct 13/14	Advanced Bushwalking *
Oct 16	FBW Meeting
Oct 20/21	S&R Activity
Nov 3/4	Canoeing *
Nov 18	Introductory Abseiling *
Nov 20	FBW Meeting
Dec 1/2	Canyoning *
Dec 11	FBW Meeting

Note : \* denotes part of the Bushsports program.

The dates for bushsports 1984 and other FBW activities are set out ~~below~~ above.

Instructors are required for the various sessions. Instructors' costs will be repaid generously. Bushsports is designed to attract people into clubs and spread skills through the rucksack sports. If you would like to help your club or help others, by passing on your skills, please help run a Bushsports session. Contact Hugh Paterson 569 4855 (H) 818 1033 (W) or Tony Parr 331 7597 (H) 666 8943 x 2084 (W).

## NATIONAL PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEES

FBW is seriously concerned at the present situation regarding National Park Advisory Committees. This concern relates to a number of areas, namely, the proposed amalgamation of advisory committees, the people selected on advisory committees and the method of selection of advisory committees.

Federation understands that the NPWS is currently considering the amalgamation of a number of advisory committees such as Wollemi and Blue Mountains, Deua-Wadbilliga and Morton, Warrumbungles and Mt. Kaputar and Royal and Heathcote. In each of these cases Federation believes that park management problems are quite different between the parks to be amalgamated. In each case of the first three proposed amalgamations the geographical spread of the parks would render any useful input by the relevant advisory committee impossible. In the case of Royal and Heathcote, the parks have distinct characters and it would be inappropriate to combine the two committees. Federation therefore opposes these proposed amalgamations.

For a number of years Mr Bedford has appointed people to advisory committees who should clearly be seen to be antagonistic to the National Parks concept, including representatives of offroad vehicle clubs. The Federation rejects any notion that this is acceptable because of any purported benefit in educating these people in the National Parks concept. There are a great number of members of the community willing to sit on advisory committees who are sympathetic with National Parks. It is indefensible that appointees antagonistic to National Parks can be selected for advisory committees.

A case in point is the Barrington Tops National Park Advisory Committee who recently voted against the extension of that park. Federation believes that this advisory committee should be dismissed and a new committee selected.

Roger Lembit

With the official arrival of summer, I think of two important factors governing the sport of bushwalking - snakes and fires. Elsewhere in this newsletter is a breakdown of action to be taken in case a bushfire erupts. Recently the National Times (30/9 - 6/10/1983) printed an article on burns which, whilst initially not affecting bushwalkers, due to the isolation we sometimes get into, may help save a life ( or limb ). Injury from fire can occur at anytime or season.

If a person is burnt either by dry heat ( ie. fire ) or by scalding ( which is wet heat ), the first priority is to put the fire out on the person. Dousing the burnt area with cold water is ideal ; however an over application, especially where major burns are concerned, will reduce body temperature and induce hypothermia. Irrespective of the degree of the burning, the victim will suffer some form of shock.

A clean dressing ( without the application of any lotions ) should be placed over the burnt area. A bandage should then be applied firmly unless where blisters have or may be forming, in which case the bandage should be lightly applied. Any burnt clothing in or near the burnt area should be retained as part of the dressing as :

- the fire will have killed any bacteria in the material, and
- removal may break the skin or blisters and allow infection to enter the body.

Needless to say, the area around the affected area should be dried. The burnt area should be immobilised and medical treatment sought.

Burns cause the body to go into deep shock, and one complication of a major burn to a limb is that blood may be cut off to the extremities. Surgical treatment is required quickly in this event otherwise amputation may result.

Age and a strong healthy cardiovascular system also play a part in resisting the shock, and the subsequent recovery of the victim. A rough rule of thumb places the chance of not recovering as the sum of the person's age plus the percentage of body burnt.

The resultant shock and body reaction to fighting infection sets up an imbalance of body salts and water levels. Major burns may require surgery so that the patient should not normally be given anything to drink. However the victim's body will be fighting the imbalance and if medical aid is a long way off then small drinks of water containing a quarter teaspoon of salt per cup can be given. Later during recovery, the patient will need to increase his calorie intake by up to four times to help with the growing of new skin.

As for snakes, well that's for another time.

#### BREWING BILLY TEA WAS AN ART FORM

From The SUN, Tuesday, December 6, 1983 - the "This Was Australia" column.

Once upon a time every Australian picnic party made and drank billy tea. Now most of us don't even know how to make it, for the vacuum flask has replaced the billy.

Billy tea is a novelty, added to coach trips and organised rambles in the bush - a piece of nostalgic Australiana.

So here's how to make billy tea :

First make a fire with leaves, sticks and wood. Erect a pair of forked sticks with a crosspiece to hang the billy, or simply rest the billy on the coals.

Fill the billy. Experts say that still water boils more quickly than running water, and river water more quickly than rain water. City tap water should never be used as it has a "bad taste". Always fill the billy to the brim so the rim will not burn away. Put the billy on or over the fire. When the water boils, throw in a handful of tea leaves and remove the billy from the fire. Allow it to stand for a few minutes. If any tea leaves float on top, tap the side of the billy with a stick and they will drop to the bottom.

