

# THE Bushwalker

MAGAZINE OF THE CONFEDERATION OF BUSHWALKING CLUBS NSW INC.

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<http://www.bushwalking.org.au>



## BUSHWALKING IN THE UNITED STATES

Tom Boyle

### THE JOHN MUIR TRAIL

In the United States, bushwalking is called hiking. There are three famous hiking trails in America: The Appalachian Trail, The Pacific Crest Trail and The John Muir Trail.

The Appalachian Trail extends from northern Georgia to Southern Maine near the crest of the Appalachian Mountains on the eastern side of the country. Compared to the isolation of the other two trails, it is a social gathering. Approximately 3,400 kilometers long, the trail is host to about 750 through hikers each year. There are a number of huts along the trail where one can stay overnight. There is no reservation system. It's first-come, first-served. Like the other two trails, it can only be hiked in the summer from late March to early October.

The Pacific Crest Trail is located on the western side of the country. 4,255 kilometers long, it extends from Mexico to Canada near the crest of the Sierra Nevada Mountains in California and the Cascade Mountains in Oregon and Washington. The trail is oftentimes remote. We once hiked for 35 days between civilization although you usually will come into a town about once every two weeks in the less remote areas. Because of the length of the trail, one cannot carry regular food; it would be too heavy. One must carry freeze-dried food. Since it is usually unavailable in the little towns in the mountains, one must have a base person somewhere in America to ship the freeze-dried food packages on a regular basis to remote post offices in the mountains. The trail can only be hiked from March to early November but those who start early and quit late will probably have to hike across snowfields. For this reason, one must know and be intimately familiar with the usage of an iceaxe. It is the only

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## SOUTH-EAST FORESTS AND LOGGING

Excerpt from NEWS RELEASE;  
Friday, 14 April 2000

*The Premier of NSW, Mr Bob Carr today announced a major expansion of the State's national parks system of almost 324,000 hectares and a guaranteed 20 year log supply for the timber industry in the South Coast and Tumut regions.*

*"The Southern Forest Agreement, comprising the South Coast and Tumut regions, represents a balanced decision based on three years of intensive scientific forest research".*

*"It creates a continuous corridor of national parks and reserves, stretching 350 kilometres from the Victorian border to Macquarie Pass, north of Nowra. And links from the escarpment to the coast.*

*Icon areas such as Murrumbidgee, Conjola the Five Lakes area south of Ulladulla, Deua, Dignams Creek and Monga will be protected forever."*

The media statement goes on to take credit for unprecedented additions to the State's reserve system in the life of the present Government. The additions over the past 5 years are of course welcome. They should also however, be looked at from the perspective of what these intensive regional assessment processes have confirmed. That is that the New South Wales reserve system at the time of assessment, protected only a quarter to a third of the forest environments needed to meet the criteria of our National Forest Policy of 1992 and, more

*John Macris Conservation Officer*  
importantly to protect endangered species from extinction in coming decades.

While the reservations of the past 5 years are measured in the hundreds of thousands of hectares, the data from the assessment process would demonstrate that these steps forward have been modest rather than momentous in the scheme of things.

The figure of 324,000 hectares protected under this decision, is

approximately 50,000 hectares less than the reserve option favoured by conservation advocates. These areas, now allocated to logging and woodchip production, include lands of previously recognised wilderness quality in the Deua, Tumut and Goobarragandra (northern Kosciuszko) forests, along with important corridors along the Clyde River valley and Wandella. The number of new reserves also needs



Photo - South-East Forest Alliance

a little scrutiny. Most are small, isolated areas. This is mainly a facet of the immense fragmentation of remnant natural areas as islands on public land. It is more a reflection of the folly of land clearing when looked at in context.

The amount of land protected has ultimately been decided as a factor of what could be reserved without native forestry job numbers being reduced in the southern region, rather than the

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Walk Safely - Walk With a Club



## THE BUSHWALKER

**Contributions**, letters to the editor, original cartoons and suggestions are welcome. They should be sent to the address below. Except for short notes or letters, all contributions should be accompanied with text file on three and a half inch floppy disk in IBM format or E-Mail.

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The Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs NSW Inc represents approximately 67 clubs with a total membership over 10,000 bushwalkers. Formed in 1932, the Confederation provides a united voice on conservation and other issues, runs training courses for members, and provides for the public a free wilderness search and rescue service. People interested in joining a bushwalking club are invited to write to the Secretary Bushwalkers NSW at the above address for information on clubs in their area.

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### THE BUSHWALKER

is the magazine of the Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs NSW Inc. It's published quarterly. The aim of the magazine is to provide articles and information of interest to the members of clubs affiliated with the Confederation and Bushwalkers generally. Any opinions expressed by individual authors do not always represent the official views of the Confederation.

## Continued from page 1

best available scientific knowledge.

Following is a brief look at how the decision fared on key areas highlighted in earlier editions of the Bushwalker.

**Murramarang additions** (9,600 ha). Credit is due on this addition, with the park greatly expanded from a narrow coastal strip, to now take in all of the majestic Spotted Gum forests to the Princes Highway in the west, and the catchment of Durras Lake. Proposed corridors to the escarpment forests were not protected however. Score 8/10.

**Merero National Park** (3,400 ha) An excellent stretch of coastal forests and lakes between Uladulla and Bawley Point. A link to Morton National Park via the spectacular Mt Kingman area has also been reserved. Score 9/10.

**Conjola National Park additions** (16,800 ha) The catchments of Conjola and Swan Lakes have been well protected. The opportunity to protect the most viable east-west wildlife corridor from the escarpment to the coast has only been partially realised, with a large chunk of this key link remaining as State Forest. Score 7/10.

**Mongarlowe National Park** (25,000 ha) This is the Buckenbowra River area described in an earlier edition of this magazine. It is very pleasing to report that the wild headwaters of this river have been protected, along with the moist forests of the upper Mongarlowe River, behind the abrupt escarpment. This park connects Deua and Budawang National Parks, contributing to the new

350 km corridor of connected reserves described in the Premier's statement. Some of the wilderness values of Buckenbowra are compromised by the retention of the lower reaches of the valley for logging. Score 8/10.

**Deua National Park additions** (20,000 ha) As mentioned above, some long sought areas in the upper Deua and Tuross catchments, amounting to thousands of hectares, have been excluded from new reserves. This area seems to have suffered at the expense of good outcomes on the coast. Watch this space for ongoing struggles over Deua. Score 4/10.

**Kooraban National Park** (25,000 ha) Another worthy coastal zone reservation. This new park south of Narooma extends from Mt Dromedary in the east to link with Wadbilliga National Park in the west. Some important species habitat is conserved. Score 7/10.

**Gourock National Park** (20,000 ha) An area of important forest dependent mammal habitat, protecting a range of tableland and escarpment forests. The reserve design of this park appears to be especially compromised by the retention of the most productive areas for logging. Score 6/10

**Woomargama National Park** (23,000 ha) This national park has been in the pipeline for close to a decade. This park is one of the largest remnant areas on the south-western slopes and features transitions of moist and dry forest environments. Score 8/10.

