

THE

BUSHWALKER

Newsletter of the Federation of Bushwalking Clubs (NSW) Box 2090 GPO Sydney 2001 ISSN 0313-2684 August 1989

EDITORIAL

More than ever Bushwalkers are going to have to stand up and be counted. The source of and reason for their being in the Bush is more under threat than ever before. If all of us, whether we belong to Federation or not, don't speak up, fight for what we hold dear, then we are going to find the privileges we now enjoy will slowly but surely be whittled away. Other than unsympathetic politicians, and there are now a number of these, we have the very powerful and wealthy 4WD lobby, the fishing lobby, the miners, the loggers, and the graziers, who, for one reason or another are wanting to do something in or with National Parks. The national apathy towards research and development, the greater reliance on imports rather than the striving towards a more efficient manufacturing industry, the utter lack of pride in workmanship and the advocacy of increased population (as much as double) is going to put more and more pressure on the push to mine, log and develop our very precious National Parks. Get off your backsides, open your mouths, put pen to paper, make a nuisance of yourselves, make the powers that be sit up and take notice. About the only thing our politicians fear is the loss of their position whether it be their seat in parliament or their governing power. So fellow Greenies (if you don't like that - Conservationists) use your voting powers to achieve what we think will save us and our planet from extinction.

Gordon Lee.

A.G.M.

The July meeting of the Federation was the AGM. A new committee was elected and some reports from outgoing officers were presented. We have managed to fill most of the positions (A full list will be in the next issue).

A full transcript of the office bearers reports will be sent to the clubs, so we have only printed a brief summary of some of the available reports.

Presidents Report- Gordon Lee

This year it has been decided, (and almost achieved) that federation will become an incorporated body whose name will be The Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs of NSW. Appearing in the phone book as Bushwalkers Federation.

A most reasonable public liability insurance policy has been organised for federation. Our thanks go to Brian Walker for his efforts in this direction.

Federation has participated in a number of liaison meetings with the NPWS and is watching developments in the field of Bushleadership Courses. We are continuing to promote the federation and its ideals through a number of public displays.

Secretaries Report- Maureen Cavill

The new insurance policy that federation has promoted has been a drawcard in attracting new members. Two new clubs have joined and four others are in the process of joining.

The connection of the new federation phone has enabled us to more quickly respond to enquiries (although time can be a problem for a totally volunteer arrangement).

A more up to date version of the club list is being prepared (this is the main

information that we send to people who enquire).

Finally it would be good to get more input from clubs, what would you like to see federation doing and how can you help.

Search & Rescue Report- Keith Maxwell

This year has been a busy one for the two main areas of S&R. We see one of the uses of S&R as assisting in Bush Safety Training. This is done by running S&R practices, organising First Aid courses and talking with clubs when invited. The main purpose of S&R is to find people in trouble in the bush. The past year has seen us involved in two minor and one major callout, all of which reached a successful end in a minimum of time.

The ability of S&R to maintain control of its field groups has improved with the addition of new portable radios.

While I said all positions in the committee have been filled we are trying to encourage people to attach themselves to one of the jobs, so they can assist the elected officer. This type of unofficial helping has made the S&R work much easier and we would like to see the other overworked committee members assisted in the same way. This need not require you to attend meetings very often but if you can help with mailing, typing, phone calls or anything else you will be most welcome.

A call to the federations new phone number (see article "federation update" page 2) will get you some information on how you can help.

FEDERATION UPDATE

* : PAST >

Last month (June) a national conference on the possibility of standardising the various courses which are offered in Australia, was held. Federation had two representatives at the meeting (Gordon Lee and Don Rice). All states were represented. The meeting lasted 3 days. The representatives decided that the principals which should be emphasised are;

1. Safety
2. Environmental Impact
3. Quality of experience (trip enrichment)
4. Political clout (funding)
5. Certification may mean jobs
6. Guidelines for principals of schools and others .

