



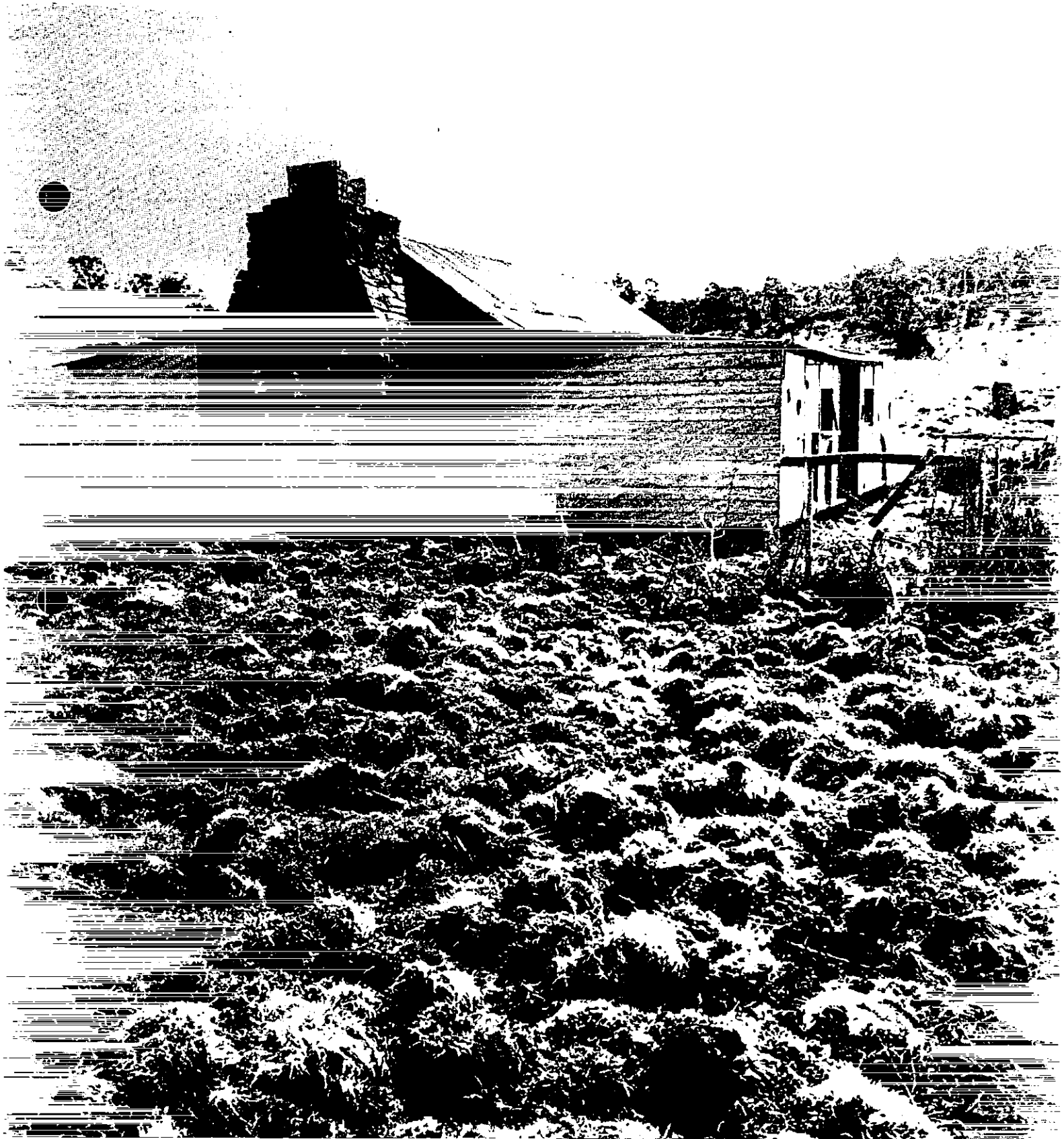
NPA Bulletin

National Parks Association A.C.T.

Vol. 22 No. 2 3 December 1984

\$1.30

Registered by Australia Post Publication No NBH0857 ISSN 0727-8837



NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION OF THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY INC.

Inaugurated 1960

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.

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The NPA of the ACT Office is located in Kingsley Street, Acton. Hours 9.30a.m. to 2p.m. Tuesday to Thursday.

Annual Subscription Rates		(1 July-30 June)	
Family members	\$15	Student members	\$6
Single members	\$12	Corporate members	\$8
Pensioners	\$ 6	Bulletin only	\$8

For new members joining between:

1 January-31 March:	Half specified rate
1 April-30 June:	Annual Subscription — 15 months membership benefit.

DEADLINE DATES for NPA Bulletin contributions:
15 July, 15 October, 15 December, 15 April

Articles by contributors may not necessarily reflect Association opinion or objectives.

PRINTED BY DEREK KELLY 541226
TYPESET BY BELCONNEN TYPESETTING — 547390

CLASSIFIED

If you have anything to sell, swap or whatever, post your advertisement to the Editor NPA Bulletin, Box 457 GPO, Canberra, 2601, or drop it into the NPA Office, Kingsley Street, Acton. Advertisements are restricted to members of this Association and (from the next edition) to 20 words each, and are free. Closing date for the next *Bulletin* is 15 January 1985.

For sale

Half Moon — a beautiful 900 hectare Wildlife Refuge on the Mongarlowe River near Braidwood, NSW. Three parts of it are now for sale: a modern 3-bedroom, pine house with electricity and open fire and 34 hectares of land, a 156 hectare block and a 142 hectare block (\$85,000, \$75,000 and \$70,000 each). Phone Stewart or Mary Harris, (062) 513646.

Snow chains, loose type, 14", \$15. Kevin Frawley. 823080.

Tandem bike, \$290. Fiona Brand. 479538.

Cloth badges with NPA of the ACT logo, \$1.20 at meeting, \$1.50 posted. Write to GPO Box 457, Canberra 2601, or phone (062) 571063.

Field Guide to the Native Trees of the ACT, \$4 at meetings, \$5 posted. Write to GPO Box 457, Canberra 2601, or phone (062) 571063.

Wanted to buy

Adult buoyancy vest, for canoeing. Kevin Frawley. 823080.

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Cover

An ugly scene this time, for a good reason. This photograph of Brayshaws Hut represents three of our main concerns in the Namadgi area — neglect of our cultural heritage, thistle overgrowth (everywhere) and feral pig problem. The foreground is not a newly ploughed paddock. It is a massive tract of land dug up by pigs while rooting for food. For more lectures of Brayshaws, turn to page 15.

PRESIDENT'S FOREWORD

1984 has been a good year for the Association. Meetings and walks have been well attended with some new leaders and new destinations appearing. We began the year with a seminar on the Murrumbidgee and followed it up with participation in Heritage Week. In the middle of the year came the very welcome news that Gudgenby Nature Reserve was to form part of a greatly expanded area to be known as Namadgi National Park. At last! Achievement of the goal for which the Association was formed more than 20 years ago. In October, the first meeting was held of the Namadgi Consultative Committee. Our representation on this committee will ensure that we keep abreast of what is happening in the park as well as giving us a voice in the formulation of policy. In this way the present membership will be continuing the work of our predecessors who lobbied so patiently for so long. In September, Neville Esau represented us at the annual conference of the Australian National Parks Council and was re-elected as Secretary of that body.

We received additional Government support this year which enabled us to consider an office of our own and an office assistant. By the time you read this, the office, which is situated near the Environment Centre, should be open for business, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays between 9.30a.m. and 2.00p.m. It is staffed by Kay Dugan, whom we welcome to our organisation. Why not drop in and meet Kay and make use of the office? Eventually we expect it to offer a number of services to members.

Finally, I would like to wish you all a very happy Christmas and look forward to enjoying the bush together again in the new year.

NEW STRUCTURE FOR COMMITTEE

Following extensive discussions earlier this year the NPA Committee has decided to establish a number of new sub-committees. It is hoped that these new sub-committees will improve the operation of the Association in particular areas, spread the work load, and involve a greater number of members in the Association's activities.

So far, three new sub-committees have been formed: the Namadgi, the Environment and the Finance and Membership Sub-committees. Brief reports from the conveners of these sub-committees appear below.

The Committee hopes to establish other sub-committees during the coming year covering Bulletin policy and production, and meetings and other social activities.

