



# The Bulletin

Newsletter of the Greater Western Sydney Region

Issue 483 – March 2020



SCOUT ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA  
NEW SOUTH WALES BRANCH  
GREATER WESTERN SYDNEY REGION



**Mr. Ross Grove**  
Region President

**Mrs. Debbie Howlett**  
Region Chair

and

**Mr. David Stopps JP**  
Region Commissioner

Invite you to be attend the

**73<sup>rd</sup> GREATER WESTERN SYDNEY REGION  
ANNUAL REPORT PRESENTATION**

**SUNDAY 14TH JUNE 2020**

**2.30pm - BUNDILLA SCOUT CAMP**

*Afternoon Tea will be served at the conclusion of the meeting.*

Please RSVP by Friday, 22nd May 2020 By phone or email

Phone: 9639 2488 / 0472 688 766

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

**GREATER WESTERN SYDNEY REGION OFFICE**

**6 Baden Powell Place, Winston Hills 2153**

**BUSINESS HOURS:** TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY & FRIDAY 9AM to 3.30PM

**Phone:** 9639 2488 **Email:** [gws.region@nsw.scouts.com.au](mailto:gws.region@nsw.scouts.com.au)

**Website:** [www.greaterwestscouts.com.au](http://www.greaterwestscouts.com.au)

## **FROM THE REGION COMMISSIONER**

Dear Members and Supporters,

We have had some trying times first with the drought then the fires and now we face COVID-19.

But, like the drought and bushfires, we stick together, as Scouts and will get through this. Over the last few days, I have had to make some very hard decisions. Two of the hardest decisions were the cancellations of two of the Region's major events, Cumberland Gang Show and Jamborette. These decisions have not been made lightly but, I must follow government guidelines to keep all members safe in these trying times.

For more information on COVID-19 go to: <https://www.nsw.scouts.com.au/members-services/health-and-safety/scouting-guide-to-coronavirus/>

As we are all Scouts and our motto is: 'Be Prepared', this is one of the reasons why these decisions have been made. I hope, like the bushfires, it is over soon, and we can go about our normal scouting activities. Please be aware that there may be further changes and disruptions to our activities, in the near future and these will be communicated as the need arises.

On a happier note, I have had the opportunity to attend the Hills District Catapult night where I was attacked by a number of young scouts with a variety of water bombs. None of the leaders in the Hills came to my aid – I know who you are! My memory is long...!

I understand all groups are in full swing for their ARPs. I suggest we do as many of these outdoors as possible.

As I will continue to support all the leaders in GWS, I hope my team and the decisions that have been made receive the same support. If you are in the process of organising an activity, please discuss this with your sectional Region Commissioner or myself before committing to the activity, until further notice. Thank you.

Keep safe and wash your hands.

Yours in Scouting

**David Stopps**  
Region Commissioner  
[rc@greaterwestscouts.com.au](mailto:rc@greaterwestscouts.com.au)  
Mobile: 0472 688 766 (04SCOUTS66)



## **SCOUTS NSW EMAIL ADDRESS ACTIVATION**

**Are you one of the 62% in our Region that has not yet activated their Scouts NSW email address?**

Volunteers who hold any of the following appointments below should have received their Activation email with username and password details.

If you have not received it, and believe you should have, please contact [ITSupport@nsw.scouts.com.au](mailto:ITSupport@nsw.scouts.com.au)

If you have received your activation email for your new account and NOT activated as yet – please do so by 31st March 2020.

### **At a Group level:**

- Group Leaders/Leaders in Charge
- Group Treasurer
- Group Chairperson
- Group Secretary
- Rover Crew Leaders
- Group Section Leaders

### **At a Region or District level:**

- All official Region and District appointments that don't currently have Scouts NSW email addresses such as DRCs, DCs, etc.
- District Commissioners (Sections)
- Region Commissioners (Sections)

### **In addition, the following members:**

- Fellowship Members

**For further information, please go to:**

<https://www.nsw.scouts.com.au/office-365-update-jan-2020>

If you need any assistance in setting up your Scouts NSW email address, feel free to contact me.

**Matt Thompson**  
RC Communications & PR  
[matt.thompson@nsw.scouts.com.au](mailto:matt.thompson@nsw.scouts.com.au)

## **Be Prepared: Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)**

To support the Leadership across Greater Western Sydney, our Region Commissioner has asked that we develop a plan to consider the impacts of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) and a way of keeping the Region updated as things develop over the coming weeks and months.

