

NEWSLETTER of the BUSHWALKERS OF NEW SOUTH WALES

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

EDITORIAL WAFFLE

As mentioned elsewhere in this Newsletter, the Annual General Meeting is approaching. It brings with it a question which is familiar: Is Federation really worthwhile, and what should be expected of it? This is a question that, at least in recent years, seems to be repeated at regular intervals. It must be asked because Federation and the matters it concerns itself with rarely seem to provoke much interest, let alone participation, from walkers in general.

Late last year it looked for a while as if things were going to change, but the enthusiasm waned visibly. Before long it became apparent that most clubs, many delegates, and even a couple of office bearers were still not going to take Federation and their obligations seriously.

Why, then, do we persistently refuse to dissolve the Federation? Would it matter very much if there was no federation of bushwalkers? The answer to that question explains both Federation's existence and its problems of survival.

Federation is waiting – waiting for issues and situations that may never arise. To put it a bit dramatically, Federation is rather like a defence force which waits for an invasion that may never come. Yet, just like the waiting defence force, we are reluctant to disband our organisation just in case – who knows, next year someone might discover uranium in Monolith Valley, or decide to close the roads to both Newhaven Gap and Yadboro.

Meanwhile we grow bored and disinterested. The various committees keep nibbling away at issues large and small, but none major enough to unite all walkers into the enthusiastic Federation we would like.

This is one of the biggest problems currently facing Federation – to maintain the interest of walkers without the unifying force of some common external threat. So far we do not seem to have come anywhere near a solution.

BUSHWALKERS' BALL

This year the Ball will be at Chatswood Civic Centre on Friday, 17th September. Further details in the next Newsletter.

A.G.M.

The Annual General Meeting of the N.S.W. Federation of Bushwalking Clubs will be held in the N.S.W. Environment Centre, 263b Broadway, at 6.30pm on Tuesday, 20th July.

All walkers are asked to consider nominations for the various offices. Namely, President, Junior Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Secretary, Minute Secretary, Conservation Convenor, Tracks and Access Convenor, Information Officer, Public Relations Officer, Publications Officer, Nature Conservation Council Delegate.

Delegates are especially reminded of the importance of this meeting, and presidents and secretaries of affiliated clubs are also invited to attend. Let's avoid a repetition of the fiasco that was last year's A.G.M.

Supper will be provided after the meeting.

RESPECT LANDHOLDERS' RIGHTS

Federation has received an indignant letter from a solicitor who also happens to own a property called "Burrimal" in the Widden Valley. He was somewhat irate to have recently apprehended a large party of walkers crossing his property without prior permission. In future he wishes to be informed in advance of any proposed walk which crosses his land.

All walkers are reminded that it is both courteous and in their own long term interests to ensure that the owner of any private land which they may cross is aware of their intention. In many areas landholders have had bad experiences with vandals and shooters, and resent the presence of any uninvited strangers. Bushwalkers in action often do look pretty scruffy and disreputable no matter how honourable their intentions. In other cases farmers may have specific reasons for keeping everyone away from, say, lambing paddocks.

Of course most property owners have no objection at all to walkers once they know their intentions. So, even if only to protect the good name (?) of bushwalking, let the landholder know what you are doing. It's even better if you let him know in advance.

CONSERVATION MATTERS

The Conservation Committee has come to a standstill, hopefully temporary, following the resignation of its Convenor, Ian Olsen. Ian has gone to spend a few weeks walking in Arnhem Land, and will not be standing for re-election at the A.G.M. He has done an excellent job since he took office last year, as evidenced by the number of issues which must be handed on to the next Convenor.

Not all of the issues mentioned below are "alive" at the moment, but all deserve investigation and/or action as soon as someone can spare the time to help. Incidentally, the Conservation Committee does not consist of its Convenor alone, nor a few select individuals, but anyone who has the time and interest to come to committee meetings. The only catch is that you may be asked to write a letter or two — after all, the Convenor is only there to convene the meetings, not to do all the work.

But to return to the current conservation issues:

1. **Border Ranges.** This is a matter which has quietened somewhat since the Easter trip and the change of government. At the moment conservationists seem to be waiting to discover the new government's attitude, although a delegation from several environmental groups hopes to meet the Minister for Lands (Mr Crabtree) and let him know our stand on this issue and others.

