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PRESIDENT'S FOREWORD

Recreation with conservation

South east of the A.C.T. lies a series of national parks which generally follows the eastern scarp of the Great Dividing Range. From north to south we know these national parks as Morton, Budawang, Deua and Wadbilliga. These national parks preserve an interesting and diverse range of national environments, although they share some unifying features.

They also provide a wide range of opportunities for outdoor recreation and study of natural ecosystems. I am sure many of you have sampled some of these opportunities.

Although we often think of environmental consciousness and dedication of national parks as a fairly recent phenomenon Morton National Park (in its original form) dates from 1938. It is, in fact, named after Mark Morton, a member of the N.S.W. Parliament, whose efforts led to its formation. The other three parks have been formed much more recently, the last to be dedicated being the Budawang National Park in 1977. Pioneers such as Morton recognised the need to preserve the beauty and diversity of the Australian environment. They passed on to us a vital part of our national heritage just as we must strive to do for those who will follow us.

My reasons for writing about these national parks now are to bring to your notice some of the problems which stand in the way of our ideals of conservation for these great parks. Paradoxically the major problems facing the managers (the N.S.W. National Parks and Wildlife Service) arises from human use, or should I say misuse, of the parks resources. These parks are sufficiently rugged and remote to be free (at the moment) of the development pressures which are a source of friction in the Kosciusko National Park. They are, however, a mecca for those who enjoy outdoor recreation. The number of visitors to this area has increased enormously in recent years and visitor pressure, in the form of environmental degradation, is now a serious problem due to soil compaction from tramping. This is particularly evident at the many popular campsites scattered through the parks. Particular problems include, loss of vegetation cover, clearing of vegetation for campsites and tracks with resulting erosion, loss of dead and fallen timber (part of the natural ecological cycle) by its use as fuel, pollution due to lack of proper hygiene and failure to remove rubbish.

Hence the paradox: how to enjoy the natural wonders of the Budawang Range for example (in Morton National Park) without destroying or at least degrading this experience for others who follow. This is not a problem we should (or could) pass to the managers for a solution. It is up to the individual to examine critically his or her conservation attitudes. Not that collectively we are powerless to act in these matters. In conjunction with the N.P.W.S. and other conservation groups we can help to minimise impact by setting standards and most importantly by educating visitors to understand and appreciate the need to consider conservation first. The Service should not be asked to act as environmental policemen. This is neither practicable or desirable.

We could apply these actions to many other parks and reserves also. I have emphasised these problems in relation to the coastal parks because the problems are particularly evident there (especially areas of Morton National Park) and because all these parks are used extensively by ourselves and other A.C.T. residents for year round outdoor recreation. Next time you visit any of these areas I hope you will be more aware of your impact and the need to preserve the timeless beauty of these lands. Through our own individual awareness, our collective impact will be minimised.

The Year of the Tree

The Australian 'Year of the Tree' ends in June. N.P.A. A.C.T. has undertaken a number of special projects to mark this event and I want to pay a special tribute to those members who have worked hard to make these projects successful. Our most ambitious projects were the forthcoming field-guide book 'Native Trees of the A.C.T.' and the tree planting project at Glendale in the Gudgenby Nature Reserve. I would like to thank all those members who gave their time and effort so willingly on these two projects. I would also like to invite all members and friends to take part in the book launching in June. Please see the article in this issue for further details.

FIRE

This word has struck terror in most minds this summer as the powerful destructive quality of fire has made itself very obvious to all Australians.

For all people in the A.C.T., January and February was the time of concern as the fires raged through the mountains to the south of Canberra. The sky was full of smoke every day and the news was most depressing as the fire fighters could not bring the fire under control.

A combination of long term drought, high summer temperatures and strong winds kept the fire going until over 80% of the Gudgenby Nature Reserve was burnt and parts of the Cotter catchment ravaged.

Our N.P.A. offered its services to the Conservation Branch to help fight the fire but the only way members were allowed to help was in assisting the A.C.T. Emergency Services to make a hundred and more steak sandwiches each night for the midnight shift of the fire fighters.

Members of the Gudgenby sub-committee have walked extensively since the fire in the Boboyan Mountain and Forest, Rendezvous and Middle Creeks, Nursery Swamp and Creaming Flats areas. They report that when the fire swept over the ground every twig, leaf and log was burnt to ash or charcoal. The heat of the fire scorched the leaves of trees over huge areas leaving a mosaic of green and brown over all the forested mountains. Large pieces spalled off granite rocks where the fire was most intense. The pine forest in the Gudgenby valley was a stark scene of areas of

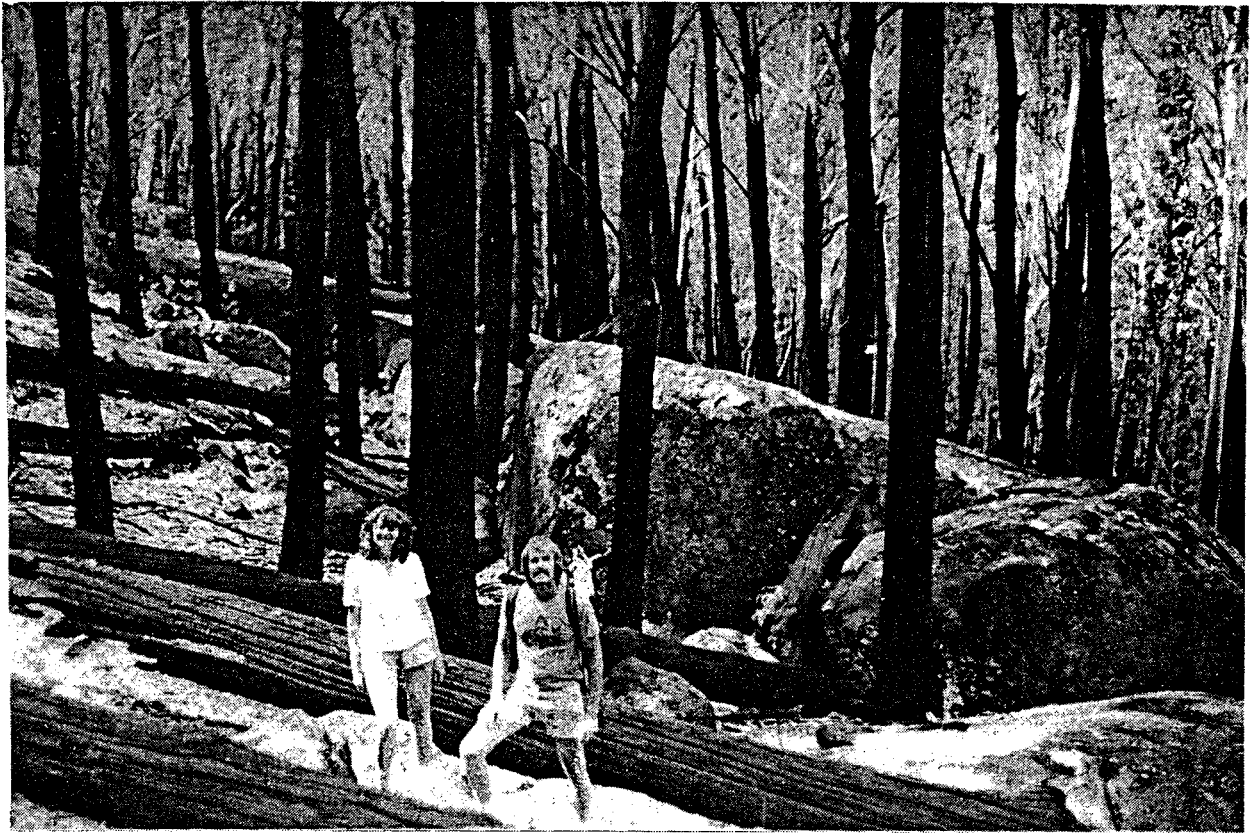
jet black trunks and silvery branches amongst scorched brown and green untouched pines. Already this area is being cleared and it is hoped that native forest will be allowed to return or be planted.

The forest on the slopes of Rendezvous Creek has areas of completely blackened bushland but already on the burnt tree trunks new leaves (epicormic) are appearing as the trees endeavour to survive. Remarkably there is still animal and insect life in the burnt bushland. Ants are busy rebuilding and birds and kangaroos are feeding on any patches of unburnt grass or scrub. Even a lyre bird was heard calling in a heavily burnt area.

The greatest cause of concern is the disturbance caused to the soil by the 120 kms of fire trails hastily bulldozed or regraded during the fire and eroded gullies caused by heavy rain storms since the fire. The Conservation Branch has commenced seeding of the fire trails and blocking them off to prevent access by vehicles in the hope that if left undisturbed the bush cover will return. In some areas, grass, branches, logs and earth have been brought back over the denuded areas of the newly bulldozed trails.

There is no doubt that much thought will have to be put into a fire management plan so that next time fires begin, mistakes will not be made and the damage minimized. The Conservation Branch and the A.C.T. Bushfire Council are carrying out an extensive analysis of the procedures and methods used to combat the fire and from this a plan for the future will be evolved.

Fiona Brand



Extensive damage to trees on the slopes of Middle Creek after the recent Gudgenby Nature Reserve fires — Photo Reg Alder

GUDGENBY NATURE RESERVE

With the benefit of time and some rain, Gudgenby Nature Reserve is gradually showing signs of recovery after the devastating bushfires of January.

Gudgenby, the spiritual home of our Association, has been brought closer to our attention through its recent crisis.

With some 80% affected to varying degrees by the fire and gashed by new fire trails and reactivated old ones, the natural values are vulnerable. The now very obvious trails provide temptation for abuse by trail bikes and 4WDs. The feral cattle, pig and rabbit problem is putting increased pressure on the unburnt and regenerating areas and the prolonged drought has exacerbated the problem. The vegetation already stressed by lack of water has a harder job regenerating after the fire.

The Gudgenby Sub-committee has been occupied with these issues on top of the previously existing ones. Our enquiries have shown that the current basis for fire management in the Reserve is a rather hazy generalised statement along the lines that, while fire at times can be used as an effective management tool, all wildfires within the reserve will be fought. The committee is concerned at the lack of a properly formulated fire policy. We have been told that one is likely to emerge from the comprehensive analysis of the January fires now being undertaken within the department.

Another area of concern is that there appears to be a shortage of funds, and labour, to carry out restoration work to the standard we consider desirable and necessary to the long-term recuperation of the Reserve. No research has been instigated to date on the effects of the fires on the Reserve's diverse eco-systems.

A further representation has been made regarding the

THE COVER for this issue was designed by Betsy Jane Osborne who has drawn the botanical illustrations for the *Field Guide to the Native Trees of the A.C.T.* at present being prepared for publication by the N.P.A. Betsy has used parts of her original descriptive drawings from various species described in the guide book to make this composite picture for the cover.

formation of a Gudgenby Nature Reserve Advisory Committee and no reply has been received. We have requested discussions on these matters with the new Minister for Territories and Local Government, Mr Tom Uren, and hope also to raise with him the proposal for urgent restoration work to be carried out in Gudgenby under the Commonwealth Government's job creation program. Termination of grazing leases and acquisition of the freehold enclaves and adjacent areas at Blue Gum Creek and Honeysuckle Creek for inclusion in Stage 2 of the Reserve are among the other issues we hope to cover.

The Gudgenby Sub-committee notes with interest that in the ALP recent election platform on environment and energy (published in the ALP Bulletin LOBBY) there is a section on Gudgenby. It reads: "A Labor Government will end the undue delays in regazettal of this park, both to conserve its natural resources and to develop it as a major outdoor recreation area."

