

# THE Bushwalker

MAGAZINE OF THE CONFEDERATION OF BUSHWALKING CLUBS NSW INC.

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## BARRALLIER'S JOURNEY INTO THE KANANGRA-BOYD WILDERNESS

by Andy Macqueen



On the 200th anniversary of Ensign Barrallier's 'journey to the King of the Mountains', Andy Macqueen

revisits aspects of the story, and makes some fresh discoveries.

Two hundred years ago on 28 November, the enigmatic Ensign Francis Barrallier wound up at Johnston Falls on Wheengee Whungee Creek, a short distance south-west of Kanangra Walls. He was 25 days out from Sydney. The party (eight in number, including the Aborigines Badbury and Le Tonsure) was short of food and in poor spirits. Boots had disintegrated and feet were 'full of wounds'. The waterfall, though not really impassable, was simply the last straw. They turned round and headed back.

To reach this place, still deep in

the wild today, Barrallier had travelled from his depot south of Oakdale, down to the Nattai River and the Wollondilly, around Tonalli Peak, up the Tonalli Valley (passing north of Yeranderie), through Byrnes Gap to the Kowmung, and up Christys Creek to Wheengee Whungee Creek.

This interpretation of Barrallier's route is largely the one put forward by Justice Rae Else Mitchell (of the Warri-gals bushwalking club) in 1938, though Ernest Moxley in 1955 first suggested that the terminus might be in Wheengee Whungee (West Christys) Creek rather than Central Christys.

Anyone with any doubts about the route might study -

- my book *Blue Mountains to Bridgetown: the Life and Journeys of Barrallier*, 1993 (out of print);
- my article in the May 1998 edition of *The Bushwalker* (arguing that an alternative theory that Barrallier finished up in Burnt Hole Creek is

*Continued on page 7*

## RESCUE AT KALANG FALLS

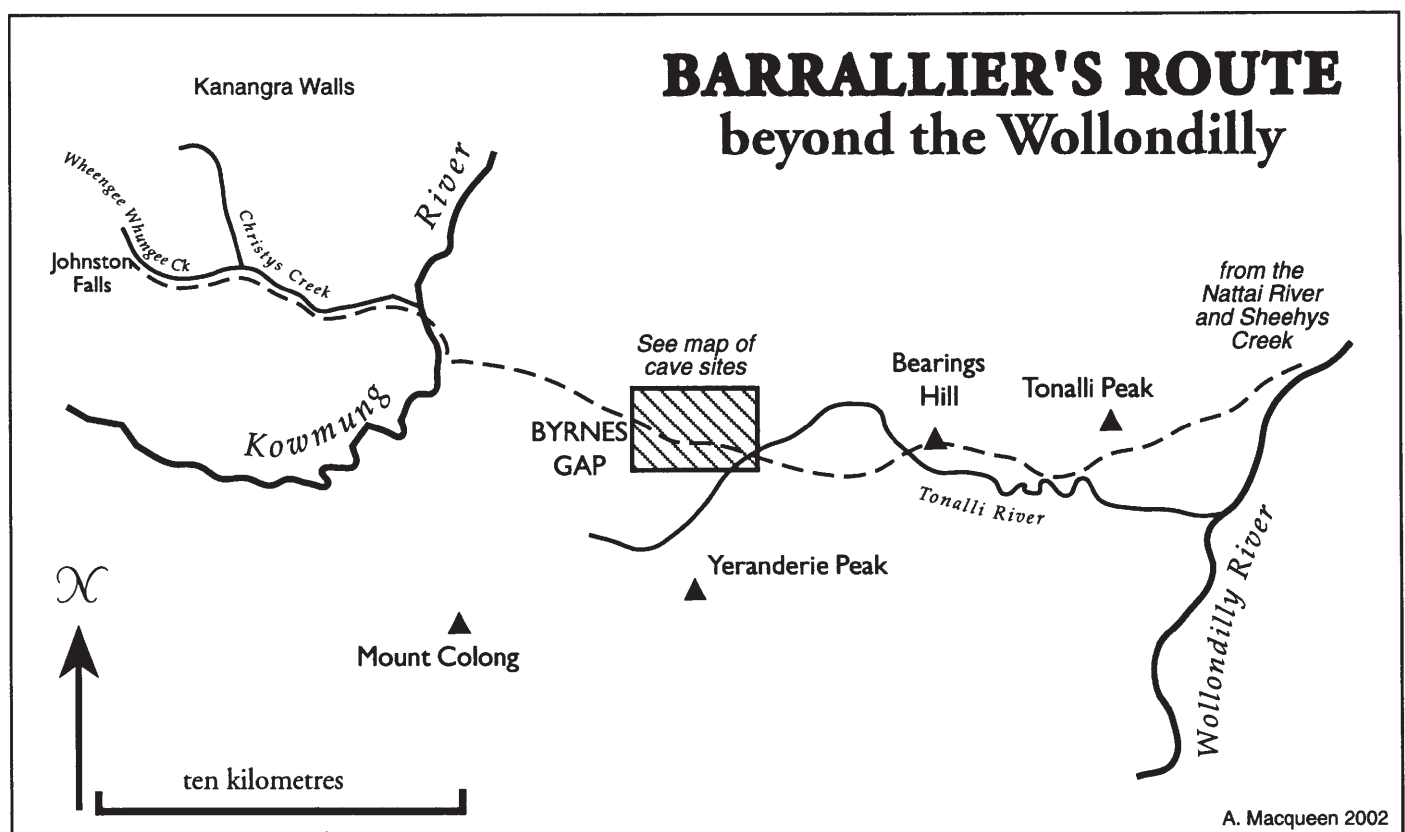
On Sunday night 8<sup>th</sup> September, a group of 23 novice canyons was reported overdue in the Kanangra Boyd National Park.

They were from a production company at Charles Sturt University who were developing a play with an abseil scene.

The group had their first abseil lessons the day before at the Dance Floor Cave at Kanangra Walls. They then headed for Kalang Falls Canyon as their second day of abseiling experience.

