

THE

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BUSHWALKER

Newsletter of the Federation of Bushwalking Clubs (NSW)
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EDITORIAL NOTE

The last year has seen the introduction of a more or less regular Federation Newsletter. The Newsletter arose directly out of the crisis at last year's annual general meeting, when it was discovered that bushwalkers in general apparently knew very little about their Federation, and cared less. Thus the main function of the Newsletter is to carry the simple message. "Federation is alive and well and working for NSW bushwalkers".

The above statement has as much application today as it did when Peter Tuft wrote it in July 1976 (in his Report Publication Officer, 1975-6). John Berry who volunteered to act as editor this year started off with the same spirit of enthusiasm but due to unforeseen reasons, was unable to continue with the good work.

Part of John's plan was to give the Newsletter a new identity and he chose to resurrect the banner 'The Bushwalker' after the magazine that the Federation last produced c.1964. As the first newsletter (Volume 1) appeared in 1975, the new format should have commenced with Vol.12 No.1, with this edition being No.2.

Therefore we have numbered this issue Vol.12 No.1, and propose that the next issue in September to commence at Vol. 13 No.1.

We must also apologise to those advertisers who supplied material for the proposed November issue of the Bushwalker. It appears that the draft copy has been lost.

PRESIDENT'S PRATTLE

So much for the past. What of the future? Unfortunately I feel as Peter Tuft did in '74. If we don't get off our collective bums and put back into Bushwalking what we have got or are getting out of it, then we might as well wind up Federation now.

If we (the individuals - who ARE Federation) are not prepared to denote some of our valuable time in doing the work which has to be done to keep this body viable, then those few who are trying to do it are simply wasting their time.

The choice is yours. If you want a body which can be of value and assistance to walkers, which can have some political clout, which can be a means of dissemination of information of interest to walkers, which can support a respected public service in Search and Rescue, which does have sufficient creditability to give significant support in our interests - then the choice is yours!

Gordon Lee
President



At 10am Good Friday, a member of a large party from a Sydney bushwalking club fell heavily and broke his leg in Gabes Gully (down from Pages Pinnacle near Kanangra Walls).

There were several first aiders in the party and the patient was stabilised until a rescue could be mounted. 9.30am Saturday the Police helicopter just beat the fog to lift out the patient. Polair also only just found a

helipad near Kanagra Walls to unload the patient into an ambulance.

The fog stayed in and the helicopter was both unable to collect its observer (left behind in Gabes Gully to fit the patient in) or collect more fuel.

Consequently the observer got an unexpected bushwalk (carrying his own seat tool) and Polair did not fly back to Sydney till Sunday morning; See - technology does save you time.

WHAT IF

One of the important principles of bushwalking is self sufficient travel in bush areas. BUT what if one of your party got lost or injured?

- Could you organise a search using the remaining party members?

Or do you know how to contact Search & Rescue?

- Just who is responsible for rescue in NSW?

Or its Monday morning and your friends are not home from their weekend bushwalk. What do you and your club do, should they contact Search & Rescue?

Bushwalkers Search & Rescue is YOUR volunteer rescue service. To get the fastest possible response to searching or rescue, all bushwalkers should know how we operate before the incident (hopefully never) occurs.

Regular attendance by club members at S & R practices will help (How many of your club members were at our last S & R practice?) but it seems a talk to a club meeting by a S & R committee person may also be needed.

S & R is not trying to drum up business but to improve club self sufficiency and minimise both suffering for the lost or injured and bad publicity for bushwalking.

To continue to achieve these aims get your club secretary to arrange an S & R talk on the next program with one of the following;

Director Keith Maxwell 805 8329(w) 622 0049(h)
 Assist. Director Peter Treseder 84 7574(w) 489 4182(h)

FROM THE MINUTES

* It was noted that the MNSDB may be considering raising the water level of Warragamba Dam, and possibly allowing better access and recreational usage of its foreshores. Janet Crosio (Minister for Water Resources) has indicated that fishing will be permitted on the Cox, Kowmung and Wollondilly Rivers (and their tributaries) outside the 3km restricted zone provided. NPWS and State Fisheries requirements will still have to be met.

* The farmer who owns the land at the junction of Galong Creek and Cox's River has objected to bushwalkers camping on his land.

* One club has reported that cars left on the Black Range (off the Jenolan Caves road) were vandalised and included having brake lines cut.

* The Federation is supporting NPA's protest over horse riding in National Parks. A FBW policy on this matter is being drafted by our Conservation Director.

CLUB NEWS

* On October 23, the Sydney Bush Walking Club will be holding their 60th Anniversary dinner at the Menzies Hotel. The Federation would like to offer their congratulations to this our oldest (but many say still young) existing member club. The first meeting to form a bushwalking club occurred on October 21, 1927.

