



Armidale Bushwalkers armidalebushwalkers.club Newsletter February 2020

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ARMIDALE BUSHWALKING CLUB 2019 WALKS REPORT

Note - Our website is now armidalebushwalkers.club



The club organized a lot of successful walks in 2019 despite the drought and low river levels. Throughout the year we could see the effects of the drought gradually worsen in various places we walked but there were a few surprises as well. The year ended with disastrous bush fires which started in Queensland and northern NSW in September and gradually spread south as spring progressed destroying most of the Blue Mountains, South Coast and even parts of Kosciuszko including the historic Kiandra courthouse and the nearby

Mount Selwyn Ski Resort.

Our first walk for the year was in January with a short walk near Beech Lookout followed by a float hike down the Styx River swimming through

the pools in the narrow sections. The walk was well attended with eighteen participants. Later in the month five members and two visitors enjoyed a day walk to Wrights Lookout and the Cascades Walk where the effects of the drought were noticed with some of the beech trees looking stressed.



In February while the Secretary was away six members undertook a long day walk down the gorge of Salisbury Waters and up Mihi Creek back to the car park. Later in the month a planned walk along Georges Creek near Point Lookout was swapped for a walk to the summit of Mount Yarrowyck due to a spell of damp weather to the east. Fine views were enjoyed and some of the trees were starting to show stress from the drought.

March was the warmest on record across most of Australia and we started the month with a walk along the Thelfall Walk then descending from the lookout to the site of the old hydro electric plant which powered Hillgrove. Later in the month six members joined a group from Coffs Harbour for a

weekend at the Deervale Hall near Dorrigo. We walked to the Silent Pool on the Saturday with some members swimming across the pool and into the narrow slot where the Nymboida River flows from a waterfall into the pool. A band from Dorrigo played some live music in the evening and



individual members brought along some food so we had a scrumptious dinner. On the Sunday we did a walk to Borra Creek before returning home. On the last day of March we drove to what we thought was a road reserve hoping to walk to the head of Rusdens Creek. The adjoining property owner objected to us walking along the road reserve so we headed to Moona Falls and walked along the gorge rim for some spectacular views of the falls and gorge. The falls were dry due to the drought.

In April eleven members headed to Dorrigo for some day walks staying in cabins in the caravan park. The grass was green and 20 cms high. On the Saturday we visited Cedar Falls which were running well and on the Sunday we walked to Lanes Lookout and the top of Syndicate Ridge. Later

in the month nine members enjoyed a day walk to Steep Drop Falls which were also dry. Over the Easter weekend three members joined an overnight walk to the Henry River east of Glen Innes. The river was running although much lower than would be expected at that time of the year. We experienced some light rain mostly overnight.



In May ten members set off from the car park at Dangars Falls on a Saturday morning following the track to Salisbury Waters. After lunch eight members returned to the car park along the track while two members walked up through the gorge of Salisbury Waters as far as possible without having to swim and managed to find a camp site. They returned on Sunday up a steep spur back to the car park. Later in the month four members undertook an overnight walk from Buds Mare Rest Area down to the junction of the Apsley River and Rusdens Creek. Both the Apsley River and Rusdens Creek were just a trickle but still flowing.

June heralded the start of winter although conditions were fairly mild. Eight members went on a day walk from Wallamurra down some rather steep slopes to Postmans Creek where lots of rock orchids and staghorns



were observed. The steep slopes were very loose and one member was injured trying to pull themselves up the loose powdery slopes using a small tree. Luckily another member brought some rope and we managed to get the injured member back to the cars safely.

Later in June nine members walk along the escarpment from Majors Point to Point Lookout on an overnight walk in misty conditions which obscured the views. A day walk in the Wards Mistake area in the head of Round Waterhole Creek with nine members finished the month.

In July the Secretary headed north to warmer climates while eight members undertook a day walk in Cathedral Rock National Park. In August three members participated in an overnight walk along a rather dry Round Waterhole Creek. Finding water for camp was an issue on the walk.

