

NEWSLETTER

of the

BUSHWALKERS OF NEW SOUTH WALES

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

ISSN 0313-2684

PAST PRESIDENTS REPORT

In September '75 I found myself at a special meeting of the Federation to discuss its future, the crisis of a failed annual meeting two months previous had suddenly involved many with a conscience about Federation. When the nominations came those who were most vocal were lumbered with the jobs. However, we were all keen and fired with a spirit of creativity, it was a good executive.

We soon organised an executive meeting to formalise aims and policies. Here's what we planned to do:-

1. Improve relations between the Federation bushwalkers, the main answer to this was the publication of a monthly newsletter. It would be the forum for future policies.
2. Revitalise Council meetings.
3. Encourage the involvement of walkers in conservation matters.
4. With S & R, improve relations with the police. If we achieved part of this we would have done a good job.

Well what did we get done?

After about 20 widely spread issues of the newsletter, it has become an established thing thanks to the terrific job done by Peter Tuft. One years issue was paid for by the Paddy Pallin Foundation but now we are on our own, hence the rise in fees at the AGM. However the newsletter has brought Federation closer to the bulk of the walking movement.

Council meetings are more interesting but just as long unfortunately, however the committees have increased the work and involvement of FBW.

With conservation our involvements were: Border Ranges, poster sales, bus trip for fifty bushies during Easter '76, support for parliamentary inquiry — still sitting, UNE wilderness study, input regarding recreation attitude to wilderness.

Northern Blue Mountains, last year FBW started to push for the northern Blueies as a park, at the same time other groups started to do same for a larger area. Nattai to the Hunter, we joined in and chaired the Ad Hoc Committee through preparation of park proposals, a deputation to the Premier and a fund raising campaign, later supporting the Colong Committee in the Premier's visit. Out of all this a promise of the Southern Blue Mountains Park, and the proposal of the Northern Blue Mountains by the Wildlife Service earlier this year.

Proposed slate mining on the Coloual Range was the first major threat to the Northern Blue Mountains since the proposal, representatives were sent out to Mr. Landa and Premier Wran —an enquiry was called. The Minister is believed to be making a statement any day.

Looking back: FBW is now a voice in the community in keeping with the importance and size of its membership.

NEW PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

The Challenge which faces Federation new executive will be taken up with zeal and enthusiasm. My own task, to fill the position of President vacated by Bruce Vote is indeed a challenge.

As more people become involved with bushwalking Federation must grow. There is a greater need for Federation to become a viable lobby in the preservation of remaining wilderness areas in N.S.W. and promote outdoor recreation and safety.

In the conservation area the main challenges facing us today are the creation of policies related to off-road vehicles and the Kosciusko National Park Hut System. Also the growing number of development proposals within the Northern Blue Mountains, also Ettrama/Bundundah Wilderness and the Deua-Brogo Region and the promotion of a "Corridor National Parks System" between Queensland and Victoria, will require research.

Tracks and Access requires expansion into investigation of access systems into national parks.

At the recent AGM affiliation fees were increased by about 40% to cover newsletter publications costs, though we still have a deficit of about two thousand dollars. Thus I hope to be able to establish a Finance Committee under the Treasurer, Jim Calloway, to propose fund raising activities. This may lead to the creation of a Publications Account from which funds might be available for the yearly publication of a Bushwalkers Journal.

Publicity is vital, through it Federation can promote bushwalking and assist in the formation of clubs.

Search and Rescue is our greatest concern at the moment, to create a suitable climate with the Police Department in which it may operate most efficiently.

Finally, the concept of workshops has been established in N.S.W. and its continued existence depends on FBW. Workshops will provide a link for instruction of members of all affiliated organisations.

In summary, Federation is the forum place for bushwalking clubs in N.S.W., if we are to remain a strong and viable lobby we need the moral and financial support of all affiliated organisations.

Peter Harris.

