



WILLOWS OUT OF OUR WATERWAYS

by Jeffrey Cottrell

For the last 4 years we been busy eradicating willows from along the Colo River in the



Wollemi National Park. We are now working outside the park along the Colo River to remove the willows on Private and Crown Land so the park will not be re-infested & to help landowners eradicate the problem from their property. We hope to have this completed by the end of

2004. As a result some members of our group are looking for new challenges. Most of us will still work within the Wollemi removing other significant pest species but we want to ensure the equipment purchased for our program from Environment Trust funding & by National Parks continues to be used. We also would like to continue to get the variety of tasks that makes the volunteer fun. We are very conscious of the fact that weeds like the willow require a total catchment approach and you also need to keep track of the work being done in adjoining catchments. We know our group does not have the resources to tackle some of the larger catchments around NSW and so we are looking for ways to attract new members. We see three possible sources of new volunteers:

- People currently involved in environmental studies or bush regeneration studies.

- People involved in landcare organisations in the catchments in which we will be doing the work.

Friends of the Colo are looking for people interested in joining a program to eradicate certain willow species from New South Wales water ways. This program has developed as an off shoot of a program to remove willows from along the Colo River in the Wollemi National Park. The program will initially focus on rivers running from the west side of the Snowy Mountains. The program will support substantial Black Willow eradication programs already carried out in the area by contractors. It will focus on paddling and walking in inaccessible areas & areas already treated & will aim to poison and map willows that have re-grown or been missed by those programs. We are running two activities to gauge interest from volunteers. If you are interested in attending either of these activities you can contact Jeff Cottrell on 0418210347 or at friendsofthecolo@optusnet.com.au



Carol & Brad poisoning willow on The Colo river

2004. As a result some members of our group are looking for new challenges. Most of us will still work within the Wollemi removing other significant pest species but we want to ensure the equipment purchased for our program from Environment Trust funding & by National Parks continues to be used. We also would like to continue to get the variety of tasks that makes the volunteer fun. We are very conscious of the fact that weeds like the willow require a total catchment approach and you also need to keep track of the work being done in adjoining catchments. We know our group does not have the resources to tackle some of the larger catchments around NSW and so we are looking for ways to attract new members. We see three possible sources of new volunteers:

- People currently involved in outdoor activities like members of your organisation, bushwalking clubs & canoe clubs.

The activities will be: provide an opportunity to train those involved in poisoning and mapping techniques & the approvals required before you can treat willows along a river.

At these activities we will gauge interest in activities for spring 2004 and thereafter, to determine what funding we could apply for to start up an eradication program. We will be using tools and other equipment purchased by Friends of the Colo Inc. and the National Parks & Wildlife Service for their "Willows out of Wollemi" program.

During the 1960s and 70s a number of varieties of willows were introduced into Australia for various reasons. A number of these willow species, like many introduced species, have become an environmental problem. Willows reproduce from seed or vegetatively from pieces broken off by wind or water. Low water flows during

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ANZAC DAY AT SPLENDOR ROCK 2004

by Margaret Covi - President
Confederation of Bushwalkers NSW

In 1947, with memories fresh of bushwalking friends lost in World War 2, the then Federation of Bushwalkers made plans for a bushwalkers' war memorial. A plaque was set up & dedicated at a gathering of 80 to 90 bushwalkers at Splendour Rock on Anzac Day, 1948. On Anzac Day 2004, 56 years on, bushwalkers were still gathering there to remember the war dead. Among clubs represented were Nepean, Springwood, NPA, the Outdoor Club, Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue & the Watagan Wanderers. We were very pleased to have with us at the 11 a.m. ceremony, one



Jan Wouters Keith Jones and Margaret Covi - Anzac Day splendour Rock

bushwalker from the 80 or 90 who gathered at the first service in 1948. Keith Jones, then a member of Newcastle Technical College Bushwalkers, is still an active walker & now a member of the Watagan Wanderers & Newcastle Ramblers, & walked out to Splendour Rock with the Watagan Wanderers contingent.

Many arrived on Saturday, the day before, & set up camp at Mt Dingo in readiness for the dawn service, others camped at nearby Mobbs Swamp to walk out for the later service. A nice campfire added atmosphere & warmth on a chilly evening under a clear display of stars, & made a focal point for people to get together & talk. Thanks are extended to NPWS at Blackheath for their permission to hold the gathering in a part in our wil

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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.

Advertising rates are available on request at advertising@bushwalking.org.au

Distribution is through affiliated clubs, major retail outlets, council information centres and national park offices.

Address all correspondence to The Editor, The Bushwalker Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs NSW Inc PO Box 2090 GPO Sydney 2001

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The Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs NSW Inc represents approximately 65 clubs with a total membership around 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.

Or web site www.bushwalking.org.au

Prices for advertising

Back cover \$515.00 -

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Quarter page \$105.00

Business card size \$60.00

insert \$290.00 +insertioncost approx \$175.00.

All Prices exclude GST

Deadlines for magazine

Summer edition, 2nd week in October-

Autumn 2nd week in January - Winter, 2nd

week in April - Spring, 2nd week in July

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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.

A JOURNEY BACK IN TIME IN CHINA

by Margaret Kirk



The bus from Guilin turned left of the main highway north, & pulled up for a 'comfort stop' at the usual huddle of general store cum workshops. The morning air was chill, the wind sharp. It was New Year's Day & we were on our way to the town Xiyuan, about

destination, Xiyuan, on the Xi River. Our local guide was there to meet us; our hotel was across the road.