In a media release during election week, the Member for Fraser, Mr Ken Fry, stressed that regazettal of the Reserve and conservation of its resources were a high priority in the A.C.T. ALP environmental policy. He said a flexible management plan was needed, based on sound professional advice and supported by 'close consultation with the National Parks Association of the A.C.T.'

Our hopes are certainly high!

Gudgenby Homestead

One issue, raised recently in consultation with the Conservation and Agriculture Branch, was the future of the Gudgenby property.

This property, dating back to the early pioneer pastoral runs of the late 1830s, currently is stocked by cattle and some sheep and has been well-managed by the same family for more than 50 years.

There have been many suggestions tossed around regarding its future, including:—

- allowing the area to return to its natural broad valley-type vegetation, representing a vegetation type, although modified, now poorly represented in the

Reserve. Also providing a buffer zone to the nearby wilderness area.

- continued rural use while this remains a viable form of management
- rural use as a type of 'model farm' providing an educational resource for Canberra students and public development by private enterprise
- use as a subsidiary management centre for the Reserve
- site for a field station, visitor centre, interpretative trails or displays and possible government-built and managed cabins for accommodation

The Sub-committee is examining these options and would appreciate input from members.

Denise Robin



Burnt pine logs cut from the Boboyan forest after the Gudgenby fire
— Photo Hedda Morrison

THREE VIEWS OF THE CATTLEMEN AND HUTS OF THE HIGH PLAINS

After a long hike down the steep Diamatina Spur from Victoria's second highest peak, Mt Feathertop, a short scramble across the West Kiewa River led to a small log hut. It was Blair's Hut, built between 1931 and 1932 by cattlemen, Frank and Tom Blair. Dumping our packs and pushing open the rough door, the simple interior was revealed: a large stone fireplace, a table and couple of bush stools, a few pots and pans and at the other end, two beds covered with straw-filled hessian. It was my first night in a cattlemen's hut. Its appeal lay partly in the bush architecture, examples of which I had previously only seen in paintings and photographs. But beyond that was the pleasure of having a hut to yourself for a night, not so far removed from a child's delight in having a backyard cubby-house. Over the next six days we stayed in a number of huts as we progressed over the Bogong High Plains, some of relatively recent construction, some sheltered by snow gums, and some with visitors' books to record the passing of scout groups, bushwalking clubs, school parties and the occasional solo walker.

At that time, thirteen years ago, the history and folklore of the huts both in north eastern Victoria and the Snowy Mountains was known only to a handful of people, the cattlemen, some older bushwalkers and a few locals living in nearby towns. Two years ago one of those older bushwalkers, Harry Stephenson, published *Cattlemen and Huts of the High Plains*. The book's tremendous success, it still remains in the more prominent display shelves of Melbourne bookshops, showed the extent of the public's interest in the people, lifestyles and architecture that belonged more to the last century than the micro-chip

era of the 1980s. Stephenson's book was the first on the subject and remains the best, combining an extraordinary collection of old photographs and memoirs with solidly researched historical detail. These ingredients along with the book's good editing make it highly readable, even for those who have never set eyes on a cattlemen's hut or have little knowledge of the area.

By comparison, Tor Holth's book, *Cattlemen of the High Country*, which came out shortly afterwards, has greatest value as a detailed reference work. It is essentially an oral history, comprising many recorded yarns and recollections of the old cattlemen. As such it has the common drawback of oral history in that the subjects go into extraordinary detail as they talk about the families, their relationships, properties and exploits, in-effect assuming the listener or reader has some background knowledge of the subject. I found this made the book very difficult to read through as a narrative and I tended only to refer to sections where a chapter heading drew my interest. Nevertheless Holth's book is undoubtedly well-researched and forms an important addition to the primary sources of Victoria's history.

The latest book of this genre is Klaus Hueneke's, *Huts of the High Country*. Its publication coincides with the recent intensification of the debate about the legitimacy of retaining huts in the Kosciusko National Park, particularly in the so-called wilderness areas. With wide distribution Hueneke's book should help promote the view of the Kosciusko Huts Association that the huts should be preserved as links with the area's history and as safety refuges for skiers and bushwalkers caught in a mountain blizzard. The latter quality is summarised in the last two verses of Ted Winter's poem, "Why Huts":

"Though properly clad, you can get wet before rain has changed to snow,
Then a fire is essential — all tourers better know,
We need the huts, don't be misled by what some people say
Without the huts we tell you, 'twould be suicide to stay.
We've seen blizzards rage for days on end with no chance of moving on,
With a tent in such conditions, your strength would soon be gone.
Preserve the huts — there still is risk — but it is minimised,
So cherish huts ski-tourers — as climbers do their rope
Without safety equipment, there really isn't hope . . ."

In Stephenson and Holth's books the primary emphasis is on the cattlemen families and secondly on the huts they built. In Hueneke's book the order is largely reversed; description of the huts is used as an introduction to a description of the cattlemen and gold miners who built them. This methodology is complemented by the fact that the chapters are divided according to geographical location rather than historical sequence, although in chapter four on Kiandra and the Goldfields and chapter nine, Frost Plains in the North, the two are closely interrelated. This makes the book a particularly easy reference for ski-tourers and bushwalkers wishing to find out about the huts and history in an area they have or will be visiting. But for the general reader I think this methodology tends to chop up the narrative too much. To cater for these readers, while not losing the interest of the hut users, Hueneke could have reorganised the material along the lines of his six-page introductory historical overview, where the huts are referred to according to the different phases of land use. With this method the narrative would have flowed more easily; moving from the general to the particular, the huts being treated as secondary objects of the primary historical developments. This criticism aside, and it is a substantial criticism, Hueneke has done a great service for all people who love the Kosciusko area and have wondered as they walk or ski across the plains, about those who passed that way before them.

Stephen Johnston



Some of the N.P.A. packwalkers at breakfast in front of Cascade Hut on a recent outing — Photo Reg Alder

WOG WOG AGAIN

Our trouble with the Wog Wog access to the Morton National Park dates from 20 November 1974. For many years before that we had used the road with the friendly approval of the owners, but on that day it was blocked by two men who refused us access. They reluctantly gave way only when we pointed out that there was a right of way across the property. Since then those who use or try to use the road have been subjected to direct and indirect obstruction, through personal confrontation, notices, letters, and lawyers' phone calls. Concessions have been made for foot traffic, then abruptly withdrawn, and the situation is confused except in one respect — it is hostile.

As an association, and privately through our members, we have taken up the matter with the N.P.W.S. as well. The considerable correspondence makes it clear that they have been upset and are anxious to help. It makes it equally clear that they are under some constraint which prevents them from expressing their views freely in writing, or from giving definite answers to some of our questions. In an attempt to end evasiveness and have some definite knowledge of what was going on, the President wrote to the District Superintendent on 8 February 1983 to ask if N.P.A. representatives could meet him for a personal discussion, and a meeting was arranged for Saturday 26 March in Braidwood. N.P.A. representatives were Reg Alder, Les Pyke, Denise Robin and Robert Story, those from N.P.W.S. were Brian Richardson (District Ranger, Nowra District) and Bruce Slater, Ranger of Bundanoon. We spent an hour and a half in Braidwood before leaving to see the disputed area and consider alternative ways of reaching this section of the park.

These were the main points discussed:-

- Brian Richardson informed us that the N.P.W.S. could not answer questions on the status of the right of way because the Service's authority did not extend beyond the borders of the park, but he could not say why we had not been told this in the first case.
- Access over private property is the concern of the Department of Lands, in this case the Goulburn office.

- A right of way does exist, but is not marked on the ground and would need to be re-surveyed. We do not know what expenses would be involved or who would have to pay.
- The right of way affects also a grazier who has to cross Wog Wog to reach his lease in the Corang area which is now surrounded by the Morton National Park.
- It is possible that the owner may be able to have the right of way revoked under certain conditions.
- The right of way is under other forms of land use (grazing or pine plantations or both).
- N.P.W.S. regards the closing of the right of way with mixed feelings. On the debit side: a. Users of the park are denied access, become disgruntled, and withdraw their support for the Service. b. The neighbouring land-holders point to unused land and demand grazing rights. c. Some park visitors cross the private land anyway, whereupon the owner vents his ire on the national park. On the credit side: a. The number of park users in a small and beautiful area is reduced, and management problems and damage are reduced in proportion. b. Anti-park propaganda from the land-holder in question becomes less vociferous.
- The Department of Lands could take the matter up, probably with success, but would be unlikely to do so for fear of antagonizing the owners.
- We could likewise take the matter up, and without reference to N.P.W.S., but we would still involve them indirectly.

In a nutshell the position with the owners is that they bought the property in the full knowledge that the right of way was part of the deal. Our position is that we have either to fight a legal battle or accept the present injustice and a longer access route which will commence from the Mongarlowe road and by-pass the northern boundary of the Wog Wog property. The N.P.W.S. is negotiating acquisition of property for this route which will provide an extension of the park through which a rudimentary track will be blazed to the Corang track.

Robert Story

THE MILFORD LAMENT
(Sung to the tune of "The Dying Stockman")

It was Christmas Eve on the Milford,
Ten inches of rain fell that day!
And while huddling all sodden at
Dumpling,
A trumper was heard loud to say:

CHORUS

Oh, why must it rain on the Milford?
Why must this weather so flout
We poor trampers who come to the
Milford,
From Australia the land of the
drought?

Oh, I had such high hopes for the
Milford:
Bright sunshine I wanted to see.
Instead I got rain by the metre —
The good Lord did not smile on me!
CHORUS: Oh, why must it rain etc.

But on Christmas Day on the Milford
The sun burst forth so clear and
bright.
Alas, though, too late for
MacKinnon's —
The views had been clouded from sight.
CHORUS: Oh, why must it rain etc.

At Sandfly Point on the Milford,
I boarded the launch painted red;
And while chugging along into Milford,
I recalled what that trumper had said:
CHORUS: Oh, why must it rain etc.

Now though the rain poured on the
Milford,
And the views from the pass a sad loss,
Great beauty was found in the micro
Of forest, of fern and of moss.
CHORUS: Oh, why must it rain etc.

And we all know that sometimes the
Milford,
Is blessed with bright sunshine each
day;
Then at times of such triumph for the
Milford,
I imagine that trumper to say:

FINAL CHORUS

Oh, isn't it great on the Milford
When sunshine foul weather does flout!
If this is a "dry" for the Milford,
Then Hooray! for this glorious
drought!

Frank Clements



**LIVING ON CHRISTMAS ISLAND,
INDIAN OCEAN**

People often daydream from behind an office desk, imagining themselves on a remote tropical island. There is much to be said for such a change. Our family's new home is Christmas Island, Indian Ocean, which appears as a small dot on the map 360 kms south of Java. When we arrived in January 1982 on the fortnightly charter from Perth, any preconceptions of a tiny island, surrounded by sandy beaches and coconut palms, vanished when we saw a large bulky island, rising in terraces to a plateau 300 metres above the sea. Stepping onto the modern tarmac, we were greeted by Islanders in their easy-going manner and presented with a wax-paper umbrella to facilitate our steps through the wet season downpour. It is Australia's most unusual "international" airport as the runway has the appearance of an ocean wave and passengers on the fortnightly Singapore flight pass through passport and customs control in an elongated tin shed, which is the terminal building. Our family entered the latter and were confronted by a sea of faces, mainly Chinese and Malay, who had come out of curiosity to enjoy the social occasion. As newcomers, we were introduced to numerous Island officials, and spent the next 2 months matching a tangle of names and faces. From the airport we were driven by minibus to our new home 5 kms distant.

