

NIMBIN ROCKS ACCIDENT REPORT

22. 9.56.

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# Nimbin Rocks Fatality 22-9-56.

I have, here under ~~recorded~~, <sup>recorded</sup>, as accurately as I can, from my own memory, the sequence of events following the accident. Times however are only approximate.

Friday night on arriving at the camp site Neill Lamb & myself drafted out three separate climbing parties from the twelve members present. These were discussed with the others and duly agreed upon. They were as follows:

Party 1. To climb ~~the~~ the Cathedral & Twin Spires  
Graham Baines, Peter Munt, David Ward,  
Joan Anderson & Dawn Blakeway.

Party 2. To climb first the Pinnacle (Needle) and  
then to join party 3 on the Monastery  
Ken Shea, Brian Watson & John Marsh.

Party 3. To climb the Monastery  
Neill Lamb, Jan Klauka, Pet's Norma Kavanagh  
& myself.

These were the arrangements for the first days  
climbing.

## Actual Report

a little before ~~about~~ 10 AM when our party (party 3)  
had reached the top of the plateau, overlooking  
the other two rocks, and were about to start

(2)

the traverse to the ~~Cathedral~~ <sup>will</sup> monastery, Jan and myself heard a heavy fall of rocks from the Cathedral. A short while later we heard a shout that sounded like help! help! help!, coming from the Cathedral. We shouted back and after hearing a few more shouts and ~~seeing~~ people moving about very actively, we decided something must be wrong and immediately started down.

On reaching the base of the monastery will Jan & myself took a rope each and having ~~decided~~ <sup>decided</sup> to bring the rest of the gear set out ~~down~~ at a racing pace along the base of the monastery and down the slope to the Pinnacles (needle) where we met Brian & Ken who had just descended & Jan who had come across from the Cathedral with the bad news. Graham by this time had gone to summon help and call the ambulance.

Will had dropped back with a twisted ankle so Jan & I raced across to the Cathedral ~~where~~ at the base of which we were met by John who had just come across from the Pinnacle. The time then ~~was~~ would have been before 10.10 AM. After drawing a quick breath we climbed up the steeply sloping western end of the Cathedral, which takes you with a minimum amount of difficulty to a wide shelf about half way up the <sup>northern</sup> side of the

at the base of the twin spires, and and the beginning of the real climb of the Cathedral or Twin Spires. Here we found Dave with Peter whom they had left where he lay, and who was quite unconscious although Dave assured us that his breathing was good. Dawn was also there and we covered Peter with all our jumpers and jackets to keep him as warm as possible.

Neil then arrived and by this time Peter <sup>was</sup> moving a little and making slightly. Neil then tended to Peter. To us he didn't appear so badly injured. He had a very badly broken right arm but outwardly his other injuries just looked like surface abrasions.

There being nothing else I could do for Peter myself, I then climbed up to bring down the rope that the others of party I had left on the cliff when they had decided to Peter. The rope was tied about 50 feet up on the Cathedral and slightly above the right from where Peter had fallen from the ~~Cathedral~~ Twin Spires, so I would estimate that he ~~had~~ had fallen between 40 & 50 feet. I could see where a large piece of rock had broken away so in my opinion it was the   
 from the face of the Twin Spires

going way, of this piece of rock ~~it~~ under Peter's weight that had caused the accident

Untying the rope and passing it double round the tree I rappelled off and then pulled the rope down. While Jan coiled the rope I descended <sup>to the base of the rock</sup> again to see ~~if~~ if I could help ~~these~~ Sister Alexander from the Timblein Hospital who had arrived <sup>accompanied by Graham</sup> at approx 10.45 <sup>to get</sup> up

<sup>to where Peter lay</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>Sister Alexander</sup> could not make it. Ken Shea arrived about the same time with first aid gear from the camp. However <sup>after climbing back up with a blanket they had brought</sup> I came down once more in time to meet the ambulance bearer <sup>Mr Nardi</sup> and assist Jan Brian & John in carrying the stretcher up the last ~~bit~~ of the slope. Mr Nardi would have arrived at the base of the rock about 11 AM or soon after.

I loaned Mr Nardi my sandshoes and several of us then climbed up with him to where Peter lay still attended by Neill who was holding his left arm to keep it away from his damaged right arm. While Mr Nardi strapped up Peter's broken arm <sup>with splints</sup> Graham Brian Jan & myself brought up the heavy cumbersome stretcher

5

Peter was then placed on to the stretcher covered with blankets and tied on with nylon cord. At approx 11:30 AM we started down the rock with the stretcher. John Marsh ~~was~~ tended an anchor rope which he let out slowly taking a lot of the weight while six of us Jim, Neil, Dave, Ken, Brian & myself, supported the stretcher and brought it down.

We reached the base of the rock about 12 noon and after a short rest in which Peter was made a little more comfortable we set off down the slope to the ambulance car. A local resident Mr Pithers & the Police Constable Payne from Timbiri ~~helped~~ <sup>and</sup> two local boys helped us carry down the stretcher. The car parked in Mr Egan's property was reached at 12:30 PM and left for Lismore soon after.

John accompanied the ambulance into Lismore, while Ken went into Timbiri with the Police Constable to make all the necessary phone calls. The rest of us then went back to camp having to support Neil who had again

twisted his ankle.

Norma Joan Dawn & Graham  
who had stayed behind to collect all  
our gear and look unsuccessfully for  
Peter's Glasses & arrived ~~to~~ back in  
camp Gladen down with gear about  
2 PM.

The above details are as accurate as I  
can remember. I regret not being able to  
give more concise times, but in heat of  
the moment I forgot to record them

*Michael J. Woodrow*

MICHAEL JOHN WOODROW.

24TH SEPTEMBER 1956