September came and so did the fires. Houses were lost in Drake and the rivers were completely dry. Six members headed to the upper part of the Styx River which was flowing reasonably well despite the drought. We found a nice campsite and walked upstream on the Saturday and



downstream on the Sunday. A day walk at Long Point later in the month along the tracks revealed how dry the rivers were with no water visible from the lookouts in both the Chandler and Macleay Rivers. The trees were very stressed as well with some looking dead. Fires caused the cancellation of the walk along the World Heritage Trail scheduled for last weekend in September. Fires continued mostly to the north of Armidale into October and more houses were lost in Rappville.

October started with a day walk on a Wednesday with five members along part of Cliffs Trail and Cunnawarra Road. Later in the month three members participated in a day walk in drizzly conditions in Cathedral

Rock National Park. A day walk to the summit of Mount Yarrowyck with eight members revealed that most of the trees on the western side of the mountain had died from the prolonged drought. A Peregrine Falcon was observed flying above us as we traversed the rocky ridge. The last Sunday in the month saw two members do an exploratory walk in the Styx River State Forest and along the Styx River downstream from the Point Lookout Road to the waterfall where the river drops over the basalt cliffs. The river was flowing but was very low and in one place we managed to step across



the river in one step.

On the first weekend in November four members did another overnight walk along the Styx River departing Friday afternoon and walking down to the location where we reached on the walk back in September where we camped. We then followed the river downstream to Wattle Flat camping along the way. One section required a short swim to cross the river in the narrow canyon we visited back in January. This would be the final walk

for 2019 as the fire emergency in northern NSW worsened by the end of the following week forcing the closure of nearly all parks in northern NSW and the cancellation of the remaining walks in the program. More houses were lost in Wyaliba and along parts of the Mid North Coast from the



fires. Most of the forest along the Styx River where we had walked earlier in the spring was burnt during November as well.

In December we had a Christmas get together in Central Park as all parks in northern NSW were closed due to the fires. The fire crisis moved south into the Blue Mountains and the Southern Highlands. By the end of December Kosciuszko National Park was being evacuated just as the Secretary was finishing a walk in the area with another club on New Years Eve. Other clubs in Sydney and Canberra were forced to cancel most of their walks due to the fires as well. Houses were lost in southern NSW and in eastern Victoria as well as in South Australia. By years end fires had burnt through over ninety percent of national parks along the east coast of

NSW including areas where fire had not occurred for hundreds of years.



2020 will present some challenges to our club finding areas to walk in that have not been impacted by fires. If we decide to walk in areas impacted by the fires we can expect a rather gloomy scene. Finding drinkable water may also be an issue as the larger streams will be carrying large quantities of ash and sediment from the fires especially after heavy rain in the catchment. I suggest we carry the club's water filter on all overnight walks in fire ravaged areas. The filter is available from Armidale Outdoors.

ARMIDALE BUSHWALKING CLUB
MINUTES OF AGM HELD 30TH JANUARY 2020

The President welcomed all to the meeting which commenced at 17:40

PRESENT

Paul McCann, Peter Rodger, Peter Laffan, Kathy King, Joc Coventry, Julie Kennelly, Joanne Campbell.

APOLOGIES

Kate Carter, Mike Affleck, Elton Squires, Liz Chappell.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS AGM

The minutes from the previous AGM held 23rd January 2019 were sent to members and were taken as read. Moved Jo Campbell, seconded Joc Coventry that the minutes be accepted.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS AGM

Frequency and Minimum Numbers for meetings:

We now only require a quorum of 10% of the current membership to be present at meetings. In 2019 all meetings were run as formal meetings with the chair requesting any general business to be discussed. After closure of the formal meetings we then discussed walks for the next program. Members can have any concerns they may have discussed at the general meetings by advising the Secretary prior to the meeting.

Due to some members being away during January we decided to have the AGM at Kent House to ensure certainty of the venue and date. Kent House is centrally located in the centre of Armidale making it easier for all members to attend the venue.

Documents Pertaining to Children on Club Walks:

We decided that all children under 18 must be accompanied by one of their parents as only a few members have the necessary accreditation to work with children. If the leader has the necessary accreditation then other children may attend the walk. On most walks the parent is accompanying the children on the walk.