Today, as the Coronavirus (COVID-19) spreads, I wanted to give you an update on our current planning and our thinking regarding changes that may be required for our Scout Groups. Our goal is to support your wellbeing, the wellbeing of our leaders and youth, and at the same time ensure the ongoing delivery of a fantastic program for the youth of Western Sydney. Please take the time to discuss with your Section Leaders and start considering the impacts to your Group.

Within the Region, we have set up a dedicated coordination group, meeting regularly to monitor the spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19) and assessing how it may impact our movement. This includes planning for different scenarios and considering how we need to prepare ourselves for them. As a part of this process, the team are continuing to review information and follow guidance from NSW Health, as well as the Australian government. We will be seeking our information from reliable, trusted sources, rather than the rumour and gossip doing the rounds on social media.

As this situation develops, we expect that we will have a coordinated, consistent Scouts NSW approach and at that time, that program will take over the role of risk assessment and member update. Until then, we will ensure you have the latest information.

### **TAKE PRECAUTIONS**

#### **MEMBER SAFETY**

As our main concern is to ensure the protection of our members and professional staff, it is important that we keep you abreast of the current warnings issued from NSW Health, as well as the Australian government. At this time we ask that you consider in your Group, how you might adjust your ceremonies and programs to encourage good hygiene. This could include considering halting the shaking of hands (as recommended by the NSW Govt) or close contact games. At this stage we have no further guidance to give, but will keep you updated as this develops. This may be the time to focus on the 'Health & Hygiene' sections of the awards scheme.

#### **MAJOR EVENT CANCELLATION**

It is possible that as COVID-19 spreads, there is an increased risk of activity cancellation due to lack of attendance or by public order. Consideration needs to

be given to the possibility of loss of costs already incurred from cancellation of events due to a pandemic. Each event needs to carefully consider the risk of the activity, the financial impact and reputation exposure in the event of spread of Coronavirus.

#### **REDUCTION OF INCOME**

Some of our facilities earn income through hall hire or hire of other equipment. Start thinking now of what you would do if this income was not available due to a drop in hiring from the general public.

#### **TURNOVER OF MEMBERS**

Start thinking about how you would keep in touch with your Group members if we had to stop meeting for a defined period of time. A prolonged closure could see an increase in members not return to Scouting, significantly impact our member numbers. It is important that we stay connected to our members virtually if not physically during any such period, as the recent fires taught us (staying connected builds a stronger Scouting community / family).

The team intends on working through these (and more scenarios) over the coming weeks, and we'll keep you informed as our thinking develops. At this time, we are not asking you to adjust your programs, only to consider the potential impacts and plan for a number of future possibilities.

#### **LEADERSHIP**

Finally, I wanted to share my thoughts about our role as community leaders. Throughout the weeks and months ahead, youth, parents and our fellow leaders will look to us for leadership. It is important that through this period we remain calm and informed to be able to support our communities. This is no time for speculation, gossip or rumour. Please consider your conversations, as they will have an impact on our Scouting community. Use your leadership skills to de-escalate conversations and support our Scouting community. We don't want to contribute to the hysteria.

#### **More information**

Here are some helpful resources for further advice and updates about Coronavirus (COVID-19):

[NSW Health COVID-19 resource page](#)

[smartraveller.gov.au](http://smartraveller.gov.au) COVID-19 travel advice

[Australian government daily COVID-19 health alert](#)

If you have any questions about this, please contact us at: [strategy@greaterwestscouts.com.au](mailto:strategy@greaterwestscouts.com.au)

*Yours in Scouting*

**Geoff Henderson (BEATLE)**

**Deputy Region Commissioner**

**Strategy & Development**

[strategy@greaterwestscouts.com.au](mailto:strategy@greaterwestscouts.com.au)

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## APPOINTMENTS GWSR

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<b>DUFFY, Nathan</b>	Fellowship Member	Blue Mountains Scout Fellowship
<b>DUFFY, Patricia</b>	Fellowship Member	Blue Mountains Scout Fellowship
<b>KHOR, Yong Chen</b>	AVSL	1st Carlingford Venturer Unit
<b>KOKAY, Craig</b>	AJSL ACSL	1st Winston Hills Joey Mob 1st Winston Hills Cub Pack <i>Boronia</i>
<b>ROBINSON, James</b>	From Trainee Ldr (S) To ASL	1st Blackheath Scout Troop 1st Blackheath Scout Troop

## RESIGNATIONS

<b>KILVINGTON, Roslyn</b>	Trainee Ldr (CS)	1st Kellyville Cub Pack <i>Zazu</i>
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### PETER MARSHALL

We have been advised that Peter Marshall passed away on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2020 after a heart attack, aged 56.

