

Bushwalking NSW Newsletter

Edition 4 September 2013



Photo from the Walls of Jerusalem National Park, Tasmania, taken by Doug Slatter.

Welcome

There has been plenty of activity in the office since our last newsletter, as you all know the bills needed to be paid! The insurance and affiliation has kept the AO very busy, with 65 clubs and 10,112 members currently, she gets tired just thinking about it!

Another innovation; Keep up to date with Bushwalking NSW, and let us know what's on your mind by following us on Twitter, <http://twitter.com/BushwalkingNSW>. We'd love to know what you've been up to, or share some inspiration from one of your recent walks.

We also had our AGM last month, with very few changes to the Management Committee. David Trinder remains our President, with Mitchell Isaacs as the VP. We still do not have a Treasurer, any accountants out there? As advised in our last newsletter, David Morrison and Robert Gascoigne have joined the management team. David has already made a huge contribution, not only getting his head around the ins and outs of Insurance, but also organising the survey which you will have seen regarding 'The Bushwalker' magazine.

So far we have 96 responses to the survey about The Bushwalker magazine. This is good, but a small number compared to the 10,000 bushwalkers in clubs in NSW. If you haven't already, please send this message to your members and encourage them to complete the survey. All questions are optional and anonymous. Here is the link;

<http://davidmorrison.id.au/survey/bushwalker.html>

Please advise Gail if you are receiving too many/not enough copies of The Bushwalker, so that we can accurately assess our printing requirements.

We are introducing a new regular feature this month, courtesy of David Morrison. This will be called "Insurance

Matters' and each newsletter we will address a commonly asked question regarding all the forms of Insurance. If anyone has any questions and they think that the answers may be of interest to other members, please send them in.

We'd like to write a short piece for Wild Magazine to let them know about the exciting things happening in bushwalking clubs in NSW.

If there's any exciting news or updates from your club, please send a short email over the next week or so, and let us know what's been happening. It's a great opportunity for you to promote your club as well as bushwalking in general. If you have 1-2 good pictures, send those through as well.

For example:

- Recent trips
- Planned trips
- Increase in memberships
- Other interesting activities

Please direct any submissions to Mitchell Isaacs, who has taken up the position of Publicity Officer, at;

mitch@outdoorgenius.com

We also have an information piece from YouCamp, which may be of interest to you all.

Tracks & Access Report

By David Trinder

This report includes relevant extracts from the NPWS "Park Closures" section of their web site at <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/NationalParks/FireClosure.aspx> For further information refer to the link. Last update: 16/9/2013 12:01AM 3 parks currently

Last update: 16/9/2013 12:01AM
3 parks currently affected by fire
93 parks with closed areas
20 parks with fire bans

For hazard reduction burning information, major wildfire updates and a list of all current incidents in NSW, please visit the NSW Rural Fire Service website external link.

It is essential that if you are planning remote bushwalking, camping with access into national parks that you check with your local National Parks and Wildlife Service Office first to obtain the latest information.

Sydney Region

Agnes Banks Nature Reserve

This reserve is closed until further notice due to recent fire activity and the danger of falling limbs or trees affected by fire.

Newcastle and Hunter

Barrington Tops State Conservation Area

Gloucester Tops road and Gloucester Tops Precinct closed for walking track clearing

All access to Gloucester Tops is temporarily closed, just past the Gloucester River camping area - to allow for the safe completion of work on the walking track.

Central Coast

Bouddi National Park

Old Wagstaffe Fire Trail No public access is available through private property. Signs indicate where public access is not permitted.

Dharug National Park

The 11km Walking Track in Dharug National Park is closed until further notice due to a land slide

Blue Mountains

Martins Lookout, Springwood

Local walking tracks in the vicinity of Martins Lookout remain closed due to recent hazard reduction burn and continuing high fire danger. (Namely Sassafras Creek / Glenbrook Creek areas) Walking tracks from Springwood to Martins Lookout also remain closed.

The Undercliff and Overcliff tracks are closed between Princes Rock access and Lyrebird Lookout due to recent landslides. This means visitors doing the National or Wentworth Pass loops will need to return via the Shortcut Track.

The Den Fenella walking track will be closed 7 days per week during upgrade work which commenced 31 January 2013. The Den Fenella lookout remains closed due to structural damage on the bridge.

