

The Mountain Devils

Bushwalking and Social Club

INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS

January 2005

The Mountain Devils Bushwalkers Club – Bushwalking Rules

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1.0 ABOUT OUR CLUB

The Mountain Devils Bushwalking and Social Club Inc

Our membership comprises men and women whose ages, levels of fitness and bushwalking experience are as varied as their nationalities, occupations and other general interests.

Our programs are published four times each year and contains a good balance of activities, including: short day walks day walks, 2-3 day excursions, camping weekends, socials events and bushwalking holidays.

We welcome new members who wish to share our main objective, ie. “walk for fun and fitness, make new friends and gain a greater appreciation of our natural environment”.

2.0 MEMBERSHIP

Membership to the club is open to all persons 18 years and over. You do not have to be enrolled in or have completed a course to join. Prospective members are welcome to participate in two walks before deciding to apply for membership.

The club’s financial year is 1st July to 30th June. **New Members** joining during April or May who enclose the appropriate annual fee with their membership application will be automatically registered for the following year.

Membership Renewal Fees must be paid by 1st July each year otherwise your membership will lapse.

Membership Fees are reviewed each year by the committee and are indicated on the current Membership Form.

Note: There is no additional “joining” fee, your membership fees cover -

- ï All club activities unless an additional fee is indicated in the programme.
- ï Public Liability, Personal Accident and Club Committee and walk Leaders (Directors) Insurance
- ï The club is affiliated with the **Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs of NSW** and are entitled to be represented by two of our members at all its meetings.

The Confederation has the following objectives -

- ï The preservation of national parks, wilderness areas and heritage listings;
- ï The maintenance of the volunteer Search & Rescue unit; and
- ï The unification of all persons and organisations interested in recreational bushwalking, camping and other related activities.

For more information about the Confederation please contact our club’s representative or visit their web site at www.bushwalking.org.au or phone 02 9294 6797.

3.0 LEADING CLUB WALKS

We are always looking for additional bushwalking leaders. New walks are especially welcome; please do not hesitate to volunteer to lead a walk, which has been in a previous programme. You should familiarise yourself with any walk you propose to lead. This will assist you in completing the **Walk Suggestion Form** and when answering enquires regarding the walk from prospective participants. **If you have not led** a walk previously, please don't hesitate to contact the any of our walk leaders and **ask for assistance**.

If you wish to have a walk included in the next programme, please contact the Walks Co-ordinator before the **deadline for suggestions**, which is advertised in each programme. While our Walks Co-ordinator will accept your walk suggestions by phone, the preferred method is via a Walk Suggestion Form which is included in all club programmes. The form prompts you for all the information our members have come to expect and avoids any possible misunderstanding or errors in communicating your walk details verbally.

To overcome any concerns you may have about **committing yourself months in advance** to lead a walk, just tick the **Registration Essential** box on the Walk Suggestion Form. Then if required, you can then advise those who register for your walk if you have to cancel the walk, change the walk or any arrangements for the advertised walk.

The **Registration Essential** box should also be ticked if you are

- Setting **maximum or minimum limits** on number of participants i.e. minimum number is four unless carrying an EPIRB tracking system then it is three. Maximum number may be set by NPWS in National Parks, the fragile environment, difficulty of walk or the number of experienced walkers supporting the leader.
- Leading a walk outside the Campbelltown area.
- Car Camps.
- Leading a difficult walk so you can discuss experience, fitness level and/or equipment requirements with prospective participants.

Note: The starting time and meeting place for walks where registration is essential will not be published in the programme.

Walk leaders are invited to attend our Programme Review meetings should they wish to check the details of their walk in the next programme.

4.0 PARTICIPATION IN WALKS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

On viewing our programme, please read it right through as soon as possible. Check for limits on walks, requests for expressions of interest, the need to confirm a booking, etc. Where a limit is indicated a "**first in - first served**" policy is always adopted, however, a leader will may have a reserve list if necessary.

Please be at the walk meeting place at least **5 minutes before the starting time** so that you can "sign on" and be advised of any special instructions, possible hazards or difficulties that may be encountered. Leaders will **not delay the start** of a walk for more than a couple of minutes for latecomers, even if they have registered.