The following recommendations were moved and passed unanimously by the conference;

1. That National Standards be developed
2. That we recognise that there will be endorsements for regional variations
3. That there be an ongoing dialogue between States and Territories to this end
4. That a working party be established to look at what the National Standards ought to be.

The federation now has it's own phone service, manned (sorry personned) by bushwalkers. The new number is 548 1228, If the number is unattended we have an answering machine to catch all the lost calls.

In the first month of operation we have had approximately 105 people ring. Most of the callers are requesting information about the clubs that might be in their area and what would be suitable for them. We rely on information that clubs have given us to answer their questions, so if there is any more you could give us that would help us direct new members to your club then call the above number and let us know (a contact phone number is very useful)

On another front the federation is mounting a display at the Young Australia Expo, to be held during August. During the same month we will be presenting a small display at the Playgroup Association conference. Earlier this year a display at Parramatta (co-ordinated by Life Be

In It) was washed out due to the weather. Later this year (Sept Oct) there is to be an Australian National Sports Expo at Homebush Sports Center that we will be participating in. This amount of activity can become very difficult for the few people involved, so if you or your club are interested in helping with any displays or exhibits (after all new members are what keeps a club going) then contact us on the federation number above.

We have said before that bushwalking is an activity that benefits young people by developing self reliance, fitness and an acceptable outlet for adventure. It seems that we are not the only people who feel this way.

Federation has been approached by the police youth club organisation with a view towards providing some trip leaders. The idea is to run some activities for young people who would not normally see this type of lifestyle.

Providing our youth with alternatives must be a major social service that federation could furnish.

Initially we will be running a trial of the scheme in the Sutherland region and if this is successful we would try to widen the idea.

This could be a good way to show that your club is not entirely self centered, but would like to put something back into the community. It will not involve much of your time or a great expense, so if you are interested discuss it with your club and give us a ring for any further information.

WALLY ROOTS

The Sydney Bushwalker, noted the death in February of Walter (Wally) Roots. He was an early member of the SBW's and was appointed as one of the Trustees of Garawarra Park until it was added to Royal National Park.

Root's route off the Gingra trail was named after him, though probably Wally's main claim to fame was his 'discovery' of Splendour Rock.

In 1932 Wally became the first Secretary of the Federation

With the proposed incorporation of the Federation, it is interesting to reflect upon the minutes of our inaugural meeting.

This was held at 5 Hamilton Street Sydney at 8pm on Thursday July 21, 1932.

Cliff Ritson was in the chair (with Harold Chardon as Secretary) with representatives of the Hikers Club of NSW, Sydney Bush Walkers, Mountain Trails Club, Bush Tracks Club, Bushlanders Club, Sydney University Bush Ramblers Society, YWCA Ramblers Club, and the Workers Educational Assn Ramblers in attendance. Apologies were received from the YMCA Rambler's Club.

The meeting resolved the name of the Federation to be 'The Federation of Bush Walking Clubs of New South Wales'. Its objectives were to be;

i) To unite all Recreational Walking Clubs with a view to protection and promotion of mutual interests.

ii) To accumulate knowledge and information re;

- a) Technique of Walking and Bushwalking
- b) Information re Routes and Country
- c) Statistics

3) To promote the resumption of suitable areas for the formation of walking parks and for the protection of tracks

4) To prevent the incursion of roads into recognised walking areas

5) To protect our native Fauna and Flora

6) To prevent spoilation and vandalism in any shape or form and to educate the public to a greater appreciation of the bush

7) To co-operate with other bodies for the furtherance of the objects of the Federation

8) To encourage good fellowship amongst Federated Clubs.

The meeting closed at 10.30 (which shows that even then Federation meetings dragged on).

BUSHWALKERS BLITZ ROGAIN ?

< TIMES :

(We owe a great debt of gratitude to past FBW president, Stan Cottier, who located and restored our first minute book. It is now lodged with the Mitchell Library with the rest of the Federation's records).

