



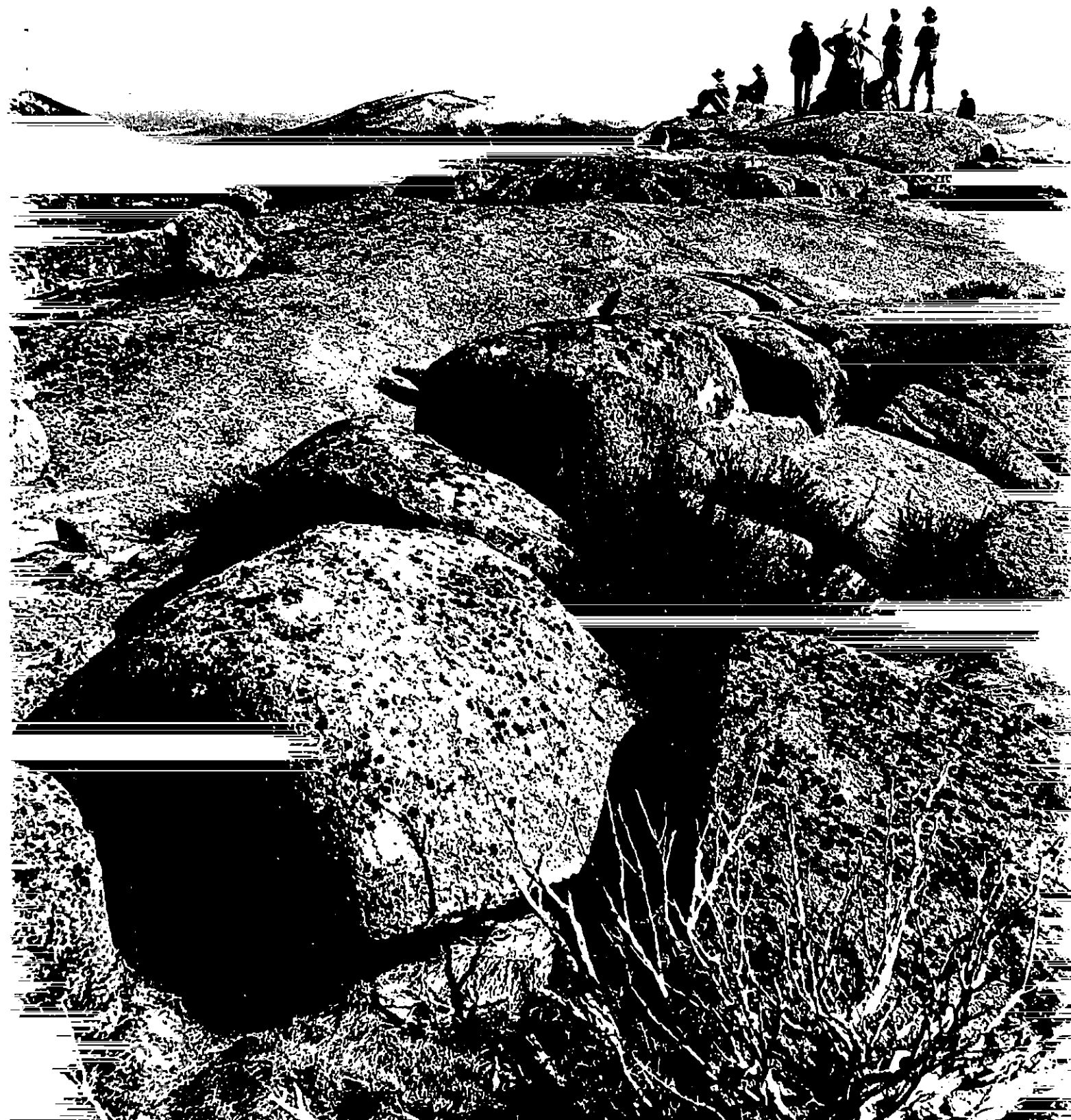
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President's Foreword

A number of important issues affecting the Gudgenby Nature Reserve have surfaced in recent months. I am sure that members will remember that Gudgenby was proclaimed in 1978, the culmination of nearly 20 years' effort by the NPA. The future of the Reserve now appears threatened by several new developments.

The first concerns the grazing leases within the Reserve. When Gudgenby was proclaimed a number of grazing leases, both freehold and leasehold, remained within the Reserve. A glance at the map of the Reserve produced by the Department of the Capital Territory will reveal the extent of these leases. When Gudgenby was proclaimed, the stated intention of the Department of the Capital Territory was to progressively acquire the freehold areas (by purchase) as finances permitted and to resume the leasehold areas as the existing leases expired. Since 1978 neither of these intentions has been realised. Lack of finance has prevented the freehold acquisitions and when the first lease was due to expire early in 1981, instead of the area reverting to the Reserve, an extension of the lease was granted.

The failure to adhere to the original intentions regarding these holdings has serious implications for the future of the Reserve. The valleys within the Reserve have nearly all been subject to intensive grazing for over 100 years. This has inevitably produced many changes to the natural flora and fauna, some intended, some unintended. In many cases the natural woodland has been entirely removed and replaced with introduced grasses. Such land management policies, though sensible for pastoral development, do not fit well within a nature reserve where natural values should predominate. Apart from affecting the integrity of the Reserve as a natural area, pastoral land management can have an adverse impact on surrounding natural areas by the uncontrolled spread of exotic weeds and

grasses, the run off into streams of pesticides and fertilisers, and the spread of feral animals.

It is important also for the future management of the Reserve that all forms of pastoral activity be ultimately removed; only then can a management plan for the whole area, which concentrates on preserving its natural values, be implemented. In addition, the failure to resolve the problems of grazing leases has a direct impact on planned extensions to the Reserve. Areas such as Honeysuckle Creek, which form part of the State 2 extensions, also contain a number of grazing leases. Until a firm policy of resumption of leases is adopted, the Stage 2 extensions may remain only on paper.

A second problem which has arisen concerns the future use of the two satellite tracking sites within the Reserve. The Honeysuckle Creek tracking station has already been closed and the Orroral Valley station may also close within three years. The Association can get no definite answers to its questions on the future use of these sites, yet this information is vital for future planning in the Reserve. It is imperative that the future use of the buildings and facilities, after satellite tracking operations cease, is compatible with the management of the Reserve as a natural area. Plans to use the Honeysuckle Creek site as a field study centre have been drawn up but implementation must await decisions by the Government.

The Association has made and continues to make representations on these topics. I may add that we have also had the support of other local conservation groups, including the Conservation Council, and we are grateful for this support. I look to members to continue the struggle, both individually and through your support of the Association and its aims.

Stand-In

I drove to Canberra on a pleasant spring day. My objective was to attend the 21st Annual Meeting of the Association. I had time to think as I drove down (the now much shorter distance) from Sydney, it seemed hard to believe it was 21 years since I first went to Canberra. I had arrived mid-1960 and soon after Roy Tait had me enrolled as a member of the fledgling NPA, Roy and I had served

together on the Council of the Queensland NPA some years earlier. As a result NPA activities and outings had been interwoven throughout my 19 years in Canberra and I was looking forward to a relaxed evening renewing acquaintances.

THE COVER is a special and was photographed and designed by one of our members. The scene is the trig. station on Mt Kelly with the Brindabella Range in the background and was taken on one of the Association's regular back-packing weekends.

Having arrived I rang round a few friends only to discover Canberra winter ills had laid low both our President Neville Esau and Bob Story the speaker for the evening. Not long after, that great persuader Ian Currie rang and asked me to step in for Bob. I realised I was probably one of the very few present members who had been closely associated with the very early administration and activities of the Association. Reluctantly I agreed.

There went my relaxed evening. I knew my memory, unfortunately, did not compare with Bob's for recall and precision of detail and I wondered if I would be able to do justice to all those early workers, particularly Dr Nancy Burbidge. I had arranged to have a Chinese meal with the travelling companion of my China trip before we both proceeded to the meeting and I was in two places at once, reminiscing over China and trying to recall my early Canberra experiences. If I was at all distraught my companion kindly didn't comment.

At the meeting it was exciting to see so many familiar faces from the early years. Keith Green and Jan Kiek, like me, had returned for the event and it was good to hear greetings from Betty Temple-Watts and others not able to be present. Ian took the chair in Neville's absence and the meeting proceeded smoothly as usual, under the efficient guidance of our retiring Secretary, Sheila Kruse. The business of the meeting having been disposed of, it was my turn.

I recalled there was so much to be done in the conservation field in those early days. The first programme of the Association was to investigate the Territory for suitable reserve areas and a national park. Nancy, who had lived in Canberra for many years, already knew the best areas. A committee comprising Nancy, Fiona and Sandy Brand, Bob Story, Ed Slater and myself prepared the first proposal for the Gudgenby National Park. We walked up and down Yankee Hat, Mt Tennant and even Mt Kelly, in and out of the many valleys, not to mention the swamps, in the southern part of the ACT until we were thoroughly familiar with them. (What a host of walking trips this area subsequently provided, and still does I am sure.) The original submission of 1963 was revised and the area proposed extended a few years later and has been followed up on and off ever since. Hopefully one day its status will be formalized and we will see Gudgenby gazetted with National Park ranking.

