

# BUSH BOYS

Volume 1, Issue 2

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## Explorers

A Quarterly Publication

The Official Magazine of Father James Tierney's Bush Boys Books

### Camping Checklist

Question 50: Recite the seven points on the Camping Checklist.

#### CAMPING CHECKLIST:

1. Food: three proper meals a day.
2. Drink: tanking up with lots of tea.
3. Clothing: protection and modesty.
4. Shelter: tents or caves or gunyahs.
5. First Aid: for the wounded and sick.
6. Safety First: avoid accidents.
7. Hygiene: wash body; bury manure and scraps.

From *ABC of Camping*



Father James Tierney -  
before he needed  
spectacles



From a curve in the line they glimpsed the dull grey-green of eucalypts on hilly slopes: they were coming to the foothills of the Wild Bush Mountains.

The train's electric power took it effortlessly up the gradient. There was none of that laboured *chuffing* of former times, when the energies harnessed by man could but gradually win their hard-fought contest over gravity.

Then came the exciting part. A whisper-rumour swept the half-full carriage, *Grand Chasm Creek!* The boys, whose noses were buttoned on the window glass, were joined on the left of the train by some of the adult passengers. They gazed in wonder. The train rushed heedlessly along. Its iron way was perched on a narrow ledge half way down a precipice. Cliffs rose sheer above them on the right, and a sheer drop lay below them on their left. The train seemed ideally placed to slither off the cliff and plunge a hundred metres to its doom, where it might lie for ever among the boulders, big as houses, which lay scattered in the gorge. Across the chasm, opposite them, rose a matching cliff on whose brink there clung the scrubber species of the eucalypt. It was a terrifying sight, but also one which filled them with the deepest satisfaction. It seemed to proclaim, "Here ends your domain, O Man, and here Mine begins. Enter - if you dare!"

From *Bush Boys* Chapter 4, *The Journey to Coachwood Falls*.



You could copy out your favourite part of the above quote and illustrate, noting the different landforms.

Father James Tierney — retired Parish Priest,  
Catechetics Consultant and Author.

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#### The Books by Father James Tierney

Bush Boys (\$5)

Cuthbert Joins the Bush Boys (\$2)

Bush Boys and Bush Rangers (\$10)

Bush Boys on the Move (\$15)

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## An Engineering Wonder of the Victorian Age

The Lithgow Zig Zag Railway formed part of the main railway line westward from Sydney across the Blue Mountains. It lowered the line from the summit of the mountain into the Lithgow Valley. It was built between 1866 and 1869 and enabled produce to be taken to Sydney from the farming areas beyond the Blue Mountains. It also allowed the development of the coal and iron ore deposits found in the Lithgow Valley.

The original plan was to bring the railway from the top of the mountains to the valley below using a tunnel. But tunnels are slow and costly to build and it was decided to lower the track using a zig zag instead.

By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century there was increasing traffic on the line and the single track zig zag became a bottleneck. A ten tunnel deviation through the escarpment was constructed and completed in 1910. The zig zag became obsolete.

In 1972 a group of railway enthusiasts started to rebuild the zig zag track and a steam tourist railway was established. Today you can take a 12 km journey in restored carriages along the zig zag, passing through two tunnels and over three sandstone viaducts along the way.

### Interesting facts about the Zig Zag Railway:

- ◆ It took 600 – 700 men about 2 ½ years to build the zig zag. They lived in tents in 20 different locations at temperatures down to -10° C.
- ◆ The zig zag was originally planned with three tunnels but only two tunnels were completed as the third developed cracks during construction and was blown up to form a cutting. This was the second electrically detonated explosion in the southern hemisphere.
- ◆ During construction the chief engineer, John Whitton, sat on a stone seat carved in the cutting next to the no. 2 viaduct where he supervised the work. He sent instructions by runners on foot or by horseback or signalled by semaphore or mirrors. This seat is called the Engineer 's Lookout.
- ◆ In the 19<sup>th</sup> century there was only one brake on the train and one on the engine, so trains travelled very slowly. It took 3 hours to cross the zig zag.

Peter asked him, "Suppose the train jumped off the rails into the gorge? What would happen to us?"

The guard laughed - he had sons of his own, and said, "We railway men keep the train on the rails by sticking to this little book" - he pulled out a flattish cream volume from his pocket - "our *Safe Working Catechism for Locomotive Englnemen.*"

From *Bush Boys* Chapter 4

### What is a Zig Zag?

A railway zig zag (also known as a switchback), is a way of climbing or descending hills in difficult country with a minimal need for tunnels and heavy earthworks. A zig zag consists of sloping tracks forming the letter Z. At the top and bottom points there are reversing stations. The train proceeds along the top track, reverses along the middle leg of the Z before resuming its original direction along the bottom track.



