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## 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



- 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](mailto:friendsofthecolo@optusnet.com.au)



Carol & Bradm 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.

*Continued on page*

## ANZAC DAY AT SPLENDOUR ROCK 2004

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 bushwalker from the 80 or 90 who gathered at the first service in 1948. Keith



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

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

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 wilderness area & for their help in

*Continued on page 9*



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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  
E-mail editor@bushwalking.org.au

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.

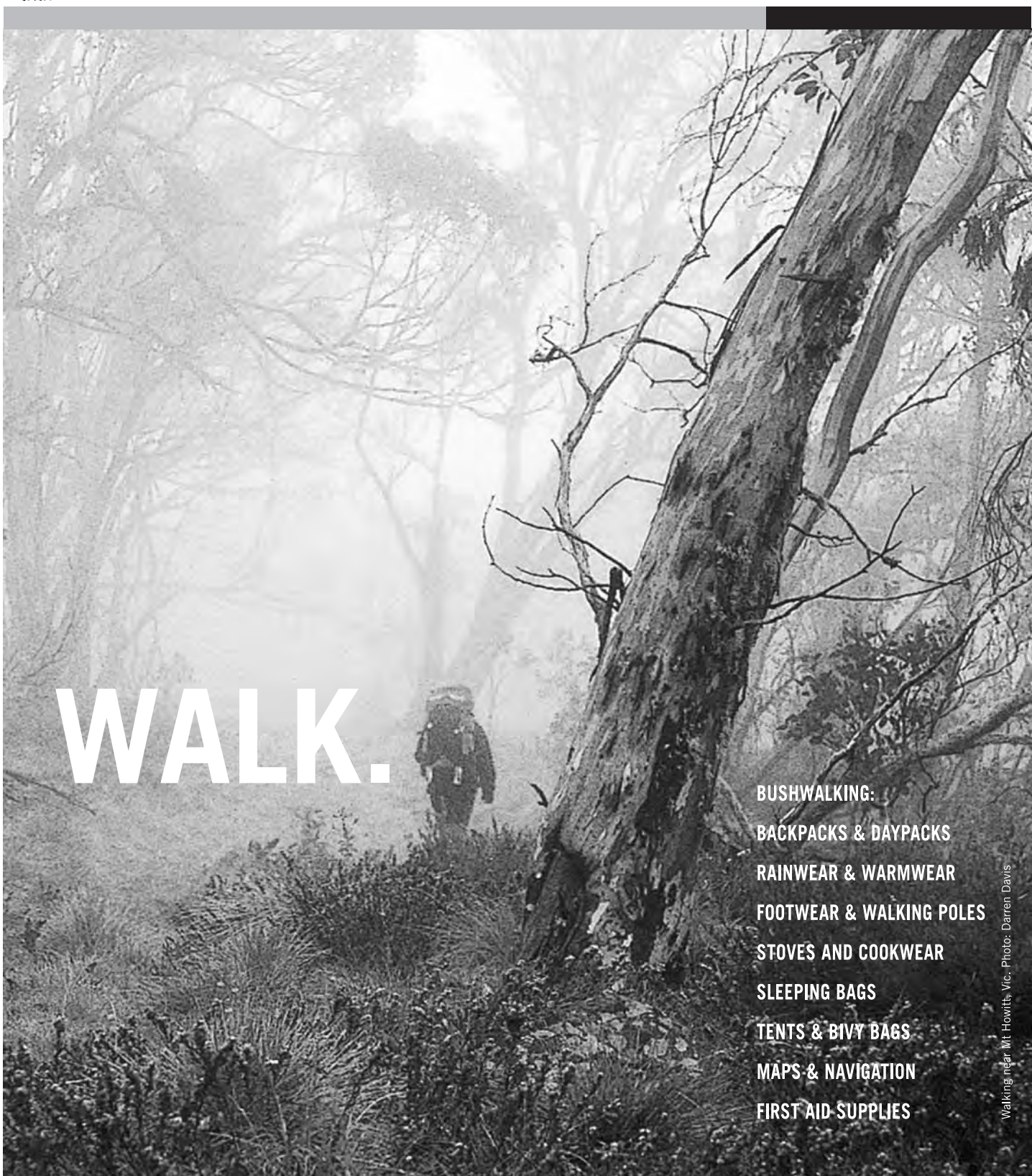
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**Deadlines for magazine**  
Summer edition, 2nd week in October-  
Autumn 2nd week in January - Winter, 2nd week in April - Spring, 2nd week in July