We pressed on with other submissions, our first success was the Molongolo Gorge Reserve followed later by Gibraltar Falls. Our first Association trip to the latter was made before there was any road! We supported other groups in the establishment of Tidbinbilla Fauna Reserve

and, when established, Nancy was appointed to its advisory committee. We also objected to the locating of the original television towers on Black Mountain - it was one of the areas we were seeking to have reserved. Had we been successful then, the present tower would probably not stand on the same spot. Alas in those days the public conscience on conservation issues had not yet stirred. Eventually, Black Mountain was given the status of a reserve. By this time, largely due to Nancy's phenomenal capacity to win the co-operation of people who didn't necessarily agree with her or the Association's point of view, we had established good working relations with the then Department of Capital Territories. We met at intervals with representatives of the Department to discuss existing reserves, outstanding proposals, the proposed National Park, and conservation issues of mutual concern and there were many lively and interesting sessions.

I also recalled early Association outings when they attracted so many attenders that the programme had to be expanded and new walks leaders found to cope. I remembered fronting up to my first Parliamentary Committee which was on wildlife conservation, on that occasion I was backstop to Nancy. The second occasion was the Parliamentary Committee hearing on the proposed Black Mountain tower. This time I was spokesman with Chris Watson as backstop and Bill Adams giving us great support.

Once started, the memories came thick and fast and I apologise now for lack of any seemly balance or order in my reminiscences and can only hope they added something extra to the contents of the "Bulletin Extra".

The meeting proceeded with a break for Fiona Brand to cut the delicious birthday cake (thanks to Nan Dunn and Betty Gill) and a toast to the Association. The new Secretary Judy Payne - a former Queensland NPA member also - was ceremoniously installed in office and we all wish her well with her new responsibilities. Sheila was stepping down to join the quieter ranks of the Committee members, leaving a job I had persuaded her to take on 11 years ago soon after she came to Canberra. What a wonderful job she did, thank you Sheila. A series of slides of early outings, guaranteed to evoke nostalgia, followed by supper concluded the meeting.

Canberra's bitter winter weather returned the following day and I returned thankfully to Sydney's warmer climate. However, I must always envy members their ability to participate so easily in Association activities and outings, distances tend to defeat you in Sydney. A toast to the future and happy walking.

Julie Henry.

Rural Issues and the NPWS (NSW)

The National Parks and Wildlife Service of NSW has published a brochure settling out its objectives and their relationship to the environment and affected public. The full text of the brochure is too large to include in this bulletin and to enable members to understand the issues more fully this condensed version is appended.

The NPWS was established in 1967 to coordinate nature conservation in NSW by preserving a full representation of natural habitats to ensure the continued survival of all our native plant and animal species.

European settlement brought the decline of our native plants and animals from the activities of the settlers, livestock and exotic pests. Twenty species of native animals are extinct, 48 species of mammals, birds and reptiles are in danger of extinction, nine species of native plants are extinct and a further 307 at risk.

Most species of native fauna and flora are protected and national parks, nature reserves and wildlife refuges help in their conservation. The NPWS operates a wide range of research, education and extension programmes to increase knowledge, public awareness and appreciation to further ensure protection of the environment.

Local advisory committees provide a link with the NPWS in achieving its nature conservation objectives. Committee members are usually local people with park management skills, user groups, local authorities and adjoining landholders. Draft management plans are exhibited for public comment and review committees of local citizens, local and specialist Service staff are available for discussion, clarification of issues and reception of suggestions. The NPWS attempts to involve the public as early as possible in the management planning process by presenting a series of management alternatives.

There is little land remaining in its natural state and nature conservation demands that it is largely undisturbed. Developed land is acquired only if management considerations make it essential. Most land acquired is vacant Crown land and only .36% land reserved in 1978-1979 was freehold and 15.37% leased. It is not true that it is NPWS policy to acquire a fixed percentage of land in NSW for national parks and nature reserves. Land is only acquired if it satisfies one

or more of these objectives - the conservation of viable populations of certain species of native flora and fauna - preservation of examples of remaining natural ecosystems - protection of areas of special scientific or scenic interest - public association with natural environments for education, recreational and aesthetic experiences.

Four thousand hectares is considered the minimum area to sustain viable populations of native plants and animals and for some species the area required may be as high as 20,000 ha. Smaller areas can only ensure conservation of species if they are surrounded by larger areas. Wildlife refuges achieve nature conservation objectives without acquiring land. Areas having a high perimeter to area ratio are most effective and attempts are made to minimize intrusion of large inholdings, dissection by major roads and service corridors. Several areas are needed to prevent extinction.

Weeds and feral animals are a serious problem in both Service areas and private lands and are difficult to overcome. \$350,709 was spent on weed and animal pest control and \$107,621 on boundary fencing in 1978-1979. The Service cooperates in pest control research with the Department of Agriculture and the CSIRO. Kinchega and Kosciusko National Parks and Yathong Nature Reserve have been sites for major rabbit research and control. Programmes to control feral pigs and goats are being undertaken in association with landholders and Pasture Protection Boards in the Barrington Tops, Kinchega, Warrumbungle, Mt Kaputa and Kosciusko National Parks and Nocolche Nature Reserve. The Department of Agriculture undertakes research in feral pig control in Willandra National Park and the Service itself is conducting the largest research programme on feral goat biology and control that has been attempted in NSW.

Dingoes, although declared noxious animals, are protected native fauna in national parks and reserves and the Service recognises its responsibility to adjoining landholders. Control programmes are aimed primarily at wild dogs in the periphery of national parks and nature reserves as these are most likely to molest stock. Compound 1080 is effective but is being evaluated for its effect on non-target fauna.

Eradication of noxious plants has high priority and programmes have been successful, examples are the control of blackberries in Kosciusko National Park and broom in Barrington Tops National Park. A water weed control programme is to be undertaken in Hat Head National Park. The Service conducts field days to create awareness and to seek the cooperation of adjoining landholders in the eradication of pest animals and weeds.

Native animals and birds can cause

economic hardship to landholders and provision is made for landholders to secure a licence to cull a specified number of animals and birds. Commercial harvesting of kangaroos is only permitted in areas west of the Great Dividing Range. The eastern portion of the State is classed as non-commercial because of difficulties in assessing populations of kangaroos and maintaining adequate checks on harvesting.

Although the NPWS is not required legally to contribute to fencing, it does recognise it has sometimes a management and moral responsibility and then contributes to the cost of the materials.

The majority of bushfires are started by people and occur mostly in or near areas of population, along roads or railway lines. The NPWS is recognised as a Fire Authority and is responsible for bushfire prevention and control in its areas and cooperates with local authorities in pre-planning its fire prevention and suppression programmes. Prescribed burning programmes to prevent full accumulation to dangerous levels as well as the construction of fire breaks and trails is undertaken. The effect of fire on natural communities is constantly monitored and research on plant response after fire is being undertaken in conjunction with the CSIRO. A computer model is being developed to plan fire management programmes in sub-alpine environments.

Grazing by domestic stock can have a significant effect on the composition of plant communities and the extent of vegetation cover. Certain plants in Kosciusko National Park have been removed by grazing and the reduction of cover leads to serious soil erosion. Grazing introduces weeds which are difficult to control and if established, can spread into neighbouring agricultural lands. Few Service areas are suitable for relief grazing during extended droughts and in these periods native animals are faced with the same shortages. If stock are re-introduced in a National Park years of re-establishment of natural vegetation can be destroyed in a few months. Permanent seasonal grazing benefits only a few graziers who by this method increase their stock above the carrying capacity of their own properties. During the 1979-1980 drought the Service offered farmers access to water and fodder cut in National Parks but few graziers took advantage of the offer.

The NPWS invites any member of the public who wishes to obtain information on parks and their management or comment on park management practices to contact their local District or Regional Service Office.

Adapted by Reg Alder.

Sentry Box - Backpack with a difference

The Association's back-pack to Sentry Box of 7-8 November 1981 was out of character in two respects - it was the only time within our recollection that an Association camp had taken place on top of a mountain, and we had a special purpose of an exploratory kind.

It started in May 1981 when Dr Josephine Flood addressed a meeting of the Association on the subject of Aboriginal sites in the South-Eastern Highlands (reported in September 1981 NPA Bulletin). Dr Flood, who is a pre-historian with bush-walking experience, had researched the culture of pre-European man in the mountainous region between Canberra and the Victorian Alps, culminating in her publication 'The Moth Hunters - Aboriginal Prehistory of the Australian Alps' (Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, 1980). It became obvious that she and the Association had some interests in common.

The Aims and Objects of the Association would encompass the support of policies for the protection and preservation of Aboriginal sites. As a body we are often consulted by government authorities, and invited to put forward submissions relating to aspects of national parks. Here was a chance to get some education on the local Aboriginal heritage and at the same time perhaps help an expert in some field work. The matter was taken up with Dr Flood.

