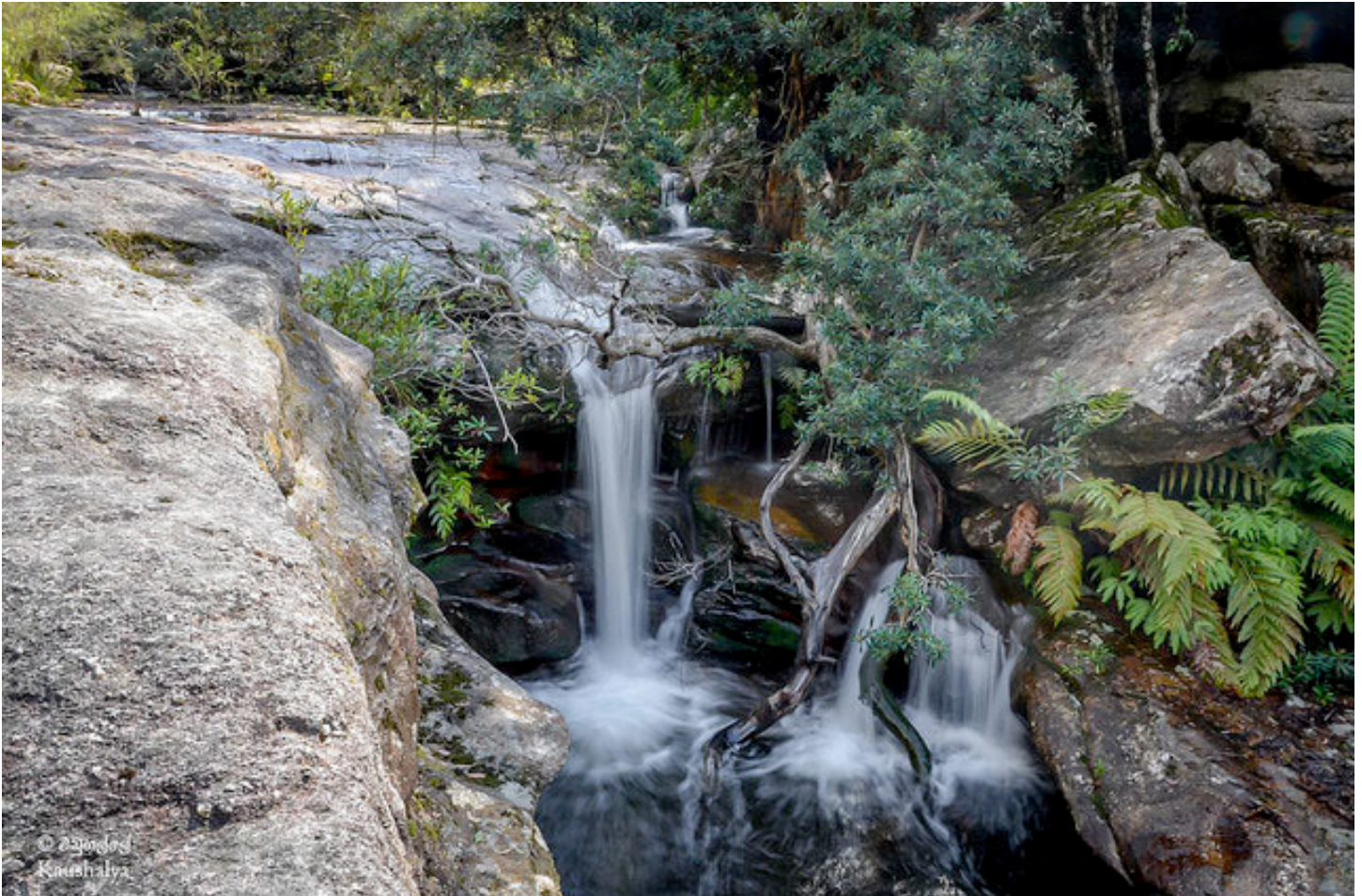


Bushwalking NSW Newsletter

Edition 10 August 2014



Blue Mountains National Park: thanks to Kaushalya from SUBW for use of your great photos!.

ATTENTION ALL CLUBS AFFECTED BY THE BMCC LICENSING PROPOSAL!

I have been informed this morning that licensing proposals for non-commercial entities, e.g. bushwalking clubs, have been suspended by BMCC, while negotiations are ongoing!

PLEASE PASS THIS NEWSLETTER ON TO YOUR MEMBERS!

Hello Everyone,

It's been a very busy couple of months with the AGM, new website, insurance matters, various submissions and the general day to day running of your organisation.

I am pleased to welcome our new President. David Morrison, known to you all as the evil genius behind the new website, has taken on the role for 2014-15. We are also happy to have two new committee members, Alex and Sierra from SBW and Sydney Uni. Bushwalkers respectively. We know that they will make terrific contributions and look forward to their participation.

You will all by now have seen the new website;

<http://bushwalkingnsw.org.au>

If you haven't, now is the time to jump in and have a look. Naturally, there will be a few minor hiccups and changes that will need to be made along the way, but it looks really good and is, we think, very user friendly.

