

# BANKSTOWN BUSHWALKING CLUB INC.

THE OUTDOORS CLUB THAT DOES IT ALL!

## BUSH TELEGRAPH

2019 No. 2  
WINTER



### AIDAN'S 'ADAMSON LEGACY TOUR', KENYA 2013 by Aidan Basnett

Having grown up in Kenya in the early 1970s, and having been mesmerised by the story of 'Born Free', I arranged a special tour there in 2013. 'Born Free' was the story of a rescued wild lioness called Elsa, raised by George and Joy Adamson, and successfully released back into the wild. An Oscar winning movie of the same name was also made. George Adamson was later known for the successful release of the now famous, Christian the Lion, a lion cub bought from Harrods.

I decided to arrange the niche tour to follow in the footsteps of where the story all happened. The six of us had never met before, and we met for the first time in Nairobi – two from Italy, two sisters from Canada, one from Kenya, and myself. We are now life-time friends.

Our first two night stay was at George's old camp called 'Kampi ya Simba' in Kora National Park, a truly remote part of Kenya. We were the first group ever to have been allowed to stay at the rebuilt site which was amazing. He raised over 40 lions here, including Christian, but there are no lions left here now due to poachers – sad, and he would be horrified. We slept in the open and climbed the rock opposite the camp. George was murdered by poachers here in 1989.

Our next stay was at 'Elsa's Kopje' in Meru National Park which is where Elsa was born and released. 'Elsa's Kopje' (Kopje meaning hill) is a luxury lodge built on the rocky area where Elsa once roamed and offers amazing views of her domain. We visited Elsa's grave (Joy's ashes were scattered here too) which was very moving, and also that of Pippa, a cheetah Joy Adamson raised and also released. I highly recommend Meru National Park as there are not the hordes of vehicles, but an abundance of wildlife including lion and elephant.

Next stop was a two night stay at 'Joy's Camp' in Shaba National Park, now a luxury camping lodge which is where Joy spent the last years of her life. Another remote and spectacular area of Kenya yet quite different to the previous stays. Joy raised an orphan leopard here called Penny, and again successfully released her into the wild. We visited the areas and rocks where Penny roamed. Joy was sadly murdered in Shaba in 1980.

Our last stop was 'Elsamere' - Joy Adamson's house by the shores of Lake Naivasha in the Rift Valley. A lovely house where we stayed two nights. The Colobus monkeys still come out of the forest for their daily fruit at 3pm, carrying on Joy's tradition. She referred to them as her 'friends from the forest.'

It was the most wonderful and moving tour I have ever done and I plan to arrange another. I am actively involved in lion conservation and want to keep the legacy of the Adamsons alive. I run a Facebook page called 'George Adamson Legacy Australia' which now has 3160 followers. Please let me know if you would like to know more as my Adamson library is quite extensive, and I have lots of photos of the tour too!! I also highly recommend these 'off the beaten track' areas of Kenya.



Aidan atop Kora Rock overlooking Kampi ya Simba (camp of the lions).

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All opinions and recommendations contained in this magazine are the individual authors' alone, and do not constitute official endorsement by the executive or members of the Bankstown Bushwalking Club Inc.

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## PRESIDENT'S PIECE

BY THAÏS TURNER

### AGM

'Thank You!' to all those outgoing, and 'Welcome!' to all those incoming, committee members / position holders who were elected / appointed at our recent AGM on 11 March 2019. Reports from the Committees are published in this edition of the Bush Telegraph, along with the list of new position holders. A Club Information Sheet listing these members was also recently sent out to all, via the Club's group email. We're looking forward to undertaking our duties for the Club over the coming year.

### Club Nights

You'll notice a change to Club Nights beginning in the Winter 2019 Activities Program. General Meetings will now be held in Feb, May, Jul, Sep and Nov, with our AGM remaining in Mar. Social events will be held on the other Club Nights, in Apr, Jun, Aug, and Oct, with the Christmas Party in Dec. (No meeting is held in Jan). The quarterly Activities Program and Bush Telegraph magazine will still be presented in Feb, May, Aug, and Nov as usual, and start times for all Club Nights will remain at 7:30pm.