**South West Slopes Nature Reserves** (approximately 15,000 ha) These scattered areas generally came across from Crown Land and were hence under a lower degree of land use threat than the State Forest areas. They are all important additions none the less, containing poorly protected remnant woodland habitat. Score 8/10.

**Brindabella National Park additions** (10,000 ha) This addition from was from Crown Land rather than State Forest. The reserve links Brindabella and Kosciuszko National Parks and protects important Tiger Quoll, Koala and Northern Corroboree Frog habitat. This is a welcome addition to the alpine reserve network. Score 9/10.

**Northern Kosciuszko addition** (around 1,600 ha) The Alpine Ash forests removed from Kosciuszko State Park in the late 1960s were expected to be returned to the park under this forest decision. Confederation is dismayed that 3,500 hectares of wilderness quality Ash forest have been left out of the reservations in this area, to remain as unprotected State Forest. This will remain the thorn in the side of what might have been a 'win win' outcome in the Tumut region. Score 3/10.

Other areas where reservations were missed or of a minimal nature include the proposed Jervis Bay Currumbene additions, Bimeramalla east of Budawang National Park and the Wandella - Peak Alone area inland from Narooma.

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# ALL CARE AND RESPONSIBILITY

**There is no doubt that we are in the age of lawyers and litigation.** An architect on the radio recently claimed that one in every four of their professional insurance policies is acted upon each year. Going bush is no escape. Lawyer talk words of “duty of care”, “public liability”, “negligence” etc follow us there too. We all need to be aware of our responsibilities when we are part of a club bushwalk.

A recent fatality with an organised bicycle touring group provides a timely reminder of the responsibilities we all live with. At the Coroner’s Court the lawyers made the leaders of this group feel most uncomfortable as they questioned their actions and motives. A club bushwalk has many similarities to this bicycle group.

The purpose of this article is to encourage bushwalkers to go bush sensibly so as to limit their (inescapable) potential liability. This bush lawyer is also a Public Officer and a past workplace Safety Officer. There are two clear trends we need to be aware of. One trend is fault as shown by the many claims against local Councils for injury to persons tripping on footpaths. Another trend is the passing on of personal responsibility. For example recent Workers Compensation cases have

Keith Maxwell - Director Wilderness Rescue shown employers to be responsible for what many would call personal silliness. What about bushwalk leaders???

There is always the probability of injury when you visit the remote and rough terrain of many of our National Parks. Injury could also imply a personal liability (responsibility). Insurance is thus essential since typical claims can be many thousands of dollars. Without Incorporation - “Inc.” all members of a club could be liable to pay for claims! Not being present when the injury occurred is no defense! To protect its Office Bearers the Confederation is thus an incorporated body that also provides public liability and personal accident insurance for the bushwalkers of its constituent clubs. Only wealthy or dumb bushwalkers belong to clubs that are not an “Inc.” The underlying assumption of the Confederation insurance policies is that our various outdoors activities are done safely. If the activities are not done safely the Insurer could exercise their right to refuse to pay!!

Some time ago I wrote a simple list of “DO and DON’T” bush safety guidelines. Since then I have noticed that in many of the bush rescue incidents (that make the nightly news) at

least one or more of these guidelines has not been followed! All clubs should consider using this list as a minimum safety guideline for outdoors activities. If need be consider some extra guidelines for risky activities such as liloing, abseiling etc. Guidelines could be as simple as the skills you expect of leaders and the bushwalkers involved. Remember bushwalking is our relaxation so you don’t want a book of rules.

The skills to effectively manage injuries until an ambulance or rescue helicopter arrives are learnt in First Aid training. Do not treat persons beyond your level of training. Thus, all clubs should encourage their trip leaders (and other members) to obtain a recognised First Aid Certificate. Obviously in such an incident all the bushwalkers present would offer assistance within their limit of skill.

This could become a much longer (and boring) article with all the questions that the bush lawyers always seem to be able to dream up whenever this topic is raised. Although we are being forced to be thoughtful in our actions we are not being asked the impossible. Commercial outdoors companies have far stricter controls they must follow in taking paying customers on adventure activities.

## WILDERNESS SAFETY

DO Give list of group NAMES and give complete route details of WHERE you are going to close relatives/friends or Police. Include details of where your car(s) will be parked.

DO tell them WHEN you are LEAVING and RETURNING and anyone’s SPECIAL medical conditions e.g. diabetes, asthma.

DO notify them of your SAFE RETURN.

DO take the correct MAP and COMPASS. Know how to use them.

DO take appropriate clothing/footwear. Always take a windproof/waterproof PARKA and clothing that can keep you WARM WHEN WET e.g. wool and definitely NOT jeans.

DO take waterproof MATCHES and some SPARE food in case of delays. Always take some cold snack food such as dried fruit, nuts or chocolate for quick energy .

DON’T overestimate your abilities. Always ALLOW TIME for the unexpected e.g. thick scrub, cliffhines.

DON’T go faster than the slowest member of your group. At regular intervals do a HEAD COUNT of your group.

DON’T SPLIT up your walking group (except for below) during the trip. There is safety in numbers.

DON’T leave an injured person ALONE in the bush. A walking group of THREE or more will allow one to look after the injured while the other goes for help.

DON’T keep moving when LOST. Find a campsite nearby with water that will be visible from a helicopter. Wave vigorously at any helicopters; they are probably looking for you!

DON’T forget if you are OVERDUE to PHONE home from the FIRST phone box/Police Station you come to.

REMEMBER - Your safety is dependent on your FITNESS and EXPERIENCE as well as your EQUIPMENT and the trip LEADERSHIP. Every trip must include at least ONE experienced bushwalker to every

THREE inexperienced walkers.

### WALK SAFELY - WALK WITH A CLUB

Visit the Confederation of Bushwalking website at [www.bushwalking.org.au](http://www.bushwalking.org.au) for a club near you.



Alex Tucker Tracks and Access Officer

## HUMAN WASTE MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP - WORLD'S BEST PRACTICE IN REMOTE AREAS

(Commonly called The Poo Workshop)

At the end of March, I represented Confederation at this 5-day workshop, initiated by the Australian Alps Liaison Committee and held in Canberra (1½ days) and Jindabyne. Some 100 delegates, mostly Rangers, attended it from the NSW and Victorian National Parks Services. The Keynote speaker was Bob McConnell from the American Alpine club, the man who organised and led an expedition to assist the first American woman to reach the summit of Everest. He claims to have made every mistake in the book on that expedition because of ignorance of Tibetan cultural values. He then spent the next five climbing seasons as the leader of teams cleaning up the high altitude rubbish of seventy years of Everest expeditions. He was expelled from Tibet for life by the

Chinese authorities because he dared to photograph the "non existent" rubbish. If you ever find yourself near Colorado Springs give yourself a treat by calling him. (Phone number and email address available from me).

