



Bushwalking NSW

Annual Report 2020

President's Report

Oh what a year! This time last year, all bushwalkers needed to concern themselves with was where and when was the next outing? All that bushwalking club committees needed to consider was the usual business, ensuring they had enough members – how might we get more? – and that there was enough activity to keep every member happy.

And now? Well, we may be getting back to some sort of normality, but we've had a long period of Covid-19 lockdown. Much as Bushwalking NSW wanted to be able to encourage more bushwalking, the best advice we had to give, and still do, is for clubs to pay close attention to government directives about outdoor activities, group activities, travel, hygiene and social distancing. Those of our clubs who are close to state borders will be aware of the limitations other state governments are imposing upon NSW and ACT clubs. We don't seem to be out of the woods yet, but I know that many clubs are finding ways to ensure that their members keep active and fit.

This time last year I was talking to the clubs at the AGM on my experiences of an active club, shortly then to be voted onto the Bushwalking NSW management committee. I volunteered to fill an unfilled position (vice-president) to help out the then president. Little was I to know that by March, just as Covid-19 struck, I found myself to be the president. Alex, the outgoing president, had already overstretched his normal term, but offered to fill the gap for a bit longer. He is, as I am discovering, are many people in the bushwalking world, fully engaged in many organisations. Thank you, Alex, for your many years of volunteering on the management committee. His stepping down, however, means that the VP had to step up. Was yours truly surprised? Doesn't really come close. Lesson One: Don't miss a meeting! Lesson Two: Always read the fine print!

In any case, I found myself with a wonderful group of committee volunteers all pulling their weight in the management committee. Between the vast experience of Keith and Margaret, through to the fresh youthful enthusiasm of several first-timers and a few other considerably more experienced than I am, I have felt most supported. Thank you everyone. Kirsten continues to make the wheels turn on the management front, and I have found our weekly Zoom supervision meeting to be most valuable. Kirsten also speaks most favourably of the office volunteers. Thank you everyone.

So, what have I to report for my six months incumbency?

All clubs will be aware that at last we have resolved the large club cap. I inherited this matter, and resolved to finalise it. I cannot, however, take all the credit, since the management committee collectively resolved to resolve the matter. We will operationalise it over the coming year. Thank you all the clubs and individuals who took the time and effort to help me understand their various points of view and positions on this curious historic relic of our organisation. The question where it first came from left everyone scratching their heads. So I guess we will leave that origin resting in the mists of time.

I inherited two other key matters, which are still ongoing. The first is the drafting of a new strategic plan for Bushwalking NSW. We are some way there, although I have to admit that the second matter – up-dating the constitution has taken precedence. I optimistically thought we'd have



Bill Boyd
President,
Bushwalking
NSW

something for the AGM to approve, but I now prefer to err on the side of caution and take a wee bit longer. The updating basically ensures that our constitution accords with contemporary governance practices, guidelines and laws, and that it actually reflects the practices of a 21st century Bushwalking NSW. We are still seeking input from members – many thanks to those who have already sent commentary – and I hope to be able to circulate a real final draft in the coming months.

A continuing matter for the office and the management committee is insurance. We spend a lot of time and effort trying to clarify matters for clubs, working through contacts and brokers. With a recent change of broker, some discussions seem to be starting again! We obtain insurance through Bushwalking Australia, which provides an opportunity for very specific targeted insurance that suits the needs of bushwalking clubs, and, as a collective, offers extremely good value for money. Try to get cheap insurance for almost anything else you do, and you will appreciate what value we get. Consider insurance as an ongoing discussion.

I mentioned committee member Keith earlier. Many of you will know him from his many years, nay, decades, of involvement in bushwalking and mountain rescue. Keith has indicated that he will retire from the committee this year. I have only known him for a short time, but will certainly miss his knowledge, wisdom and enthusiasm. He has been working on a large project archiving the Bushwalking NSW records, and keeps uncovering interesting facts and snippets. I don't think we have heard the last of Keith yet!