Peter commenced with Scouts Queensland as a Venturer Leader in 1985, before moving to Granville where he resumed his Venturer leadership.

However, a move to Manildra in 1987 saw him take up a Group Leader role with 1<sup>st</sup> Manildra until resigning in 2000. The funeral service for Peter was held on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> February.



### JEAN HIBBERD OAM

It is with sadness that we notify you of the passing of Jean Hibberd OAM at the age of 88.

Jean was Cub Scout Leader and then Group Leader at 1<sup>st</sup> Blaxland from 1965 to 1986.

She received the OAM in 1994 for services to children with disabilities, particularly through the Scout Association and to the community.

Her Cub Scout Wood badge was completed in 1966 and she received the Certificate for Good Service in 1971. Jean's funeral was held at Pinegrove on Thursday 5th March.

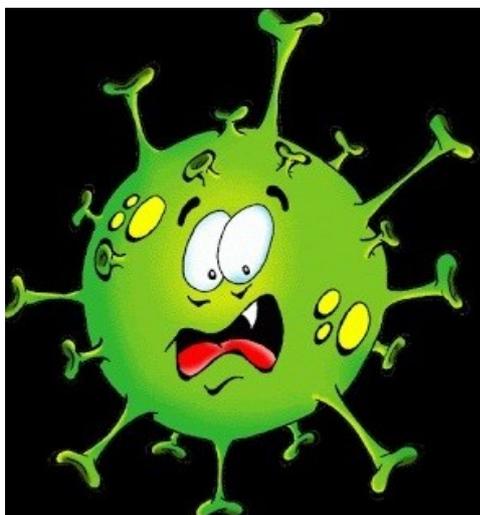
## “BUG OFF” A GLOW GERMS ACTIVITY



This is a **Cub programme** I have had on the back burner for a number of years. One, because I thought it was an activity that the First Aid team could do and two I didn't have a supply of the relatively expensive fluorescent powder. Now I have the glow powder, and with the pending Coronavirus flu pandemic I thought it may be a useful activity night for your Joeys and Cubs.

The basic idea is to point out to the cubs how germs are transferred from person to person by coughing sneezing and touch. Most kids can appreciate the first two and how to avoid them by wearing a face mask. Touch is a little harder to understand as it is not only touching the infected people (how can you identify an infected person), but touching things that infected people have touched and left germs for you to pickup. A tag game will demonstrate the rapid spread of germs by touching, with 'sticky' balls.

To make matters more difficult real germs are invisible - that's where the glow powder comes in handy. By brushing small quantities of the powder on touchable objects like door knobs, hand rails, tap handles, sign in biros and play objects, the 'germs' can be made visible in UV light. (We will explain at length that real germs cannot be seen with UV light).



Bugs on hands are transferred to the mouth by touch and food, so 'really' washing your hands before eating is a good way to avoid infection. A process of hands 'infected' by Glow powder will be used in a washing game to remove all the 'germs' with efficient hand washing and drying.



With the cubs, a comparison of soaps, detergents and hand gels will be demonstrated and a colourful poster left on the notice board will remind them of the correct hand washing method.

If you would like to do this activity (or any of our activities), email me to book a night. We would like to see your Joeys before the Cubs. If your numbers are small, invite a nearby Group. Cost will be \$2 per youth (\$50 minimum for the night).

**John Leahy**  
[john.scoutleahy@gmail.com](mailto:john.scoutleahy@gmail.com)

### Children's Festival

For those Joey Mobs that were planning to participate in the Children's Festival Sydney 2020 on Sunday 5th April in the Rocks, please note that the organisers have now cancelled the event.

### The Big Birthday Party (Joey Fun Day – 30 Years Joey Scouts) – Region Badge design competition

Joey Scouts began in Australia in 1990 which means that they will be celebrating 30 years of Joey Scouts in 2020. To mark the occasion, each Region in NSW will be holding an event or activity - a birthday party! Greater Western Sydney Region will be holding their Big Birthday Party (Fun Day) at Bundilla Scout Camp on Sunday 13th September.

