

# The Bulletin

*Journal of the Greater Western Sydney Region*



Over 100 Scouts and Leaders representing all sections from Joey Scouts to Rovers proudly marched in the annual Blacktown Festival Street Parade 30th May 2009

*Photo courtesy of Gary Rudd RA*

**No. 367 June 2009**

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## Venturing Out

George Kendall Riverside  
Park, Ermington

**Sunday 5th July**  
**10.00am to 4.00pm**

For more details call  
9874 2281 or  
visit the website:

**[ermingtonscouts.asn.au](http://ermingtonscouts.asn.au)**



## REGION OFFICE HOURS

**MONDAY to FRIDAY**

**8.30 am to 4.30 pm**

**Closed for Lunch 1.00pm – 1.30 pm**

The Bulletin is edited and published for the general information of members in the Greater Western Sydney Region. The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the GWSR or Scouts Australia.

**Submissions** must be made by the **20th day of the month preceding publication** and may be edited for clarity or to fit available print space.

Unless specifically requested, submissions and photographs will not be returned except when accompanied by a self addressed envelope.

Articles and illustrations (except for copyright items) from the Bulletin may be re-used unaltered by other Scouting publications and credits shown.

**Editor;** Anne Thompson **[anne.dlcs@gmail.com](mailto:anne.dlcs@gmail.com)**

## **FROM THE REGION COMMISSIONER**

*Jan Playford*

*Email: [rc@rgreaterwestscouts.com.au](mailto:rc@rgreaterwestscouts.com.au)*



*Building a Better Future*

Firstly, let me thank all of you. It appears most AGM's have gone off without a hitch. It is gratifying that we seem to have finally got most things right. We have only had a couple of Groups who have had difficulty paying their accounts and Region is working with them to arrange payment. I would like to thank all the Group Leaders and the committees for their dedicated work. Thanks also to the Region and District Leaders for attending many of the meetings.

What has happened through the AGM's, is that we have discovered that there are still some Groups hiring their halls with no lease or paperwork in place. This is extremely foolish and you are putting yourself and your committees at risk. If you are not sure of how to hire your hall please make contact and we will set you right. If you are hiring your hall all your safety audit items have to be done. You also need to have your fire extinguishers checked every six months.

In conjunction with State we have submitted a grant for a major upgrade to Bundilla. Hopefully we will be successful. Many Regions and Groups have successfully submitted grant applications of varying kinds. Have a look at the NSW website as well as our own for further information. There are various amounts of money going for the asking!

Our adult members in the Region have increased by 11.5% in the past year, however, on a disappointing note we have lost 0.07% (one youth member). Out of ten Regions, we are coming in fourth for adult members but tenth (LAST) for youth members. Come on everyone we don't want to be running last!!

I am hoping that the extra adults will mean better programming and more youth members. Remember we are a YOUTH movement. Whilst I applaud the extra adults, we don't want to become adult heavy and youth poor.

Have you had a bring a friend night recently? What is your Group doing to increase its youth members? I know in April people drop off members because of the census, however, if you have youth members who have returned, please make sure they are registered.

I still hear of Leaders hanging on to Y1's for months. These should be submitted as soon as possible. Once the parents have decided their child is definitely joining and have paid the joining fee and membership fee the form needs to be submitted to Region Office, usually within a six week period after commencing meetings for the first time. If we can all work together I know we can increase our numbers. After all who wouldn't want to be a member of the world's leading youth organisation?

In July we have a perfect opportunity to showcase Scouting at the **Venturing Day Out**. This is one section we can certainly expand. This is the chance for your Group to gain members and open a Unit. This day is for all the Region, not just the local Groups. Once again, have a look at our website for more information and contact details.

*Jan Playford*

Thought for the month:

*There is strength in numbers.*



**VALERIE JEAN WALKER**

11TH JANUARY 1934 - 10TH MAY 2009

A true Scout to the end - she will be sadly missed.  
Sincere sympathy to her husband Andy and Family

## ***POSSUM'S CORNER***

*Jan Carter - Region Office Manager*

**Phone: 9639 2488**

**Fax: 9686 2510**

**Email: [gws.region@nsw.scouts.com.au](mailto:gws.region@nsw.scouts.com.au)**



### **First Aid Courses for 2009**

#### **Senior First Aid Course Dates:**

September 5th & 6th

closing date 21st August

November 28th & 29th

closing date 13th November

Cost \$85



#### **One Day Requalification Courses:**

15th August, 17th October.

