

**Bushwalking
Victoria**



**ANNUAL REPORT
2009/2010**



Bushwalking: At a natural pace in a natural place



**Representing the interests of all bushwalkers and recreational walkers since 1934
and still meeting the challenge.**

Bushwalking Victoria promotes bushwalking, engages in activities that add value to the community and proactively represents the interests of all recreational bushwalkers.

Key performance areas

- Value to members and community
- Sphere of influence and representation
- Management and governance.

Benefits to members

- Access to resources and information via a statewide club network
- Strong voice representing walkers' needs and interests direct to land managers and government regarding outdoor recreation policy, preservation of natural areas, management of and access to public land
- Monitors the operating environment to assess impact of changes; eg legislation and regulations to provide advice/guidelines to members
- Organises low cost liability and personal injury insurance for members
- Provides all members with a discount card
- Promotes to the community the benefits of joining a club.

Community contributions

- Promoting bushwalking/recreational walking as an activity that assists health, wellbeing and social interaction
- Helping to keep walking tracks open for all
- Providing a volunteer specialist search and rescue group to assist Victoria Police
- Providing a referral service for members of the public wishing to join a club or get information about walking
- Facilitating the formation of new clubs
- Publishing free information about safe bushwalking and getting started.

Bushwalking Victoria is a signatory to and supports the principles of the
Walk 21 International Charter for Walking www.walk21.com

Bushwalking Victoria acknowledges the
support of the Victorian Government



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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The past twelve months has seen us move into the next phase of our Strategic Plan with a continuing emphasis on the three key areas of:

- Value to members and community
- Advocacy and sphere of influence
- Management and governance

How well we have addressed these areas is for you to judge when you read the contents of this report. Some highlights of our achievements include:

- Development of a contacts data base which will enable more efficient communication with our members.
- Expansion of key relationships to include the Victorian Office of Seniors and the Heart Foundation (Victoria).
- Completion ready for release a booklet for community walking groups on how to "Green Walk".
- Embarking on the feasibility stage of the Melwalk project.
- A number of high profile searches that led to formal recognition of the valuable service provided by our Search and Rescue Group.

The Board's decision making has been facilitated by the work of various committees and working groups. They have investigated and discussed the details of issues and formulated recommendations for Board consideration and decision. These committees/groups (that include Board members) along with specialist volunteers are the executive arm of the organisation and they ensure that day to day operational activities occur. I thank all those involved for their important contribution.

For BWV to exert proper influence on behalf of our members we need to continue strengthening our financial resources. Some of this will continue to come from grants and in the past year we have actively pursued a number of grants with some success. However we need to increase activity in this area.

Volunteers and Staff - thank you

Our need for resources is not just financial and we continue to rely on the generosity of our many volunteers. Once again the contribution of volunteers was in the order of 15,000 hours [an 8 full time staff equivalent and dollar value in the order of \$200,000].

The organisation could not function without these dedicated people many of whom are applying their professional skills for the

benefit of the organisation and I thank you all for your contribution. I thank our conveners/coordinators, honorary consultants, my fellow Board members and those that represented us on various bodies.

Again a special thanks to my partner Val Ford for her extensive voluntary personal assistant services to Board members. Without Val's consistent support over the last five years it would not have been possible for me to perform the role of President in a meaningful way. Thank you to our staff Jenny Sykes our Admin officer for maintaining our public contact service liaising with and assisting clubs and providing other administrative services and to Gina Mancuso who rejoined us in March 2009 as Project Officer for the "Walking Communities" project. Gina now leaves us after having completed the task of developing the green walking guides for community groups

We are also grateful for the work of our volunteer Field Research Officers who help to keep us informed about what's happening in our walking areas. This network is expanding and continues to attract members from regional clubs; something that contributes greatly to the effectiveness of the group.

Looking forward

Our strategic plan continues to guide us and help us set our work program for each year. However the plan is flexible so that we can respond to new information and opportunities as they arise. We need to keep lifting the profile of the bushwalking community and demonstrate the value we are contributing to the public good. There will continue to be many challenges during this process and BWV needs your support in helping us with the task.

At the conclusion of the 2010 AGM I will, as required by the constitution, step down as your President. The last five years has for me been a challenging and satisfying experience and I wish my successor well as the organisation continues to gain influence and operate proactively on behalf of all those who love walking be it in urban green spaces or natural places such as parks forests or the remotest wilderness.

I commend to you the following pages of the Annual Report which set out more detail about our achievements during the last twelve months. Please spend some time reading about them.

David Reid

SECRETARY'S REPORT

It has been another busy year monitoring the various legislative changes which may affect Bushwalking Victoria and our members. Advice was provided to all clubs on the Working with Children legislation, and Bushwalking Victoria, itself, has made changes to comply with the new industrial relations arrangements. We expect that in the coming months we will be developing further guidance for clubs on the Code of Conduct, soon to be introduced by the Victorian Government as part of its Respect Agenda.

We welcome all questions from clubs, and if unable to provide an answer, we will search for a relevant and authoritative source of information to assist. During the past year we have assisted a num-

ber of clubs on matters ranging from the benefits of incorporation to risk management issues. We also deal with many queries from the general public on bushwalking matters and those wanting to join a bushwalking club

Jenny Sykes and I spend considerable time on insurance matters, including the issue of the annual insurance questionnaire and compilation of the returns from clubs. Although, questions on the cover provided by the policies are referred to the National Insurance Officer of Bushwalking Australia, we respond to numerous queries on the policies, claims procedures and certificates of currency.