We hope this change will reinvigorate our Club Nights (usually 2<sup>nd</sup> Mon of the month) and we look forward to your support. On the designated nights we'll have adequate time for meetings, followed by supper, and then plenty of time for social events (slide shows, food events, training, guest speakers, etc) on the alternate months. The Social Committee welcomes any of your suggestions to help organise a social night event.

Reasons for the change include a decline in meeting attendance in 2019, although meeting attendance numbers have remained stable (on average) during the previous 5 years, peaking at an average of 20 in 2017. Barbara (Club Secretary) has compiled some data about memberships and meeting attendance patterns, and it appears that age demographics and area of residence may be major factors. It is expected that work / shift patterns may also be relevant, though no data is currently available on this aspect. In the near future we may run a survey asking for your input about Club meetings and social nights.

### Communications

Due to the recent broadcasting of unpleasant emails directed at members of the Management Committee, I would like to remind everyone that these members volunteer their time to serve on the Management Committee in the best interests of the Club. A re-

minder also that all communications (verbal/email/written etc) should follow codes of dignity and respect at all times, and focus on factual issues, rather than personalities.

Please note: the Club has a Members Representative (currently Aidan) and this is the avenue through which such matters should be raised, in a more confidential manner. The Members Rep brings these issues forward to the Management Committee for discussion and decision making.

When raising issues, it would also be most helpful if your comments were accompanied by some positive, practical solutions.

### Membership Fees

Membership fees are soon due. The Club's membership year begins on 1 July. At the recent Club AGM a small rise in fees (\$5 per adult) was approved. Please ensure you use the 2019-2020 Membership Form (to be issued soon) when renewing, as it has an updated fee schedule and several questions requiring your answer/s. Remember: you will be updated to 'current' when your payment (cash, cheque or EFT) and a **signed** and completed Membership Form, is received by the Membership Officer (currently Aidan). This documentation is required to comply with our insurance regulations. Please discard any older versions of these Forms, and ensure all Memberships and Membership Enquiries are referred to Aidan.

### Club Name

Please read Jon's article in this issue of BT, putting his case for a change in Club Name. Input on this topic was also received from some respondents in 2017 (during the Club Logo survey), so others may also want to add to the conversation. I foreshadow another survey, on this topic, in the near future.

### Child Protection and Safety Policy + updated Activity Register

Thanks to Chris W. and Lynda for their input in developing the Club's Child Protection and Safety Policy. This new policy was emailed recently to all Club Members and has been placed on the Club website. It is complemented by an updated Activity Register (content to be noted by both leaders and participants) so please make sure you replace any of the older forms you may have in stock, with the new 2019 version.

See you on the track soon,  
Thaïs

## REPORT ON BUSHWALKING NSW FEB 2019 GENERAL MEETING BY KERRIE MCLEAN

Thaïs and I attended the February meeting recently which was held in Redfern Town Hall, and as usual it was well attended by members of other clubs – mostly located in the Sydney area.

President Alex Allchin commenced the meeting and introduced the keynote speaker Yuri Bolotin with the topic being 'Bushwalking with a Purpose'.

Yuri discussed 6 points to bushwalking with a purpose (these allow planning and reminiscing to extend the life of the walk before and after):

- \* Become a bush photographer – for visual records and pleasure.
- \* Learn about things you see in the bush i.e. plants, animals, geography, birdlife, geology, aboriginal culture, artefacts, historical features and survey marks.
- \* Become a bushwalking leader – social, organisational, technological experiences can be enhanced.
- \* Protect the Environment – think about conservation.
- \* Participate in bushwalking events i.e. Colong Foundation or like bodies.
- \* Explore, document and share – make track notes, audio notes, contribute to books.

He also discussed and sold books written by Michael Keats, Brian Fox and himself, the latest of which was new out in March, about the Newnes area.

Unfortunately the next keynote speaker was unable to attend the meeting, so the Executive Officer Kirsten Mayer gave updates on the recent survey, Young People in Clubs, and she thanked all of the volunteers.

Also Bushwalking NSW was looking for an Events Co-ordinator; photos for the recent competition (entries by 31 Mar 2019), names to be put forward for the Chardon Award, and submissions for a Canyoning Leadership Guide.

If you wish to keep an eye on the impact, that the changes made to National Parks, are having, look up the parkwatchnsw.org website for information.