You must have a current (not expired) First Aid Certificate in order to do this course. Cost \$75 for Scouts and \$105 for non Scouts.

**Forms and money into Region Office two weeks in advance.**

### **THE TONY BALTHASAR JAMBOREE FUND**

Has funds available to assist eligible Venturers to attend the 11th New Zealand Venture at Wellington from 1st to 10th January 2010.

Venturer members who have sufficient funds to pay the deposit and who think they may qualify for assistance from the TBJF should obtain an application kit from the NSW State Office.

***Completed applications must arrive at NSW State Office  
no later than 5.00 pm on Friday 10th July 2009***

**WE REGRET THAT LATE APPLICATIONS  
CANNOT BE ACCEPTED**

*Brian Tye Chairman*

*Tony Balthasar Jamboree Fund*



## ***APPOINTMENTS      MAY 2009***

### **APPOINTMENTS**

IREDALE, Ian	AL	1 <sup>st</sup> Kellyville Group
JEFFERS, Rosalyn	AL	WPHV Group
YOUNG, David	AL	1 <sup>st</sup> Westmead Group
BEVAN Bruce	AL	1 <sup>st</sup> Riverstone Group
GLEESON Karine	AL	1 <sup>st</sup> Hazelbrook Group
HOLLOWAY James	AL	1 <sup>st</sup> Castle Hill Group
McLEAN Alasdair	AL	1 <sup>st</sup> Toongabbie Group

### **TRANSFERS**

HEMMONS, Michelle	Fr ACSL	1 <sup>st</sup> Kings Langley
	To CSL	1 <sup>st</sup> Kings Langley
KENNEDY Craig	Fr CSL	1 <sup>st</sup> Kings Langley
	To ASL	1 <sup>st</sup> Kings Langley
LESSLIE Shaun	Fr AL	1 <sup>st</sup> Kellyville
	To ASL	1 <sup>st</sup> Kellyville
MATTHEWS Robert	Fr GL	Guildford
	To GL	3 <sup>rd</sup> Merrylands
BARRAGH Michael	Fr AL	1 <sup>st</sup> Blaxland
	To CSL	1 <sup>st</sup> Blaxland <i>Pukeena</i>
CHIN Richard	Fr ACSL	1 <sup>st</sup> Blaxland <i>Keego</i>
	To ACSL	1 <sup>st</sup> Blaxland <i>Pukeena</i>
HUDSON Michael	Fr JSL	1 <sup>st</sup> Blaxland
	To JSL	1 <sup>st</sup> Blaxland
FAIRALL, Jeffrey	Fr GL	1 <sup>st</sup> Cambridge Park
	To AL	1 <sup>st</sup> Erskine Park
DOUGLAS, Godfrey	Member	Hawkesbury Black Horse Fellowship

### **CALLED TO HIGHER SERVICE**

WALKER Valerie Jean	Hon Adv	GWSR
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### **REGISTRATIONS**

1<sup>st</sup> Blaxland Joey Mob *Taipan*

### **TRAINEE LEADERS NOT PROCEEDING**

BELLINGHAM Rowena	T/ Ldr	1 <sup>st</sup> Blackheath
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## ***SCOUTING SUCCESS AT THE HAWKESBURY SHOW***

**Lyvern Slender ASL**

**1st Grose Vale Scout Group**

Scouting Groups from Hawkesbury District, 1<sup>st</sup> Grose Vale, 1<sup>st</sup> Hawkesbury, 1<sup>st</sup> Glossodia, 1<sup>st</sup> Oakville and the Blackhorse Fellowship united for this year's Hawkesbury Show to promote Scouting in the local area and further afield.

For the second year running Hawkesbury District Scouts won the award for ***Best Presented in the Grand Parade***, and also this year won ***Best Outside Commercial Exhibit***. We received support from ***Windsor Rotary and Windsor RSL*** to hold the Exhibit Stand and, as for many years, the truck used in the Grand Parade was supplied by ***Winston Express Haulage***, a great community effort.