To incorporate Youth Led, Adult Supported, the Region will be holding a Region Badge Design Competition for the Big Birthday Party! All Joey Scouts are encouraged to design a badge that we will have made into a cloth collectors blanket badge. The badge should capture the Birthday theme of the event and include the Joey Scout logo.

An entry form which will include a badge template to draw on and a question as to what your Joey Scout would like to do or see at the event, will be available through the District Joey Leader. The competition will close on 31st May and will be Judged by the Region Joey Youth Council .

### 2020 Joey Calendar

There have been some updates and changes to the Joey Region Calendar for 2020:

- |                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| <b>Sat May 2</b>     | Youth Helpers Course   |
| <b>Sat Aug 1 - 2</b> | Region Konara (Joint Joey Konara & Cub Palaver)              |
| <b>Sun Sep 13</b>    | The Big Birthday Party (Joey Fun Day – 30 Years Joey Scouts) |



### Joey Scout Promise Challenge Award

Congratulations to Joey Scout

**Tiffany Gale - 1st Toongabbie**

who recently earned the Promise Challenge Award

**Well done, HOP-HOP-HOP!**



**Joey  
Scouts**

## 30 Years of Joey Scouts

Joey Scouts will be turning 30 in 2020  
To celebrate this special milestone, a badge is available for all Joeys and Joey Leaders to wear on their uniform!



The cost per badge is \$2.20

Orders can be placed as a Group through your District Joey Leader.

Badges will be distributed in April once payment is received.



**Gabie Thompson (Darzee)**  
Acting Region Commissioner Joey Scouts  
[joey@greaterwestscouts.com.au](mailto:joey@greaterwestscouts.com.au)



## JOEY AND CUB SCOUT REPORT

### Joey/Cub Fun Day on the Water

Despite persistent rain, the annual Joey/Cub Fun Day on the Water was held on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March. Due to the wet weather participant numbers were much lower than previous years. Regardless of the weather, the Joeyes and Cubs (and most of the Leaders and Parents) didn't mind getting wet and were very keen to carry on.

The decision was made early in the day that the activity would only run through to 11am as the forecast for the afternoon was for storms. This ensured that the Joeyes and the Cubs each had an hour on the water each and an hour doing land activities.

A great big thank you goes out to Tracey Hansford and Sandy Knox for looking after all the registrations and preparations both leading up to and on the day. Many thanks to the Water Activities team and the Youth Leaders (Scouts and Venturers) for their assistance ensuring that all the Joeyes and Cubs had a great day on the water. I would also like to thank all the Joey and Cub Leaders that assisted with running the activities on the shore.

Badge work covered off on the day included some parts of Aquatics and Paddling stage 1 and stage 2 and/or Canoeing Level 1.



It was extremely satisfying to see the smiles on the faces of the youth members. Well done to all!

### GWS Region Bushfire Relief Walk

On Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> April, all members of GWS Region have the opportunity to unite together by participating in the GWS Region Bushfire Relief Walk. Cub Scouts can join the walk at either 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> Blacktown Scout Hall, departing at 2.15pm for a 9.7km walk or by joining the walk at McCoy Park departing at 5.15pm for a 4.6km walk.

Joey Scouts are encouraged to join the walk at McCoy Park at 5.15pm for a 4.6km walk or at 1<sup>st</sup> Winston Hills Scout Hall at 6.15pm for a 1.2km walk. The walk will finish at Bundilla Scout Camp at 7pm.

The cost of the event is \$15 which includes a \$5 donation, \$5 for the badge and \$5 for dinner. Register your Pack/Unit now at

<https://events.greaterwestscouts.com.au/event/295>

Applications close 20th March. All funds raised will go to the Scouts NSW Chief Commissioner's Emergency Relief Campaign, supporting Scouting families effected by bushfire.



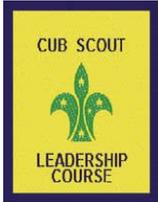
Badgework linked to this event is Messengers of Peace and the distance walked counts toward the Walkabout Award.



**Gabie Thompson (Darzee)**  
Region Commissioner Cub Scouts  
Acting Region Commissioner Joey Scouts  
[cubs@greaterwestscouts.com.au](mailto:cubs@greaterwestscouts.com.au)



### CUB SCOUT LEADERSHIP COURSE



On Saturday 29th February, 38 Cubs participated in a Cub Scout Leadership Course. The Course was supported by 12 leaders and a Scout Youth Helper.

