

NEWSLETTER of the BUSHWALKERS OF NEW SOUTH WALES

The N.S.W. Federation of Bushwalking Clubs
G.P.O. Box 2090, Sydney, 2001.

INTRODUCING THE NEW FEDERATION

Who said Federation was dead? It's not true, thanks to you. We asked for help and got it.

In July the word went out — Federation is collapsing. You were asked, "Do you want a Federation, and what do you want it to do?"

You responded. Firstly, thirty of you came to an informal meeting early in September, and secondly, nearly sixty of you turned up at the adjourned Annual General Meeting on September 16th. Many new ideas were put forward on the role of Federation amongst walkers and the community generally. There were also many criticisms, the biggest being the lack of communication with clubs. However, everybody felt that the continued existence of Federation was essential. Its degree of involvement in issues other than Search and Rescue was a matter of some debate, but there was a majority view that we should still be active in conservation, information, access and the promotion of inter-club activities, although the type of involvement could be different.

Your enthusiasm produced a new conscientious executive fired with the idea of enacting new policies. This Newsletter is the first. Others to come are: better publicity, especially in relation to Search and Rescue press releases; application to the State Government for financial support of a professional secretary; the creation of a field conservation service with bushwalkers providing first hand information to other conservation groups, and a rethink of the form and frequency of meetings.

Your help in the creation of this new atmosphere of involvement and co-operation was great, but it can't stop there — each council member needs to spread the work load to individuals or clubs.

We hope to close the communication gap with this newsletter, but we need feedback — please contribute to it. The Federation is you!

In keeping with the new spirit we also have a new name: "Bushwalkers of New South Wales".

Bruce Vote
President

SYNOPSIS OF THE ADJOURNED ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 16 SEPTEMBER 1975

- A. Points raised in the letter of notification of the meeting.
 1. On the difficulty of filling Federation offices: Delegates tend to be junior members of their club's committee, and may often be ignorant of Federations' activities and importance. Also offices and committees have in the past been filled by delegates only, but are open to all club members.
 2. Poor feedback from clubs to Federation: Delegates usually lack authority to make decisions for their clubs without referring the matter back to them. There is again the problem of delegate's junior position within clubs, and lack of knowledge. It was suggested that at least one of each club's delegates should be a member of the club executive.
 3. Poor support for committees: As before, delegates tend to be too inexperienced to volunteer for committee positions. Committees are not restricted to delegates only, and club members in general should be encouraged to participate. There is a possibility of State Government support to employ a part time secretary. Meanwhile, we still need a strong committee.
 4. Poor support for Federation activities (reunions, S & R demos): The main reason appears to be a lack of communication. Also many club programs clash with Federation activities.
 5. Non-election of office bearers: No comments specifically on this topic (already thoroughly covered) but there was much discussion of Federation's role in conservation. Federation has an important role to play, through general support of issues, field work (see conservation report in this Newsletter) and on issues which affect only walkers e.g. the Tri-State Trail.

B. Points raised by the informal preliminary meeting on September 9th.

1. Communication Gap:

A newsletter for each club member is required to inform all walkers of Federation activities and relevance.

2. General Organisation:

Emphasis was laid on the need to improve efficiency by making full use of sub-committees, which should be open to any club member. It was also suggested that Federation could be administered by a single club each year, and that council meetings could be held at club premises on a rotating basis, but these suggestions were not generally accepted.

C. At this stage the discussion ended, and the adjourned A.G.M. was re-convened. Officers were found for all the previously unfilled positions. The only other point of some interest among the remaining routine business was a successful motion that Federation should prepare a submission for a grant for the State Government for assistance with employment of a secretary, Search and Rescue equipment and general Federation activities.

CONSERVATION REPORT

Summary of the Conservation Committee's activities during September:

1. Inquiry into Proposed North Coast Woodchip Industry — an earlier submission was amended in the light of additional information.
2. Inquiry into Sand Mining on Fraser Island — the original submission was revised to comply with altered terms of reference of the inquiry.
3. Motions to be put to the Nature Conservation Council annual conference (18th October) were considered. A draft motion calling for steps to be taken towards the National Parks and Wildlife Service assuming control over the bulk of the Warragamba catchment was prepared.
4. A meeting with the National Parks and Wildlife Service to discuss the proposed Tri State Trail has been arranged for 2nd October. A report of this meeting will appear in the next Newsletter.
5. Provision of a field information service to conservation groups has been suggested as a way in which Federation's conservation effort could be directed to great benefit. The National Parks Association was approached and has requested information on developments in the following areas:
 - *Wild Goat Plateau and Long Nose Point (Nattai area) — roadworks.
 - *Deberts Knob — power transmission line.
 - *Byrnes Gap — private property development.
 - *Yerranderie — airstrip and other development
 - *Jooriland — development.
 - *Boyd Plateau — Phasmatid defoliation of trees.
 - *Nadgee — logging in Nadgee River catchment.
 - *Brisbane Water National Park — proposed expressway.

