

THE BUSHWALKER

Newsletter of the Federation of Bushwalking Clubs (NSW) Box 2090 GPO Sydney 2001

PRESIDENT'S PRATTLE

Federation's congratulations and thanks have to go to Peter Treseder and the Search and Rescue unit, aided and abetted by Peter's club, The Three Peaks Outdoor Society, in their effort to raise the \$12/15,000 needed to replace S & R's aging radios.

Also, mention must be made of the doughty band who gathered at Echo Point on the October 87 long weekend to throw themselves on the generosity of the general public. The public responded to the tune of nearly \$4,000.

If you look at the report in this issue you will see that what we thought as the near impossible hurdle of raising \$12,000 was surmounted, exceeding our wildest dreams, and Dick Smith's amazingly generous donation of \$5,000 will enable S & R to carry out a number of further necessary tasks.

As with all appeals, their success would not be possible without the help of those who donated what they could, helped in whatever way they could, especially with their time. By the efforts of persons who were willing to do a job however small we were able to achieve the impossible.

The format of past issues of The Bushwalker has been due to the efforts of Paul Oboohov from the Bankstown Bushwalking and Social Club. Unfortunately communications between IBM and the Macintosh became harder (and expensive) to continue. This means that we are no longer able to use Paul's valuable expertise and we would like to thank Paul for getting us on our way.

Gordon Lee.

DAM ON THE KOWMUNG

The Federation has established a committee to watch over developments that affect the Kowmung River and it's environs in the southern Blue Mountains National Park. The group is known as the Kowmung Committee. The Kowmung River is well known to most walkers in Sydney and surrounding districts.

The committee has been established in response to plans by the Water Board to increase the storage capacity of Lake Burragorang. The Board has also raised the possibility of flood control dams being on the major tributaries that feed Lake Burragorang.

Concerns over the safety of Waragamba Dam during a one in ten thousand year flood have prompted the Board to float several ideas on the public. Some of these are;

- 1) a new spillway to divert excess water away from the dam wall.
- 2) flood control dams on tributaries in the catchment area, and
- 3) in the future, the construction of a new larger dam.

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S & R FUND RAISING

The drive to raise enough money to replace our ageing radio equipment has been an unqualified success. With a little effort, more money has been raised in the last six months than in the whole of Federation's history. At the Climbathon weekend, with the support of the Blue Mountains City Council, the bucket collectors alone raised in excess of \$3,500. It is planned that a similar weekend will be held annually and so provide ongoing funds to run our Search and Rescue section.

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FROM THE MINUTES

- It appears that no camping is to be allowed at Budthingaroo (on the Kowmung Road) and at the alpine lakes in Kosciuszko National Park.
- A hut has been reported on the Hollander River (upper Kowmung) that is full of Telecom equipment.
- The unofficial sign at the first exit on Wollangambe Canyon has been removed again, and as many inexperienced people are now frequenting the canyon, it was decided to write to the NPWS asking them to erect an exit sign at the first exit location.
- The NPWS were also to be contacted to effect erosion control at the end of Narrow Neck (Blue Mountains) and to arrange for an additional spike to be inserted into Taro's Ladders.

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Bushwalkers may care to note that the current maximum water level of Lake Burragorang, as stated on the 1:25,000 Jamison topographic map, is 117m. The Kowmung enters the Coxs River at just under 120m. This does not allow for water backing up during a large flood!

Of major concern to bushwalkers is the possibility of the construction of flood control dams on the Kowmung and Coxs Rivers. The Kowmung Committee is also anxious to ensure that any development to the dam wall and future expansion will not cause the upper limit of the stored water to flood the Kowmung.

Some clubs and people have been suggesting that the Federation is not concentrating on issues that affect bushwalkers directly, well here is one that can hardly fail to affect any bushwalker that uses the Blue Mountains for escape and recreation. Your help will be vital in ensuring that the Kowmung remains accessible and in its present state for many years.