After checking in at the hotel we boarded mini-bus, & off to lunch at a very new restaurant on the riverbank. Lunch over; another short bus ride took us to the landing stage where our riverboat waited. These riverboats are battery powered to avoid pollution to the pristine river environment. Cruising down the river was delightful – if rather chilly. The area has some of the most spectacular mountain scenery anywhere in China, with peaks rising almost vertical from the water, lush vegetation, clean clear water, mirror-like pools and white water rapids. There was a mist, which added to the charm & mystery of the scene.

After about 40 minutes we pulled in to a tiny wharf on a bend in the river, with a huge cliff on the opposite side. We were invited to take oiled tea with the local minority villages. On the wharf boat building, entirely by hand, was in progress. One large boat was being repaired, and the fragrance of the timber filled the air. We climbed up to the village & entered the home of the local; Dong Nationality people. Delicious oiled tea was served. This is tea laced with fragrant oil, & containing what seemed to be roasted rice grains. Next came sticky rice steamed in bamboo – also delicious.

Warmed round the open hearth an refreshed, we boarded our boat for about 30 minutes more down river to a nature reserve, and again tied up to a wharf, amid even more spectacular scenery. Here the mountain looked like super-enormous boulders of rock, & we could see what appeared to be pathways cut into the steep sides, going up & up. We can't be going up there? Oh yes we are! We were entering the famous "Bai Yao" valley, or "Hundred Medicines". It was here that the ancient's medicine came to search for & gather rare medicinal herbs. A book by Li Shi Zhen, Ben Cao Gang Mu, is to this day the definitive book on Chinese medicine, after 500 years. Indeed, these wise men must have been a hardy breed. Just to climb up the valley, over boulders & through rushing streams, would be testing enough. But they used the herbs for self-experimentation, trying as many as 20 different potentially poisonous plants. They were guided by their

knowledge of the five flavours, sweet, sour, bitter, salty bitter & fiery or hot, & how one flavour could be an antidote for the other.

Now there are steps cut in the rock & the ascent from the valley requires only a stiff climb. At intervals in the few level spots, are placed statues of the venerable doctors, Sun Si Miao, Zhong Zhangjing, Li Shi Zhen a& others. Their fame lives down the centuries.

About 700 feet to the top, & the view was breathtaking, if a little misty. Most of the way steps were cut into the living rock, sometimes one had to squeeze between huge boulders, or duck under an overhang. Another steep pinch wound seemingly without end skywards between vertical cliffs. We had started in warm jackets and jumpers, & gradually shed layer after layer as we climbed. We finished on a knife-



The end of Bai Yao Valley climb - photo M Kirk

2 hours drive northwest of Guilin in China's Guangxi Province. Our party of 8 consisted of an American Professor of Eng Lit, another American who taught English, a New Zealander couple, both teachers, a Japanese teacher, a Chinese teacher of English and one of her students – a 14-year-old boy, & myself, a student of Chinese at Guilin University. We were off for an adventure over the New Year holiday.

The bus resumed the journey over a remarkably good new road, gradually climbing up & up, while the scenery changed from fields to forests. Here & there we dropped & picked up passengers. We were near the lower slopes of Mt Mao'er, the highest peak in the area. As recently as 1999 the crash remains of the famous "Flying Tigers" was found in dense jungle on the slopes Mt Mao'er Shan. Eventually we started the decent to our



Boat building at The Xi River

edge promontary with 360 degree views of the surrounding mountains, in the failing afternoon light. Then it was a race against the fading day to get back down to the landing stage to where a boat was waiting to take us up river.

In the near darkness we traveled to where our bus waited. By the time we reached Xiyuan we were all famished & weary – it had been a long day, but what an adventure! We felt we had gone hundreds of years back in time and returned to the present in the space of a few hours. This can really happen in China, & it's part of the fascination of going off the beaten track to re-live China's ancient history.



THE REDGUM BUSHLAND COMMITTEE

WIRRIMBIRRA SANCTUARY

CAMPAIGN FOR BEROWRA VALLEY NATIONAL PARK

AT A SPECIALLY CONVENED BEROWRA VALLEY PARK TRUST MEETING LAST TUESDAY EVENING REPRESENTATIVES FROM SYDNEY'S KEY CONSERVATION ORGANISATIONS & COMMUNITY GROUPS STRONGLY REJECTED HORNSBY COUNCIL'S JOINT MANAGEMENT PARK PROPOSAL & DECLARED THEIR SUPPORT FOR A BEROWRA VALLEY NATIONAL PARK.

A push by Hornsby Council for a joint management agreement with the National Parks Service which would mean the abolition of the Park Trust and increased control by council over the management of the Park was stated to be unacceptable by most representatives.

Geoff Dowsett from the Red Gum Bushland Committee said that the proposed removal of the Park Trust and the setting

up of a special advisory committee to replace it is a means to increasing council influence and control. The special advisory committee which is likely to consist of Hornsby Council appointed representatives of sports clubs, dog walkers and other would be high impact users of the park could have considerable influence on the drafting of a new park plan of management in 5 years time incorporating more high impact uses of the park as a regional park.

A representative from the National Parks Association of NSW stated that "there will be no adverse impact on the Park if it becomes a National Park administered by the National Parks and Wildlife Service". He indicated that the park would continue to be professionally managed and Council can be involved in the Park but involvement should not equate to control. It all comes down to a question of good faith. I believe the appropriate classification for the Berowra Valley Regional Park is as a National Park" he said.

A representative from the Nature Conservation Council of NSW also indicated support for a national park along with representatives from the Hornsby Conservation Society, The Red Gum Bushland Committee, The Association of Berowra Creek and The United Residents Group of Berowra.

An extract from the unofficial minutes of a meeting with council's general

manager and parks and state government officers was read out indicating that council's general manager is not prepared to allocate funds to the park without some control.