When fully operating these new sub-committees, along with the existing Outings Sub-committee (which continues in operation) will be able to plan and operate many activities vital to the association's aims and objectives.

Any member who would like to be involved in these activities or would like more information can contact any committee member. Any offers of help will be gratefully received.

NAMADGI SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT

Following the declaration of Namadgi National Park, a Namadgi Sub-committee has been established to replace the Gudgenby Sub-committee and to 'keep an eye' on the development of that park and to offer help and advice whenever we can. The first meeting was attended by Reg Alder, Fiona Brand (convener), Ross Carlton, Denise Robin, Babette Scougall and Robert Story, but any other interested members are most welcome to come to future meetings.

The Sub-committee congratulated Denise Robin on being appointed as NPA representative to the Namadgi Consultative Committee, which met for the first time on 3 October. This widely representative group will advise the Minister for Territories and Local Government, Mr Uren, and will carefully study the Plan of Management, which will be ready for comment by June 1985.

The aspects of management that our Sub-committee would like to have discussed are vermin control (especially pigs), weed control, culture conservation, walking tracks and education, termination of leases, access into the park and bush-fire control.

The Sub-committee is already in contact with the Kosciusko Huts Association about the preservation of historical buildings in the Namadgi National Park.

ENVIRONMENT SUB-COMMITTEE

The Environment Sub-committee will be responsible for handling environmental matters other than Namadgi National Park. At the moment the agenda of items of interest stretches from Daintree in far north Queensland to the Murrumbidgee corridor. There are a number of ways members can become involved e.g. attending sub-committee meetings, bringing items to the sub-committee's notice, carrying out research on topics of concern. Members who would like to become involved are most welcome.

Kevin Frawley (H) 823080 (W) 688556

FINANCE AND MEMBERSHIP SUB-COMMITTEE:

Members of this Sub-committee have identified a number of aspects of the Association's management where improvement might be achieved.

Acting on Sub-committee recommendations in the first such area addressed, the NPA Committee has approved a broad investment policy aimed to maximize return on moneys held whilst achieving adequate security and liquidity. This policy is now being applied and it is hoped will improve the financial strength of the Association.

Members of Finance and Membership Sub-committee are: Syd Comfort (convener), Neville Esau, Ian Currie, Ross Carlton (ex officio), Ian Haynes and Jan Ogden.

NEW MEMBERS

The following new members are welcomed to the Association:—

George Adamaitys, Curtin; Peter and Clare Best, Weetangera; Keren Bisset, Aranda; Robert Brown, Red Hill; Jack Cairns, Scullin; George Carter, Aranda; Philip and Carole Castle, Rivett; Lin Chaffer, Cook; Mary Devonshire, Canberra City; Judith and Peter Durston, Yarralumla; Monty and Colleen Fox, Rivett; R. and H. Franzi, Jamison; Nicholas Gascoigne, Weetangera; John Gibson, Holt; Marcia Humbley, Curtin; Pamela and Russel Kefford, Yass; Mr and Mrs Gary Klentworth; Griffith; Valerie Lavington, Narrabundah; Ian and Phyl McKillop, Forrest; Dr M. Middleton, ANU; John Morgan, Latham; Gavin Newton, Scullin; Shin Koy and Ann Ng, Kambah; Alice and Ray Pelham-Thorman, Forrest; Denis Peters, Phillip; Gutta Schoeffl, Queanbeyan; Barbara Silverstone, Garran; David Smith, Holder; Ann and John Tassie, O'Connor; Tidbinbilla Pioneers Association, Tharwa; Kevin and Patricia Totterdell, Curtin; M/s L.R. Verrall, Curtin; Judith Weeling, Ainslie; G. and M. Wilford, Torrrens.

Robert Bell, Mawson; Mr and Mrs G. Caitechon, Cook; Malcolm and Karen Fyfe, Weetangera; Prudence Hall, Campbell; Norman Johnston, Downer; Les and Jenny Lopez, Queanbeyan; Bruce and Gail Tivendale, Downer; David Truman, Hawker; M.A. Winsburg, Dickson.

LONG-TERM GOALS ACHIEVED

Report of the first meeting of the newly formed Namadgi National Park Consultative Committee written by Denise Robin, our Association's representative.

3 October 1984 represented something of a landmark for the National Parks Association of the ACT.

It was the day on which two of the Association's major objectives were officially achieved — the formal declaration of a magnificent national park in the Territory and the inaugural meeting of the Namadgi National Park Consultative Committee.

Hot off the Government Printer's presses, a special issue of the Commonwealth of Australia Gazette was greeted with jubilation at the consultative committee meeting.

The Minister for Territories and Local Government, Mr Tom Uren, waved the sheet happily and commented that in his political career (now spanning some 26 years) it was one of his proudest achievements. Mr Uren expressed his desire that the new committee would provide expert advice to him on the planning, development and management of Namadgi. He said it would play a key role in focussing attention on the opportunity for public participation in the development of the plan of management for Namadgi. He expected the plan to be presented to him for formal acceptance towards the end of 1985.

Mr Uren said that in charging the Consultative Committee with its task, he wanted it to recognise and support one important theme.

'Namadgi is to be in every sense of the phrase a park for the people,' he said. 'I want it to be a living part of the ACT community, available for all to use throughout the year, but in a manner in keeping with the need to protect the important natural and human attributes of the area.'

'To have such a magnificent park on the doorstep of a national capital is a rare experience and one I am sure that will become increasingly appreciated by both residents and visitors. I look forward to your advice and assistance in making that park available to them.'

The official terms of reference for the Committee, adopted at the meeting, are:

The Committee shall advise the Minister for Territories and Local Government and/or the Department of Territories and Local Government on matters relating to the planning, development and management of Namadgi National Park. Accordingly the Committee shall:

- a) advise the Minister and/or the Department on the planning and development needs of Namadgi National Park;
- b) advise the Minister and/or the Department on major management issues affecting Namadgi National Park;
- c) provide the Minister with a point of liaison and communication with community interests in relation to Namadgi National Park;
- d) advise the Minister on proposals to mobilise community interest in Namadgi National Park, e.g. the establishment of a Friends of Namadgi Trust Fund to finance projects in Namadgi.

The Committee consists of 15 members, 13 appointed in an individual capacity by the Minister (either having specific expertise or representing an organisation with a special interest in Namadgi, or both) and two members representing ex-officio the Department of Territories and Local Government.

Members are to be appointed for terms up to two years. Retiring members may be re-appointed.

The Department of Territories and Local Government is to provide Secretariat support to the Committee.

The membership comprises:

Chairman

Dr Alec COSTIN — former Senior Principal Research Scientist, CSIRO, and Visiting Fellow, Centre for Resource and Environmental Studies, ANU; author of *Ecosystems of the Monaro* and other publications; one of the foremost

experts on conservation of highland vegetation and soils in Australia.

Members

Miss Cheryl-Lee BELL — Primary Teacher from Telopea Park School, specialising in Environmental and Aboriginal Studies.

Mr Peter BUCKMASTER — President of the Rural Lessees Association (ACT); committee member of the ACT National Tree Program; rural landholder at Uriarra, ACT.

Mr Peter CULLEN — Principal Lecturer, Natural Resources, Canberra College of Advanced Education; consultant to government on several water quality issues, notably those affecting Lake Burley Griffin and Lake Ginninderra.

Ms Irene DAVIES — Conservation Officer of the Canberra Bushwalking Club, one of several user groups closely associated with Namadgi.

Ms Sue FEARY — MA student at ANU, studying pre-historic settlement patterns in the ACT; past Vice-President, ACT Archeological Society.

Mr Ian FRASER — Director, Conservation Council of the South-East Region and Canberra; former Education Officer, South Australian Conservation Council.

Mr Bruce LEAVER — Director, South-East Region, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service; responsible for management of 15 national parks and 26 nature reserves in NSW; member, ACT Bush Fire Council.

Ms Denise ROBIN — Member, ACT National Parks Association; Assistant Director (Information), Australian Heritage Commission.

Dr Ken SHEPHERD — Senior Lecturer, Department of Forestry, ANU; member, Institute of Foresters.

Mrs Patricia MIDDLETON — Member, Canberra Visitor and Convention Bureau.