The next meeting will be held at Redfern Town Hall at 7pm for a 7.30pm start on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> May and the topic for the evening is: Engaging Young People in Outdoor Adventure.

## 2019 AGM: Management Committee Report 2018

### Activities Programs

Club members welcomed the extensive and varied quarterly program of activities to keep them adventuring outdoors during 2018. There were some extreme weather events which affected some planned trips, as with previous years. It's great to see new leaders coming forward and making valuable contributions. Thank you to the Walks, Abseil and Social Committees for creating our programs full of fun activities. Thank you to all the leaders (especially new leaders) and also to all the participants (and a special welcome to new members). We had 23 different leaders during 2018 co-ordinating 107 activities (excl social), and we hope this trend continues to inspire others to lead activities. With our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary coming up in 2020 we are hoping to have 40 leaders and 40 walks, for 40 years. Can you help us achieve this goal?

### Behind the Scenes

A heartfelt Thank You to the Management Committee (Thaïs, Paul, Jon, Barbara J., Abdul and Aidan) who have done a large amount of work behind the scenes to keep the Club on track. Thanks as well to all those who volunteered to provide our tasty suppers at Club Meeting nights, and the presenters who provided interesting and diverse topics at Club Meeting nights. We are transported to other wonderful places through your slide shows. Thanks also to the Social Committee (Abdul, Barbara and Thaïs) who co-ordinated many social events, and to Julie and Vaz for hosting the Club's successful annual Christmas Party.

### Club Promotion

Aidan, our Membership Officer, has taken up the role with enthusiasm and grown our numbers by another 20 new memberships during the year. May this trend continue. Thanks also to Barbara J. who has provided able assistance updating the Googlegroups email list. Promotion continues quarterly through the local MP's newsletter, and our listing in the Council's online directory. Posters/flyers and business cards were created in 2018 and are available for distribution at the 2019 AGM, to help you can spread the word even more widely.

### Bush Telegraph

The Bush Telegraph (the Club's quarterly newsletter) was again produced in both print and digital versions in 2018 and made available to all members. Thanks to the contributors who shared a wide range of interesting stories & pictures of Club trips, and trips from further afield, as well as other information pieces. Please continue to submit your items so we can continue sharing our activities with other members. How about writing a brief report on each Club activity to share with other members through the Bush Telegraph?

### Social media

Don't forget to check out the Club's Facebook page; explore the informative Club website [www.bankstownbushwalkingclub.org.au](http://www.bankstownbushwalkingclub.org.au) (recent updates now complete thanks to Kshitij and Tim F.); and have a look at all the great trip photos being posted for your interest.

### Risk Management

The Walks & Management Committees maintain updated forms & procedures to conform with the latest safety principles. Our Club website is a good point of access to keep

abreast of this topic. We work hard to maintain our Club's very good safety record. However other incidents do continue to occur in our favourite National Parks across the State each year, and the Police, NPWS and other agencies continued to remind outdoor adventurers to carry a PLB if possible, and to follow some basic rules to ensure the best outcomes for yourself and your group. Bushwalking NSW meetings (quarterly – all welcome) and their monthly newsletters are another good way to keep up to date with how to stay safe in the outdoors.

### Insurance

During 2018 we continued to hold the Club's personal accident, and third party liability cover, with the insurer Jardine Lloyd Thompson Sports Division, chosen by Bushwalking NSW on behalf of their member bushwalking clubs. See our website and Club Information Sheet for more details.

We've had a very active year, and look forward to sharing many more with all our members.

We'd love to chat with you at a Club meeting soon, and to see you out on the bush tracks.

*Thaïs Turner, President,  
on behalf of the Management Committee*

## 2019 AGM: Treasurer's Report Jan-Dec 2018

In the 2018 calendar year, our Club had an effective loss of \$132.60.

The club remains financially sound. The effective balance in our Commonwealth Bank account plus petty cash at end of year 2018 was \$ 5,339.66. Included in this amount are abseil funds of \$3,610.00.

The main items of income and expenditure for the Club during the year were:

#### Main income:

- membership: \$3305.00
- abseil revenue: \$615.00

#### Main expenses:

- BNSW fees (including insurance): \$2190.00, with fees made up as follows: Insurance \$7.35 pp and BNSW fees \$7.65 pp (for 146 members)
- Club administration (stationery, printing, hall hire, PO Box, Fair Trading fees, other): \$1557.87
- Web hosting: \$401.48
- Suppers: \$203.25
- Christmas party: \$71.48

A small rise (\$5 per adult) in membership fees has been deemed necessary to compensate for persistent average losses of over \$400 for the last five years.