Also attending were scientists from USA, UK and Australia and Parks administrators from Tasmania and New Zealand. Several papers related to "failures" of commercial composting toilet systems at high Altitudes. Manufacturers documented some successes and park managers and other successes were mentioned in out of session conversations. The consensus was that there is no universal system for such locations and that even the best systems failed if they did not receive regular maintenance. This is not wholly bad news. The composting toilet at the Schlink Pass hut is not performing well probably due to variations in usage and low overnight temperatures. However it has eliminated the mine field and probably the gastric wogs that were features of this location B T (before toilet) and if necessary can be pumped out when the management trail is open to road tankers in spring.

The papers of most interest to bushwalkers relate to methods of carrying out human waste. (See separate article on the Poo Tube Revolution) and to research into decomposition rates of toilet paper and tampons, and into the environmental effects of a synthetic urine. I had thought to review a number

of the papers in Bushwalker but I have found that the preprinted papers do not always do justice to the personal presentations, which I attended. (There were three concurrent sessions) I will lodge the complete papers in the library in the Sydney office of the National Parks Association. I am a sure member of Confederation clubs will be welcome to read them. On request. For interested Country members I can provide a list of the papers and, within reason, copies of selected papers.

I believe that the workshop did allow me to raise the profile of Confederation with Park Managers and rangers and provided me with a number of personal contacts for future Tracks & Access problems or queries. I was able to get more information on a number of issues, including advice that the Permit System for the World Heritage Wilderness area of Tasmania is not yet in force. It seems that there is some residual opposition probably at the political level. See also the separate article on the sewage treatment plants of the Kosciuszko resorts.

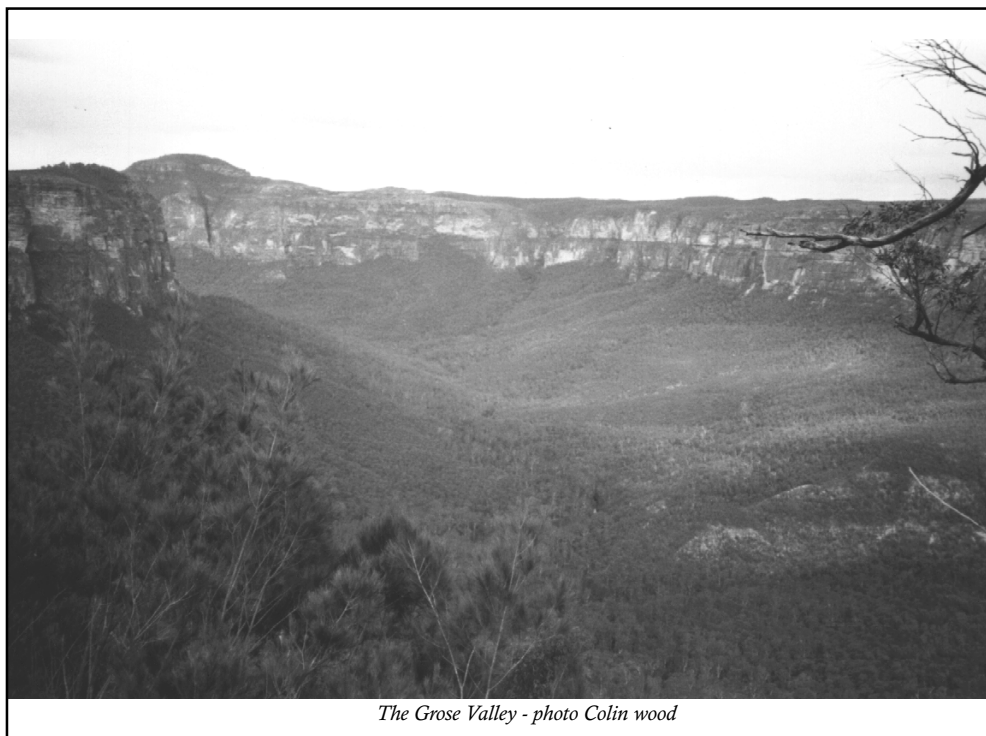
## KOSCIUSZKO SUMMIT TECHNICAL COMMITTEE (KSTC)

A few days later Alan Vidler of the Canberra Bushwalking Club represented Confederation at the half yearly meeting of the KSTC, which focussed on the track upgrading work between Charlotte Pass and the the summit.

Naturally a visit to the new composting toilet was included. (This innovative design possibly warrants a later report because the amount of composting material is still less than the minimum needed for a complete trial. The Contractor will monitor the operation for up to 2 years before receiving his final payment) Incidentally portaloos have been provided at Rawson's Pass where there is management vehicle access, at least during summer

Three casual employees have been working on the old Summit Road, stabilising the surface, rectifying erosion, narrowing the track in places and restoring the path through the rocky area near the summit.

The committee members were pleased and impressed with the



The Grose Valley - photo Colin wood

works. About 100 walkers were met on the track in about 2 hours. (Visitor surveys indicate about 52 000 people walked to the summit between December and early April with probably 70 % coming via the Thredbo chairlift, with a peak of 4,500 on Easter Saturday 1999.) No one really wants to have limitations on visitor numbers and such a plan would be very difficult to implement but continuing increases in numbers may make it essential.

Maintenance weeding was proceeding in the two-year-old revegetation area near the summit.

A "high wear and rubbish" hot spot was noted at the Kosciuszko Lookout on the walkway from the Thredbo chairlift because many walkers lunch and/or turn back at this point. There is also concern about phosphorus build up at camping sites just outside the Blue Lake catchment.

The proposal to reroute the AAWT down Spencers Creek is still a possibility, but obviously has a much lower priority than the summit and other popular existing tracks.

Methods of making the Snowy Crossing stepping-stones more stable and user friendly are still being considered. A bridge to withstand the peak snowmelt would be a massive structure and neither environmentally nor visually acceptable. Using the crossing is only a problem for a few days each year and so the priority is not high.

### LAMINGTON NP

Further to the T&A report in the February issue the President of the Queensland Federation of Bushwalking Clubs has provided some more information on the lost walking party, based on the debriefing of the S&R participants and thus not necessarily the complete story. The National Parks Service requires bushwalking parties to apply for a permit by completing an 18-page questionnaire detailing the proposed route, the number and ages of party members, their experience and equipment etc. The reported statement by the NPS District Manager that the party had met the self reliance & experience criteria would have been based on the completed document. (I speculate that whilst the answers given by the party may well be completely true, their problems after missing their intended track might have arisen from a failure to agree on one plan and to stick to it. This is a lesson that we all may need to remember)

## THE POO TUBE IS COMING!

Walk Safely - Walk With a Club



Most of the overseas methods for the removal of human waste from remote areas involve the removal of sealed containers by helicopter, management vehicles or pack animals such as donkeys or llamas. In Australia commercial guided walks operators may be required to have the waste man packed out. The Army Adventurous Training Corps (AATC) devised a toilet sledge for their ski touring activities. It must have been an experience for the novice skier private "volunteered" to tow it. Outward Bound (OB) has trialed their own version of a poo tube made from 100mm PVC pipe 960 mm long. Each of the two party leaders carried one tube fitted with straps that secured it to the back of their rucksacs. This was satisfactory for their ski touring parties. For canoeing expeditions or campsites accessible by vehicle, OB have used steel "bomb canisters" as used by the Army for transport of land mines. These are no longer in production.

