



Ncle Moran
HERALD
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Mr Bignell gives the victory sign as he is placed in an ambulance.

Firefighters were 'lifesavers' for lost HV photographer

A PACKET of firefighters may have saved the life of an Abermain freelance photographer who lost his way while bushwalking at Cradle Mountain, in northern Tasmania, on Tuesday.

Robert Bignell, 36, of Abermain, used the firefighters to start a small fire to dry his rain-drenched clothes.

'I knew if I didn't dry my clothes I would die,' he said today.

Mr Bignell was reported missing to police yesterday afternoon when he failed to return from a one day walking trip.

Before leaving the duty ranger's office on Tuesday morning he had mentioned the route he inten-

ded taking. When he had not returned by lunch-time on Wednesday, the ranger raised the alarm.

At about 11.45pm on Wednesday, the head ranger of the park, Mr Oliver Vaughan, and State Emergency Service officer, Mr Paul Darby, found Mr Bignell sheltering in a small cave on the summit of Cradle Mountain.

He was taken yesterday to the Mersey General Hospital at Latrobe and found to be in good condition considering his ordeal.

He said he could not find the track leading down from the mountain.

'I was cold, wet, hungry and very tired but I thought of all the training I had done and the things I will wanted to do in life, I made up my mind I was not going to die,' he said.