The Stand and Grand Parade Float showcased some of the many activities on offer to Scouts of all ages. Leaders from all the Groups were on hand to demonstrate some of the many Scouting skills and crafts. The catapults were a favourite with both boys and girls, even Miss Hawkesbury Showgirl couldn't resist a turn.

Many show goers like to stop by and reminisce with current Leaders and Scouts about the good times that they had in Scouts. Scouts Australia is now 100 years on, and with the resources available to us here in the Hawkesbury, there are some great times to be had, in the years ahead.

*Scott Heinrich (1st Hawkesbury)  
Johnathon Slender (1st Grose Vale)  
and Greg Freeman (1st Oakville)  
proudly display their winning  
Show Ribbon award.*



***Congratulations to everyone  
involved! BRAVO***

## JOEY SCOUT NOTES

Kathy Cuneo

Region Commissioner Joey Scouts

Email: [joeyscouts@greaterwestscouts.com.au](mailto:joeyscouts@greaterwestscouts.com.au)



Our successful Medieval Joey Scout Fun Day was held on 31st May - further details next Bulletin. Thank you to the Joey Scout Leaders of the Region for their wonderful support.

GWSR was well represented at the recent BL3 course for JSL's. As well as the 12 participants there were three trainers from the Region. It is very pleasing to see so many completing their training.

The next Wandarrah on 19th June will feature a discussion on suitable bush walks for Joey Scouts. As all mobs will be urged to go hiking in Term 3 this will be a valuable session for all Leaders.



*Congratulations to Joey Scout*

Eliza Lean - 1st St Marys  
*who gained her Promise Challenge badge.*

**HOP, HOP, HOP**

## 1st Kings Langley Venturer Scout Unit 20th Anniversary October 2009

Calling all past members of our unit, to join with us  
and help celebrate this special milestone.

For more information or to pass on your contact details so that you  
can receive your Invitation, please contact:

**Margo Dalziel VSL**

**Home phone: 9831 7658    Mobile: 0405 599 241**

**Email: [cmn.dal@bigpond.net.au](mailto:cmn.dal@bigpond.net.au)**

If you know any past member of the 1st Kings Langley Venturer  
Unit, please pass this information on to them. ***Thank you.***

## ***VENTURER REPORT***

*Aaron Wardle RC Venturer Scouts*

*Mobile: 0421 076 497*

*Email: [venturers@greaterwestscouts.com.au](mailto:venturers@greaterwestscouts.com.au)*



The Region Venturers were well represented at Anzac Day Dawn Services and Marches across Sydney this year. Thank you to all of the Leaders who accompanied their Units and especially to those who endured the night long gathering at 1st Westmead Scout Hall on the Friday.

With a Jamboree at the end of the year, Venturer Units are getting out and visiting Scout Troops across the Region. This is a perfect opportunity to meet the local Venturers and to find out what activities they have planned. The Venturers are always willing to help the Scouts in preparing for outdoor activities, and will be talking with older Scouts about linking into the Venturer section once the Jamboree is finished. If you have a special activity that you think would be great for the Venturers to attend, don't forget to send them an invite!

The Region Roventure is on again from Friday July 10 to Sunday July 12 at Upper Colo. Cost is only \$40 for a fully catered weekend. Venturer Units don't forget to make sure your Roventure applications are submitted before June 26 to avoid disappointment.

### ***Try Venturing Badge***

Have you ever wondered why our Youth Members attend Cub and Scout nights every week? ... To prepare them for all of fun they can have in Venturers of course! Venturers love to plan their own activities and get outdoors as much as possible. So why not experience a taste of what Venturers has to offer? All Scouts aged over 13½ years old are encouraged to complete the *Try Venturing* Badge. The only requirements are to attend three activities (one outdoors) with your local Venturers. The activities can be with one unit, or a mix of units. Simply record the dates in the back of your record book and you will qualify for the badge. Why not get involved now? **Contact the RCVS for more information.**

## TRY VENTURING AT 1<sup>ST</sup> NORTH ROCKS

### Dorothy Bell (Dino) VSL

Last year our Venturer Unit recognised a need for the promotion of the *Try Venturing* Badge within Scout Troops. The Unit then put plans into action by having the Unit President, PR Officer and I visit as many nearby Scout Troops as possible, where we talked to the Scouts about Venturers and the *Try Venturing* badge.