Val Wake

TREASURER'S REPORT

COMMENTS ON 2009/10 ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

SPECIFIC POINTS

- The financial report has been prepared for use by the members of Bushwalking Victoria and is a special purpose financial report. It has been prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act 1981. The report is prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historical costs.
- Bushwalking Victoria has a surplus of \$11,738 for the period reported. This surplus will be transferred to the equity accounts as indicated in the statement of income and expenditure.
- An Organisation Support grant of \$15,000 is received annually from the Victorian Department of Planning and Community Development but is subject to approval by the Minister for Sport, Recreation and Youth Affairs. This grant assists Bushwalking Victoria to operate in an efficient manner and develop effective administration and operational systems for the future. It also helps to meet some of the costs associated with skill development through such things as the first aid qualification subsidy. Unspent grant funds must be returned to the Department unless the Minister specifically authorises otherwise.
- On 4th May 2010 The Board approved an amount of \$33,000 to remain as the contingency reserve to cover such situations as unexpected increase in insurance costs, loss of low cost rental for office premises and loss of funding from Sport and Recreation Victoria.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS AS AT MARCH 31, 2010

- Interest income of \$4,305 has been apportioned between the General Fund and the Search and Rescue Fund.
- These funds were received as donations and as grants from the Victorian Department of Planning and Community Development.
- Sundry income includes sale of calendars and a one off refund of an advance to Diamond Valley Bushwalking Club for the cancelled 75th Anniversary Walk.
- This includes reimbursements for first aid training.
- The depreciation of equipment has been calculated on a straight line basis/method at rates to match the cost of each item of equipment over its economic life. Only items that had a book value at the start of the year have been included.
- The Bushwalking Environment Committee expenditure includes an estimated amount of \$2,500 that will be recovered from Parks Victoria.

Equipment List

| | Cost | Book Value 2010 |
|------------------------------------|-------|-----------------|
| | \$ | \$ |
| Search and Rescue Equipment | | |
| Radios, purchased 6/6/07 | 1,970 | 740 |
| Carry bags | 705 | 264 |
| GPS | 3,608 | 1,623 |
| GPS extrex Vista HCx & Mapping | 4,236 | 1,791 |
| Emergency Shelters | 965 | 355 |
| GPS | 4,868 | 3,126 |
| Bothy Shelters | 1,353 | 757 |
| Transceivers | 4,792 | 2,419 |
| Radios | 5,592 | 5,131 |
| GPS units & mapping | 1,236 | 1,202 |

7. Sundry Creditors:

| | |
|----------------------------|--------|
| Australian Taxation Office | -\$305 |
| Health Super | \$659 |
| CGU Workers Compensation | \$484 |

8. Other Liabilities

| | |
|---------------------|----------|
| Provision for Leave | \$13,433 |
| Unspent Grant funds | \$ 6,875 |

9. Members Equity

| | |
|--|-------------|
| | 2010 |
| Members equity at beginning of year | \$163,929 |
| Plus Net Surplus/ (loss) for the current year | \$11,737 |
| Member's equity at the end of the financial year | \$175,667 |

Current year gross surplus from the general fund in the profit & loss account has been apportioned to various Equity Funds as follows:

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <u>Bushfire Recovery Fund</u> | \$5,843 (consisting of \$2,900 of specified donations and \$2,940 of profit from calendar sales) |
| <u>Search & Rescue Fund</u> | -\$4,220 (consisting of a deficit of \$8,441 offset by \$4,221 from the General Fund surplus) |
| <u>Contingency Fund</u> | Nil (the deficit of \$1,539 from the insurance fund has been offset by \$1,539 from the General Fund surplus) |
| <u>Future Projects Fund</u> | \$10,115 (balance of surplus from the General Fund) |

Fred Bover

AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF BUSHWALKING VICTORIA INC

I have audited the financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of Bushwalking Victoria Inc for the year ended 31 March 2010 as set out in the above pages.

The financial report has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the requirements of the Associations Incorporations Act (Victoria).

In my opinion the financial report presents a true and fair view of the financial position of Bushwalking Victoria Inc as at March 31 2010 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in the Notes to the financial statements.

Joanna OBrien, BBus (Accounting), TSTC
06 May 2010
Melbourne

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2010

| | Notes | 2010 \$ | 2009 \$ |
|---|-------|----------------|---------------|
| GENERAL FUND | | | |
| Income | | | |
| Membership fees | | 61,198 | 57,853 |
| Interest | 1 | 2,885 | 5,660 |
| Donations and grants | 2 | 37,778 | 22,945 |
| <u>Sundry income</u> | 3 | <u>13,196</u> | <u>13,205</u> |
| Expenditure | | | |
| Communications (includes newsletter) | | 4,491 | 4,495 |
| General administration | | 27,422 | 29,832 |
| Staff costs | 6 | 48,328 | 44,083 |
| Training | 4 | 4,435 | 5,180 |
| Promotions | | 853 | 4,284 |
| Affiliations | | 3,797 | 3,815 |
| Bushwalking Environment Group | | 2,583 | 1,756 |
| <u>Depreciation</u> | 5 | <u>1,429</u> | <u>1,515</u> |
| Surplus/(deficit) for the year [Transferred to Future Projects fund See note 9] | | <u>21,717</u> | <u>4,703</u> |
| SEARCH AND RESCUE FUND | | | |
| Income | | | |
| Donations and Interest | 1 | 1,421 | 14,826 |
| <u>Grants</u> (Emergency Management Australia) | | <u>25,239</u> | <u>12,975</u> |
| Expenditure | | | |
| General administration and operations | | 4,820 | 4,982 |
| Emergency Management Grant | | 22,568 | 1,962 |
| <u>Depreciation</u> | | <u>7,712</u> | <u>4,226</u> |
| Surplus/(deficit) for the year [Transferred to Search and Rescue Fund See note 9] | | <u>(8,441)</u> | <u>16,631</u> |
| INSURANCE FUND | | | |
| Income | | | |
| Insurance contributions by members | | 59,469 | 59,469 |
| Interest | | 0 | 0 |
| Expenditure | | | |
| Insurance payments on behalf of members | | <u>61,008</u> | <u>59,064</u> |
| Surplus/(deficit) for the year [Transferred to Future Projects fund See note 9] | | <u>(1,539)</u> | <u>405</u> |