Christmas Island operates as a mining town where all essential services for its 3000 inhabitants are provided by the mining company. It differs from other remote mining towns in that it is situated on a tropical island that is suit-

able for a tourist resort. Because there are only 350 Europeans on the Island, among the 1800 Chinese, 750 Malays and 95 Eurasians, it might be aptly described as "Australia's little Asia". When the extraction of rock phosphate ceases towards the end of the decade, after a 100 year operation, a unique community will vanish into the pages of history. Only a small core population, subsisting on tourism, fishing, market gardening and government subsidies is likely to remain to remember old times.

Our new family home proved to be a spacious 3 bedroom dwelling, located in a settlement known as Silver City. In the 1970's a large number of pre-fabricated aluminium houses were constructed on the plateau terraces of Lower Drumsite, together with a children's playground. One came to be called Silver City and the other Prickly Park. This accorded with the pragmatic nomenclature of the old timers, who called the points and headlands by male names and the beaches and cove by female names.

Higher up the plateau, overlooking Silver City, is the Chinese community of Poon Saan, an elongated village, of 2 and 3 storey flats, constructed for functional rather than aesthetic reasons. Various natural terraces, an open air cinema, the Technical School, a community hall, some shops, a post office and company workshops fracture the tedium of the rows of flats. In addition, miniature garden plots, odd makeshift garages, and an assortment of clothes drying on the clothes lines along the balconies give Poon Saan its own unique appearance. Adjacent, but on the other side of the bitumen road are the 50 newly erected pre-fabricated houses of Taman Sweetland, named in honour of Mr W.W. Sweetland the Commissioner of the Inquiry

into Island affairs who was instrumental in having them erected.

Poon Saan (Chinese for halfway) was so named because it is approximately midway between the Phosphate Works at Drumsite, 2 kms along the plateau, and the Cantilever loading facilities at the settlement on Flying Fish Cove, 2 kms down the hill. The latter is properly known as "The Settlement" for all the other inhabited areas are considered appurtenances to this first settled village. From Drumsite, which is perched on the 150 metre cliff at the head of the Cove, it is possible to look directly down on the Settlement, with its ribbon of development confined to a narrow coastal terrace. An enclosed conveyor belt, which descends steeply down the slope, connects the Phosphate works at Drumsite with the port facilities below. All the phosphate is transported by the plateau railway to the "Drum Siding", which has large shunting yards and a number of huge storage tanks or drums which gave rise to the name of "Drumsite". Fronting the railway over a considerable distance are numerous houses, while interspersed between two separated parts of the phosphate works are workshops, the Engineers Headquarters, and the main portion of the Christmas Island Area School with its own oval and tennis courts. A new building houses the Island Conservator (John Hicks) who is employed by the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Most days it is necessary for those on the plateau to visit the Settlement. On account of the steep descent, a car is indispensable, although many make do with the free hourly bus service between communities. A 60 km/hr speed limit is enforced by the constabulary with their frequent radar checks. Towards the end of the long descent is a high road-cutting through the limestone ridge (with its "Beware of falling rocks" signs). The sudden view of the Settlement, with its visiting oceanic yachts, ships loading phosphate, jungle-clad precipices and its hotch potch of human construction always seems a fresh surprise. The usual purpose of the Settlement visit is to shop at the Island Trade Store, the virtual sole repository of gastronomical requirements and material necessities. Being Hobson's Choice it is a matter of taking what's offering. Earlier this year, a person or persons unknown, apparently didn't like the choice and sprinkled the goods in the store with diesel oil.

The Settlement stretches for approximately 3 kms along the northern coastline, the bitumen continuing a further 3 kms to the spectacular golf course beside the ocean. At the head of Flying Fish Cove, wind and wave have weathered away the cliffs to form a half kilometre sandy beach, fronted by the Malay Kampong, a series of 4-storey flats, compressed between the access road and terrace cliff. As all the Malays are Muslim by religion, the village or Kampong has a central green domed mosque from which the faithful are summoned to prayer 5 times a day, by the timeless intonations of the mu'essin or prayer crier. The Malays are expert on the water, hence many of them have been hired to unload the cargo ships by means of small ferry boats. Often on a calm evening, one can see the Malays in their dugout canoes, fishing in the Cove. Near the Kampong is a large steel jetty designed to launch the ferry boats, while further along is a boat ramp adjacent to the Island Boat Club.

On the coastal terrace immediately above the Cove there is the headquarters of the Phosphate Mining Company, with its host of workshops, stores, warehouses, garages and offices. Adjacent is a post office, bank, library, government offices, and the Christmas Island Club with its associated tennis court and swimming pool. The other public utilities, including the Sports Hall, police station, hospital, open air cinema, pre-school, private shops (open at night) and a public swimming pool are to be found further along the coast, interspersed with workers' dwellings. The more spacious old colonial houses towards the golf course are reserved for management staff.

Daily life on Christmas Island is very simple, uncomplicated and unencumbered. Most families rise with the tropical dawn at 6 am and are at work at 7 am while

school commences at 8 am. Because the lowest overnight temperature is a rare 21 C. there is no difficulty rising early. A family priority is to listen to the 6.30 am bulletin of local news, for all Island affairs are communicated by this means, including the arrival of shipping with fresh produce from Perth and Singapore. School buses follow a set schedule to pick up all the children for school. Our 5 year old adores the huge phosphate works "transporter" which sardines a multitude of blue-uniformed children for the trip to school. When leaving the house unattended during the day there is never a need to lock the door as stealing and other crime is virtually unknown.

One is very conscious of nature and the natural environment on the Island because it is a prominent part of daily living. Tidal information determines when and where a person may swim. Every morning I have to frighten the red crabs away from the back door back to their crabholes. All Islanders share their houses with the gekoes who are such charming creatures that no-one would consider killing them like the mosquitoes and cockroaches. Jungle birds such as the emerald dove, the silver-eye and the Island thrush are always in our garden just near our large dining room windows. As with most of the Island fauna they show little fear of man for they are seldom molested. There are no dangerous animals such as venomous snakes on the Island. However there is a 20 centimetre centipede which is not only scary when it runs at full speed on its 40 legs but whose bite can put an adult into hospital. Last week I rescued our 1 year old just an arms length from one.

Most residents take time to enjoy the wildlife and natural features of the Island but to describe all these would require a separate article. Many of the recreations such as swimming, fishing, snorkeling, scuba diving, camping and jungle walking utilize these natural features. But there is plenty to occupy one's time. All the common sports are played and are the best means of meeting those of different ethnic background. The sports include tennis, cricket, soccer, basketball, badminton and golf. The evenings are filled with dinner parties, club functions and free movies. Altogether there is a reluctance on the part of people to leave the Island because life is so simple and natural.

Christmas Island gained international prominence on account of the presence on the Island of the endangered bird, the Abbotts Booby, whose survival was threatened by the habitat-clearing for phosphate mining. As a result of successful environmental lobbying, a survey of the nesting sites was made leading to better protection for the bird. According to the best available evidence the species is likely to survive. It is however already a relic species and its threshold of viability can only be determined over a number of centuries.

Phosphate only occurs in rich pockets on the Island so that when the mining ceases half of the Island will remain intact. Previously no consideration was given to rehabilitation, so that mined fields were left in a totally devastated form. However new mining guidelines require any new operations to be backfilled and rehabilitated.

There is an air of uncertainty about the immediate and long term future of Christmas Island. In August 1982 the Commonwealth Government passed the phosphate Bounty legislation which effectively removes Christmas Island from its previous privileged position. If the local phosphate producers then the Commonwealth is no longer obliged to buy the Christmas Island phosphate. This may lead to the early closure of the mining operation, although I personally think mining will continue for a few years until the "A" grade reserves are depleted. Also in August 1982 the Sweetland Report concerned with the Long Term Future of Christmas Island was tabled in Parliament. This report was much more concerned with people and their activities than the future protection of the wildlife of the Island. Hence interested environmentalists will need to monitor the Governments response when it is forthcoming.

D. HAWKE

THE S.W. TASMANIA NO DAMS BLOCKADE

Joining a protest was an action totally new to me, but the dam issue had arrived at a, to me, totally frustrating impasse. Obvious opposition, letters, petitions, etc had elicited no Federal intervention, though statements had been made that 'they' believed the dam should not be built.

Eighteen people from Canberra/Queanbeyan left on 27th December, having formed ourselves into a group only about a week before Christmas. A four hour flight stopover at Melbourne gave us a chance to start to get to know each other. Our number included a group of teachers, several public servants, a solicitor, a computer programmer, several research workers, a couple of mature age students and an unemployed surveyor.

We were met at Hobart airport and then taken to the Tasmanian Wilderness Society's office which proved to be a delightful two storied, balconied house being restored as much as volunteers and resources made possible. Billets were arranged for us with No Dams supporters around Hobart, a relaxed and hospitable crowd. Next day we volunteered for jobs at the office, and most spent the day putting out a newsletter together and labelling envelopes. Two of us cleared out and painted a back room being converted for use as a dark room. That evening we had a getting-to-know-you dinner and ended up playing games in a park nearby. This game playing is a part of the Non-Violent-Action (NVA) outlook (of which more later) and is designed to encourage knowledge and trust of ones fellows. I think it is fair to say that after our convivial dinner that evening we were all in a state of unquestioning trust in the whole universe and its contents!

On Wednesday we were transported in dribs and drabs, by volunteers, across to Strahan, a journey of about five hours. The TWS camp (at that stage) was in the Council camping ground, though it overflowed somewhat along a track and into the bush behind. The camp later moved out to a small farm just outside Strahan, as the pressure on camp facilities became too great.

Each day at Strahan began with a *Meeting*. These somewhat unwieldy and often interminable affairs were aimed at arriving at consensus (rather than merely majority) decisions on all manner of questions which arose. Compromise after compromise was mooted until no-one raised any further objections. These meetings generally took 1½ to 2 hours, discussing general camp arrangements and such miscellaneous points as whether individual groups should display their various flags prominently and what constituted 'violence' in the context of the Blockade. On this latter point we agreed that verbal violence was out, tampering with machinery was out (even, for example, removing starter keys, disconnecting wires, etc). I gather that later groups developed and followed much the same guidelines. Non-dangerous obstruction of work was the aim, both to slow work down (we couldn't hope to physically *stop* the dam being built) and to get media coverage to keep the issue alive in Australia, and overseas where possible and to provoke some definite intervention.

Our group had two days in Strahan and were left to our own devices once the morning meeting was over. Some of us walked across to Ocean Beach one day. About six kilometres of dirt road leads across open coastal heathland and then stabilised sand dunes. Birdlife abounded (sorry birdwatchers - I hear them, sometimes see them, but never recognise them), and the heath plants were flowering profusely. We picnic lunched by a tannin brown stream just up from where it lost itself in the beach. A long walk up the wet, dark sand, seemingly endless beach reminded me of New Zealand west coast beaches. That was a lovely relaxed day before our NVA training was to begin in earnest.

Saturday and Sunday we spent in training - after the morning meeting. It is hard to imagine beforehand why such emphasis is put on this training; no one was allowed into any TWS action, or 'up-river' until training had been undertaken. After passing through the system, its importance became obvious. The Blockade was an extremely mentally tiring experience, more so for some than others.