To kick off the badge activities the Unit decided to invite Scouts to a 'Formal Dinner' on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May. The chosen location was the bus shelter on North Rocks Road, but on the night the weather was not suitable for this location. *HOWEVER* - the unit sprang into action, led by the Unit President and thanks to the imagination of these young people, the night was a great success!!! Very proficiently, out came the cargo net, tied off to the beams of the hall (risk assessment done) and tables installed in the cargo net. Dinner



was then served to the seated Scouts & Venturers. There were no spills and all looked quite comfortable and happy seated in the cargo net! Games were played between courses and all had a great time.

There were Scouts and Leaders from Parramatta, Wentworthville and North Rocks plus a VSL from

Kings Langley who visited us for inservice. This activity qualified the seven visiting Scouts to have the first of three required visits for the *Try Venturing* Badge signed off. These Scouts were great company and we look forward to seeing them again soon. We plan to have another activity where Scouts over 13½ years will be most welcome. The date set for this activity is July 2<sup>nd</sup> so if any Scout would like to know more about the *Try Venturing* badge or if they would like to join us on our next activity please feel free to email me: [dorothybell@idx.com.au](mailto:dorothybell@idx.com.au) or phone: 0418 579 900

## ***NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE VISIT 1ST NORTH ROCKS CUBS AND JOEYS Joanne Hrast (Bagheera) ASCL***

Our Cub Scouts have been learning about the Emergency Services as part of their Boomerang Award Scheme. The Group recently had a visit from the North Rocks Rural Fire Service. The evening was a hit with both the Cubs and Joeys alike. Fireman Anton gave an excellent presentation to the children explaining how to be fire safe in the home and in the bush. He told a yarn about a Koala to make it easier for the children to understand what to do to keep safe, as well as reading a story book explaining **good fire** such as birthday candles, and **bad fire** such as naughty children playing with matches that ultimately cause their home to burn down. The firemen brought along smoke detectors, fire blankets and extinguishers and explained their importance in the home and what children should do if they hear the alarm sound. The firemen also spoke to the children about their recent experience in the Victorian fires where the North Rocks branch spent 15 days volunteering their time to assist their Victorian counterparts. The Cubs and Joeys then participated in a fire drill in the Scout Hall where the Cubs and Joeys learnt to “**Get down low and go, go, go**”. The highlight of the night was when the children all had their turn at using a fire hose and climbed in the fire truck.



# RADIO, SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

John Leahy

(H) 4572 1549 (W) 8467 3592

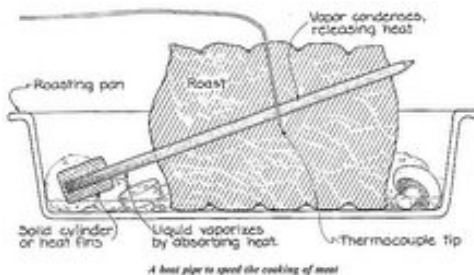
Email: [john.leahy@measurement.gov.au](mailto:john.leahy@measurement.gov.au)



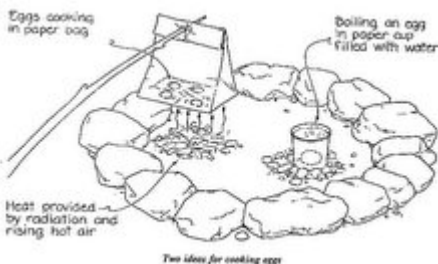
## Cooking with Science

I have been going through my collection of old Scientific American magazines with the aim of cutting out articles of interest and throwing the rest. This is a very slow process since each issue contains at least a couple of articles that I have to read all the way through to make sure I'm not binning something of interest.

A couple of articles in the Amateur Scientist section on cooking were of interest to Scouts: "Gismos that apply non-obvious physical principles to the enjoyment of cooking" (June'84) describes transfer of heat into a meat roast using a Thermo Pin **heat pipe**. The calculations showed that 2,256 joules/second were transferred inside the roast by the heat pipe, whereas only 35 joules/second were transferred by a similarly sized Aluminium rod. The heat pipe pin cooked the roast in half the time of the normal oven cooking process.