* Another club celebrating their birthday is the Brisbane Water Outdoors Club which is ten years young this year. The club were recently forced to find new club rooms when their lessors demanded the club should carry public liability insurance for meetings.

* The Newcastle Morning Herald of Monday, January 26, 1987 announced that Selby George Alley had been awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in the General Division (OAM) for service to the community. His nomination was instigated by the Committee of the Newcastle Bushwalking Club Ltd.

A teacher, Selby became a guidance officer then student counsellor at the University of Newcastle. He was the "mentor and guide in the largest sense of the word" to the Newcastle Bushwalkers since the early 1940's when the club was formed. Selby has been involved in environmental issues, the national heritage, natural science and botany, the family and society, and young people.

* A member of the Catholic Bushwalking Club has located another store in the suburbs offering competitively priced gear 'Single Rope Techniques' in Blackshaw Ave., Mortdale.

* We belatedly record the passing of CMW's founder, Ninian Melville, late last year. Ninian contributed a great deal to the Federation and enthusiastically tried to establish a Topographical Bureau in early 1936. This body hoped to encompass the present jobs of the Conservation Bureau, Track and Access Bureau, Search and Rescue, and information distributor. However before it could get underway, Nin was transferred to the country.

In 1961 he took over as S & R Field Director in 1961, a job he held for nearly a decade. Under his leadership, S & R personnel and equipment were improved and a number of spectacular rescues were performed. The rescue of Dennis Rittson from Kalang Falls being graphically recorded in number of magazines.

FEDERATIONBALLFEDERATIONBALLFEDERATIONBALLFEDERATIONBALLF	
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D	BYO & BYOG
E	WHEN September 18
R	WHERE Lane Cove Town Hall
A	COST \$8 per head, available at door
T	RAFFLE tickets available from the AGM in July
I	PRIZES for best decorated table, lucky door prize
O	
N	
FEDERATIONBALLFEDERATIONBALLFEDERATIONBALLFEDERATIONBALLB	

FOUND

1. Two pairs of expensive spectacles found near Corang early in April. Ring Don Finch 85 2067.
2. Bifocals on Rover Trail early in April. Ring 'Spiro Hajinakitas 681 4874 (B).

WALKERS' GEAR

I have never been what a bushwalking friend calls a gear freak. The latest product in the shops does not attract me if what I have is still serviceable. But I always try to buy good stuff - gear that will do the job it is meant for and which, with proper care, can be relied on when conditions are hard.

Last weekend as I unfolded my day-old Culoul 1:25000 map and found I was now walking over a damp white smudged area - devoid of the lovely detail and interesting contours that had impressed me when I first spread the map out at home - I began to consider where bushwalking equipment was heading these days and how far I had already been diverted from the principles I believe should be applied to its purchase.

For the moment I thankfully consulted my 1955 (inch to the mile) St Albans sheet, the legible and well-preserved veteran of numerous Colo trips in the 1960's, located my position and continued downstream. That night I thought more about the gear changes I had seen over the years and what they really meant to bushwalkers' safety, comfort and pleasure.

Maps of course came first to mind for they entice me into planning trips and remind me of good walks done. For this the new large scale maps are great, a wonderful improvement on small scale, sketch and provisional maps of the past. But, even on a dry weekend, despite careful attention to folding and handling, I am left with a split and limp sheet with details blurred, while if it rains the paper and printing just disappear, leaving me high if not dry.

What about packs? So many changes over the years, surely the modern ones are a vast improvement on anything before. I remember the pleasure of moving from A-frame to H-frame with better balance and easier carrying. Good packs they were, with plenty of room, simple of access, strong and capable of keeping gear dry even in wet conditions. Modern packs, made of 'miracle' cloth and designed to take weight off the shoulders sound wonderful - there are so many to choose from, the popularity must arise from their quality. Well, mine is comfortable. It is a pity that the non-slip buckles need continual adjustment - and strange that I should be told by the agents that the large top pocket isn't meant to hold much unless the whole pack is chokka and that my habit of liking maps, first-aid and scroggin readily accessible in an external pocket is odd and should be changed.

Perhaps the urgent need to get weight off my shoulders stopped me paying enough attention to the comments about waterproofing. I don't expect material to be as impervious as vinyl sheeting, but that the whole contents should be soaked after a couple of hours of light rain came as a shock. So did the solution offered of a pack-cover: through the Colo scrub? "I wouldn't know, I walk on tracks" said the salesman. "Try a canyon bag, it's only the seams that leak". But I'm looking for lightness and convenience, not another complication.