The representative from the Friends of Berowra Valley while not supporting a national park for Berowra Valley expressed concern for the long term preservation of the unique fauna and flora in the park.

Four people representing dog walkers could not understand why conservationists were so opposed to dog access to the park when the park is subject to other more threatening pollution.

Two representatives from council sponsored bush regeneration groups were concerned that funds for contract and volunteer bush regeneration would not be available without council involvement and a joint management agreement in place.

A representative from the Hornsby Conservation Society assured the bush regenerators that there would be adequate support under a **national** park management arrangement.

The major concern of the conservationists was the current status of the Park as a Regional park and the politically motivated pressure from Hornsby Council for sports field construction in the park and dog walking access on all tracks and trails.

The response to a question "Can we seriously trust this Council to co-manage such an ecologically precious resource" was met with a resounding no confidence vote.

At the meetings conclusion the overwhelming majority of the community representatives were of the opinion that in order to protect the Park the process for the reservation of the Berowra Valley Regional Park as a National Park must commence immediately and that Hornsby Council and the National Parks Service recognise that the community will accept nothing less.

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A portion of the old Bargo environment, known as "Bargo Brush" in bushranger times, has been preserved at Wirrimbirra Sanctuary,

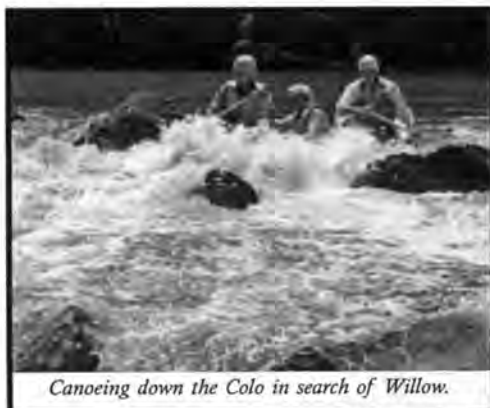


a 90-ha flora and fauna reserve and research sanctuary, managed by the David G Stead Memorial Wildlife Research Foundation of Australia on behalf of the National Trust. Wirrimbirra is located at 3105 Remembrance Drive, 3 km north of Bargo (about half-way between Bargo and Tahmoor), and consists of open forest, with heath and swamp areas, with a major creek system running through the reserve. There are excellent bushwalking trails, a native plant nursery and a wildlife enclosure. The sanctuary is open seven days a week and has budget-priced cabin accommodation for those who need a break before moving on, or who just want to experience Wirrimbirra at night. It is also becoming a popular venue for family events, workshops and weddings. Wirrimbirra hosts a number of festivals throughout the year, such as Reptile Day in August and Brush with the Bush in October, and other special days - Bug & Bird Day, Mammal Day and Frog Day, where wildlife experts come along to give shows during a day filled with activities. There are also special attractions for children in most school holidays, and you can check these on Wirrimbirra's website www.wirrimbirrasanctuary or phone Wirrimbirra on (02) 4684 1112.



From Page 1

the seed production periods from September to November and in the months after and during periods of drought leave the sand and gravel beds and banks of rivers exposed and ideal places for the germination of willow seeds. One of the most aggressive species is the Black Willow and its hybrids. It sets thousands of seeds that are spread by wind over tens of kilometres. In the early 1990 the problem came to a head when surveys in the Snowy Mountains and Bega River areas discovered an explosion in the number of seeded trees (i.e. willows that were not planted). A survey between 1995 and 1997 estimated that from an original planting of a couple of hundred Black Willows in Tumut, prior to 1980, the population in the Tumut, Goobaragandra, Goodradigbee, Upper Murrumbidgee, Snowy and Bega Rivers had grown to over 1.9 million trees and seedlings. The worst infestation was along the Bega River, where there was an estimated 1.8 million seedlings and trees.



Canoeing down the Colo in search of Willow.

In NSW and Victoria millions of dollars has been allocated to eradicate the Black Willow which is a particularly aggressive and invasive species. And one of our objectives is to train people to spend recreation time in wilderness areas to report any willow's found so they can be poisoned before they become a problem again.

In 1998 a bushwalker walking along the Colo River in the Wollemi Wilderness Area reported a grove willows, 2 to 3 years old, which were 40 kilometres inside the wilderness area. It was found that these trees had grown from seed blown up the Colo river from areas downstream. In 1999 National Parks ran an initial trip from the Wollemi Creek junction to Upper Colo to determine the size of the problem. In 2000 they ran the first WOW trip (Willow Out of Wollemi). On this trip 18 volunteers and 10 NPWS staff were dropped into the Colo River by helicopter, with canoes and food and equipment for 5 days on the river.

FIVE WALKS AROUND THE GEORGES RIVER NATURE RESERVE

by Peter Cheatam



These walks range from easy to medium/hard with some interesting navigational exercises for walkers who want to challenge the Georges River region. If your club is baffled as to where to walk this season come and experience the Campbelltown wilderness and experience the river system.

What does the Georges River Nature reserve have to offer Bushwalking Clubs?

The George's has over two thousand hectares of wonder and beauty just 20 minutes drive from Campbelltown city centre, or a forty-minute drive from

Wollongong or a one-hour drive from Sydney.

The river is a haven, full of native flora and fauna; the river is a natural playground. The river system is abundant with wilderness and wildlife. Over 200 species of birds inhabit the river as well as native animals including wallaby, koala, platypus, possums, snakes, lizards, and geckos. It also has a number of aboriginal sites.

Just a few of the hidden secrets that the George's River Nature Reserve has to offer bushwalkers. The bushland surrounding the George's River flourishes with life, having native orchids, ferns and lilies. Decorating the landscape eucalypt and ghost gums tower overhead.