This year a moderate change is being trialled in the preparation of the Club's annual financial statement. All membership income and fees to BNSW are being applied to the current calendar year, rather than portions being allocated to the following calendar year as done in the past. This change avoids some significant accounting complexities, thus facilitating easier preparation and checking by Club members.

**Jon Gray, Treasurer, 10 March 2019.**

## 2019 AGM—Walks Committee report

Why do you bushwalk? Is it for the fitness, the scenery, the company, the wildlife, the sense of adventure? There are many reasons for walking and other outdoor activities, and proven benefits for both physical and mental health. It's great to have an interest that is so good for you as well as being so enjoyable.

Even in the age of social media, walking with a club is still one of the best ways to get into bushwalking. You get to meet new people, but also catch up with old friends and familiar faces. Club members have a wealth of knowledge about many of the Club's activities that they are happy to share. A club walk or other activity can be a chance to learn and broaden your horizons as well as an opportunity to exercise and have a good time.

As a club we are blessed with leaders who like to organise a very diverse menu of activities, giving us one of the most varied programs available. We do day and overnight walks, canyons, caves, bike rides, canoe and kayak trips to name a few. If you haven't already tried some of these, the Walks Committee encourage you to expand your horizons and try a new activity or a different style of walk to the ones you usually do. There is nothing like a group of keen participants signing up for an activity to make a leader feel valued. And the more we show our appreciation to our leaders, the more fun we can have on the activities they organise for us.

The Walks Committee as always would like to thank all the leaders who contribute to the program. Extra thanks go to those leaders who send through their activity details prior to the Walks Committee meeting which makes our job much easier. And we are always happy for "new" leaders to put their hand up and lead a trip. Just ask anyone on Walks if you need any advice.

See you in the bush.

**Aidan, Chris, Geoff, Louise, Lynda, Mike, Shannon, & Wai-Lin**

**The Walks Committee**

## 2019 AGM—Social Committee Report

2018 was a great and successful year for the Club's social activities.

A Club that is also committed to providing diversified activities that will encourage social cohesion among its members and establishing camaraderie through its social activities.

We've seen various social activities in the last year, exciting and memorable activities put together by our enthusiastic members.

A big thank you to all the members who've led these activities in the last year:

Shannon – for inviting us to discover and taste the excellent Italian cuisine at Enzo's Cucina, and Villaggio Bar Cafe; visits to Bundeena and Hazelhurst Arts Centre; exploring the Auburn Botanic Gardens; and the climbing session at Villawood.

Mary Flynn – for a day of strolling and exploration checking out the 'Hidden' sculptures at Rookwood.

Abdul and George – for being chefs of the day at the Sausage Sizzle, and collecting a reasonable sum to be donated to the Colong Foundation.

Paul Bowdler – for incorporating socialising at Mt Wilson, Kangaroo Valley and Yerranderie base camp weekends.

Julie and Vaz – for hosting the social-get-together Christmas party at their place, which was attended by many, rain or hail.

Thaïs – for taking us to the delightful film festivals – Banff and Radical Reels; from the mountain sculpture at Scenic World to the Sculpture by the Sea; and the Southern Highlands for Red Cow Farm Gardens and Brigadoon - the ultimate Scottish experience. Also, for the opportunity to attend the informative BNSW meetings; the enchanting lights at VIVID; and for letting us 'Feel the Beat' of the Cumberland Gang Show.

The presenters at the meeting nights - Aidan for showing the 'Adamson Legacy Tour of Kenya'; and Thaïs and Jon for re-showing Sharon Fulcher's 'Leave No Trace'. Thanks again to Thaïs for letting us travel first-class on the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage; and to Mike for letting us see the interesting bushie things – especially the Birds, through his camera lens; Ian for the fantastic tour of 'Incredible Amazing India'; and Fay for taking us to '8 National Parks in 6 weeks'.

We've also had a 'Buy, Sell, Swap or Give Away' night organised by the Walks Committee. It was a good way of getting members to market and socialise, and to reconnect with members who haven't been to our club nights.