Kalang Falls is a particularly popular canyon as it is a spectacular gorge that can be done any time of year. The canyon is a side creek to the much larger breath-taking gorge under Kanangra Walls. Kalang Falls drops 500 metres in nine "two rope" abseils. Most people could scramble out from the top of the third pitch, but beyond there canyons are committed to finishing the canyon. Kalang Falls usually takes a day to complete. Large

*Continued on page 6*



A. Macqueen 2002

*Continued on page 6*



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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 . le 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 70clubs with a total membership around 11,000 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](http://www.bushwalking.org.au)

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## IN THIS ISSUE

### BARRALLIER'S JOURNEY INTO THE KANANGRA-BOYD

WILDERNESS.....1

RESCUE AT KALANG FALLS.....1

CONSERVATION NEWS.....3

THE GRIP OF GRAVITY A POEM BY COLIN GIBSON.....3

NATIONWIDE CLUBS PROGRAM LAUNCHED.....4

KOSCIUSZCO NATIONAL PARK FORUM.....4

LETTER TO THE EDITOR.....4

PADDLING IN THE OUTBACK.....9

WIRIMBIRRA SANCTUARY..... 9

ADMINISTRATION OFFICER WANTED.....11

### BUSHWALKERS WILDERNESS RESCUE SQUAD

REPORT.....12

THE NAVSHIELD .....12

### 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.



# CONSERVATION NEWS

**It was with much relief to all that participated in the campaign to stop the Charcoal Plant at Mogo near Bateman's Bay to hear that the company decided to shelve its plans to construct**

**the plant** because of the vociferous campaign by a sizeable percentage of the local community, environmental groups, recreational groups and the Charcoalition. This withdrawal has undoubtedly saved a large area of forest and its attendant biosphere from certain destruction.

Although fresh from this win we shouldn't rest because there will always be calls for exploitation of the native forests if we don't start lobbying for the sustainability of timber production or the development of new technologies to supplant and quell the needs of the timber-resource hungry logging industry. Governments must see that with every problem an opportunity exists to improve and maybe even revolutionise an industry in different ways that they have previously considered. Education and research are the keys to this door.

In this way Australians can attain what Michael Porter, a supposed guru of management, would term the competitive advantage in the global marketplace.

We are also about to experience the embarrassing spectacle of the Federal government with dollar signs in its'

**FEDERAL  
GOVERNMENT  
WITH DOLLAR  
SIGNS IN ITS'  
EYES**

eyes try to sell off old military lands bordering the George's River. Although they are stating otherwise, it is fairly certain that there could be no other reason for the Defence Department transferring these lands to the Department of Administration and Finance and engaging the services of Price-waterhouse-Coopers to prepare a submission. These lands are situated immediately opposite the existing Georges River National Park and have areas of fairly rare riparian fauna and flora. Development would greatly detract from the aesthetics of the riverine and the National Park environment. For those of you who feel moved to act contact Leigh Martin at the Total Environment Centre or peruse their website at

Another call to arms is required to quash the appalling amendment presently before State Parliament that was introduced by the Honourable Malcolm Jones of the Outdoor Recreation Party. In this amendment to the Wilderness Act, called the Wilderness Amendment (Procedure) Bill 2002, the veritable Mr Jones wishes to dilute the act to allow appropriate recreation activities to be sustained within Wilderness areas vis. Fishing, horse riding, canoeing, bushwalking (sic), cycling, camping, vehicle-facilitated camping, with the catch-all that the list is "not limited to any of these activities". He is trying to demote wilderness areas to the status of recreation reserves. What is most galling to me is that he is purporting to represent the interests of Bushwalkers. I will say to him in this forum that he doesn't represent us in any way. I would urge all of you to write to your respective state members of parliament to vote this amendment down. For more information see <http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/prod/web/phweb.nsf/frames/bills> and drill into the Current

Michael Maack Conservation officer

Session - Legislative Council arena.

Over the last weekend I had the honour to attend the 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Environmental Education Conference at Katoomba called "Echoes Into the Future". This theme epitomised the idea that what we are doing now in Environmental conservation will be reflected, as an echo is a reflection, across the whole of future society. The seeds we plant today, the trees we save to prosper, the waterways we cherish, will repay us a hundredfold into the future. The essence of Sustainability and our current Ecological impact were highlighted. We were admonished as future eaters but in the nicest possible way. It was a revelation to our senses that we could enjoy a comfortable lifestyle without having to sacrifice too much. All we needed to do was to resolve to act and act. I would urge you all to follow these tenets and I will say adieu.

## THE GRIP OF GRAVITY

by Colin Paul gibson from A wild Blue wander

From the lockdown I can see  
A great gorge wall in front of me  
Yawning at eternity,  
Defying the grip of gravity.

Steep, steep, this buttress leads me down  
Through mist as soft as feather-down;  
Down, down, I step with quaking knees  
In dawn's half-light and hanging breeze;  
The truth that lingered near the dead  
Is resurrected in my head,  
For every single dawn is birth  
Across the face of planet Earth.

Moisture in the moss is sipped;  
Clouds descend, the wind is whipped  
With forests' scent of eucalypt,  
The valley sealed like a crypt.

What worth are wagon-loads of gold  
To kings whose hearts have frozen cold?  
The same grim hands prepare the graves  
For emperors and galley slaves ...  
What isn't here is not amiss,  
My lips the sweet white water kiss;  
The doubts that wander through my head  
Are fools to think that truth is dead.

Now, from the valley, I can see  
The mountains stand majestically,  
Cliff-faces looming powerfully  
Defying the grip of gravity.

A Wild Blue Wander a book of Bushwalking poetry may be purchased by emailing [turton@smartchat.net.au](mailto:turton@smartchat.net.au)





## NATIONWIDE CLUBS PROGRAM LAUNCHED



Outdoor Australia magazine is pioneering a program that gives walking clubs the opportunity to raise awareness of the benefits of club membership.

This is achieved by giving clubs a presence in the magazine, showcasing the incredible depth of experience possessed by club members to a large number of enthusiasts.

It is hoped that this program will encourage a new generation of walkers to join clubs and thus be exposed to the bushwalking code and the value of respecting and protecting wild places. But it's not just about attracting novices. Experienced walkers will be a great asset to clubs experiencing a shortage of leaders, so attracting experienced enthusiasts is also a goal.

### THE PROGRAM COMPRISES TWO PARTS:

**Walk Profiles:** clubs are assigned a full page of the magazine with which to profile a walk. This page promotes responsible walking and recommends club membership. In addition, a 'Tread Lightly' or 'Technique' tip helps to spread the word on responsible outdoor practices. All Walk Profiles are assembled to strict guidelines thus ensuring accuracy and consistency.