Registration for Walks

All walks require registration; contact the leader at least four days before 'day' walks and ten days for overnight walks. If you find that you are unable to attend, please advise the leader immediately so another member can take your place. The starting time and meeting place for walks can only be obtained from the walk leader.

Inviting Children*, Visitors and Other Members

You must always **obtain the leader's permission** before inviting a friends and relatives on a walk. This 'rule' also applies if you intend to invite another member of the club to travel with you to the walk, particularly if they are less experienced or fit than you. **Remember, leaders have the right to refuse permission** for any person to participate in a club walk on the grounds of lack of necessary equipment, fitness and/or experience.

* *Children are not entitled to join or walk with the Mountain Devils Bushwalking Club Inc.*

Transport

If you intend travelling by **Train**, check departure times a day or so before the walk, if in doubt ring the leader.

Members travelling by train will usually be found in the first carriage.

Car-pooling is optional.

There is no obligation on a leader or any member to provide transport for others so please do not depend on obtaining a seat at the car pool meeting place without prearranging it. If you are willing to provide transport please contact the Walk Leader four or five days before the walk. If you require a lift, the leader will pass on the name and phone number of any members who are offering transport.

Note: In the interests of 'fair play' the cost of petrol, parking and/or entry fees, etc. should be shared.

5.0 WALK GRADING SYSTEM

The following information must be taken as a guide only as it cannot take into account all factors. This system has been devised by fit experienced bushwalkers so those new to bushwalking may find even the lower grade walks a little difficult at first.

Bushwalking is quite different from street or beach walking so if you have little or no bushwalking experience, we suggest you start with Grade 1 or 2 walks, then as your fitness and confidence develops, progress to the higher grades.

Grade	Distance (See Note below)	Type of Terrain	Suitable for
1	Up to 8kms	Established tracks, fire trails, roads and/or beach walking. May include some gentle gradients.	Beginners to bushwalking.
2	Up to 12kms	Established tracks, fire trails, roads and/or beach walking, generally gentle gradients but may also include some moderate gradients.	Most people with reasonable fitness.
3	Up to 16kms	Mostly on tracks or fire trails, with moderate gradients.	People who are used to bushwalking.
4	Up to 20kms	Mostly on tracks, may involve some off track walking , eg. Creek beds or open bushland; and/or steep gradients . The Leader will have knowledge of all aspects of the walk i.e. there should be no exploratory sections .	Those wishing to gain bushwalking experience. A taste of real bushwalking.
5	Up to 20kms	May involve considerable off-track walking, be prepared for possible difficult sections, eg. Rock hopping and/or scrambling.	Members who have completed at least 2 Grade 4 walks and are sure-footed.
6	Up to 30kms	Will involve mainly off-track walking; some exploratory sections; thick bushland walking; long/short steep gradients; rock scrambling/hopping; river crossings; and/or rugged strenuous terrain.	For very fit & experienced bushwalkers. Must have progressed through the grades with our club.

Walking Pace

Leisurely Pace TIE (take it easy)	Unhurried, easy pace suitable for beginners or the less fit. Can be applied to walks graded from Medium to Very Hard.
Moderate Pace	Leader prefers a slightly quicker pace, but will adjust to suit the type of terrain. Should be no problem for the reasonably fit.
Energetic Pace	Be really fit and raring to go - not recommended for the beginner or those below average fitness.

Descriptions of some walks in our programs may vary from the information above, eg. Distance (kms) may be a little longer but in most cases the terrain will be similar. If you are at all uncertain about the experience and fitness required to complete a walk at the required pace, please phone the leader for advice.

You are requested to adhere to the leader's pace, i.e. not race ahead. If struggling to keep up you should advise the leader.

6.0 ESSENTIAL BUSHWALKING EQUIPMENT

When bushwalking, you must be prepared to operate independently by equipping yourself as follows: -

Day Walks (even short ones)

- i Bush hat or other suitable headgear
- i Enclosed footwear, preferably boots with ankle support and good grip (definitely no thongs or sandals)

- i Backpack containing:
 - * Water (at least two litres, more in hot weather)
 - * Food, including emergency high-energy food, eg. Mars Bars, Scroggin
 - * Whistle (to attract attention)
 - * Warm jumper (preferably wool or thermal)
 - * Waterproof rain jacket
 - * Sun screen
 - * Insect repellent
 - * Gardening gloves (for scrambling)
 - * Matches (in waterproof container)
 - * Torch
 - * Toilet paper (for the obvious but also as fire starter or leaving a trail)
 - * First Aid Kit containing bandaids, antiseptic, insect repellent, crepe and triangular bandages, personal medication, painkillers.
 - * Pocket knife

Remember, the leader has the right to refuse permission for any person to join in a club walk on the grounds of lack of essential equipment. The leader should also carry a Map, Compass and a rope if required.