**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.

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Walking near Mt Howitt, Vic. Photo: Darren Davis

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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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## 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, Xiyan, 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



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

### 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.

GEOFF DOWSETT  
JOHN LANGSTON  
PO BOX 582 PENNANT HILLS 1715  
PH 9484 0321  
email xcyt@bigpond.com

## WIRIMBIRRA SANCTUARY

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



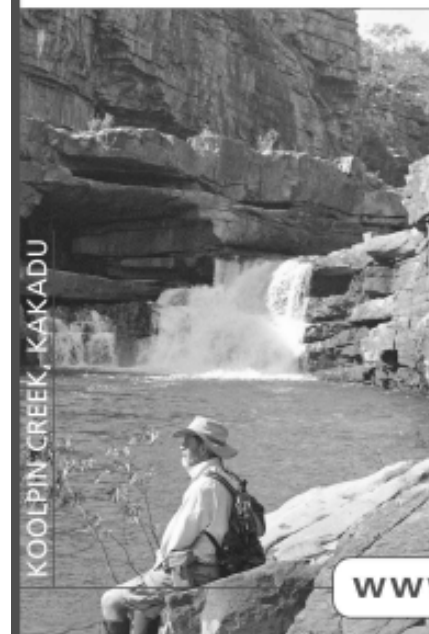
a 90-ha flora and fauna reserve and research sanctuary, managed by the David G Stead Memorial Wildlife Research Foundation of Australia on behalf of the National Trust. Wirrimbirra is located at 3105 Remembrance Drive, 3 km north of Bargo (about half-way between Bargo and Tahmoor), and consists of open 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](http://www.wirrimbirrasanctuary) or phone Wirrimbirra on (02) 4684 1112.

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Brisbane Water National Park is a major park north of the Hawkesbury river encompassing over 12000 hectares. The Girrakool entry is located near the freeway on the old Pacific highway and has several walks throughout. One particular walk that is a recommended is a 2 to 3 hour loop down the west side to cross over Piles Creek and back up the east side.

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

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 trial 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 trial 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.

Several other Local Walks and Areas of Interest

- Little Box Head - Bouddi National Park
- Putty Beach to Little Beach - Bouddi National Park
- Kincumba Mountain Reserve
- Bulgandry - Aboriginal engraving site Bouddi National Park
- Staples Lookout - Brisbane Water National Park

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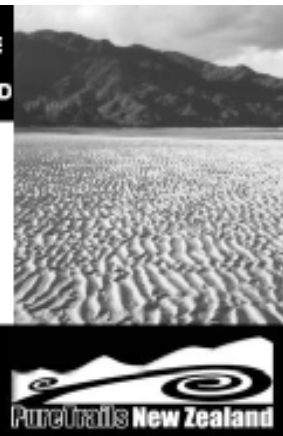
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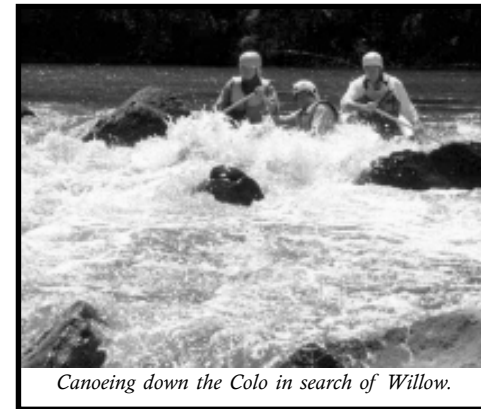
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From Page 1

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

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.

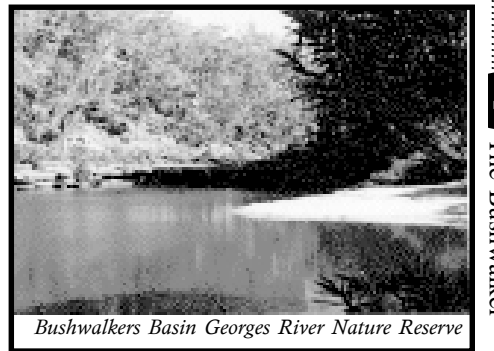
The focus of the group in the Colo area has turned to treating willows on private and Crown land outside the park and also working on other pest species mapped during previous work inside the park. Members of the group who are interested in remote area activities are looking for other projects that can 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.