Amongst Keith's contributions is the Chardon Award. The award recognises those who have made a significant contribution to the bushwalking movement. It is named in honour of Harold Chardon, an early 20th C bushwalker who played a key role in founding Bushwalking NSW in 1932. We will be announcing the winner of the 2020 Chardon Award at this year's AGM.

I close with a nod to Keith's interest in the history of bushwalking. I have been gifted a lovely wee book entitled *With Swag & Bill*, published in 1906 by the wonderfully named Government Tourist Bureau Intelligence Department. The author is H.J. Hopkins, member of the Warragamba Walking Club. The President of said club, in introducing the book, writes, "To have admitted having walked from daylight until dark is to give yourself away as a downright vagrant, sundowner, or, if not quite mad, to be suspected of having a bee in one's bonnet". And if these are not good reasons to go a-bushwalking, I don't know what are.

I wish all clubs a productive and exciting 2020-2021 year of bushwalking and all other related activities. We may have stay closer to home than in the past, but this state of ours offers so much opportunity, it would be a shame to waste the chance.

President: **Bill Boyd**

Executive Officer's Report

Through bushfire and pandemic this year, our clubs and their members have maintained their dedication to their clubs and the benefits of outdoor adventure. Our clubs have actually slightly increased their overall membership by 1% (+136) this year and we send them well deserved congratulations.

Our Management Committee have been working hard this year on:

- communications and submissions through the bushfires and covid pandemic,
- a modern constitution,
- membership fee reform,
- strategic planning,
- building a trackwork approach,
- conservation and access advocacy, letters and submissions,
- our financial records, banking and financial compliance,
- child protection, risk management, club insurance,
- club affiliation and incorporation guidance,
- bushwalking history,
- how to increase the attractiveness of clubs to young people, and
- Bushwalking Australia governance.

A fantastic amount of volunteer effort. A huge thanks to our committee.

We all owe our thanks to the continued efforts of our volunteers who put in around 800 hours of effort to write our newsletter, help in administration, maintain our website content and back end, and provide marketing expertise. A huge thanks to you all for keeping the wheels turning so well!

A warm thanks to Christopher Birch, QC who kindly assisted us on our insurance communications to meet ASIC requirements.

Finally, a very special, hearty, and huge thanks go this year to Keith Maxwell. Keith has been volunteering for Bushwalking NSW Inc., The Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs of NSW and The Federation of Bushwalking Clubs New South Wales (our former names) for around 40 years! Even more remarkably, during this time Keith has been Director then later President of Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad (BWRS), now Bush Search and Rescue NSW (BSAR). BSAR grew out of the Search and Rescue Section of the NSW Federation of Bushwalking Clubs.

Since I started with Bushwalking NSW 5 years ago, Keith has always been the most consistent contributor. A remarkable contribution. We really can't thank you enough Keith!

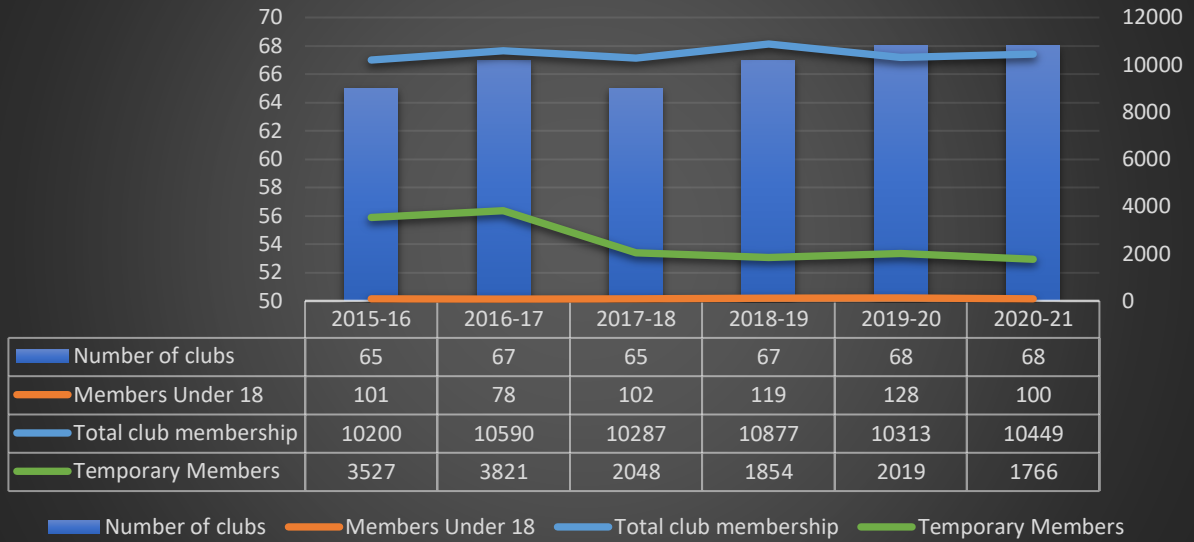
Keep exploring, be amazed!