Bushwalkers Basin Georges River Nature Reserve

They were in 3 groups, each assigned a section of river to map and treat for willows. They were then to paddle out to the park boundary at Upper Colo. During the course of the week the river rose by over a meter, making the canoeing experience a memorable one but making treating willows difficult as they stood in the rising water. The focus also changed to safety rather than just poisoning trees. After this trip Penrith Whitewater Stadium, through Jack Hodge, became involved, providing rafts and guides for subsequent trips. FoC have since held 5 extended trips on the river, treating about 5000 willows and monitoring results. As a result of this work along the Colo the group received a "Weed Busters Award of Excellence" in 2003.

The focus of the group in the Colo area has turned to treating willows on private and Crown land outside the park and also working on other pest species mapped during previous work inside the park. Members of the group who are interested in remote area activities are looking for other projects that can benefit from their experience in willow poisoning, whitewater and wilderness activities. They are looking for other people who enjoy remote area activities and people who have an interest in their local rivers to join them on programs along New South Wales' wild rivers.

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The sandstone cliff-faces are used for abseiling training. The Georges River can be liloed in sections. There are a number of caves, intriguing walkers with the hidden mystery that goes with the natural beauty just outside our city.

WALK ONE

Venue: Mercedes Road, Ingleburn to Georges River via Minto Bush Camp, Myrtle Creek and Florence Avenue

For this walk leave one car at Mercedes Road, Ingleburn and one at Minto Bush Camp for the return journey, other option is to walk through to the Georges River for a swim and then return to Minto Bush Camp to retrieve your car. Before parking your car at the Bush Camp get permission from the manager. Or leave a car at the end of Florence Road. (Lock your car in this area).

v Map: Campbelltown 1:25,000 & UBD street directory

v Time 2 hours

v Grade: Easy

Equipment needed for this walk

Lunch, water, map & compass, wet weather gear, head torch. Again it is an area that needs good navigational skills to

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NAV 2004 - THE BULL**** STOPS

by Keith Maxwell President Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue



It's autumn and winter is not far away so NavShield 2004 is near. Another great chance to practice bush navigation in a great setting with great company.

NavShield was developed by Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad (BWRS) 16 years ago as a bush navigation training event for the Emergency Services. It has proven to be a popular formula and typically attracts 500 participants many of whom have attended 5 to 10 NavShields! NavShield is recognised by the NSW State Rescue Board.

So where is NavShield held? A different area each year! It's part of the fun. Have you got any friends in NP&WS who might drop a hint? Site details are not released until the week before Nav 2004. Here are some clues. Not east of Sydney and accessible for weekend course setting. Have you been watching which direction our Course Setter drives out of Sydney? Think about any large paddocks that you know of. The base site for NavShield will be a large enough for 500 people to camp by their cars/trucks.

So when is NavShield held? NavShield is always held on the first weekend of July each year - so this year NavShield will be held on 3rd/4th July.



Australian Army Rescue team gets a checkpoint at NavShield 2003

Each year NavShield may or may not have a full moon for night travel; may or may not have rain/snow. You don't think bush rescue occurs just on sunny days, do you?

So what is the navigation like? The aim of NavShield is to find as many checkpoints as possible in either the one day or two day, overnight, event. Each checkpoint has a unique paper punch to verify that you found the checkpoint. Checkpoints are randomly spread out over the area of about half a "topo" map - 10km by 10km. There are easy to find checkpoints close to the base site but they have a low points value compared to the checkpoints that are a long way from base. Unlike a lot of other navigation events the country used by NavShield is proper bushwalking country, not disused farm country.

So the real challenge is to decide a route through the bush to find the best mixture of checkpoints in the time allowed. Night travel is allowed but you must carry adequate bushwalking gear. Don't be late as there are severe penalties for being overdue. Will the points penalty exceed the points value of this 'last' checkpoint?

Post event food is available so you can mingle while the results are collated. A computer database program means awards can be presented about an hour after NavShield ends.

So what has stopped you from attending NavShield until now? Surely not an Entry Form. Entry Forms will soon be posted to your club. Alternatively you could apply for an Entry Form by emailing the BWRS Secretary - secretary@bwrs.org.au

So come and be a part of NavShield 2004. I always enjoy NavShield. I usually have enjoyable weekends setting and retrieving checkpoints. I also enjoy the friendly atmosphere of NavShield and the chance to meet many of the participants - but be warned.

You may be a good navigator, a great bush navigator, the last of the great explorers or God's gift to bush navigation. At 8.45am 3rd July 2004 the bull**** will stop when NavShield 2004 starts. It will be time to stop talking, start walking, find checkpoints and enjoy NavShield 2004.

SALE OF LOW COST TOPOGRAPHICAL MAPS

The BWRS is glad to announce the resumption of the sale of low cost topographical maps to all bushwalking and outdoor activity clubs (conditions apply). Prices \$1.00 to \$3.00 each, minimum order \$30.00. The pricing is set to encourage groups to bulk-buy multiple copies of their required maps. These are the normal 1:25000 topographic maps of NSW (a few 1:50000 maps are also available); see the list on the web site <http://bwrs.org.au/mapsale/maps.html>.

Visit <http://bwrs.org.au/mapsale> for prices, conditions of sale and connection to the list of available maps. If you have any questions about the sale, contact Doug Floyd floyd1@bigpond.com.

All proceeds raised are for BWRS to purchase equipment necessary in its role as a volunteer remote area search and rescue group <http://bwrs.org.au/>.

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Price for Bushwalking Clubs \$30



REMOTE AREA FIREFIGHTING SKILLS IMPROVED BY NAVIGATION EVENT

By Dan Meijer Coal and Candle RFB Warringah-Pittwater District.