2 or 3-Day walks

In addition to the above, the following items are required for backpacking/overnight walks:

- * Tent and footprint
- * Stove
- * Billy
- * Knife, fork, spoon
- * Plate, mug
- * Rubbish bag
- * Water carrier (bag, wine bladder etc)
- * Sleeping bag (in waterproof bag)
- * Sleeping mat
- * Set of spare clothes (in waterproof bag)
- * Extra warm clothing
- * Hat and gloves (if the weather is likely to be very cold)
- * Personal washing gear and towel

If you have not participated in a 2 or 3 day walk previously, don't hesitate to contact the leader for advice regarding food and other supplies.

7.0 SAFE BUSHWALKING PRACTICES

For Participants

- Unless otherwise agreed you must remain in contact with the leader and inform the leader of any proposed stops or deviations.
- In large groups, keep in contact with one another, ie. By keeping the person in front in sight at all times and checking on the person behind you on occasions.
- If you lose sight of the group and you are unsure of the way ahead stop and blow your whistle loudly twice (2) every few minutes until found.

For Leaders: You are responsible for the management of the group, this involves:

- i Briefing all participants on the walk and safety procedures.
- i Leading from the front and appointing a back marker or appointing an alternate leader, if desired, for a stated time or distance.
- i Conducting a head count, eg. before moving off, after a rest period and in difficult terrain.
- i Noticing signs of stress within the group members.
- i Constantly monitoring the route and position.
- i Encouraging new or inexperienced members.
- i Controlling the pace of the group and setting limits on the "racehorses" (faster walkers), eg. to wait at a given point; and
- i Keeping in contact with every member of the group.

You may use your discretion to:

- i Refuse permission for any person to join a club walk if you consider they lack the necessary equipment, fitness and/or experience to complete the walk at the required pace.
- i Cancel a walk at any time if the weather deteriorates, the track conditions appear unsafe, if there is a declared total fire ban or a potential bush fire danger emerges.

For walk Grade 5 and 6 walks you must

- i Complete a Walk/Trip Intention Form indicating
 - i Names and addresses of participants.
 - i Colour and registration number of cars.
 - i Route plan.
 - i Estimated time of return.
- ii Leave the form with the Walks Co-ordinator, club's S & R Contact person, neighbour, relative or friend and
- ii Advise that person of the group's safe return.

Search and Rescue Procedure

The person with whom a Walk/Trip Intention Form is lodged must be advised to phone a **S & R Contact Officer** (see phone number in the latest programme) in the event of a group not returning by the time specified by the leader. The S & R Officer is then responsible for contacting the Police and the Wilderness Search and Rescue Group.

Note: In general, the police will not commence the search until the following morning.

Search and Rescue and Remote First Aid Training Days

The club encourages all members to register for these events, which are conducted by the club or Confederation. Refer to the latest programme for dates and details.

8.0 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, FORMS, ETC

A copy of the following material is usually available to members from the club's library or as indicated.

Club Constitution

All members must abide by the club's constitution. On joining the club all members are issued with a copy. A prospective member may request a copy before joining.

Walk Suggestion Forms

Normally included with each programme.

Walk Register Form

Normally posted to each leader of a walk in the current programme.

Membership Application/Renewal Form

Available from the Web Site or on request.

Walk/Trip Intention Form

Normally posted to each leader of walks Grade 5 and above, a copy is included overleaf or published on the club Web Site.

Accident Report Form

All accidents and injuries should be reported. The completion of this form will assist in processing an insurance claim. Forms are available from the Secretary.

We trust this information has been of help to you

If you have any questions or require more information regarding any aspect of the club's operations, please contact a committee member listed in your programme.

Out club secretary welcomes any suggestion you may have to improve this document.