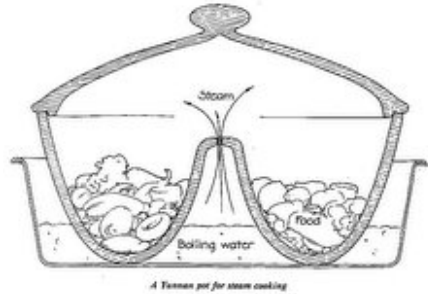


The article also describes an **immersion egg timer** that used Liquid Crystals to indicate 'soft, medium or hard', the advantages of using a **Yunnan pot** for steam cooking, and a terra-cotta butter cooler.

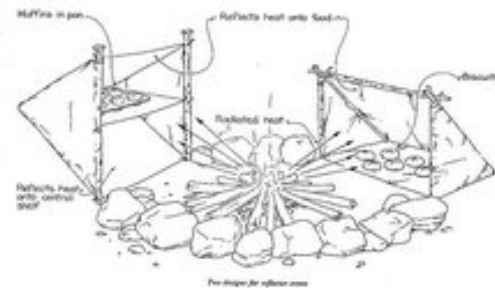


The second article "Cooking outdoors with simple equipment demonstrates aspects of thermal physics" (Aug'85) describes (a) using a 'dingle fan' to rotate a roast by rising hot air,

(b) two designs of **reflector ovens** to cook muffins or biscuits, (c) designs for ovens made from tin cans heated by charcoal briquettes, design of a can heater 'buddy burner' with wax absorbed in corrugated cardboard, and (d) how to **hard boil an egg in a paper cup** and, cook eggs in a brown paper bag over an open fire.



Not one of these cooking aids required electronics or batteries, and the Thermo Pin was suitable for backpacking. The passive egg timer, butter cooler and Yunnan pot would be more suitable for a standing camp.



**...AND THE SCOUTS GO  
MARCHING ON  
Mark Fell (Dingo)  
DSL Blacktown**

The last weekend in May saw over 100 Scouts and Leaders representing all sections from Joey's to Rovers, proudly marching in the annual Blacktown Festival Street Parade. To the beat of drums, provided by a number of Scouts and Cubs from Quakers Hill/Doonside, the Festival is always a great way to showcase Scouting in the local community. The cheers and response from the public is always very positive, and it was certainly a proud moment in time, for all in attendance. *Photo courtesy of Gary Rudd (RA)*

# Have the Time of Your Life at the American Jamboree!

Have you always dreamt of going to America? Do you love attending major Scouting events? What better way to do this than combining it with the fun of a Jamboree to give you the experience of a lifetime! Come along, you'll love it!

Nominations are now open for the 2010 Boy Scouts of America (BSA) Centenary Jamboree in Virginia USA, July and August 2010.

With over 40,000 Scouts attending, there will be a whole range of action and adventure for everyone including: archery, buckskin games, confidence courses, motocross, conservation programs, scuba diving, marksmanship, kayak fun, raft encounters, and many more.

Scouts Australia has been invited to send one patrol comprising of eight Scouts to this Centenary Celebration. As their name suggests, the BSA is a **boy only** organisation, and so no girls can participate in the Jamboree. Scouts will need to be at least 12 years of age by 1 July 2010 but not have reached their 18th birthday by 4 August 2010.

All Scouts must participate in a pre-jamboree training camp or have attended an Australian Jamboree. All applications must be recommended by your Group Leader and received by the Contingent Leader no later than 30 June 2009. Application forms can be found on the Scouts Australia website under International Scouting ... Resources.

The anticipated cost will be about AUD \$6000, including all fees, travel and event costs. The contingent will also be touring through New York, Niagara Falls and Washington D.C. on our way to the Jamboree!

