

Dear Alexa

Thank you very much for your letter of 11 July enclosing a donation cheque of \$500 to YHA from the Paddy Pallin Rogaine. The cheque came as a surprise and is most welcome. I had forgotten the arrangement Warwick Marsden set up for the rotating donation to organisations that the man Paddy Pallin supported in his life time.

We have applied the cheque to YHA's Small Hostels Building Fund. It is always a challenge to raise the capital for smaller properties as these ones tend to be less economic. In December last year the Garie Beach cabin hostel in Royal National Park burnt down after 50 years of usage and we are fundraising for its replacement. We have a bequest and the insurance proceeds and so are well on the way. There will be some challenges to reconstruct it as it is within the National Park but it does sit at a key overnight point on the South Coast track and was well used. In the event that we do not replace at this location then the small hostels fund will be applied to an alternative.

Paddy Pallin was an early Chairman of YHA. He was older than most of the young people involved in the years after the war and provided leadership and a semblance of respectability to the fledgling organisation. The first YHA office was in a room behind his shop. He used his own money to buy the first hostel YHA owned – a ski hostel at Kiandra. The YHA paid him back from takings. He personally picked out the site of the Thredbo YHA which has a great view straight up Mt Crackenback. I met him a few times and even in his very old age he remained an inspiring and very energetic outdoors man. He would be very pleased to see what the Paddy Pallin Rogaine has become today with consistently good organisation and great numbers participating. (Although I did have a dream; it was the future and the Paddy Pallin Rogaine had evolved into a gastronomic feast in the forest and only a few diehards went for a walk to find a handful of easy check points near the Hash House!)

As a consequence of YHA losing the Garie Beach hostel I have been doing some research into accommodation on long distance hiking tracks for New South Wales and whilst YHA is unlikely to play a major role it is certainly something we are interested in. In particular if accommodation is provided along the way then campsites don't get worn out and carrying a full pack is no longer necessary. The leadership at National Parks and Wildlife is interested. In Western Australia, the Rogaining Association has been a contributing organisation to the building of simple shelters on the 1000 km Bibbulmun Track.

Please pass on YHA's gratitude to the Committee and to Michael Watts and his team of volunteers for all their excellent work at this year's event.

Yours Sincerely

Julian Ledger
CEO

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