Coal & Candle rural Fire Brigade (Warringah- Pittwater) took part in one of the most demanding navigation events in Australia, the 2003 NavShield Wilderness Rescue Navigation Shield, on the weekend of 5-6th July.

The event is similar to orienteering and draws competing teams from various emergency and defense groups. As Coal & Candle is training its members in remote area firefighting skills. NavShield was used as a good practice run between fire seasons.

RFS teams from various districts, including Baulkham Hills, Lithgow, Blue Mountains, and also took part.

Teams were issued with topographical maps and a list of 6-figure-grid reference, representing small checkpoints to be found in the bush.

The course covered about 100km² with the checkpoints given various points value according to accessibility. Teams had to correctly plot the points on their maps, and then plan a route to take them to the most checkpoints within the event's time limits - either 11 or 30 hours.

NavShield was held in The Gardens of Stone National Park near Lithgow, with terrain ranging from, gentle and open to sheer cliffs and dense scrub. The teams camped the night before the event, where temperatures reached about -4. Not the usual conditions for firefighters! We took the opportunity to catch up with the NavShield "regulars" from other brigades and services.

The event started after breakfast on Saturday. We headed off into the bush full of optimism about both our navigation skills and fitness. Two members were veterans of several previous NavShields, and for some, this was their first go.

The teams quickly learnt that skills such as measuring distance and aiming-off are easily learnt in training but can be difficult to apply accurately, and that watercourses marked on a 1975 map might not be easy to find on the ground.

The use of 20m contours, not the usual 10m ones, threw several teams out when plotting routes involving climbs. All the teams criss-crossed the course, occasionally crossing paths - all very friendly but giving nothing away about checkpoint locations! After counting paces for two or three 350m legs, nothing beats finally finding the soccer-ball sized white and orange checkpoint markers in the scrub.

The evening saw the one-day arriving back early to relax, or running down a fire trail to get home at the last possible moment after squeezing in a late checkpoint.

Springwood Bushwalkers won, and the Berowra RFB topped the RFS teams in the one day event, While Newcastle Bushwalkers narrowly beat Kangaroo Valley RFB to win the two day event.

Coal and Candle ran in the middle of the pack, with no clear superiority of any emergency service this year. All teams found the event a very worth while exercise for improving navigation, bushcraft and other remote firefighting skills, as well as for excellent team-building.



Briefing prior to NavShield 2003

WINTER IN THE BLUE MOUNTAINS "MOUNTAIN DEW" COTTAGE BLACKHEATH

- 3 bedroom, 2 bathroom cedar cottage
- Close to Govetts Leap and National Parks
- Totally private
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BUSHWALKERS CELEBRATE ANZAC

ANZAC DAY 1999

TRIBUTE TO JACK CUMMINGS

By Peter Cleary

Like many people who spend their weekends tramping around the Blue Mountains, I have made the odd tentative foray into the "Wild Dogs" region, and have visited Splendour Rock only once in 15 years.

I had heard rumours of a Dawn Service on Anzac Day, but nobody I spoke to had attended, or knew for certain if such a ceremony actually took place. With this in mind, at 8am April 24th 1999 I trudged uphill from the old parking area at Packsaddlers (Carlons farm) with Ray Orr, a bushwalking friend from Katoomba.

The scene that greeted us was a

ANZAC DAY

by Tom Hayllar 1999

Standing on Splendour Rock,
encircled by the Wild Dog Mountains,
we are shot at by the wind
and flecked with rain and sun.
Now Anzac Day runs down
through all the trees
to the bend in the Cox.
And there are birds
in all the space of the air



and in place
of bugles
sounding
the "last
post"
there are
currawong
calls - wild

and winsome flowers of sound
that rise and bloom and fall.
Out over far Kanangra
Light swells and flashes
amongst smoky clouds
and closer where sunlight
bursts on one great spur ahead
we image the spirit moving
on the brightness -
the curving, shaping spirit
that transforms
its myriad
trembling forms
to blue green
loveliness.
Other walkers stood
on Splendour Rock and saw -
before the bugles ordered them to war.
Now we stand where they stood
and where they often must
have longed to go,
the Wild Dogs ringed around us
and the Cox's down below.



Peter Cleary & Bill Sandy at plaque to Jack Cummings

bushwalkers dream. A roaring fire circled by strategically placed logs on which to sit, and a group of the most welcoming people I've yet to meet in the bush; complete with proffered cups of tea. Our tents pitched, our meals cooking, we then met a character who became very dear to me over the next couple of years, Jack Cummings.

I learnt Jack had been the convenor of the Dawn Service at the bushwalkers' memorial plaque on Splendour Rock since the 60's but had attended nearly all the services held since the plaque was dedicated in 1948.

Jack didn't carry a tent but strung a fly between the same two trees each year. He cooked on an old style "choofer"; preferred an old pullover to a modern fleece, on top of which he wore a threadbare red nylon spray jacket, showing disdain for newfangled Gortex. He entertained us during the course of the evening with bush poetry he had written himself, along with tales of his early walking days as a lad with the likes of Paddy Pallin. Jack was also one of the founding members of the BWRs. We all turned in early to a beautiful starry night, punctuated by the howling of dingos far below in the valley of the Cox.

At 5.30am Jack moved gently from tent to tent making sure we were all awake. With beanies, gloves, fleece-tops & head torches, we silently made our way to the rocky outcrop, about a dozen in total.

Jack welcomed everybody formally, handing out song sheets as we jockeyed for position on the narrow outcrop. At 6am, as Jack was about to begin the service, the silence was broken by the plaintive call of a lone Lyrebird far below us somewhere down in the valley.