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH, 2010

| | Notes | 2010 \$ | 2009 \$ |
|--|-------|----------------|----------------|
| CURRENT ASSETS | | | |
| Bendigo Bank Cash Management Trading Account | | 174,792 | 186,004 |
| Federation Event advance | | 2,500 | 0 |
| CURRENT LIABILITIES | | | |
| Sundry creditors | 7 | 839 | 824 |
| Other liabilities | 8 | <u>20,308</u> | <u>43,085</u> |
| NET CURRENT ASSETS | | <u>156,145</u> | <u>142,095</u> |
| NON CURRENT ASSETS | | | |
| Equipment | | 68,492 | 61,664 |
| Less provision for depreciation | | (48,971) | (39,830) |
| TOTAL NET ASSETS | | <u>175,666</u> | <u>163,929</u> |
| MEMBERS EQUITY | | | |
| General Fund | | 15,000 | 15,000 |
| Search and Rescue Fund | | 26,411 | 30,631 |
| Contingency Fund | | 33,000 | 33,000 |
| Future Projects Fund | | 90,412 | 80,298 |
| Bushfire Recovery Fund | | 10,843 | 5,000 |
| | | <u>175,666</u> | <u>163,929</u> |

The accompanying notes form an integral part of this report.

Bushwalking Victoria Inc A0002548Y

Statement by Members of the Board of Management

The Board has determined by means of the Australian Taxation Office self assessment system that Bushwalking Victoria Inc. is an exempt entity for income tax purposes and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the notes accompanying the financial statements. Bushwalking Victoria Inc does not have any mortgages, charges or securities; and is not a trustee of any trust nor does it have any trusts held on its behalf. In the opinion of the Board the financial report as set out in this document presents a true and fair statement of the financial position of Bushwalking Victoria Inc. as at the 31st of March 2010 and its financial performance for the year ended on that date.

At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that Bushwalking Victoria Inc will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due during the next twelve months.

6th May 2010

Signed, David Reid
President

Signed, Fred Bover
Treasurer

BUSH SEARCH & RESCUE VICTORIA

It has been a busy 12 months for Bush Search and Rescue Victoria with a number of searches and training events in that time.

In May 2009 BSAR assisted the Victoria Police with the search for a 3 year old boy missing in freezing conditions overnight near Gormandale, in Gippsland. Fortunately he was found alive and well early the next morning in a pine forest less than 2kms from the family farm from where he was last seen. BSAR members David Tingay, a doctor and XXX, a nurse, provided on site first aid before the child was transferred to hospital via ambulance for further checks. Indications were that his core temperature was low but he quickly recovered after being supplied with warm coverings, warm drinks and food.

In August 2009 BSAR was involved in the search for missing Victorian Minister for Water, Tim Holding in the Mount Feathertop area. The search was a serious one due the fact it was mid-winter in alpine conditions and dangerous terrain. BSAR was quickly on site and was deployed to the areas of greatest concern and as well as the areas where the minister was likely to be. In bad weather overnight, a small group of BSAR members camped near the summit. Equipped with full alpine gear, they were able to quickly scout the summit areas and avalanche prone gullies. Other BSAR groups stayed overnight near Federation hut and were deployed early in the morning to nearby gullies. Tim Holding was briefly spotted overnight by plane and later by helicopter mid morning the day after BSAR were sent to the search. He was winched to safety before groups could reach him in the heavy terrain. Minister Holding had been missing for two cold nights in below freezing conditions but was fortunately reasonably equipped. Nonetheless, he did suffer some exposure to the cold and required a few hours to return to normal body temperature on being found.

In September 2009 BSAR were briefly called out to the search for a missing photographer in the Cambarville area. He was found before searchers reached the area.

In October 2009 BSAR were involved in the search for a woman missing at Point Nepean national park. BSAR searchers combed the park being mindful of the former use of parts of the park for use by the Defence Force. The missing woman was later located by Police in the nearby township of Sorrento in a mentally unsound state.

In November 2009 BSAR was involved in the search for a brumby hunter missing in alpine country near the Victorian-NSW border at Davies Plain. He was located after a few days of being lost. Apparently he had been knocked unconscious after coming off his horse. After regaining consciousness the next day, the hunter has lost his horse and one of his two dogs and was not fully aware of his location. In freezing conditions and with only minimal clothing on, he managed to stay alive for another two nights by sleeping in hollow logs and staying with his companion dog.

During the last twelve months BSAR also undertook some successful training events. The alpine winter practice at Mt Hotham focused on the use of newly purchased avalanche beacons. The training and investment on the items paid off when there was successfully deployed the next month during the Tim Holding search in the high risk area around the Feathertop summit. The annual BSAR training weekend was held in September 2009 at Wombat State forest where a large number of BSAR searchers were involved in training with new radio and GPS equipment.

During the year, and especially as a result of the Tim Holding search, there has been more interest in BSAR from the media. Many interviews have been conducted with the press surrounding recent searches. This has proved valuable as a means to inform the community about our organisation as well as being of benefit to current BSAR members as it lets their family and work places know about the important community contribution to which they graciously volunteer their time and energy.

Frank Zgoznic



Preparing for Mt Feathertop search



Rescuing an injured skier at Mt Bogong



ADMINISTRATION

The day to day running of the office has been maintained. We've updated the computer and email service and are currently working on a new data base. To assist with maintaining current contacts we'd appreciate clubs letting us know when there are changes to their committees.

The cheerful volunteers from the Koonung Bushwalking Club, especially Lynn Lam and Claire Harris, have ensured that the monthly

newsletter has been posted out on time. My thanks go to them for their friendship and assistance.