Dr Graham YAPP — Senior Research Scientist, CSIRO Division of Water and Land Research; committee member, Royal Australian Institute of Parks and Recreation (ACT).

One additional member to be appointed.

Mr John TURNER — First Assistant Secretary, ACT Parks and Conservation Service.

Dr Bryan PRATT — Assistant Secretary, Land Management Branch, ACT Parks and Conservation Service.

Committee Secretariat

Dr David SHORTHOUSE — Biologist for Namadgi National Park will head the Secretariat of the Consultative Committee.

At the first meeting David Shorthouse said the Gudgenby Area Plan was expected to be published within the next two months and the policy plan for the Cotter some time after that.

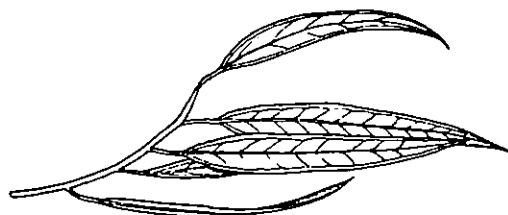
Public advertisements will be placed soon calling for comments on these plans. The intention is that discussions will be held with community groups and interested individuals in the development of the draft plan, expected to be ready by June 1985.

NPA's Namadgi Sub-committee will be co-ordinating our comments, so please get in touch with the convenor, Fiona Brand, or myself, if you have any contribution to make.

David Shorthouse will start the process of public consultation rolling with NPA at our next general meeting on 19 November — be sure to come.

The consultative committee members at present are looking at a discussion paper prepared by the Parks and Conservation Service as a basis for management of Namadgi. This will be discussed at the next meeting on 6 December.

A day-long field trip is to be held on 30 October to acquaint committee members with issues in Namadgi. Subsequently the committee intends to meet every three to four months.



ANPC CONFERENCE REPORT

Neville Esau

The Eleventh Annual ANPC Conference was held in Adelaide over the weekend of 22-23 September. National Parks associations (or their equivalents) from States and Territories except Tasmania and NT were represented at the Conference.

The Conference considered a large number of motions from delegates covering topics on conservation, national parks and land management, as well as ANPC policies. The NPA of the ACT put forward five motions:

- That ANPC recommend to the NPA's of Victoria, NSW and the ACT and to the ACF that a conference on the conservation of Australia's alpine areas be jointly organised by these bodies and held in 1985. This was carried.
- That ANPC sponsor the publication of pamphlets and posters explaining the need for rainforest conservation and promoting the dedication of the Greater Daintree National Park. This was lost.
- That ANPC make submissions to the Australian and NSW Governments requesting that adequate steps be taken to manage the Willandra Lakes World Heritage Area to preserve the attributes for which the area has been included on the World Heritage List. This was carried.
- That ANPC endorse the ACF policy on Antarctica and support the concept of a World Park for the Antarctic Region. This was withdrawn after discussions with delegates.
- That ANPC recommend to the NPA's of Queensland, NSW and the ACT and to the Nature Conservation Society of SA that they co-operate to develop further the proposal for a tri-state Simpson Desert National Park. This was carried.

One of the major themes to emerge from the Conference was the need for improved co-operation between federal and state authorities both to enable the dedication of more national parks and to improve the management of existing parks. Delegates well understood the constitutional and organisational difficulties in achieving these aims. A number of motions, however, will enable the ANPC executive to explore, in an imaginative and constructive way, methods to encourage co-operation between governments and authorities.

Following the Conference a number of delegates were able to have discussions with the Director of the SA National Parks Service. These discussions explored the possibilities for further federal/state co-operation, amongst other topics. Delegates were pleased to find that the Director had a very positive attitude to such co-operation and he suggested a number of ways for member bodies to further this work in their respective states.

The Conference also heard reports from member bodies on conservation activities for 1983/84, as well as the usual executive report and treasurer's statement. The Conference decided to make a major change in the funding mechanism for future conferences to enable member bodies to send one delegate using ANPC funds. Previously a pooling arrangement applied where each member paid the average cost for one delegate. It is hoped this change will lessen the charge to members for attending the conference, and encourage members to send their second delegate to the conference.

The 1983/84 executive was re-elected for a further year. The executive is:

President	Rick Nelson	NSW
Treasurer	Dick Johnson	Victoria
Secretary	Neville Esau	ACT.

A full report of the motions will be contained in the Conference Minutes which will be issued in due course. Any member wishing further information can contact me or any member of the NPA committee.

TUGGERANONG — TOO LATE?

Reg Alder

The planning for Tuggeranong raced inexorably along from the late 1960s and it was not until the early 1980s that a baton was taken from the NCDC by environmentalists to divert the town centre and west bank development.

Examination of the NCDC annual reports from 1968-69 progressively show very plainly the planning intentions of the NCDC to develop both sides of the Murrumbidgee and to locate the town centre close to the river.

By 1970 both sides of the Murrumbidgee were to be developed and in 1973 Tuggeranong Town was to be situated along the eastern bank of the Murrumbidgee. A 1974 photograph showed the position of the town centre near Pine Island and on a structure plan the development of the west bank, open spaces, town centre and lake are shown. Progressive years showed the filling in of detail and it became increasingly plain from the road plans that the town centre could only be finally located in one position. Then in 1978 and 1979 the style of the annual reports changed and from then on, no mention is made of planning projections.

It was not until 1980 that the Commission, possibly because of increased opposition to their plans, canvassed the main metropolitan issues in public discussion papers at meetings of the Canberra community. Conservation groups, including the NPA, recommended the protection of the Murrumbidgee corridor. A decision was made that the development of Lanyon and the West Murrumbidgee would be postponed until AFTER Gungahlin. The threat still remains. The role and structure of the Tuggeranong Town Centre was to be re-assessed and development deferred.

The NCDC's intentions have been very plain and publicly available, albeit tucked away in small paragraphs in their annual reports but the message has been there for all to see who would look. It demonstrates that environmentalists should always be alert and looking for trends long before development commences. The Town Centre cannot readily be shifted because of the road patterns. It should be remembered that the development of the west bank of the Murrumbidgee has only been deferred until after Gungahlin and the planned average width of the Murrumbidgee corridor is only 400 metres with an area of 800 hectares.

Continual vigilance is necessary.

NCDC PLANS FOR THE ACT

Alastair Morrison

I would suggest that as many Association members as possible should make a point of reading the recently published Policy/Development Plan of the NCDC entitled *Metropolitan Canberra*. It contains considerable material of environmental interest. The Plan is available for purchase at the NCDC office.

There are two main features of urban development intended for the ACT and both have implications for open spaces within the urban area. In the north of the ACT there will be a major urban development in Gungahlin complete with a town centre and a number of suburbs. The logic of developing Gungahlin is inescapable. It will round off Canberra on its northern side and settlement will be conveniently located for access both to Civic and Belconnen. But the necessary provision of improved communications will have a considerable impact on the Ainslie/Majura ridge. The NCDC intends to build a major 6-lane highway called Monash Drive along the western slopes of the ridge. This will involve the destruction of much natural bushland.

Monash Drive will be part of the Eastern Parkway along the eastern periphery of Canberra. A Western Parkway will also be built. It is difficult at present to see exactly what impact the Western Parkway will have but it could involve

the loss of part of the Black Mountain Reserve.

In the south the NCDC is pressing on with its elongated Y-plan which will eventually extend Tuggeranong as far south as Tharwa. The town centre will be built almost on the banks of the Murrumbidgee. The NCDC had originally intended simultaneously to extend urban development across the Murrumbidgee into West Murrumbidgee. Mr Uren has ruled against this but it seems unlikely that this ruling will last for very long. Without West Murrumbidgee the Tuggeranong Town Centre, to which all the main roads in the area have been designed to lead, will be in a very isolated position. It seems likely that the business people of Tuggeranong will agitate energetically to have West Murrumbidgee restored in order to increase their turnovers. With the advent of self-government they may find some powerful support among aspiring ACT politicians. Whatever happens the pressures on the already very narrow Murrumbidgee corridor are bound to increase substantially.

It must seem surprising that the NCDC has not sought to consolidate Canberra into a more compact form by urban development in the Majura Valley, Jerrabomberra and the large area between Weston Creek and Belconnen. It hardly makes economic sense to reserve the latter entirely for pine planting. In the case of the other two areas the NCDC alleges that the presence of an Army Field Firing Range precludes development in Majura and that the needs of HMAS Harman forbids development in Jerrabomberra. Taken at its face value, and including the Belconnen Naval Station, this means that the Defence Department is a major obstacle to the consolidation of Canberra.