Pour the tea into tin mugs and drink it black. This is true billy tea - the best tea in the world! For extra bush flavour try the following :

For a smokey taste, leave the lid off while the billy boils;

For a hint of eucalyptus, immerse a small twig of gum leaves in the billy for a few seconds before pouring.

Many years ago, billy-boiling contests were very popular at bush picnics. Contestants set their fires from local materials : dried grass, leaves and twigs.

Over these they hung their billys, each containing a set amount of water - usually two pints (1.4 litres). On a signal they lit their fires. The prize was given to the person whose billy boiled first.

Over the weekend of October 22nd and 23rd S&R held a night navigation practice for bushwalkers in the Wollangambe Wilderness (near Mt. Wilson). 27 persons took part - clubs represented were Camden Bushwalkers, Three Peaks, Catholic Bushwalkers, Western Suburbs Bushwalkers, NPA, Span Unlimited. The people were split up into groups of 4 and were given a course with checkpoints at various intervals to locate and report back to base upon their finding. The teams were despatched after dark Saturday. It proved, for all, to be an interesting, if somewhat exhausting, event. Although most experienced some minor difficulties with the rather heavily dissected terrain, all except one party managed to complete their courses. After such a result I personally feel that the event was well worth the effort and that much useful information was gained by the persons who took part. Such an activity certainly sorts out those who can read a map and those who can't. The importance of night navigation skills to bushwalking S&R members cannot be underestimated as it is to be expected that searchers may well be sent out into difficult terrain at night in the event of an actual callout. For those who had difficulties it is suggested that individual clubs put on a couple of "night owls" walks. Apart from the night navigation side of the activity a new Field Officer, Peter Tresseder of Three Peaks, was given valuable practice in the management of a field operation. In finality I wish to thank Tony Parr - Camden, David Ford - NPA for their assistance in setting up checkpoints at short notice in the bush.

Nick Eichhorn  
Radio Officer

#### REMINDER

#### CANYON PRACTICE March 22nd and 23rd, 1984

Not all have to be keen canyoneers or rockclimbers to attend this practice as a large group of persons will be needed to assist the rescue team with the stretcherhaul. Please advertise in your club walks programme.

#### COMMENTS FROM A PARTICIPANT

They always say that in retrospect you forget the pain ... how true of my memories of the S&R night practice sited on the Mt. Wilson and Wollangambe 1:25,000 sheets.

As background, in previous searches I have attended, I believe we have wasted valuable time by sleeping the first night at base, after an afternoon or evening callout, and only commencing searching early (sometimes) the next morning.

Thus far we seem to have gotten away with it, and no serious harm has come to the involved lost parties by the 8-12 hour delay in search commencement that occurs as we await daylight. However, such a practice, in a scenario of serious trauma or impending death could, I believe, result in impairment of life of the lost parties, agonizing self recrimination and guilt by all involved (eg "if only we were earlier ...") and possible community criticism and allegations of neglect.

The Damocles sword being that initially we have no idea of the condition of the lost party.

Anyway, similar thoughts must have occurred within the S&R committee and the night search practice was held, I believe to:

- 1) document our night searching ability
- 2) practice the same.

The event consisted of small teams with radios setting out from various road points in the area and attempting to walk a route defined by a line on the appropriate maps. In so walking, checkpoints would be happened upon whereon the group was to radio in its calculated position.

Clubs represented included SBW, SUBW, 3 Peaks, NPA, Camden, Newcastle Bushwalkers, Kamerukas and Catholic Bushwalkers. My own team consisted of Gordon Lee (SBW) and myself (SUBW/Kameruka). I carried the radio, Gordon carried the prawns. We commenced at the Mt. Wilson hair-pin (MR 548885) and proceeded across Du Faur Creek over spot height 972, across Bell Canyon, over Beyer Ridge and onto the Wollangambe, thence upstream and along S.Wollangambe Creek, back across Beyer Ridge via saddle MR 512905 to an upper Bell Creek tributary and along the long spur via 995 to the Bell Road at MR 482882.

- 1) Within Federation there is a group of walkers capable of night S&R work even in terrain such as heavily dissected sandstone and canyon. However night walking, navigation and searching takes much more time than daylight.
- 2) There is no substitute, particularly north of the Bell Road, for local knowledge. Our initial speedy progress was enabled by previous walks in the area. S&R group leaders generally, and particularly for night searches, should have :
  - i) good local knowledge and/or
  - ii) extensive general experience.
- 3) Night pass finding is very time consuming.
- 4) A set of abseiling gear and 20m of handline is very useful in this area.
- 5) Future night navigation practice should not involve difficult passfinding, such that even the course setters have difficulty in daylight.
- 6) A small group of 2-3 would be ideal for a fast traverse of a certain route at night. Eg. a quick traverse of Bell Canyon would be quite achievable at night. A grid search would not be necessary to exclude a lost party along this creek.

In conclusion, I believe that S&R must not balk at the opportunity to send out early parties of experienced walkers during the initial night hours after a callout, for the purpose of either searching or just travelling to strategic positions so that the daylight hours are then not wasted in track travel only. At the least, a true dawn start of searching by some/most parties is a worthwhile aim.