The service was simple; a hymn (the

Recessional), the last post, the ode, and a minute's silence followed by the national anthem. The youngest member of the party placed a sprig of wattle on the plaque. Throughout the service the musical accompaniment was provided by an ancient tape player brought along by Jack for the occasion. As the final bars of the "Last Post" were echoing across the valley, almost on cue, the sun started to rise over the Burragorang painting the sky a vivid red-orange.

As a fifty something bloke who has attended numerous dawn services around the country, this one I found to be the most moving. I wasn't alone with moist eyes and a lumpy throat as we all moved back to our campsite for the welcome first cuppa of the day.

Breakfast over, tents stowed, rucksacks on we all moved off together, Ray and I deciding to stay with our newfound friends, all members of the Nepean Bushwalking Club from the Penrith district.

The return route saw us cross over the plateau tops of mounts Dingo, Merrimerrigal, and Warrigal. We then dropped down on the northern cliff face of mount Warrigal to a pass named by Dunphy as "Wombat parade" through Blackhorse Gap; along Blackhorse Ridge; and then the long steep knee-trembling descent of Blackhorse Spur, followed by a welcome lunch break at Breakfast Creek.



Nepean Bushwalkers on Splendour Rock



View from Splendour Rock

ANZAC DAY AT SPLENDOUR ROCK

In drizzle, we followed the slow ascent of the leech infested, stinging nettle choked Carlons Creek to arrive back at our vehicles by 4pm where Jack's wife, Alma, was waiting with tea and biscuits for everyone; very welcome, as by this time the mist and rain were starting to settle in for the evening.

Continued from page 1

wilderness area & for their help in providing a convoy to drive out as far as Medlow Gap for those less able to walk the full distance. We were pleased that Ben, the NPWS ranger leading the convoy, was able to spend the weekend with us & take ceremonies, wearing with pride his grandfather's war service medals from the campaigns in France in World War 1. We also thank our Convenor, Confederation member, Jan Wouters, who organised this year's event.

At 5.30 a.m. was our Reveille, a wake up call, the sound of a tin billy being beaten. Cold though it was, we were all soon up & warmly dressed, & heading out towards

Splendour Rock. Light was starting to show in a pink line above the eastern horizon as we commenced the dawn service. About 30 were present. For some years now Nepean Bushwalking Club has been conducting the service. Their member Jack Cummings, who had attended most Anzac ceremonies at Splendour Rock since 1948, conducted the service for many years on behalf of Confederation, & after his unfortunate death in 2000, the club has continued to conduct the annual service, for which we would like to thank them. They had produced a lovely colour booklet this year with the order of service & to commemorate the occasion. We began with an introduction to remind us of why we were assembled & to remind us that "their legacy to us is their spirit, unity, purpose & the never ending yearning to follow the Bell Bird's call". "God of our fathers known of old" was then sung, followed by a minute's silence & the Ode & the National Anthem. As we concluded we waited for sunrise & over the mountains saw the sun come up in a beautiful golden ball just as it rose at Gallipoli 89 years earlier, as our soldiers

landed to begin their campaign.

Now in daylight we returned to camp & most ate breakfast, downed tents, packed up & began their walk out. However after a while more began arriving. By 11 a.m. we had another group of about 30 gathered at Splendour Rock. This included a large group of Scouts & their leaders from Springwood, Penrith, Glenfield & surrounding areas. This was to be the ceremony conducted by myself as President of the Confederation of Bushwalkers of NSW. By now we had a beautiful morning as we thought back to those who had given their lives so that we could continue to enjoy these beauties, even though they would not live to see them again.

We began by remembering why we were there, that is to honour the memory of those Bushwalkers who died for their belief in our way of life, because by their sacrifice that we are free to stand there today. We continued by remembering how the plaque was put in place. The names of bushwalkers known to have died in World War 2, with their club & service, were read out, also remembering that there may be others we do not know from that war, & any conflicts before or since. Then the ode was recited by all present, finishing with "Lest we forget" & a minute's silence followed - real silence out there in the Wild Dog Mountains in which we could contemplate our war heroes' sacrifices. Reflections on Anzac Day followed, in which I mentioned that there was a time was when Anzac Day seemed to be on the verge of becoming irrelevant, but instead has taken on a new life. People still have come here today to show that Anzac Day has taken on a new meaning of national pride arising from sacrifices made in wars & the struggle to build our country. We are thankful to those of our bushwalking comrades who laid down their lives for all of us & we should always remember them in gratitude. They were people like us who loved the bush, this area & others like it, & only wished to go out & enjoy it. However they answered the call to defend freedom, & many never saw again their beloved bush. We treasure our freedom, which few countries can rival - our freedom among many things to go bushwalking in our wonderful country. A scout leader also reminded us of our debt to the fallen, & our hope for warfare to cease. The singing of the National Anthem concluded our ceremony.

Next year will be the milestone of the ninetieth anniversary of the Gallipoli landing & it will fall on a Monday holiday, with the weekend preceding it to give us plenty of time to walk out to Splendour Rock. We are therefore looking forward to a similar commemoration of Anzac Day at Splendour Rock next year, & hoping that many more clubs will be able to join us.



Ceremony at Splendour Rock 1993 - in photo - Bruce & Joan Morrison Stan Cottier (president 1948) Robyn Arthur (president) - trumpeter Louise De Bezeville

This was to be a "one-off" trip for me, but with newly forged friendships especially Jack's I fronted again the following year. This year sadly ended tragically as Jack died in a mishap in the following October. A tragedy compounded for Alma by the loss of the family home of 40 yrs in the 2000/2001 bushfires. (A full-page obituary was published in the Bushwalker Magazine in early 2001).