The training started with explanations of the theory and principles behind the Non-Violent-Action Movement. There followed some penetrating soul-searching, getting to know ones-self and ones fellows, much more role-playing to develop quick decision making both under normal and stressful circumstances. It was very important to realise one's limitations as well as those of others on whom one might be dependent at some stage. We discussed at length the types of actions we imagined we could become involved in, what sacrifices we were prepared to make, etc.

Monday was the day we were to go up-river, but not until lunchtime. We spent the morning doing 'peacemaker' training. This turned out to be invaluable and involves one or two members of a group each day more or less standing back and keeping an eye on the tenor of others in the group, potential conflicts, dissention, undue pressure and stress, and moving in and calming things down if necessary.

Our journey by fishing boat along Macquarie Harbour and up the Gordon River to the camp near Butler Island was wet, though happily not rough. Indoor space on the boat was limited, but the hospitality of the crew was not. On a rotation system, we all managed a stint in the warmth and dry. The rain clouds lifted intermittently when we entered the Gordon River and we all had some grand views of the misty steep valleys; the dense and diverse flora down to the river edges and even into the river; and limestone cliffs. We did not have the mirror calm water and perfect reflections for which the area is renowned, but it is beautiful in any of its moods.

The Butler Island camp from the river shows only as a communications hut (solar and exercise cycle charged battery operated) on a pontoon out from the bank. The bush was dense enough to hide the myriad tents, kitchen tent and meeting space surrounded by rubber dinghies (duckies) and several canoes, kayaks and runabouts. After unloading ourselves, camp supplies and some canoes for Blockade use, we were shown to a somewhat muddy, swampy area to set ourselves up, with our own private log drawbridge entry and moat. The moat was OK for washing, but not for drinking owing to its path upstream below some dubious 'camp facilities'. We were secreted amongst many mossy, licheny trees, light only filtering through.

At the river camp, meetings took place in the evenings after dinner and under the pressure of having to advise Strahan what would be happening next day so that the media representatives could be advised.

For our first three days most of us took part in rubber duckie protests at Warners Landing. Here a jetty was being built for the landing of bulldozers to be used to push roads back to existing ones and onward through virgin forest to the dam site itself. The first day's duckie parade took the form of a silent vigil. About fifty, one to four person duckies and a few canoes and dinghies arrived line astern, occupants singing conservation songs (one written and learnt the evening before) who, fell silent, lined up just off the pontoon and stayed *all day*. The silence was infectious - the workers were very quiet, and the police communicated in whispers when at all. Some of us went a little further upstream to non-HEC land (the Hydro-Electric Commission has been 'given' pockets and strips at intervals along the river so that here it is legal to land, there it is not), and set up a soup kitchen. The vigil contingent came along in dribs and drabs, cold, wet, hungry and usually desperate for relief (no landing at or near Warners Landing for anything). At about 4.30p.m., the vigil line paddled midstream, hooked onto lines towed by the runabouts, raised paddles, and sang their way back to camp.

For the next two days, duckies again went up to Warners Landing, each time a number of people being arrested on the landing for trespass and/or obstruction. The first day the police added twenty metres around the landing pontoon to their off-limits space. The next day a 'platypus' on a lilo tested this ruling, but had to work very hard before she was eventually arrested right at the landing's edge. One group were landed a few hundred metres downstream from the landing and, while police were keeping an eye on the duckies, appeared out of the bush behind the workers. The

police appreciated this 'one up' mark for the 'greenies'. Relations with the police on the whole (and often with HEC workers also) were pretty good at that time.

Of the group I went down with, twelve were arrested, all near the river at the proposed dam site. Two were taken up by launch one day, but were not followed by the police. They spent the day in the bush, at the dam shafts (two or three horizontal shafts have been mined into the hillsides, aimed at discovering suitable rock for the dam footings), and talking to the workers there. Then, ignominiously unarrested, they had to be brought back to our camp. These two, plus one more, went in again next day and were successful in their endeavour to be arrested for trespass.

Next day (Friday) another six went up to the dam site, again unseen. A boatload of supporters followed, and were followed up by two police runabouts, a police launch and a boatload of media people. Before this audience, this lot came out of the bush two by two at about twenty minute intervals, and the police then had to go in, climbing ropes up the steep scree slopes, to bring them out. The two women had come out of the bush and gone into a mine shaft while the police were following another boat upstream. The HEC workers turned their generator on and gave the girls a guided tour of the mine. When the police returned, these two remained hidden and nothing was said by the workers. It was a good half hour before they showed themselves and the police moved in. The HEC workers were not seen to do any work for the couple of hours we watched. I can only say that HEC claims that work has not been delayed by protesters leaves some amazing conclusions to be drawn. Perhaps the HEC should consider a time and motion study at least.

Our last three arrest prospects decided to 'go' at the dam site on the following Monday, with a number of people from other groups. On Saturday, we relaxed a bit and did a bit of bushwalking (the only time we really did); others played around in the river. The river in the evenings was often magically still and serene and people tended to gravitate there before dinner for a reflective, silent half hour or so.

On the Sunday, I left the Butler Island camp on the TWS boat, a ex-sightseeing 80 people launch. I took the packs of all our arrestees with me, aiming to get these back to Hobart before their owners were released from gaol. The trip along Macquarie Harbour was very rough, and slow. A group of Franklin River rafters whom we had taken aboard vowed it was the worst experience they had had, and many people travelled near the stern rail!

By Tuesday morning I was back in Hobart, just in time to meet two Monday arrested women on their release from overnight gaol. They were very shaken by their experiences and took a few days to settle down, particularly as some of their friends were still in gaol. A bail hearing for about a hundred people took place the following Friday, and everyone was released, even if they didn't want to accept bail conditions, as the gaols were becoming unable to cope with the influx of prisoners. Many of these people have cases to face at various times in the months to come.

Since returning to Canberra, this group has met several times, took an active part in the election campaign in the marginal Eden - Monaro electorate, and held stalls to raise funds for the National South West Coalition for their campaigning throughout Australia.

It is strange how one's standards change depending on the context. I was so proud of the people I visited in gaol, and proud to welcome them all back when they came out on bail (a couple of our group had been in gaol eight days). On the whole, I have always avoided protests and demonstrations generally believing there must be a better way to make changes and get messages across. In this case I felt all the better ways had been tried, many conversions made, but the desired result had not eventuated.

Over 1100 people were prepared to put their reputations in jeopardy by being arrestees as a protest against a virtually autonomous authority being able to purloin National Park (and later World Heritage) land to its own uses. This must mean something. The long-term result is still in the balance.

We must all do whatever we can, whenever we can, if we really believe in that wilderness, and in National Parks as a whole.

Adrienne Nicholson



Containers of water carried by members to the top of Mt Boboyan to make tea and coffee for the public on the Heritage Week walk
— Photo Reg Alder

FIELD GUIDE TO THE NATIVE TREES OF THE A.C.T.

Since August last year, a group of N.P.A. members have been busy preparing for publication an illustrated guide to the recognition of 60 native trees of the A.C.T. Only trees that commonly grow to four metres or more are included and, even though the A.C.T. is not a distinctive botanical region in a geographic sense, only trees that grow naturally within the inland boundary of the A.C.T. are given full descriptions; trees of the Jervis Bay area are not included.

Members who have contributed are — Laurie Adams, George Chippendale, Jenny Cusbert, Sheila Kruse, Warren Nicholls, Peter Ormay, Babette Scougall and Sybil and Robert Story. The original idea for the Field Guide came from Neville Esau who felt it would be a suitable project to commemorate the Year of the Tree.

It should prove valuable to all who take an interest in their natural surroundings — bushwalkers, conservationists, naturalists, school excursion groups, and meet a long felt need for a simple yet comprehensive guide to tree identification on walks.

The expected date of publication is the first week in June, and, as the project is at present on schedule, tentative arrangements have been made to hold a book launching in the Nancy Burbidge Amphitheatre in the National Botanic Gardens at mid-day on Monday, 6 June. Watch for confirmation of the time and date in the Canberra Times.

A leaflet has been inserted in this Bulletin to help publicize the Field Guide, and anyone willing to help promote it should contact Sheila Kruse on 486104.

Advance payment for the purchase of this book would be most welcome to help meet the cost of production.

Babette Scougall



Members of the public and N.P.A. members on top of Mt Boboyan during the Heritage Week Walk — Photo Hedda Morrison

HERITAGE WEEK WALK 1983

The National Parks Association again organised a public walk to Mt Boboyan (1458m) in the Gudgenby Nature Reserve as a Heritage Week activity. Fire swept all this area in January, but it was decided to proceed with the plan so that the walkers could see what damage had occurred and the regeneration taking place.

We used the previous method of temporarily marking a route with red plastic ribbon so that people could walk, look, photograph or puff at will without having to keep up with a group. A team of ten willing Association members did the preparatory work and provided assistance and information to those taking part.

The weather looked chancy at times, but it remained dry. Forty seven people took part on Sunday 10 April. In view of the competition of several other walks and numerous other activities for this first day of Heritage Week, we considered this a satisfactory result.

The excellent and interesting view from the summit was enjoyed by all in the clear but cloudy conditions. The cold wind made its presence felt there and we could not leave the cardboard direction indicator on a camera tripod unattended. The camp-fire with billy tea in the lee of the summit was as popular as ever.

Looking out from the summit one could see the various degrees of damage caused by the fire. Some small pockets appeared untouched; some trees had their crowns relatively unharmed but the understorey had gone; other trees had suffered considerable damage but were recovering in contrast to their stark dead neighbours; there were patches of just black ash.

At close quarters during the walk it was heartening to see the regeneration taking place from the roots and along the branches and trunks of most trees. A few trees had fallen since the fire due to weakening of the previously fire-hollowed trunks. Some grass was appearing from the black remains.

It was interesting to see that some rotting logs on the ground before the fire had been torn apart in the desperate search for food, presumably by surviving wombats and echidnas. We saw some kangaroos, birds and lizards; droppings also showed that wombats were using a few of the burrows again.

Unfortunately there was plenty of evidence in the valley of fresh uprooting by feral pigs which had also returned. It

seems to me that the damage they cause is potentially more serious than the results of the fire.

As our organisation and team could have coped with twice the numbers attending, we will reconsider our strategy for this walk in 1984.

Charles Hill

HERITAGE WEEK EXHIBITION

A highlight of Canberra's Heritage Week was a three day exhibition in the Albert Hall, from Sunday 10 April to Tuesday 12 April.

Heritage Week is designed to promote an awareness of Australia's heritage in both the natural and man-made environments. The Association is, of course, active in both fields and it was appropriate that it should enter into the spirit of things and combine with thirty four or more other organisations to present the Heritage Exhibition at the Albert Hall.

The Gudgenby Nature Reserve was the central feature of the Association's display. Visitors were able to see photographs showing the devastation of the January bushfires together with photographs featuring the distinctive flora of the Reserve before the fire.

Orroral Homestead also featured prominently. The display provided an ideal opportunity to illustrate the valuable work being done by the Association to prevent the homestead from falling into further disrepair.

An assortment of "touch and see" items (feathers, fruits, leaves, rocks and cultural artefacts) were an eye-catching component of the display and proved popular with the children.

The public appreciated the range of free literature available, and sale items; including Association T-shirts and badges, N.P.A.Q. songbooks and Tasmanian Wilderness Society cards, were well received. The Association took almost \$80 in proceeds during the exhibition.

The sub-committee would like to thank all those members who contributed to the success of the display by supplying material, ferrying screens, and minding the stands. Your help was greatly appreciated.