Visit [www.zigzagrailway.com.au](http://www.zigzagrailway.com.au) to find out more about the Lithgow Zig Zag including times of operation.

Find out more about zig zag railways in other parts of the world.

## The Blue Mountains

Above the ashes straight and tall,  
Through ferns with moisture dripping,  
I climb beneath the sandstone wall,  
My feet on mosses slipping.

Like ramparts round the valley 's edge  
The tinted cliffs are standing.  
With many a broken wall and ledge,  
And many a rocky landing.

And round about their rugged feet  
Deep ferny dells are hidden  
In shadowed depths, whence dust and heat  
Are banished and forbidden.

The stream that, crooning to itself,  
Comes down a tireless rover,  
Flows calmly to the rocky shelf,  
And then leaps bravely over.

Now pouring down, now lost in spray,  
When mountain breezes sally,  
The water strikes the rock midway,  
And leaps into the valley.

Now in the west the colours change,  
The blue with crimson blending;  
Behind the far Dividing Range,  
The sun is fast descending.

And mellowed day comes o'er the place,  
And softens ragged edges;  
The rising moon 's great placid face  
Looks gravely o'er the ledges.

**Henry Lawson 1888**

Perhaps you can copy out your favourite verse and illustrate.



"Fire is a good servant  
but a poor master."

## What is a Total Fire Ban?

Total fire bans are imposed on days of extreme fire danger. During a total fire ban, no fires of any kind may be lit in the open. Electric or gas-fired barbeques in national park picnic areas may be used and possibly the same type of barbeques in your own backyard.

Find out more details by visiting the [NSW Rural Fire Service website](#).

Question 49. *Between October and March, do the bushfire regulations allow cooking fires?*  
Between October and March, except during a Total Fire Ban, the bushfire regulations allow cooking fires if cleared around for 3 metres with an adult, or cleared around for 2 metres in a permanently constructed fire place.

From *The ABC of Camping*

Then John and he lit the fire, the first in the new fireplace, made on Tuesday. Peter ran down to the water with both billies, filled them, and came back to report, "The water feels *beaut!*"

Greg set the billies at the edge of the fire, using a stick to poke aside the small rocks which formed the front of his *properly constructed fireplace*. He stood up, "Let 's go swimming," he said.

From *Bush Boys* Chapter 20: Pitching Their Own Camp

See *Bush Boys* Chapter 23: First Night in the Tent for a diagram of a **properly constructed cooking fire**.

What to do if caught in a bushfire while on foot

- ◆ Don 't panic.
- ◆ Cover all exposed skin and hair.
- ◆ Move across slope away from the fire-front, then down slope towards the rear of the main fire-front.
- ◆ Find open or already burnt ground. Don 't try to outrun a fire or go uphill, or through low flames, unless you can clearly see a safe area very close by.
- ◆ If you can 't avoid the fire, lie face down under a bank, rock, loose earth or in a hollow, or if possible get into a dam or stream, but not a water tank.

Find out how to prepare for the bushfire season, what to do if a bushfire approaches and what to do if caught in a fire.

Read the [Bushfire Action Guide](#) [www.ema.gov.au](http://www.ema.gov.au)

## Who's Scared of the Scaly Snake?

With the warmer weather, there are increased sightings of snakes. Snakes can cause great fear and many people's reaction to encountering a snake is to try and kill it. Most people are unaware that all Australian reptiles are protected by law and that they could be fined for needlessly killing a snake. So much fear is caused unnecessarily by the 'unknown'. So if you are afraid of snakes learn more about them!

Here are some interesting facts:

- ◆ Snakes are usually timid. They tend to flee rather than fight and bite.
- ◆ Snakes are not aggressive by nature and usually only attack to defend themselves.
- ◆ Snakes have no ears and can sense ground vibrations through sensitive jaw bones. They 'smell' using their flickering tongues.
- ◆ Snakes actively avoid open areas so keep the grass around your house short: If a snake does cross the grass, you will be able to see it and avoid stepping on it.
- ◆ If you find out you have a resident snake leave it alone. It has probably been living quite happily on your property for some time.
- ◆ Ring WIRES with a description of your snake and for some reassurance from a snake handler.
- ◆ Be prepared by learning first aid for snake bite.