Executive Officer: **Kirsten Mayer**

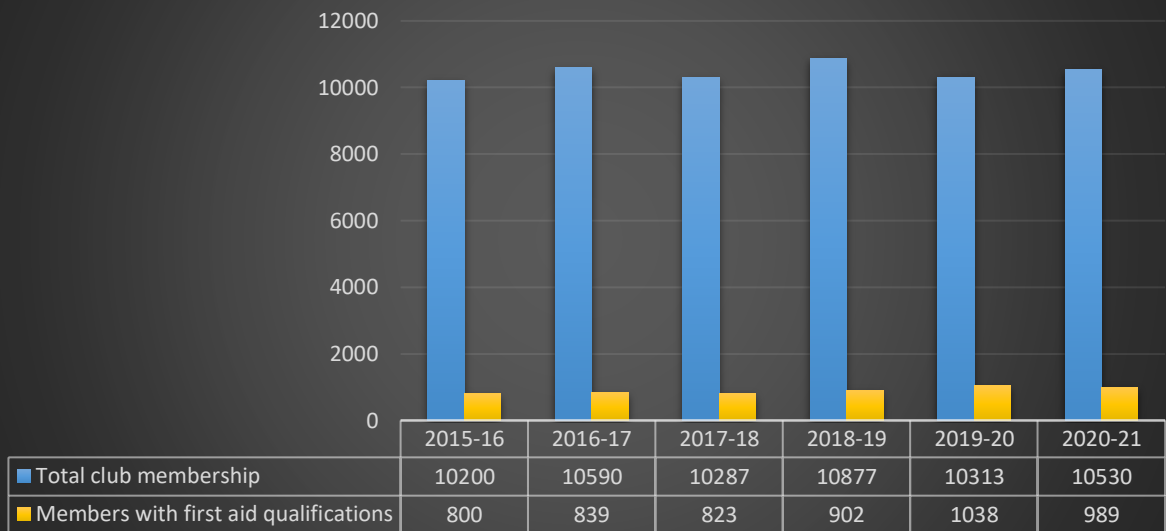


Kirsten Mayer
Executive Officer,
Bushwalking NSW Inc

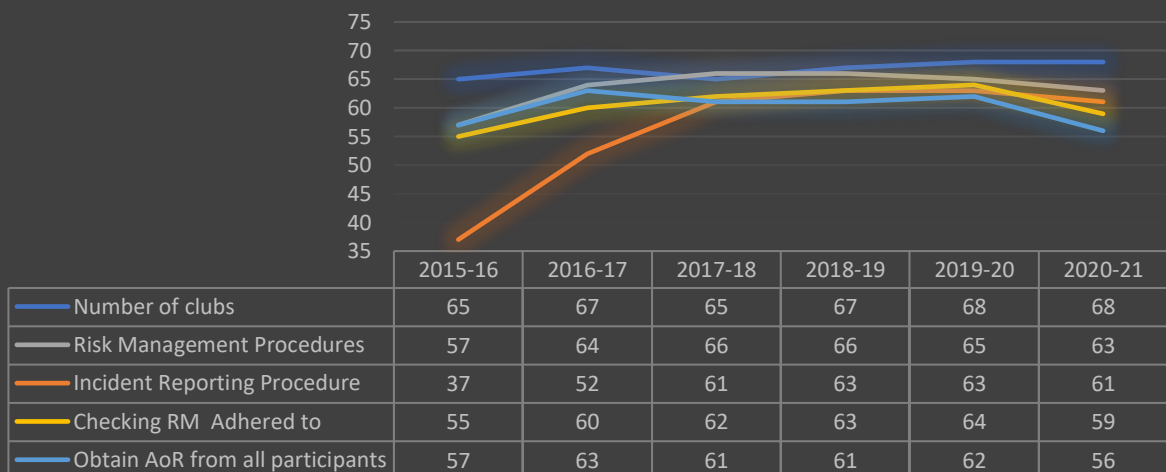
Total Club Member Numbers Over Years



Members with Recognised Current First Aid Qualifications



Club Risk Management Practices



Vice-President, Conservation, Tracks & Access Officer's Report

Volunteer Track Maintenance Project – Great North Walk

The purpose of this project is to provide opportunities for clubs to get involved in maintaining tracks. Some clubs have already been doing this for some years but Bushwalking NSW has developed a partnership with the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment to undertake maintenance work on the Great North Walk between Sydney and Newcastle. Three clubs and individual club members have registered interest in participating. Subject to funding and relaxation of COVID restrictions, it is planned to get the project underway by early 2021.

In the longer-term it is hoped to extend the project to other long-distance tracks in NSW.

Advocacy

Submissions were made in relation to the following:

- [Light-to_Light Walk Strategy \(draft\)](#) (Ben Boyd National Park) – concerns raised about impacts on the non-commercial bushwalking community through proposed changes to bush camping. Thanks to John Flint for comments.
- [Planning for the future - Ku-rin-gai Chase](#) – Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park – support for enhanced bushwalking access including track maintenance, new tracks and camping areas.
- [Angus Place Mine Extension](#) – opposed extension due to impacts on Gardens of Stone.
- NSW Upper House Inquiry Warragamba Dam – opposed raising of wall due to impacts on Greater Blue Mountains area.