Anne S. Robertson

PARK PERSONALITY PROFILES MARIE BYLES

"Nature is a living being which responds to our love and interest — we get more from it by co-operation than by exploitation — without a changed attitude to nature we cannot stop the rape of the earth, which is more dangerous to man's future than the atom bomb".

Thus wrote Marie Byles in an article for *The Bushwalker* in 1948, when her concern was for the setting aside of primitive areas as some compensation to nature for the destruction of forests and the decimation of fertile lands.

Marie Beuzeville Byles came to Australia in 1911 at the age of 11. Both her parents were considered radicals. Her father, a fresh air fanatic and a signals engineer with the N.S.W. Railways, took his three young children on tramping holidays in the Blue Mountains, sometimes walking 30 kms a day. Her mother was a vegetarian and a feminist who "wore no corset and loose, straight, ankle-length dresses. Her father's nickname for Marie, "Mrs Mahabili Pushbar, the Lady what gets things done", seems to have been well justified. In 1918 she began to study Law, and later became the first woman to graduate in that discipline from Sydney University. This legal training was to be of great benefit to the conservation movement.

At this time bushwalking was an activity not considered suitable for females. However, whilst she and several girlfriends (Dympha Cusack amongst them) were studying, this was their favourite recreation. At first they carried revolvers and tomahawks. These were finally left at home — more from considerations of weight than added feelings of bravery according to one friend, Dot Butler. Light weight camping equipment was not then available, and in spite of the weight to be carried these girls walked many kilometres in virgin bush. One trip took them through the Grose River canyon country, where they found a pass up to the Boorong Crags and Mt Hay.

In 1920 Marie and three friends formed an expedition to see the rusting boilers of the S.S. Maitland which had run onto the bombora off Bouddi Head in 1898. She recalls that one of the girls carried a huge Colts automatic pistol conspicuously displayed in her belt and wore a man's breeches, whilst the rest of them "romped about in dark coloured bloomers", and suffered great consternation when they thought they'd lost their skirts!

Three years after graduation, Marie set off on a cargo boat, and climbed mountains in England, Scotland, Norway, Canada and New Zealand. Her first book, "By Cargo Boat and Mountain", tells the tale. Upon her return she opened her own law practice in a partitioned section of the foyer of the Duke of York Cinema in Sydney. From there grew a practice based on prompt service and absolute integrity.

In 1929, Marie joined the two-year-old Sydney Bushwalkers Club and became one of its leading conservationists, vociferously promoting its protected wilderness policies and playing a leading role in moulding public opinion. To members she introduced an enlarged, modified European rucksack to supersede the 'Dungall' swag pack previously used for walking and camping.

As the Byles family had a holiday home at Palm Beach, interest in the Bouddi region across Pittwater was maintained. In 1930, Marie Byles and Dorothy Lawry were instrumental in persuading the Lands Department to name the nearby Boat Harbour 'Maitland Bay'. Marie was keen to see this area made a National Park, and began writing articles about it in order to gain public support. When, in 1932, the Federation of Bushwalking Clubs was formed, she persuaded them to make this their first project. In 1935, Marie, Dorothy and Richard Croker were asked by the Lands Department to accompany Mr Barry, Gosford District Surveyor, on a trip to the district. Marie writes that they turned up with rucksacks, rain capes, food and billies, whereas Mr Barry had his lunch in a red handkerchief tied to his belt. To their surprise he led them through the 'rough stuff' and finally wrote a report that recommended the addition of the northern end of Killcare Beach, an area they

had not ventured to include. The Bouddi Natural (later National) Park was declared and came under the administration of a group of trustees. The Gosford Council and the Federation were both asked to appoint three trustees and Marie was one of their nominees. Only one councillor used to attend meetings, held on the beach. He became known as Steam Roller because "he trampled all over our suggestions with an iron will".

The Sydney Bushwalkers held their very first working bee at Bouddi in May 1940, and, to everyone's surprise, sixty people attended. A water tank, floated around by the honorary ranger, was installed; a shelter shed was built and properly graded and drained footpaths were formed. With subsequent additions, the park today has an area of 1148 hectares and includes a marine extension.

From 1932 Marie made many walking, skiing and horse-riding trips with Sydney Bushwalker friends. She supported the Wild Flower Protection legislation and the Blue Mountains National Park which Myles Dunphy proposed. She worked for the setting aside of Garrawarra, Era, Barren Grounds, Blue Gum Forest and Burning Palms. She was on the Kosciusko Liaison Committee which was designed to get together walkers, skiers, fishermen, motorists, scientists and others to formulate policies and tell the Government what the people wanted. Nothing came of the idea and it was many years before the park was declared.

One ploy frequently used to keep the public informed was to ask a friend to write to a newspaper asking for information on a forthcoming park. Marie would then answer it in another letter! A writer in a 1936 'The Bushwalker' reporting on the first ascent of Beloungery Split Rock in the Warrumbungles, wrote of Marie "To me she was a voice crying in the cold, pale dawn, while stars still snapped in the heavens 'Time to get up'".

On the second of two overseas walking trips to New Zealand, Marie and a friend entered the unexplored Mahitaki valley near Milford Sound and named various rivers and lakes.

In 1935, she organised and led an expedition into Western China to climb Mt Sansato (6097 metres). The party of three men and three women, with a team of baggage mules, began by walking through Burma, making its way in "jungle, across torrents and hilltops". The travellers were met with suspicion, partly because China's war with Japan had started, and partly because the women, in a land of long Chinese garments, wore the more practical shorts and skirts. These were considered disgusting. "To them we were animals with pink knees", said Marie to a reporter. Poor weather prevented the achievement of the ultimate goal although they did climb to 5490 metres and saw the gorge where the Yangtze cuts through the mountain.

Marie's deep disappointment at not achieving her objective was one of the factors which led her on the road to contemplation and a life long study of Eastern religions. Most of her published writings reflect this deep interest :-

Footprints of Gautama the Buddha (1957)
Journey into Burmese Silence (1962)
The Lotus and the Spinning Wheel (1963)
Paths to Inner Calm (1965)

It was in 1937 that Marie purchased some land at Cheltenham, a Sydney suburb, and built her home Ahimsa, which means 'non-violence in word, thought and deed', or 'Peace'.

Marie's active bushwalking came to an end in 1941. She and Paddy Pallin had started the Bush Club that year and it was on one of their walks that a boy became ill. Whilst her companions carried the boy, Marie shouldered the three packs. The strain was too great on her feet (she was 1.59m) and her feet arches suffered. She turned closer to meditation and Buddhism, and spent a year on a study pilgrimage to India, the Himalayas, Burma and Japan.

In the immediate post war period, the Cumberland County Council developed and exhibited a Master Plan for Sydney and its environs. Marie Byles produced forceful arguments for the inclusion within the Green Belt of land near Devlin's Creek, a tributary of the Lane Cove River. So

great was her influence that the diagrams were altered during the period of public exhibition.

Closer to home, she was responsible for the local council planting Cheltenham Road with gum trees. She agitated for the closure of 'paper roads' which appeared on maps and led to the potential of being useful targets for developers. It is said that the Council often agreed to her proposals because her requests were logical and could not be easily refuted. She helped form the Beecroft-Cheltenham Civic Trust, which a friend recalls she used to call the Non-Progress Association.

Her 1¼ hectares of land, valued at \$150,000 and covered in native trees and wildflowers was given to the National Trust in 1972. Her home and garden became a tiny oasis in suburbia and was a haven for those seeking rest, quiet and spiritual rejuvenation.

In her 1971 Newsletter to friends, Marie wrote "I have various upturned logs at the edge of the bush and I call them my coffins. My idea is that I shall be sitting on one of them, feel tired, and fall off dead".

Marie Beuzeville Byles died on 21st November, 1979 at the age of 79. Ahimsa and the Hut of Happy Omen, were left for others to enjoy. Her friend, Tom Herbert, considers them a "fitting and perpetual monument to an ideal conservationist".

(Compiled by Beverley Hammond from Marie Byles' own published writings and letters to friends, from articles in journals and newspapers, and from written notes and reminiscences of former companions in the environmental and walking movements.)



ORRORAL HOMESTEAD — A HISTORY

The search for new grazing land and water took the first European explorers Wild, Vaughan and Throsby-Smith to the "Limestone Plains" in 1820¹.

The original stock stations were established in what is now the Canberra district towards the end of 1824 and pastoral expansion proceeded at a rapid rate.

The rugged area to the south-west was penetrated, but the squatters were "outside the limits of location" and received no official recognition before 1836².

Sometime between 1826 and 1836, a squatter by the name of William Herbert staked a claim over a run in the Orroral Valley³. By 1847 an official list showed that Herbert had a licensed run on "Naas and Ararel" and that other settlers in the area included Thomas Chippendale at Naas, W. Davis at Booroomba, Edward Severne at Gudgenby, James Wright at Mount Tennant and "Cuppercumba" and M'Keahie and Crawford at Boboyan⁴.

Over the next 50 years these people and places were closely linked together and variously had an impact on what we know as the Orroral Valley.

It appears that the Herbert family, Edward Severne and then Gilchrist and Watt had the Orroral lease before it was transferred in 1864 to a C. McReahim in 1864. McReahim was granted the "Orroral Run 166", estimated at 5,600 acres with a grazing capacity of 640 head of cattle. Its appraised rental was £30.

The official record leaves some puzzling gaps in the history of Orroral Homestead and the spelling of the property name and its early occupants varies considerable.

This name McReahim, published in the N.S.W. Government Gazette of 1864 and with the first name "Charles" in Fussell's Squatting Directory for N.S.W. 1865, is a puzzle. No other sources record a person by the name of McReahim in the district at that time. It seems safe to assume that this owner was actually Charles McKeahnne.

Like many of the free overseers in the district early last century, Charles McKeahnne (1809-1903) was a Scotsman. A ploughman in Renfrewshire, he was a bounty migrant who with his wife, Elizabeth, and baby daughter, Ann

arrived on the *St George* at Port Jackson on 15 November 1838. They arrived in Queanbeyan in December that year. Only two months earlier the township of Queanbeyan had been officially proclaimed and its population was around 50 people.⁵

McKeahnne was employed as a stockman on J.J. Moore's run "Canberry" and after about 12 months went to work for John Gray, storekeeper/squatter, of Queanbeyan. Between 1838 and 1844, McKeahnne was employed by Gray to "superintendent a small herd of mixed cattle" at Boboyan, a run of about 17,920 acres in mountainous country about 60km south-west of Queanbeyan. On Gray's bankruptcy, McKeahnne acquired Boboyan and sold a half interest to another Scot, Alex Crawford. He sold the remainder of his interest to Crawford in 1845 and moved to "Gudgenby Station" as overseer/manager for Edward Severne.

About four years later, McKeahnne bought Gudgenby and then went from strength to strength, acquiring Booroomba, Congwarra and Orroral. He made "Blythbourne", Booroomba the family home. Booroomba was developed by himself and his son, Charles Henry Alexander George (1851-1923) into a fine hereford cattle property, remaining in the McKeahnne family until 1925.⁷

The other McKeahnne sons, Archibald, Alexander and George, also were on the land. It was Archibald, the eldest, who was responsible for the building of the homestead.

The date of construction of the Orroral Homestead is still elusive, despite a thorough investigation.

Oral history has it that Archibald McKeahnne, a noted craftsman, built the homestead, with its parallel kitchen block, as a home for his young family.

The first concrete evidence for the existence of these buildings is not found until a survey of 1893,⁸ although we know Archibald was living in the Orroral Valley from the mid-1860s.