Sentry Box was of immediate interest because she had sighted, on the information of a ranger from the NSW NP&WS, what appeared to be an Aboriginal stone arrangement; but time and difficulty of access had not enabled proper investigation and measurement. The site was near the saddle between two rocky ranges of the Sentry Box complex. Also there was the question of exploring the area generally.

The Outings Committee of the Association endorsed the project, even to the extent of deciding to carry water up the mountain if necessary. The decision to back-pack and camp was taken as there would be insufficient time to accomplish the intended tasks on a day-walk. The Committee found it easy to make the decision, being a body with a sprinkling of prehistory students.

On 31 October, with the assistance of Charles Hill of the Association and Dick Healy a work colleague, the Sentry Box area was reconnoitred, with the pleasing results of finding a camp site, and a running water supply about 100 metres or so away. If you look at the ACT NAT MAP Scale 1:100,000, the camp

site is at about the 'S' in Sentry Box, and the water supply is about the beginning of the creek running roughly north-east. During October there had been plenty of rain, resulting in water soaks over large areas of smooth rock surfaces. Even so, our running water supply was underground; it suddenly appearing where we discovered it, and disappearing a few metres away.

On the back-pack Saturday our party of 14, including Dr Flood and her son Michael met at the end of the 6 km track from the Boboyan Road at 8 am. This track finishes at a wire fence which marks the boundary of private property, through which the track passes. The proprietor kindly gave permission to traverse his property and for some of the party to camp near the boundary fence over Friday night.

The distance from the cars to the camp site on Sentry Box is 6-7 kms which took about 3½ hours, involving a climb in the vicinity of 550 metres.

As we set out, the top of the mountain was hidden in cloud, and the day was cool and fine. We proceeded via the foot-bridge over Sheep Station Creek, and a course of approximately NW magnetic until we encountered a wire fence across our route. We then followed this fence on its right hand side until a T-junction was reached - after a distance of about 1½ kms. Timber had been cleared away from the fence, enabling a steady easy up-hill climb.

At the T-junction a compass bearing of 290° magnetic was taken which led us another 1½ kms or so through timbered terrain but virtually no undergrowth. This bearing took us slightly to the left of the highest part of the ridge, avoiding most of the rocky outcrops along the ridge line.

The collective experience of the party included a number of different ways of going up Sentry Box, and it was the party's view that this way is the easiest.

The next key land-mark was coming out onto a saddle (refer 'X' in 'Sentry Box' on the ACT map 1:100,000). It is important not to have a bias to the right when walking along this saddle because the scrub soon gets denser on that side. A final short but sharp climb from this saddle gets you to the top of Sentry Box Hill.

Upon reaching the top the cloud had lifted, leaving panoramic views in fine cool weather. We moved across the top of the range to the camp site a little below the saddle between the two ranges. We had sufficient time to rest, pitch our tents, and lunch before moving up to a large smooth area on the western side of

Sentry Box Hill. Here we came upon the Aboriginal stone arrangement.

At least it is a fair conclusion that it is such an arrangement; it being of a regularity which makes it extremely improbable that it is the result of nature. The arrangement consists of an approximate 'V' with one arm about 60m long and other arm about half that distance. Each arm consisted of portable stones in a rough line; not geometrically straight but distinct and regular enough to indicate the influence of man, and old enough to doubt it being the handiwork of Europeans. Moreover the characteristics were similar to known Aboriginal stone arrangements elsewhere in these Highlands.

Next followed some solid work. Under the direction of Dr Flood the extremities and directions of the lines of stones were located by compass and map bearings. A measuring tape was strung along as a straight line through each row of stones, and each stone was plotted according to scale on graph paper by measuring distances along and from the tape. Dr Flood then took a series of overlapping photographs, aerial survey fashion. Thus the whole arrangement was recorded for posterity.

It is believed that these types of stone arrangements, having regard to their locations on or near mountain tops in difficult country, were used by the Aborigines for secret ceremonies including initiation.

After the field-work the party moved further up the hill and with explanations from Dr Flood caught and cooked Bogong moths. Her publication 'The Moth Hunters' researches and explains the seasonal migrations of the Aborigines into the mountainous areas for harvesting and feeding on these moths which are highly nutritious.

We looked up rock crevices and scooped up handfuls of the moths which, after quick roasting on pre-heated rock surfaces, tasted acceptable to all. The importance of the hapless moth in the food chain was well understood as we watched swirling clouds of ravens or crows (I am not sure which; there is a difference which varies throughout Australia) in their search for moths.

On the Saturday evening, as we cooked around the camp fire and looked up to the bright bronze tipped mountain top to the east from the rays of the setting sun, we reflected on an unusual and educative day. Our physical environment must be virtually the same as that for pre-European man.

The Sunday morning was cool, clear and fine with a cloud effect in reverse to that of the previous morning. This

time the valleys were filled with mist with the mountain tops clear, like islands in a sea.

Throughout the morning we spread out and closely explored the range out to its most northern extremity - the Sentry Box itself. There were many interesting features but the climax was the discovery in a rock shelter of what is almost certain to be an Aboriginal artefact*. It was of a stone that seemed to be completely foreign to the geology of the surrounding country for some kilometres. It was obvious from its shape and percussion marks that it had been formed by striking in the way of Paleolithic man. The party searched briefly through the surface of the cave floor, on hands and knees, at about a metre width per person, but with no further findings. Nevertheless the site warrants further investigation.

As we moved back to the camp site we paused at intervals to marvel at the scenery. Level with us were circling birds of prey surveying the slopes and chasms below, and again those swirling and wheeling clouds of ravens or crows in search of Bogong moths.

On the return journey out of Sentry Box, just after we passed the rocky outcrop at the end of the saddle (near the 'X' in 'Box' on the ACT map), we disturbed some lyre birds. As was found during the reconnaissance the previous weekend, these birds seem to have a habit of perching on the tops of rocks or low tree limbs, perfectly camouflaged, and suddenly taking off flying low as one approaches. Anyway, you can take it that lyre birds do fly at least some distance.

After about three hours in all of down-hill walking we returned to the cars where we were greeted by the hospitality of Ian Currie and his day-walk party.

I believe that there is scope for the Association to undertake more works of an exploratory and investigative kind in conjunction with experts in disciplines relating to the out-doors. The Sentry Box back-pack was fortunate in having as its guest the widely acknowledged expert in our region's prehistory, Dr Josephine Flood.

* Artefacts found in the ACT should be lodged in the Institute of Anatomy Museum and those found in NSW in the Australian Museum, Sydney.

L.R. Pyke

New National Parks and Reserves in NSW

Members who have purchased Gregory's "National Parks of New South Wales" may

wish to update their copies with information on parks and reserves which have been gazetted since the guide was published.

BUNDJALUNG NATIONAL PARK of 12,800 ha and 50km north-east of Grafton on the coast between Evans Head and Iluka features long white beaches, coastal lagoons, intertidal areas and a fossil reef on the Evans River. There are large tracts of north coast sand complex communities consisting of eucalypt forests, 'wallum', *Banksia serratifolia*, heath, extensive marshes, paperbark swamps and littoral rainforests. The Esk River is ideal for canoeing and boating.

YURAYGIR NATIONAL PARK incorporates Angourie and Red Rock National Parks is of 7,300 ha is on the coast east of Grafton and extends from Angourie to Red Rock. There is a wide range of fauna in the park and the variety of landforms results in a broad representation of vegetation communities. Leisure activities include surfing, camping, bushwalking, fishing and wildlife and landscape photography.

YARROWITCH GORGE NATIONAL PARK of 2,618 ha complements the popular Apsley Gorge National Park 15km to the west and features fine waterfalls and gorge scenery which are very photogenic. There are some pockets of warm temperate rainforest in the generally dry woodland. There are two colonies of the uncommon brush-tailed rock wallaby. There is no public vehicular access.

CONIMBLA NATIONAL PARK of 4,157 ha is 18km north-west of Cowra and comprises a large portion of the former Kangaroo State Forest. It lies astride ridges of Devonian sediments supporting open forest, low open forest and heath. There are no visitor facilities or other developments and bushwalkers, campers and those interested in nature conservation studies will find the park attractive.

WATSONS CREEK NATURE RESERVE of 1,260 ha is on the Moonbi Range 20km north-west of Bendemeer. The reserve consists of a mixture of undulating and steep rocky granite terrain on the Moonbi Range. The area has been preserved to improve the sampling of natural vegetation on undulating to hilly country on the western side of the northern tablelands.

DAVIS SCRUB NATURE RESERVE of 13.86 ha, 14km west of Ballina is a small remnant of tropical rainforest on a volcanic ridge which is part of the Mt Warning central volcanic complex and has been gazetted to preserve an area of this type which is rare in New South Wales.