As well, I thank all who contribute to the running of the organization, this includes the Board members who have been unstinting in their time and advice, and especially BWV secretary, Val Wake and vice president Chris Towers.

Jenny Sykes

BUSHWALKING ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE (BEC)

The committee executive consists of a manager, three coordinators, and two specialist consultants. They are supported by 12 Field / Research officers and a number of Club Environment Contacts. Coordinator's reports follow the manager's report.

BUSHWALKING ENVIRONMENT MANAGER

During 2009-10 the role of the BEC manager focused on organization of the BEC and a range of planning and strategic issues, a summary follows:

- Organizing BEC Coordinators meetings
- Attending BWV Board meetings
- Presidents meeting
- Meetings with:
 - DSE re Walking Track Classification System
 - Parks Victoria re Greater Alpine National Park management plan review.
 - Parks Victoria re Development of walking tracks in Bunyip State Park.
 - Consultants investigating walking opportunities in Kinglake National Park.
- Exploration of Route for the Living Links Project
- Organizing Chain Saw Course for Club Members
- Involved in organization of BEC Field Officers Conference
- Post Fire assessment of Freemans Mill Track
- Bushfire Recovery organization
- A major activity was the coordinating of the Field/Research Officers activities.
- The BEC manager also represented BWV at:
 - Opening of the Ada Tree Scenic Reserve
 - Australian Alps Walking Track Stakeholders Conference at Falls Creek.

- Opening of the Grand Strzelecki Track at Morwell National Park
- Bunyip State Park Action Group.

BEC Field/Research Officers activities

- Represented BWV on Mt Buffalo Advisory Committee & investigation and comments on Gondola Proposal
- Attendance at Australian Alps Walking Track Stakeholders meeting
- Involved with setting up Bunyip State Park Action Group
- Organizing Track Maintenance Freemans Mill
- Investigation into proposed Grampians Long Distance Walking Track
- Representing BWV on Wilsons Prom Advisory Committee.
- Macedon GDT extension
- Attendance at Loddon /Mallee Trails Strategy Meeting.

Special Projects

- Trail Bike Project (David Rimmer, Steve Robertson, Phil Brotchie)
- Walking Track Grading Project (David Reid)
- Living Links (Tony Walker)
- Huts and Heritage and formalizing BWV caretaker role at Federation Hut (Anne Sedgley)
- Regent Honeyeater project (Sylvia McLean).

Dave Rimmer



Are we still on the track?



Working on the Alpine Walking Track

TRACK MAINTENANCE

For the 12 months ending 1 April 2010 seven events were held and 385 members attended. The bushfire recovery weekends were notable for attracting far more members than any previous events.

Reading reports in club newsletters it was pleasing to see that at least 12 of our clubs did their own conservation activities.

A special mention has to be made of one individual and two clubs. In organizing the Bushfire recovery weekends Steve Robertson

organized far more people for voluntary work than anyone in recent times. Over 300 members attended those two weekends. Meanwhile two of our country clubs, Border (based in Wodonga) and Ben Cruachan (based in Maffra) stand out for organizing so many of their own conservation/ track maintenance activities.

Thanks to all members who took part in our activities and especially to the leaders.

Jim Harker

LAND MANAGEMENT & ENVIRONMENT CONSULTANT

VEAC Investigations

Victorian Environmental Assessment Council (VEAC) River Red Gum Forests Investigation Community Reference Group (CRG)

The CRG's task was ultimately completed with the Government's 30 December 2008 decisions on VEAC's recommendations, while the Investigation itself bore fruit in the subsequent passing, on 26 November 2009, of the legislation creating the new National Parks which VEAC had recommended. VNPA continues to keep us informed of relevant developments, with the fight now more focused on trying to ensure that the NSW Government protects River Red Gums on that side of the border in a similar fashion as the Victorian Government has now done on this side. The VEAC River Red Gum Forests Investigation CRG is now defunct, but BWV continues to maintain a watching brief on this issue via ad hoc liaison between VNPA and BWV's LM&E Consultant.

VEAC Metropolitan Melbourne Investigation CRG

Attending and providing input to CRG meetings on 16 October and 1 December 2009. In particular, at the latter meeting, presenting a position paper on Melwalk. Attending an 'informal luncheon' with VEAC on 20 January 2010 and a CRG meeting on 2 February 2010.

VEAC Remnant Native Vegetation Investigation Regional Meeting

Attending and providing input at the Hamilton meeting on 27 November 2009.

Submissions

During the reporting year, BWV submitted a number of substantial representations, drafted (except for the Barwon SW Trails DMP) by the LM&E Consultant, which commented on the following government environmental papers:

- VEAC Remnant Native Vegetation Investigation
- St Arnaud Range National Park Draft Management Plan
- Barwon Southwest Trails Draft Master Plan
- NSW Natural Resources Commission NSW River Red Gum Forest Assessment
- Forest (Recreation) Regulations 2010

Input

The LM&E Consultant provided suggestions for input to the DSE Road Management Plan, but owing to the very tight time constraints with which we found ourselves faced, a submission was unable to be developed in time, and consequently none went forward. The LM&E Consultant also provided suggestions for input to the Barwon Southwest Trails Draft Master Plan.

At the request of the BEC Convener, the LM&E Consultant provided input, in support of that submitted by the BWV BEC Convener and Track Maintenance Committee Coordinator, to a Parks Victoria Alpine National Park wePlan discussion forum dealing with shared trails.

In pursuance of a request of the BEC Convener, providing suggested amendments to, and comments on, the BWV Environment Policy and related policy papers.

At the behest of the BEC Convener, providing input on the value of the trailbike Newsletter we receive.