Archibald, who was left in Scotland when his parents emigrated in 1838, joined the family in Australia in 1851.

In 1864, Archibald McKeahnne married Mary McMillan from Ayreshire, Scotland, in a ceremony at his parent's home at Booroomba. The Queanbeyan Courts Birth Register⁹ records the birth of their first child, Charles, at Orroral, County of Cowley on 14 October 1865. The fact that the birth was not registered until two-and-half-months after it occurred perhaps indicates the remoteness of that part of the country. Orroral Valley in the 1860s with Fitz' Hill to cross and sometimes flooded rivers, was an isolated area.

Archibald and Mary McKeahnne's other three children — Elizabeth 6/11/1867, Mary 5/12/1873 and Jane 7/11/1877 — also were born at Orroral.

Old maps show the existence of a shed and shepherd's hut in the second half of last century in the vicinity of where the Orroral Homestead now stands. It is possible that Mary McKeahnne gave birth to and began raising her four children in either of these two places, but one imagines that these buildings, which did not survive very long, would have been fairly primitive. If she did not have a comfortable dwelling, one might suppose Mary McKeahnne could have spent her confinements at her parents-in-laws' home at Booroomba, a journey of some 23km across a bridle track.

That the young family lived in the remote valley so early provides grounds for assuming the existence of a reasonably substantial building i.e. the Orroral Homestead, in the 1860s.

The oral history has it that the large slabs in the homestead building are of ash from further up the valley. An 1885 map records a small triangular plot near the junction of the Orroral River and Sawpit Creek reserved for the preservation and regrowth of native vegetation. (The existence of such a reservation so early appears to indicate that a considerable amount of timber had been taken from there and the creek name suggests a sawpit in the vicinity.) We have been unable to locate evidence of a sawpit and suggest this is something a future archaeological survey of the valley might reveal.

If, in fact, the Orroral Homestead was built in the 1860s, it was on land at that stage part of the "Orroral Run" held



N.P.A. members measuring-up on Coronet Peak preparatory to making a plan of the Aboriginal stone arrangement there — Photo Babette Scougall



by Charles McKeahnie senior. It was not until December 1878 that Archibald officially acquired land in his own name in the valley and that land was further to the south of the homestead plot. Archibald's plot was Portion 1, Parish: Orroral, Country Cowley, applied for under the 13th clause of the Lands Alienation Act 1861. It had a long fence valued at £20 and the survey maps show chock-and-log fencing running along the valley and around the area, later known as Portion 28, where the homestead stands.

Archibald McKeahnie and family lived at Orroral until the early 1880s when they moved to Wells Station, in the northern part of what is now the A.C.T.

Between 1883 and 1891, Archibald's youngest brother, Charles Henry, began buying up other holdings in the Orroral Valley.

Portion 28 was applied for by him as Conditional Purchase 93-56 on 10 August 1883 and the purchase was finalised on 15 February 1894.¹⁰

The previously mentioned November 1893 survey shows the name "Orroral" against a house valued at £100 and kitchen block £30. The value of other improvements included stable £2, fencing £5-5-0, ringing £5 (total £142-5-0). The survey map also shows two roads crossing the property — one marked "from Cooleman" and "to Gudgenby, Naas" along the western side of the valley and the other a track branching off on the eastern side of Orroral River "to Booroomba".

The map shows Portion 28 as "open undulating forest" with a large part ring-barked and quite extensive fencing.

It seems the family used the Orroral Valley holdings as an extension of their very successful Booroomba property.

In 1889, the Bank of N.S.W. held a mortgage on Orroral and the involvement of the bank continued until the 1920s¹⁰.

Charles Henry McKeahnie sold Orroral in 1911 to the Bootes family — the family that later owned "Gudgenby".

Albert George William Bootes, and for a while his brother, William Sydney Bootes, owned Orroral until 1928 when it was bought by Andrew Twynam Cunningham of Naas, Tharwa.¹¹ Albert Bootes still maintained a mortgage on it for a few years.

It is from the period of the Bootes ownership that we have been able to obtain our earliest first-hand oral history of Orroral homestead.

Mrs Mary Cregan, now of Narrabundah, A.C.T., used to work seasonally at Orroral, from before World War 1 until she married in 1919. She used to cook for the Albert ("Boy") Bootes family when they came over from "Bangus near Gundagai for cattle branding and to escape the heat."

The Bootes family used to travel by car to Naas where they would be met by the manager in a wagonette and horses to continue the journey beyond Fitz' Hill.

Mrs Cregan, the daughter of John and Rebecca Gregory, of Naas, would live at Orroral when the family was there and had her own room at the end of the kitchen block.

Mrs Cregan's memory of the homestead is that it was structurally the same as it is now. She remembers the fine craftsmanship of the house and believes it was built by

Archibald McKeahnie over a period of 10 years. She remembers the kitchen with a floor of large river-washed stones. Adjacent to the kitchen was a small store room with a dirt floor and a large tin-lined flour bin built by Archibald McKeahnie. The next room, used mostly as a bedroom, had a dirt floor and the end room, a board floor. A covered way, of curved iron and supported by posts, joined the kitchen block and homestead, over a flagged path. There was a ship's tank between the two buildings. The kitchen block verandah was netted in and the copper and washtubs were on the rear side. The well at the front of the house was then in operation.

Mrs Cregan recalls that Bootes fully stocked the place with Hereford cattle and that there were always lots of people about. The hut and nearby schoolhouse, built by Tom Oldfield, were often used for overflow accommodation. Mrs Cregan recalls that Orroral was considered an "old place" in those days, and the roof on the kitchen block was rusty.

Mr Bill Bootes, son of Boy Bootes, who owns Gudgenby and now lives in the Canberra suburb of Farrer, has childhood recollections of Orroral.¹³

He recalls that the two buildings were identical in dimension and that the homestead block was let into the hillside. The verandah floor was about 18" off the ground. The timber was alpine ash, taken from the tip end of the Orroral Valley.

Mr Bootes said the end room of the kitchen wing started to fall down in the 1920s. The storeroom was unpapered and one could look through the cracks.

In the latter part of Andy Cunningham's ownership of Orroral, he leased some of the land to Edward George (Ted) Gregory of Tharwa, A.C.T. (The late Ted Gregory was Mrs Cregan's brother). Ted Gregory bought the property from Andy Cunningham on 5/12/47 and held it until the land was acquired by the Commonwealth on 1 March 1964 to establish the NASA Tracking Station.

From 1 May 1964, the Gregorys were granted a tenancy of the property and Ted's son, Gordon, still runs cattle and sheep there.

Mrs Annie Gregory, widow of Ted Gregory, said Andy Cunningham built the woolshed and held a big dance to celebrate its opening in about 1930. Mrs Gregory remembers going in a T-model Ford and having to get out and walk while her husband reversed the car over Fitz' Hill.¹⁵

Mrs Gregory said Sid Cleary managed the property for Andy Cunningham, an enthusiastic aviator, who used to land his aircraft in the Orroral paddocks. He left from Orroral for the start of the big East-West Air Race in 1932.

Mrs Gregory only stayed occasionally at Orroral, usually on fishing trips. She and Mrs Cregan remember the fruit trees in the garden and also a profusion of periwinkle, gooseberries, lilac and red-hot pokers.

The construction of the deep space tracking station has altered the general atmosphere of Orroral Valley, but around the homestead, only a kilometre away, the tantalising whispers of more than a century of history remain.

References

- 1 E. Lea-Scarlett, *Queanbeyan District and People*, Redfern 1968, p. 3.
- 2 *ibid* p. 18.
- 3 J.F. Campbell, as quoted in Lea-Scarlett *ibid* p. 259
- 4 *N.S.W. Govt Gazette* 1847, p. 580-581.
- 5 *N.S.W. Govt Gazette* 1864, part 2, p. 2457. and J. Fusse 1 *The Squatters Directory for N.S.W.* 1865.
- 6 'Enterprising Gaels became Pioneer Pastoralists', by Tony Corp in *Canberra Historical Journal* No. 9 March 1982.
- 7 *ibid*
- 8 *Records*, Crown Lands Office, Sydney. Survey of 1893.
- 9 *Birth Register*, Queanbeyan Courts.
- 10 *Records*, Crown Lands Office Sydney.
- 11 *ibid*
- 12 Personal communication Mrs Mary Cregan, October 19 1982.
- 13 Personal communication Mr Bill Bootes, October 1982.
- 14 *Records*, Titles Office, Canberra.
- 15 Personal communication with Mrs Annie Gregory, October 1982.

Denise Robin

JUST BRIEFLY . . .

You are told elsewhere in this Bulletin that you can expect to receive your copy of the Field Guide to Native Trees in the A.C.T. in June, and right now, as we write these words, the F.G.S/C. and Friends of are flat out on final editing and proofreading. Gremlins and Murphy's Law permitting, the book will be ready in time for unveiling on the chosen date. (Don't ask me now, check the date later.) We regret that two of the contributors will miss the ceremony — Laurie Adams because he will be somewhere in the U.K. halfway through his five months' awayfromitall and a short stint at the Kew Gardens herbarium, and Babette Scougall because, with Muriel Rafferty and others, she will have set off a few days earlier for some tramping around Europe and the English lakes district. (We can't wait to see the photographs.)

Heritage Week in Albert Hall saw our newborn display committee in action. Under Anne Robertson's direction, Jill Davidson, Peter Arriens and Norma Price assembled a fine display and we particularly enjoyed the panel of plans and photos and information on the restoration of the Orroral homestead. Not only children explored the baskets of "things to touch" collected from the Gudgenby Nature Reserve, though children in their thousands certainly did on the Monday and Tuesday.

Having added restoration to our list of interests — conservation, reservation, preservation, education — we weren't surprised to hear that our two leading restorationists, Ross Carlton and Denise Robin, attended an N.P.W.S. seminar at Yarrangobilly on the restoration of the old Coolemine homestead. Past tense as you read, but future as we write, we can't tell you (guess) what of special interest to N.P.A. was (will be) gleaned from that interesting five-day exercise.

More and more we like the A.N.U. Continuing Education field trips. We believe that several of our members, Margaret Aston and Merle Bailey, the Andersons, the Pettits, the Storys, John Ashman and John Payne, Mieke van der Bergh, attended the bird school at Rotamah Is. in May, and of course you know that the leaders, Sonia Tidemann and Shirley Kral, also are N.P.A. members.

And have you heard that CCE is to repeat last year's Introduction to Ornithology course? Starting in July, it offers one-night-a-week instruction for ten weeks from a variety of experts. And while we're on the bird theme, as of now (April) there are still one or two vacancies for the Booligal bird school in October. Highly recommended by those of us who have gone before.

WANTED IMMEDIATELY: A fresh Just Briefly reporter; will need to start writing now for the September Bulletin. All enquiries to the Editor (542240).

THREATENED SPECIES

The Fund for Animals and the Total Environment Centre are producing a bulletin 'Threatened Species — Conservation Alert' which gives details of the species, the threat and suggested lobbying action to bring about their protection.

The 'Alert' published about every four weeks is free, but donations would be gratefully received. Further information may be obtained from Conservation Alert, P.O. Box 371, Manly, N.S.W. 2095.

ORRORAL HOMESTEAD PROGRESS REPORT

At the time of writing (April) a draft of the Conservation Plan, including recommendations, has been produced by our architectural consultant, Peter Corkery.

Peter's recommendations call for work to be carried out in three stages, which can overlap.