The Social Committee appreciates the help of those who volunteered their time for preparing supper – Shannon, Barbara Funnell, Glenda, Abdul, Thaïs, Louise, Jon and Paul. We hope to see more members volunteer. We are always seeking supper volunteers, so put your hand up and do something great for the Club.

The Social Committee is delighted to see these kinds of activities unfolding. We are grateful for your commitment and for sharing your time and skills in making this club a fun place to be. Let's have more of these now and in the future, to encourage members to be well-connected with the Club. Well done everyone.

If anyone has any ideas for other social activities they'd like to organise for the Program, please contact one of the Social Committee members.

**The Social Committee: Abdul, Barbara & Thaïs**



## 2019 AGM—Abseil Committee report

It's been a bit of a chaotic year for the abseil trips. We've had to reschedule or cancel a fair few club trips and training days due to the weather (extreme heat and unexpected heavy rain), or unplanned clashes with other events. On top of that there were quite a few short notice trips popping up during the busy season, making it difficult for all interested to participate. With the trips that did go ahead as planned we did manage to revisit favourite routes and also cater to some requests of trip proposals.

The caving trips had suffered from a bit of a snag of permits returning within days of the requested dates. Due to this delay the trips did not get published on the program, and members didn't get the chance to prepare to go. Hopefully this issue will be rectified the next season.

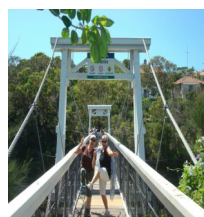
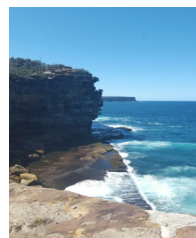
We would like to remind people to regularly inspect their equipment for damage and wear. Replace prusik loops every few years as they are inexpensive, yet very useful to have on hand. The club also stocks sacrificial tape and maillons for participants to carry should anchors need replacing, or we need to make our own on abseil trips.

The abseil committee members haven't changed since the previous year, but we welcome club members to step up and have a go. It provides an opportunity to learn more about our activity preparations and trip leading skills.

Chris, Paul, Kshitij & Tim

Your friendly Abseil Committee

## Shannon's pics—Watson's Bay to Rose Bay 3 Mar 2019



## A new name and image for our Club?

By Jon Gray

I believe it's time for our Club and in fact the whole formal bushwalking movement in Australia to reconsider its naming and image.

Our Club, in common with the whole formal bushwalking movement in Australia, is not attracting younger, dynamic members and thereby regenerating itself. I believe a major contributing factor behind this is that Bushwalking Clubs, bushwalkers and the activity of "bushwalking" are generally not perceived as exciting or "cool".

Over the years I have come to the conclusion that the main reason for this lies in the term "bushwalking" itself. Unfortunately, I believe the term just fails to ignite a sense of excitement and adventure. Rather, it conjures up a rather staid and boring image of people gently strolling through bushland. As a fellow member bluntly stated recently: "it sounds nerdy". Bushwalkers are rarely perceived as dynamic, exciting, trendy adventure seekers, and that's a shame, because in actual fact most of us are like this – we love adventure and believe in living life to the full.

Apart from this poor image is the fact that "bushwalking" does not always take place in the "bush". It is rather non-sensical to say we are bushwalking through coastal, desert or alpine landscapes. One doesn't say: "I'm going bushwalking in Nepal". Another issue is that we in our Club and most other Bushwalking Clubs, of course do so much more than "bushwalking". Other activities such as canyoning, caving, rock climbing, cycling, kayaking and cross-country skiing are also a big part of our Club. Does our name tell people we do this? No!

So, I would personally like to see our Club, and ideally the whole bushwalking movement in Australia, move away from the term "bushwalking", or at least qualify it. There are several other terms in common use that describe this activity, including hiking, trekking and the more recent "wildwalking" (my favourite). Broader, more all-encompassing terms include "outdoor adventure" and "venturing". All these terms tend to capture a spirit of adventure and excitement that "bushwalking" alone does not.