None of the above are intended for ordinary bushwalkers in remote areas. The traditional advice is to carry a light trowel and to bury faeces and toilet paper 150 mm below ground level. There are three (at least) problems, no one really knows if the "biologically active zone" extends to that depth, in many rocky alpine areas there is not

that depth of soil, and the digging activity may sever the roots of plants growing well away from the hole. Other expedients have involved prising out a rock and replacing it on top of the faeces, shallow cat holes or a smearing operation with the back of a trowel to induce rapid decomposition.

A research scientist at the University of Tasmania has begun an investigation of vegetation responses to digging and the rates of decomposition of known dry weights of toilet paper and tampons in mass bags at depths of 50 and 150 mm in the same hole in different remote areas ranging from coastal dunes to alpine feldmark. Also a synthetic urine will be applied to random vegetation plots with varying degrees of repetition and the effects mapped and remapped over the three year project duration.

The Poo Tube for bushwalkers is a joint project of the Australian Alps Liaison Committee, the AATC and the Victorian Bushwalking and Mountaineering Training Advisory Board. The latter is responsible for the training of outdoor leaders. The first prototype was made from 150 mm PVC Sewer piping fitted with screw caps and about the height of a chamber pot. Naturally this was too bulky and heavy for walkers. The current model is made from 100mm PVC with a sealed base and a screw cap with O ring seal. It is intended to strap to the outside of a rucksac and has been proven to cater for four people on a three day trip or eight people over a 2 day weekend. Obviously the most cunning walkers volunteer for the earliest carry. The material cost is about \$30. Bob McConnell is taking a sample Poo Tube back to the USA having swapped it for an autographed copy of his most recent book. He might have an interesting time with the US Customs if he declares his trophy Poo tubes and their use have been featured in Wild magazine. For the rest of us, the waste is deposited on several layers of greaseproof paper and then rolled up like fish and chips before inserting into the poo tube.

Disposal can be into existing pit or composting toilets, toilet discharge points in caravan parks or marinas or, gradually, into domestic toilets.

The poo tube is coming to NSW and will be welcomed by bushwalkers etc with concerns for the environmental and health effects of human faeces. We

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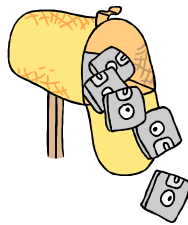
too can spread organisms like giardia and cryptosporidium and the incidence of the former is said to be increasing in possums presumably after digging up our cat holes.

Canyoning and ski touring are likely to be the first activities in NSW where the use of poo tubes will be encouraged or made a condition of an access permit. However the timing should depend on the provision of facilities for disposal by or for the NPWS near popular entry points.

## SNOWY MOUNTAINS RESORTS SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANTS. (STP)

The STP at Smiggins Holes Perisher and Charlotte Pass are operated by the NPWS, under licenses with the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) All provide tertiary treatment but are currently being upgraded to improve the conversion of ammonia into nitrogen. Full details are available in the Environmental Impact Statement., and inquiries should be directed in the first instance to the NPWS Library at Hurstville. The ammonia problem is related to the slow build up of sewage in the system and the natural processes are not self-sustaining until half way through the ski season. Part of the solution is to increase the size of the final storage pond to allow for longer residence times before discharge to the receiving waters.

The volume exceeds the EPA limits about 4-5 time a year on average. These events are directly related to snow melt and heavy rain events. There have been no exceedences of the eight criteria regulated by the EPA licence Samples are taken and analysed once a week in winter and once a fortnight in summer. In addition invertebrates and micro organisms are monitored above and below the entry of treated water into the natural streams. This biological monitoring produces a more meaningful and expeditious measurement of the health of the stream than the chemical criteria and the numbers of indicator organisms such as E coli



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### A WARNING FOR WALKERS.....

At the last Coast & MountainWalkers club meeting, we heard a report telephoned in from a member living in Blackheath that there has been a recent spate of such incidences at the car parks in the area used by bushwalkers. I didn't learn how widespread the problem is (i.e. localities apart from around Blackheath), but apparently the scumbags have been smashing windows to gain entry. I didn't catch if it was mostly happening during the day, overnight or both. The member had a vehicle, which was left parked overnight near the town centre, burnt out (at least I think that was what was reported !) Let's hope they don't get out to Kanangra Walls.

David Springthorpe E-mail  
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## ACCESS PROBLEMS

Malcolm Hughes Bertha St.  
HillTop 2575

The Southern Highlands bushwalkers have encountered four instances of access or facilities being denied because of the actions or behavior of a few irresponsible people.

Access to Bonnum Pic through "Ben Haar" is denied because of a small percentage of walkers who have caused Jim Samson inconvenience, leaving gates open, disturbing stock etc. As a result Jim has been in touch with solicitors who, have advised him of liability if injury to a walker occurs. Now no one has access there except for a marked route being installed in the National Park.

Bushwalkers used to have access to Mount Jellore through Ken McCracken's property "Jellore" until same people walking through his property upset him. There used to be access to Russell's Needle from Wombeyan Caves road until someone upset Steve Temporal. Now he has refused access to bushwalkers.

Our Southern Highlands club had an arrangement to park our vehicles inside the "Wattle Ridge" property, where they were safe from vandalism, while we walked in the Nattai river from Starlight's track. Several groups have made a nuisance of themselves by going to the main house and requiring using the phone or toilets. The owners go there for rest and privacy and don't like people randomly interrupting their rest and solitude. Now we are no longer allowed to Leave our vehicles as before.

This letter is to demonstrate that property owners have problems with some bushwalkers and it is up to us to ensure that we don't be the cause of any similar problems. I am sure that members of affiliated clubs are not the people causing these problems as we all contact property owners before entering their properties and get permission. Maybe we can pass the word around to non members and avoid loosing any further access.