I would like to thank all the leaders that assisted on the day to ensure the course was very successful. We are also very thankful to Pinnaroo Fellowship who looked after the Catering for the day.

Well done to all Cubs that completed the course. Can I please remind Cub Leaders that participants are required to complete two pre-course worksheets which they need to bring along on the day.

I rely on all Cub Leaders to follow up with the participants that they have completed the requirements prior to the event and that they take the completed paperwork with them to the course.

Those that have not completed the pre-work are less prepared for the day. Badges and certificates will not be awarded until all requirements are completed.

The term two Cub Scout Leadership Course will be held on Sunday 17th May. Registrations can be found here: <https://events.greaterwestscouts.com.au/event/270> and will be opening soon.



*Congratulations to the following Cub Scouts who have achieved their Grey Wolf Award*

**Julia Robinson**

1st Blackheath

**Lillian Robinson**

1st Blackheath

**Alexander Fraser**

1st Blackheath

**Alexander Mortensen-Hill**

1st Cambridge Park

**Timothy Nicholas**

1st Greystanes

**1 - 2 - 3 - WOOF**

### 2020 Revised Cub Calendar

There have been some updates and changes to the Cub Region Calendar for 2020:

Sat May 2	Youth Helpers Course
Sun May 17	Cub Scout Leadership Course
Sat Aug 1 - Sun Aug 2	Region Palaver (Joint Joey Konara & Cub Palaver)
Sat Aug 22	Cub Scout Leadership Course
W/end Oct 2 - 5	Cuborette – Includes Region Cub Youth Council
Sun Nov 15	Cub Scout Leadership Course

***Please note the change of date for the Region Palaver and the dates for the proposed 2nd GWS Region Cuborette. More details to follow!***

**Gabie Thompson (Darzee)**  
Region Commissioner Cub Scouts  
[cubs@greaterwestscouts.com.au](mailto:cubs@greaterwestscouts.com.au)





**Joey/Cub Fun Day on the Water**

## SCOUTS

The saddest news this month is that Jamborette/Regionette has been cancelled this year, due to the effects of COVID-19 and the health implications our camp could have. We must keep our members safe and healthy. The good news is I have booked Cataract for next year.

It is a year for cancellations. First Cuboree2020, then Jamborette and now ScoutHike and Sirius Cup too has been cancelled for this year. All other local activities are still running at this point in time – but that could change at a moment's notice.

This weekend saw 1 of our scouts from 1<sup>st</sup> Quakers Hill/Doonside enter an open mike night. James Munzer and his brother, Jabb, sang and played guitar and were so good they won the night! They will move on to the next round. Good luck and BRAVO!!



Don't forget to register for our Bushfire Relief Walk. It's coming up fast! You don't have to do all 33km of the walk. There are many starting points along the way. You can start and stop anywhere in between.

I have been helping out with 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> Blacktown these last few weeks. I have enjoyed the nights and have seen some true scouting taking place. The scouts planned and ran sessions on science explosions (with quite a bit of mess being made), multi fire lighting, rugby kick off and a flour war – that was extremely messy! But they all had a ball and they learnt something along the way.

As I watched and helped, I found the scouts listened to, respected and helped each other. Others who walked past may have seen an unruly rabble but I know what was happening. They were developing confidence in themselves and each other. This is one of the reasons I am still in scouts. Another is watching their faces when they come up with an idea fully expecting an adult to say no and then watching their faces when you say,

'Why not?' So, I challenge all leaders to say, "Why not?" more often. For course there will be times when you have to say no but most of the time it should be a yes even if it needs tweaking.

### Upcoming events for this year are as follows

- March** Radio Camp - John Moyle Field Day  
21<sup>st</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> March 2020
- April** Australian Scout Medallion presentation  
19<sup>th</sup> April
- Bushfire Relief Walk 4<sup>th</sup>** A 33km Walk from 1st Penrith Scout Hall to Bundilla Scout Camp along urban and local bush tracks to unite GWS Region in a fundraising event for the NSW Chief Commissioner's Emergency Relief Campaign (Family Support Fund)
- May** uBITX SOTA Challenge – 2<sup>nd</sup> May & 9<sup>th</sup> May
- August** State Rally from Friday 31<sup>st</sup> July to Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> August. The theme is 'Beyond the Horizon'. Each district is asked to run at least one activity. We are on RAC 1 again.  
<https://events.greaterwestscouts.com.au/event/295>  
17<sup>th</sup> August Region Scout Youth Council
- September** 19-20<sup>th</sup> RSYC Survival Camp (TBC) For all PL's and APL's in the Region
- October** JOTA/JOTI will be held over the weekend of the 17-18<sup>th</sup> October
- November** 16 Nov Region Scout Youth Council
- Our Advanced Leadership course will be on 30<sup>th</sup> October to 1<sup>st</sup> November
- Waratah for the older scouts and leaders will be on the weekend of 14<sup>th</sup> November
- Parramatta District will be holding their Wide Game on 27th November