So, what might be a suitable name for our Club? Although my first preference would be to remove "bushwalking" altogether from our name, I recognise this may be going too far for many, so a combination of terms may also be appropriate. Some suggestions I have are:

- Bankstown Wildwalkers (my 1<sup>st</sup> preference)
- Bankstown Bushwalking and Outdoors Club
- Bankstown Bushwalking and Outdoor Adventure Club
- Bankstown Bushwalking and Venturing Club
- Bankstown Bushwalking and Outdoor Venturing Club

There are several other clubs with similar goals to ours who just refer to themselves as "Outdoor Clubs", including Wollongong University Outdoor Club and University of Western Australia Outdoor Club. Both these clubs avoid all mention of "bushwalking" (only hiking, caving, etc) on their websites. I suspect they too considered that "bushwalking" did not foster the exciting image they wanted to portray.

I believe names such as these would help change the general image and perception of our Club in a positive way. I also believe some changes along these lines are needed for the whole formal bushwalking movement in NSW and Australia. Of course many members may be reluctant to change our name, and there would be various administrative issues to deal with, but I am convinced that unless we make a change such as this, our Club, and perhaps the whole formal bushwalking movement in Australia, will continue to slide into irrelevance. We can help to lead the way in rebranding of bushwalking clubs throughout the country. Please consider this proposal, bearing in mind the long-term future of our Club and the whole bushwalking movement in general.

**CLUB NIGHTS EVERY MONTH**

USUALLY HELD ON 2ND MONDAY OF MONTH—  
EXCEPT JANUARY

**Georges Hall Community Centre**  
**188 Birdwood Road**  
**Georges Hall NSW 2198**

**Club email address:**  
**bankstownbush@gmail.com**

Contributions to this newsletter are always  
welcome & can be emailed to Thaïs .

Deadline for Spring issue is: Fri 2nd Aug 2019

Club Nights coming up in Winter 2019:

June	17th - Social Night .
July	8th - General Meeting.
August	12th - Social Night.

We're on the Web!

[http://  
www.bankstownbushwalkingclub.  
org.au](http://www.bankstownbushwalkingclub.org.au)

**2019 AGM — Membership Officer report**

At the end of 2018 total membership figures had increased slightly over the corresponding 2017 period, with 135 members on the register. (124 adults and 11 children under 18yo.)

22 members were deleted from the membership list during 2018 due to resigning or non-renewal for 2018/2019 at Oct 2018 meeting date.

26 members were also added to the membership list during 2018 (22 new members and 4 rejoining members).

The rate of enquiries is approx 5 per month. The main sources were: finding the Club via the internet, from referral by friends, and from links on other adventure activities web-sites.

Rope related activities continue to draw new members to the Club, though at a lesser rate than previous years.

The Club also still has several families with children.

Members are electing to receive their communications of the Program and Bush Telegraph in the majority by email (85%) with the remainder by postal methods (15%) - identical to last year.

**Aidan Basnett**

**Membership Officer**

**NEW MEMBERS**

**David Hayes**  
**Muhammad Fayyaz**  
**Iman Safsout**

Please welcome our new  
members when you next  
see them on an activity.



Abdul receives the Member of the Year  
award at the 2019 AGM.

**AWARD WINNERS**

**2018**

**Member of the Year**

(participated in most  
activities (excl social))

**Abdul Zaitoun**

**Leader of the Year**

(led most activities  
(excl social))

**Thaïs Turner**

**Ross Hamilton Shield**

(for the Club's Paddy Pallin  
Rogainers with the highest  
score)

**Meela Davis,**

**Rebecca Parsons &**

**Thaïs Turner**

**CLUB OFFICE BEARERS & COMMITTEE MEMBERS –  
elected & appointed at March 2019 AGM**

<b><u>POSITION</u></b>	<b><u>NAME</u></b>
President	Thaïs Turner
Vice President	Ivars Karklins
Secretary	Barbara Jacquemin
Treasurer & Public Officer	Jon Gray
Member's Representative	Aidan Basnett
Walks Committee	Geoff Bovard
	Louise Glynn
	Wai-Lin McCaull
	Lynda Paju
	Mike Robinson
	Shannon Simonit (Rep)
	Chris Ward
Social Committee	Barbara Jacquemin (Rep)
	Thaïs Turner
	Abdul Zaitoun
Abseil Committee	Paul Bowdler
	Tim Fox
	Kshitij Sahni
	Chris Ward
Membership Officer	Aidan Basnett
Newsletter Editor	Thaïs Turner
(Bush Telegraph)	Wai-Lin McCaull
Activities Program Editor	Kshitij Sahni
Web Master	Aidan Basnett
Bushwalking NSW	Kerrie McLean
Delegates (3)	Thaïs Turner
Child Protection Officer	Chris Ward