Federation Diary for 77-78

21 & 22 October, 1977	Search and Rescue Demonstration
11 & 12 March, 1978	Annual Reunion
15 & 16 April, 1978	Search and Rescue Practice
15 & 16 July, 1978	Search and Rescue Practice.
15 September, 1978	Bushwalkers Ball

TRACK & ACCESS

The last month has been a busy one for Tracks and Access, but so far there is not much to show for it as replies have not been received for any of the several letters written. Current issues are:-

- **Access to the Warragamba Catchment Area.** Federation has applied to the Water Board for permission for affiliated club members to the three kilometre limit around Lake Burrangorang at three points; Sheeys Creek on the Nattai, Beloon Pass between the Nattai and the Wollondilly, and the Sheepwalk road from Jooriland to Yerranderie.
- **Vehicles in the Kosciusko National Park.** A protest has been sent to the Park Management over two incidents concerning vehicles "out of bounds", one incident concerning a maze of snowmobile tracks on the Rolling Ground above Guthega. The other regarding the use of the Eucumbene - Happy Jacks road by a privileged few who have access to the keys of this normally restricted road.
- **The Lockleys Pylon Track.** Some months ago a firebreak was bulldozed which obliterated the walking track from the Pinnacles to Lockleys Pylon. It was reported that the Blue Mountains Management intended to amend this by actively regenerating the cleared area. However there has been no action so far and a letter has been written asking the park to confirm its intentions. The park superintendent has accepted an invitation to attend the September meeting and it is hoped to question him further then.
- **Horse Trail, The Australian Horse Trail Riders Association** has plans for a "National Horse Trail" from Melbourne to Cooktown via the main divide. If they plan to use existing roads and tracks O.K. but if they plan to cut their own trail through prime untracked bushland then they may be in for a bit of opposition. We have written to find out more.
- **Track Cutting in Royal National Park.** It is reported that the park has been a bit carried away with small parts of its track repairs program. Federation agrees that many tracks in the park could be closed and allowed to revegetate and that new tracks should be cut to replace them. This is what being done - in most cases. We will follow up the cases where damage is being done.

Peter Tuft.

INFORMATION WANTED

At the A.G.M. in August two Information Officers were elected - Wilf Hilder and Peter Tuft. Whilst Wilf, who has held the position for several years, will continue to provide information on maps, books, and huts and various items, Peter is looking for a worthwhile way to complement Wilf.

What sort of role does the bushwalker see the Federation Information Officer fulfilling, apart from what Wilf does? Is there a demand for up-to-date information on routes, tracks, access, problems, etc? What about reviews of new products and equipment? Any other suggestions? If there is no need for such services there is not much point in working on them. On the other hand if there is a demand, Peter will do what he can to satisfy it.

CONSERVATION REPORT

So many issues confronted the conservation committee over the past twelve months that we have had to limit ourselves in order to be effective.

The Northern Blue Mountains wilderness park got effective results. We were involved in showing the Premier over the entire Greater Blue Mountains both by air and ground travel. He saw the Northern Blue Mountains for the first time and we believe he was impressed.

The NPWs started last year with a sluggish attitude to the Northern Blue Mountains campaign but just recently have announced that they have referenced the entire proposal. This is the first step towards dedication and we believe our efforts were a good part responsible for it.

The production of a fifty page proposal by the Conservation Committee was a major task and I must thank Chris Cosgrove, Dave Noble, Ted Daniels, Keith Maxwell, Bruce Vote, Warwick Blayden, Keith Seddon and the numerous others who worked with me on this proposal.

Out of the Northern Blue Mountains have risen major issues in their own right - coal mining, electricity generation and army firing ranges. The last is quiescent at the moment but the committee will have to keep an eye on it, the first two points however are a serious threat. The entire proposal is rich in coal and will come under considerable pressure as present coal fields are used up. Closely allied with this is the generation of electricity. A dam is proposed near the Colo/Wollemi junction and a pipeline from here to a proposed power station on the Newnes Plateau - construction plans indicate to a 1982/84 start.