David George Stead was a self-educated marine biologist who had an interest in the natural sciences. Realising that the indigenous wildlife was fast disappearing he tried to convince the authorities of the need to stop the destruction. He also approached the Naturalist's Society of NSW to form a conservation body, and wrote to the papers to raise public consciousness. Though he received little support, his activities caught the eye of Count Birger Morner, the Swedish Consul-General in Australia.

Count Morner, himself a well known naturalist who was making a study of Australian wildlife, contacted Stead. David and some of his friends attended a meeting at the Royal Swedish Consulate on May 11, 1909 and arranged for a public meeting eight days later to form a society. About fifty people attended and a committee was formed to draw up a constitution for the Wild Life Preservation Society "to encourage the protection of, and to cultivate interest in the Australian Flora and Fauna".

Stead had a lot to contribute. He was a hard working naturalist and prolific writer, as well as a member and office-bearer of many scientific/natural history bodies.

In the early years of conservation the WLPS and the Mountain Trails Club guided bushwalking movement did not see eye-to-eye. Basically there was disagreement over land usage as well as a personality clash between dominant personalities of each organisation. Both organisations came together to support the Blue Gum Forest issue in the early thirties

This report comes from the Sutherland Bushwalking Club Team that won the first Combined Rescue Services Rogain, held on the 24th and 25th of June.

The weather forecast on the way to Nerriga on Saturday morning wasn't overly encouraging with talk of thunderstorms and possible hail. Blue skies at Nerriga suggested that the Weather Bureau was probably only operating on the basis that in 1989 the odds are in your favour if you predict foul weather and we based our plans on good weather.

After 30 minutes of plotting the various checkpoints on our maps and changing our minds several times on the route to take we headed off and soon found ourselves in the company of three other groups. It looked as though we might be travelling in 'convoy' during the weekend but by lunch time two diversions to distant checkpoints had resulted in us being several kms from the other groups. Several hours later another group very sportingly saved us the bother of using our compasses in some scrub by yelling out from the fire trail to what they took to be the rest of their party.

After dusk we settled in for several kms of wading/sliding along a decidedly waterlogged fire trail. A fire at the sallee creek radio checkpoint made a welcome respite from such joys and it was very hard to leave it for the vagaries of finding checkpoints at night. Our first effort was to locate a checkpoint by a river junction. This would have been very easy by day but it took much discussion and some compass cross bearings to find the checkpoint. We never actually saw the river junction but could deduce its presence from the sound of running water and having only a channel of smooth water in view.

After a brief sojourn by the fire we headed for a checkpoint on a hill several kms away. Our efforts were spurred by the sight of lights moving about near the hill. If they belonged to the Sydney Bushwalking club team who were on a reverse route we were certainly not going to win without a lot of night walking. Fortunately the lights belonged to the Tallanganda SES group who were on a similar route to us. With much peering by torchlight we found the checkpoint and only

noticed a tent 2m away after marking our card. It made us feel better about our powers of observation to learn later that at that stage the occupant of the tent hadn't found the checkpoint.

Next came the crucial test of climbing a nearby rocky outcrop nearly a km away with no guarantee that we would find the checkpoint. In fact that checkpoint was the least visible of all the ones we found and it was only by nearly treading in the rock crack in which it was located that it was eventually discovered. The return trip was enlivened by a slight inadvertent diversion into a swampy area and we were later assured that we sounded like a mob of kangaroos crashing about in the bush.

Another stretch of several kms saw us finally in the warmth of sleeping bags with resolutions to get up early rapidly fading. After leaving our campsite around 8:15am we had a fairly hectic day making sure we got back to the base by 2pm. This meant ignoring some checkpoints that were fairly distant from the main fire trail and we expected to at best come third or second in the competition. Finding the Sydney Bushwalkers many kms up the road from where we feared they were was a little reassuring.