**Equipment Reviews:** Clubs are provided with the latest equipment to use. The club tests this equipment and their findings are shared with other enthusiasts through "real world" equipment reviews in the magazine. Feedback will also be provided to manufacturers, giving club members a voice in product development. In some cases clubs will be able to keep the tested equipment for its future use.

These pages will highlight the contributing club's contact details to give readers a point of contact and the contributing club exposure.

All clubs will benefit from the regular exposure given to the concept of club membership within the club pages. In addition, the Outdoor Australia web site will provide information on the benefits of walking with a club, plus links to federation and club web-sites: <http://www.outdooraustralia.com>

If you wish to provide feedback or comment on this new undertaking, or register your club for participation, please contact Outdoor Australia's Clubs Editor.

Carl Roe - Clubs Editor

Outdoor Australia Magazine

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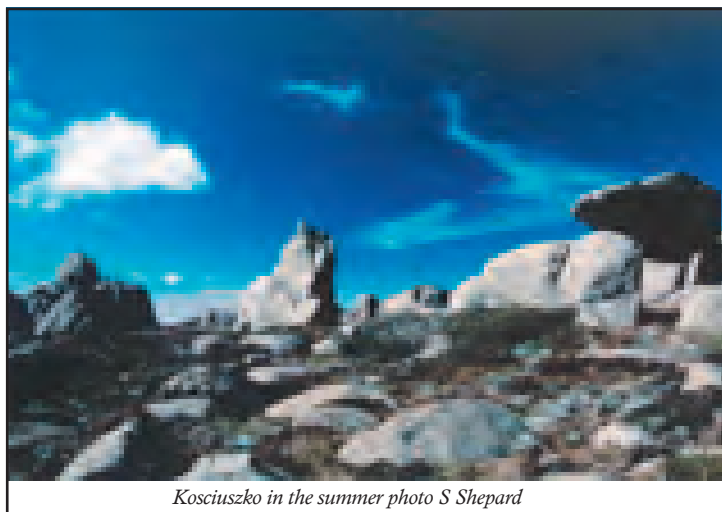
## A REPORT FROM THE KOSCIUSZKO NATIONAL PARK FORUM

At the most recent meeting (19 and 20 September) members of the Community Forum considered how best to manage the summit and main range area in the future. Forum Chair, Rick Farley, said he was pleased with the progress that had been achieved and the level of agreement reached.

Local Forum representative Wilf Hilder from

The Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs NSW said:

There clearly was a wide range of views around the table, but areas of consensus were emerging. For instance, it was



*Kosciuszko in the summer photo S Shepard*

broadly agreed that there should be no new walking tracks across the main range. It was acknowledged that there should be more resources devoted to visitor education, information and interpretation facilities.

Our approach is to do everything possible to protect the Park as a national and international icon, while still allowing visitors to enjoy the experiences it offers. We all agreed that protecting the natural values of the Summit and the Main Range was our primary goal and that visitor use must not impact on those values.

This may mean greater regulation of visitors to the summit in peak times such as Easter, Christmas and New Year.

More accurate data on visitor numbers and distribution is needed to assist such decisions. This will mean cooperation with all Park users and operators combined with ongoing monitoring of visitors and their impact on the Park environment.

Wilf Hilder said the future of the Summit Road was a

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

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



critical issue.

There was some agreement that the road should be rehabilitated and narrowed to a walking track while still allowing some vehicular (whatever form that may be) access for services and emergencies.

Further discussion also is needed on whether mountain bikers should continue to be allowed to ride to Rawson Pass.

However, there was agreement that some infrastructure (eg toilets) is required for those visiting the Summit. It was recognised that such infrastructure should be as unobtrusive as possible, non-permanent, well designed and of high quality -acknowledging that this will cost more. However, more discussion is required on the location, type and removability.

### COMMUNITY FORUM CONSIDERS KOSCIUSZKO SUMMIT

Members of the Community Forum, which was established to help develop a new plan of management for Kosciuszko National Park, have recently tackled some of the bigger issues facing the future of this great national park. The 21 representatives have been meeting

monthly since they first came together back in June and have discussed issues as diverse as weeds and pest animals, natural and cultural heritage

The Community Forum now has two more meetings before releasing a progress report to the public in December 2002. Members will regroup in the New Year to continue working with the National Parks & Wildlife Service to produce a draft Plan of Management by July 2003.

The draft plan will then go on public exhibition for 3 months (August-October 2003).

The discussion paper on the Summit and the Main Range is currently available at [www.npws.nsw.gov.au](http://www.npws.nsw.gov.au). You will also be able to find the Progress Report here in December. For more details, contact the NPWS or your local Community Forum representative. Wilf Hilder at [president@bushwalking.org.au](mailto:president@bushwalking.org.au)

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*Continued from page 1*  
or inexperienced groups have often been benighted in Kalang Falls.

Oberon SES search and vertical rescue teams were responded to Kanangra Walls for a 6:00am Monday start.

Naturally, it was expected that such a large group would make slow progress through the canyon and that they would probably either be found on their way out of the canyon or cliff bound east of Murdering Gully. This is a common navigation mistake made by overdue groups trying to get out of the canyon in fading light.

A possible voice contact was made from a small rock lookout that overlooks most of the canyon. Careful viewing revealed that the group were around 300 metres below at the bottom of the fourth pitch; not quite halfway though the canyon!

A group of four SES personnel trained in vertical rescue entered the canyon at 8:10am and reached the students at around 11am. By 11:30am, the overall Charles Sturt student leader had been located and the students regrouped. It was clear why they were so slow. They had lost equipment and were down to just eight descenders among the 23 persons! One of the students had also injured his leg in a fall but was trying to keep moving.

Rescue via helicopter of this person was tried but abandoned after several attempts due to the prevailing high winds. This student group was really too large and inexperienced with insufficient gear to quickly move through Kalang Falls. Helicopter rescue was really required for all 23 persons.

Another vertical rescue crew of Bathurst City and Oberon SES volunteers and two Special Casualty Access Team (SCAT) ambulance paramedics then took additional harnesses and descenders into the canyon. The aim of the rescue became to reach the bottom of Kanangra Deep before dark.

However once the injured man began moving he deteriorated quickly. Two rescuers camped with him overnight hoping that helicopter rescue next day (Tuesday) would be possible. Meanwhile the remainder of the student group were lead down the fifth pitch. Additionally one of the canyons deteriorated psychologically to the point that she could not abseil this 40 metre pitch and had to be 'abseil assisted' down the pitch. (She descended linked together

and under the control of a vertical rescue person).