Visit [www.wires.org.au](http://www.wires.org.au) for a snake fact sheet and to find out more about animal rehabilitation.

Read Snake-bite or spider bite *Bush Boys on the Move* page 476

### Learn Q47 ABC of Camping:

What is the First Aid for snake bite or spider bite?

The First Aid for snake bite or spider bite is crepe bandages bound tight, as tight as for sprains, on top of the wound, and above and below it, immobilising the limb in splints, re-assuring the victim, treating for shock and getting a doctor.

Greg said, "Please stop screaming! Keep still! I'm only cutting off the leg of your jeans. They're too tight to roll up. We've got to get at the bite, to treat it properly." .....

Although quivering with excitement, Greg was secretly enjoying himself. That flash of a red belly they had spied under the snake as it wriggled off meant a lot to him. It was a red-bellied black snake, not a tiger snake or a death adder. So he could hardly fail in applying the first aid. But why tell the yahoos straightaway? They probably would not believe him, anyway.

From *Bush Boys* Chapter 31: First Aid

## Constructing Shade Shelters: Protection from the Sun

See *Bush Boys Explorer's Spring Edition* for instructions on building shelters using rope and a tarpaulin.

**Handy Hint:** If your tarpaulin doesn't have holes to attach the ropes to, place a large stone under the tarp, bunch the tarp around the rock and secure the rope over the resulting bulge.

## A Bush Christmas : A 1947 Movie, rated G

Riding home from school to commence their school holidays, children Helen, Snow and John, meet two strangers "Long Bill" and Jim, and in conversation tell them about their father's new and valuable mare, Lucy. The next morning, when they discover that Lucy and her foal have been stolen, they realise their stupidity and with their English cousin Michael and friend Neza set out to track the thieves. A storm obliterates the tracks and the children get lost in the majestic Blue Mountains. After three days, with an anxious search party on their trail, they stumble upon the thieves' hiding place in a ghost town and are taken captive!

Read the book *Bush Christmas* by Smart and Borer. This book is based on the film.



## Question: What causes sunburn?

### Answer: UVR

We all know we have to take care in the sun especially in the summer. It is very easy to get sunburnt and increase our risk of getting skin cancer. Did you know that it is the ultraviolet radiation ( UVR ) from the sun which damages our skin?

- ◆ UVR comes from the sun.
- ◆ Unlike sunlight, it can't be seen or felt. It contributes to sunburn, skin aging, eye damage and skin cancer.
- ◆ UVR can reach us directly from the sun or indirectly by being reflected from surfaces such as snow, water and sand or scattered by water droplets in clouds or atmospheric particles such as dust, also the blue sky itself.
- ◆ UVR is strongest in the middle of the day so it is better to plan outdoor activities before 11 am or after 3pm ( day light saving time ).
- ◆ Shade is a very effective way of reducing your exposure to the sun. Shade can be natural such as that provided by trees and hedges. Shade can also be provided by constructing permanent or portable shade structures.  
**Remember: shaded areas move as the sun moves, you need to move too!**
- ◆ UVR can reflect off surfaces such as concrete, water and sand and so you can still get sunburnt even if you are in the shade.

Greg explained, "Dad said we ought to keep out of the sun in the middle of the day and early afternoon, so I said we'd explore a direct route to King's Cave."

From *Bush Boys on the Move* page 86

"Let's have lunch upstream a bit," proposed Bernie, "and find some shade."

"Swimming, sitting or walking," murmured Greg, "by Dad's orders, no sunstroke or sun cancers allowed."

From *Bush Boys on the Move* page 125

#### First-Aid for Sunburn

If the burns are mild, apply calamine lotion or an after-sun lotion. More severe cases may be accompanied by heatstroke.

#### Treatment for sunburn:

- ◆ Cover the skin with light clothing or towel
- ◆ Move the casualty out of the sun
- ◆ Cool the skin by sponging with cold water or by soaking affected areas in a cold bath for ten minutes.
- ◆ Give the casualty sips of cold water
- ◆ If there is extensive blistering or skin damage seek medical advice.

#### Dehydration, heat stroke, heat exhaustion

- ◆ Plan the route to have water available at all meals.
- ◆ **Tank up with tea** at all meals.
- ◆ **Most creek water is polluted and must be boiled.**
- ◆ Do not take anyone who does not drink tea.
- ◆ Use salt tablets and/or Staminade etc.
- ◆ Wear a hat and get into the shade wherever possible.
- ◆ Never stop to talk, eat or rest in the summer sun.
- ◆ Rest before collapse occurs: it saves time! If those in front are resting while others catch up, the latter must be allowed a rest too.