Stage one is an archeological survey. Originally it was not thought that this would be justified for a building of this type and size. However, as the significance of the building, both architecturally and historically, became apparent the matter received further consideration. When our archeological consultant was advised of the plans for drainage which included changing the fall of the land behind the house he advised that an archeological survey was desirable before any digging was undertaken. Accordingly, the working weekend which had been advertised for 26/27 March was cut back to a single day and the job schedule rearranged. As no allowance was made for archeological work in the original estimates, an application has been made to the Department of Territories and Local Government for a further grant to cover this. Indications are that this will be favourably received and it is hoped the work will be undertaken during June. It is expected that the work force will be made up in part by volunteers from the Archeological Society but it will also be possible for any of our members with an interest in this aspect of the project to take part. As well as a contribution to the project there will be a great opportunity to learn.

Stage two of the project is protective work, which includes the drainage improvement now deferred until after the archeological survey. Other protective measures include:—

- restoring the back verandah to its proper position, replacing missing sheets of iron and reactivating the back guttering.
- securing and weatherproofing the roof.
- capping the chimneys to prevent further damage to the masonry.
- covering and later reglazing the broken windows.
- temporarily covering the hole in the north gable.

This work was brought forward and much of it was completed on 27 March by an enthusiastic band of 17 volunteers who assembled in perfect autumn weather and spent a very enjoyable day at work.

Stage three will involve the actual work of restoration. This promises to be a fairly slow process and will include some work requiring fairly rare skills. In particular we will have to scarf new timber on to the bottom of each of the large pillars where they have rotted. **WE WOULD BE MOST PLEASED TO TALK TO ANYONE WHO CAN OFFER ASSISTANCE OR ADVICE WITH THIS TASK.** If you can help or if you know anyone who might be able to help please ring Ross Carlton on 863892 (H) or 452366 (W).

Although the project is proceeding a little more slowly than expected (due to factors outside our control — certainly not from any lack of interest on the part of members) it is proving a source of great satisfaction to many and will continue to do so for some time. It is making more immediate our involvement with the Gudgenby Nature Reserve. At this stage it is expected that there will be further opportunities for member involvement in May, June and August.

Ross Carlton

FOUND: An automatic Seiko watch in Budawang's near Darri pass. John Favre 303573.

FOR SALE: Austrian leather walking boots, rubber soles, fit 6-7, worn twice — \$60.

Heavy duty canvas tent 8' x 8' x 8', zippered sections, extension covers car, flyscreen windows, PVC floor, roof rack, little use — \$250 ono: 488774 (not 1-3p.m.).

MUNGO NATIONAL PARK

Did you come to the February General Meeting? Frank Clements showed slides and talked about a trip taken by a party of members and friends to Lake Mungo last September.

It's one of a system of six lakes fed by a former tributary of the Lachlan River, known as Willandra Billabong Creek. About 40,000 years ago Lake Mungo was more than nine metres deep with a shoreline of 200km. It teemed with Murray cod, golden perch and mussels. On its shores lived marsupials, rodents, reptiles, frogs and emus. These together with grass seeds, made a good diet for the groups of people who lived and died on its shores.

How do we know this?

After fluctuating for long periods, the lakes finally dried up some 15,000 years ago. As Mungo dried and the water area was reduced in size, westerly winds blew exposed quartz sands to cover the crescent shaped clay and soil banks or lunettes which had formed along the eastern shore over a period of 120,000 years. These shoreline lunettes preserved the debris of occupation. As the westerly winds continued to blow, the sands moved further to the east and the evidence of past years is being exposed.

Excavations at Mungo in 1969 recovered the cremated bones of a young female. These had been smashed and placed in a small pit. A radio carbon dating indicates that the burial took place about 26,000 years ago — the earliest evidence of cremation in the world. Only 500 metres away, further digging a few years later uncovered a supine male skeleton thickly dusted with powdered red ochre, subsequently dated at about 30,000 years.

Other extrusions provide evidence of the food eaten, the hearths used for cooking and warmth, and some stone tools and grindstones manufactured and used. Animal bones which have emerged include the hairy nosed wombat, Tasmanian devil and tiger, the three metre tall Procoptodon kangaroo and other extinct marsupials.

It was whilst studying 30,000 year old hearths from Mungo that scientists discovered a 'reversal' or deviation of 160° of the earth's magnetic field.

If you would like to see Mungo National Park for yourself, drive to Balranald then take the good-weather-only Arumpo — Ivanhoe road north west for 150km. Alternatively go to Mildura and go on one of the school holiday day tours, or drive the 110km yourself. Soon after entering the Park, declared in 1979, you will see the huge cypress pine log woolshed. This was built in 1969 on Gol Gol station by Chinese labourers, and had stands for 30 shearers who handled 50,000 sheep each season. You can camp by the western shore of the lake (pit toilets and limited tank water supply) on the red earth amidst saltbush and casuarinas. You'll see kangaroos, shingle back lizards, bearded dragons, Major Mitchell cockatoos, emus, chats and wrens to mention a few.

It's a 8km drive across the lake bed to the eastern shore where the lunette known as the Walls of China, has a wonderful display of wind eroded sedimentary units. Search around for hearths, shell middens, bones and stone artefacts — but please leave them alone.

The Ranger and his assistant were very helpful. They even brought their motor generator up to the camp one night to show slides of the area and explain some of its important features. A resident archeologist keeps an eye on the shifting sands — ever hopeful that the rain and wind will expose more evidence of Man's life on the shores of Lake Mungo.

Reverley Hammond

LIBRARY ACQUISITIONS

"The National Estate in 1981" — a report of the Australian Heritage Commission, 1982. Acc. No. 82/5

Directory of services available to the rural landholder to assist in the improvement of property for wildlife habitat. Ed. D.E. Baker, A.N.P.W.S., 1982. Acc. No. 82/6

"We need national parks" — papers presented to N.P.A.Q. 50th anniversary seminar, held at Cunningham's Gap National Park in May 1980. Acc. No. 82/7

Annual report of National Parks and Wildlife Foundation, N.S.W., 1982. Acc. No. 82/8

National Conservation Strategy for Australia: Living Resource Conservation for Sustainable Development. "Towards a national conservation strategy" — a discussion paper. Dept. of Home Affairs & Environment, 1982. Acc. No. 82/9

Annual report of Commonwealth Legal Aid Commission, 1979-80. Acc. No. 82/10

Public choice in Tasmania: aspects of the lower Gordon River hydro-electric development proposal. H. Saddler, J. Bennett, I. Reynolds, B. Smith, CRES, A.N.U., 1980. Acc. No. 82/11.

An economic evaluation of national parks. A.M. Ulph and I.K. Reynolds, CRES Monograph 4, CRES, A.N.U., 1981. Acc. No. 82/12

"Future demand and supply of electricity for Tasmania and other matters" — report of Senate Select Committee on S.W. Tasmania, 1982. Acc. No. 82/13

Bounty (Books) Act 1969. Acc. No. 83/1



Assorted cans and bottles gathered during the February swim/walk up the west bank of the Murrumbidgee above the Cotter confluence
— Photo Babette Scougall

MID WEEK WALKS

Following requests from several members, mid week walks have been included in the current Walks Program. The Committee has agreed to a trial of one per month for June, July and August. The requirement for such walks is not known, but they may appeal to those who have retired, those with young families, and others who have weekend commitments.

The degree of interest shown will be discussed at the next Walks committee meeting. The success of the program would then depend on people being willing to lead walks, and to offer suggestions for suitable venues.

If this program holds appeal for you, please go along to the walks and discuss them with the leaders. Alternatively you may like to phone me with your recommendations and requests.

Beverley Hammond
886577

NEW MEMBERS

The following new members are welcomed to the Association: Chris and Margitts Acker, Curtin; Monica Binder, Hackett; Dr Mary Brenan, Canberra; Mr and Mrs I. Brown, Curtin; Dr Jeffrey Clyde, Campbell; Dorothea Drevenkar, Acton; Mr and Mrs Davis, Canberra; Lyn Hall, Fisher; Roger and Sarah Hnatiuk, Cook; Mrs E. Jukes, Torrens; Lorna Jennaway, Weston; S.P. Kral, Pearce; Michael Kennedy, Canberra; Paul Kesby, Queanbeyan; Miranda Korzy, Lyons; Miss J. Norton, Woden; Helen

O'Brien, Hackett; Keith and Connie Owen, Melba; Robert W. Phillips, Mawson; Brian Palm, Campbell; W. Quinn, Red Hill; Bob and Wendy Ross, Cooma; Peter Rose, Richardson; Ralph Rabbidge, Turner; Noelene Smart, Yarralumla; Stephen Taylor, Hackett; Mr and Mrs D. Thompson, Fisher; John and Anne Tassie, O'Connor; Peter Wilson, Aranda; Rob and Jenny Wilson, O'Connor; Karen Wilson, Queanbeyan; Stephen Winderlich, Braddon; Stephen Wade, Braidwood; Simon Wild, Lyons; Carmen Zanetti, Ainslie.

WANTED

SECRETARY

ASSISTANT SECRETARY

This is an advance notice that Judy Payne and Fiona Brand will not be standing for election to the positions of Secretary and Assistant Secretary at the A.G.M. in August.

An early and urgent plea is made to any member who could take over either of these positions to talk things over with Judy or Fiona.

Briefly, the Assistant Secretary will in future be asked to handle all arrangements for the general meetings in addition to providing the usual stand-in and back-up assistance to the Secretary, who is responsible for Association administrative work.

THE FERAL PIG

All who have walked through the bushland of the A.C.T. and the surrounding mountains will have noticed the degradation by rooting of the native grassed areas by feral pigs. Their activities have become more noticeable in recent years even though pigs have been raised, escaped or released in the local area for a hundred years.

The feral pig in our area closely resembles domestic breeds and most probably came from farms in the district. Since despoiled pastures have been noted on the mountain tops of the boundary ridges of the A.C.T. with the pigs coming to feed there it is possible that some do migrate.

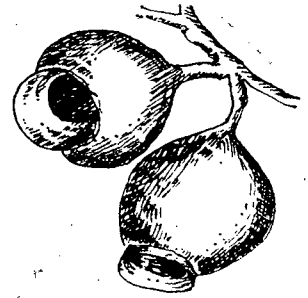
The pigs' habit of rooting, wallowing and omnivorous feeding habits results in serious degradation of the habitat. This poses threats to small animals, native birds and some of the flora because of the resulting changes in vegetation patterns of swamps and bogs. Soils cannot develop in a natural manner because of the rooting habit.

Studies of the habits of pigs have been carried out by trapping and tagging. Portable weldmesh traps have been found the most useful with the traps being entered by pushing against a lightly sprung door. The door cannot be opened by a pig from within. Traps are free fed for a number of days to allow the pigs to become accustomed to the trap and then set to trap the pigs pushing past the door. The habit of pigs in scouring the ground with their snouts leaves characteristic marks to identify that it is the pig coming to feed and not other animals.

Pigs favour moist areas for feeding and because of this do not move over great distances in the A.C.T. as they would in more open areas. Pigs eat mostly plant material with bracken and native geranium being most favoured in the A.C.T.. They will shift fallen timber possibly for grubs and will eat carrion beetles from rotten carcasses but avoid the carcass.

Of all the methods of extermination available trapping offers the most effective method of control. Shooting is too labour intensive and poisoning brings problems of control with dangers to non-target animals.

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 FOUR cents per kilometre (calculation to nearest dollar) be offered to the driver by each passenger accepting transportation. Drive distances quoted from the meeting point, for one way only, are approximate and for guidance only. Walk distances shown are total.