UKEREBAGH NATURE RESERVE of 180 ha is located on Ukerebagh Island in the Tweed River and portion of the adjoining mainland and has been gazetted to preserve the natural features of wetland habitats for waterfowl and waders as well as the mangrove and littoral rainforest habitats.

A Short Walk in the Andes

The Inca civilization has interested me for about 30 years, but it was only one year ago that I decided to have a closer look at some of its remains. I thought it advisable to join an organized group on a trek through specific areas of the Peruvian and Bolivian Andes. Having made this decision my wife and I had to seek answers to two questions: (a) Which is the most reliable trekking company? (b) Do they run trips into the areas in which we were interested?

I will spend most time on how we answered them and criticism of the organization of the particular tour, leaving until last a brief description of the journey itself. There is no lack of books and beautiful photos dealing with the Incas and the Andes but getting to and coming from the Andes poses some problems. As we were going to pay out between \$3,000 - \$4,000 each (\$3,620 was the final amount) it is important to look carefully at the tour outlines, limitations and promises made by the various trekking companies. It is like buying a new car; the dealers only tell you about the good things, you find out about the rest later! With motor cars one can find detailed accounts of their performance and short-comings in numerous magazines, but critical evaluations of treks, cruises and packaged tours are hard to find. The interests of the consumer are not adequately catered for by the tourist industry. Consequently the consumer has to dig around for this critical information.

In our case we made our choice last November after many discussions with people who had been on trekking tours in India and Asia. It was not until we came to Canberra in February that it was possible to talk with people who had actually been walking in South America. It turned out that these discussions gave us a much clearer idea as to how best prepare for the trip than the meagre information that was available from the company. However, no matter how carefully one goes about the choice of a trip and the appropriate preparations, it is not until one is actually with the group that omissions and departures from the descriptions given in the glossy catalogue become apparent.

Our particular company stated that a tour would consist of no more than 15 people in addition to an "experienced group leader". We ended up with 16 people and no leader except for the time we were trekking in South America. Sixteen people were to strain the resources available

during the Peruvian walk. The lack of a group leader caused us to lose precious time on Easter Island as we were there for only three days. Fortunately I had a map of the island and we all had to get together and sort it out for ourselves. There were other problems that caused unnecessary annoyances to the group; problems that arise from poor planning by the tour organizers. One particularly important consideration is to bring along enough money to pay for meals in the major cities. We were told that about \$150 should cover this; during these stays we had about 25 meals to pay for. These could cost between \$5 - \$15 depending on whether one wanted to enjoy the local cuisine or to eat as inexpensively as possible. Some members of the group ran into financial troubles due to this lack of proper advice.

These comments, I hope, will convince anyone who is contemplating going on such a tour for the first time, of the necessity to undertake careful and detailed enquiries about conditions and costs.

Our particular tour lasted for 37 days. Of these three were spent walking to various parts of Easter Island, 10 walking through the rugged mountains of the Vilcabamba region north-west of Cusco in Peru, one day in Machu Picchu and four days walking in the Cordillera Real north of La Paz in Bolivia. The remainder of the time was spent either in aeroplanes, trains, buses, in the back of trucks or wandering around Lima, Santiago, Cusco, La Paz, Puno, Copacabana or Papeete.

The three days at Easter Island were barely enough to see all the statues and other ruins of interest on the island. This was one of the highlights of the trip; one which one could not afford to miss if flying to South America with Lan Chile airlines. We arrived at Cusco (11200') one hour after leaving Lima (0'). Within 24 hours we were out in the mountains at 9900' preparing to walk up to 13000' during the next day! The next 10 days were spent going up and down between 9000' and 15000'. We walked over three passes at 15000' travelling over some well preserved Inca roads and visited several important Inca ruins that tourists never get near. Our walk in Bolivia was of a more gentle nature starting on the Altiplano at 14500' rising up to 16000' over the pass.

The trip was one of contrasts both with respect to the terrain and the people. We enjoyed every minute of it notwithstanding the above criticism. I managed to expose fourteen rolls each of 8mm movie and 36mm still films so I must be enjoyed what I was looking at!

Peter Fielding.

Morton National Park - Draft Plan of Management

The Association committee in its consideration of the draft plan of management for the Morton National Park realised that members of this Association did not have enough detailed knowledge for constructive comment on the northern wilderness area of the Park. An edited version of our submission was included in the September 1981 issue of this Bulletin. The South Coast Conservation Society in their Journal of June 1981 published details of their submission and in most points covers the area omitted in the comment from this Association.

The following comment for members' information is an extract from the South Coast Conservation Society's submission. Most place names and the areas their identify may be found in the Moss Vale and Ulladulla maps of the NATMAP 1:100,000 series. Further detail will be found in the Society's Journal.

The submission was based on the concept of retaining the integrity of the Ettrema and Budawang wilderness areas by preventing all vehicle access into the wilderness cores. Limited access only being considered into surrounding buffer zones. Access by foot was considered not to pose any immediate problems except perhaps in Monolith Valley. Trail bikes or similar two-wheeled vehicles should be totally prohibited within the park and horses prohibited within the wilderness cores.

Ettrema Wilderness

In Ettrema no single bushwalker track exists and this condition should remain. It is an interesting contrast to the intensely mapped and tracked Budawang wilderness.

Shoalhaven R. Trail

This trail crosses the plateau at the northern end of the Ettrema wilderness and should be maintained as a walking and service road only. As a fire road it would make an effective circuit of fire control roads surrounding the wilderness core, i.e., Shoalhaven R. trail, Yalway Creek fire road, Yarramunmun Tops trail, Braidwood road, Tolwong property access road. Barriers to be placed where the road leaves the Tolwong property and at the foot of the hill behind Timboolina Flat.

Roads Leading out of Tolwong Property

Roads north towards Tumbledown Point

and west and north to Tolwong Mine to be maintained for bushfire control and walker access. All other roads leading off the Tolwong access road with the exception of the Touga road to be closed to vehicles. Suitable forewarning of closures to be at the Braidwood road and Touga turn-off.

The Ettrema Trail

This trail and off-shoots penetrating into the wilderness core to be closed to all vehicles and allowed to regenerate. The trail is at present locked at the Braidwood road at the entrance to 'Ennis Clare', if this locked access cannot be maintained it should then be locked on leaving the property. It is essential that the road remains closed as its use as a realistic fire control road is doubtful.

Ettrema Creek

Four-wheel drive clubs and motor bikes consistently use the watercourse track along the creek between Cooe Flat and Yalwal Creek. This permits a gross intrusion into the wilderness core and prevention of access should have a high priority.

The Yalwal Track

There should be no ability to drive along the banks of Yalwal Creek between Dajera Creek dam and Ettrema Creek junction. Access from the Yalwal State Forest is uncontrollable. Consideration could be given to retaining the Yalwal Creek road as a fire road only. Trail bike riders come into McKenzie Station from the Burrier fire trail via McKenzie Saddle and as the station is part of Morton national Park they should be prohibited.

Yarramunmun Tops

This trail could remain open until the Yarramunmun and Boolijong Creek catchments are added to the Park.

Budawang Wilderness

When the Tianjara Army Range is added to the Park all the roads leading in from the Braidwood road (except Twelve Mile Road) and from Sassafras properties should be closed and remain as fire roads. Access roads from Twelve Mile Road should be similarly closed.

Sassafras Access to Budawang

Road to be closed 4km south of the Braidwood road, the remainder remaining as a fire road. Suitable parking and primitive camping area to be established at the road head. From Nerriga it is important that road access is controlled beyond the vicinity of Round Mountain, its use as a fire road is doubtful.

Wog Wog

Access across the property is

unsatisfactory for walkers and priority should be given for a 'no conflict' walking access to the north across leasehold land.

Yadboro

Vehicle access should be prohibited beyond Yadboro. Fire roads below The Castle and Mt Owen should be closed and revegetated. The Longfella Ridge, Pigeon House fire trail and Pigeon House north fire trail to be kept strictly as fire trails.

Little Forest Fire Roads

To be closed beyond the picnic area and allowed to revegetate if these become part of the Park. The Tianjara trail should be a fire control road only beyond the landing ground.

Purnoo Lookout

To be developed as a lookout and picnic area with no access beyond except for fire control.

Meryla Pass

The escarpment road running south along the top of the pass to be closed and revegetated.

Fitzroy Falls

Access to the Falls across the highway is becoming increasingly dangerous and the highway should be re-routed along the base of the dam wall on the northern boundary of the Park.

Reg Alder.

Myall Lakes Cruise

What a thrill it is to return to a favourite place after 10 years and find it as good as you remember it. That was my luck on a recent sailing cruise to the Myall Lakes National Park. Of all the ways to see this park, under sail must surely be the best. The lakes themselves cover more than 10,000 ha and in addition there is great cruising on the 20km long Port Stephens. A week is barely long enough to cover the area, let alone poke into the many bays and anchorages which abound. Travelling by boat gives access to the literally hundreds of kilometres of natural foreshores within the park.