The final blow - the pack base alone is watertight, so everything sloshes around in an inch of water. Oh well, I can save weight by cutting of some of the many straps for holding climbing, skiing and ice gear in place. Of course I remove one strap too many - across the chest - and the shoulder straps start slipping. Back went the sternum band and now, every time I sit down with the pack on, I risk garrotting. And all I wanted was a basic bushwalker's sack!

Tents have changed beyond recognition to beautiful engineer-designed curves in wonderful breathing fabrics, with annexes for cooking and gear stowage and clever flip-together tent poles. For snow camping there is nothing better. But for those who own these complexities then use them where once we saw only little Japara tents. Now those simple shelters, which, supported by bush sticks, open to the bush airs, pitched on rough or smooth ground, skilfully sited for view or protection, are unique to Australian bushwalking, seem headed for extinction, along with that other native design, the Japara waterbucket.

I remember when wet weather saw us wrapped in cape-groundsheets. We cursed them as we climbed Carlons Chains, clasped them tightly down as winds whistled across the Narrow Necks, huddled under them to eat quick lunches in driving rain and held them high over damp kindling till the fire caught. Sometime in the fifties Dorothy (Butler) passed a New Zealand parka pattern around the Club, and, with Japara from a Drummoyne sailmaker, and strange concoctions from the Club chemists, we fitted ourselves out for the Southwest.

Soon oilskins began to replace the homemades and, if treated right, worked fairly well. Then the changes came fast. Gortex and Drycoat polycottons now dominate the market. Their proof is only found in usage, some work, some don't. "Did you wear it in the bush?" one complaining Gortex-owner was asked. My second-time-out Drycoat left me soaked in light summer rain - luckily in country where I could take risks. Designed no longer for the walker but for the skier and motorised outdoor man, few have shoulder capes, pockets are too small for maps, storm flaps couldn't resist a summer shower and lengths indicate they are meant for use with overpants.

So, what is the answer? Are we the receivers of the surplus products from another more fashionable, more universal, activities? Have novelty and technology blunted our critical assessment of what we buy? Do we get what we deserve? Once there was a slogan - "Designed for Australian Conditions by Australian Walkers." Now there are many who sell but are there any who consider the Australian bushwalker market worth the trouble of specialised design. What do you think?

(Joan Rigby, The Sydney Bushwalker, March 1987)

ROBERT PALLIN REPLIES

It would be impossible for a shop like PADDY's to exist on selling to walkers alone. We sell to travellers, climbers, hostellers and therefore must have a range of expertise in our shops. We do not pretend that every assistant in PADDY's is a tiger walker, but we can say that all people in design and key management are active walkers including Barry Higgins (Distribution Manager), Ian Gibson (Managing Director) and myself.

As head of the company that used "Designed for Australian conditions by Australian Walkers", I have tried to keep that ethic alive and well, and considering the conditions of the last few years I believe we have succeeded as well as we could.

No matter how much Joan and I like the Japara tent, unless a reasonable number of people buy them then we cannot afford to produce them. This is aggravated by us being one of the few countries which continued to make cotton tents well after the nylon "miracle cloth" revolution, which causes a lack of cloth manufacturers willing to produce for such a small market.

We have to constantly fight (the Customs Department) to buy cloth, which is not available from local suppliers, without having to pay prohibitive duties, quite often higher than the duty on importing the finished product. At one stage we were importing sleeping bag shells ready to be filled, cheaper than we could import the raw cloth. This anomaly still applies to cloth suitable for tents.

I do believe that Gortex to be a major step forward for our market, and it does work. If anyone has a jacket they claim doesn't work, they should speak to the Goretex agents or the store where they bought it.

PADDY's has continued making these products well after any reasonable business person would have ceased production. We are and will continue to provide a service to walkers second to none. We are always willing to receive comment on our products and are always trying to improve them. However to remain in business we can only make and sell products that are economical to do so. In the end it really depends on how much the bushwalker supports those that try to give a good service to walkers.

(Edited reply in The Sydney Bushwalker, May 1987).

BUSH LEADERSHIP COURSE

One of the schemes that the Federation has been kicking around recently is a Bush Leadership Course. This follows the interest shown in BUSHSPORTS which introduced bushwalkers and the public to various aspects of the rucksack sports.

It was felt that perhaps more emphasis should be given to ensuring that those (including bushwalkers) who were leading (e.g. school) trips away in the bush should have a certain degree of proficiency. This followed a number of incidents which may have been avoided or at least alleviated had those on the scene had better training.

The idea was also derived from the Victorian Bushwalking & Mountaincraft Leadership Certificate Course and a similar scheme which is operating in Tasmania.

Kuring-gai College of Advance Education was the only body in NSW to cover this type of activity. That course however was geared towards those employed in the recreation industry.