- [NSW Independent Bushfire Inquiry](#) – support for knowledge-based approach to fire management. Thanks to John Flint for comments.

In addition, correspondence for the following:

- Katoomba Airfield lease – letter to Minister supporting Blue Mountains Conservation Society in opposing the lease. Lease was not granted.
- Radiata Plateau acquisition – letter to Minister supporting Blue Mountains Conservation Society. NSW Government has purchased the land for inclusion in National Park estate.
- Synthetic Field Development, Sheldon Forest, Turramurra – letter to Council supporting local conservation group.
- Reopening of Kanangra-Boyd National Park and Wild Dogs section of Blue Mountains National Park including repairs to Boyd River and Carlons Creek bridges. Northern section of Wild Dogs is now open.
- Open letter to NSW Government concerning EIS for Snowy 2.0 Main Works. Bushwalking NSW signed this along with other NGOs and individuals. Main Works has since been approved.
- Proposed Crown Land Disposal, Cloonty Road, Carrington Falls. Issue raised by local affiliate club. Letter to Crown Lands opposing disposal due to impact on bushwalking access. Outcome yet to be advised.



David Bell
Vice-
President,
Conservation
Officer,
Tracks &
Access
Officer,
Bushwalking
NSW Inc

The Executive Officer and the Conservation Officer also met with representatives NSW Treasury to discuss bushwalking issues relevant to the proposed NSW Nature-based Tourism Strategy. Draft Strategy yet to be released.

Customary Rights

Research was undertaken to consider whether bushwalkers have customary rights in the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area. The assistance of barrister Dr Christopher Birch SC is acknowledged. It was concluded that the criteria identified to list this area as World Heritage does not confer customary rights on bushwalkers.