I'd like to wish the new convenor Bruce Vote the best of luck. I'm sure Federation with Bruce at the helm will emerge as a major force in the bone strewn area of Politik gaming, an area in which I had just began to dabble but where I'm sure Bruce loves to frolic.

Dennis Rittson

CONSERVATION PIECES

Two national parks in N.S.W. have recently received large additions to their boundaries. They are Myall Lakes National Park which was gazetted on 17/7/1977 from 15884 ha. to 29440 ha. an increase of 85%. 14441 ha. of rural land has been declared a non-urban buffer zone in addition. Kanangra-Boyd National Park was increased by 18% with the absorption of Konagaroo State Forest, a blow to the tenacious fingers of the forestry commission.

Dennis Rittson

NEWEST CLUB

The Federation would like to welcome the latest club to become affiliated with us - The Outward Bound Association of N.S.W., Box 4213, G.P.O. Sydney, 2001. The group is distinct from the Outward Bound Foundation which is responsible for running the O.B. courses, with membership being primarily made up from people who have completed the course and with some other interested persons.

HUTS POLICY

Federations draft policy on huts in the Kosciusko National Park was accepted with one amendment at the meeting on August 16th. The Amendment concerned paragraph 4.1.1. (see May and June newsletter for details of the draft) which now reads:-

4.1.1. *No existing hut should be deliberately destroyed, unless specified in the Plan of Management.*

The meeting felt that occasions may arise when an unwanted hut should be removed, and that the policy should allow for this.

The fact that there was only one amendment indicates the effort put into ensuring that the draft was well balanced between the wilderness and hut-oriented points of view.

Peter Tuft

LOG BOOKS

At the moment Federation has no definite policy regarding the placing and maintenance of log books. Possibly because of this some walkers have complained when they climb a mountain expecting to find a log book but come across a summit without even a cairn on it. Several peaks have been restored to wilderness by having their log book removed and cairn removed e.g. Mt. Mouin. Another group of walkers have been equally dismayed come across log books seemingly placed with gay abandon on many insignificant peaks such as Yellow Dog and Cambage Spire.

The main argument for logbooks is that they record visitor usage in national parks or proposed areas. They also record the achievements of such as very fast times for certain trips or give details of long extended trips, thereby inspiring others to greater things. The log books in the Mitchell Library contain fascinating information about early bushwalking.

The strongest argument against log books are that they are a sign of mans presence in wilderness areas, they fit the same category as huts, tracks and cairns. Also opponents argue that the signing of a book should not be the reason for climbing a peak. Many trips seem to connect only those places where there are log books. This leads to disproportionately heavy usage of certain areas e.g. Splendor Rock and virtually none in places where there are none.

The controversy regarding log books mainly stems from books in the Greater Blue Mountains. Let us look at where some of the log books are:-

(i) Southern Blue Mountains

Mt. Solitary, Knights Deck, Splendor Rock, Mt. Jenolan, Mt. Guouogang, Mts. Paralyser, Cloudmaker, Goondel, Colong, Broken Rock, Black Coola, Bimlow, Morong Falls, Thurat Spires, Bonnum Pic, Yerranderie Peak, Tonalli Peak, Bimlow-Lacys Tableland divide.

(ii) Northern Blue Mountains

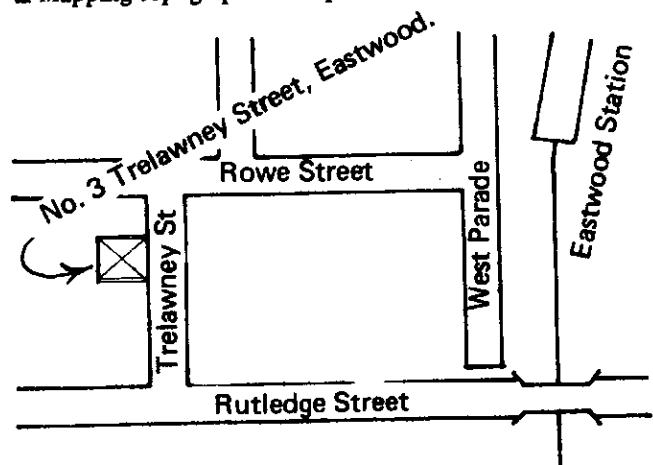
Rock Hill, Mt. Barakee, Mt. Mistake, Mt. Savage, Island, Parr South. The low number of log books here is evident. These are all infrequently visited which contrasts to most of those in the Southern Blue Mountains. Note also that there are no books in the largest section of the northern proposal viz the Wolgan, Wollemi Hunter areas. Perhaps it would be good to see it remain without log books.