### So remember to put all these dates in your planners.

If any troops/units need extra help to run nights, please don't be shy in asking for help. We love to help out. If you need someone short notice, please call me – if I can't make, I'm pretty sure I can find someone who can. We all know what its like to be short handed and we understand how things just happen.

**Tracey Stopps (Wiangi)**  
Region Commissioner Scouts  
[scouts@greaterwestscouts.com.au](mailto:scouts@greaterwestscouts.com.au)



Scouts



SATURDAY APRIL 4, 2020

## Bushfire Relief Walk

**REGISTER AT:** <https://events.greaterwestscouts.com.au/event/295>

**BADGE LINK:** WOSM Messengers of Peace

**WHERE:** 33km Walk from 1st Penrith Scout Hall to Bundilla Scout Camp along urban and local bush tracks.

21-23 Lethbridge St, PENRITH to 6 Baden Powell Pl, WINSTON HILLS

**HOW:** Scouts of all ages can join the walk at any of the Scout Halls along the way.  
SCOUTS ROVERS VENTURERS Start at 1st Penrith Scout Hall LEAVE 0600 (33km to go)  
6km to 1st St Marys Scout Hall 0800-0815 (27km to go)  
4km to 1st Mt Druitt Scout Hall 0915-0930 (23km to go)  
8km to 1st Quakers Hill Scout Hall 1130-1145 (15km to go)  
5km to 1st/2nd Blacktown Scout Hall LUNCH 1345-1415 CUBS JOIN WALK (9.7km to go)  
6km to McCoy Park 1615-1715 JOEYS JOIN WALK (4.6km to go)  
4km to 1st Winston Hills Scout Hall 1815-1820 (1.2km to go)  
1.2km to Bundilla Scout Camp ARRIVE 1900

**FEES:**

\$5 per walker Looking at donations being supporting the NSW Chief Commissioner's Emergency Relief Campaign ( Family Support Fund ).

\$5 for Bushfire Relief Badge to be received upon completion of the walk.

**DINNER AT BUNDILLA:** \$5 for sandwich and drink.

## VENTURERS

It's been an odd start to the year with the fires and floods. Nevertheless, Venturer numbers in our Region continue to be strong this month - up about 25 on the same time last year. Great work everyone!

We held our Initiative Course early this year at Scheyville National Park near Windsor. This is our third time at this wonderful spot. We had 23 attendees and 8 leaders and helpers, including attendees from Sydney North and Hunter and Coastal Regions. A little bit of rain, but not enough to dampen everyone's spirits. Thanks to Matthew Vella and Andrew Cross for organising the course and to all the leaders and Rovers who came along to help. The other courses are filling up. The next course is Environment in March to be followed by Leadership in August.

Since my last report, Roventure was postponed to the first weekend in May due to heavy rains. Some people have had to drop out due to the change of date, so we'd really like to see more people register. Our Rovers are putting in a huge effort to get it up and running and we would like to support them as much as we can.

Waratah 2020 planning is well underway. Our launch is a little later this year, but stay tuned for some more information to come.

Unfortunately, Dragon Skin has been cancelled due to the current Coronavirus issue.

**Brian Nelson**  
Region Commissioner Venturer Scouts  
[Brian.Nelson@nswventurers.com.au](mailto:Brian.Nelson@nswventurers.com.au)



**Initiative Course 2020**





## REGION ACTIVITIES TEAM 2020

We just cannot win at present. We have spent the last few months dodging bush fires and extreme heatwave conditions.

Then came the floods! But certainly the rain has been welcomed to many areas. I had the opportunity to head out into some of the bushfire affected areas in the Blue Mountains just recently, and the greenery is certainly coming back.

One of the first activities we were able to run for the year (that we did not have to cancel) was an abseiling workshop at Bowen Mountain and Yellow Rock. This also includes a theory night at Bundilla. Always a popular weekend, enjoyed by all in attendance.



