

Bushwalking NSW

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GENERAL MEETING 16 FEB 2021 MINUTES

Time & Date 7:30-9:00pm on Tuesday, 16th February 2021

Location: Online via Zoom

Attendees:

NAME	Club	Nominated Club Delegate
Dee McCallum	All Nations BW	Yes
Peter Jack	Illawarra Ramblers	Yes
Tracy Wunziatu	NRBC	Yes
Linda Hager	BWC	Yes
Michele Maurer	ANB	Yes
Maarten V.D. Wende	NPA	
Bruce Lyman	Blue Steel Dash	Yes
David Springthorpe	Coast and Mountain	Yes
Cheryl Fletcher	WEA Ramblers	Yes
Kevin	NPA	Yes
Terry Herbert	CBC	
Jon Gray	Bankstown Bushwalking Club (BBC)	No
Halina Kraski	SBW	Yes
Keith Maxwell	Bush Club	Yes
Peter Jack	Illawarra Ramblers	Yes
Jim Collier	Sydney Bush Walkers	Yes
Margaret Covi	Watagan Wanderers	Yes
C Fletcher	WEA Ramblers	Yes
Leigh Shearer	Walking Volunteers	No
Ian Napier	Walking Volunteers	No
Paul Wyngaardan	CBC	No
Sheila Walker	Central West BC	Yes
Matt McClelland	NPA of NSW	Yes
Linda Hurford	Central West BC	Yes
David Noble	SUBW	No
Stuart Corner	SRW	Yes
Jim Close	SBW	Yes
Tony O'Sullivan	WEA Ramblers	Yes
John Hungerford	The Bush Club	No
Tony O'Sullivan	WEA Ramblers	Yes
Roll Gilbat	Central West BC	Yes
Bill Donoh ?	Wanderers	Yes
John Baird	Walking Volunteers	No
Vanessa Hicks	Sutherland Bushwalkers	Yes
Alan Bunt	Sutherland Bushwalkers	No

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Thais Turner	Catholic BWS and Bankstown BWC	Yes
Kirsten Mayer	Executive Officer, Bushwalking NSW Inc.	No

Present

1. All members of the Bushwalking NSW Committee and delegates of various BNSW clubs, and additional members and visitors as per the attendance list above.
2. The EO and Chair welcomed members and visitors at 1908 and in the meeting preamble a number of clubs reported on their activities. A general discussion was had about the common but 'puzzling' dynamic in clubs of members joining but not participating in walking activities. The Chair declared the General Meeting open at 1930, and welcomed Melissa Harper.

Apologies

3. Nil.

Previous Minutes

4. The Chair moved that the tabled minutes of the General Meeting of the 18th Feb, 2020 Bushwalking NSW Inc General Meeting, 19th May, 2020 Bushwalking NSW Inc General Meeting Minutes and 24th Nov, 2020 Bushwalking NSW Inc Special Meeting & General Meeting Minutes be accepted.

Seconded and approved.

Guest Speaker

5. Dr Melissa Harper, University of Queensland and author of [The Ways of the Bushwalker: On foot in Australia](#), spoke to the developments and evolution of bushwalking in Australia over the last twenty years, in particular drawing attention to the broad phenomenon of state governments supporting nature based activities by engaging with commercial enterprises, a combination of resources and efforts aimed primarily at an audience (market) of those less experienced in the outdoors but who wish to indulge an 'iconic' experience for a short period of time.
6. See the recording of Melissa's presentation and the ensuing discussion [here](#)
7. Some specific observations (not exhaustive) include the following:
 - a. Overall rise in interest in bush-based activities, not just bushwalking
 - b. Social media has played a large part in broadening accessibility to the bush and to advice about tracks and gear

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- c. Meet Up groups reflect a move away from formal bushwalking groups with 138,000 users on walking Meet Up groups
- d. Increased interest in long distance walks, reflected in the '2000s' - 2001 Cape to Cape walk, 2002 Larapinta, 2006 Great Ocean, 2010 Noosa.
- e. Walking companies increasingly make these walks popular. Trekking companies can be attractive ways for walkers to access long distance walks.
- f. An emerging niche market is that which addresses walking services for women.
- g. By 2012 there were enough commercial operators to create the "Great Walks of Australia" group – walks overseen by commercial operators.
- h. Governments are increasingly developing multiday walks especially as a means of driving revenue into regional areas. However these walks are not aimed at the self sufficient walker but are aimed at the less confident walker wanting to experience a 3-5 day walk of 40-50km but with a degree of comfort.
- i. State government development together with regional and district governments /bodies have pursued this market. Their discourse is often based around mental health benefits, and preventative health.
- j. Another promotional theme which is popular is that relating to conservation, tapping the global trend towards nature based tourism. Trails have been built to specifically address conservation interests.
- k. This reflects the growing trend towards developing tourism around an experience, which in turn is often couched in specific 'exclusive' language. For example 'iconic', 'world class', 'unique'.
- l. The experience seeker has become the focus of government promotions which pitch 'immersive', 'authentic' experiences to high yield tourists.
- m. High yield tourists are in fact becoming the focus - it's not just about getting people into parks but getting them to spend.
- n. Health benefits can be outweighed by economic benefits.
- o. The Three Capes walk in Tasmania was discussed as an example of the evolution in long distant walks – commercial focus aimed at being a no mud 'wild walk' rather than a wilderness walk (such as the Overland Track).

General Business

8. The Chair addressed the following:
 - a. The Constitution was received, reviewed and accepted by Fair Trading, He thanked those who had supported its adoption at the previous GM.
 - b. The Committee is alert to issues of interest or concern to Clubs and its members but it's not 'all seeing' and he asked clubs to continue to flag issues in their areas to the committee.
 - c. The Chair alerted members to the forthcoming Bushwalking Manual which is especially significant given the apparent emergence of the proposition that

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walkers undergo formal training before being allowed to undertake certain walks.

- d. The Chair asked members to consider volunteering on the Management Committee.
- e. The Chair also brought attention to the EO's search for a volunteer Administration Support person.
- f. The Chair flagged the need for a person to volunteer to represent BNSW at the national level – at Bushwalking Australia.

Close

- 9. The Chair concluded by thanking Dr Harper and declared the meeting closed at 2057.