Then John alarmed them. In a small voice he said, "I feel sick and a bit dizzy."

And Kev said, "So do I."

Greg and Pete sat up and studied them carefully.

"Sunstroke," said Greg, and simultaneously Pete said, "Touch of the sun."

"Raise their legs," muttered Greg. "Half the blood is in the legs – run some back to the head."

From *Bush Boys on the Move* page 324

Find this quote, continue reading to find out Greg's treatment for heatstroke.

## The Origin of Anzac Biscuits

During the First World War, women from both Australia and New Zealand, sent biscuits to the soldiers: these were hard, long-keeping biscuits that could survive the journey by sea, and still remain edible. These biscuits were known as Soldiers Biscuits. After the Gallipoli landings in 1915, they became known as Anzac Biscuits.

The traditional biscuit is hard and flat. During the war, some soldiers used broken biscuits to make a form of porridge.

Softer and chewier versions of the Anzac biscuit have appeared over the years. Common to most recipes are the ingredients: rolled oats, coconut, butter and golden syrup.

Anzac Day occurs on the 25<sup>th</sup> April. It is a day set aside in both Australia and New Zealand to pray for, think about and honour those who fought not only in WW1, but also other conflicts such as WW2 and Vietnam.

ANZAC stands for Australian and New Zealand Army Corps.

Find out more about the Gallipoli landings.

Eventually they came out, dried off in the sun and lit the fire, and got dressed in damp clothes. They nibbled Anzac biscuits and "tanked up with tea."

From *Bush Boys on the Move* page 85

## Burns and Scalds

Burns occur from bushfires, campfires and cooking fires.

- ◆ Survive bushfires by sticking to waterways in summer tramping.
- ◆ Avoid ridges and slopes: there is no escape uphill from bushfires.
- ◆ The ultimate escape from a bushfire is to light a fire at your feet and move downwind into the area it has burnt. It is a 'last resort'.
- ◆ Don't get into an overheated water tank – or you will stew to death.
- ◆ Escape radiant heat, the killer, even by digging into the ground.
- ◆ Insist on strict discipline with cooking fires and campfires – a moment's carelessness or stupidity leads to horrible accidents.
- ◆ Never carry hot things like boiling water over someone who is sitting or lying on the ground.
- ◆ Beware of exploding rock from a fireplace made of sandstone or certain other rocks which have absorbed water from being in or near a creek. The water turns to steam, the pressure builds up and the rock explodes: hot fragments of rock and red hot coals are flung everywhere: dangerous to health and likely to start bushfires.
- ◆ Obey bushfire regulations.

From *Bush Boys on the Move* appendix 2, page 476

## A Recipe for Anzac Biscuits

1 cup rolled oats  
1 cup plain flour  
1 cup sugar  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  cup coconut  
125g butter  
1 tablespoon golden syrup  
1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda  
2 tablespoon boiling water



Combine dry ingredients in large bowl. Combine butter and golden syrup in pan. Heat until butter is melted. Combine water and soda and add to butter mixture, stir into dry ingredients while mixture is warm.

Place piles of about 3 tsp mixture on greased tray. Press piles down lightly. Bake in slow oven for about 20 minutes. Loosen biscuits while warm. Cool on tray.

Perhaps you can make a batch of Anzac Biscuits to eat with your billy tea.



"The bigger the fool,  
the bigger the fire."

## Rising from the Ashes

An area of bush that has been recently burnt out by fire is easily recognisable: a blackened wasteland emitting an acrid smell. It appears that everything that stood in the path of the fire has been killed. But have you noticed how quickly the bush seems to spring to life again?

Australian native plants have adaptations which allow them to survive bushfires. Some plants actually need fire in order to exist. There are two main strategies by plants to survive fire:

1. **The ability to sprout new growth from protected parts of the plant.** eg. Paperbark trees are able to sprout new growth from groups of little buds under the bark. These buds lie dormant until they feel the heat of the fire. "Sprouters" have thick bark which not only protects the buds during fire, but also provides a store of starch. The sprouting buds use this stored energy until they have sufficient greenery to begin photosynthesis.

2. **The use of chemicals from bushfire to initiate seed germination.** eg. Banksia seed cones open after being baked, allowing the seeds to fall to the ground. The seeds fall into the nutrient rich ash where they will germinate. The parent plants die in the fire but the fire resistant seeds ensure the continuation of the species. It takes 5-8 years for Banksia plants to become mature enough to flower and set their own seed. If another bushfire sweeps through in this time, the species would be eliminated from that area.