We picked up the boat, a six-berth, 28 footer, from Soldiers Point on the south shore of Port Stephens. (We being yours truly, John Webster and two associates.) As the tide was wrong for going up the river we spent the first day

exploring the western end of the port. With the approach of evening we made our way cautiously into an anchorage off Corrie Island at the river's mouth. We reckoned we were far enough in when the lookout reported a pelican ahead - standing up.

I can think of few better ways of waking up than to open your eyes and see through the open hatch the glow of sunrise over Yacaaba, the spectacular old volcano that forms the north head of Port Stephens. There was just time to catch a couple of fish before breakfast and then off up the river with the flood tide. At Winda Woopa we had the company of a pair of dolphins playing around the boat. A brief stop at Tea Gardens for bread ("Sorry, bread's not in yet") and then off again, threading the narrow twisting channel and marvelling at the vegetation, the wildflowers, the birds. At one point, two whistling kites, two white breasted sea eagles, a wedge tail and three pelicans were all using the same thermal to gain height. We passed Monkey Jacket, Kangaroo Island and Grasswater and just short of the quaint fishing settlement of Tamboy decided to stop for a swim and lunch. No sooner said than done. Simply a matter of throwing a rope over the branch of a melaleuca and dropping off the back of the boat. This far up the river the water was fresh and sharks were no longer a concern. Lunch was in the shade of the trees on the bank, with a golden whistler singing overhead.

Emerging from the river we hoisted the sails and allowed the following breeze to carry us across the Boardwater to Legge's Camp. Here we made a brief stop for petrol and bread ("Sorry, bread's all gone"). On across the Two Mile, into Boolambayte Lake, past Wallaby Joe's, Sheep Island and Goat Island and then a battle with the fluky breezes of the Violet Hill Passage to emerge at last into the main objective, Myall Lake itself. We had planned to anchor at Tickerabit but as we approached saw another yacht ahead of us obviously making for the same spot. (The only yacht besides ourselves that we were to see on the lakes.) Deciding the anchorage would be too crowded we altered course for an unnamed bay at the SW corner of the lake. This bay must have the softest bottom in the world. When we dropped the anchor in one metre of clear water it disappeared from sight completely in the ooze and the particles stirred up remained suspended for hours.

Morning found us working to windward in a light to moderate nor-easter, 12km to the picturesque village of Bungwahl at the far northern end of the lake. From the village we could see across the high dunes to the east the swathe left by the sand miners. The mining operation is approaching its end and the implications for employment are of local concern. We watched the operation of the sawmill and from the quality of the timber being

milled (less than 50% of each log usable) concluded that its future must also be shaky.

After a swim and lunch we set off back down the lake. The nor-easter had now freshened to pretty near 30 knots and it was a case of bracing your feet against the side of the cockpit and using two hands on the tiller. Under reefed main and small jib we had an exhilarating ride the length of the lake, eventually opting for shelter under the lee of Long Point. That evening we spent snugly at anchor while the wind continued to roar in the treetops overhead. We were out of sight of any man-made light, there was no moon and Venus was bright enough to cast a shadow.

Going ashore in the dinghy in the morning the bush was absolutely full of birds: honeyeaters, tree-creepers, kingfishers, finches, whistlers, wrens, thornbills, robins. The thornbills were nesting and a group of very busy scrub-wrens was feeding a young cuckoo at least ten times their size. After breakfast we sailed via Bird Island (covered in pelicans, cormorants and terns) to Bidy Harbour. Here we went ashore to search for a limestone cave. We came across a cairn built in 1971 by a Sydney youth group and eventually found the cave, but declined to enter (a hands and knees job). In this area the vegetation falls into distinct bands. By the waters edge, melaleucas with their feet in the soggy ground covered with exquisite native violets. And what melaleucas! Sixty feet tall where they are crowded together and, where they have room to spread, trunks four feet in diameter. Outside these comes a thick bank of casuarinas with no understory and the ground covered in a mat of needles. Beyond these on rising ground is the eucalypt forest. Through it all are reminders that the whole area was once covered in rain forest cabbage tree palms, vines and huge masses of staghorns. Large areas away from the water have been cleared for grazing and here we found a herd of cattle and horses in pretty fair condition. At this point we were probably on one of the grazing leases which still exist within the park boundary. From the hilltop we could again see the scars of the sand-mining operation over near the coast (about 4kms away) and the dust clouds from an occasional sand truck. One problem facing the park management was particularly evident in this area. This is the spread of lantana. This menace is thriving and in some places is already too thick to penetrate on foot. It is hard to know what the solution to this is as eradication would require effort on a massive scale. Perhaps there is work here for a few of those local unemployed we heard about.

Back aboard, we explored the western half of the lake, stopping in the far NW corner for a swim. As a gusty southerly.

change was forecast for the evening we left the big lake and rather than trust to our anchor, attached ourselves to a mooring in the sheltered bay below Violet Hill. Three moorings are provided at this central point in the lake system by the Myall Lakes Yacht Club based in Port Stephens. We shared the moorings overnight with the other yacht and two cruisers. However, the change apparently petered out before it reached us and we awoke in the morning to a return to cloudless skies.

An expedition up Violet Hill (140m) rewarded us with extensive views over the whole lake system. This area has been developed as the main point of public access to the lakes. There is a launching ramp, a pleasant picnic area and a camping area with room for 10 caravans. Access is from the Bulahdelah-Forster road.

As our battery had gone flat the previous evening, we motored the 2kms to Johnsons Beach on Boolabayte Lake to give it a bit of a boost. This turned out to be an absolutely delightful spot, as nice a campsite as you would find anywhere. We anchored off the beach on a firm sandy bottom and swam or rowed ashore through sparkling crystal clear water. The small beach of white sand was framed by large spreading melaleucas and backed by an extensive grassy area protected by trees from all weathers. It was a case of swim, siesta, lunch, siesta, walk, swim and just simply let the peace and beauty of the place soak in. As the day passed, it became apparent that no one wanted to be first to suggest we leave this idyllic spot. Eventually however, leave we did and caught a light nor-easter down to the Two Mile where we anchored by the eastern shore. At this point the land adjacent to us was part of a fairly extensive private property which remains completely surrounded by the park. Nevertheless we went ashore and explored the lake's edge. We were in return examined by a group of particularly fearless blue-faced honeyeaters. The tenacity of the old rainforest was evident in a few enormous vines looped and contorted about the melaleucas.

In the evening a professional fisherman set his nets nearby and when he raised them in the morning had a haul of at least 50 fish, mainly flathead and mullet. He stopped to chat and gave us eight bream. As we were out of ice at the time we had no option but to eat them straight away. Two bream each made a fairly sizable breakfast. Talking to the old fisherman revealed once again the poor PR that the NPWS has with so many country people. This fellow, who had been 60 years on the lakes, approved of the park and was generally sympathetic to conservation issues but was in many ways antagonistic to the parks service. With our limited knowledge and hearing only one side of the argument we were not in a position to judge the rights and wrongs of the issues he complained of although we

suspected that, at least in some of them, the parks service was justified in what they were doing. It is very important however that the service improve its image with local people. For example, where they undertake such controversial actions as poisoning goannas (as he claimed they are doing) they should at the very least take the trouble to explain their actions in the local paper. In my view an even better plan would be to retain a few people like our old fisherman as part-time advisers and, incidentally, to spread understanding within the community. All knowledge does not reside in the heads of the Bachelors of Environmental Science in the NPWS. The service is very often seen as an alien group which, while it might have the right objectives, goes about its tasks in a wrong-headed city fashion.

As the breeze was light that morning we motored the 2kms to Legges Camp where we at least replenished our bread supply (and ice). A pleasant sail across the Broadwater and we reached Mungo Brush, a popular camping site. This is just within the southern boundary of the park and accessible by road from Tea Gardens. At this point the dunes which separate the lakes from the ocean are only about half a kilometre wide. Beside the camping area is a low hill which holds the best piece of rain forest remnant in the area. After a swim and lunch we headed back to Tambooy at the lake outlet under jib only (a lack of haste indicative of our reluctance to leave this magnificent system of lakes).

Motoring down the river we arrived back at Tea Gardens at low tide and were enthralled by the numbers of birds on the tidal flats. In fact, I had the tiller taken from me as it was felt I was getting so excited we were in grave danger of running up a mud bank. As well as the ubiquitous pelicans and cormorants there were flocks of spoonbills, curlews and those aggravating little brown waders that could be snipe or sandpipers or godwits. After leaving the river, a gentle run up Port Stephens in a dying nor-easter found us in Fame Cove. As it was now Friday evening, boating activity had markedly increased and we anchored in company with four other yachts and two cruisers.

On our last day we explored North Arm and as the breeze freshened, followed the southern shore of the port down to Nelson Bay and out to the blue line on the map that marked the limit of hire boat operations. At this point were were opposite the heads and lifting gently to the remains of the ocean swell. We returned for lunch to our first night's anchorage off Corrie Island and then had one last walk ashore. We were still fascinated by the dynamics of the environment. In one place dead mangroves which had become exposed to the ocean swell, probably after the collapse of a protecting sandbank; in another, young mangroves attempting to colonise a shallow backwater to retrieve their loss.

