



BY DAMON SHORTER

ANU is a young university and few events taking place here can claim the proud title "tradition". Perhaps the closest thing ANU has is the inter-college event "Inward Bound". Every year hundreds of students from the residential halls of Daley Road risk hypothermia, exhaustion, leeches and blisters to compete in this unique and gruelling event, which last month was held for the 34th time. Of course, like all good traditions, the history of Inward Bound is chequered with tales of bravery, foolishness and controversy.

Bill Packard is regarded by many as the patron saint of this most unusual of sporting events. As the first warden of Bruce Hall and a lecturer in geography, he helped instigate Inward Bound at a time when the ANU was little more than a remote research institution, and Lake Burley Griffin still the Molonglo river. In a recent interview, he described how the event began.

"We first ran Inward Bound in 1962, when there would have been only about 200 full-time undergraduates at the ANU, and about 160 of these were living at Bruce Hall. Probably about half of the residents competed in the event, and most of the others were involved in some other way. The competitors were blindfolded and driven in groups to points about 20 miles away from Bruce Hall and dropped in the middle of the night. The winners were the first team to get back to Bruce Hall.

"We realised a few things after this first event," he said. "First, you couldn't accept lifts, because the first people to get in were a couple of attractive girls who hailed a passing car and were back in Bruce Hall in next to no time. Two, you were not to inquire of anybody where you were - you had to work it out on your own.

"By the next year, 1963, the basic pattern had begun to settle. The team became a group of four, for safety purposes, and the end-point was changed to somewhere other than Bruce Hall so as not to restrict route choices. You had to

Inward Bound

Tales of bravery, foolishness and controversy

stay together, you were given an envelope to open if you got lost which told you where you had been dropped, and you were given a map reference for the end-point. Canberra then was a city of only 55,000 so the countryside was pretty empty."

The person who supposedly dreamed up the idea for the event was Dr Mike Gore, then an ANU lecturer in physics who later went on to become founding director of Questacon, the National Science and Technology Centre. Mike Gore related how he and another Bruce resident, Julian Hartley, envisioned the event as a complement to Bush Week, which in those days "consisted of heading out to Bungendore and drinking the pub dry".

"Because it was bush week, everybody was dead keen on having the bush as the theme, so I thought why don't we have something where people's skills in the bush are tested?" he said. "I reminisced on similar exercises we did in the RAF when I was in the military reserve at Leeds University, called escape and evasion exercises, which were training for pilots who got shot down behind enemy lines."

But, according to Bill Packard, Inward Bound only really became established when the event broadened to include people from outside of Bruce Hall. In particular, he recalls an incident involving Duntroon military cadets. "There had always been rivalry between Royal Military College Duntroon people and the very tiny Canberra University College, which later became The Faculties of the ANU," he said. "The 'corpies', as the mili-

tary cadets were known, regarded the few full-time university students as wimps or softies, and the students on the whole regarded the corpies as semi-Neanderthal thugs. The cadets were well disciplined and well organised, as opposed to the long haired hippie types at the university.

"This ill-will came to a head in about 1964 when quite a large group of uni students raided Duntroon. They went into the residents' quarters during one of the formal meals, when all the cadets were in the mess hall having dinner. The students, in a sense, were quite unconscionable - they tipped people's possessions over and so on, and as the final act, got a car which had almost completely had it onto the Duntroon parade ground - that sacred piece of territory - and set fire to it. The Duntroon cadets came storming out to save their turf from this desecration, the students effected their escape, and that was that.

"It was clear that great insult had been made to Duntroon, but the officers forbade any retaliation. However the cadets were good, ordinary, very much red-blooded Australians. They probably said 'very good sir', and then formed a dark plan. About a week later, Duntroon cadets to a man (except the two who were rostered on sentry duty), slipped out of Duntroon. This was strictly forbidden, but they had worked out that the Commandant couldn't sack the lot of them. They gathered at the Chifley library at about 6pm, all wearing their black tracksuits, and some even had blackened faces.