## SNIPPETS

Compiled by Thais Turner

- **Track access:** Furber Steps (near Scenic World, Katoomba) is undergoing track maintenance work and is closed from 12 Apr 2019 to 30 Jun 2019. An alternative walking track is from Echo Point, via Giant Stairway and Federal Pass - somewhat steeper and longer but gives access to the same area.
- Funds (\$10m) have been granted in mid Feb 2019 by the NSW Government, to make a significant **track upgrade** to the 13.6km Grand Cliff Top Walk from Wentworth Falls to the Marked Tree at Katoomba. Targeted will be the missing links from the Fairmont to Sublime Point.
- Funds have also been allocated for a **Federation Cliff Walk** from Watson's Bay to Bondi.
- Upgrades for **mobility access** to iconic Blue Mountains Lookouts will also benefit from \$9.9m for this project.

Many **environmental issues** affecting Local Council areas, Statewide and Nationwide have inspired increased **activism** recently:

- Blue Mountains Conservation Society ran a community **rally** to 'Protect our National Parks' on 24 Feb 2019.
- The 'Give a Dam' film about the threats to the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area and bushwalking destinations, by the proposed raising of the **Warragamba Dam** wall, was shown in cinemas and other locations in Penrith, Liverpool, Campbelltown and the Mountains during Feb and Mar 2019. Find it also at [www.colongwilderness.org.au](http://www.colongwilderness.org.au). It highlights the extraordinary biodiversity, ecology, and beauty of this natural wonderland. The film will also be shown at the UNESCO World Heritage Committee meetings in Paris in April.
- **School Strike 4 Climate** demonstrations were held around the country and internationally on 15 March, due to concerns by youth globally, about the state of the planet now and into the future.
- Destination Pagoda has been launched by the Colong Foundation to enhance the protection of the **Gardens of Stone** National Park and a proposed Gardens of Stone State Conservation Area.
- A vast number of supporters who wish to protect the fragile environments, endangered and threatened species, in **Kosciuszko National Park** (and other locations where the Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Act (2018) may allow feral animals to proliferate) are continuing to call for the repeal of the Act.
- The **detrimental effects** on the natural environment, flora and fauna of: 'longwall' underground coal mining (cracking and spills); 'fracking' for coal seam gas (contamination of water tables); seismic testing off the coast near Newcastle (marine creatures sonar intervention); and Adani's Qld coal mines (water table depletion and Great Barrier Reef degradation); will continue to be vigorously opposed by all who wish to preserve all aspects of the world's environment and biodiversity for the future.

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- A very informative article on **Navigation** can be found in the Mar / Apr 2019 issue of the Australian Geographic Magazine on pages 114 – 120. Very useful in conjunction with Chris Ward's Map and Compass Navigation Night being held at the Club Rooms on Mon 13th May.
- Two **articles** of interest can also be found in the Apr/May 2019 Great Walks Magazine: Pages 76/77 - weighing your backpack, and Pages 80/81 – interpreting weather maps.
- On the website [www.lotsafreshair.com](http://www.lotsafreshair.com) you can find many **video clips** plus articles of interest to bushwalkers, especially a 'Beginners guide to Bushwalking'. Explore the website today.
- **World Environment Day** is coming up on 5<sup>th</sup> June – make sure you do something positive for the environment on this day, as there is still so much to be done to ensure the sustainable future of our planet for all following generations.
- If you are interested in free camping around Australia there is a series of books that have been published by Mike Koch, the most recent of which was published in March this year. Entitled 'Australia Free'. Books 1, 2, and 3. Approximately \$55 each, or possibly \$45 each through Booktopia.
- The Australian Geographic Magazine issue newly out (May/Jun 2019) is their 150th edition—a Collector's Edition. Check newsagents if you don't have already have a subscription. Also just launched is their new magazine to be published twice yearly, entitled 'Australian Geographic Adventure'.
- Get your hands on a NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) free pocket guide to help you explore all that our parks have to offer, as well as a camping guide and tips on bushwalker safety.



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