Doug Wheen

#### ILLEGAL ROAD IN THE WOLLANGAMBE

In September, a bushwalking party came across an illegal road cleared along the ridge between Dumbano and Cesspit Canyons. A large number of trees had been chain-sawed to allow access for off-road vehicles. One branch of the road leads down towards a scrubby section of creek well upstream of the main Dumbano Canyon.

The road serves no apparent purpose and could have been constructed out of pure malice. The National Parks and Wildlife Service are currently investigating the matter. Walkers visiting the Dumbano area should be on the lookout for ORV activity in the area as it is quite likely that anyone using the road is guilty of its construction. Information regarding the road should be immediately reported to the National Parks and Wildlife Service, Blackheath Office.

Roger Lembit



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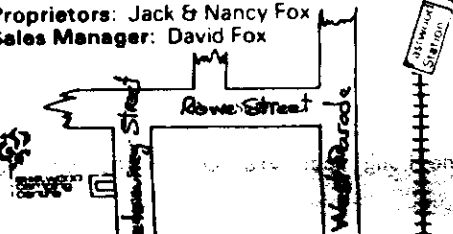
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#### WEATHER FORECAST

Lennox Walker (Daily Telegraph, 13/10/83) has forecast that there will be an increase of wet days for December and early January but that Christmas Day and New Years Day will be dry and hot. He estimates that from late January through to March will be a very wet period - so perhaps walks programmers should keep this in mind.

#### Letters to the Editors

Dear Sir,

Over the last few months, considerable time has been spent at Federation meetings discussing the destruction of bush by 4WD's and trail bikes. Next, we should try and do something about it.

Firstly, though, we must make sure our own camp is in order. It amazes me the bushwalkers can complain about such things yet still drive their cars and tanks along roads that we have been trying to close.

It is common to see bushwalkers' cars at the end of Narrowneck, even though we have been trying to have the road closed for several years. Now that there is a gate on the Narrowneck road, we should be making more efforts to have it locked CLOSED, not open.

If we really want to close roads such as Narrowneck, the Mt. Cameron firetrail, and other tracks that should be closed, we must make sure that no bushwalkers are using these roads.

It seems that during the last S&R practice, a 4WD was driven around a gate (closed) and into land, if not in then, at the edge of Blue Mts National Park. This is hardly the responsible attitude I expect of bushwalkers. In a real S&R exercise there may be a reason to drive along such roads, but I can't see any excuse for doing so on a practice.

Come on bushwalkers. Lets have a bit more

- Ensure all campfires are constructed so that they cannot escape into the surrounding environment. Do not leave a campfire unattended. Make sure all fires are extinguished before breaking camp. Obey the fire restrictions relative to the season and conditions.
- Firstly DON'T PANIC, keep your party together. Decide upon an escape route and make sure every member knows where they are heading. Avoid dense scrub and vegetation where possible.
- Don't try to outrun the fire uphill, instead plan an exit route that will lead downhill and to the rear of the fire, or to bare burnt ground. Move quickly but do not run. Keep to vehicle tracks if in the vicinity.
- Drink as much water as possible, as fluid loss will increase with perspiration. Fill all available water containers.
- Watch out for spot burns on clothes and hair cause by flying sparks and debris. Protect the head from radiated heat.
- Don't attempt to run through flames unless as a last resort. If this course of action is decided then choose a place where fuel is sparse, free of obstructions and you can see through the flames. If the flames are greater than 1.5 metres in height (ie. roughly shoulder height) or depth, then it is too hazardous to run through. Cover all exposed skin as best as possible, take some deep breaths (without inhaling fumes or smoke) and move briskly through the flames. Try not to run for there may be obstacles on the ground.
- The lighting of a backburn, say 7 metres long, if trapped by a high wall of deep flames may be used in extreme cases. Sudden wind changes can turn this exercise into just as much danger.
- Most deaths by fire are actually caused by radiation and shelter can be obtained in running streams, pools and dams. Elevated metal water tanks are not a satisfactory way to eliminate this problem. Other suitable shelters are eroded gullies free of scrub, depressions left by fallen trees, deep wheel ruts, behind logs and large rocks where as much inflammable material as possible has been cleared. In addition to sheltering from the fire, shield your body with clothing (not of nylon and other synthetics), sheets of bark, slabs of wood, soft earth. Remember that in a fire the oxygen level is best closest to the ground.
- If you are caught in your car, park in the clearest area available (eg. an old gravel quarry), on a section of the road with the least amount of curbside scrub, or against an embankment in a cutting. Turn on your headlights and stay in the car.
- Close all windows and vents, lie on the floor, cover yourself with anything to shield from radiation. Stay inside till the fire has passed. Tests indicate that it takes 8 to 10 minutes for the engine compartment to catch light and more than 30 minutes for the petrol compartment to burst - the flaming period of a forest fire rarely exceeds 4 minutes in any one place.
- Do not try to speed through a fire as (1) visibility will be greatly reduced, (2) there may be obstructions on the road, (3) and there may be other vehicles parked or fire tenders using the road.

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