Further afield the *Metropolitan Canberra* paper contains two items of special long term interest to our Association. A new dam will eventually be built below the confluence of the Naas and Gudgenby Rivers. To be known as the Tennent Reservoir it will cover a very large area indeed. It will flood all the pastoral land above the dam and back waters up far beyond. It will not be needed for a number of years but by the turn of the century — which is not so very far away — the project will be very much further advanced. The location and extent of the reservoir are shown on several maps in the paper.

The other and perhaps more surprising proposal is for a loop road from Mount Franklin to the Corin Dam as well as the upgrading of the Mount Franklin Road. The rationale for this proposal is to complete a recreation and tourist route from the Cotter to Tharwa via the Brindabella Road. This would be a major construction work and would have a profound impact on the mountain environment. Completion of such a road would be bound to revive demands for skiing facilities on Franklin and/or Gingera. It would, of course, be a very expensive development and there is no likelihood of the funds being made available in the foreseeable future. But it would be wrong to underestimate the ability of the tourism lobby to push for such a development.

Editor's Note

Copies of the NCDC Paper are held by the Association and are available for loan to members.

ANOTHER BUDAWANG 'CHALLENGE'

Olive Buckman

I had backpacked to Folly Point in '82, and Hidden Valley in '83, which set me thinking of a combination of the two — perhaps over a three day weekend.

In May '84, capable leader Philip Gatenby not only put this on the program, but also assured me it was within my capabilities — the only snag being that it would only be a TWO day weekend.

So — with morale boosted — seven of us left Canberra at 5.30a.m. (!) to drive to Newhaven Gap (the road to Sassafras was as bad as ever and beyond, even worse), and by 9.15a.m. we were on the track at a smart pace.

On reaching Hidden Valley, we crossed it and proceeded to climb some 80m up the side of Mt Sturgiss, hauling and squeezing up and over boulders in rock niches, rewarded

with magnificent views and a welcome billy with lunch.

No more tracks now till Sunday afternoon, we battled our way down the eastern side of Mt Sturgiss to Mt Elliot and followed round under its cliff line, then steeply down through the bush to the beautiful nature-carved gorge of Kilpatrick Creek. A trip along to Sluice Box Falls, a short climb up again, and camp. By 6.00p.m. we had all eaten, darkness had long descended, and after being upright for 14 hours, we now faced a similar period round the fire and/or snug in our sleeping bags.

In spite of some rain during the night, Sunday dawned clear and sunny and by 9.00a.m. we were off again, facing the toughest part of the weekend. Looking at the map, the distance for the morning seemed a mere 'stroll' . . . but far from it! We scrambled up and down several ridges, crossed minor creeks, bushbashed through dense scrub, avoided leeches, admired tea trees, banksia and other flora, but cursed the small eucalyptus, melaleuca and banksia trunks, growing so close together, that one caught either oneself or one's rucksack every few minutes.

However, some three hours later, having crossed Camp- ing Rock Creek and admired the lovely Munnuldi Falls, gathered umpteen gashes, scratches and bruises, to say nothing of a constant wet bottom sliding down slimy rocks, we slowly pushed up the steep 200-odd metres to the foot of the mighty rock face of Folly Point. Now came the final challenge — Watson's Pass — a mass of vertical, narrow rock crevices, overhanging boulders and slippery sheer rock walls. It was a case of 'packs off and pass 'em up', then trying to find hand and foot holds (to say nothing of knees and bottoms) to haul ourselves to the top. With the occasional hand from above, or push from below, we all managed — no alternative anyway! The final rock face, done with the help of three permanent iron pitons and a dangling chain, was child's play! Never had copious cups of tea or coffee tasted more wonderful, after over four very exhausting hours.

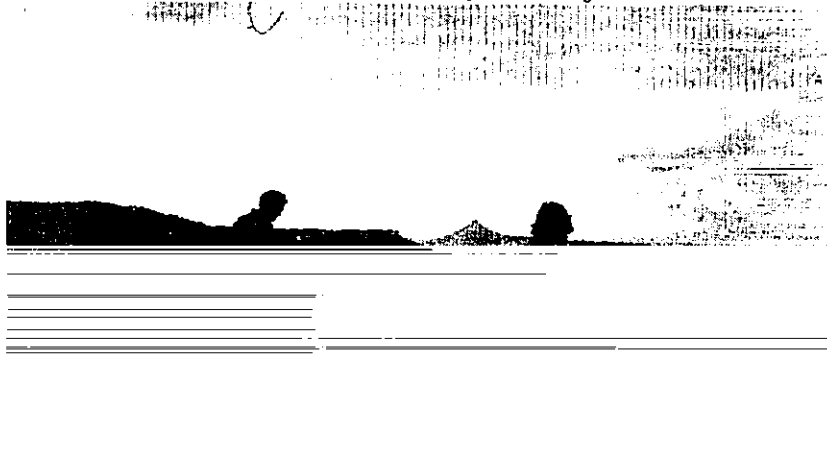
Around 2.00p.m. it was 'off again', soon to deviate and sit at the lookout at Folly Point. The day was exceptionally clear, and once again I thought, 'this MUST be one of the loveliest of all views of the Budawang's'.

Looking to the right, we could trace most of our trek, from the top of Mt Sturgiss, Mt Elliot, down and up and round the steep slopes below, some of us wondering how on earth we had covered such rugged country. Ahead and to the left were Mt Tarn, Donjon Mountain, Shrouded Gods Mountain, the Castle, (see Bulletin December '83) Byangee Walls, Pigeon House and masses more peaks with deep valleys in between — a view one does not easily forget.

Home, hot baths and comfy beds beckoned us all, as Philip set a fast pace along the track for the last 2-3 hours. Unusually thick mud, swampy areas, and overgrown bushes did their best to slow our speed, but we still reached the cars in time to drive the worst section of the road (?) out to Sassafras before dark.

Looking back, it was one of the most challenging — but unforgettable and enjoyable — weekend backpacks I have accomplished, thanks to good company, good weather and excellent leadership.

Some of the party on Folly Point looking towards Pigeon House.



CAPE TRIBULATION NATIONAL PARK — THE DAINTREE CONFRONTATION

Reg Alder

Although I did not actively participate in the Daintree confrontation against the Queensland style of law and politics, it was quite an experience to be at the site in August and gain some first hand knowledge from those willing to test their wits against authority and risk physical injury.

In the first instance the publicity about the road has centred on the fact that it is a road through the Daintree rainforest to a settlement at Bloomfield and so makes a connection to Cooktown. It was to be a rudimentary road suitable only for 4WD vehicles. What has not been given particular mention is that the road is through Cape Tribulation National Park, the first section of which is along the coastal fringe, where it makes a great scar on the escarpment. Debris from it rolls down the hillsides to the beachfront. Here, a national parks officer was used to read the 'Riot Act' to blockaders, declaring that it was illegal to trespass within 50 metres of the road. Although the desecration of the rainforest would be no less even if the land was undeclared, the motives of a local shire council putting an access road through a national park to another shire without any gain to its own electors must be questioned.

Our first camp was at the caravan park at the small village of Daintree on the southern bank of the Daintree River. Here a motor cyclist told us about his experiences of travelling the present road to the start of the new. He described the road as horrific mentioning that he had twice fallen off his bike. The road crosses the Daintree River by vehicular ferry, climbs around steep ridges, crosses many creeks (which, even in the dry, are only just negotiable), winds close to the beaches, then cuts across coastal flats and hills to the last settlement. Later, a Western Australian camper told us how he had given financial and moral support to the blockade.

On the way north we passed an enormous subdivision in the rainforest which has received national publicity. All the roads have glamorous sounding names after trees, and lead to 1 hectare subdivision allotments. The forest is dense, a good deal of it appears to be subject to flooding in the wet, and very little of the desirable rainforest will be left once sites are cleared for buildings and the gardens that will be growing vegetables 'quicker than they can be eaten'. What assets there were in the area will soon disappear with the close subdivision. We were told that the area was once within the national park but has now been excised from it. The laws governing the sanctity of a national park in Queensland allow their declaration to be readily revoked.