The fifth pitch was completed by 4:00pm. However, even with extra improvised harnesses and descenders there was still insufficient gear to move the group efficiently. The extra gear was also insufficient to do the next two-stage abseil. Without either extra long ropes or multiple sets of ropes all abseilers must gather on a midway landing that is



way too small for 23 persons plus rescuers. The group would have to spend their second night camping rough (and cold). For most of them, their last food was 6:00pm Sunday.

Meanwhile a ground party of Police Rescue and Correctional Services Officers began the descent of Murdering Gully to deliver food and blankets.

Eventually the winds eased enough for the injured man to be winched into a helicopter. A SCAT paramedic was lowered down to the remaining group to assist with the winching out of another canyoner with minor injuries.

Around 6:00pm the second vertical rescue team reached the canyons. During the night Correctional Services Officers scrambled and climbed their way around the final waterfall of the canyon to deliver food and blankets to the base of the two stage abseil. A rope was lowered down to haul up the food and blankets for the canyons.

By Tuesday morning, rescue operations had escalated to include 68 SES volunteers from outside the Central



West Division including Southern Highlands and Sydney Western Divisions. Around another 30 from the Central West Division units in Oberon, Bathurst City and Orange were also involved.

**Additional Comment - There have been other rescues from Kalang Falls in the past. The most notable one was in September 1970 when Dennis Rittson of the Kameruka Bushwalking Club received serious injuries to both arms from a falling boulder. The Search and Rescue Section of the NSW Federation of Bushwalking Clubs (now Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad Inc.) did the rescue. Members of the Sydney Rock Climbing Club acted as the "Rock Squad". A series of flying foxes were set up to haul Dennis out on a stretcher.**

More recently, there was a death from a simple fall where the person suffered head injuries while walking between abseils. There have been many other rescues by helicopter from the canyon and the exit route, Murdering Gully, over the years.

Although Kalang Falls is a fairly straightforward trip for experienced parties - it is still a difficult and dangerous place. (Capable climbers and scramblers can reverse the canyon or escape by traversing to Murdering Gully). The canyon is suitable for beginners if they are accompanied by competent and experienced abseilers who can quickly supervise the rigging and de-rigging of the abseil pitches. Time lost from jammed ropes or slow rigging can easily lead to being benighted in the canyon. Beginners should never make up the majority of the canyoning party. ALL people who visit abseil canyons should have their own abseil gear. The experienced abseilers should also have knowledge of self-rescue techniques. The party in the above report was both extraordinarily large and very inexperienced and ill equipped for such an undertaking.

Rescue is difficult from Kanangra Gorge and its side canyons. The area is subject to high winds and occasional snow. Canyoners need to be careful, as these gorges are full of loose scree rock and vegetation. Several persons have been killed from large falls but did not die immediately but slowly and painfully.

Edited by Keith Maxwell (President BWRS) from a media release by Oberon SES.



impossible); and

□ Alan Andrews' analyses, published in Royal Australian Historical Society papers and in his book *Earliest Monaro and Burragorang*, Tabletop Press 1998.

Andrews approached Barrallier's route partly by analysing the 1806 expedition of George Caley. Caley followed in Barrallier's footsteps and was guided by one John Warby, who was also on Barrallier's trip.

Andrews and I independently identified the key hill in the Tonalli Valley from which Barrallier took bearings. But



Cave 1 - Under the cliffs at Gander Head

Andrews' version of the route differs from mine in two interesting respects. The first is the location of the depot itself. In my book I decided that the depot

must have been in the headwaters of Gillans Creek, not Sheehys Creek where it had previously been placed. However, I think Andrews' arguments have brought me into line and I'm prepared to concede that Sheehys Creek is may be right after all.

The other matter of difference is in the identity of Barrallier's cave near Byrnes Gap. But this one I'm unwilling to concede.

### 20-MAN CAVE (PLUS WOMBATS)

On approaching Burns Gap on 25 November, Barrallier sheltered in a cave from a thunderstorm while two of his men went to reconnoitre the view ahead. In my book I argued that the cave was the one located along the cliffline beneath Durruma Cap on the Axehead Range (AGD GR419246 Yeranderie). Let's call it Cave 1.

Alan Andrews argues for a different cave. It is at GR427240, lower down, in the conglomerate band. I'll call it Cave 2.

Keeping an open mind, I went looking for Cave 2 to judge it for myself. I certainly found it, but nearby I found yet another cave. Also in the conglomerate, it's in the head of a small steep gully at GR428238. Cave 3.

To satisfy the journal account, the cave should satisfy several criteria:

(i) *It would be reached after crossing several north-south ridges, and then climbing steeply. All three caves could fit this criterion.*

(ii) *It would be about half a mile from Byrnes Gap. Only Cave 1 is within half a mile from the Gap: the other Caves are twice that distance. However, Barrallier's recorded distances are not reliable*

so this is probably not a fatal issue.

(iii) *It should be able to accommodate 20 people.* In general, people's judgment of the capacity of a cave is extremely subjective, and depends on the whether one is trying to stuff a crowd in for shelter, however uncomfortably, or trying to provide ideal sleeping space for all. Twenty people could in fact be stuffed into each contender for Barrallier's cave. Caves 2 and 3 would be fairly uncomfortable, but Cave 1 would be most uncomfortable.