The cruise ended with a reach back to Soldiers Point in a brisk southerly under a lowering sky. A hundred yards from the wharf we dropped the sails for the last time and started the motor, and as we did so the rain began to fall.

At the end of a cruise like this, one cannot help feeling a deep sense of gratitude to all those people who worked so hard through the 1960s to ensure that this magnificent park preserves for all time the biggest and best of our coastal lake systems.

Ross Carlton.

Walking Tracks in NSW

Many people are familiar with the extensive foot and bridle paths which exist in other countries, notably in Britain. Here in Australia, provision is made for walking in some national parks and certain reserved lands but little has been done to provide tracks in other places. To correct this deficiency the NSW Department of Lands has been implementing a programme to provide walking tracks through lands under its control and with the assistance of other authorities. Two categories of tracks are being developed, one to provide scope for a range of one-day walks which are readily accessible to centres of population and the other of regional significance providing scenic appeal and associated interest to allow a number of days walk and an opportunity for overnight camping.

Tracks completed to date are located at Armidale, near Mt Victoria, Goulburn, Wagga Wagga, Grafton, Berowra to Pennant Hills, Narrandera, Moree, Lismore and Tamworth. Track distances range from 6.0km to 30km with provision for short loops, the shortest loop being 3km. A track of 6kms is planned for Araluen Falls to be completed by the end of 1981.

A set of the completed walking track brochures is held by the Association. Further copies (free) may be obtained by writing to the NSW Department of Lands, GPO Box 39, Sydney, 2001.

It is evident from some brochures that the work on some tracks has been made a community project with co-operation of private individuals (probably access over their lands), Apex and Lions Clubs, National Park Association local branches etc. in the completion of the tracks and playing an essential role in their future management.

The organisation necessary to bring these tracks to fruition could provide the basis for suggestions that this Association could make for a system of walking tracks in the ACT.

Reg Alder.

The Sturt National Park

My wife and I visited the Sturt National Park in October last year. We had passed through a couple of times before but never stayed. We can recommend a visit if you go there when it is not raining (it seldom does) and the weather is cool. The Park provides a secure introduction to the real outback.

We travelled by Campervan via Forbes, Condobolin, Cobar, Louth and Wanaaring, returning via Wilcannia and Lake Cargelligo. It is our practice, once in the extensive grazing country of the north and west, to night stop in sheltered spots along the road, never in sight of the road, keep quiet and show the minimum of light. This worked particularly well on our last trip because a brilliant rising moon rendered artificial light almost unnecessary.

If you want to keep travel on gravel roads to the minimum, drive to Broken Hill first and then up the Silver City Highway to Tibooburra. There are good caravan grounds in Cobar, Broken Hill and Wilcannia. Tent campers should bear in mind that arid Australia seems coated with a solid carpet of tiresome prickly seeds. A pair of gardening gloves for use when putting up and taking down the tent is a useful item of equipment.

The Sturt National Park consists of 344,000 hectares of former pastoral properties now recovering from long years of over-grazing. The terrain is varied - flood plains and downs and wooded creeks and some abrupt little ranges. The wild life is most interesting. Red Kangaroos and Emus are abundant and a large proportion of the unusual birds and animals that live in arid Australia are to be found there. Particularly charming are the 3 Chats of the area - Crimson, Orange and Gibber. One full dam - the area had received abundant rains a little time before - had many ducks including Pink-eared and a Freckled Duck and four ducklings. At the Mount Wood camping ground, which adjoins a small dam, we displaced a pair of Brolgas.

The Park Headquarters are in Tibooburra though the Ranger is not always there. He has an enormous area to cover and lives at Mount Wood where there is also a small pastoral museum. There are established camping grounds at Mount Wood, Olive Downs and Fort Grey as well as Tibooburra and a fair network of reasonable roads. The camping ground at The Gorge is only partly completed. The Park authorities will no doubt take a benevolent view of any responsible and

well-equipped party which wants to camp away from the roads. A surprising range of supplies is available in the little town of Tibooburra. September and October are the best months for a visit.

A little way south of Tibooburra, near Milparinka, is the water hole where Sturt and his party spent six terrible months in 1845 while exploring the area. Sturt's second-in-command, Poole, died here from scurvy and a nearby hill is named after him.

The main problem in the Sturt National Park is that of water. Bore water is available in Tibooburra and there are rain water tanks in the camping grounds. You cannot, however, depend on the latter being full. If it does rain you may get stuck because the roads rapidly become impassable. And whatever you do, be sure to check the camping ground toilets for Red-backed Spiders. The National Park supports a thriving population of these little animals. You have been warned.

Alastair Morrison

Fraser Island - The Last Wilderness

To people interested in the natural environment, Fraser Island is renowned for its beauty, for its extraordinarily fragile ecological balance, for its significance as the world's largest sand island and as the site of a very important conservation victory.

On October 5, NPA members were treated to a film of historical merit on Fraser Island. Called "The Last Wilderness", this film was made in 1974 as part of the campaign to stop sand mining on the island. It was produced by conservationist Vincent Serventy.

In straight cinema terms, the photography was brilliant and the study of the different facets of nature fascinating. It brought out the interaction of the species and the development of the perched lakes, the rainforests, swamps, cliffs and coloured sands.

The theme of the ecological balance was accompanied by another, less pleasant, message. The film dealt firmly, factually and directly with the destruction of the island by the sand miners.

Given the arrogant acts of sheer vandalism being committed by mining companies on Fraser Island at the time the film was being produced, the restraint of the film's makers was admirable. Yet the message was not lost then, or now.

The film showed what could be achieved by an organisation such as the Fraser Island Defence Organisation (FIDO) when the public is made aware of the real value of an area and when the arguments are cogently expressed and graphically illustrated.

In March 1977, Fraser Island became the first site listed in the Register of the National Estate - the nationwide inventory being compiled by the Australian Heritage Commission of sites worthy of protection for present and future generations. Fraser Island remains the only place out of a total 6,900 sites so far listed that has been included in the Register by Ministerial Direction - the Minister being empowered to direct such action only after an enquiry carried out under the Environment Protection (Impact of Proposals) Act.

The bulldozers were moved off Fraser Island - a major victory chalked up to FIDO and the conservation movement.

Geoff Robin.

Letters to and from Association

To: The Superintendent,
Kosciusko National Park,
14 December 1981

On a recent weekend walk through the Jagungal-Upper Tumut area by members of this Association, we noticed a number of developments which are not in keeping with the management of this area as wilderness. Could you please provide answers to the following questions as a guide to your policy for this management area:

1. The vehicle barrier at the trailhead at Round Mountain on the Cabramurra Road has been removed. Why is this so? Vehicles now have unrestricted access to the Farm Ridge and Toolong trails from this point. Is this a deliberate intention by Park Management; if so, how does such action follow from the management of the Jagungal area as wilderness?

2. Three bridges on the Toolong track have recently been upgraded with concrete slabs in place of the old wooden structures; why was this done? Does this action imply that the Toolong trail will be maintained as a permanent vehicle access? Surely the correct policy for former roads and trails in the wilderness areas is to allow reversion to the natural condition as soon as possible. Besides destroying wilderness values, trails are sources of introduction of alien species and are continually subject

to erosion.

3. A large number of snow markers have been placed along the Toolong trail from Round Mountain. Most of these were a type of orange plastic tube, but at the bridges substantial wooden markers have been installed. Again this policy is not in keeping with stated wilderness management policies. Many of the plastic type markers have already collapsed and have been crushed and broken by vehicles, littering a considerable area along the trail; in addition, the bridge markers cause considerable visual pollution. When will these markers be removed? We find the installation of these markers aesthetically objectionable and must protest; we ask that no trail marking of any kind be undertaken in wilderness areas.

4. The use of the weather recording station on the northern slopes of Mt Jagungal needs to be reconsidered in the light of wilderness management policies for the Jagungal area. Continued vehicular access to this station is causing serious erosion problems, particularly on the trail under Jagungal and on other steeply sloping areas. Recent incursions of vehicles (presumably to service the station) have caused considerable damage to flora by leaving the existing track where trees have fallen; this type of damage must be prevented. In addition, the station is a source of visual pollution and not in keeping with the natural qualities of the area. Can this station be relocated outside this sensitive area? Until this occurs, can further vehicular access to the station be prevented to at least control further ecological damage?

I apologise for the lengthy and detailed nature of these questions. However, our Association regards these questions as most urgent and serious. I hope you can give them your immediate attention.

To: The Hon. Michael Hodgman, M.P.,
Minister for the Capital Territory,
4 November 1981

The National Parks Association of the ACT is becoming increasingly concerned with the lack of action by your Department to terminate grazing leases held by Mr Gordon Gregory in the Orroral Valley so that these areas may become part of the Gudgenby Nature Reserve.