Landowners we spoke to on the old road were very much against the new road and were more concerned that the present road be given a better surface and made all weather. They were giving positive assistance to the confrontationists whose headquarters were set up on one property.

We avoided using the new road and instead walked along the beaches, clambered through coastal mangroves, rockhopped around promontories and crossed estuary mouths, being ever mindful of the risk of estuarine crocodiles. A large rise and fall in the tides made a vast difference to the degree of ease with which we were able to negotiate the coastline. Our final beachside camp in the rainforest was within the sound of the bulldozers and lorries.

One of our party, an ex-magistrate and aware of what is accepted police practice, was asked by a policeman to identify himself (without the policeman first identifying *himself*) and replied that he was 'a citizen of Australia'. The rather nonplussed policeman was further taken aback when *he* was then asked who *he* was and where *he* came from!

The road, which was claimed to be 'completed' at this point, had been cut deep into the side of the hill, leaving a very steep and easily eroded slope above. The debris had been tipped over the edge onto a slope which was already at its angle of repose. Not much of the road would be left after the monsoon rains. Two metre rocks had been rolled down the hillside without any warning on to people on

the beach — and the beach was being used as the highway for those resisting the progress of the road! One local was using his launch to ferry supplies ahead of the blockade. There was a continuous stream of people going up and down the coast, even though the media had announced resistance was over.

At our first lunch we found a rather decorative flask and were surprised that on uncorking it on this beautiful tropical beach no genie appeared. Shortly after, however, two beautiful young women appeared, dressed as nature intended, to remain for some time to tell us about their thoughts, dedication and experiences. Their dedication and concern was without question, as well it must be for those who buried their bodies up to their necks after fastening concrete blocks to their ankles. Some tied themselves high up in the trees in an effort to stop themselves being shaken out of the trees by bulldozers. The police, who looked as if they could well look after themselves, were using Alsatians to intimidate and maul those who resisted. Camps and bodies were being searched, written matter torn up and film destroyed. It was all-out war, the police even examined the beach at low tide to see if any person had slipped around their blockade during the night.

After we left we read in the newspapers that the battle had been won by the Shire Council and that the road was through. This was far from the truth as they were still only 8 kms along a road that was to be 35 kms long. It was said that the rainforest section was completed and the rest was not of much importance. Examination of the 1:50 000 army map of the area shows that it is rainforest all the way to Bloomfield.

At this point in time it cannot be stated what the real reasons for building the road are, but it is evident that finance and politics are playing a large part. What can be said is that the road was not needed or wanted and that it is a desecration of a unique rainforest and national park.

Six weeks later the road was finished.

When it needs a Minister for Tourism to open a minor road that cannot be negotiated immediately after the ceremony because of a sudden storm, the futility of building the road becomes even more evident.

UNITY WITH NATURE

Arno Wynd

When I mention bushwalks and camping out in the hills, a more or less regular reaction of certain people, mainly women, I'm sorry to say, although no more than a stereotyped self-image may stop men from saying so, is: "I couldn't do that! All those creepies and crawlies out there — they terrify me". Now, though I'm not exactly a Harry Butler who casually pokes his hand into a hollow log and drags out some 'creepy' or 'crawlly' (a fellow NPA member the other day maliciously suggested he, Harry, first puts them there sufficiently drugged), I am of the opinion that man, rather than snakes or scorpions, is the most dangerous animal to be encountered in the bush or elsewhere. The non-human animal acts and reacts predictably; provided we don't invade his privacy, in other words, refrain from trespassing onto the area where instinctual 'flee or fight' reactions are triggered, we can be perfectly safe even near a pride of (sated) lions — all it takes is steady, Harry Butler-like nerves, and some common sense. Horse-sense is important, for it is difficult to protect ourselves from the chance encounter, the sudden confrontation. So we try to avoid them and don't, for instance, pitch a tent next to a swampy area where there are plenty of frogs, and hence most probably a prowling snake or two.

To be at ease in the bush requires an easy mind. Some people are born with an easy mind it seems; others acquire it by contact with nature, among other things; others again never achieve it. Some people seem to be alienated from their roots and origins to the extent that any animal that invades their environment has to be chased away or be

killed. With considerable amazement I have observed people who find it impossible not to crush an ant that happens to cross their path: in an offhand manner they put their big boot on the tiny creature and kill it! I cannot escape the feeling that these people could never be successful bushwalkers or good campers, let alone ever experience oneness with nature.

Among living beings, I assume we are the only ones capable of contemplating the marvel and the mystery of living matter, the enigma of life linked with 'dead' stuff. Sometimes we look at a rugged old tree, finding it difficult to perceive where tree ends and rock or soil begins, and are deeply aware, in some 'total' sense, of the common life shared by the tree and ourselves. This inward unity with nature is a prerequisite for the outward appreciation of the bush, the hills, the animals, what have you, or so it would seem to me. The Aborigines had, and have, an abundance of this inner and outer unity, and hence succeeded in not irrevocably injuring the land during 40,000 years of habitation, which is considerably more than we blow-ins can say for ourselves. This unity with nature makes for a good National Parker!

Preference, duty, chance, and many other influences take us to a score of different social settings and contacts. Assuming that your experience is not unlike mine, some of these we enjoy, some we can take or leave, and others we'd rather avoid if at all possible. I must confess, and this may be regarded as a vote of thanks to the National Parks Association of the ACT as I joined it a few years ago, that I cannot, from the top of my head, think of any social occasion that is friendlier, more casual and non-pretentious, that provides more opportunity for close human contact with new and old acquaintances, than the average NPA bushwalk.

I've often wondered why this should be so. Good, relaxed leadership comes into any explanation, of course, and there seems to be plenty of that in the NPA. But I have also come to the conclusion that unity with nature, in the inward as well as in the outward sense, results in the coming to the surface of certain good and very human qualities, and a compensating, if perhaps temporary, lowering of the strong competitive urges the type of society we live in seems to engender. Not that I don't sometimes, unsuccessfully, try to outwalk young fellows, half my age, with legs like junior trees and muscles reminiscent of manilla rope, but that must be taken as an ill-considered lapse into the 'normal' order. Leaders are generally quite prepared to regulate their pace to that of old codgers such as myself.

Unity with nature may lead to surprising little experiences. Let me tell you a few anecdotes from my own encounters with nature. When living in the Outback (Central Western Queensland) I once met, on a very lonely dirt road, two piglets not older than a week or so. They had, temporarily or perhaps for good, strayed from their mother, and looked forlorn indeed. I squatted down on the road and started making oinking noises, with a deal of credibility, it seemed, for the piglets ran up to me, and for a minute or so I had a chance to admire them at very close quarters. The wind was my way, but in the end they caught my scent and ran off squealing.

An experience requiring more inward unity was the following. On my way to a small island off the coast of Western New Guinea (Irian Jaya) where I was supervising the construction of an airstrip, I was sitting all by myself in the prow of the small ship that took me there, a voyage of some 90 minutes. Feeling slightly bored, I lapsed into a sort of 'altered state of consciousness', a relaxed, contemplative mood. In that mood I asked... whoever or whatever it is that is behind the reality we know (you fill in on the dotted line as you see fit, I'm not trying to score a metaphysical point, I'm not even insisting there is somebody or something behind it all) to send a number of dolphins my way to swim in front of the ship, as they so often do in those waters. Waking up from my reverie, I saw a mile ahead the characteristic tumbling backs of a number of dolphins or porpoises. Not a minute later, two of them were at the prow of my ship, swimming, tumbling and skipping for the sheer fun of it, or so it seemed from the

big grin on their faces. Again, I had ample opportunity to admire these marvellous animals in their natural habitat. When we approached the jetty of our destination, they quietly slipped away into the 'deep blue yonder' of the tropical sea.

Which goes to show that being a proper National Parker, in the sense of being able to experience unity with nature, has many unexpected rewards.

JUST BRIEFLY

Odd happenings at meeting points: an 'all male' turn out, which gave comforting thoughts to the lady leader with severe back pain (they did NOT have to carry her out!); the leader who sauntered along at 8.15a.m. for an 8.30a.m. start, to be met by his group tapping watches and saying 'You did not read your Bulletin - 8.00a.m. start!'; returning from a soaking wet walk, another member found her keys inside the vehicle! A friendly off-duty policeman soon had her inside, and away to a hot bath.