2. **Culoul Range Mining Leases.** A new threat in a new area. Colo Shire Council has called for an environmental impact statement, which Federation wants to inspect. The Culoul Range is an important wilderness area, and these threats to it must be watched closely and strongly opposed.

3. **Proposed Extension to Heathcote National Park.** Federation is supporting proposals put forward by the National Parks Association and the Total Environment Centre.

4. **Tri-State Track.** This should really be a Tracks and Access matter, but that committee has been non-functional this year. The Track is another matter which waits for an indication of the new government's attitude. Meanwhile, David Noble of Sydney University Bushwalkers is preparing a route proposal for the Blue Mountains section, and the National Parks Association has proposed a track from Yamba (at the mouth of the Clarence River) to the Queensland border. Comment on both of these proposals is sought from walkers.

5. **Eden Woodchipping.** Federation is supporting opposition to this project, especially in view of the area's wilderness and scientific value.

6. **Gosford-Wyong Water Supply.** The Public Works Department has requested comments on the recreational value of the affected area. (The proposal involves damming the McDonald River near St Albans.) Federation will have to investigate before replying.

7. **Yadboro Land Sale.** A submission is to be made to the National Parks and Wildlife Service to the effect that the purchase of the top few blocks in the Clyde Valley and the 3 blocks on Yadboro Creek should be given priority if any of the land is to be bought.

8. **Funds-for-the-Environment Campaign.** Clubs are urged to support the campaign, details of which were available in the April Newsletter and an Australian Conservation Foundation bulletin.

9. **Clarence-Northern Blue Mountains Area.** The area of the proposed additions to the Blue Mountains National Park is being threatened in numerous ways:

- a) The proposed Clarence colliery
- b) A proliferation of roads, some of which even enter the existing National Park
- c) An upgrading of the Mt Cameron Track
- d) Increasing numbers of trail bikes
- e) Expansion of forestry activities.

It is intended to prepare and circulate a map and notes showing the threats to the area. This is a cause which the Colong Committee may take up. It is also intended to continue investigating the proposed colliery.

10. **Mt Flat Top.** The Central Mapping Authority is responsible for considerable damage and debris resulting from trig building operations on this "peak" beside the Mt Hay road. A letter of complaint has been sent.

11. **Yerranderie** (also see elsewhere in this Newsletter). All responsible authorities (Water Board, Shire Council and Planning and Environment Commission) have been unresponsive to letters objecting to access to Yerranderie from the east (ie. via the Wollondilly). The Bindook Committee has proposed a national park for the area (as well as for the rest of the Southern Blue Mountains). Both these aspects of the Yerranderie issue will be followed up, and more aspects are likely to appear in the near future.

12. **New Government.** As mentioned earlier, Federation is to take part in discussions with the new Minister for Lands concerning wilderness areas in general and in particular the Blue Mountains area from the Wollondilly to the Colo.

Coming meetings of the Conservation Committee (at 6.30pm in the N.S.W. Environment Centre, 263b Broadway): July 29, August 26.

PADDY PALLIN ORIENTEERING CONTEST

The annual Paddy Pallin orienteering contest was held this year on Saturday, May 29 on Faulconbridge Ridge, near Springwood. There were some 35 teams totalling about 80 competitors — by far the biggest attendance for some years. The crowd was largely made up of members of orienteering clubs, who in the past have left Paddy's event to bushwalkers alone.

There were 19 checkpoints, set at various points along some 6 km of Faulconbridge Ridge and on the spurs and gullies on either side of it. The layout of the course was such that one was virtually restricted to running up and down the main fire road, ducking a kilometre or so off to either side at regular intervals. This is probably very poor in terms of good orienteering course design, but was much appreciated in view of the scrub, which varied from thick to almost impenetrable (fortunately not too much of the latter). The highest possible score was 34 points, and a distance of over 20km would have to be covered to achieve this. The time allowed was 4 hours.

The top two placings were taken by orienteers. In the Open section I. & C. Rennard (30 points) came first, followed by P. Donnelly & I. Cameron (29 points) with P. Butt & W. Daniels third (28 points). The defeat of this latter team, who have been the star performers in Paddy's orienteering for some years, is attributed to the fact that the course favoured the orienteers' more athletic style (ie. they run better!). Speed becomes all-important in an event such as this where the navigation was very straightforward (literally for many checkpoints) and roads provided opportunities to run.