Following general discussion at a BEC Coordinators' meeting, writing to Parks Victoria about the new trend of seeking online input to Alpine National Park planning, suggesting that this approach failed to take account of the number of people represented by a single submission (eg BWV's 10,000 members).

Articles

At the behest of the BWV President, preparing an article for BWV News requesting BWV clubs to encourage their members to sign a petition in support of the retention of VEAC in its current form.

Extramural Contacts

Occasional contact with The Wilderness Society about environmental projects in which that organization is engaged, and with VNPA as outlined in the opening paragraph of this report.

In-house Meetings

Attendance at BEC Coordinator meetings (including discussion of BEC and TMG issues).

Projects

Participation in Snake Island reforestation, alpine restoration and selected track maintenance projects.

Personal Wider Environmental Activities

8 December 2009: In accordance with VNPA and Friends of the Earth suggestions, sending an email to NSW Premier, cc NSW Minister for the Environment, NSW Minister for Primary Industries and all NSW Cabinet Ministers, urging them not to reverse the commitment of the previous NSW Premier to improved protection of NSW River Red Gums and to finalize implementation by March 2010. (Nonetheless, the NSW Government did go back on its promise, only preserving as National Park about half of that to which it had earlier committed.)

16 December 2009: Signing Avaaz petition, endorsed by some 11 million signatories, requesting a meaningful environmental agreement to be reached in Copenhagen, which arguably added impetus to negotiations that led to the basic (although nowhere near satisfactory) agreement which was ultimately reached.

21 December 2009: Signing The Wilderness Society petition to the WA Minister for the Environment requesting better protection for the Great Western Woodlands in WA (the Esperance, Norseman, Kalgoorlie area, with which the BWV LM&E Consultant is personally familiar), the largest intact temperate woodland left on earth and home to rare and threatened animals like the Spotted Quoll, Western Brush Wallaby and Greater Long-eared Bat.

24 December 2009: At the suggestion of The Wilderness Society and Greenpeace Australia Pacific, writing to the Federal Minister for Agriculture, Fishing and Forestry urging him to honour the government commitment not to import illegal timber linked to biodiversity loss, human rights abuses and climate change.

Dr Phil Brotchie

CONSERVATION PROJECTS

A challenging year now behind us with the devastation of the February 2009 fires with Bushwalking Victoria and so many clubs and individuals wanting to assist. The last 12 months saw us participate in many recovery programs in the fire affected areas as well as ongoing activities in areas that were spared by fire.

A special thanks to all that volunteered in Bushwalking Victoria events and also their own activities that help in maintaining our bushwalking amenities.

Our conservation year in a snapshot:

1. June 2009 – Eight people spent an enjoyable weekend on Snake Island involved in tree planting to restore Manna Gums on the Island. This weekend was held with assistance from a Parks Victoria Community Grant.
2. Target 2000 was a major event held on one weekend in September and October for the Bushfire Recovery Program on our walking tracks. 18 Clubs from all over Victoria - 305 people attended with a staggering 2065 volunteer hours generated over the four days with 15 tracks worked upon. Duties included chain sawing, debris removal, pruning, step building, retaining

walls, track marking as well as the most important aspect – fellowship as walkers came together for the special cause.

3. Alpine Restoration – our normal event of January where we do a search and destroy of Grey Sallow Willow did not proceed this year due to fire activity in other parts of the state. This activity will proceed again in 2011.
4. Nature is a remarkable thing after a fire – it rebounds and the next major task is to reclaim Condons Track that all that beautiful new growth is now overtaking. A special thanks to Maroon-dah Bushwalking Club that have taken up the challenge to assist.

The year ahead looks promising in activity with:

- Snake Island revegetation
- Alpine Restoration willow removal
- Track clearing and other revegetation work programs

Thanks to all for their continual support.

Steven Robertson



Target 2000 - working on Condons Track

COMMUNICATION AND MARKETING

Web site

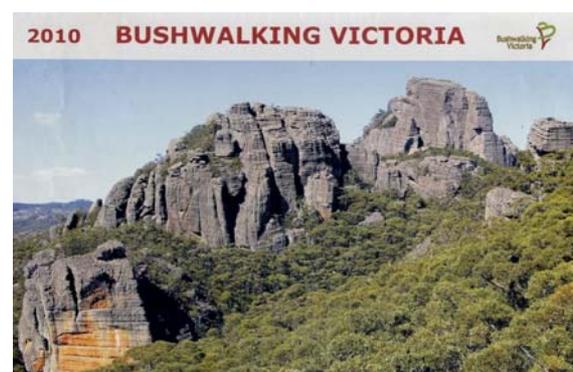
The web site continues to be our most important communication and marketing tool with an average of approximately 1,300 page visits per month. The major improvement to the site for the year was deleting the 75th Anniversary section and adding a new Member News section in its place.

The Member News section collects together all content of direct interest and relevance to member clubs and their members. Sub-sections include News, Insurance, Forms, Policies and Guidelines and stories on Community Activities undertaken by member clubs. More changes are planned for the coming year, including investigating the addition of Web 2.0 items such as video and a blog.

Calendar

Sale of a calendar is a simple and effective way for BWV to promote the interests of Victorian Bushwalkers to a wider audience. Following the success of the 2009 75th Anniversary Calendar the Board approved the production and sale of a 2010 calendar with proceeds to be directed to the BWV Bushfire Fund.

The calendar was again well supported by photographers with 39 people submitting a total of 116 images. Well known bushwalkers



John and Monica Chapman generously devoted their time and expertise to select the 27 images required for the calendar.

Regrettably sales of the 2010 calendar were not as strong as they were for the 2009 calendar, with the total sold being about two thirds of the total number sold in 2008. Despite the lower sales approximately \$1,000 was added to the Bushfire recovery Fund.