Should you plan to visit any of the above areas please ring the Conservation Convenor (Ian Olsen, 84-6845 (H), 92-0319 (W)) for further information.

THIS NEWSLETTER: (AN EDITORIAL)

There seems little point in printing a regular report from the Publications Committee, as its work is apparent to anyone who reads this Newsletter. However, some points deserve mention in this first issue.

Firstly, a large number of people believe that this Newsletter is the key to the continuation and success of Federation. Federation cannot realize its full potential unless every club member is aware of the relevance of Federation to them, personally, and gives support accordingly. Thus the Newsletter's primary task is to keep club members informed and interested in what Federation is doing.

Secondly, the future of the Newsletter is in one sense uncertain. There will definitely be at least a basic bulletin, such as this issue, to follow each council meeting. Whether it grows to something rather more than a mere information sheet depends, as always, on the support given by clubs and their individual members. That is, you!

If you know of something which you think would be of interest to walkers in general, tell them about it through your Newsletter. "Letters to the Editor" and the like will be received with infinite gratitude. In particular, any comments on the Newsletter itself will be most welcome.

For instance, there are several references in this issue to the Tri-State Trail. Are most walkers aware of the basic proposal, or would they like to see this sort of thing discussed in more detail in the Newsletter?

This Newsletter will achieve its goal best if it contains material that walkers want to read. Please let us know what you think that is. Send any contributions or comments to the Publications Officer,

Peter Tuft,
3/27 Tramway St.,
Rosebery, N.S.W., 2018.
Phone: 669-3872.

TRACKS AND ACCESS REPORT

1. The lease held by the army for the firing range in the Tianjara area of the Budawangs will expire next year, presumably opening up the area for general access.
2. There is a new bridge over the Cox River at the Little River junction.
3. At Easter a Canberra member of the National Parks Association was charged with trespassing by the owners of the Wog Wog property, on the west edge of the Budawangs. However the problem of access via Wog Wog has apparently now been cleared up: walkers may cross the property provided that their cars are left at the Mongarlowe Road, i.e. the owners will permit foot access only, which means a walk of about three miles.
4. Many new construction roads are being bulldozed in the Cox valley for the new Wallerawang-Sydney power line. In particular, a road from Little Cedar Creek to Deberts Knob terminates on the track from Narrowneck (Taro's Ladders) to Medlow Gap. The Tracks and Access Convenor (John Berry, 799-3216) would like any information or photographs on new roads being built in this general area.

OFF-ROAD VEHICLES

The Australian Government will shortly be conducting an inquiry into the environmental impact of off-road vehicles. The newspaper notices state that:

"While the value of such vehicles for a number of purposes is recognised, it has become apparent that the ready availability and versatility of trail bikes, mini bikes, dune buggies, 4-wheel drives and over-snow vehicles is placing an increasing burden on national parks and other wilderness and semi-wilderness areas. As environmental nuisance and risk to public safety are of growing significance, the Committee (House of Representatives Standing Committee on Environment and Conservation) is to make an early examination of the problems.

"It is expected that the inquiry will canvass the adequacy of present control and their varying effectiveness, the actual extent of the damage caused by such vehicles, and the need for and nature of any measures which could minimise these deleterious effects."

Federation will probably make a submission to the inquiry, as this is a matter which directly and strongly affects walkers. Comments from individuals and clubs will help in the preparation of this submission. Send your opinions via your club delegate, or direct to the Conservation Convenor.

PHIL BUTT

At the 1975 Annual General Meeting Phil Butt stood down from the FBW executive ending 10 years of service to the Federation. Starting in 1964 as minutes secretary and subsequently President and Secretary, Phil has steered the FBW through some difficult years of dwindling support, receiving little appreciation for his efforts to update the FBW Constitution and revitalize the Committees.

Phil's initiative in calling senior Club officials to the reconvened AGM has brought a new sense of direction to the FBW. Our best wishes and belated thanks go with him.

Coming Council Meetings

Tuesday, 18th November, at Scots Church.

Monday, 8th December, at N.S.W. Environment Centre.

Note that this meeting is on the second Monday of the month, not the third Tuesday.

Both meetings are at the usual time: 6.00pm.