Now as a member of the Nepean Bushwalking Club I attend Anzac Day at Splendour Rock as a matter of course. Strangely, in the few years since that memorable Dawn Service, a lone Lyrebird sings on cue for the Last Post. We like to think it's either that same Lyrebird or old Jack's spirit.

Bill Sanday, a bushwalker from Glenn



Splendour rock photo Peter



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Chris Leaver, Vice-President, Peninsula Tramping Club, Christchurch, NZ

* Sports Science findings

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achieve this walk. (Bring your binoculars for bird watching)

WALK TWO

Venue: Minto Heights, Hanson Road to Freres Crossing via Peter Meadows Creek, Boronia Road, Freres Road and follow the track on the left hand side of the road down to the river for a swim.

v Map: Campbelltown 1:25,000 & UBD street directory

v Time: 2 hours

v Grade: Easy

Equipment needed for this walk

Lunch, water, map & compass, wet weather gear, head torch for this exciting



walk. Again it is an area that needs good navigational skills. (Bring your binoculars for bird watching). Leave a car at Freres Crossing for the trip home. (Lock your car).

WALK THREE

Venue: Old Coach Road to Bushwalkers Basin, Georges River. From the Basin follow the track back up to the car. There are a number of deep sandy beaches for swimming and liloing. (There is also an abseil site at this location)

v Map: Campbelltown 1:25,000 & UBD street directory

v Time: Thirty minutes

v Grade: Easy

Equipment needed for this walk

Water, lunch, Campbelltown 1:25,000 map & compass, lunch, water, wet weather gear, head torch. Bring your binoculars for bird watching, swimming costume. (Lock your car).

WALK FOUR

Venue: Hanson's Road, Minto Heights to Mercedes Road, Ingleburn via Peter Meadows Creek, Minto Bush Camp, Georges River & Myrtle Creek, Mercedes

Road

v Map: Campbelltown 1:25,000 & UBD street directory

v Time: 4 hours

v Grade: Medium

The start to this walk is on the bend of the road. Look out for the steel gate on the right hand side of the road

Equipment needed for this walk:

Lunch, water, map & compass, wet weather gear, head torch. It is an area that needs good navigational skills. There are a number of abseil sites at both locations. Bring your binoculars, swimming costume and lilo. Leave a car at Mercedes

Road. Lock your car. Another

solution is to be dropped off in the morning and picked up late in the afternoon.

WALK FIVE

Venue: Freres Crossing to Simmo's Beach via the Bushwalkers Basin, Minto Bush Camp, Myrtle Creek, Georges River, Long Point and finishing at Simmo's Beach, Macquarie Fields

v Map: Campbelltown 1:25,000 & UBD street directory

v Time: A full day is needed for this trip.

v Grade: Medium / hard

Equipment needed for this walk

Lunch, water, map & compass, wet weather gear, head torch. It is an area that needs good navigational skills. There are a number of abseil sites at both locations. Bring your binoculars, swimming costume and lilo. You need to leave a car at Simmo's Beach for the return journey. Lock your car. Another solution is to be dropped off in the morning and picked up late in the afternoon. and BBQ facilities at Simmo's Beach. Make sure you lock your cars and don't forget to leave a car at Mercedes Road for the return trip.

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The trail winds down through the sandstone escarpment and follows the gully sides where the creek has scoured through the levels of stone over hundreds of years. The trail continues through large stands of gums carpeted underneath with ferns.

At the bottom of the gully the sounds of the creek



Piles Creek suspension bridge

grow as you get closer to the point where you cross over a small suspension bridge. Below is a large pool where the creek finally slows its chaotic decent to the valley floor.

There is plenty of room here to stretch out and have a break before you begin your climb up the east face of the gully. A quick dip may even be in order!

The climb starts out and heads up the trail towards home. In this first section you climb up quite quickly, as

you go remember to turn around and look at the vistas that open up behind. Soon you will be high on the gully sides and the views back to the south west are quite amazing particularly late in the afternoon with a setting sun. Take the time to climb to the top of some of the rock outcrops on the sides of the track to gain better vantage.

The trail runs along the top edge of the east side of what has become a sheer side of the gully below with views down into the gully and across to where you

descended earlier. Several lookouts are on this side with views back across the park.

Shortly you return to a large pool towards the head of the track and cross several stepping stones to return to the carpark and picnic area where there is plenty of room to spread out and relax.

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- Putty Beach to Little Beach - Bouddi National Park
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- Staples Lookout - Brisbane Water National Park

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LETTER TO EDITOR

Comment on Poem in last issue (Pommie Tenderfoot)

ANCESTORS

Hume, Sturt, Warburton, Flinders, Bass
 Explored our bush and shore..

They spoke in funny accents, but are AUSSIES
 evermore.

Dark deeds and foul were also done
 By folk in days of yore,
 But they of course were done by POMS
 Upon an alien shore.

Peter H. Edwards (not a Pom)

Footnote - The person described in the poem in issue 293 redeemed himself and was a credit to expedition.

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Walking near Mt Howitt, Vic. Photo: Darren Davis

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A black rectangular box containing the signature "Paddy Pallin" in a white, cursive script.

DEFENDING THE WILDERNESS ACT

By Michael Maack – Conservation Officer



*Partially completed camera platform at Butterbox Point supervised by NPWS (Grose Wilderness)
(Courtesy: Sue Morrison)*

An errant drone aircraft whose avionics are scrambled by a lightning strike and is then cast to wreak havoc on the human world as a Weapon of Mass Destruction seems inimicable to the values of World Heritage Wilderness. Yet the guardians of our National Parks heritage within NSW are willing to forego all sense, probably under a directive from the Premier's office called 'Memorandum 2003 – 18: Facilitation of Film-making in NSW', to grant a licence to film this war-scenario movie in one of the most sensitive and fragile areas of the NSW biosphere - a recently burnt area of the Grose Wilderness in the Blue Mountains at Butterbox Point near Mt Hay.