If you hear or see any information that you think is relevant to this issue please inform any one of the commit-

tee contacts as listed below. Phone calls will be accepted, however letters giving the information with date or sources where possible would be the most acceptable. Also please sort through your pictures for good photo's of the lower Kowmung (don't send them, just remember them for possible future use). Short stories about people and events in the Kowmung may also be useful. Needless to say, more volunteers are required.

Please act upon this as the Kowmung is at risk!

KOWMUNG COMMITTEE
contacts are:

Ian Wilson 517-2962 (h)
(secretary) 27-7766 (w)
126 Gowrie St Newtown 2042

Dave Noble 560-5973 (h)
5/68 Hat St. Leichhardt 2040

Michael Maack 546-2358 (h)
4/64 Noble St. Allawah 2218

CONSERVATION

The Southern Metropolitan District of the National Parks and Wildlife Service (which includes Royal, Heathcote and Thirlmere Lakes) has obtained the services of a Community Liaison Officer - Susie Wood. Susie's aims are to bring a community awareness of the national parks in the district.

Now that the Garawarra State Recreational Area (north and east of Helensburg) has been gazetted work on cleaning up the area is well underway. This includes the upgrading of the Burgh Track. Susie has prepared a brochure for community participation in the planning of the recreational uses of the new SRA and will be placed in letter boxes in the Stanwell Park, Otford, Helensburgh and Waterfall areas.

In the past visitor rubbish has been dumped at a tip on Artillery Hill. The District has now purchased two compacting rubbish trucks which will now transport the rubbish to Menai tip.

<p>BUSH LEADERSHIP COURSE : Introductory Navigation. Dates 16th 17th April 1988 Venue Flagstaff Hill G.R. 497872 (Mt Wilson) Maps Mt Wilson & Wollangambe 1:25000</p>	<p>Gear All requisites for overnight camp and day pack and compass. Bring your own water! Transport Private Course fee \$5 Contact Gordon Lee 7441824 (4 to 7 pm preferred)</p>
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CONSERVATION

A NATIONAL TRAIL

A national magazine recently carried an article on the dream of R.M. Williams (an outfitter of bush folk) for a wilderness trail stretching from northern Queensland down to Victoria and taking in rainforest, river, gorge and high country. Intended as a walking and riding trail, it would be twice as long as the Appalachian Trail in America. (The Bulletin, August 11, 1987)

Two men using a \$200,000 Bicentennial Grant have spent about eighteen months exploring, liaising and mapping out a suitable route. Their aim has been to link existing fire trails, bush tracks, stock routes and walking paths. Unfortunately the NPWS are being made to appear to be the bad guys - standing in the way of the project.

This idea of a national trail is not new. Myles Dunphy had thought of the idea in 1938 and had indicated a possible route through NSW. In the 1970's the Federation considered a Tri-State Trail linking the national parks along the Divide but this was allowed to lapse due to lack of support.

One of the concepts of the Tri-State Trail was that efforts should be made to establish corridors for movement between the parks but no one specific access route should be marked through any park. Hence the origins of our Major Walking Tracks Policy.

Both men used a four-wheel-drive to explore their proposals and one wonders whether their final choice will turn the horse trail into tri-state highway and used for car rallies.

FIRST AID CERTIFICATE COURSE

Club Walks Secretaries and others please note the following dates for weekend courses.

MAY 21-22

OCTOBER 29-30

Go to 6.

SOME THOUGHTS ON FEDERATION

After a perusal of Vol.12 No.1 of 'The Bushwalker', I feel inclined to write, first to offer my congratulations and thanks to Gordon Lee for his effort and secondly to raise a few matters and possibly even generate some discussion or debate.

A matter that has often taken up my time is the question of "what is Federation for?", or to put it another way "what is Federation's job?". Most would agree that Federation should not just be another club or even a club of clubs. Having said that just what should it be?