**To submit your application or for more information, contact the Australian Contingent Leader:**

Aaron Wardle

PO Box 543

Wentworthville NSW 2145

0421 076 497 or [acwardle@ihug.com.au](mailto:acwardle@ihug.com.au)

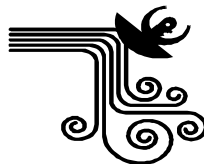


## **REGION ACTIVITIES TEAM**

*Keith Travers Activity Commissioner*

*Telephone: 9632-3341*

*Email: [activities@greaterwestscouts.com.au](mailto:activities@greaterwestscouts.com.au)*



The activity team for water has completed another successful season but with fewer courses and less people completing their qualifications this year. Last year was a record year, with nearly 200, including sailing, power, canoe and kayak quals. I note with interest the amount of people using their skills on activities, that are coming in on the A1 forms.

**Level 3 Canoe Course:** I think it is time we ran a one day Level 3 course for canoe. The pre-requisites will be; a log book with at least three overnight canoe activities, Senior First Aid Certificate and availability to teach on Region canoe courses. The date for this will be advised soon - probably late August or early September. Applications can be made by ringing me on 9632 3341 (a date will be set to suit the majority).

**Sailing Course:** September 26 to 30. Closing date Sep 11, 2009

**Training for Boat Owners:** The tragic capsizing of the motor cruiser *Last Call*, with the loss of three lives, has heightened the need for new boat owners to undertake training. In November 2007, the *Last Call* a Bayliner 25 purchased on the internet, attempted to leave Whitby in an offshore gale. Soon after clearing the harbour entrance, the boat met a huge sea and the owner and his brother were thrown overboard. Sadly, a little while later the owner's partner was also washed over the side, while making a desperate mobile phone call to the rescue services. The owner had very little boating experience and had not attended any seamanship courses. This type of accident could have been prevented with a small amount of training!

**Maritime Rescue NSW:** There will be a new boating service on the water shortly, white boats with red stripes and people in blue uniforms. This is the joining of Coast Guard and Coastal Patrol and VMR. The new service will be called Maritime Rescue NSW. This volunteer service assists rescue and breakdowns on NSW water ways. More info should be available at the Boat Show.

***Remember winter is here - stay warm and dry!***

# **‘I Helped Other People’ Badge**

In February 2009, country Victoria was devastated by bushfires. Homes, friends and families were lost.

**Draco Scout Fellowship** is releasing a new camp blanket badge, the ***I Helped Other People*** badge. Funds from every badge sold will be donated to either the ACT Chief Commissioner’s Fire Appeal or directly to Scouts Victoria. Funds will go towards rebuilding Scout Groups which have been affected by the fires, either through loss of equipment or loss of Members.

## **What Does It Mean?**

The badge is based on one of the most important parts of the Scout Promise, ‘*to help other people*’. The silhouette depicts a Volunteer Bushfire fighter doing his best to help injured wildlife in a fire-affected area. The yellow background is a memorial to the Cub Scouts from Kinglake Park who lost their lives in the fire, and the yellow ribbon around the Scout logo is a symbol of memory and hope and reminds us all of Scouting’s role in supporting and rebuilding communities. The name of the badge, ‘*I Helped Other People*’, reminds us of the promise that every invested Scouting member makes.

## **How Much Do They Cost?**

Badges (actual size is approximately 6cm x 7cm) are \$3 each and \$2 from each one sold will be donated to either the ACT Chief Commissioner’s Fire Appeal, or directly to Scouts Victoria.

## **How Do I Place An Order?**

Email [dracofellowship@yahoo.com.au](mailto:dracofellowship@yahoo.com.au) with your order and details. We will advise you on the best payment method and then send them out to you.

Order one for yourself or one for every member of your Group.



***Thank you for your anticipated support.***

## ***ROCK RELATED ACTIVITIES***

*Rick Jamieson Region RRA Co-ordinator*

*Phone: 4572 1321*

*Email : [rickj15@bigpond.com](mailto:rickj15@bigpond.com)*



### **Coming Activities**

**Abseil (Rockcraft) Courses:** 11<sup>th</sup> August (theory at Bundilla) and 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> August (practical at Bowen Mtn. and Yellow Rock). Also 27<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> October and 1<sup>st</sup> November.

**Scout Abseil Badge Course:** Friday 11<sup>th</sup> Sept. (theory) at a Scout Hall suitable to the applicants; Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> Sept. (practical) at West Pennant Hills or Blaxland.

**Scout Top-Rope Climbing Badge Course:** 26<sup>th</sup> June (theory at South Windsor Scout hall) and 28<sup>th</sup> June (practical at Lindfield Rocks). Also 25<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> September.