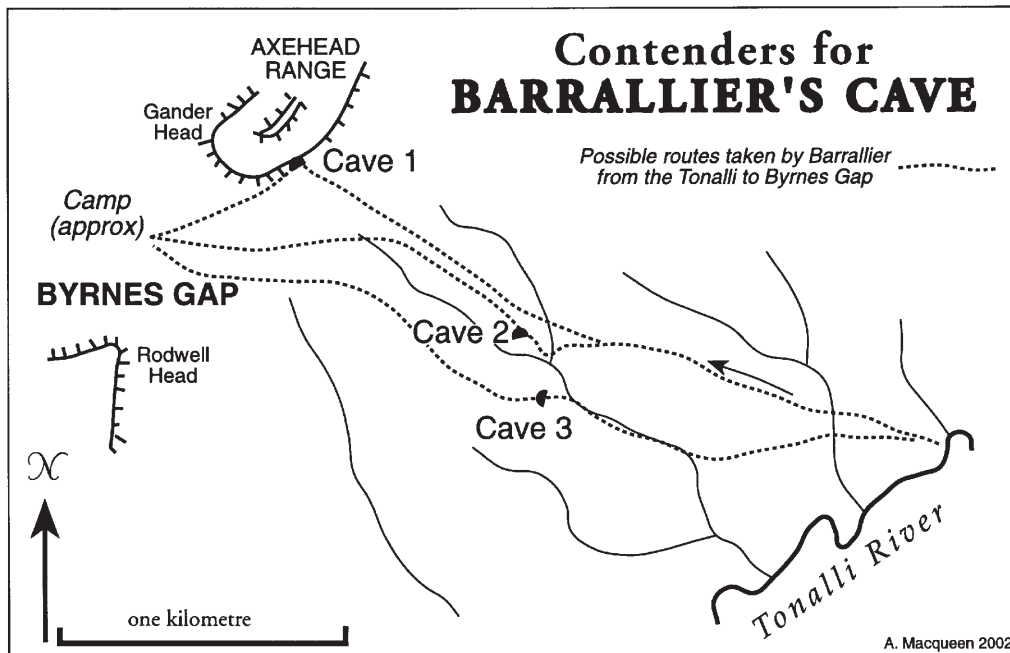
(iv) *It must be so located that a weary person could travel to a view point and get a view to the westward, and return, within an hour or so.* Cave 1 best satisfies this: from the cave, one can fairly quickly scramble up a rough gully to Gander Head, and obtain an excellent view. From Caves 2 and 3, the closest point from which one can get any view to the westward is the small hillock in the middle of Byrnes Gap. You would be pushing it to get there and return in an hour, though I think Cave 3 is a little better than Cave 2 in this respect.

Based on the above, I find it impossible to state a preference. However, there is one last criterion that might be the clincher.

(iv) *According to Barrallier's Aboriginal companions, the cave is 'the home of wombats'.* Now, Cave 3 is quite definitely the home of wombats - there are deep wombat burrows excavated at the back at one end. Caves 1 and 2 have no burrows, nor does their rock strata lend itself to burrows.

So there you are, if you believe in wombats you'll probably settle on Cave 3. But don't take my word for it - go visit the caves and decide for yourself. Perhaps you'll find yet another cave!

## Contenders for BARRALLIER'S CAVE



A. Macqueen 2002

## WHO WAS BARRALLIER?

What was a Frenchman doing in the Rum Corps? Why was he sent to see 'the King of the Mountains'? And why did he disappear soon after the expedition? These tantalising questions have been answered, but they still make for an interesting story.

Borne in Toulon, France, on 19 October 1773, he was baptised 'Louis Francois Barralier', thought he later called himself Francis Louis Barrallier. His father was a prominent local royalist, and they were forced to escape Toulon during the Revolution. Barrallier wound up in



Britain, and subsequently New South Wales - aspiring to the job of Surveyor General. The best job he could get was as an ensign in the Rum Corps. He was

of the Aboriginal people he met along the way. It is often quoted on matters anthropological, being one of the few relatively comprehensive early accounts



Cave 2 - Plenty of standing room

however sent by Governor King as a surveyor and explorer on several expeditions, the most notable being the 1802 trip into the Southern Blue Mountains.

Unfortunately the next year this promising young colonial fell victim of the politics besetting the governor and the Corps, and had to leave. Nevertheless he went on to pursue a distinguished career as a soldier and surveyor in the West Indies before enjoying a long retirement in England.

Few early Australian explorations could have been the subject of more fascination and speculation than Barrallier's. Most of the research has been done by bushwalkers rather than main-stream historians. The reason is that much of the route still lies in wild country, part of the Kanangra-Boyd Wilderness Area.

Many bushwalkers travel the area, and for the nearly a century many of them have wondered about this white man who blundered around the place before them.

Reinforcing this fascination is the thought that when he turned around, Barrallier was quite close to crossing the range. 'If he had only walked along the Boyd Range ...' we say. But that's pretty silly - the 'if only' situation can be applied to many failed explorations.

Another reason for the fascination is his lengthy journal, written in French, complete with frustrating ambiguities and errors concerning route details. The journal is most notable for its observations of the activities and customs

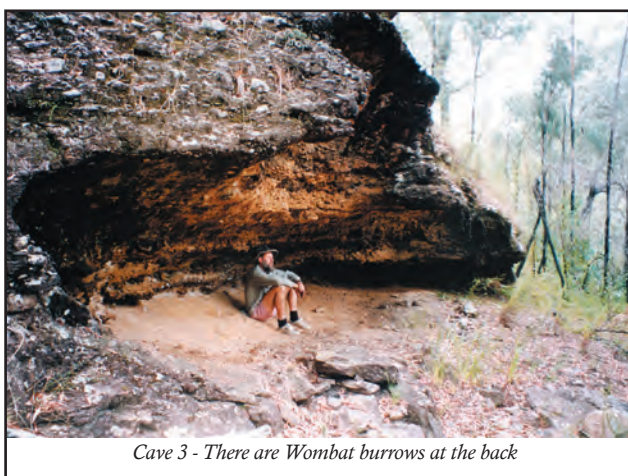
dealing with Aborigines.

Historian Jim Smith has pointed out the existence of what appears to be a more detailed account of the first day of the expedition - Barrallier's original unedited version apparently. If the rest of the unedited account should ever turn up, it will be a treasure trove.

## NEW BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Barrallier enthusiasts may be interested to know that more biographical information has come to light since I wrote *Blue Mountains to Bridgetown*.

Harry Steward, a British authority on cartography, has undertaken a great deal of research of the Barrallier family, and has managed to considerably round out Francis's story. I believe he may be contemplating a book of his own, but



Cave 3 - There are Wombat burrows at the back

some of his material is summarised in a paper *Francis Barrallier: The Man behind the Maps* (in *The Globe*, Journal of Australian Map Circle, #50, 2000).

Among other things, Steward paints a more detailed picture of the Barrallier family in Toulon and of the father's key role in opposing the republicans, explains their activities on arrival in England - or Milford Haven in Wales, to be correct - and how Francis came to acquire the patronage of Charles Greville. He also shows how Francis's whole life story is closely linked to that of his father and brothers.

Steward adds further mystery to Barrallier's story. For instance, although



he and his wife Isabel had no children, there was, intriguingly, a lad who took his name and received a legacy in Isabel's will.