In spite of our new President and Vice-President being unable to attend, a small but happy crowd gathered around the Past President for the mid year BBQ, and welcomed the good wishes telegraphed by Ross Carlton, our new President.

On the Long Plains walk (finishing in the SE corner of the ACT - one foot in NSW), snow lay all around, and battles commenced. Patience paid off for one member 'attacked by the young'; as she carried a bag full of snow until retaliation stocks around ran out, then got a handful down the attacker's back! Peace, Blondie, peace. War is over for 1984.

Members camping at old Yarrangobilly on October long weekend, were joined by NPA's grand and knowledgeable friend, Andy Spate. A fascinating walk through a pine plantation and a day above the river gorge were enjoyed, and enhanced by Andy's guiding. Most members (after deciding windscreens at 7p.m.!) went off to a bush dance in Talbingo. Andy won the prize of a 'mug for a mug' dressed in old coat, disgusting old hat, beard and swag roll. Scribbly Gum gathered that the NPA square dancing team also put themselves on the map! All returned to thick frost, frozen water INSIDE camper vans (but NOT in Eskies) and 'the coldest night of the year'.

Bill and Edna continue to enjoy their overseas tour. After many months in Greece, they meandered through the UK where they (among other things) were photographed again at the church where they were married and spent a week on the canals. When last heard of they were climbing mountains in Kanderstag, Switzerland.

Garth Abercrombie has again flitted away from us for some years - this time to Manila, busy with the construction of the H.Q. for the Bank of Malaysia. Good luck Garth, both with your work and your future '(MUTZAGH ATA) challenges'.

On a recent NPA coastal camping trip I hear that 13 year-old Kevin had no difficulty landing two fine salmon off the beach with a borrowed rod. However, Lala, our well-equipped fisherlady claims her lack of success was due to unfair competition from a seal on the first night and the next day due to a rod and line wrestle with a gigantic shark that broke her 40lb line! What next Lala!

Scribbly Gum

A VOICE FOR THE WILDERNESS

Syd Comfort

The huge Antarctic beeches of the upper Hastings River have grown since Australia formed part of the ancient continent of Gondwanaland. For millions of years this forest remained unchallenged. The first human inhabitants, the Aborigines, lived in harmony with this environment revering the forest giants and thus, when the first Europeans settled in the early nineteenth century the forests stood in their untouched completeness. Accustomed to the conditions of their homelands, these settlers found the environment alien and threatening and struggled to make a living by changing that environment towards the familiar European scene. The bush and the forest were obstacles to be overcome. Then the utility of the forest trees was recognised and the remaining years of the century saw the timbergetters seeking the profit to be earned from these rich and apparently inexhaustible forests. Our century has seen the continuation of this exploitation at an ever increasing rate made possible by improved technology. That the outcome of this frenzied exploitation could be the complete elimination of the forests has been widely recognised only in recent times and has resulted in the growth of a strong conservation movement determined to halt this headlong rush towards the destruction of the rain forests. This film presents this history through short sequences showing the beauty and majesty of the forest, the hunting and gathering culture of the Aborigines, archival material of the early settlers and timbergetters and some dizzy, almost disorienting representations of the pace and rapacity of the present day. The message is clear; the rain forests are under extreme threat and it is this generation which will decide their future.

The screeching buzz of the chain-saw breaks on us and we are introduced to the particular problems of the upper Hastings. The two tributaries of the Hastings, the upper Hastings and the Forbes fall through 1000 metres and are surrounded by rain forests — sub tropical, cool temperate and warm temperate; hardwood and softwood; sassafras and eucalyptus as well as beech — each with its rich and diverse understorey and fauna. We are treated to some excellent photography of these forests and of their inhabitants including some particularly fine lyre bird performances.

The forests of the Hastings have been logged for a century and a half so that there remains only a small area not affected by man's exploitation. Less than four percent of the Hastings forest is in a national park and as this is confined to the Upper Hastings, the Forbes is not protected. The Forestry Commission planned to open a unique area of the Forbes to logging but local conservationists acted to oppose this. There was a clear clash between the ideologies of exploitation and conservation. The film traces the development of the local conservation movement in its campaign to block the logging. Although the drive for this came from dedicated individuals, readers of this bulletin will warm to hear that it was through the formation of a branch of the N.S.W. National Parks Association that this campaign was initiated and pursued. Discussions with the leaders of this (Mid North Coast) branch of the N.P.A. explore the reasons for their adoption of such a determined stand on this issue — the uniqueness of the area in remaining free of man's interference; the rich genetic and plant species store provided by rain forests which if lost would not be available to future generations; the role of rain forests in regulating the effects of rainfall and in arresting erosion; the degenerating effect of the removal of the large trees from the rain forest by so modifying the ecology that many other species are destroyed. Then there is the sheer beauty and refreshing spirit of the wilderness forest with its potential for human enjoyment and recreation.

Interviews with local residents, many directly dependent on the timber industry, show the other side of the coin. Logging and milling provide a traditional way of life and employment for these residents and, observing the social and economic value of the products, the cutting of the forest is accepted and normal. Any limitation on this

threatens their jobs and so strikes them directly whereas many of those opposing logging do not have such a direct and personal interest at stake.

The conservationists had identified other forest areas which could be logged and provide employment without threatening an area as unique and valuable as the Forbes but the Forestry Commission was not to be moved. The controversy is traced as it moved towards confrontation through demonstrations, threats of violence and eventually court action. The film shows the conflict within a locality between the direct economic benefits of exploitation as seen by those employed and the less immediate and tangible gains flowing from conservation. This conflict can result in the development of deep rifts within the confines of a local community.

The film draws attention to a number of current problems in the timber industry which are sometimes attributed to conservation pressures but which stem from other causes. The number employed in the industry has fallen due to rationalisation which often involves the closure of small mills and the concentration of operations in larger mills. There has been widespread adoption of automation with its inevitable reduction of job opportunities. Another aspect relevant to the Forbes area is that even if logging were to proceed as advocated by the Forestry Commission, the available timber would be cut out soon and thus at best, this policy would extend the life of logging in that area for a short time.

Much relevant and interesting archival material has been successfully incorporated into the film. For me, perhaps the most fascinating sequence was from a newsreel of the thirties which shows the felling and extraction of the last two remaining red cedars in a North Coast location. Stressing the massive scale and difficult conditions, the commentary built this up as a mighty achievement for the timbergetters involved without a flicker of consideration for the sacrifice made. Perhaps, after all, we have come a little way in fifty years.

Throughout the film there are many fine sequences showing the beauty and infinite variety to be found in the rain forests of the Hastings. But the film does a lot more than this. In a short span it outlines many facets of the issues involved in the retention of an area such as the Forbes. The spectrum ranges from the almost spiritual value of rain forest wilderness to the effects on a community which relies on the timber industry for its livelihood.

This film would repay a second viewing.

Oh, what happened to the patient? In 1982 the Premier of New South Wales announced that the Forbes was not to be logged and that alternative areas would be made available for this purpose.

A Voice For The Wilderness. Producer, Chris Wilcox. A Yowie Films Production, supplied by the Sydney Filmmakers Co-operative. 48 minutes. Shown at the March 1984 General Meeting of the Association.

Rod Tier talking to some of the group who went on the Yankee Hat rock paintings walk led by Sophie Caton on 6 May. Photo by John Gascoigne.



CLIMBING MUZTAGATA (7546m) IN CHINA'S XINJIANG PROVINCE

This article is based on a lecture to the Association by Garth Abercrombie on February 16 1984

In 1979 I was invited to join a small group of Hong Kong expatriates organising a trek to the Annapurna Sanctuary region of Nepal. It was a great success and the idea of an annual adventure caught on. The size and composition has varied over successive years but the group so far has managed treks and/or climbs in Tanzania (Kilimanjaro and the Serengeti), the Andes (Inca Trail), and the Himalayas (Yala Peak).

Our 1983 adventure was certainly the most ambitious and for me the most exciting as it combined a high altitude peak with a visit to a relatively inaccessible but historically fascinating part of the globe. The staging point for the expedition was to be Kashgar in eastern China which for centuries has been a focus for the ancient silk and trade routes. The names the region has variously been known by, like Lesser Bokhara, Moghulistan, High Tartary, Kashgaria and Eastern Turkestan, only serve to confirm the fascination of the area.