Jeffrey Cottrell  
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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

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

Continued on page 11



# NAV 2004 - THE BULL\*\*\*\* STOPS

by Keith Maxwell President Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue

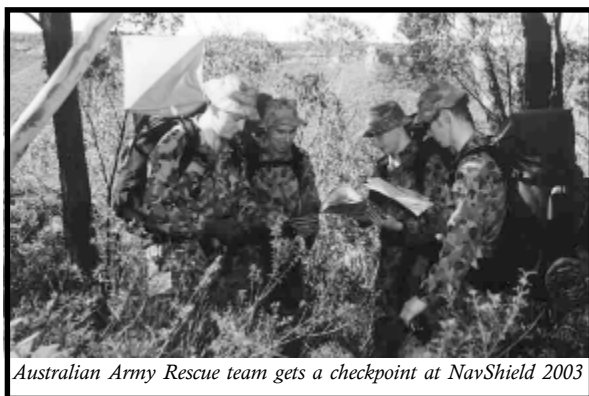


It's autumn and winter is not far away so NavShield 2004 is near. Another great chance to practice bush navigation in a great setting with great company.

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](mailto: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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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](mailto: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



Walk Safely - Walk With a Club

Continued from page 5

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

\* Sports Science findings

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## 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 5-6<sup>th</sup> 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 100km<sup>2</sup> 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.

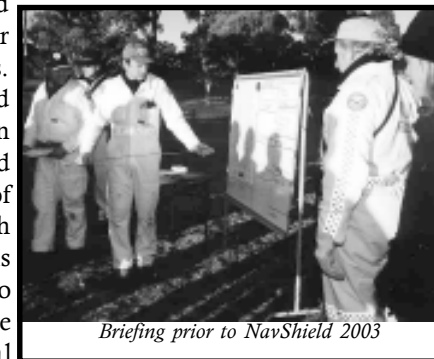
The teams quickly learnt that skills such as measuring distance and aiming-off are easily learnt in training but can be difficult to apply accurately, and that watercourses marked on a 1975 map might not be easy to find on the ground.

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

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# BUSHWALKERS CELEBRATE ANZAC DAY AT SPLENDOUR ROCK

Continued from page 1

## 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 24<sup>th</sup> 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 &amp; 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.

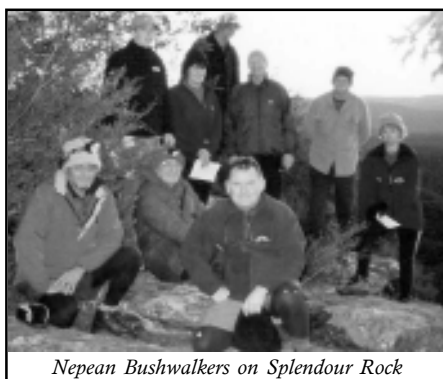
The service was simple; a hymn (the

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 Burratorang painting the sky a vivid red-orange.

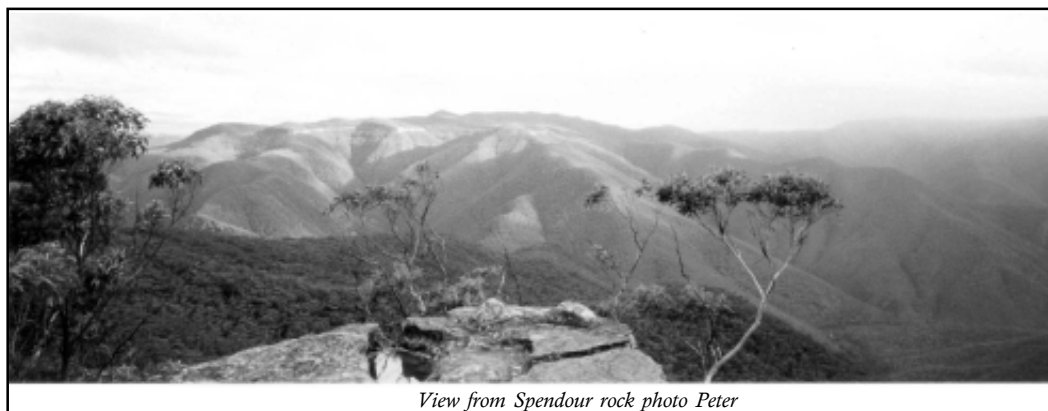
As a fifty something bloke who has attended numerous dawn services around the country, this one I found to be the most moving. I wasn't alone with moist eyes and a lumpy throat as we all moved back to our campsite for the welcome first cuppa of the day.

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 photo Peter

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.



Ceremony at Splendour Rock 1993 - in photo - Bruce &amp; 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 Jacks 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

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.