Illawarra and South West

Budderoo National Park

Carrington Falls camping area closed (Ends Friday 20 September)

Due to vandalism of facilities, the Carrington Falls camping area is closed until 20 September 2013. Please contact the Fitzroy Falls Visitor Centre on 02 48877 270 for advice on other camping options.

Illawarra Escarpment State Conservation Area

Areas closed due to rock falls - Dave Walsh's Track

The following areas are closed owing to land slide and rock fall hazards:

Five Islands Lookout, Mount Keira.

Area below Mount Keira summit, bounded in the north by the summit cliff line and Dave Walsh's Track, in the west and south by Mount Keira Road and in the east by a line from Geordies Flat (hairpin bend) to Victoria Lookout.

Morton National Park

Amphitheatre Walk/Nicholas Pass closure (Ends Tuesday 31 December)

Northern parts of park closed for aerial goat shooting (Ends Friday 20 September)

Dharawal National Park

No public access to the section of the park within the Sydney Catchment Area

The southeastern section of the park, between the Southern Freeway and the Princes Highway, is located within a water catchment Special Area. This area is closed to the public except with the consent of the Sydney Catchment Authority.

Insurance Matters! Visitors

There seems to be some confusion over how and when visitors are covered by the insurance policies.

The first thing to note is that the policies only cover Full Members and Temporary Members of clubs. This means that a visitor must be made a Temporary Member for the insurance to apply to them. (Special rules apply to Associate Members - watch out for a future article.)

It is recommended that Visitors sign an Acknowledgement of Risk Form which explicitly makes them a Temporary Member. It may be possible to have wording on the trip waiver form saying this instead of a separate form.

This could also be done by having them apply for membership, and have the wording on the form make them a Temporary Member until their application is approved.

It is also recommended that Visitors be only permitted to attend three (3) activities, and that if they wish to attend more, they become a Full Member.

Improving Club Communications

Has your club had the situation where it was waiting for an official e-mail, but it never arrived? Maybe it was the survey for insurance coverage sent out in March, or worse, the invoice that had to be paid by a fixed date. Isn't e-mail supposed to be reliable?

Well, yes, it generally is, but it can be caught by human problems. In my club's case, the insurance invoice never arrived. It turned out that the addresses on file were for the former president and treasurer. One was actually travelling at the time it arrived, and the other never thought to forward it on to the current treasurer to pay. Oops!

How can you avoid this situation?

The best way is to have an official club e-mail address that is independent of any club member's personal e-mail address. There are many advantages to this:

- Once you give out this address, it is permanent. You never have to remember to tell people a new address after the AGM.
- Multiple people can monitor it so that if the primary person is away, an assistant can make sure all e-mails get dealt with.
- It looks more organised and professional to have a club address rather than a personal e-mail address. You can put it on your web site and forget it.
- You have a record of all your e-mails in one place. This can be handy if you are trying to track down something. If multiple people have received your messages, it can be a nightmare to try to find a particular message.
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So how can a club set up an official e-mail address?

If you have your own domain name and hosting arrangement, you can set something up easily, eg, info@blackstumpbushwalkers.org.au

But if you don't, there are other easy ways. You could set up a free Gmail account such as blackstumpbushwalkers@gmail.com. Google's help explains how to sign up for an account:

https://support.google.com/mail/topic/1669013?hl=en&ref_topic=1668946

With Gmail, people can go to <http://gmail.com> and login to read the e-mail. General help about using Gmail is here:

<https://support.google.com/mail/?hl=en>

Alternatively - and I would recommend this - set up your e-mail program (eg, Outlook, Apple Mail, etc) to check the account automatically when it checks your personal e-mail. Google has detailed how to set up your e-mail program on this page:

https://support.google.com/mail/answer/78892?hl=en&ref_topic=1668961

I would recommend using IMAP instead of POP for your e-mail protocol. The advantage of IMAP is that all the messages are stored on the server, so that anyone accessing the account has a full history of the messages. With POP, once you check for mail, they are deleted from the server and no-one else can access them.

A side benefit of using Gmail is that it is very, very good at stopping spam. Maybe one in a thousand spam messages actually end up in the Inbox.

What else is needed?

Something you do need to remember is that as an official address, people expect it to be monitored regularly. Prospective members are not going to hang around forever waiting for a reply.

One of the most important parts of setting it up is to establish a procedure for monitoring it. A useful arrangement my club has used for years is to have a single person responsible for checking the e-mail daily. There is also a backup person who checks it if the primary one is away. There needs to be good communication between these two to make sure they tell each other if they are going to be away any time. Probably both should have the account installed on their computers.