It seems to me that Federation should, at all times, be very mindful of its place in representing the various clubs as providing leadership in, mainly, bushwalking and perhaps to a lesser extent some of the associated activities that bushwalking clubs may at times get involved in. Let us consider a few items where Federation could give clear guidance:

- 1. Conservation: At various times Federation, as most of its constituent clubs, receives requests for support, generally but not always financial, from various conservation orientated causes. I feel that Federation should not itself donate to causes, because that's not their job, but should use its resources (for example, the delegate to the Nature Conservation Council) to establish the worth of various causes. The clubs, through their delegates or through notes in 'The Bushwalker' can get the idea of how worthy a cause may be.

In my club, for example, we have a policy of allocating 10% of last years income towards conservation. The committee decides how to allocate the money and informs the club at the next meeting. Members can still bring up conservation matters or can vary the amount allocated but essentially its handled by the committee. (Ed. its a pity that we

cannot find anyone willing to fill the position of Conservation Convenor)

- 2. Maps: Federation could be invaluable resource in this area by liaising with the map producers (CMA,etc), map sellers, etc.

Associated with maps is another information area -Tracks. Possibly Federation could establish a line of communication with the national parks authorities in this and other States or even overseas (e.g. New Zealand) and provide an invaluable service to our members.

- 3. Use of National Parks: Who should really be allowed to use the parks and for what purpose? Are some money earning activities (eg trekking) acceptable while others not (eg horse riding) and, if so, why? I feel that this matter, enormous in scope, needs both discussion and debate. It's the basis of subject that won't easily be resolved but both Federation meetings and 'The Bushwalker' provide forums for debating the matter and possibly ultimately formulating a Federation policy.

- 4. Insurance: This is a natural area for Federation to investigate and to arrange for one or two organisations to provide the most cost effective cover for our various members. An attempt was made to do this a few years ago but collapsed through lack of support. Possibly we're all a little wiser and in some cases poornow, and there is a little more perceived need for insurance.

- 5. Incorporation: Should we or should we not incorporate? Some clubs have done so. Federation could get the views of their clubs and let others have the benefit of that experience and perhaps find out about some of the pitfalls.

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- 6. Ethics: Should there be a general set of bushwalking ethics and, if so, what should they say? Bushwalking has been around for quite a while now and Federation could serve us all well by coming up with a generic set that clubs could use as a model. Possibly Federation has done this in the past but, if so, its been lost and could possibly be dug up again.

(Ed. A Code of Ethics was last drawn up in October 1979, and Roger Lembit prepared a sheet on 'Bushwalkers and the Environment' which was sponsored with a grant from the Paddy Pallin Foundation a couple of years ago).

Conclusion: I hope my ramblings will not be seen as criticism. Its certainly not meant that way but I feel that Federation should be very mindful of its place in providing guidance and leadership and it can best do this by being a resource in a number of specialised areas. This may help to overcome the problem raised in the last editorial that bushwalkers seem to know little about Federation.

I hope members will consider these views and perhaps submit a few comments of their own.

Arnold Fleischmann

Editor. Arnold wrote a rather lengthy letter which we have had to edit due to limited space. We hope that we have maintained the essence of what he wrote. But to paraphrase JFK - Ask not what your Federation can do for you, rather what you can do for the Federation.

BUSH DANCE :

In aid of S & R

WHEN : Friday 13th May

WHERE : Lane Cove Town Hall

COST : \$8

BAND : Hot Foot

TIME : 8 pm to 12 pm

PRIZES : Spot prizes , Lucky door
Guessing comp

COSTUME : Prize for the best field costume ?

TICKETS : Sold at the door

B. Y. O. E.

40th Aniversary Anzac Memorial Service

Splendor Rock

Monday 25th April 1988

6.15 am Assemble at Splendor Rock

6.25 am Dawn Service.

Sunday 24th the gates will be opened on the Megalong Rd. to Medlow Gap at 11.00 am

Monday 26th gates open for exit at 1.00 pm

The gates will only be open for a short time.