## The Banksia

- ◆ This native Australian plant was named after the English botanist, Joseph Banks, who travelled with Captain James Cook.
- ◆ Because Banksias produce an abundance of nectar, they are an important source of food for animals such as honeyeaters, honey possums, pygmy possums and bats.
- ◆ Larvae of moths and weevils burrow into Banksia cones to eat the seeds. Birds such as cockatoos break off the cones to eat these insect larvae and also the seeds.
- ◆ Banksias are popular garden plants because of their showy flower heads, and their nectar attracts birds and small mammals.
- ◆ Banksias are grown on wildflower farms for the cut flower trade.
- ◆ Even though the nectar of Banksias is poor, it is sought by beekeepers because it is an abundant and reliable source at times when other sources provide little.
- ◆ Banksia cones are often cut up and sold as coasters for souvenirs for tourists.
- ◆ May Gibbs' Banksia Men in *Snugglepot and Cuddlepie* were modelled on aged Banksia cones.
- ◆ "Banksia" was a proposed name for Australia. Obviously it was never adopted!

The BBBB 'went off' with a great flash of flame, red and orange and yellow, and a fraction of a second later the WHOOF of the explosion.

It happened in a thicket of she-oaks and turpentines. At once the bush was ablaze in half a dozen spots...Smoke blossomed up. Pillars of fire soared high. The luxuriant new growth in the low scrub between the trees burnt ever so fiercely. What the rain had greened and grown in weeks, the fire dried and burnt in seconds. It fed itself greedily with the fuel at hand and its appetite was insatiable.

From *Bush Boys on the Move* page 387



Find out more about Joseph Banks

Read *Snugglepot and Cuddlepie* by May Gibbs

## Secret Signs

The Greek letters ΙΗΣ are the English letters JES, short for **Jesus**. His Holy Name means Saviour or "God saves" (Matthew 1:21) Some say IHS stands for "In His Service", also for *Jesus Hominum Salvator*, which is Latin for "**Jesus, Saviour of men.**"

The Greek letters ΧΡ are our ChR, and short for **Christ**, a title meaning Messiah, the Anointed One, the Chosen of God.

'Fish' in Greek is *ichthus* or in capitals, ΙΧΘΥΣ being our letters I-Ch-Th-U-S.

They are the initials for the Greek words of a short creed, "**Jesus Christ (is) God's Son (the) Saviour.**"

From *Catholic Family Catechism Disciples' Edition with 50 Questions and Answers*. Page 15

Mrs Cumberland was shrewder than they thought. She read the annoyance on their faces, and said, "Their teacher's got them all stirred up about the old bushrangers. He thinks there's a hoard of stolen gold in these mountains. And a very kindly girl, I think she was called Annie, asked me had you found the bushrangers' mark in any of the caves in the bush. I asked her, "Which one of their marks?" and she said, "The sign of the crossed pistols, of course." Then the others looked at her reproachfully as though she were giving away secrets.

From *Bush Boys and Bush Rangers* page 66

## The Phonetic Alphabet

Sometimes on the telephone or two-way radio it is difficult to distinguish between B and D, or between P and T. For people whose second language is English, many of the other letters, too, are not spoken or not heard accurately. But with this phonetic alphabet, you can spell out words with absolute clarity.

Practice The Phonetic Alphabet by reading out car number plates when travelling

Alpha	Juliet	Sierra
Bravo	Kilo (Keelo)	Tango
Charlie	Lima	Uniform
Delta	Mike	Victor
Echo	November	Whiskey
Foxtrot	Oscar	X-Ray
Golf	Papa	Yankee
Hotel	Quebec (Kweebec)	Zulu
India	Romeo	

0 Nadazero	2 Bissotwo	4 Kartefour	6 Soxisix	8 Oktoeight
1 Unaone	3 Terrathree	5 Pantafive	7 Setteseven	9 Novenine

## A Bush Boys Theme Book

You may like to make a notebook recording all you find out from the suggestions in *Bush Boys Explorers*. Use A 4 pages and file them in a folder. Include drawings, postcards, pictures, dried leaves and flowers, maps, diagrams, Bush Boy quotes, lists of interesting facts, photographs of any projects completed, poems, stories etc. Paste in articles from *Bush Boys Explorers* and write your own. Make a title page for your book. For more ideas see *Bush Boys: A Living Book Unit Study* available [www.cardinalnewman.com.au](http://www.cardinalnewman.com.au)