Seminar and Conference Attendance

- Nature Conservation Council Annual Conference – November 2019
- Bushwalking Australia National Conference – November 2019
- National Parks Association (NSW) Forum on Snowy 2.0 – January 2020

Vice-President and Conservation Officer: **David Bell**

Achievements

- Developed relationships with land managers and clubs on tracks and access
- Numerous submissions – see Vice-President's report
- Wrote to all councils in NSW and ACT to encourage creation of more walks
- Hundreds of items of bushwalking history added to our publicly shared drive
- Increase in total club members 1% (+136) despite a very tough year
- 8% (+81 person) increase in our newsletter subscribers
- 13 new webpages and total website content refresh
- Refreshed Bushwalking NSW Inc. Constitution
- Continued work on Guidelines for Child Protection during club activities
- ASIC insurance communications compliance

Future directions

- Continue to develop the strategic plan and direction for Bushwalking NSW
- Finalise revision of the constitution
- Continue advocating a bushwalking perspective in environmental planning and input to relevant inquiries
- Support new walks proposals
- Recruit new members
- Use technology to improve our services and support to our members
- Seek funding and support for our priorities
- Support "It's Sweet to Walk Soft" Minimal Impact Bushwalking training



Thanks to our Volunteers

Bushwalking NSW would like to thank all its committee members, appointed positions and volunteers without whom we could not operate.

Management Committee Members

Role	Person
President	Alex Allchin till March then Bill Boyd
Vice-President	Bill Boyd till March then David Bell
Secretary	Bruce Lyman
Treasurer	Peter Jack
Ordinary committee member	Margaret Covi
Ordinary committee member	Keith Maxwell
Ordinary committee member (before March)	David Bell
Ordinary committee member	Jon Gray

Appointed Positions

Position	Person
Public Officer	Margaret Covi
Conservation Officer	David Bell
Tracks and Access Officer	David Bell
Risk Management Officer	Margaret Covi
YPIC Working Group Officer	Jon Gray
Media Officer	Vacant
Training Officer	Vacant
Website Content Editor	Leonie Bell
Webmaster	Alexandra Davidson
Newsletter Sub-Editor	Justine Bourke and Holly Wang
Admin Officer	Nabamita Bhattacharjee
Social Media Manager	Ashlee Ferret
Digital Marketing Officer	Lisa Han
Bushwalking Australia Delegate (ex-officio)	President
NSW Conservation Council Delegate (ex-officio)	Conservation Officer

Treasurer's Report

Bushwalking NSW Inc is in a relatively secure financial position with net assets just over \$100,000 or 1.4 times annual operating income. This is a prudent level of reserves and one we should aim to maintain, particularly during the present difficult environment. Our largest single liability is the accrued annual leave and as there has been no material change during the year. I have not entered any additional expense or adjustment to the balance. All other liabilities were settled within the normal terms and within seven days of the financial year end.

Our group insurance scheme suffered a significant deficit of \$2,777 as a result of a miscalculation of the premiums per individual club member insured. This occurred when some clubs declined to participate in one or more policies and we did not adjust the calculation accordingly. The error was approximately \$0.14 per insured club member. We expect to recover the shortfall in the current financial year.

Operating income is similar to last year with marginal variations in the individual components.

Operating expense increased by approximately \$2,500 over the previous year on a cash basis (i.e. excluding the non-cash accrual in 2019). However the total is still well covered by recurring income and well within management control.

The net surplus is about \$5,400 less than the previous year on a cash basis but still at acceptable levels and positions your association well for any disruption arising from the present unsettling environment.