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INFORMATION

New Maps — Penrith 1:25000 — covers much of the Blue Labrynth, Gurnang and Mt. Armstrong 1:25000. These two sheets cover the west of Yerranderie and Bindook, filling the area of Mt. Weong & part of the Kowmung. Gurnang was to be called "Porters Retreat".

Widden 1:25000 has been re-issued, many cliffs have been added and as many left out. Covers around Nullo Mountain.

The Gundungura sketch map has been reprinted.

New Publications

Northern Blue Mountains Wilderness Park, compiled by D. Ritson and C. Cosgrove, 51 pages of text & B & W photos, 2 maps. A limited number of this unique production are available from the Federation. Cost \$4.

Rain Forests. Covers many aspects of rainforests, colour photos and maps. Printed by the NPWS, it is the start of subscription series mentioned in Vol. 2, No. 3 of the newsletter. The next edition will be on the aborigines in the eastern states. Available from the NPWS or the Environment Centre \$3.25 (subscription rate was \$1.00 but now \$2.00).

The Quiet Land. by Peter Dombrovskis and Ellen Miller. A superb collection of photos for the Tassie addict \$14.95.

Trampled Wilderness — The History of S.W. Tasmania. by R & K Gowlland. Another good addition to the bushwalkers library. Both this book and the Quiet Land are available from Paddys.

SEARCH AND RESCUE PRACTICE

July 15-17

Base camp was the picnic ground at Mt. Wilson there were 61 walkers present. Mt. Drutt, Springwood, Sydney Uni, Ramblers, Span, UN.S.W. and N.P.A. Experienced walkers only were requested and they were kept busy for both days.

The search on Saturday was for 5 people split into two groups. It was made very authentic as they had no specific instructions where they were to "get lost". The area was rugged and scrubby but both groups were located by 3 p.m. and everyone was back at base by 4 p.m.

The new base radio and three new pack sets were used during the search. At no time was base unable to communicate with any of the new pack sets (for a change) Reception was much clearer. A full compliment of three packsets will greatly increase our search ability.

On Sunday there was a stretcher lift and carry out from an exit of Wollengambe Creek to a fire road. Minimal gear was taken to try and see what is absolutely essential. The lift was quick and also the carry as stretcher parties were spaced out along the ridge on the walk in.

At the debriefings the general opinion was of a greater feeling of participation and accomplishment from this intense type of practice weekend. Many future practices will therefore follow this pattern.

The S&R committee would like to thank those walkers who were present for their enthusiastic support.

Keith Maxwell

BAD NEWS FROM TASMANIA

The High Court of Australia has ruled against conservationists in the Precipitous Bluff case. Though the company cannot start mining the Bluff as it is in the South-West National Park and the government has promised no mining will take place, it must be remembered that Lake Pedder and parts of several other parks have previously been revoked to commercial interests.

Also the Hydro Electric Commission has announced plans for the lower Gordon Scheme, the last major hydro scheme available in Tasmania, and includes the flooding of the lower part of the Gordon River (including the Splits, the Davey, Olga, Denison, Maxwell, King, Anrew Rivers and almost the entire length of the entire Franklin River. The consequences are almost too disastrous to contemplate, Southwest Tasmania is destined to become a network of dams, roads and powerlines. Lake Pedder is no more/should we try and save what is left of the nearest approach to true wilderness remaining in temperate Australia.

Dave Noble
South-west Tasmania C'tte (N.S.W.)