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For bookings phone Keith Maxwell 622-0049 (h)
or Peter Treseder 489-4182 (h)

Every trip leader should have a First Aid Certificate.

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.

The next newsletter will be available in mid March and contributions must be in by early February.

Correspondence concerning the Newsletter should be addressed to The Editor, Newsletter, PO Box 228, WEST RYDE 2114.

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The following is a breakup of the money donated:-

Australian Geographic Federation	\$5,000
Commonwealth Bank	2,000
Paddy Pallin Pty Ltd	1,000
Anonymous	1,000
Channel Nine	300
Superior Sportswear	250
Salena Stapleton	200
Mountain Equipment	120
Hardie Employees Credit Union	112
Blue Mountains Climbing School	50
MJ and JB Hooper	50
Les Wormald	30
Bill Capon	25
Georgina Eddy	20
Alan Riches	20
Warwick Deacock	20
Warwick Deacock Enterprises	20
Canberra Bushwalking Club	500
Sydney Bushwalking Club	500
Sutherland Bushwalkers	140
Mt Druitt Bushwalking Club	120
Newcastle Bushwalking Club	120
Camden Bushwalkers	100
Central West Bushwalkers	100
The Bush Club	80
Brisbane Waters Bushwalking Club	73
Springwood Bushwalkers	54
Kameruka Bushwalking Club	8
Money collected at Echo Point	3,860.53
Bank Interest	223.21
Total	17,096.34

The following equipment was also donated:-

Capita	2 watches + 1 umbrella
Eureka Tents	1 x 4 man tent
J and H	Goretex jacket
Macpac	1 pack
Nestles	Coffee
South Coast Search	2 white boards
Summit Gear	1 pack
Three Peaks	Material and manpower
Outdoor Society	to support display
Wildsports	Clothes to support Climbathon

Eight radios have been purchased for a total of \$12560 and have been successfully used already this year (searching for a missing German tourist round Mt Solitary).

The remaining donations may well be used to purchase ropes, pagers, and a shed to house excess S & R equipment. Some funds will be allocated to finish the

painting of the trailer and advertise our sponsors. The gear donated will be placed on tender at a later date.

IMPORTANT

Search and Rescue has now obtained two alphanumeric pagers to assist call-outs. Bushwalkers (or their relatives/friends) should;

- i) call (02) 016-020, and ask the Operator to
- ii) page 016-277.321 OR 016-277.322
- iii) and leave a short message along the lines

"URGENT CALL OSCAR HAMMERSMITH
PHONE BOX 049 729.6426"

The caller should ensure that the correct number (and STD code) is recorded by the Operator. (Note - you must indicate in your message if you are calling from a public phone box as the return call will have to be lodged through a Telecom operator).

- iv) If no return call is received within 15 minutes (to allow the holder of the pager to find a phone), repeat step (i) and (ii) and quote the alternate pager number.

CALLOUT - BLUE MOUNTAINS AREA

S & R was called out to assist Katoomba Police to search for a missing German tourist - Stefan Michels.

Stefan was last sighted on New Year's day near Ruined Castle where he had sought directions to Mt Solitary. He was not equipped for overnight walking. Police and volunteers had searched for two days without finding a trace of the tourist.

Forty seven bushwalkers assembled at 6.30am at Katoomba Police Station on January 5 before moving to the search base at Flat rock on Narrow Neck near the top of the Golden Stairs.

Our search area, as allocated by the Officer in Charge, Sgt. Bob Kelso, was the area between Mt Solitary and Narrow Neck and containing the Cedar valley. Bushwalkers were organised into eight groups but because of the search plan, the groups worked in pairs. All groups left base by 8.15am and most had reached their search areas by 10.00am. Due to poor weather conditions for most of the morning, visibility was restricted to less than 50m thus preventing air searching and making ground searching difficult.