**Rescue (Recovery) Day:** 14<sup>th</sup> June at Bowen Mountain.

**Group Courses** can be arranged by contacting Rick.

Applications (on the A1 Form) should be sent to Region Office two weeks before the course. Two-day and three-day courses cost \$20, one-day trips \$10, Scout Proficiency Badge courses \$5.



**See our website:**

[www.beprepared.com.au/gws](http://www.beprepared.com.au/gws)

*A Scout from 1st Balcombe Heights  
abseiling at West Pennant Hills  
during a Recent Course*

## **BUSHWALKING NOTES**

*Frank Barr GWSR Bushwalking Coordinator*

*4758 6472 or 0409 128 310*

*Email: [data\\_scsi@msn.com.au](mailto:data_scsi@msn.com.au)*



A coroner's inquiry held recently, following a Blue Mountains bushwalk that resulted in a fatality, has received widespread publicity. Without adding my thoughts, I would simply like to comment that a lot of mistakes were made by a lot of people and a lot of time was wasted searching unnecessary areas.

The primary responsibility for your safety on a bushwalk is YOU. Proper planning is essential and usually results in successful outings. On the other hand, parties that end up in trouble usually have little or no procedures in place to handle the unexpected. Should help be required during an outing, modern technology has enabled bushwalking to be even safer:

**1. Carry an EPIRB or PLB.** These are Emergency Positioning Indicating Radio Beacons or Personal Location Beacons they are readily available within a number of organizations for little or no cost. The local Blue Mountains Police have 4 PLB's at both Katoomba and Springwood Police Stations available for loan. They are fairly simple and fool resistant to use and require a 'sit and wait' once activated.

**2. Carry a mobile telephone.** These are a great safety device but should be used wisely. Ensure they are fully charged, turned off and stored in a waterproof area. They should only be used in an emergency. Once required, they give you a vast number of choices and that rarest of all commodities, common sense, comes in to play. Be prepared with information before you call. Communications are random and unreliable in wilderness areas so frame your message with the important information first. Consider also letting someone know that is familiar with your activity. This could be your home or Scout Leader. A short message in this situation can allow someone with knowledge of what you are trying to do, to arrange things on your behalf. Should you decide to ring the emergency services direct, BE PREPARED. You can dial 000

or 112 with basically the same results. 000 is the standard Australian emergency number and can be dialed from a locked mobile. It also works via any network provider, not just yours. 000 may work even if your mobile indicates no signal available. The international standard for emergencies is 112 and this works in a mobile without a SIM card. It also can be used world wide and automatically connects to the emergency service (e.g. 911 in North America, 999 in England and 000 in Australia). My suggestion is you alternate between 000 and 112 until successful.

Once answered, you will be asked for the required service by the operator. Unless you are reporting a serious injury and you are in a situation easily accessible by vehicle, ask for the police. They are the search and rescue coordinators in most areas, including the Blue Mountains. Katoomba Police now have a standard list to ask. Be ready with location information (grid and map references, if possible), party size and condition etc.

**3. Help from passing groups.** Even in wilderness areas, we sometimes cross paths with parties travelling to different locations. Most groups share a common bond and are willing to help in any way they can. Several times on long walks, I have utilized these people to pass on messages on their return such as: “travelling well but expect to be a day late” or “all OK and expect to be at prearranged pickup on time - please bring dry clothes for all”.

Hopefully, all your travels will be trouble free and any emergency calls will be limited to parties you come across, less prepared than yourself. As Scouts, you can console yourselves that all the effort to do the paperwork correctly will not be wasted. Parties with properly prepared A1's usually have little need for them in rescue situations. On the other hand, poorly documented outings are more likely to finish in grief. I appreciate paperwork is a pain but think of what it would feel like to be in bush situations and needing help when your journey details were not known by people trying to find you.

Keith Travers, our RC for Activities has just forwarded the following link to a very detailed publication on bush communications:

[http://www.bushwalkingvictoria.org.au/forms/Communications\\_for\\_Bushwalkers.pdf](http://www.bushwalkingvictoria.org.au/forms/Communications_for_Bushwalkers.pdf)

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