My last piece of news for this month is that I am leaving the organisation. I will miss working with you all; after nearly four years we have all come to know each other well. I will be staying around to train your new Admin Officer and will introduce you all to him/her when the time comes; I will also be filling in when that person has holidays etc. so you won't be quite rid of me! Please see below for a job description; if any of you would like to apply or know anyone who fits the criteria, please let me know.

From the (new) President

As the new President, I would like to say a bit about where I see Bushwalking NSW going.

A comment was made at the AGM to the effect that "no-one else needed to do anything for Bushwalking NSW - that was what the committee was for".

My view is quite different.

I happen to believe that organisations work best when a lot of people do a little bit each.

People who are elected to a committee are no different to anyone else. They have lives of their own and time pressures just like everyone has. Many are also involved with other organisations, and it is a constant juggling act to do what they have to for each of these organisations, as well as managing their jobs and private lives.

A peak body like Bushwalking NSW has fingers in many pies. There are representatives to other organisations. Risk management has to be constantly monitored and updated. Insurance has to be coordinated. Meetings are held with government departments and other bodies. Policies are developed on issues relevant to bushwalkers. A magazine and newsletter are published. And so on.

It is just plain unfair to expect a limited number of committee members, even if they had all the required expertise, to do all this and more. If they try, they eventually burn out and a valuable member is lost.

In other organisations, I have often found there are people who are prepared to help. They actually *want* to help, because they value what they get out of the organisation, and want to give something back. They also may have skills that the committee does not have, and sometimes have time to

devote to projects that require work over an extended period.

These people are just as important as the elected members of the committee!!

So far, three new people have volunteered to help us like this. One is helping to maintain the content of our new web site, which needs to be kept up to date with new issues of our publications, and in many other ways.

Two others have offered to be part of a small working group to update our risk management guidelines, which have long been due for a review.

These are essential jobs for the effective functioning of Bushwalking NSW, and all bushwalkers should be grateful to these people for offering their help.

There are many other ways people can help. Is there a conservation issue you have an interest in that affects bushwalkers? Maybe you could be part of a small group that formulates a draft policy for Bushwalking NSW to adopt officially?

Do you have skills in training people? As discussed at the AGM, we would like to coordinate training between clubs so as to expand the number of people with access to training. This would be especially valuable for smaller clubs who may not be able to organise it themselves.

Bushwalking NSW is just taking its first steps into the world of social media. Volunteers are needed who can keep our feeds active and interesting.

If you have a skill or interest that may be of use to Bushwalking NSW, or even if you just want to help but are not sure how, I am happy to talk to you about the possibilities. Please contact Gail and leave a telephone number and a couple of good times you will be available, and I will call you.

David Morrison
President

Position Vacant

Bushwalking NSW - Administration Officer

Bushwalking NSW Inc., the peak body for bushwalking in New South Wales, is an incorporated association run by a Management Committee. It encompasses over 60 affiliated bushwalking clubs NSW-wide with over 10,000 members.

Following the resignation of our current Administration Officer, we are seeking a replacement.

Confidence and maturity is required as the person will have the sole responsibility of managing of the Newtown office, reporting directly to the President. Also required are excellent organisational abilities to meet the demands of this busy multi-faceted role.

Duties include:

- attending to phone, post and email enquiries from bushwalkers, clubs, equivalent interstate organisations and media,
- maintaining the financial Excel Workbook and attending to all financial matters,
- taking minutes at monthly General and Management Committee meetings held at the Ashfield RSL Club,

- club insurance including collating renewal questionnaire responses, preparing the composite NSW Return, and invoicing clubs
- coordinating printing and distribution of our quarterly magazine *The Bushwalker*,
- preparation of the monthly newsletter from articles submitted
- helping to maintain the content of our new web site <http://bushwalkingnsw.org.au>

It would be ideal if applicants have bushwalking experience in a club environment, but this is not essential.

Work hours are flexible; 15 hours for a 3 day week

Computer literacy, with MS Office Word and Excel skills.

If you feel that you meet the above requirements, please send your CV to Gail. Closing date 12 September.

Insurance Matters – Risk Waivers

Do people have to sign the Risk Waiver Form every time they renew their membership?

One of the onerous tasks for many clubs is getting the Risk Waiver Form signed every time someone renews their membership. Some just send money, some don't bother and some genuinely forget. So what is the actual situation?

Well, it is complicated!

Bushwalking NSW's legal advice is that the risk waiver must be renewed every year. There are two reasons for this:

1. If the wording ever changes, the club will always have an up-to-date waiver form.
2. It is useful to remind people of their responsibilities regularly.

The Risk Waiver Form can be completed in two ways:

1. Signing a physical piece of paper. This will be the case for people joining or renewing their membership using a paper form.
2. For people joining or renewing using a web system, by a tick box on the web site saying that they understand the waiver, and with a link to the actual wording of the waiver in the description of the tick box. The critical thing is that the risk waiver must be "in sight" when they tick the box. Making them go and search for it somewhere is not good enough.

So, for example, on a web site you could use a statement like this:

I have read and understood the Risk Waiver; []

where the words "Risk Waiver" are a web link to the actual wording of the waiver.