In the Restricted (mixed) section, the places were: T. & A. Radford (24), first; C. & M. Wilmott & S. Kopriva (23), second; and R. Alsop & M. Forwood (20), third.

Congratulations are due to all the placegetters, and thanks are also due to Paddy and his helpers for the work involved in organising the event.

A NATIONAL BODY FOR BUSHWALKERS

Warwick Blaydon

For several years the idea of forming a national body representing bushwalking has been kicked about. The replies from various clubs and federations seem to fall into the range from apathy to cautious approval — hence further action has been discouraged. But what should a national body do, what should be its aims, in what direction should it head?

Perhaps the following suggestions will give some idea of the scope of activities in which the national body could be involved. They entail the coordination and pooling of information on:

- a) Safety procedures and brochures
- b) General publicity
- c) Publication of guides to walking areas
- d) Hut and track behaviour code
- e) Track marking and maintenance
- f) Tri-State Track
- g) Opposing commercial interests, off road vehicle groups, etc.

The body would unite all associations and persons interested in recreational walking, camping and other similar forms of outdoor activities. It would act as an information bureau, and promote the establishment of national parks, etc. Take a look at your club's and your Federation's constitutions — they probably have the same goals.

From the above suggestions I have deliberately left out conservation as there are already enough established state and national bodies in this field. However the national body could lend its weight to issues of primary importance to bushwalkers such as Lake Pedder, Precipitous Bluff, Victorian Alps, Border Ranges, wood-chip and logging in (proposed) parklands, etc — areas which walkers from all states would visit.

Other outdoor organisations have national bodies and not all are in competitive sports — canoeists, skiers, cavers, horse trail riders.

It does not necessarily follow that we should keep up with the Jones, but at the moment each state federation is going its own way without much exchange of ideas with its counterparts interstate — ie. a communications breakdown. The breakdown also extends to the individual clubs and their relation to the state federations.

Yes, there will be problems in establishing a national body and yes, it will cost money, but if we are to protect bushwalking interests then we will have to show more signs that we have a voice, and the bigger the voice the louder it will be. Remember that unity is strength.

FOR SALE

Paddymade "Bushman" frameless rucksack
(2 pocket model) — \$10.00

Downhill skis, stocks, etc. — \$45.00

John Fry, 50 St Johns Road, Auburn, 2144.

(Private advertisements such as this will be published in the Newsletter free. If you want to publicise something among the rucksack fraternity, remember this: the Newsletter is read by over 1500 walkers.)

INFORMATION REPORT

(Compiled from information supplied by
Wilf Hilder, Information Officer)

Not much from the Information Bureau this month — only three points:

*Three publications of interest released recently:

- a) Tasmanian Tramp No 22 (1976), \$1.00 from bushwalking suppliers
- b) Nordic World No 17
- c) Fall Line (magazine of the Victorian Ski Association). This issue contains a fair bit of material of interest to N.S.W. skiers. Available from larger newsagents.

*C.G.A. (the life assurance group) has established two "fitness courses" or "outdoor gyms" in the Fairfield area. One is at Fairfield Park, the other at Deer Bush Park. The latter is in a bushland setting. There is apparently a similar sort of thing at Manly Dam, too. These should be of interest to those who do not like to restrict their exercise to weekends.

*Due to severe industrial trouble related to the Central Mapping Authority's transfer to Bathurst, a number of Lands Depart maps are in short supply. The situation is not likely to improve in the near future, and may worsen. Accordingly, don't leave your map purchases to the day before a trip — get in early and make sure the maps are available.

FOR
AUSTRALIA'S
FINEST
LIGHTWEIGHT
BUSHWALKING
EQUIPMENT.

Paddy Pallin

CANBERRA
Paddy Pallin, 46 Northbourne Ave.
47 8949

MELBOURNE
Paddy Pallin, 55 Hardware St.
67 4845

SYDNEY
Paddy Pallin, 67 69 Liverpool St.
26 2685

S & R ALERT, WOG WOG STATION

Warwick Daniels

Police requested help Friday 21/5/76 for two boys overdue on a three day trip, from Sassafrass to Wog Wog Station, via Hidden Valley and The Castle.