Chris Towers

STRATEGY CONSULTANT

Overview

During 2009-10, as in previous years, the role of the Strategy Consultant has focussed on assisting the BWV Board in three key areas:

- (i) Increasing BWV's visibility and influence in government – state and local
- (ii) Working with the BWV executive to develop position papers and other material designed to position BWV as a 'thought leader' in areas of key interest to the organisation, such as the role and value of recreational walking, the conception and design of walking facilities and the value of recreational walking to the community
- (iii) Assisting BWV in the formulation of long term objectives and the strategies needed to attain them, consistent with the overall objectives of BWV as set out in the President's report.

Increasing Visibility and Influence in Government

During the last 12 months, the Strategic Consultant has assisted the BWV President with formulation of 'engagement' policies for key Government Departments. It has become increasingly apparent that as walking is not the primary focus of any particular department in the Victoria Government, that we need to engage all areas of government with some interest. In practice this means developing relationships with at least 6 Departments some of which we have had very little prior contact with.

The challenge remains to get the message over that BWV is no longer a purely bushwalking (in the traditional sense) organisation, but one with a much broader focus on recreational walking.

On a positive note, we have been able to bring Sports and Recreation Victoria (SRV) to an acknowledgement that their focus has been too exclusively on sport, and that they need to understand the non-competitive recreational environment better.

The Strategy Consultant has assisted in efforts to define BWV's vision for walking trails in and around the Greater Melbourne area. This has resulted in submissions made to Parks Victoria (Linking People and Spaces), Living Links (Phase 2 Corridors) and involvement in the Melwalk program (see below).

Thought Leadership

BWV took part in the 'Healthy Parks Healthy People' congress in

April 2010, delivering two workshops and attending a wide variety of sessions and congress activities. The Strategy Consultant prepared and delivered a workshop on 'The Role of Recreational Walking Advocacy Organisations in the Creation of a Healthy Parks System'. This workshop (and supporting paper) addressed the importance and ongoing role of organisations like BWV in forming community attitudes towards parks, and in lobbying and influencing governments and land managers. The paper is available on the BWV web site.

The Strategy Consultant participated in a group aimed at assessing whether a system of cross-boundary urban walks analogous to those developed in Sydney and elsewhere, was justified for Melbourne, and how such a system could be created and defined.

The group reported to the BWV Board in October 2009, and from that report, the Melwalk project has emerged. Initial contacts with interested organisations have given a strongly positive feedback, and the Melwalk project will start in earnest during 2010.

Long Term Objectives and Strategies

The Strategy Consultant has focussed on two key areas during 2009-10:

- (i) Assisting in the definition of the role BWV can/should play as a recreational walking advocacy group. The social environment has developed rapidly over the last 12 months, as organisations like the Heart Foundation, Diabetes Australia and Beyond Blue, have all evinced ongoing and increasing interest in walking as a means of improving community health and wellbeing. The Healthy Parks Healthy People Congress strongly reinforced this message and validated many of the conclusions we had been coming to.
- (ii) Defining the role BWV can play in fostering the concept of 'walkability' in our cities. Whilst BWV makes no claim to expertise in the design of pedestrian facilities in the urban environment, it is not practicable to isolate recreational and walking transport design issues altogether. The concept of walkability needs to be considered as a continuum spanning streets to wilderness, and BWV needs to respond to this challenge. This will build on prior work done with the Kinect organisation.

Tony Walker

BUSHWALKING AUSTRALIA INC (BAI)

This national body, which is a network of state bushwalking bodies, continues to explore its role. Some progress has been made in getting states to share information and skills but much more needs to be done. BAI is now holding an annual face to face conference which is a very useful tool in this regard. The 2010 conference will be hosted by BWV in Melbourne.

BAI continues to effectively facilitate the arrangements for insurance for all clubs across Australia, providing one of the best value for money schemes.

There is still much to be done in raising awareness with the Federal Government and politicians as to the value of non sport recreation.

As part of this effort BAI council member and President of Bushwalking Queensland John Marshall has been elected to the Board of the Outdoor Council of Australia. This body is developing a national strategy for outdoor recreation which it is hoped will gain political attention.

At the BAI AGM held in November 2009 Marianne Watt who had been a delegate and BAI Treasurer for a number of years retired. We thank Marianne for her contribution to the national body. At the same AGM Chris Towers was elected Treasurer of BAI and I was elected President.

David Reid

FEDERATION EVENTS

General

On being approached, clubs have responded positively to requests to host a Federation event. Apart from this year's coming event, there are clubs currently negotiating or considering the 2011 and 2012 events. A special club milestone may be a catalyst to prompt a club to consider hosting a Federation event, underpinning club celebrations. Any future offers will be welcome.

2009

As outlined in last year's report, there was no Federation walk event in 2009 due to the horrific bushfires, including Mt. Disappointment. In lieu of this and at relatively short notice Bushwalking Victoria's 75th Anniversary event was substituted to the Regent Honeyeater Project; assisting Ray Thomas (Australian Geographic's Conversationalist of the Year) for a weekend of tree planting in the Lurg Hills near Benalla. Over 125 bushwalking volunteers from about 20

clubs and associated organizations attended and planted over 4000 trees and plants. In addition to our planting achievements it was an extremely social and educational event. Shared breaks and meals allowed social and bushwalker networking along with floral, ornithological and faunal talks and exhibitions. This weekend was so heartening that it could only be described as 'soul food'.

2010 Federation Weekend

Booked for October 8-10, in the Otways Surf Coast, based at Anglesea, this weekend is to be hosted by the Waverley Bushwalking Club. Thorough and enthusiastic planning has been underway since early last year, resulting in 23 walks of all grades including an overnight pack carry, envisaged for participants. It is expected that this event location will be appreciated and well supported by the other clubs.