Muztagata, known by the Chinese as the 'Father of Ice Mountains' forms part of the Pamir plateau in an area the ancient Persians referred to as the 'Roof of the World'. From here radiate the great mountain ranges of Asia; the Hindu Kush, Karakorum, Himalaya, Tian Shan, and Kunlan Shan. The mountain itself was first climbed in 1956 by a combined Russian/Chinese party and was used as a training ground for the Chinese prior to their successful Everest ascent in 1960. Our liaison officer Mr Chu had been one of the first ascenders, having lost his toes from frost bite in the process.

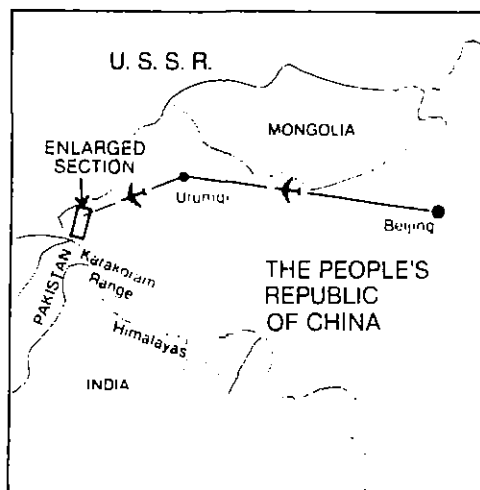
The team this time consisted of 7 members, 2 of whom planned to go only as far as basecamp, and 2 Sherpas Arnu and Dorje who had been with the team in Nepal the previous year. They had never been out of Nepal before and when we assembled in Hong Kong we marvelled at the manner in which they handled the culture shock. They at least gave the expedition a degree of credibility and helped to dispel the impression that we were complete novices. An impression founded to some degree on the presence of Cam idly swinging his 8 iron golf club. He expected to spend most of his time at basecamp and planned to spend it fruitfully. In being able to chip a few balls into the ice-fall from Camp 1 one supposes he must have established some sort of first.

We flew to Beijing via Tianjin and were welcomed by the Chinese Mountaineering Association (CMA), our hosts while in China. In addition to Mr Chu they had also provided an interpreter (Sha Guo), a basecamp cook, the basecamp food, and had made all our travel arrangements. We dined with the CMA officials that evening and left for Urumchi, the capital city of Xinjiang province, early the next day.

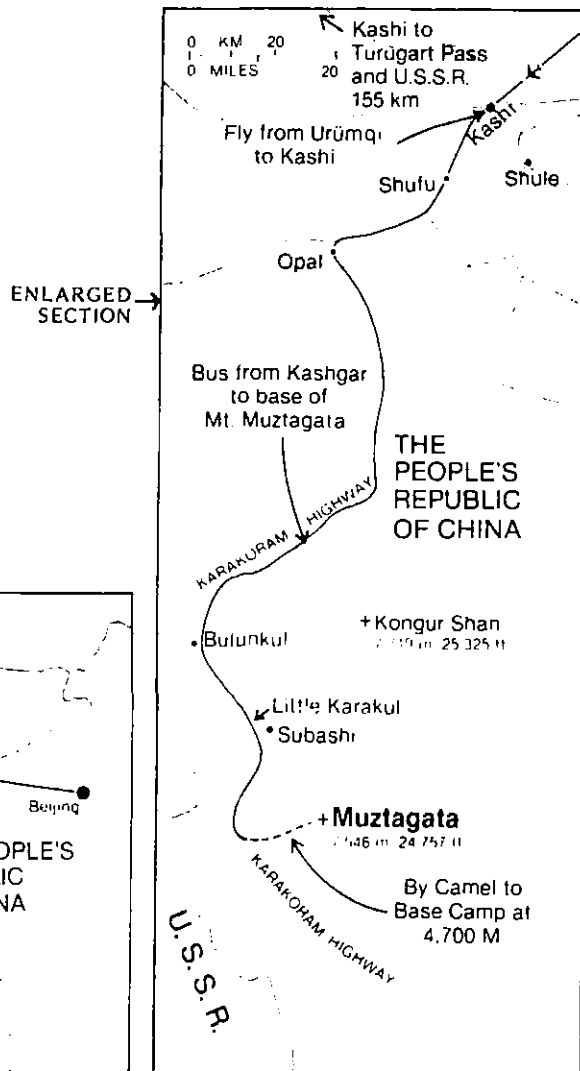
The Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, the current name for Hsin-Chiang or 'New Province', lies on China's north-west border and although having a sixth of the total land area contains a population of only 13 million, of whom, as Sha Guo delightfully put it, 'the Minorities make up 80%'. We stayed in a dacha style guest house on the outskirts of the city and enjoyed a day of sight-seeing including a visit to an 'Ancient Corpse' exhibition at the local museum. Another flight, this time in an Antonov 24 (the Russian equivalent of the Fokker Friendship) took us across the Tien Shan Range and after a short stop-over at Aksu onto Kashgar.

As access to this part of the country is still restricted there were no tourist hotels and we had to stay in an old guest house that had once been the Russian Embassy. The Moslem influence in Kashgar still predominates despite official disapproval and to wake to the muezzin's call in the morning was a new experience for most of us. We left Kashgar with all our gear in a chartered bus and headed off down the Karakorum 'Highway' through villages that looked like scenes from a child's book of Bible Stories, complete with donkeys, goat carts, and farmers winnowing grain by hand. On through a gravelly desert and into the Gez defile, the road clinging to the gorge walls while we conjectured on the route that Marco Polo must have taken when he travelled these parts some 700 years ago.

About 3 in the afternoon we had our first sight of the 'Father of Snows'. We all involuntarily cheered and Arnu and Dorje who had been very quiet during the bus trip started singing little songs to themselves. Dorje's first reaction was 'No problem', but Cam's was a little more unconventional: 'I'd be a bit more excited if I knew there was a golf course up there'. We were now in Kirghiz country and were impressed with their yurts, bright cloth-



The expedition members assembled in Hong Kong where they were joined by two Sherpas who were on previous expeditions undertaken by the group. They then travelled to Beijing. In Beijing the group hosted a formal banquet for the C.M.A.'s leading officials. The party then flew to Urumqi, changed planes and continued on to Kashgar. From Kashgar they travelled by bus to within 11 kilometres of the Base Camp. Food and equipment were transported from Kashgar to the Base Camp by fifteen camels. Chinese staff consisted of an interpreter, a liaison officer, a cook and five camel drivers.



ing and rosy-cheeked children.

The first night's camp was on a grassy meadow near the village of Subashi. For me it was great to be away from cities, aeroplanes, and dusty roads and to be among mountains and open plains. During the night the camels arrived and we watched in fascination as they were loaded for the trip into basecamp. Some were no trouble and knelt down obediently while others snapped and spat and had to be leg-roped. The camels were the two-humped Bactrian variety, about the size of a pony. We had 15 in 3 teams of five. Three sheep were also carried in on the camels and before leaving the camel-drivers butchered one for our fresh meat. I couldn't help thinking what a marvellous NPA weekend walk the wander into basecamp and back would have made. As it is, people pay thousands of dollars to trekking companies just to get to basecamp and for us it was merely the walk in.

Being at the foot of a massive moraine, the site for the basecamp was not very appealing but the views to the Russian Pamirs and of the ice-fall of an adjacent glacier were still impressive. We felt we had to spend the first day acclimatising but Arnu and Dorje were rearing to go while the weather was fine. They took off and established Camp 1 at the snowline and flagged a route towards Camp 2. We made our move the following day, dumping our loads at Camp 1, pitching the tents on the levelled out scree and returning to basecamp.

Our general plan was to move up a 1000 metres in 3 day cycles. This meant doing 'carries' to the higher camp on 2 consecutive days and then moving up on the third. This arrangement certainly suited me and I suffered no ill effects from altitude. I had my greatest discomfort at Subashi and the first night at basecamp, having moved up to 14,000 feet in the 2 days from Kashgar. As it turned out, the altitude difference of our camps was only about 700 metres and mainly due to inexperience we established Camp 4 at a lower altitude than we would have wished. My estimate of the camp altitudes was:

Basecamp	4300m	14,000ft
Camp 1	5000m	16,400ft
Camp 2	5700m	18,700ft
Camp 3	6400m	21,000ft
Camp 4	6900m	22,600ft
Summit	7546m	24,750ft

All the same it was hard going at altitude as the following snippet reveals:

Keith: 'How much longer' ?