It is an area that comprises montane heath, hanging swamp and transitional forest accommodating a number of resident endangered species, e.g. the Giant Dragonfly, the Pink Flannel flower and possibly other unknown species. It is not clear when or how the decision was made to film in a World-heritage Wilderness and perhaps we will never know? Environmentalists offered thirty potential sites as substitutes for this ill-considered locale.

It should be noted that wilderness is the heart of a National Park. It is a sub-area of a greater National Park where modern land-use is forbidden. It is an area where humans are constrained and it is this constraint that allows wild-ness to flourish.

The history of this area is closely linked to the Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs. Butterbox Point overlooks and is within 4 kilometres of Blue Gum Forest, a watershed-location for conservation campaigns within Australia and an area seminal to the formation of the then Federation, now the Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs. In 1932, after a campaign by Bushwalkers the forest was reserved. This reserve was managed by the 'Blue Gum Forest Trust' that in the early 1960's eventually ceded their in-holding to the newly formed Blue Mountains National Park (gazetted September 25, 1959). In the 1990's the Confederation nominated the Grose valley for inclusion as Wilderness before the Blue Mountain's World Heritage Listing in November 2000. Unfortunately the suggestion that the Mt Hay Road be closed to vehicular traffic in our wilderness submission was rejected. This has allowed vehicular access, read this as film-crew access, to the heart of a wilderness area that has been one of the causal problems in this recent dispute.

I was on the frontline of this action that sought to define the definition and tenets of Wilderness protection within our state.

I will not give a chronological account of the protest highlights other than to say that apart from a few instances of heavy handedness by individual members of the police during the arresting process the action was well-mannered. In total nine protestors were arrested, eight during the initial confrontation and one as the 'Stealth' film vehicles were shepherded past the NPWS gate. Incidentally the Parks Service had closed off the whole area for the duration of the filming.

Our negotiations with the Parks Service were conducted with the NPWS departmental hierarchy at the blockade site. To their credit they were willing to confront us in person rather than through intermediaries however their courage in this regard must be moderated by their acquiescence in favouring a film-centric, possibly economic rationalist, agenda over the community's expectations for them to be custodians and defenders of our natural heritage.

If the misnomered Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) had any moral fortitude then the DEC hierarchy should have challenged these 'Film-friendly' over 'Environment-friendly' Parliamentary Executive decisions rather than leave it to the community to institute legal provisions to stop a damaging environmental and alien land-use (i.e. film-crew constructions) within a Wilderness and World Heritage Area.

In previous correspondence I was reticent to laud the formation of the Department of Environment and Conservation for fear that our wild environment might be disadvantaged. In hindsight I was correct. An organisational aggregation into one body under the pretext of economies of scale and scope has never proven successful. There are reasons for this that I can only allude to in this document because the available space does not permit me to expand. However Pope Leo XIII eloquently stated the argument against super-ministries in a 1941 papal encyclical called 'Quadragesimo Anno': 'it is an injustice, a grave evil and a disturbance of right order for a large and higher organisation to arrogate to itself functions which can be performed efficiently by smaller and lower bodies'. The DEC has been guilty of this process and the result is this subsequent debacle of granting filming rights in World Heritage listed Wilderness. It has not been fair to the film company 'Talons', with whom we empathise, and certainly not fair to the trusting community who are abiding to their respective NPWS Plans of Management under the NP&W and Wilderness Acts in accessing the National Park. It is not fair that the government believes it can override community-consultative agreements at whim.

Our protest actions did achieve success by delaying the construction of the two camera platforms by a day. We were hoping to buy enough time to try to invoke an interlocutory injunction against the shoot. On barrister's advice we were instructed that instead of an interlocutory injunction we should seek to gain an emergency hearing before the Land and Environment Court. This was duly sought and the decision was handed down at 9.45am on Thursday, April 29. The 'Wilderness is sacrosanct' judgement is entirely favourable for us but the DEC decided to appeal the decision and costs in the Supreme Court. They subsequently withdrew their appeal under cooler consideration.

Luckily even Huey, the weather god, was on our side. Wet weather closed in during the late afternoon of the protest. Under the Licence, a wet weather 'Condition of Consent' should have invoked another film-set construction delay. Delays in construction played in our favour because it negated any departmental argument that fait-accomplis environmental damage existed and Court directives would not have a protective effect. However even the wet weather did not delay construction. Within a day the set seems to have been constructed at who knows what environmental cost.

Perhaps this was the intention behind the tactic by the NPWS to try to coax us to allow the construction crew passage through our blockade during our negotiation process. Or possibly it was an attempt to avoid a litigious situation, one instituted by the film company for delayed-shooting damage claims. Either way, the Department's tactics forced community-based organisations to fight on a legal and physical front-line.

Inasmuch as values are predicated upon morals, it now seems that the premier NSW Environmental Department has little environmental-moral credibility at its highest levels and, unfortunately, has probably caused morale disillusionment at its lowest. It is a sad day for the DEC and the NPWS.

At the time of writing this piece the Premier, Bob Carr, decided that he did not want to abide by the decision of the umpire and will invoke enabling legislation to counteract the judgment. Bushwalkers be warned. We will have to vigilantly engage the government to ensure that retrograde legislation does not diminish the power of the existing legislation to protect our National Parks' core wilderness environment.