## CANYON ACCESS

I think Rick Jamieson's suggestion that by restricting access to the Newnes and Wollemi Canyons by making the walk in longer will force many day trippers into closer, already overcrowded canyons such as Claustal or Wollongambe, is true. In this day and age of longer working hours and reduced leisure time, not everyone has the pleasure of being able to take more than one day off to undertake outdoor pursuits. Rather than wholesale access restrictions, the NPWS need to install proper gates and fences that will effectively prevent trail bikes and 4wds from entering our treasured wilderness areas. I have seen quite a few unsatisfactory gate/fence arrangements in a range of National Parks in NSW (including the Blue Mts) where trail bike riders and 4 wheel drivers have simply constructed or found detours to by pass these obstacles. Effective gates/fencing doesn't need to be expensive. What's needed is a bit of foresight when assessing/designing gate/fence arrangements. A bit more monitoring of areas by rangers probably wouldn't go astray also. Monitoring of areas could also have the added benefit of reducing car vandalism. It is most certainly our right to have access to canyons in National Parks. As tax paying Australian citizens and along with indigenous people, we are all part owners of these fragile areas. Whilst I believe National Parks are absolutely essential in the protection and management of wilderness areas, they should strive to be more inovative and proactive rather than burecratic.

Mike Law-Smith



# BUSHWALKERS WILDERNESS RESCUE

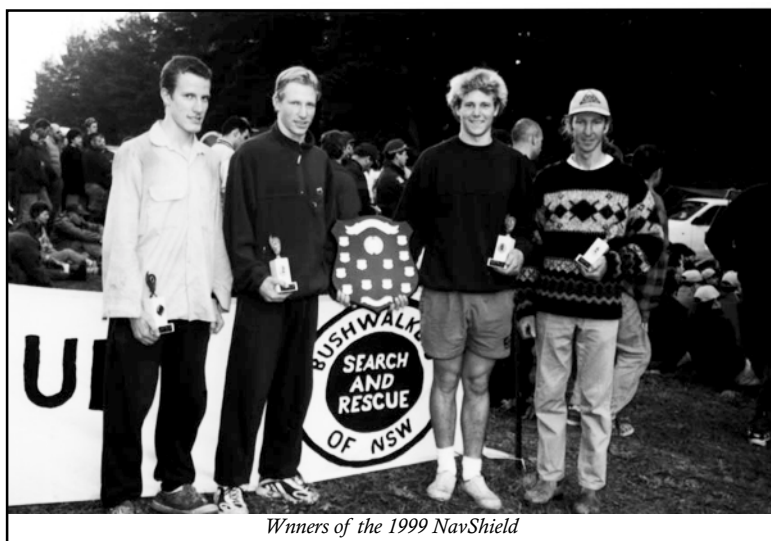


## BWR TRAINING

A very successful Training Weekend was held at Cataract Scout Park again. Over 70 persons took part in an active program that included navigation HF radios. Land search techniques, incident management, casualty handling/improvised stretchers etc. Unfortunately Careflight was unable to attend so the helicopter training remained theoretical. BWR achieved its aims of training bushwalkers as both to be self reliant in managing trip emergencies and as rescue personnel.

### NAVSHIELD 2000

NavShield Entry Forms will be posted this month to clubs and past participants.



Winners of the 1999 NavShield

Early next month we plan to meet the local landholders for the proposed NavShield 2000 site. They know where the NavShield will be but you will need to register. This year again, you don't need to register solely by snail mail but can register via the NavShield website that can be accessed from the Confederation website at [www.bushwalking.org.au](http://www.bushwalking.org.au)

### BWR REVAMP.

BWR is tightening up its internal structure by moving to a fixed squad

Keith Maxwell Director

and auxiliaries. The members of the fixed squad will have a distinct quantified group of skills that will include First Aid Certificate, search management ALVRI cliff rescue training etc. We are currently finalising the list i description of skills and the level of identification (uniform) that will apply to emphasise our fixed squad and auxiliary members. Most of the bushwalkers who trained recently at Cataract Scout Park have the skills BWR would expect of its larger group of auxiliaries.

### WOMBAYAN CAVES SEARCH

David Robinson-Sydney Bushwalking Club/  
Rocksquad

Sunday, March 5 - A family outing on 125 hectares of rugged land that they had just purchased, about 6km south west of Wombeyan Caves.

The day was warm and the mood relaxed. City people keen to experience and learn about "the bush". They decided to explore their property. The

two young girls in the group, one 10 and the other 11 had been promised that they could select their "acre" on which to erect a cubby house and were excited about doing this. Their chance to have their

own little home.

The explorers piled into a four wheel drive vehicle, and left the less adventurous at the "shack" to relax and enjoy the sounds and smells of the "bush". They followed the fence line away from the shack and down the hill until they can drive no further, blocked by the rugged terrain. They decided to park the vehicle and continue on foot. They were about 15 minutes walk from the shack. After a few minutes on foot the girls decided to turn back and wait at the vehicle for the others to return. The

parents were none too keen on this but they were within sight of the vehicle and reluctantly agreed. They watched the kids make their way back toward the vehicle and continued their walk.

About 45 minutes later, the parents arrived back at the vehicle to find the girls were not there. They checked the area but could find no trace; they called their names and sounded the horn but there was no reply. They assumed the girls had tired of waiting and had returned to the shack, only a short distance away along the fence line. They drove back to the shack to find the girls had not returned and had not been seen. Maybe they were looking for their "acre" over in the cleared area on the other side of the fence? The parents decided to search this area - again, without result. Panic started to set in. Maybe if they gave them a couple of hours they would walk in, meanwhile, they went back over their tracks. No trace was found and they did not walk in.

Mittagong Police were notified mid afternoon and immediately contacted the local rescue squad, Berrima Volunteer Rescue Association (VRA). Jointly, a small contingent conducted a preliminary search with assistance of family members. They failed to locate the girls before the search was suspended for the night at sunset.

Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue (BWR), also a VRA squad, was contacted by Berrima VRA at 21:30 on Sunday and immediately put the network of club contacts into action. At this early stage BWR had been given little detail apart from the fact that two

**Continued on page 9**

## CARTOONIST WANTED

If you are a budding cartoonist I would like to talk to you about a some ideas I have concerning a character that's been rattling around in my head for a number of years. You can contact me at [turton@fastlink.com.au](mailto:turton@fastlink.com.au) or by writing to The Editor Bushwalkers NSW PO Box 2090 Sydney 1043. The pays lousy (nil) but will give you a byline.



## Continued from page 8

young girls were missing in rough country near Wombeyan Caves.

By 06:30 on Monday morning, searchers from the BWR Committee and the Rocksquad, Canberra Bushwalking Club, Southern Adventure Society, SPAN, Sutherland Bushwalking Club, Springwood Bushwalking Club, UTS Outdoor Adventure Club and Yarrawood Bushwalking Club were at the search area awaiting instructions.

It had rained overnight and there was thick fog hanging over the search area. The parents had experienced "the worst night of their lives", and were concerned that the girls may not have survived. They worried about hypothermia and imagined all sorts of horrors that may have befallen them. Members of the search teams assured them that this was highly unlikely and that the odds were that they would be found quickly and unharmed.