Our Association was informed earlier this year by departmental officers that these leases were to be terminated in April; later advice indicated that temporary extensions had been granted. These extensions have now expired and yet our inspections reveal that there are still several hundred head of stock on these leases. We can get no assurance that this stock will be removed by the lessee in the immediate future.

The Orroral Valley forms an important part of the Gudgenby Nature Reserve, not only in its own right as an upland river valley but as a buffer zone for the wilderness areas to the west. Once the grazing leases are terminated the Valley can begin to realise its potential as a recreational resource where visitors can enjoy within easy walking range both typical open river flats and fine examples of our montane forest.

Firm commitments were made as long ago as 1972 that grazing leases in the Tennant, Naas, and Orroral areas would become part of the future Gudgenby Nature Reserve. It is vital to the integrity of the Reserve that these commitments be honoured so that the Reserve may fulfil its promise as a natural resource of great variety and beauty.

The changes brought about by grazing on the Australian environment are well documented. Vast changes have been made to both flora and wildlife habitats. Some have been largely destroyed. All have been significantly altered. All evidence shows that grazing is not compatible with areas managed for their natural resources; these disparate forms of land use should be kept separate.

For all the foregoing reasons our Association believes that commitments already given on termination of grazing leases in the Gudgenby area should be adhered to. In particular the Orroral Valley leases now due for termination should become part of the Reserve without further delay and all stock on these leases should be cleared immediately.

Can you give our Association an assurance that no further delays will occur in implementing these planned additions to the Reserve?

To: The Hon. E. Bedford, B.A., M.P.,
Minister for Planning and Environment
(NSW),
14 December 1981

Recent changes to the boundaries of the Morton National Park now mean that the activities of the Defence Department have a greater impact directly on the Park than before. It would appear to be most important that the Defence Department liaise closely with the NPWS regarding this impact; the aim must be to minimise environmental damage in what is a sensitive natural area.

This Association is concerned that such co-operation does not appear to be happening. Continued despoliation is occurring, particularly in the Clyde Gorge, as a result of Army activities, and unexploded ordnance could pose a threat to the safety of park visitors. The use of this area by the Army is not in keeping with its preservation as an

outstanding natural area and, in the long term, must lead to severe degradation of its natural values.

Can you advise this Association of any liaison between the Defence Department and the NPWS as this affects the management of Morton National Park?

Are there long term proposals to incorporate the remaining areas now used by the Defence Department into the park, particularly those areas around Mt Tianjara, Clyde Gorge, and Newhaven Gap?

If there are proposals along these lines, when do you think the matter might be resolved?

To: The Hon. D.S. Thomson, M.C., M.P.,
Minister for Science and Technology,
4 November 1981

The National Parks Association of the ACT wishes to express its concern with statements attributed to one of your departmental officers concerning the future role of the Honeysuckle Creek tracking station which were reported in the Canberra Times of 31 October 1981 (copy enclosed).

As you may be aware the station is within areas proposed for extensions to the Gudgenby Nature Reserve and therefore its future role is of prime importance to our Association which maintains a close and active interest in the management of the Reserve.

The Gudgenby Nature Reserve is an area of great natural variety and beauty and is an important asset for the ACT. We feel that it is essential that all developments within the Reserve be managed so that the natural resources of the area are safeguarded and their potential benefits maximised.

To enable this to happen the future use of the Honeysuckle Creek tracking station facilities must be integrated with the overall management of the Reserve. We would see no role for the buildings and facilities other than as, say, a field or nature study headquarters or similar purpose devoted to the utilisation of the natural resources of the Reserve.

Can you give an assurance that no decision on the future use of the Honeysuckle Creek facilities will be made without considering its effect on the management of the Gudgenby Nature Reserve? Further, can you indicate when such a decision might be made?

In the event of some use of the facilities not connected with the Reserve being considered, will you undertake to have an environmental impact statement prepared by the proposed users so that public comment and discussion on such a

decision may be facilitated?

To: The Secretary,
Department of the Capital Territory,
14 December 1981

Thank you for your letter of 17 November 1981 signed by the First Assistant Secretary, Lands, and giving information on a proposal by W & C Promotions to establish a ski resort. Presumably the site being considered for the trial is on the southern slopes of the ridge lying to the south of Billy Billy Creek and north of Corin Road, and ranging in elevation from 1200 to 1400 metres.

Whilst this site causes a lesser degree of concern than that earlier proposed on Mt Gingera, this Association still has objections which, from the sketchy information available to us, are briefly summarised as follows:

1. Extensive tree and vegetation removal together with slope grooming seems inevitable for the site proposed, with consequent erosion and water quality problems.
2. Although the Canberra water supply would not be affected (separated by a narrow watershed), effluent would discharge into Gibraltar Creek, Paddy's, lower Cotter and Murrumbidgee Rivers. Any significant pollution of these streams could not only interfere with their ecology but pose a threat to recreational use of these streams. All these form an important part of the swimming and other outdoor recreations of the Canberra people and visitors.
3. Corin Road is a popular scenic route which could be adversely affected by the non-snow season despoliation caused by alpine ski facilities, working roads, large parking areas, and by traffic density in winter.
4. The site may extend to the boundary of the Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve near Billy Billy Rocks and could cause visual pollution of the scenery from the Reserve.

In addition, the limited quantity of local water available for snow making and the relatively low elevation may well result in an unsuccessful trial. The site could then become a large eyesore with problems of erosion, corroding equipment and dilapidated buildings.

It is the considered view of the Association that:

1. the activities of the trial should be closely monitored to prevent environmental damage;
2. if the trial is considered

successful, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) be required before permanent development proceeds; and

3. the EIS be circulated to all interested authorities and associations for study and comments.

I would appreciate information on the precautions which will be taken to prevent environmental damage during the currency of the proposed trial, and also an assurance that formal EIS procedures will be a requirement before approval is given to any permanent development.

From: Geoffrey, Maureen & David Snelgrove

We are writing to resign our membership from the National Parks Association as we will be leaving Canberra and moving to Mackay, Queensland, in January next year.

We have been members for quite a few years and spent many happy hours on walks and camping excursions when we have enjoyed particularly the company of other members with similar interests.

Unfortunately we will not be able to attend the Christmas Party to say goodbye to the many friends we have made in the Association. If members are ever in Mackay at any time they are welcome to look us up as we are sure we will be the only 'Snelgrove' in the Mackay phonebook!

In presenting the 1980-1981 financial statements to the August 1981 Annual General Meeting, I foreshadowed that it would be necessary to increase membership fees from 1 July 1982. Regrettably, this will be necessary and your Committee seeks your discussion and approval of the following new fee levels:

	Present	Proposed for 1.7.82
Family	10	12
Single	8	10
Corporate	5	5
Student	3	5
Pensioners & Cases of Financial Hardship	4	5
Bulletin Only	3	5

The previous fee increase occurred in 1976 when family rates increased from \$6 to \$10 and single rates from \$4 to \$8. The increases now proposed are considerably lower in percentage terms than those in 1976, and, in view of the rate of inflation over the intervening five years, the Committee believes it has been an achievement to hold fee levels unchanged over that period.

I will place an appropriate motion before members at the April 1982 General Meeting and welcome your discussion.

Lyle Mark

NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION OUTINGS

Please notify the leader by the previous Wednesday of your intention to go on any weekend outing.

The Committee suggests a donation of 3 cents per kilometre (calculated to nearest dollar) be offered to the driver by each passenger accepting transportation. Distances quoted, for one way only, are approximate and for guidance only.

All persons joining an outing of the National Parks Association of the ACT do so as volunteers in all respects and as such accept sole responsibility for any injury howsoever incurred and the National Parks Association of the ACT, its office bearers and appointed leaders are absolved from any liability in respect of any injury or damage suffered whilst engaged on any

March 7 Sunday Tharwa Area: Walk
Leader: Betty Campbell 811711 Ref: ACT 1:100,000
Meet: Tharwa Bridge 10.00 a.m. Very easy walk from Angle Crossing
turnoff. Birds, river life, flowers. 4km total walk.

March 7 Sunday Tidbinbilla Peak: Walk
Leader: Garth Abercrombie 814907 Ref: ACT 1:100,000
Meet: Tidbinbilla Information Centre 9.00 a.m. Medium walk up fire
trail to saddle, climb ridge - open scrub. 10km total walk.

March 13-14-15 Long Weekend Araluen: Car camp
Leader: Ian Currie 958112 Ref: Araluen 1:100,000
Car camp by creek. Gold panning? Walks. Contact leader. 125km drive.

March 13-14-15 Long Weekend Kosciusko: Pack walk
Leader: Frank Clements 317005 Ref: Kosciusko 1:100,000
Medium/hard pack walk in Kosciusko National Park. Contact leader. 200km dr.

March 21 Sunday Tidbinbilla: Walk
Leader: Jenny & Norm Morrison 821734 Ref: ACT 1:100,000
Meet: Eucumbene Drive-Cotter Road 9.30 a.m. Very easy, young family
walk along Cascade Track in Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve. Morning walk,
picnic lunch. 1.5km total walk. 30km drive.