Sylvia McLean



Special 75th anniversary tree planting event

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Walking Communities: this project is drawing to the close of its initial target, namely the production of two guides: one to encourage community walking groups to walk in green, natural areas, and the other for bushwalking clubs to mentor these groups. As this report goes to press the guides are at the printer and their official launch is imminent. Although not formally printed the final drafts were displayed at the recent Healthy Parks Healthy People international conference and considerable interest was expressed in the overall concept and the 'green walks' in particular. This interest will be pursued – it seems that the launch of these guides may be just the beginning of a 'green walk' revolution.

Melwalk: at the last Presidents' Meeting, following discussion of the ten green walks that were being developed for the Walking Communities guides, the idea was raised that this concept could be broadened into a Melbourne-wide network of walks, similar to one that exists in Sydney. Knowing that bushwalkers have a vast repertoire of knowledge and expertise regarding walks and that they utilise information from many sources, a working group was set up to examine the feasibility of undertaking such a task, aware also that it would need enthusiasm and diplomacy to ensure the collaboration of the land managers. The working group's recommendation to go ahead was supported by the BWV Board and *Melwalk* was born. Progress has been slow but steady as the groundwork of such a major undertaking has had to be carefully planned. The next year should see the project develop and expand.

Seniors: twenty bushwalking clubs participated in the Seniors' Festival walks last October, some of them were wildly successful, others less so. Every participating club was followed up and their comments referred back to the organising partners (BWV, Office of Seniors, Parks Victoria and Kinect) so that this year the events should be more streamlined with lines of responsibility more clearly defined. Talking to participating Seniors shows that this is a fantastic programme and worth every bit of effort we put in.

For the first time BWV set up a stall in Federation Square at the launch of the Seniors' Festival. The support and enthusiasm of a number of club members to man the stall was great and many Seniors and other would-be Seniors went away with a new bounce in their step and a promise to try walking a bit further in the future.

Member clubs: lots of member clubs are out there participating in their own local community or spreading their wings to embrace other causes. Until now we have relied on word of mouth or scanning of club newsletters to learn about these activities but this ad hoc approach will change with the recent addition to the Member News section of the BWV website. Here there is a 'community' tab which will highlight any such activities by clubs, informing as well as inspiring other clubs to participate further in their own community. We hope this becomes a major forum for sharing ideas.

Catherine Guli

GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

Bushwalking Victoria is an Incorporated Association and the peak body representing bushwalkers and other recreational walkers in Victoria.

There are 3 categories of membership.

- **Affiliated members** - 64 clubs, where the main activity is bushwalking. These clubs have full voting rights and their members are eligible to hold office.
- **Associate members** - 10 organisations or clubs whose activities include bushwalking but they are constituted primarily for other purposes. Associate members do not have voting rights but their members are able to participate in many Bushwalking Victoria committees and activities.

- **Individual supporter members** - may also participate in committees and activities.

The organisation is governed by a Board of Management Comprising:

- Five elected Officers
- Five elected general Board Members

The Board currently meets up to 11 times each year to review performance, make policy decisions and develop strategic direction.

The day to day management of the organisation is carried out by the office bearers, conveners of standing committees and other specialist officers.

Board of Management - Office Bearers

| | | |
|----------------|--------------|---------------------------------|
| President | David Reid | Waverley Bushwalking Club |
| Vice President | Chris Towers | CAEX Bushwalking Club |
| Secretary | Val Wake | CAEX Bushwalking Club |
| Treasurer | Fred Bover | Diamond Valley Bushwalking Club |

Board of Management - General Board Members

| | |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| Sylvia McLean | Essendon Bushwalking Club |
| Catherine Guli | Waverley Bushwalking Club |
| Barbara Guerin | Locksley Bushwalking Club |
| Carole Petchell | Bushrangers Women's Walking Club |
| Dave Rimmer | Victorian Mountain Tramping Club |

Staff

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|
| Administration Officer | Jenny Sykes |
| Walking Communities project officer | Gina Mancuso |

Other

| | | |
|------------------|-----------|-----------------------------------|
| Honorary Auditor | Jo OBrien | VNPA Bushwalking Activities Group |
| Public Officer | Val Wake | CAEX Bushwalking Club |

Standing Committee Chairpersons and Working Group Coordinators

| | | |
|--|-------------------|--|
| Bush Search & Rescue Victoria | Frank Zgognik | Melbourne University Mountaineering Club |
| Bushwalking Environment Committee | Dave Rimmer | Victorian Mountain Tramping Club |
| Track Development | Dave Rimmer | Victorian Mountain Tramping Club |
| Track Maintenance | Jim Harker | Victorian Mountain Tramping Club |
| Conservation Projects | Steve Robertson | Maroondah Bushwalking Club |
| Publications/Editor | Joslin Guest | Boroondara Bushwalking Club |
| Walking Communities Steering Committee | Darren McClelland | Essendon Bushwalking Club |

Consultants

| | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------|
| Strategy | Tony Walker | Waverley Bushwalking Club |
| Land Management Submissions | Phil Brotchie | Walking Club of Victoria |
| Federation Walks | Sylvia McLean | Essendon Bushwalking Club |
| Accounting | Jo OBrien | VNPA Bushwalking Activities Group |
| Communications | Chris Towers | CAEX Bushwalking Club |