Honorary Treasurer: **Peter Jack**

Peter Jack
Honorary
Treasurer,
Bushwalking
NSW

Bushwalking NSW Inc Statement of Income and Expense

For the year ended 30 June 2020

	2020	2019
Insurance Account		
Premium Received		
Personal Accident	\$ 18,915.53	\$ 21,383.79
Public Liability	\$ 23,333.25	\$ 21,919.68
	\$ 42,248.78	\$ 43,303.47
Premium Paid		
Broker Fee	\$ 12,894.00	\$ 12,590.31
Personal Accident	\$ 14,371.99	\$ 14,953.67
Public Liability	\$ 17,759.94	\$ 15,667.95
	\$ 45,025.93	\$ 43,211.93
Surplus/Deficit on Insurance Account	\$ (2,777.15)	\$ 91.54
Other Income		
Advertising	\$ 175.00	\$ 525.00
Annual Affiliate Fee	\$ 69,507.95	\$ 68,479.80
Bank Interest	\$ 807.24	\$ 1,405.55
Donations Received	\$ -	\$ 35.00
Miscellaneous	\$ -	\$ 143.00
Total Other Income	\$ 70,490.19	\$ 70,588.35
Total Operating Income	\$ 67,713.04	\$ 70,679.89
Operating Expenses		
Accounting & Bookkeeping	\$ 450.00	\$ 450.00
Annual Leave Expense	\$ -	\$ 6,454.72
Bad Debts	\$ 1,239.54	\$ -
Bank & Gov Charges	\$ 21.75	\$ 281.00
Bushwalking Australia Ann Subscription	\$ 9,618.00	\$ 8,167.50
Chardon Award Prizes	\$ 530.00	\$ -
Donations	\$ 20.00	\$ -
Meetings & Conferences	\$ 1,940.81	\$ 2,059.11
Nature Conservation Council Ann Subscription	\$ 90.00	\$ 180.00
NSW Dept of Fair Trading Ann Levy	\$ 47.00	\$ 46.00
Postage & Shipping	\$ 69.97	\$ 178.55
Rent - PO Box	\$ 159.00	\$ -
Rent / Electricity/ Outgoings	\$ 203.50	\$ 924.00
Staff Amenities	\$ 7.12	\$ 15.00
Stationary / Office Supplies	\$ 14.00	\$ 20.95
Superannuation Expense	\$ 3,893.19	\$ 3,433.00
Telephone/ Internet	\$ 508.75	\$ 140.57
Travel Allowance	\$ -	\$ 4,935.73
Wages & Salaries Expense	\$ 41,363.20	\$ 36,839.61
Website	\$ 377.40	\$ 342.00
Workers' Compensation	\$ 200.98	\$ 258.09
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 60,754.21	\$ 64,725.83
Net Surplus/Deficit	\$ 6,958.83	\$ 5,954.06

Bushwalking NSW Inc. Balance Sheet

As at 30 June 2020

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

	2020	2019
Assets		
Current Assets		
ING Bank Interest Bearing Account	\$ 106,510.90	\$ 107,203.66
NAB Operating Account	\$ 3,178.55	\$ 3,372.89
Petty Cash Drawer	\$ 53.65	\$ 54.25
Total Current Assets	\$ 109,743.10	\$ 110,630.80
Fixed Assets		
Computer Equipment	\$ 2,674.82	\$ 2,674.82
Computer Equipment - Accum Depreciation	\$ (2,674.82)	\$ (2,674.82)
Total Fixed Assets	\$ -	\$ -
Non-current Assets		
Deposits Paid	\$ -	\$ 250.00
Total Non-current Assets	\$ -	\$ 250.00
Total Assets	\$ 109,743.10	\$ 110,880.80
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
Annual Leave Accrual	\$ 6,454.72	\$ 6,454.72
PAYG Withholding Tax Payable	\$ 1,255.00	\$ 1,113.00
Superannuation Liability	\$ 1,143.64	\$ 1,113.68
Trade Creditors	\$ 13.00	\$ 8,167.50
Wages Payable - Liability	\$ -	\$ 113.99
Total Current Liabilities	\$ 8,866.36	\$ 16,962.89
Total Liabilities	\$ 8,866.36	\$ 16,962.89
Net Assets	\$ 100,876.74	\$ 93,917.91
Equity		
Current Year Surplus/Deficit	\$ 6,958.83	\$ 5,954.06
Prior Years Surplus/Deficit	\$ 93,917.91	\$ 87,963.85
Total Equity	\$ 100,876.74	\$ 93,917.91