At 11.30am a message was received that a body had been found, at the base of the cliffline on the eastern side of Mt Solitary, by a Bushfire Brigade group. The body was subsequently identified as Stefan.

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ALPINE NATIONAL PARKS

A couple of years ago Deirdre Schofield wrote in The Sydney Bushwalker of her horse ride with a commercial mountain safari enterprise. The proprietors argued that the cattlemen of the high country know and understand the mountains better than any other group. For 150 years they have been voluntary rangers, caretakers, rescue service and close friend to all who use the high plains. They oppose any legislation which will preclude them from the area, for they claim that

- the removal of cattle from the High Plains will allow vermin such as feral horses, rabbits and hares to go unchallenged and multiply,
- cattlemen's local knowledge is invaluable in the field of search and rescue, and their huts are of value for refuge,
- cattle keep tracks open to allow visitors pleasant and easy access from roadways into the bush,

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Most of our search groups were able to exit from their search areas reasonably quickly. A number of searchers received a helicopter lift from Cedar Gap. One group failed to observe radio schedules and could not be contacted for two hours after the discovery of the deceased and were thus late getting back to base.

This was the first practical use of our new radios and they proved to be very successful. A relay was established at Clear Hill but in the main all groups could be contacted from base.

My thanks to members of the following clubs: Span, Camden, Sutherland, Springwood, Bankstown, NPA, Three Peaks, Macquarie, Central West, CMW, SBW and CBC.

Tony Parr (Field Officer)

- scientific study confirms that grazing improves wildflower display,
- and mountain cattlemen provide a living link with the State's rich heritage and this link should be preserved.

*Editors note,
The attitudes above can have a major impact on our parks. Think about that when reading the next article*

THOUGHTS FROM ABROAD

A recent issue of CMW's Into The Blue carried a letter of thanks from a British tourist reflecting upon his stay in Australia. Imagine Kanangra Walls stripped of trees, in cold rains, with orange-clad figures dotted along the valleys, with a top car-park, another in the valley below the Walls, with a tarmac road following the river towards Katoomba!

- Britain's forest is sparse, and mostly planted by the Forestry Commission. Our mountains are covered in short grass, grazed by sheep, and are bleak and bare. the forest we do have is dull walking: pine trees of

identical size in straightlines, with a thick carpet of pine needles beneath.

- In Britain, it's impossible to live in a city and yet get away from other people to find solitude at the weekend. At Morton National Park, you could scrub-bash for a weekend and see no other walkers. By contrast, the Lakes District, Yorkshire Moors, and the Pennines are densely covered with well-worn, well-used paths. Every half hour you have to stand aside to make way for a school party. Hillsides are dotted with orange or blue waterproof jackets.

- In Britain, we seldom have campfires, and you miss a lot sitting around a primus. You'd be lucky to find enough dead wood for a fire, and even luckier if it wasn't water-logged.

- In Britain, it rains much in the mountainous west. Most bushwalks are in fact survival exercises against hypothermia.

- In Britain, you're never a trail-finder. It's all been explored, all views seen thousands of times, and all routes known to millions of people. If Mt Stormbreaker were in Britain, it would be bare of trees, there'd be six broad paths to the top, and a guidebook with several pages on each path.

QUARTERLY CALENDAR

April	
5	S & R meeting, Marrickville
16/17	Navigational Course
19	FBW General Meeting, Sydney
25	Jan Wouters leading an Anzac Day trip to Splendor Rock
May	
3	S & R meeting, Marrickville
13	Bush Dance - see elsewhere this newsletter
17	FBW General Meeting, Sydney - deadline for articles for the next 'Bushwalker'
21/22	First Aid Certificate Course - see elsewhere this newsletter
June	
7	S & R meeting, Marrickville
21	FBW General Meeting, Sydney - next 'Bushwalker' due
July	
5	S & R meeting, Marrickville
19	FBW Annual General Meeting