Representatives on Other Bodies

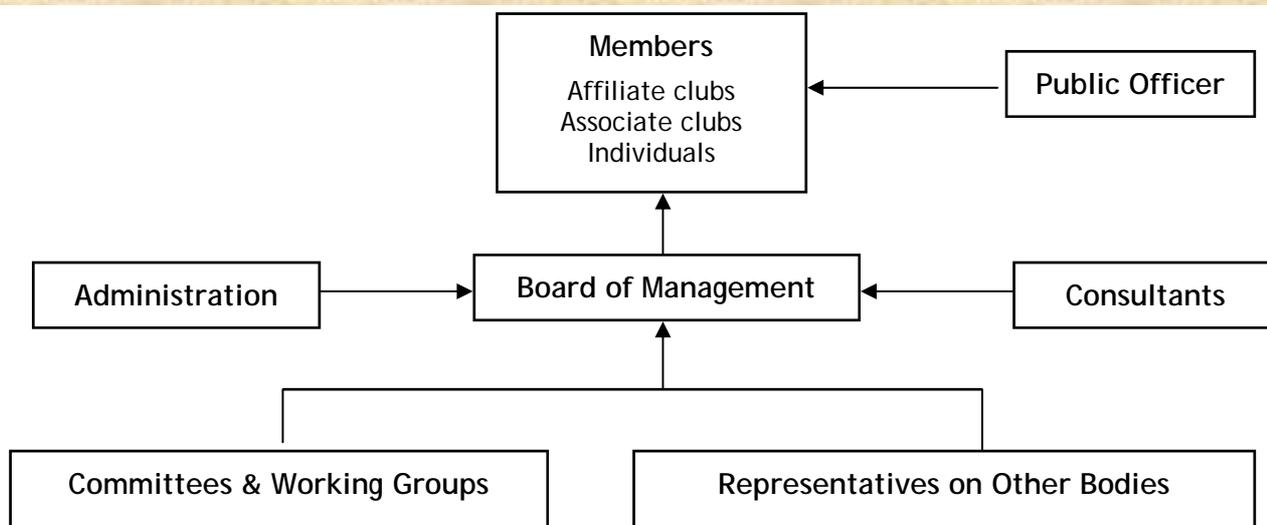
| | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|---------------------------|
| Bushwalking Australia | David Reid | Waverley Bushwalking Club |
| | Chris Towers | CAEX Bushwalking Club |

Organisations where BWV Members Provide a Bushwalking Perspective

| | | |
|--|--------------------|----------------------------|
| Walking Trails Grading Project Control Board | David Reid | Waverley Bushwalking Club |
| River Red Gum Reference Group | Phil Brotchie | Walking Club of Victoria |
| Mt Buffalo Reference Group | Pauline McLaughlin | Border Bushwalking Club |
| AAS Technical committee | Paul Chamings | Maroondah Bushwalking Club |
| Living Links Steering committee | Tony Walker | Waverley Bushwalking Club |

BUSHWALKING VICTORIA INC

ORGANISATION STRUCTURE



MEMBERSHIP

Affiliate Members

Ballarat Bushwalking & Outdoor Club
 Basically Bushwalking Inc.
 Bass Coast Strollers Inc.
 Bayside Bushwalking Club Inc.
 Ben Cruachan Walking Club Inc.
 Benalla Bushwalking Club Inc.
 Bendigo Bushwalking & Outdoor Club Inc.
 Berwick & District Bushwalking Club Inc.
 B'nai B'rith Ramblers
 Border Bushwalking Club Inc.
 Boroondara Bushwalkers Inc.
 Bunarong Bushwalking Club Inc.
 Bushrangers Womens Walking Club
 CAEX Bushwalking Club Inc.
 Camperdown Bushwalking Club
 Catholic Walking Club of Victoria Inc.
 Cobram Bushwalking Club Inc.
 Dandenong Valley Bushwalking Club Inc.
 Diamond Valley Bushwalking Club Inc.
 Echuca Moama Bushwalking Club
 Eltham and Environs Walking Group
 Essendon Bushwalking Club Inc.

Friends of the Great South West Walk Inc.
 Geelong Bushwalking Club Inc.
 Gisborne Bushwalking Club Inc.
 Good Companions Walking Club
 Grampians Bushwalking Club Inc.
 Great Dividing Trail Association Inc.
 Heathcote Walkers
 Keilor Bushwalking Club Inc.
 Koonung Bushwalking Club Inc.
 Locksley Bushwalking Club Inc.
 Maroondah Bushwalking Club Inc.
 Melbourne Bushwalkers Inc.
 Melbourne University Alumni Bushwalking Group
 Melbourne Walking Club Inc.
 Melbourne Womens Walking Club Inc.
 Melton Bushwalkers Inc.
 Otway Ranges Walking Track Assoc. Inc.
 Pakenham Bushwalking Club Inc.
 Peninsula Bushwalking Club Inc.
 Peregrine Club Inc.
 Ramblers Walking Club Inc.
 Rosebud Ramblers

Seymour Bushwalking Group Inc.
 Shepparton Adventure Club Inc.
 South Gippsland Walking & Adventure Club
 Stonnington Walking Club
 Strzelecki Bushwalking Club Inc.
 Sunraysia Bushwalkers Inc.
 Taradale and District Walking Club
 The Nomads Outdoors Group Inc.
 The Wednesday Walkers
 Victorian Mountain Tramping Club Inc.
 Walking Club of Victoria Inc.
 Wangaratta Out & About Inc.
 Warby Range Bushwalkers Inc.
 Warrnambool Walkers Inc.
 Waverley Bushwalking Club Inc.
 Wayward Women Walkers
 Werribee Bushwalking & Outdoor Club Inc.
 West Gippsland Bush Walkers Inc.
 Wimmera Bushwalking Club Inc.
 Wonthaggi Bush Beach Walking Club

Associate Members

Birkebeiner Nordic Ski Club Inc.
 Cowombat Walking Club
 Melbourne University Mountaineering Club
 Monash Bushwalking Club Inc.

Scout Bushwalkers
 VNPA Bushwalking Group
 Alpine Search & Rescue Victoria Inc.
 Victorian Rogaining Association

Victorian Rovers (Scout Association)
 YHA Bushwalking Club

Bushwalking Victoria is a member of:

Bushwalking Australia, Australian Conservation Foundation, Australian Ski Patrol Association, Outdoor Recreation Centre, Victorian National Parks Association and VicSport.