## A WHINGE FOR WHEENGEE WHUNGEE

A few years ago someone decided to name a certain canyon in the Wollangambe system 'Whungee Wheungee'.

Now I dare say this seemed funny at the time. Trouble is, few of today's canyoners understand the origin of the name, or the intended humour. In fact, the name is really quite inappropriate and probably offensive.

Francis Barrallier's terminus in the Kanangra Boyd Wilderness was probably Johnston Falls on Wheungee Whungee Creek (also known as West Christys Creek). The name Wheungee Whungee was placed on the map by Myles Dunphy, to commemorate one of the players in Barrallier's expedition. Several other people associated with the expedition have also been commemorated with local place names - Badbury, Goondel, Le Tonsure, Bungin and Barrallier himself.

Wheungee Whungee was the daughter of Goondel, the Aboriginal chief whom Barrallier met on the Wollondilly. Goondel apparently offered her as a wife for Bungin, one of Barrallier's Aboriginal assistants.

Headwater sections of Wheungee Whungee Creek have quite high waterfalls, and these were described as 'canyons' in the Sydney University Rover Crew's 1970 publication 'Gundungurra'. Perhaps this knowledge stimulated the naming of the canyon in the Wollangambe country.

I do not know whether it is appropriate, from a cultural perspective, for the name of an Aboriginal woman to be assigned to a landscape feature, especially by a non-Aboriginal male. Surely however, it is quite irreverent to further take her name, turn it around, and apply it to a place outside her own country.

Canyoners and guide-book writers: it would be a nice thing to do, on this 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Barrallier expedition, to rename the canyon concerned. Jamrick Canyon, perhaps. Or Elbon Canyon.





# PADDLING IN THE OUTBACK

You did read it right. We did some magnificent paddles on legendary rivers in legendary landscapes, Cooper Creek, Coongie Lake, Diamantina Lakes, Lake Julius, Katherine Gorge, Lawn Hill Gorge, Roper River and beautiful idyllic Gregory River. I intended to take a group of 12 and finally accepted 17 including myself & Dennis to provide 12 paddlers in our one and only Canadian for the Katherine Marathon (teams event). I had a lot of enquiries about the trip and had to refuse quite a few. After reading this article they may be thankful.

Off we went. Mitchell had a thermal pool, travelling band and bush dinner for \$5 at the pub Then on to Welford NP where there was a beautiful waterhole on the Barcoo but the toilet from hell.

The tourist officer at Windorah advised us to take a back road, longer but better condition to Diamantina Lakes NP. One hundred km of sand fishtailing later we rejoined the gravel road to the Park. Willi and Irmi in a brand new Outback had a strange noise. So much for the Outback it had broken a strut in the suspension. A planning disaster we couldn't watch the STATE OF ORIGIN and see Queensland thrashed. Wonderful paddling on the waterholes and then onto Winton but Mick and Joan in their big flash four wheel drive busted a fan belt. Des and Joy became fed up with the corrugations and decided to travel on the verge but hit a culvert and busted the Canadian for the Katherine Marathon.

After the mud holes of the Diamantina posing as waterholes, and the loss of Rhonda and Peter's windscreen to a flying German in a Britz Camper, we at last arrived at the crystal clear running Gregory River. The Gregory River and nearby Lawn Hill NP are breathtakingly beautiful. We gorged ourselves at morning tea at Bowthorn Sfa;tion and on to Kingfisher Camp where we had a 20 minute practice on the Nicholson River for the 10 of us who were paddling the now taped canoe in the marathon. We ignored pleas of "but I've never paddled a Canadian with a single paddle before" and made sure we could manage a straight line.

Next the Gulf Track to Cape Crawford, a BBQ Dinner at the pub and the STATE OF ORIGIN. Some of us continued up the Gulf Track to Roper

*Caryll Sefton NPA Illawarra & Illawara Ramblers*

Bar where we saw an idyllic lily lagoon part of a huge area to be gazetted as a NP this year and developed to be commercially viable. The remainder opted for the two lane bitumen, a helicopter flight to one of the local Lost Cities and alas a motel.

Now the event we had all been waiting for, the Katherine Marathon. Would our planning work? Would the car keys end up in the right place for the seven car shuffles. We did look a bit old compared to the other contestants who had Kevlar boats and seemed very young, fit and confident. Would we even finish? Checkpoint 4 and everything was going smoothly. Above the checkpoint there was a rapid and people and kayaks were everywhere as they tipped at the top. Some even walked down. Peter and Rhonda appeared around the bend fully upright but something was amiss. They were a bit low in the water and as they turned the canoe full of water to the bank to change paddlers; they were swimming too. Despite other near mishaps we finished the forty nine klm after 6 hours 20 minutes. We were very proud of ourselves and even more so when we all received a medal for third place in the teams event and two columns in the local paper where we were dubbed as the "paddling pensioners"!

We followed this up with an overnight paddle up Katherine Gorge to gorge seven. This is a politically difficult paddle to arrange and if anyone is considering it then I will provide further details.

From Katherine we headed home via more rotten roads yet more wonderful landscapes, lakes and waterholes. The big reliable workhorse the Toyota Troop Carrier with Ron and Barbara busted its transmission and our Forster ripped the plastic sump guard and consequently we ended up with a ding the size of a cricket ball in the sump. Nothing happened to Col and Jennifer in their Liberty and they drove faster than all of us except Sue.

Cooper Creek where Burke and Wills died is spectacular, lots of birds, fish beautiful River Red Gums, magnificent sunsets and all set in gibber plains. We finished the tour with a paddle on the Wilson River and brief visit to Currawinya NP where an area is being fenced to conserve Bilbys. Our last night was at Hungerford where we had a BBQ

tea at the pub and saw the STATE OF ORIGIN where NSW was narrowly beaten. For better or worse I don't think

## WIRIMBIRRA

### SANCTUARY

**A Memorial to David G Stead  
The Man Who Saved the Koala  
The History of Wirrimbirra (to preserve)**

This sanctuary, located on the Old Hume Hwy, Bargo consists of 90 hectares of pristine Iron Bark Forest for bushwalks and research and another 6 hectares forming the entrance that contains the visitor and education facilities.

Thistle Harris, a biologist and author, to create a memorial to her husband, David G Stead, purchased the land in 1962. In 1964 the land was transferred to the National Trust of Australia (NSW) and then leased it back to the David G Stead Memorial Wildlife Research Foundation of Australia.