The search base was Wog Wog Station, where police briefed party leaders and issued a standard map. Search parties with overnight gear were to be lifted by RAAF Iroquois helicopter to Yadbora Flat.

A note had been found at the junction of the Clyde River and Hollands Creek; so our job was to search the Clyde River valley. Radio liaison was to be maintained through our base and the police relay radio together on The Castle.

Fergus and Sally Bell were on the way to The Castle when the helicopter was recalled. The boys had been found by a search vehicle.

The police mobile canteen was on site and able to feed all.

S & R was well represented at the search with 102 walkers from 14 clubs. In addition over 30 walkers from Canberra Bushwalkers were present.

(It seems to be very difficult to get reliable information on exactly what happened before and during a search. My own inquiries (to Braidwood Police) indicated that the party was found by a group of searchers from Canberra Bushwalkers (not by a vehicle), back near the junction of the Clyde and Hollands Creek. The lost pair had apparently been walking in a circular sort of manner. It appears that they did have maps and all the right gear (contrary to some rumours) but that they were inexperienced (contrary to some news reports). There seems to be a need for better communication with the police — we'll try even harder next time. Ed.)

This Newsletter is published monthly and is distributed free, through the clubs, to all members of affiliated clubs. Mailing list subscription: \$3.00.

The next issue will be available at the A.G.M. on 20th July. The deadline will be Monday, 12th July.

All communications concerning the Newsletter should be addressed to the Publications Officer, who is:

Peter Tuft,
3/27 Tramway St.,
Rosebery, NSW., 2018

All other communications should be sent to the Secretary at the address on page 1.

PADDY PALLIN FOUNDATION GRANTS

The Paddy Pallin Foundation's committee has decided on the grant allocations for 1976. There were 25 applications (totalling about \$15 000) from 19 organisations and individuals, and it was unavoidable that many applicants would be disappointed. Nine of the applicants were successful, and together will receive a total of \$4 870.

Grants were made for purposes ranging from a photographic survey of national park proposals (N.P.A.) to purchase of equipment for cave rescue (N.S.W. Cave Rescue Group); from a security system for the River Canoe Club's clubhouse to payment of staff and office costs (N.P.A. and The Himalayan Club).

Federation made three submissions: \$1140 for a publicity campaign to promote bushwalking and attract members; \$220 for a program to acquaint senior high school students with bushwalking; and \$600 to assist with the financing of this Newsletter. The first application was unsuccessful, but the other two were granted in full.

The grant for the Newsletter, together with income from advertising, means that the Newsletter will just about break even for the next few months or so. This will do much to restore Federation's bank balance, as the affiliation levies were not designed to cope with the cost of a publication such as this.

The grant for promoting walking among school students means that we now have to look at the ways and means of doing so — not to mention finding people to take on the task in the first place.

FOIL

Federation adheres to the concept of "Carry in — carry out", which generally applies to metal containers. However this should also be extended to foil such as soup packets, chocolate wrappers, etc. So you think that foil burns or melts away? — sift through your fire after it has been doused with water.

Canberra Bushwalkers are adopting a policy which should be considered by all walkers, viz:

- a) NO FOIL to be burnt on campfires
- b) ALL FOIL to be carried out of the bush

THE NSW FEDERATION OF BUSHWALKING CLUBS

SEARCH & RESCUE PRACTICE WEEKEND 17/18 JULY 76

LOCATION: Mountain Lagoon, via Bilpin.
Take the Bell Road through Kurrajong, turn right at Bilpin (11km from Kurrajong Hts. Hotel) then approx 14km on very good dirt to site. Follow FBW arrows.

Map: St Albans 1:63360 (out of print) GR 633666. Photocopies will be available.

NOTE: We have obtained the use of private land. When at Mountain Lagoon drive quietly, be quiet, leave no rubbish and observe all signs and directions given by FBW officers. Off-road vehicles must keep to public roads.

Come up on Friday night if you like, bring all the family as the campsite is fenced. Bring water if you can since the nearest is some distance away.

PROGRAMME:

SATURDAY 8am : PRACTICE SEARCH
CAMPFIRE SATURDAY NIGHT
SUNDAY : STRETCHER HANDLING PRACTICE