TAFE was also running recreational courses in Trekking and Bushwalking Safety. They also had a Bushwalking Guide Certificate Course at Katoomba - under the tutorship of Jim Smith. This last named course was aimed at training people to become guides.

A Federation sub-committee drafted a syllabus for the proposed Bush Leadership Course along the lines of the Victorian scheme. This was discussed with TAFE who felt very confident that there could be official recognition and adoption of such a certificate.

Since TAFE considered the course to recreational rather than vocational, it was realised that what we considered as suitable standards to be set by such a course, and what TAFE envisaged as admissible, were at odds. In all probability the proposed course would have been dropped following the cut in funds announced in the May mini-budget.

Interest is still strong for a bushwalker organised/bushwalker run course and it is hoped that we can get something up and running next year.

FROM THE PAST

* July 1927 a party of skiers, under the leadership of Dr H Schlink, successfully completed the first known winter crossing from Kiandra to the old Hotel Kosciusko.

* As part of the campaign to have vacant freehold land south of the then Royal National Park protected from development, the Sydney Bush Walkers took up the lease (c.1945) of Portion No. 7 behind North Era beach. This allowed the club to control access to the other blocks which were lower down the escarpment.

Then in August forty years ago they managed to raise the sufficient funds to buy the lot outright. In the early 1950's an attempt by developers to purchase the remaining freehold was thwarted when the Minister for Lands resumed all the land, and together with the bushwalker's park (Garawarra), added it to Royal National Park.

* Twenty years ago, on the Bank Holiday weekend in August, nearly every bushwalking party had to replan their trip amid stream (so to speak) after nearly 20cm of rain fell in Sydney. Flooded streams delayed a number of parties, an asmathic Scout died of hypothermia in a snow storm on Mt Cloudeaker, and a female horse-rider drowned when she tried to cross the Cox's River.



WE would like to thank the people at Mountain Designs who very kindly donated an alpine jacket (to the value of \$150) which was raffled at our Bush Dance in May.

Mountain Designs Australia Wilderness and Adventure Sports Equipment

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67 2586 874 7586

IMPORTANT - AGM JULY

This Federation is only as good as the support its members give - i.e. the clubs.

If each club sent their full quota of councillors (delegates), then perhaps Federation would get its quota of office bearers.

WE NEED PEOPLE PREPARED TO DO A JOB.

All club presidents and secretaries are cordially invited to attend this meeting.

CALENDAR

- JULY * 7. Search and Rescue General Meeting, Police Rescue HQ, Marrickville. Open to all
* 21. Annual General Meeting for the Federation at 174 Cumberland St in the city. Commences 6.30pm. ALL WELCOME
- AUG * 4. S & R Meeting, Marrickville. open to all.
* 18. FBW General Meeting, 174 Cumberland St. Open to all
- SEPT * 1. S & R meeting, Marrickville. Open to all.
* 15. FBW General Meeting, 174 Cumberland St. All welcome
* 18. Federation Ball. see elsewhere in this newsletter.
- OCT * 3-5. S & R Practice over the long weekend to really test our ability to search and locate missing persons. This will mean searchers will be in the field for the whole three days.
* 6. S & R meeting, Marrickville. Open to all.
* 20. FBW General Meeting.

TIGER TRESSEDER

The Federation would like to give a belated congratulation to Peter Tresseder (Three Peaks Club) who completed a mammoth run last November from Mt McKenzie (Barrington Tops) to Walhalla in Victoria. Peter calculated that this 1438km run which would involve a total ascent of 51.89km and a descent of 50.91km could be completed in twelve and a half days. In fact he covered the distance in just over 10 days.

Whilst Peter does not present a high profile in the Federation, he is heavily involved in the Search & Rescue Section and is the Rock Rescue Officer as well as Assistant Director.

His work behind the scenes has resulted in S & R (and therefore the Federation) receiving a better public image. He was responsible for a short documentary which appeared on one of the current affairs shows following an abseiling death.

Peter has been busily writing submissions to a number of government, corporate and private bodies (including his employer) for sponsorship for S & R. If he is successful then the problem of replacing our six aging radio units (at \$2000 each) and other equipment will be alleviated.

It may however mean that bushwalkers will have to accept some changes (e.g. wearing logos on search callouts where the media cameras would be giving the sponsor free advertising). No one should expect something for nothing.

This Newsletter is an occasional publication and is distributed free, through its member clubs, to the members of those clubs.

Contributions to the Newsletter are always considered (and should be accompanied with the name and address of author). All material not otherwise acknowledged can be attributed to the Editor. Any opinions expressed are those of the individual authors, and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Federation of Bushwalking Clubs, NSW.

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