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 officer bearers and appointed leaders are absolved from any liability in respect of any injury or damage suffered whilst engaged on any such outing.

JUNE 1 WEDNESDAY MID WEEK WALK

Mt Ainslie

Ref: Canberra UBD

Leader: Olive Buckman 488774

Meet: Corner McKenzie and Grayson Streets, Hackett 9.20a.m. (Bus 385 leaves Civic at 8.48a.m. Alight Madigan Street and walk up Grayson Street.) For the first mid week walk, we have planned a moderately slow walk of 5 to 6 km up Mt Ainslie and across the tree covered hills to Hackett.

JUNE 5 SUNDAY WALK

Mount Blundell

Ref: Tidbinbilla 1:25,000

Leader: Hela Lindemann 515917

Meet: Eucumbene Drive, Cotter Road 8.30a.m. 8-10 km circular walk up Mt Blundell in the Blue Range. Some fire trails and pleasant bush walking off tracks. 15 km drive.

JUNE 5 SUNDAY WALK

Cotter Rocks

Ref: Rendezvous Creek 1:25,000

Leader: Phil Gatenby 815236

Meet: Kambah Shops 7.00a.m. 20 km walk from Orroral valley to granite boulders overlooking Cotter Gap. Climb of 550 metres, 41 km drive.

JUNE 11, 12, 13 WEEKEND PACK WALK

Ettrema

Ref: Nerriga 1:25,000

Leader: Tony Bayes 511707

Contact leader for details of this walk in the Budawangs.

JUNE 11, 12, 13 WEEKEND CAMP

Sth Moruya Head

Ref: Bateman's Bay 1:100,000

Leader: Charles Hill 958924

Beach and forest walking. Good bird area. Contact leader for arrangements. Booking ahead is necessary. 200 km drive.

JUNE 19 SUNDAY WALK

Gudgenby Huts

Ref: Yaouk 1:25,000

Leader: Beverley Hammond 886577

Meet: Kambah Shops 8.30a.m. 10-12 km walk, mostly easy grades, on fire trails and open scrub. Visit three huts in the vicinity of the pine forest. Suitable for beginners. 50 km drive.

JUNE 19 SUNDAY WALK

Mt Booth

Ref: Michelago and Colinton 1:25,000

Leader: Jack Smart 488171

Meet: Kambah Shops 8.00a.m. 16 km walk, steep climb up Mt Booth, south down the ridge, rough descent to dry creek and back to Brandy Flat. 60 km drive.

JUNE 26

Honeysuckle

Ref: Corin Dam 1:25,000

Leader: Les Pyke 812982

Meet: Kambah Shops 8.30a.m. 10 km medium walk along fire trail from tracking station, up to tower and return through light bush. 50 km drive.

JULY 3 SUNDAY WALK

North Tinderry

Ref: Tinderry and Michelago 1:25,000

Leader: Reg Alder 542240

Meet: Mugga Lane, Monaro Highway 8.00a.m. Walk about 15 km on fire trail, then a scramble through bush and large rocks to climb at the end. Magnificent views to the west of the Brindabellas, Scabby Range and beyond. 80 km drive.

JULY 6 WEDNESDAY MID WEEK WALK

O'Malley

Ref: Canberra UBD

Leader: Charles Hill 958924

Please telephone the leader to discuss a meeting place at O'Malley at 10a.m. Buses from Woden if required. This is a walk of approx. 9 km with a 160 m climb. You will go along the ridge parallel to Yamba Drive on grass, tracks and forest roads. Good views.

JULY 10 SUNDAY WALK

Mt Palerang

Ref: Braidwood 1:100,000

Leader: Charles Hill 958924

Meet: Canberra Railway Station 8.30a.m. Walk along forest road and back over prominent rocky ridge. Good views over Clyde Mountain and Braidwood area. 6 km walk with vertical rise of 240m. 50 km drive, last section rough but negotiable.

JULY 10 SUNDAY

Moonlight Hollow

Ref: A.C.T. 1:100,000

Leader: Lyn Richardson

Meet: Cotter Road, Eucumbene Drive 8.30a.m. 10-12 km walk in the Brindabellas, on trails, starting from near Bull's Head, going to Bendora Hut, with a 200 m climb.

JULY 16/17 PACK WALK**Hidden Valley**

Ref: Corang 1:50,000

Leader: Beverley Hammond 886577

A short walk with packs in the Budawangs, along fire trail, and rain forest tracks. Afternoon and morning walks without pack. Contact leader for details. 150 km drive.

JULY 17 SUNDAY WALK**Molonglo Gorge**

Ref: A.C.T. 1:100,000

Leader: Hansene Hansen 573453

Meet: Car park opposite Canberra Airport 10.30a.m. Pleasant 6 km walk up the gorge on a clearly defined, well graded track. Mossy rocks, small waterfalls, forest and grassland birds, and a variety of gums and other shrubs. 9 km drive. Picnic lunch.

JULY 24 SUNDAY WALK**Sentry Box**

Ref: Yaouk 1:50,000

Leader: Les Pyke 812982

Meet: Kambah Village Shops 8.00a.m. Walk for 10 km with a 470 m climb in open terrain. Particularly scenic, with many points of interest viewed from the top. Depending on wishes of party, there could be an extension to aboriginal stone arrangement. 60 km drive.

JULY 24 SUNDAY WALK**Iron Mine**

Ref: A.C.T. 1:100,000

Leader: Ian Currie 958112

Meet: Cotter barbecue area behind Hotel at 11.30a.m. for lunch. Walk up Paddy's River to the Iron Mine via the Limestone Caves. Tracks and forest roads.

JULY 31 SUNDAY WALK**Camel Ridge;Ref:**

Ref: Tidbinbilla 1:25,000

Leader: Reg Alder 542240

Meet: Cotter Road, Eucumbene Drive 8.30a.m. Climb up the forest road from Tidbinbilla for extensive views of the valley below. Snow? 12 km walk, 25 km drive.

JULY 31 SUNDAY SKI TRIP**Kiandra**

Ref: Kosciusko 1:100,000

Leader: Ann Wallace 897065 (W)

Cross country ski from Kiandra to 4 mile Hut and back. Some experience needed. Contact leader.

AUGUST 7 SUNDAY WORKING PARTY**Orroral Homestead**

Ref: Rendezvous Creek 1:50,000

Leader: Ross Carlton 863892

Bring your gloves, tools and lunch out to the homestead. If you haven't been out there recently, come and see the work done - we've made progress on the back verandah, the roof has been rain proofed and drainage works are in progress. Ring leader for details.

AUGUST 14 SUNDAY WALK**Billy Billy Rocks**

Ref: Corin Dam 1:50,000

Leader: Tony Bayes 511707

Meet: Cotter Road, Eucumbene Drive, Duffy 8.15a.m. 14 km walk up from the Tidbinbilla valley to climb these granite boulders at the headwater of Paddy's River. Fairly rough going with steep climbs in parts.

AUGUST 13/14 WEEKEND CROSS COUNTRY SKIING**Sawpit Creek**

Ref: Kosciusko 1:100,000

Leader: Denise Robin 814837

Camp at Sawpit Creek. Touring depending on snow and weather conditions. Suitable for families and beginners. Contact leader.

AUGUST 21 SUNDAY WALK**Hospital Hill**

Ref: Yaouk 1:25,000

Leader: Hela Lindemann 515917

Meet: Kambah Village Shops 8.30a.m. A 10 km walk from Mt Boboyan and along the ridge to Hospital Hill. See the post-fire regrowth in Gudgenby Nature Reserve.

AUGUST 20/21 PACK WALK**The Castle**

Ref: Corang 1:25,000

Leader: Phil Gatenby 815236

Medium hard walk from Yadboro. Contact leader. 150 km drive.

AUGUST 28 PRESIDENT'S BARBECUE**Pierce's Creek**

Ref: A.C.T. 1:100,000

Leader: President

Come to Pierce's Creek beyond Cotter and bring a barbecue lunch. Short walks. Watch out for N.P.A. signs.

SEPTEMBER 4 WALK**Sam's Creek**

Ref: Yaouk 1:25,000

Leader: Frank Clements 317005

Meet: Kambah Village Shops 8.00a.m. 20 km walk from Boboyan Pine Forest through the saddle to Sam's Creek, possibly circling Mt Gudgenby on the way back. 50 km drive.

SEPTEMBER 11 SUNDAY WALK

See next Bulletin.

SEPTEMBER 10/11 PACK WALK**Brogo River**

Ref: Cobargo 1:100,000

Leader: Phil Gatenby 815236

A medium hard walk in the Kybayan Range east of Cooma. Contact leader. 160 km drive.

SEPTEMBER 17 SATURDAY NATIVE RAMBLE**Black Mountain**

Ref: Canberra UBD

Leader: George Chippendale 812454

Meet: Belconnen Way Entrance 9.30a.m. Morning ramble to see the flowers, for those aged 4 to 80. Bring morning tea. Finishes 12.00.

NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION OF THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY INC.

Inaugurated 1960

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Annual Subscription Rates

1 July-30 June:	Family members \$12	Student members \$5
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1 January-30 June:	Half specified rate
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DEADLINE DATES for NPA Bulletin contributions: 15 July, 15 October, 15 December, 15 April

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 organized field outings, meetings or any other means.

Co-operation 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 A.C.T.

OUTINGS SUMMARY

June			
1	Wednesday	Mt Ainslie	Mid Week Walk
5	Sunday	Mt Blundell	Walk
5	Sunday	Cotter Rocks	Walk
11/12/13	Weekend	Ettrema	Pack Walk
11/12/13	Weekend	Sth Moruya Head	Car Camp
19	Sunday	Gudgenby Huts	Walk
19	Sunday	Mt Booth	Walk
26	Sunday	Honeysuckle	Walk
July			
3	Sunday	Nth Tinderry	Walk
6	Wednesday	O'Malley	Mid Week Walk
10	Sunday	Mt Palerang	Walk
10	Sunday	Moonlight Hollow	Walk
16/17	Weekend	Hidden Valley	Pack Walk
17	Sunday	Molonglo George	Walk
24	Sunday	Sentry Box	Walk
24	Sunday	Iron MineW	Walk
31	Sunday	Camel Ridge	Walk
31	Sunday	Kiandra	Ski Trip
August			
7	Sunday	Orroral	Working Party
14	Sunday	Billy Billy Rocks	Walk
13/14	Weekend	Sawpit Creek	Cross Country Skiing
21	Sunday	Hospital Hill	Walk
20/21	Weekend	The Castle	Pack Walk
28	Sunday	Pierce's Creek	President's Barbecue
September			
4	Sunday	Sam's Creek	Walk
11	Sunday	See next Bulletin	Walk
10/11	Weekend	Brogo River	Pack Walk
17	Saturday	Black Mt	Nature Ramble
18	Sunday	Tidbinbilla Peak	Walk
24/25	Weekend	Big Hole	Car Camp
25	Sunday	See next Bulletin	Walk

GENERAL MEETINGS

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

- JUNE** — Thursday 16 1983.
Allan Fox, Photographer and Environmental Consultant.
Subject: Planning for people in the Gammon Ranges National Park, South Australia.
- JULY** — Thursday 21 1983.
Norman Morrison, N.P.A. member.
Subject: Insects — Facts and Fallacies.
- AUGUST** — Thursday 18 1983.
Annual General Meeting and Election of Officers followed by slides of the year's activities.