**...Abseilers, always just hanging around...!**

Most of you would have heard about a fatality on a commercially run Zip Line (Flying Fox) late in 2019, near Cape Tribulation, in Northern Queensland. While the actual cause is still under investigation, the preliminary findings indicate equipment failure.

Scouts NSW have now put an immediate suspension on all Flying Fox Operations within Scouting, until the 31st May 2020. Between now and then a Flying Fox Committee will be convened to review the current documentation and qualification requirements for the Flying Foxes. It does not affect the Flying Fox at Pennant Hills or Cataract, both of which are more "permanent" structures. (So we can still enjoy the Fox at the Jamborette).

I have also been made aware we are currently unable to run our popular Top Rope Courses, due to questions regarding Instructor qualifications. I hope to follow up on this further with Scouts NSW. (Top Rope is basically the same as the Climbing Wall, but on natural surfaces).

I have responded to a number of questions this last month about the E1 Part 3. The main question being **"when I do I need to fill out Part 3?"**

**Part 3** is required on any activity on water (canoeing, sailing, kayaking); any rock related activity (abseiling/caving/canyoning etc); any activity involving an overnight stay (including all camps, overnight hikes etc.) This also includes overnight activities in dormitory type accommodation. Also any activity which has an element of risk. This would include say full day hikes in the Blue Mountains or similar.

Many of you know I refer to Part 3 of the E1 as the Insurance Policy. Hopefully we do not need to draw on it, but if things do go a bit pear shaped, Part 3 becomes a critical document, providing the who/what/when/where of the activity. I did request, prior to Christmas, a Part 3 to be filled out on all hikes in a bush area, including metro bush areas, due to the then serious bushfire danger. Fortunately that danger appears to have now lifted.

I have been in situations on a number of occasions where I have had to liaise with Emergency Services. Being able to provide detailed and accurate information, certainly portrays Scouting as a highly skilled and respected organisation in those particular situations. I am sure someone once said **"BE PREPARED!"**

As I have often said. **"IF IN DOUBT, FILL IT OUT!"**

If ever you have a question about the Region Activities, or just how do I fill out that form, please contact me. I am here to help!

**Mark Fell (Dingo)**

**Region Commissioner Activities**

**Assistant Technical Director, Cumberland Gang Show**

[Mark.Fell@nsw.scouts.com.au](mailto:Mark.Fell@nsw.scouts.com.au)

## LEAP (DAY) OF FAITH - NATTAI HIKE FEBRUARY 29 TO MARCH 1, 2020

1<sup>st</sup> Balcombe Heights Scouts were looking for a tough weekend hike. After rescheduling a couple of times, due to fires and floods, the decision was made to move the hike from the Colo to the Nattai.

We had 8 people on the hike, including 2 Venturers 3 Scouts and 3 Leaders.

This was an experienced level 30km hike involving off track scrambling, and made tougher by the recent bushfires, with branch debris and ash all over the trail.

After breakfast at Hill Top Bakery, we drove out to Wattle Ridge carpark and headed off at 8am. The route included a side trip to Ahearn Lookout with spectacular views of the Nattai River and surrounding cliff lines, which included our first view of Russells Needle, our goal for later in the day.



After scrambling down Slott Way we finally reached the Nattai River, and selected a camp spot 200m upstream at the junction of Rocky Waterholes Creek. After some well earned rest we set off at 3pm to conquer Russells Needle.

This was a great adventure, and we managed to scramble up the steep gradient, and sidle the cliff line, before heading up a false lead to the summit, and then

backtracking and heading 150m further south before climbing up a gully and reaching the ridgeline.

Three of us then trekked the final 150m North along the 'knife's edge', with 200m drop-offs either side, holding our nerve, before reaching the final summit. Congrats to everyone and especially Nathan (16yr old Venturer), and Tim (13yr old Scout) in reaching the summit, a small 1sqm knob, not for the faint hearted!!



We made it back to camp by 7pm, had a great night under the stars, and then headed out via Emmetts Flat and Starlights Trail on Sunday and back to the Wattle Ridge carpark by 2pm.

***This bushwalk comes highly recommended if you're looking for a more arduous and adventurous hike for your experienced Scouts and Leaders.***



Regards; Yogi & Rayza  
1<sup>st</sup> Balcombe Heights Scouts

## THE BULLETIN

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.

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