FOR SALE

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All correspondence concerning the Newsletter should be addressed to the Publications Officer, N.S.W.F.B.C., G.P.O. Box 2090, Sydney, 2001.

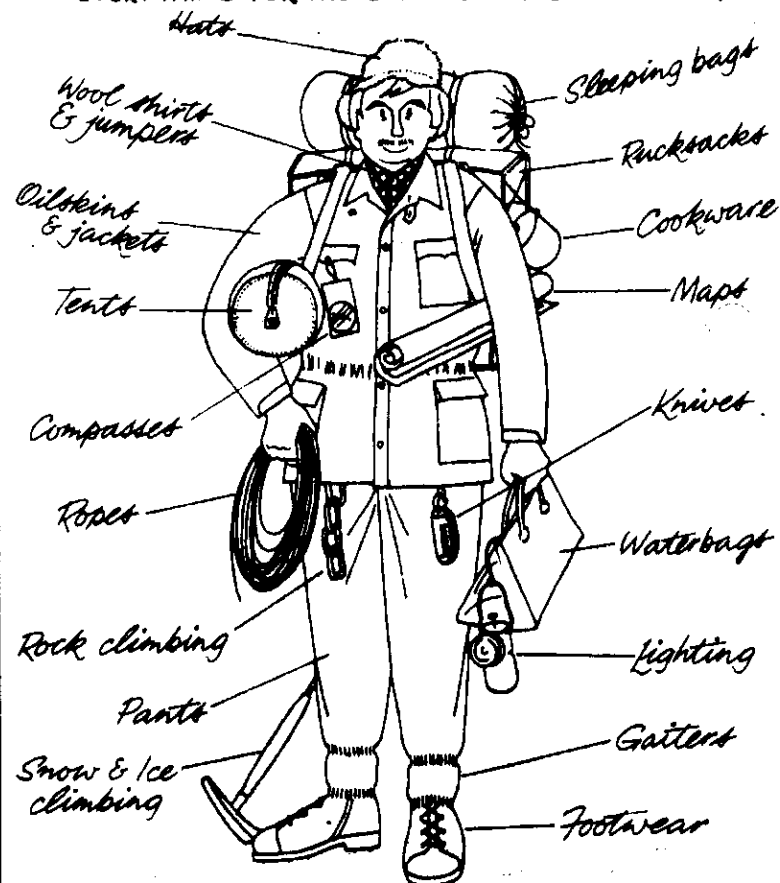
NEW OFFICE BEARERS

At the Annual General Meeting last month these office bearers were elected or re-elected:-

<i>President</i> — Peter Harris	888-7316
<i>Sen. Vice Pres.</i> — Keith Maxwell	827-3919
<i>Jun. Vice Pres.</i> — Dave Noble	
<i>Secretary</i> — Dennis Rittson	95-6060
<i>Treasurer</i> — Jim Calloway	520-7081
<i>Min. Secretary</i> — Murray Scott	520-0750
<i>Inf. Officer</i> - Peter Tuft	85-7640
<i>Cons. Convenor</i> — Bruce Vote	399 9452
<i>Tracks & Access</i> — Peter Tuft	85-7640
Wilf Hilder	622-3353
<i>Publications</i> — Tom Williams	(047) 39-2145
<i>Public Relations</i> — Mike Richter	827-1546
<i>Ball Convenor</i> — T.B.E.	
<i>Nature Conservation</i> — Roger Lyle	
<i>Council Delegates</i> — Adrian Tighe	
Ed Hanvin	
Search and Rescue Positions	
<i>Director</i> — Bob Pallin	467 1334(h) 26-2685(w)
<i>Secretary</i> — Sally Bell	476-4187
<i>Field Officer</i> — Keith Maxwell	827 3919(h) 692-3735(w)
<i>Rescue Officer</i> — Fergus Bell	476 4187(h) 218-9698
<i>Radio Officer</i> — Mike Richter	827-1546

Note — all phone numbers are home numbers unless indicated otherwise.

EVERYTHING FOR THE CAMPER AND BUSHWALKER



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