Membership Renewals:

The Treasurer sent out renewal notices to members in December and quite a few members renewed their membership before it expired on December 31st.

A reminder notice will be sent out to those who may have overlooked their renewals.

PRESIDENTS REPORT

The President tabled a report outlining the club's activities for 2019. We had 23 outings, some in conjunction with other organisations. Only a few walks were cancelled due to the fires which hit hard from November onwards. A copy is attached to these minutes. Moved Joc Coventry that the report be accepted, seconded Peter Rodger.

TREASURERS REPORT

A report showing the club's current finances was presented by the Treasurer. Moved Jo Campbell, seconded Kathy King that the report be accepted. Carried. A copy of the report is included with these minutes.

WALKS REPORT

A report on walks conducted by the club during 2019 was sent to members. The Secretary will forward the report with some photos to the Webmaster for inclusion in a newsletter.

ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS

Due to the small number of members present at the meeting and there being no other nominations for office bearers all the current office bearers and committee members were re-elected for 2020.

President:

Joc Coventry.

Vice President:

Peter Laffan.

Secretary and Walks Convenor:

Paul McCann.

Treasurer:

Joanne Campbell.

Committee Members:

Joc Coventry, Peter Laffan, Paul McCann, Joanne Campbell, as Office Bearers were on the committee.

Leontine Barnett did not indicate she was still willing to be on the committee so it was assumed she would be.

Michael Affleck indicated that he was happy to continue on the committee as a stand by member.

Moved Peter Rodger that the above members continue in their roles on the committee, seconded Julie Kennelly.

The Annual General Meeting closed at 18:15.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Changing the Cub's RAB Account to a Community Partnership Account:

The Secretary mentioned that in his role as Treasurer of Armidale NPA that that group had recently changed their account with the Regional Australia Bank to

a Community Partnership Account. The main benefits were:



- The RAB will donate 1% of the average annual balance of a member with an account with the RAB to the community group the member nominates.

- Being on the list of beneficiaries increases the group's profile in the community.

Moved by Paul McCann that we change our RAB account to a Community Partnership Account (S3), seconded Joc Coventry. The Secretary will obtain the required forms and pass them on to the Treasurer.

Post Office Box:

Currently the club pays \$130 per year to have a box at the post office. Given the small

quantity of mail it was questioned as to whether it was worth keeping the post office box. The Treasurer will investigate the matter further as the renewal is due by the end of February. Various organisations will have to be contacted to advise

them of the change of postal address. Joc Coventry made an offer that the club could use Armidale Outdoors postal address as it's postal address.

Plight of Koalas and Other Wildlife Following the Fires:

The Secretary mentioned about the plight of our native wildlife following the recent fires. He mentioned that the local State MP managed to obtain a grant to establish koala drinking stations near Mount Duval. This was welcomed by conservation groups but more needs to be done. The Secretary urged members to write to Adam Marshall thanking him for his efforts to obtain the funding for the drinking stations but also mentioning more needs to be done including the dedication of the Great Koala National Park proposed by the National Parks Association of NSW inland from Coffs Harbour and the damage that CSG and coal mining will cause to the koala populations in the Pilliga.



2019 ABC CHEQUE ACCOUNT 660956S1

Date	Details	Cheq No	Bank	Bank	Insurance	Bank Fees	Sundries
29/01/2019	NSW Fair Trading		\$46.00				46.00
22/02/2019	Stamps & PO Box		\$130.00				\$130.00
24/07/2019	Bushwalking NSW		\$654.82		\$654.82		
1/10/2019	Oban Eco Pty Ltd		\$299.00				\$299.00
20/12/2019	Yaffa Media	926	\$76.00				\$76.00
			\$1,205.82		\$654.82	\$-	\$551.00
	Total Expenditure		\$1,205.82				
	Reconciliation As At 31/12/2019						
	Balance as at 1/1/19		\$841.49		Statement		
	Plus Income		\$1,315.00		O/s Dep		
			\$2,156.49				
	Less Expenditure		\$1,205.82		U/p Cheq		
	Balance as at 31/12/2019		<u>\$950.67</u>				