From 1964 to 1984 the register of members reads like a Who's Who of the pioneers of the Environment Movement in Australia. From 1973 to 1995 the Dept of Education leased the cabins and classrooms for a "School of Specific Purpose" with thousands of pupils passing through the program.

With the death of Thistle in 1990, Wirrimbirra lost its major financial source and management inspiration and sadly the sanctuary went into decline.



*David Stead - Founder of Wirrimbirra*

My induction into Wirrimbirra was more accidental than design. My dear lady, who had been invited onto the board as a Biologist Consultant in 1997, was returning home late in the evenings, often devastated. It soon became ap-

parent that there were serious problems at Wirrimbirra so I attended a board meeting and was promptly elected to be treasurer only to find that the foundation was teetering on the edge bankruptcy. The decline was arrested by the introduction of several environment business enterprises coupled to some economic rationalization; then the Stead Board and the National Trust came to an agreement on a Master Plan for capital works to be funded out of Thistle's bequest for Wirrimbirra.

Wirrimbirra has now been rejuvenated; having recently won two prizes as a tourist attraction, with the new Visitors Centre, Café and Accommodation all profitable enterprises. Several Bushwalking Clubs are taking advantage of our facilities for conferences, training, celebrations or a place to relax after walking one of the adjacent bush tracks. The David G Stead Foundation is a non-profit charitable organisation whose only employee is the sanctuary a manager, a delightfully sweet and innocent lady, Joy Hafey; with all the maintenance carried out by the Friends of Wirrimbirra Volunteers. Our Cycle of Life in an undisturbed native forest education program is re establishing Wirrimbirra into various schools environment syllabus.

#### WHO WAS DAVID STEAD

Probably very few readers will have any knowledge of David, his life, and his achievements, which is a regrettable reflection in the acknowledgment of our Pioneers of the Environment Move-

ment.

David was a passionate young man when he joined the "NSW Naturalist society" in 1898, and by 1901 he was an active member of "International Conciliation" one of the first peace bodies based in New York. In 1910 he was elected a Fellow Member of the prestigious scientific British Linnean Society.



*A group of children at Wirrimbirra 1971*

David was one of the first to recognise that the preservation and protection of our wildlife would only come through political agitation. He started lobbying politicians with the formation and founding of the Wildlife Preservation Society in 1909. Their first political legislative success was the "Birds and Animal Protection Act of NSW" in 1918.

His next target was the huge marsupial

fur trade with America that threatened the Koala and Platypus with extinction. Our politicians were not sympathetic to banning this trade through legislation so he lobbied President Hoover in Washington. Hoover was so impressed with his arguments that he promptly banned the importation of all marsupial skins; and the fur trade came to an abrupt end.

Is this the first known effective Green Ban in Australia? He may well have been uncompromising when it came to conservation, definitely a male chauvinist (a product of his times), but loved women and children (married 3 times), and a lover of Australia. The Mitchell library has a collection of his books and articles available for research.

Why is there no "Hall of Fame Education Center" where we can instruct our young ones on the efforts of these Pioneers of the Environment Movement? "Lest We Forget."

Robert Sloss  
President



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THE AO SHALL REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT BUT WILL ACT  
ON ANY MATTER INCLUDED IN THE DUTY STATEMENT AS  
DIRECTED BY THE HON SECRETARY

The AO shall be available in the NPA Office or at home for an average of 16  
hours per week, usually up to 5 hours on each of Monday Wednesday and Friday  
(See also para 5 )

The rate of payment for an employee will be in line with the NSW Award for  
Clerical and Administrative Employees for Part Time work

Duty Statement (Not necessarily in priority order)

- 1) Record hours on duty and location in an attendance book

- 2) Collect mail thrice weekly,  
record and distribute to office bearers.  
Take action as directed. on routine mat-  
ters

- 3) Bank all cheques and send copy  
of deposit slip with an explanation of  
reason for payment to Hon Treasurer

- 4) Remind Office bearers to sub-  
mit written reports in good time

- 5) Circulate reports to all regular  
attendees at General Meetings i.e. those  
who attended, or apologised for, the  
previous meeting

- 6) Attend and record proceedings  
of monthly General Meetings on tape  
or by shorthand, transcribe and submit  
to Hon Secretary for editing (3 hours  
paid)

- 7) ~~Differs request~~  
or approved by the President

- 8) Record all outgoing corre-  
spondence passing through the  
office.

- 9) Monitor the telephone an-  
swering machine or similar, advise  
the appropriate Office bearer and  
dispatch clubs lists etc, to enquirers

- 10) Check e mail traffic and  
confirm with applicable officer on  
who will respond

- 11) Assist in preparation and  
dispatch of Annual Return forms  
to clubs

- 12) Dispatch receipts and insur-  
ance documents to clubs

- 13) Collate and process as  
directed all information on in-  
surance claims or potential claims  
as provided by clubs whether  
Personal Accident, . Public liability  
or significant near misses , (Clubs  
will decide on "potential" or "sig-  
nificance"

- 14) If requested by Clubs and  
with approval of President or  
Secretary perform secretarial work  
for clubs, including establishment  
1 maintenance of data bases for at-  
tendance records Invoice clubs on  
cost recovery basis as determined  
by Treasurer

- 15) Assist in preparing appli-  
cations for grants

- 16) Report in writing to Pres-  
ident each month on all activities

- 17) Perform other duties as  
directed by the President or in  
his/her absence by the Vice Presi-  
dent or Hon. Secretary

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# BUSHWALKERS WILDERNESS RESCUE SQUAD REPORT

Keith Maxwell President BWRS

On Saturday 21st September Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad (BWRS) members unsuccessfully searched the Wanda Beach sand hills for a missing man. The father of the missing man attended the morning briefing and expressed gratitude for the effort that was being made.

This search was conducted in urban parkland north of Wanda beach, bounded in the east by the beach and west by the main road to Kurnell. The terrain consisted of sand dunes, generally flat, with low thick heath/dune vegetation and the area is criss-crossed with many paths and foot-tracks. The area is also heavily visited by people walking, jogging, walking dogs etc. No evidence of the missing person was found, although plenty of the usual discarded rubbish was encountered. Many snakes were seen in the area.

He was later found dead wedged between two buildings in Cronulla.