In addition, the Risk Waiver Form must be signed by all visitors on every activity, and the parent/guardian for children under 18. In this case, it should be a paper form. Life members should also sign the form every year in order for the club to be covered.

The signed form (or record of understanding on the website) must be kept for 3-4 years for adults, or until they are 21 for children.

Signed forms may be scanned and saved electronically. The original paper version does not need to be kept.

David Morrison
President/Insurance Officer

Some Notes from Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad (BWRS)

BWRS members are excited about a recent burst of activity where they showed off their skills. Over many years the pattern of activity of Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad (BWRS) can be long quiet periods interrupted by times of high activity.

Mid July BWRS members had a great bushwalking weekend together collecting the checkpoint flags from NavShield on July 5, 6 at Yalwal.

On Friday, 15 August some members of BWRS responded to an urgent call by NSW Police for a search at North Head. There were concerns that a 56 year old male was a suicide risk. A far larger group of BWRS plus some NSW Cave Rescue assisted in a larger search on Saturday. Unfortunately after a short time a body was found.

Then BWRS excelled at OXFAM TrailWalker on 22 - 24 August. Over many years BWRS has had a long standing arrangement to provide first and second Safety Response Teams for this event of 48 hours / 100km. The North Head Search tested our pre planning for TrailWalker (TW). TW is a large highly planned event where 550 teams of four attempt to follow a marked route from Brooklyn to Georges Heights along tracks & fire roads.

The first point of contact for participant problems / injuries is the phone in the Event Control Centre staffed by a BWRS Search Manager. Members were rostered into the Response Teams in 7 hour shifts.

There are always many incidents but usually these can be easily solved by a pickup. The TW planning includes notes on access points plus gate keys for closed roads. Early in the event BWRS successfully worked with NSW Ambulance Paramedics for a stretcher of carry of 800m along the TW route over undulating rocky ground. However, on Friday night a far greater challenge was presented to Paramedics and BWRS. A 120kg patient was unable to continue walking at a point where access on the TW route was not close.

It was a good reminder to bushwalk carefully. The patient was cared for overnight before a combined group of RFS & BWRS, over several hours, struggled to move him just 500m to where a helicopter

could land on a creek sand bar. During this time other incidents were still happening. In the same area, overnight a man sustained a head wound that required hospitalisation.

Remote Area First Aid (RAFA) is great training for incidents where medical assistance may be hours or more away. You will need to set aside September 6/7 & 20/21 for the next BWRS course. Alternatively in ONE day of training on November 16 you could gain some basic First Aid skills in a St John Ambulance "Provide First Aid" course.

New members are always welcome in BWRS. In September we will hold one of our twice yearly induction walks. Details of First Aid courses and registration can be found at our website www.bwrs.org.au where you will also find information on bush safety and how to join BWRS.

Kosciusko NP - Feral horses

In Kosciusko National Park, there is a serious feral horse problem. The numbers are growing by somewhere between 8% and 22% per year, and it is believed there could be somewhere between 9,000 and 20,000 horses now. Control of the horses has been restricted to removal of only a few hundred horses each year.

Bushwalking NSW has had a policy on feral horses in National Parks (<http://www.bushwalkingnsw.org.au/feral-horses>) since 2003:

Horses do not belong in national parks.

There is currently a review of the Wild Horse Management Plan under way by NPWS. The background to the current situation is described here:

<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/protectsnowies/140549Snowies3.pdf>

They are seeking input from anyone who has an interest in Kosciusko NP, which we imagine is bushwalkers from all over Australia.

<https://engage.environment.nsw.gov.au/protectsnowies>

The consultation is structured as a series of conversations (like forum threads) on a range of subjects, such as:

- What is more important to consider- the estimated population of wild horses or the impact of wild horses on the National Park? or both?
- Why are the Snowy Mountains important to you?
- Have you adopted a wild horse? Tell us your experience

What is needed is for bushwalkers and others to join in these conversations, putting our side of the story, expressing our views and supporting Bushwalking NSW's policy. All you need to do is click on the agree/disagree buttons, or add a comment or two, in a very reasoned and sensible manner, saying that the mountains are important to you and why. Explain what you have seen in the park in relation to horses.

The review will continue until November, so please check back every week or so as more conversations will be started between now and then.

In case you are wondering what sort of damage the horses are doing, the photo below was taken earlier this year in the Pilot Wilderness. What was once a beautiful little stream across a grassy flat is now trampled into a bog over 5 metres across.

More photos of the damage can be seen here:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/91914657@N08/sets/72157640126733276/>





JOIN with five young Adventure Teams who will retrace Myles Dunphy and Bert Gallop's historic 1914 journey.

You can participate in the journey – whether as walkers, to camp or just sit around a campfire to celebrate.

Find out more, visit the event website or Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/DunphysAdventure>

<https://www.colongwilderness.org.au> and follow the links.

Numbers are limited: please apply early to avoid disappointment

The walk showcases how voluntary efforts of early bushwalking clubs led to the dedication of the Blue Mountains wilderness.

This legacy will be presented to the World Parks Congress in November.