By this time, VRA members from Berrima and Binalong together with local SES and Police were starting to arrive. The K9 Search and Rescue Dogs Squad, also a VRA member, was in

attendance and Polair was organised. The helicopter would not be able to operate until the fog lifted, however, and this was not expected until later in the morning. Locals on horseback and trail bikes had also been organised to join the search group. Rural Fire Service four wheel drives were to patrol perimeter bush tracks.

By 0700 John Tonitto, search coordinator for BWR had been briefed by the local Police coordinator and a search strategy put in place. Bushwalkers were split into search groups of five, radios issued and tested and local maps provided. The search was on in earnest.

Within minutes of mobilisation, a radio call was received at search HQ confirming that the girls had been found by one of the four wheel drive units. They were approximately 5 kms from where they had last been seen and were cold, hungry and thirsty but otherwise unhurt. They were returned to their parents.

This search shows how search and rescues are commonly run these days: a

quick search is initially done by the local police and people on the scene,

and is escalated the next day if unsuccessful.

Whilst this search was "over before it started", it was shown once again that a large ground search can be organised and implemented within tight timeframes and that the system works. BWR had around 20 people in attendance, all of whom were notified only shortly before midnight the night before.

For more information about Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue, talk to your club search and rescue contact, or visit our web page at:

<http://www.mcauley.nsw.edu.au/rescue/>

Or visit the VRA web page at:

<http://www.rescue.org.au/~rescue/>

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## ORAL HISTORY PROJECT RELEASED

In 1994 Andy Macqueen, representing the Friends of Blue Gum Forest, commenced an Oral History Project to record the recollections of early bushwalkers concerning the forest.

The project grew so large and absorbing that Andy was compelled to carry on to write his book *Back from the Brink*.

Seven of the interviews were taped, and the transcriptions of those tapes have now been finalised. They were formally released during the Rodriguez Pass Centenary walk on 16 April. The transcripts, together with the original tapes, have been lodged with the Local History Collection at the Blue Mountains City Library, Springwood. Anyone interested in reading the transcriptions or listening to the tapes should contact the library. Copies of one or more of the transcripts may be obtained by contacting Andy directly, phone 4751 2556 or email [andymacq@pnc.com.au](mailto:andymacq@pnc.com.au).

The interviews tend to range over many bushwalking topics beyond Blue Gum Forest, and as such they provide some interesting perspectives on the early days of traditional bushwalking. All the interviewees were keen walkers in their time and all but one was a

member of a bushwalking club. Five were in the Sydney Bushwalkers, one in the Coast and Mountain Walkers and one in the Rover Ramblers. Lewis Hodgkinson, lifelong Blackheath resident, was not a club walker but tells of many of his local rambles and related Blackheath history. Unfortunately only one person could be found who was directly involved with the 1931-32 campaign, Joe Turner. (Joe has passed away since his interview, as have John Wood and Tom Herbert.)

The interviewees recorded are as follows.

Ray Bean (1914-): Member of the Sydney Bush Walkers

•Ron Compagnoni (1911-): Member of the Coast & Mountain Walkers and of Blue Gum Forest Trust

•Tom Herbert, OBE (1903-1994): Member of the Sydney Bush Walkers

•Lew Hodgkinson (1915-): Walker and Blackheath identity

•Joe Turner (1901-1999): Member of the Sydney Bush Walkers and of the Blue Gum Forest Committee and Trust

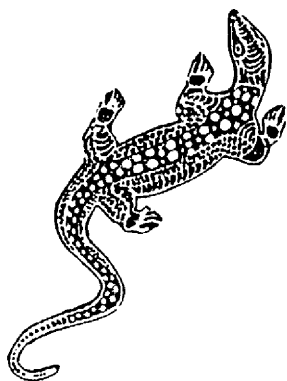
•Jack Watson, AM ISO (1916-): Member of the Rover Ramblers (and Registrar General of NSW)

•John (1916-1998) and Lawrie Wood - Members of the Sydney Bush Walkers  
Andy thanks fellow Friends of Blue Gum Philippa Coleman, Aine Gliddon, Erica Gray, Kerry Kirk, Gordon Limburg and Jan Webster for their assistance in the tedious task of making the transcriptions. Thanks are also due to Cath Ireland, tireless National Park ranger and key person behind the Friends of Blue Gum Forest. Cath provided much encouragement throughout the project.

## WANTED

Expressions of interest are invited for the position of an administrative assistant for The Confederation. This position is for contract and is part-time, approximately 30-40 hours per month.

The person would have to have computer skills in Microsoft Word, Excel, and Access. They would also have to have some selling ability, shorthand would also be desirable (not compulsory). A connection to the Internet is essential. More details can be given by emailing [turton@fastlink.com.au](mailto:turton@fastlink.com.au)



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<b>WALKS ON THE HUME AND HOVELL TRACK</b> - All cabin accommodation A series of day walks on the historic Hume and Hovell Track from our bases at Tumut, Tumbarumba and Talbingo - for experienced bushwalkers and others.	2/9/2000	10	\$1282*
<b>BIRDING ON THE BIRDSVILLE TRACK</b> A bird watchers' expedition to Lyndhurst, Mungeranie, Goyder's Lagoon and Eulo.	7/10/2000	16	\$1678*
<b>KANGAROO ISLAND AND COASTAL TRACK</b> Four nights on this unique island, then follow the coast through Coorong, the Great Ocean road, Wilson's Promontory and Lakes Entrance to Sydney	4/11/2000	16	\$1732*

\* Cost of tours includes GST where indicated



# 4<sup>TH</sup> WORLD ROGAINING CHAMPIONSHIPS

## NEW ZEALAND 15/16 JAN. 2000

*Thais Turner Bankstown Bushwalkers*

Having completed many rogaines during 1999, I was very keen to go to the 4WRC, especially as it was being held so close to us in New Zealand. What a good excuse for a holiday in beautiful NZ, centred around attending the rogaïne, (pity it was peak season on airfares).

Most of my experience has been in 6 hour rogaines over the past few years, but with a 29hr and a 24hr under my belt, I felt suitably prepared for staying out at least part of the time overnight. Fitness was being maintained by bushwalking, rockclimbing, and cycling and I planned a 3 day walk (camping) on the Abel Tasman coastal track in NZ's South Island just prior to the rogaïne.

My team was determined late in November after the organisers advertised through their email list for me, and Peter Gordon from Newcastle answered.

Peter's friend David from Adelaide also came over as part of our team. There were several people whose teams were only finalised on the morning of the event, so if you are keen to attend an event, put your entry in, a partner can be found and a team formed at the last minute. Often these teams do quite well, though I found it better to have been able to meet Peter beforehand and discuss expectations.