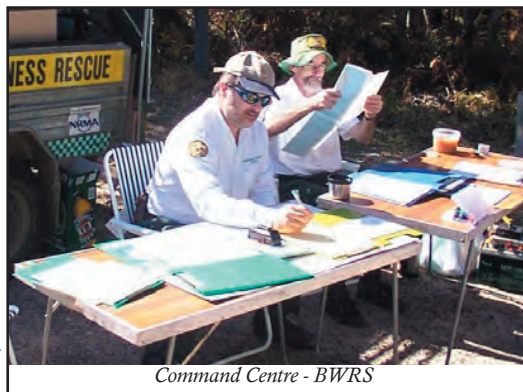
On Sunday 22nd September BWRS was again involved in trying to locate a missing person outside Bundeena. 16 BWRS members attended, 10 K9 squad members with 1 search dog, 2 WICEN members. Duty Officer, St Tony Stackhouse from Sutherland Police, gave a briefing in the morning and visited during the day. The search was conducted in the Royal National Park in an area bounded by Jibbon beach in the north, the coast in the east, residential area to the west, and south of Jibbon hill. The terrain consists of low coastal heath very thick in places. Many tracks cross the area, and many people also visit this area during the day. No evidence was found of the missing person. The search dog did find an abandoned tent site, and also quickly found the source of a smell that one of the search teams found difficult to locate. Once again, many snakes were seen.

Two other VRA Squads - WICEN radio operators and the K9 Dog Squad assisted BWRS. No evidence was found of this (still) missing man.

**On the weekend of 19/20 October BWRS held a major/realistic search exercise in the wild country of Kanangra Boyd National Park. Aircraft wreckage was seen through smoke during the 1983 bushfires. It seems that it could have been a missing RAAF Dragon freighter aircraft – see**



missingdragon.tripod.com/ BWRS has always had one of the strongest groups of vertical rescue operators in the VRA. Our "Rock Squad" is skilled in lifting and lowering stretchers as well as being bush fit. Their skills are recognised by the State Rescue Board. Shortly a new group will commence a training



Command Centre - BWRS

V 1 & VM training program.

The BWRS is offering the St John Senior First Aid training for members of Confederation bushwalking clubs on the weekend of 26/27 October. This great first aid course is run by an Instructor with a wealth of practical experience and advice. Another course will be offered on 24/25 May 2003. Registrations again will be via a \$20 deposit payable



A man in a hurry at the start of the 14th annual NavShield

search and rescue in NSW. The Board members had a very warm / memorable reception.

Quite separately some of the VRA specialist squads met on 14<sup>th</sup> October to review Regional co-ordination and to exchange squad contact details and outline respective skills. Other squads included the WICEN radio amateurs, Civil Air Patrol, K9 Dog Squad and Cave Rescue Squad.

For more details of BWRS see our web site - [www.bwrs.org.au](http://www.bwrs.org.au) To contact BWRS about membership or enquiries

BWRS DATES FOR 2003

FIRST AID TRAINING MAY 24 / 25

NAVSHIELD JULY 5/6 JULY

FIRST AID TRAINING OCTOBER 25/26

## THE NAVSHIELD

by Merryn Horrocks

held in Tallanganda State Forest and National Park 15km west of Braidwood on 6-7 July. The Navshield is a rogaine organised by the Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad (BWRS) for members of emergency services groups, bushwalking clubs and rogainers. Teams can enter either the 11-hour or the 30-hour event.

This year's event attracted 84 one-day teams and 59 two-day teams; in all, around 580 competitors. The terrain was very varied from open hills, to thick scrub, to flat, featureless terrain in the west, making the navigation a real challenge. The weather was fine both weekends, although gale force winds on Saturday did knock a few tents down!

The Navshield was won by Newcastle Bushwalking Club (who won it last year as well). This team visited 32 checkpoints and 4 radio controls and walked about 80km cross-country. To manage this amazing effort, they walked right through the night as well as both days! Class 2 was won by RAAF Richmond - HSIM 36 Squadron Land Rescue Team 1, and class 3 was won by rogainers Richard and Andrew Stone. The 1-day event was taken out by the Berowra Bushwackers.

to BWRS Secretary (PO Box 22 CANTERBURY 2193) along with a stamped self-addressed envelope.

Two BWRS members attended the Annual Conference of the NSW Volunteer Rescue Association Inc. (VRA - BWRS is a member squad) on 12<sup>th</sup> October. It is always a good chance to network. An issue of importance was the State Rescue Board accreditation of the specialist squads of the VRA (such as BWRS). BWRS is accredited for bush





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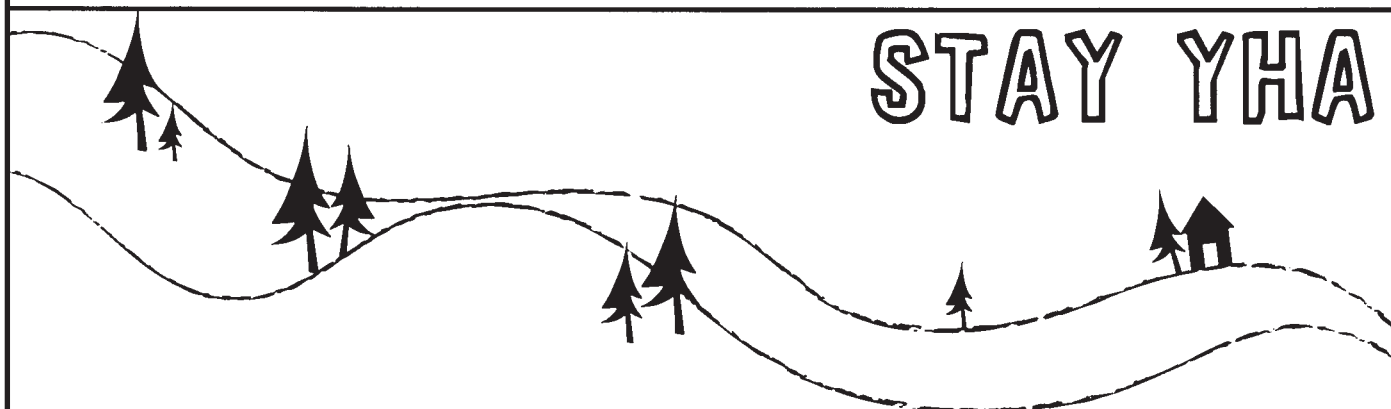
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