It was a great surprise to find that there were individual trophies for the event and interesting to hear the tales of some other teams. Although our team is loath to drum up too much competition (!) it must be said that we all enjoyed ourselves and found the event very well organised and that our navigation skills are scarcely unbeatable. The other team from Sutherland club did well and came in fourth. They very sportingly declined to protest the fact that the Tallanganda SES group included the son of the Mr Quilty after whom the mountain in the eastern end of the rogain course was named.

Our thanks must go to all the teams that competed and we hope enjoyed the weekend. As a combined rescue services event it was great to have teams from the SES, Bushfire Brigades, Police, Ambulance, VRA as well as bushwalkers. Next year we will run the event again and we hope to see more of you walkers out there, or even helping us to organise the rogain.

JARDINE VENTURE

Four bushwalkers have just completed the first complete canoe descent of the Jardine river, at the tip of Cape York.

Party members were Peter Treseder, Steve Irwin and Warwick Blayden, all from Sydney, as well as Ron Moon from Melbourne

The Jardine is Queensland's largest perennial stream and its pristine 2507 square kilometre catchment is protected within a national park and an aboriginal reserve.

Anticipating dense rain forest and much walking to where the inflatable canoes could be launched, the party was suitably surprised to find a relatively open lead into the headwaters. Here the stream was almost canoeable and the crafts were unpacked.

Initially there were numerous log jams and lots of wading. Later the party was to reflect upon this when they encountered 3-4 metre estuarine crocodiles, further upstream than previously recorded.

The Jardine was a swift flowing and very pleasant river passing through a variety of vegetation. To walk through this country would entail tremendous effort and the dangers were great - taipans, death adders, wild pigs with tusks. But added to this is the spice that no one had walked through area. Such is the country that it is the reputed graveyard of several wartime aircraft - including possibly some Japanese. Ron intends returning to the Cape later this year to attempt to follow the steps of the Jardine brothers who in the 1860's attempted a cattle drive along the explorer Edmund Kennedy's trail to the tip. Ron has been able to obtain sponsorship of a film crew and a documentary should follow.

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CATT HEAD INCIDENT

At Easter, whilst in the Blue Breaks, Catholic Bushwalking Club member Peter Marshall was struck by a falling rock. This left him unconscious with head injuries and a broken arm. Considering the nature of the injuries it was decided to get him to hospital as soon as possible. A SCAT team in the HCF Careflight helicopter was dispatched and, 24 hours after the incident, Peter was in hospital.

A number of valuable lessons were learnt;

* a well equipped first aid kit is essential. Peter's injuries required numerous gauze pads, cotton bandages and triangular bandages.

* whilst Peter's companions had first aid knowledge, most were a little rusty. It would be ideal if current certificate holders could periodically refresh their knowledge.

* whilst the ideal safe number of walkers is four, the CBC found that five were even better (two to remain behind with the patient).

* one thing the party failed to do was to keep a log of Peter's symptoms. Whilst it proved not important in this case, had Peter lapsed into a coma, then such a log would have been useful for the doctor.

* the party was faced with the best method of effecting rescue. Considering the nature of the injury (head wound and unconscious) and the terrain, helicopter rescue would have been the best and quickest method for recovery. They contacted the Police. [S&R would have done the same].

SCAT is a team of paramedics who have extra training in abseiling and accessing helicopters to get to the accident scene

CALENDAR

Sept	
4-10	National Sports Exhibition
5	S & R Meeting, Marrickville
19	FBW General Meeting, 39 George St., Sydney
22	FBW Ball - Petersham Town Hall
Oct	
3	S & R Meeting, Marrickville
17	FBW General Meeting *
28-29	St. John's First Aid Course
Nov	
7	S & R Meeting, Marrickville
21	FBW General Meeting **
Dec	
5	S & R Meeting, Marrickville
19	FBW General Meeting

* Deadline for contributions for next 'Bushwalker'

** Next issue of 'Bushwalker' due

This Newsletter is an occasional publication and is distributed 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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