There had been variable weather around the Hurunui district before the rogaïne weekend but once you are in New Zealand you come to expect any weather conditions at any time and have to be prepared appropriately. During the weekend we had all extremes – cool, windy, misty, foggy, rain, sun, heat. Another constant is the steepness of the terrain, something we Aussies aren't quite prepared for. The area around Mt. Parnassus and the Waiau River is probably regarded by NZ standards to be quite low hills (mountains) so we were lucky. On my travels through the

North and South Islands I saw plenty of taller, steeper terrain, quite a bit of it covered in horrible gorse, and was glad not to be rogaïning in that.

Friday afternoon Peter had offered to collect me from the train at Kaikoura (the Whaleway Station), he and David having spent the week driving through the North Island, doing the Tongariro Crossing and climbing Mt. Ruapehu as a warm-up. When they hadn't arrived and attempts at phone communication weren't successful, I resorted to checking email and found the answer – they



*Rogainers can 'run' on water*

were on a later ferry to Picton than I'd thought. We eventually all met, partook of the local café offerings for sustenance, and headed off to the Rogaïne site, arriving after dark, setting up our tents on the large grassy paddock and having a quick feed from the wonderful food supplied. One thing about NZ which is good for rogaines is that it doesn't get dark till about 9.30pm.

When the maps (thoughtfully produced on plasticised paper with control descriptions printed on the back) were issued on Sat. morning we had to get used to the 1:50,000 scale with 20m contour interval, the incredibly steep hills we couldn't avoid if we wanted a decent score and the proliferation of streams on the course. We weren't keen to get our feet wet with 24 hours ahead of us but it soon became impossible to keep them dry, though the photo of Peter shows how to keep them less wet for the longest possible time. He "walked on water" like this many times in the first few hours! Also occurring

with great regularity were barbed wire fences with electric cable running on the inside. We became quite adept at climbing over these, as we also did the 2.5 m high deer fences, throughout the night time.

Our course covered the south western area of the map and was amongst some high pointers but also this meant mountainous terrain. We had one short water stop at control 24 in the farmyards that make up the town/property of Mt. Stewart and a 30 min. meal break around 5.30pm just as the weather was turning nasty, beside the water tanks after control 40. No hope of using an almost full moon for navigation. We were scoring quite well and locating all planned controls. The hardest part was the 300m descent to the Anstey Stream and control 91 on the Waiau River and the 600m ascent up the other side to control 76. This really tired us out, though David handled this part extremely well, and it was very misty and had turned dark before we got to 76 so we used deer fences for navigation and abandoned any hope of getting either of the 80 pointers east or west of the ridgeline we were on. Peter did an excellent job of navigating, especially during the night hours, with a map that wasn't exactly easy to read, to get us back to the road where we had a 4km slog on tar and 6km slog on gravel back to the Hash House and our welcome tents. We had been out for 14 hours, and the food provided was very welcome at 2.30am in the morning!

Unfortunately the last 10km yielded no points. Luckily we didn't encounter any deer or wild pigs, though often wondering which side of the fences they were on. We did encounter quite a few hedgehogs though, along the fenceline and later beside the Leader Road. The thistles were also quite notable for being everywhere on the mountainsides, and there were some quite scrubby thickets in the gullies.

Overnight the very sore feet recovered sufficiently for us to spend a couple of hours on the course on Sunday morning, after a mutually agreed late rise and a hearty breakfast. We crossed the Leader River and headed north for one control and a long run back to ensure we didn't lose any points for late arrival. Being a walker, not a runner,

**Continued on page 14**

thing that will save your life if you slip on the snow in the high mountains. It would also be helpful to have a pair of crampons along in case they might be needed. Instep crampons would be sufficient.

There are several mountain passes, the highest of which is Forester Pass at 13,120 feet (4,000 meters). Although one can hike the entire trail in one summer, you would have to average about 30 kilometers a day. The problem with completing the hike in one summer is that you would not have time to stop and enjoy a few days of some of the

highest mountain in the lower 48 states at 4,420 meters. It does not make sense to start a hike at the highest point. Although one can drive up the Owens Valley to the town of Lone Pine where one can hike directly up Mount Whitney, many persons suffer from lack of oxygen (hypoxia) because of a failure to acclimatize to the higher altitudes first. The only cure for hypoxia is to descend. I have passed several hikers with this malady on my two climbs of Mount Whitney.

Secondly, the direct hike up Mount Whitney from Lone Pine is very popular. To prevent too many people from



*Rae Lakes - Kings Canyon National Park California*

being on the mountain at one time, the National Park Service limits the number of permits on this route. Also, one cannot always get a permit on one's planned starting date

world-class scenery along the way. Sure, you may have "done the trail" but you might as well walk around a running track. If you plan to do it, I strongly recommend that you plan on two summers and start in late March. You must also be aware that some years, the snow is so deep in the high Sierras in central California that you may have to bypass that portion of the trail and skip to a lower altitude in Northern California, and then return to the High Sierras later.

If one can get away for only one summer, then I recommend that you hike the John Muir Trail. Named after our most famous naturalist, the trail covers 352 kilometers in central California where it is 90% congruent with The Pacific Crest Trail. It passes over the High Sierras, the most beautiful part of The Pacific Crest Trail. Although one can hike it in either direction, I strongly recommend that you hike it from North to South for two reasons.

First, the southern terminus of the trail is the top of Mount Whitney, the

unless one applies many months early. Although a permit is required to hike the entire John Muir Trail, it is much easier to get one to hike North to South. That way you will also acclimatize your body for the last push up Whitney because most of the time on the trail, you will be at 2,750 meters or above. At the northern end, it starts at 1,230 meters in Yosemite National Park.

Plan on three weeks to a month for the hike because you will probably want to stop and enjoy the scenery or fish for the golden trout in the high mountain lakes periodically. The views are simply awesome. The best time to hike the trail is from mid-July to late August.

Plan to hike with a partner. This is not a stroll in the park. It can get very remote; a partner can make it both enjoyable and safer. Get to know your partner well before making the hike. You will be living at very close quarters for a month and you will want to remember the hike as an enjoyable experience.

You will need to resupply along the

route. There are several locations, but some are a few thousand meters down in the Owens Valley. I recommend that you pick resupply points as close to the height of the trail as possible, even if you have to hike several kilometers off the trail to a town or ranger station. You will need a base person in America to send the supplies that you have packed in advance to the remote post offices in the mountains. If you do not know someone in America who can handle this task, I recommend that you get in touch with the Pacific Crest Trail Association (PCTA) and ask them to give you the name and address of someone who will perform this task for you. The PCTA address is 5325 Elkhorn Road #256 Sacramento, California 95842. Their contacts are:

PHONE: (916) 349-2109

FAX: (916) 349-1268

EMAIL: [Info@pcta.org](mailto:Info@pcta.org)

Web: [www.pcta.org](http://www.pcta.org)

Hiking the trail is not a spur of the moment decision. It is extremely important to plan ahead. In this vein, I recommend that you write to Wilderness Press for their publication: **GUIDE TO THE JOHN MUIR TRAIL** by Thomas Winnett and Kathy Morey. Their address is 2440 Bancroft Way, Berkeley, California 94707. Although there are maps of the trail in the guidebook, they are small. I recommend that you also order **THE JOHN MUIR TRAIL MAP-PACK**. If you wish, you could call them at (510) 843-8080, fax them at (510) 548-1355 or visit their website at [www.wildernesspress.com](http://www.wildernesspress.com).