"The gathering was not unobserved by the students, who came racing back to Bruce yelling 'the corpies are coming'. The responses of the male residents varied from those who were out to get the corpies to those who, as quickly as possible, went and locked themselves in their rooms. The corpies attacked in a phalanx formation down University Avenue, which in those days was a road running all the way from London Circuit down to Bruce Hall. Some stupid Bruce resident got the bright idea of running out the fire hoses and repelling them from the front podium of the hall. The cadets were aware of tactical manoeuvres and outflanked the students before turning the fire hoses back on the Bruce Hall people. In the resulting melée, no one was seriously hurt, but some students believed they were excessively roughed up. The cadets went around like a well organised bunch of thugs (which they were) and broke into almost every room in East Wing, shattering locks and dragging out reluctant students, took some captives off - more particularly those who had long hair - and caused quite a deal of damage.

"I think afterwards the cadets realised that things had got out of hand. That night at about 9pm, the chief cadet came to me and offered to share the costs of repair. The Vice-Chancellor was absolutely livid, although mainly at his university students.

"At this point, the university decided that there were too few real contacts between students at Duntroon and the University, and in that feeling we decided to incorporate Duntroon into Inward Bound. The Duntroon cadets ar-

rived all equipped for the event on the Friday night, but a couple of their teams were last seen the next morning disappearing towards Tumut, going in quite the wrong direction. Whether it was the shame that they didn't win, that they got so lost, I don't know, but their participation in the event ceased. I can't help thinking maybe the Duntroon cadets were wiser than we thought, and they were just going off to have a good time," he said.

Inward Bound has been run every year since, following essentially the same format that was established in the 1960s. Last month almost 300 blindfolded college students endured the car trip over winding dirt roads (anything up to five hours) before being dumped on the edge of an unmarked track somewhere in the Brindabella ranges in the middle of the night. All for the pleasure of competing in an event which is notoriously exhausting and painful. "Any team that finishes Inward Bound has to be pretty tenacious," said Bill Packard. "It is one of those events that calls for you to just keep on keeping on." And this does not necessarily advantage the faster male athletes. "Women on the whole have done better than men in Inward Bound. The women who compete tend to simply have more stick-at-ability. They probably have a less macho image of themselves, which is ultimately an advantage."

Surprisingly, no one has been seriously injured in the 34 years that the event has been held. "There have been badly blistered heels, bruises and occasional cuts and sprains and three or four mild cases of hypothermia," said Bill Packard, "but overall we have been lucky." Safety is one area where the organising pattern has improved over the years. Today, students are required to carry warm clothes, food, water and other first aid and survival equipment with them to be allowed to compete.

Mike Gore remembers with glee the time that Bruce resident Tony Whitlam, son of the former Australian Prime Minister, informed him dryly that "you can't start traditions, Gore." Well, I guess they have to start somewhere.

Sculptural garden to enrich 50th anniversary

THE University's 50th anniversary will be celebrated with a commemorative landscape development on the open space at the corner of University Avenue and Marcus Clarke Street. The plan has been prepared with the involvement of staff and students from the Institute of the Arts (ITA). The landform modifications themselves have been conceived as an art-piece and the area will also include some more traditional pieces.

The garden will be a marker or sign, visible from the road and footpath and also, at closer quarters, the art-pieces will present fine-grained, tactile surfaces, rich colour and text.

A slight cutting will be made into the top of the hill, on the line of the existing heavily-used track that runs diagonally across the site. The project will take the opportunity to improve the surface of that track, which is a

major conduit between the city and the southern parts of the campus. The cutting will create an embankment up to two metres high. It is on this embankment that the principal artist involved, Mr Phillip Nizette, will be installing low relief sculptural pieces.

Towards the north eastern corner will be two tall "tablets", also the work of Mr Nizette. A pair of vertical blades in steel, the tablets will

give the sense of a gateway to the path as pedestrians enter the area. The blades will also have the University crest cut into them and will act as signs visible from the road.

The final component of the work will be its planting. There will be Manna Gums, focusing the view on to Black Mountain, and long grasses to give a strongly textured horizon to the knoll.

International chair for Barry Ninham

PROFESSOR Barry Ninham, Head of the Department of Applied Mathematics in the ANU's Research School of Physical Sciences and Engineering (RSPHysSE) has been awarded the Swedish National Visiting Chair in Chemical Engineering.

The Chair is awarded by the Swedish Research Council for Engineering Sciences, the main Swedish government funding agency for basic research within the engineering sciences. Several chairs have been established with the aim of bringing renowned international scientists to Sweden for a year of collaborative work.

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Life Cycle

by Pat