March 21 Sunday Marble Arch: Walk
Leader: Babette Scougal 487008 Michelago 1:100,000
Meet: Monaro Highway-Mugga Lane 8.00 a.m. Long walk on tracks with
some wading and slippery rocks. Bring sandshoes and torch. Marble Arch
and Big Hole 20km walk. 60km drive.

March 20-21 Weekend Brandy Flat: Pack walk
Leader: Hela Lindemann 515917 Ref: ACT 1:100,000
Beginners' pack walk, near nut. 5km walk with pack each way, plus day
walks. 50km drive. Contact leader.

March 28 Sunday Honeysuckle Creek: Walk
Leader: Charles Hill 958924 Ref: ACT 1:100,000
Meet: Mugga Lane-Monaro Highway 8.30 a.m. Walk up Honeysuckle Creek in
open scrub, short 200m climb. 45km drive. 10 km total walk.

April 4 Sunday Vanity's Crossing: Walk
Leader: Betty Campbell 811711 Ref: ACT 1:100,000
Meet: Cotter Kiosk 10.00 a.m. Bird and flower easy walk in the
vicinity of Vanity's Crossing above the Cotter Dam. 6km at most. 25km
drive.

April 4 Sunday Upper Cotter: Walk
Leader: Nick Blandford 723933 (W) Ref: ACT 1:100,000
Meet: Cotter Road-Eucumbene Drive 9.00 a.m. Longer walk from Pierce's
Creek along the fire trails and Pipe Line Road. 10km walk. 25km drive.

April 9-12 Weekend Pretty Plains: Pack Walk
Leader: Fiona Brand 479538 Ref: Kosciusko 1:100,000
Contact leader for details. 250km drive.

April 9-12 Easter Weekend
 Leader: Charles Hill 958924
 Car camp on the Murray beyond Thredbo. Contact leader for details. 250km drive.

April 18 Sunday
 Leader: Garth Abercrombie 814907
 Meet: Monaro Highway-Mugga Lane 7.30 a.m. Long day walk up the Orroral Valley with a 650m climb. 'A challenging walk', 25km. 55km drive.

April 24-26 Anzac Weekend
 Leader: Neville Esau 864176
 Car camp with walks in the beautiful Bungonia Gorge area. Contact leader. 140km drive.

May 2 Sunday
 Leader: Betty Campbell 811711
 Meet: Scrivener Dam, west side 1.00 p.m. Short walk in the Pine Plantation on roads and tracks. Bring afternoon tea. 5km walk.

May 2 Sunday
 Leader: Les Pyke 812982
 Meet: Monaro Highway-Mugga Lane 8.30 a.m. Exploratory walk in Gudgenby Nature Reserve. Contact leader if you can't stand the suspense. 12km. 50km drive.

May 9 Sunday
 Leader: Hela Lindemann 515917
 Meet: Cotter Road-Eucumbene Drive 8.30 a.m. Bendora Hut, Warks Road, Moonlight Hollow, back to Bendora on good tracks. 12km walk. 58km drive.

May 8-9 Weekend
 Leader: Reg Alder 542240
 Walk from Orroral Valley to Rendezvous Creek and Cotter Gap. Contact leader. 20km walk. 55km drive.

May 16 Sunday
 Leader: Frank Clements 317005
 Meet: Monaro Highway-Mugga Lane 8.30 a.m. Open paddocks up the creek then a climb through scrub to the rocky outcrop on Nursery Hill. 12km walk. 55km drive.

May 23 Sunday
 Leader: Ross Carlton 863892
 Meet: Monaro Highway-Mugga Lane 9.00 a.m. walk upstream from Angle Crossing and back on the ridge. Open country. 8km walk. 45km drive.

May 30 Sunday
 Leader: Beverley Hammond 886577
 Meet: Cotter Road-Eucumbene Drive 8.30 a.m. Along fire trails up from Blundell's Flat then a climb in open woodland for views of Canberra. 10km walk. 40km drive.

June 6 Sunday
 Leader: John Webster
 Meet: Cotter Road-Eucumbene Drive 8.30 a.m. Walk on tracks from Corin Dam Road, 'a bit up and down'. 7km walk. 50km drive.

June 6 Sunday
 Leader: Margaret Aston 887563
 Meet: Cotter Road-Eucumbene Drive 1.30 p.m. Ramble through pine forest and open country west of Duffy. Afternoon tea. 4km walk.

June 12-14 Long Weekend
 Leader: Ian Currie 958112
 Car camp at Green Patch, Jervis Bay. Restricted numbers so contact leader. 250km drive.

June 12-14 Long Weekend
 Leader: Garth Abercrombie 814907
 Contact leader for details. 140km drive.

Tom Groggin: Camp
 Ref: Jacob's River
 1:100,000

Mt McKeahnie: Walk
 Ref: ACT 1:100,000

Bungonia: Camp
 Ref: Caoura 1:31680

Green Hills: Walk
 Ref: ACT 1:100,000

Gudgenby: Walk
 Ref: ACT 1:100,000

Bendora Dam: Walk
 Ref: ACT 1:100,000

Orroral Valley: Pack Walk
 Ref: ACT 1:100,000

Rendezvous Creek: Walk
 Ref: ACT 1:100,000

Angle Crossing: Walk
 Ref: ACT 1:100,000

Devil's Peak: Walk
 Ref: ACT 1:100,000

Smoker's Flat: Walk
 Ref: ACT 1:100,000

Duffy Pines: Walk
 Ref: ACT 1:100,000

Green Patch: Camp
 Ref: Jervis Bay

Deua River: Pack Walk
 Ref: Araluen 1:100,000

NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION OF THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY INC.

Inaugurated 1960

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Annual Subscription Rates

1 July - 30 June:	Family members \$10	Student members \$3
	Single members \$ 8	Corporate members \$5

For members joining between:

1 January - 30 June: Half specified rate
1 April - 30 June: Annual Subscription - 15 month's membership benefit.

The Bulletin is issued in September, December, March, June.

AIMS AND OBJECTS OF THE ASSOCIATION

Promotion of national parks and of measures for the protection of fauna and flora, scenery and natural features in the Australian Capital Territory and elsewhere, and the reservation of specific areas.

Interest in the provision of appropriate outdoor recreation areas.

Stimulation of interest in, and appreciation and enjoyment of, such natural phenomena by organised field outings, meetings or any other means.

Cooperation with organisations and persons having similar interests and objectives.

Promotion of and education for nature conservation and the planning of land-use to achieve conservation.

National Parks Association outings summary

March

7 Sunday	Tharwa Area	Walk
7 Sunday	Tidbinbilla Peak	Walk
13-14-15 Canberra Day	Araluen	Car Camp
13-14-15 Canberra Day	Kosciusko	Pack Walk
20-21 Saturday-Sunday	Brandy Flat	Pack Walk
21 Sunday	Tidbinbilla	Easy Walk
21 Sunday	Big Hole & Marble Arch	Walk
28 Sunday	Honeysuckle Creek	Walk

April

4 Sunday	Vanity's Crossing	Easy Walk
4 Sunday	Upper Cotter	Walk
9-12 Easter Weekend	Pretty Plains	Pack Walk
9-12 Easter Weekend	Tom Groggin	Car Camp
18 Sunday	Mt McKeahnie	Walk
24-26 Anzac Weekend	Bungonia	Car Camp

May

2 Sunday	Green Hills	Easy Walk
2 Sunday	Gudgenby	Exploratory
9 Sunday	Bendora	Walk
8-9 Saturday-Sunday	Orroral Valley	Pack Walk
16 Sunday	Rendezvous Creek	Walk
23 Sunday	Angle Crossing	Walk
30 Sunday	Devil's Peak	Walk

June

6 Sunday	Smoker's Flat	Walk
6 Sunday	Duffy Pines	Walk
12-14 Long Weekend	Green Patch	Car Camp
12-14 Long Weekend	Deua River	Pack Walk
20 Sunday	Mt Tennant	Walk
27 Sunday	Palerang	Walk

GENERAL MEETINGS

Held at 8.00 p.m., Room 1, Griffin Centre, Bunda Street, Civic.

MARCH: Thursday 18, 1982. Dr Jim Burgess, Geography Department, Royal Military College, Duntroon. "The Effects of Burning and Logging on Soil Erosion in Forests - Eden Area".

APRIL: Thursday 15, 1982. Film "Image of Man" by courtesy of the National Library. A study of various styles of aboriginal rock art in the Kakadu National Park and Arnhem Land. Australian world authority, George Chaloupka, a field naturalist with the Museum and Art Galleries Board of the Northern Territory and narrator of the film will be at the meeting to introduce the film and answer questions following it.

MAY: Thursday 20, 1982. Mr Phil Cheney, CSIRO Division of Forest Research, "The Use of Fire in National Parks - Should We Light Controlled Fires in National Parks to Protect Assets or let Natural Fires Burn?"