You will need a Wilderness Permit for the hike. The guidebook tells you how to get this permit from several sources.

The hike is a journey with lifetime memories. I spent a career flying jet aircraft in the United States Air Force but my mind wanders back often to the spectacular mountain vistas and remote placid lakes of the High Sierras. My wife and I look forward to the day when we can introduce our grandchildren, who live on the plains, to those mountains when they are old enough to appreciate them.

you have questions about The John Muir Trail or the Pacific Crest Trail, you can reach me at [TEBoyle@hotmail.com](mailto:TEBoyle@hotmail.com). I'll be glad to answer them.

Happy Trails. Tom Boyle



## Continued from page 12

this wasn't easy and took some time to recover from as I'd been suffering from a pretty bad respiratory condition for the past week. Covering about 40kms was a pretty good effort for our team and showed us what can be done when we get a bit competitive. It honed my mountain climbing skills enough for my hike up to Mueller Hut in Mt. Cook National Park 3 days later, where I did see the full moon.

Overall we finished 138<sup>th</sup> from 193 teams from 12 countries, with a total of 620 points, 23<sup>rd</sup> from 29 teams in the Open Mixed category. For those with a map our route took in the following controls: 32, 66, 53, 20, 24, 52, 40, 54, 74, 91, 76, 36 and 47. I'd like to thank my team, Peter and David for such a great effort, and for bearing with me as I struggled up the steepest hills and as I took photos around the course. I'd rogain again with you guys anytime! Also Jude Elliott from Peninsular and Plains Orienteers in NZ who did such a fantastic job of organising things. The website connection was a great thing for keeping up to date with planning and the results afterwards. The food was also much appreciated, especially the feed after the event – no worries about carbo-loading by then! The presentations were held in the sun, on the back of a farmer's truck, and were just over when the heavens opened up again. What did I say about variable weather?!

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**Macpac, Mont, Summit, White Mountain.**



## SLEEPING BAGS

Down and synthetic bags to keep you warm in all environments.

**Macpac, Mont, Salewa, Mountain Equipment.**



## FOOTWEAR

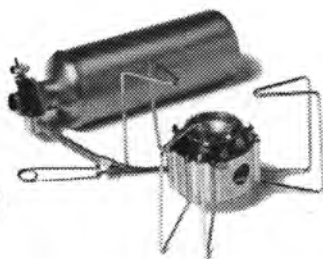
Footwear suitable for all purposes - leather and synthetic boots and shoes for bushwalking, trekking, travelling, sandals, ski boots and rock shoes.

**La Sportiva, Garmont, Hi Tec, Salomon, Tecnica.**



## PLUS

All the accessories you will ever need for your travel, bushwalking, camping, climbing, cycling, skiing and abseiling adventures.



## TENTS

An extensive range of lightweight

tents for bushwalking and snowcamping. **Salewa, Macpac, Mountain Hardware.**



## RAINWEAR

A wide range of breathable, waterproof rainshells for bushwalking, camping, mountaineering and skiing. **Mont, Macpac, Mountain Hardware.**



## CLOTHING

Clothing suitable for all outdoor pursuits - travel, bushwalking, climbing, cycling, skiing, streetwear, polartec and thermal underwear. **Macpac, Mont, Mountain Hardware.**



*Discounts provided to members with proof of club membership.*

**SUPPLYING QUALITY GEAR TO BUSHWALKERS FOR OVER 30 YEARS**



### SYDNEY CITY

491 Kent Street  
Phone: (02) 9264 5888

### CHATSWOOD

72 Archer Street  
Phone: (02) 9419 6955

### HORNSBY

106 George Street  
Phone: (02) 9477 5467

email: [Info@mountainequipment.com](mailto:Info@mountainequipment.com) Web: [www.wildsports.com.au](http://www.wildsports.com.au)



# 25 Reasons why the PALLIN Vista is the Best Wet Weather Jacket for Australian Bushwalkers

Choosing a bushwalking jacket is a big decision, and one you're going to have to live with for a while. To help you make an informed choice which is right for your needs, we'd like to share some of our favourite jacket's best features.



We invite you to come in and see the Vista at any one of our stores.  
Try it on, talk to one of our expert sales staff, and compare the difference.

*Paddy Pallin*

507 Kent St, SYDNEY • 527 Kingsway, MIRANDA • 74 Macquarie St, PARRAMATTA • 166b Katoomba St, KATOOMBA  
11 Lonsdale St, BRADDON • Thredbo turnoff, Kosciusko Rd, JINDABYNE

**CONFEDERATION'S ANNUAL  
GENERAL MEETING  
SATURDAY 19TH AUGUST AT 4.00 P.M  
AT THE AUDLEY CONFERENCE CENTRE  
(OLD DANCE HALL)  
ROYAL NATIONAL PARK**

Members are advised of the AGM for 2000 is at the later time of 4 pm. This change allows you to enjoy a day walk in Royal before the meeting. Tea & coffee will be available from 3.30 p.m as will the preprints of the reports from your office bearers. If you wish to raise an item of General Business please advise the Hon Secretary by the end of June so that it can be included in the Agenda. Late items can be raised at the AGM if time permits.

The AGM is your opportunity to question the office bearers on their achievements and to suggest new initiatives for 2000/2001

All positions will be declared vacant and existing officers may renominate. Confederation welcomes new faces and new ideas so why not nominate yourself for one of the following;

President Vice President Hon Secretary Assistant Secretary/ Hon Treasurer

Or as Convenors of sub committees for ; \* Bush Dance

\* Communication and The Bushwalker \* Conservation

\* Insurance and Membership \* Tracks & Access

\* Training \* Wilderness Rescue

In addition three ordinary members will be elected to the Management Committee.

Confederation has decided to employ, under a contract, a part time administrative assistant to reduce the workloads of the office bearers.

**AGENDA**

- 1) Attendance, Apologies and welcome to new members
- 2) Confirmation of the Minutes of the 1999 AGM
- 3) Reports from President and Convenors of sub committees ( Pre circulated)
- 4) Treasurer's Report for 1999 / 2000
- 5) Budget for 2000 / 2001
- 6) Election of Office Bearers and Management Committee
- 7) Election of two members of the Management Committee to sign and lodge the Annual Statement for the Dept of Fair Trading
- 8) Election of Auditor
- 9) Election of Delegates to other organisations.
- 10) General Business

The AGM will be followed at 6.00 p.m. by a BYO Barbeque in the picnic shelter adjacent to the meeting place

**SEE MAP ON REVERSE**

# Audley Detail



200 metres