Whenever a new person takes over the job of answering the e-mails, all that is needed is for them to use the web version, or have the account installed on their computer, and they will have access to all the old e-mails if they need them.

David Morrison
Insurance Officer

BUSHWALKERS WILDERNESS RESCUE SQUAD (BWRS)

BWRS as always, is active in training, recruitment and preparation for rescue.

On Sunday 1 September BWRS ran a special recruitment day at our Rooty Hill shed. We are looking to widen our membership base with non operational members in administrative roles to aid in our background organisation and Rooty Hill / equipment maintenance.

There will be an Induction Walk on October 12 - 13 where recent recruits will take the first step towards Operational Membership of BWRS. Valuable extra (search & rescue) skills will build on their bushwalking experience.

On October 18 - 20 BWRS will be part of a big multi agency push in Barrington Tops to find missing aircraft VH-

MDX. Extensive modern computing has better fixed the final movements of this enigma from August 1981.

BWRS encourages First Aid knowledge for bushwalkers. A one day St John Ambulance "Apply First Aid" course will be held on Sunday, November 10. This course gives a great introduction to First Aid for when outside medical assistance is less than an hour away.

A better course is Remote Area First Aid (RAFA) training for when medical help is much further away. Two weekends are required. The next course will run on October 12, 13 & 26,27. Do not delay, these courses fill quickly. You need to register at the BWRS website and pay the full course fee to guarantee your place in either course. See www.bwrs.org.au

On Friday 13 September I represented BWRS at the funeral for Gary Tweddle. Gary was the subject of a large search multi agency at Leura in July. Various members of BWRS were present during the eight days in land search plus vertical rescue around the cliffs.

The service was held in the North Chapel of Northern Suburbs Crematorium at 2.15pm and I attended as the only emergency services volunteer.

After a delay, the funeral commenced with us joining in the chorus section of 'You'll Never Walk Alone'; a song Gary had sung at many football games with his dad.

Anika (his girl friend) spoke so movingly that we applauded her. She was followed by a work supervisor and Gary's parents. He did so much in 23 years yet was also remembered as a gentleman with kindness and consideration towards his family, friends and work colleagues. Gary would have tired you out with his energy.

A reason why the Leura search, commenced in July, went so long had to be the many friends / acquaintances who travelled long distances just to help find Gary. That was indicative of the regard they had for him.

As a finale, in a garden outside the Chapel, butterflies were released to celebrate his life.

I took the opportunity to speak to Anika after the funeral. She was genuinely appreciative of the SES and RFS' efforts to find Gary.

Gary Lloyd Tweddle

29 November 1989 - 16 July 2013

As always BWRS is keen to welcome experienced bushwalkers to our core of skilled Operational Members. Details are on our website (www.bwrs.org.au) where you will also find extensive safety information / advice on GPS, PLB, outdoors communication etc.

Youcamp – benefits to bushwalkers

It may surprise many people to learn that only a little over 5 per cent of Australia is within national parks.

As the population grows the pressure on public camping grounds, popular bushwalking trails, national park swimming holes and all those special places of solitude that people seek out to escape the city are becoming busier and busier.

And yet in the other 95 per cent of the continent are countless magnificent places that bushwalkers and campers would like to access and that landholders would be happy to share.

The idea behind Youcamp.com was to create a community of landholders who welcome responsible visitors to their properties for a huge range of activities – bushwalking, camping, kayaking, fishing and seeing wildflowers. Youcamp.com allows private landowners to list their properties and advertise a range of features, making it easy for the public to find exactly what they are looking for. Many of these searchable features are about enjoying natural assets but some are important management tools. For example a landholder can advertise that they want help on their property in exchange, for say, cheap or free accommodation. They may also want visitors who have the skills to help control feral pests.

Youcamp.com is not just about escaping the city or recreation – it is about a whole new way of seeing private land, building friendships, networking and gaining insights as people from different walks of life come together.

Youcamp.com allows visitors to search for the kind of property that suits their needs based on category, price and location. We have over 45 different features that property owners can advertise – from bushwalking and conservation sites to dog friendly, campfires, clothing optional and fossicking. We have properties ranging from a few acres to over a million and the community of Youcampers is growing every day. Our goal is to have 5000 sites across Australia!

For more information, go to www.youcamp.com or contact Prue & James Woodford on 0427825273 or info@youcamp.com