Denis: 'Couple of hours' .

Keith: 'Jesus, that's a long way even in a car' .

Any sort of exertion left you breathless and after carrying out some menial task it was a relief to sit down and rest. Steep slopes were categorised as 15- 20- 30-step slopes meaning you had to stop and recover your breath after the respective number of steps. The sign of improving fitness was to convert a 15-step slope into a 30-step one the next time up it. Once the regular routine was established we all became fitter and were able to carry bigger loads and take less time on successive carries.

We had fitted ourselves out with all the clothing we felt was necessary to withstand the expected low temperatures but our biggest problem proved not to be the cold but how to avoid sunburn. Having learnt by experience the effects of bad snowburn we spent our daylight hours behind a mask of zinc cream and makeshift sun shades.

A high intake of fluids is considered essential at altitude. In an appendix to Peter Habelar's book *Impossible Victory*, which is his account of the first ascent of Everest without artificial oxygen, the expedition doctor Bull Olz maintained that 6-7 litres of water were required daily. I am not sure if I managed that quantity but made a conscious effort to keep up the intake. Each afternoon when the chores for the day were complete I would sit by the cooker and melt snow, fill the water-bottles and make drink after drink; lemon tea, soup, Tang, Sherpa tea etc. and keep drinking until my urine went clear. This seemed a good indication that I wasn't dehydrating.

The weather was marvellous and on the way up we

could see Kongur (7719m) to our north and the Karakul Lakes in the plains below. It was idyllic to be able to sit in one's tent at the high camps and look west to Pik Komunizma (7495) in the Russian Pamirs, south-west into Afghanistan and Pakistan, and south to the Karakorums and Kashmir.

Mike Thompson in his account of the 1975 Everest expedition, *Out With the Boys Again* commented on the exceptionally high level of mountain conversation, '... by which I mean that we gave full rein to a very childish brand of humour, often in questionable taste'. We were no exception. The crudity and inanity of our humour must have been appalling and one could only agree with John's observation that the reason was 'probably because only morons climb mountains'.

This was hardly the trip to carry out serious studies in high altitude behaviour but it was interesting to record some of the team members' reactions at Camp 3.

John: 'Marvellous how your brain goes. I have just spent half an hour putting in the tent liner and realise it is inside out' .

Keith: 'That's nothing. Denis managed that at basecamp' .

Summit morning dawned bright and clear. It had been a beautiful starry night but it was extremely cold and exposed flesh was very quickly numbed. We made a good start but snow shoes were required to stop breaking through the crust and it looked like being a long snow plod up an easy-angled slope. There was no indication where the summit would be but initially we were more concerned with keeping a comfortable distance from the cliff edge on our left. Keith was still having problems with chest/stomach pains and reluctantly turned back, with Dorje accompanying him down to Camp 4. Hour after hour we trudged across this interminable slope and it was only that it was the summit that kept us going. We were also painfully aware of the cloud closing in around us. 3p.m. was the agreed turning around point but by 1.30p.m. we were in a total white-out. We were very conscious then that a climber had been killed in similar circumstances the previous year so felt we had no option but to turn back. All the beautiful weather we had been having and it abandoned us when we needed it most. Although we were disappointed we saw it as a temporary set back and felt we would have another go as soon as it cleared. Dorje met us on his way back up and he and Arnu decided to go on to the top. Their attitude was different from ours in that they do not often get a chance for a summit and it was important for their careers to have this one on their C.V.s. They made it after about 1½ hours above our high point (which must have been in excess of 7200m) and virtually ran back as they were frightened of losing their tracks.

The rest of us straggled in to Camp 4, a most dispirited group. John's headache meant he had to go down immediately with Keith to a lower camp and this left only 3 of us in a position to make a second bid. A heavy snowfall overnight quashed any chance of an attempt in the morning and with the weather looking more threatening and with only minimal food supplies it was obvious we would have to drop back to Camp 2. At this point we realised that as far as climbing the mountain was concerned the expedition was over. We really had no fall-back position planned and the group energy required to mount another summit bid was just not there. To cap it off we heard on the two-way radio that the camels were on their way back into basecamp.

A day and a half later we had cleared the mountain and were all together again packing up for the walk out. I was acting more like a sleep walker as I was still going over in my mind all the things we could or should have done differently.

We had more mini-adventures to come, such as staying in a 'guest' yurt at Subashi, a two day train trip down to Xian to view the Entombed Warriors, visiting the Forbidden City, and a banquet in the Great Hall of the People. And from the CMA point of view the expedition had been a success; the summit reached, no accidents or problems and everyone safely home. Yet as a team we were all left thinking 'If only ...'.

SOME NATIONAL PARKS IN ALASKA

This is the first of a short series of articles written by Charles Hill. Earlier this year he gave an illustrated talk to the Association. This article, and others that will appear in later issues, are based on that talk. Charles and his wife, Audrey, have been active members of NPA for many years.

Audrey and I visited Alaska in August 1983. The weather at that time of their summer we found to be mild, minimum about 10°C and maximum 15-25°C with temperatures somewhat lower over 700m altitude or close to glaciers. The hours of daylight were long with good sun inland. However it is often cloudy and wet near the coast, particularly the Gulf of Alaska where air over the warm Japan Current confronts the Arctic air streams.

Alaska is a beautiful, primitive country with little habitation and man-made modification. It has massive mountains of which nearly 500,000 sq km are under permanent ice, mainly in the southern half; further north there are huge stretches of wet tundra underlaid by permafrost about half a metre down and insulated by vegetation. Primeval earth-building forces are at work now of mountain uplift, volcanoes and carving by thousands of large glaciers, rivers and wind. It is the stage that Australia was at millions of years ago! A further point which we appreciated is that most animals are not nocturnal and on every walk we stopped frequently to observe native animals in their normal habitat.

CONSERVATION

Opportunity has been taken in Alaska and also in Canada to declare large areas as national parks so that animals, their habitats and the magnificent scenery can be preserved. It is interesting to note that Sheldon, the man who worked hard and long for the declaration of Denali National Park, was not only a big game hunter but also a naturalist. He realised that unlimited hunting and alienation of animal habitats would decimate the animal population. So in 1917 the Park came into being to protect the animals — not because of the highest North America mountain it contained.

We noted 3 main categories of reserves in Alaska:

- Wilderness within National Parks which remains accessible but undeveloped and where hunting and trapping are not permitted;
- National Parks where traditional subsistence hunting and trapping by local rural residents with special permits is allowed; and
- National Preserves where sport hunting, trapping and fishing is allowed by wide-ranging State permit.

A large hunting lobby thrives in USA and there is constant pressure to allow more hunting. While we were there a senator planned to introduce a Bill to reduce the area of National Parks and increase the area of National Preserves. Conservationists rallied and we have since learned that their efforts have resulted in the Bill not being brought forward.

Both the Alaskans and Canadians provide very good national park interpretative information, mainly in well-equipped visitors centres. In addition we were impressed by the young hostesses on the Alaskan train which skirts Denali. They were mainly college students on vacation who studied as naturalists and could answer questions on trees, wildlife and other details of the country, as well as point out features of interest. Similarly there was a fulltime naturalist on board the Alaskan Marine Highway ferry who gave slide and film presentations, talks and pointed out and explained such interesting items as osprey and bald eagle nests, etc. Audrey was given a card to acknowledge her contribution to the survey of bald eagles during the voyage!

Use of off-road and over-snow vehicles seems not to be a general problem in Alaska perhaps because of terrain difficulties. However the recent Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act had left the Denali National Park open to access by aircraft and over-snow vehicles. Representations to remedy this omission have been made. The use of private vehicles in Denali is restricted on most

of the only road there, and banned altogether on the more remote section of it. The transport need is met by shuttle buses which run at about half-hourly intervals. The drivers, mainly young women rangers, were keen to point out wildlife to passengers and would stop for this purpose. Walkers found the buses convenient for round trips as they would stop where requested. Conservationists were worried by a proposal to save money by discontinuing the buses and allowing private vehicles on the road; they considered that uncontrolled access to wild animals would result in the animals avoiding habitats visible from the road.

Backpack walking is regulated by permits in Denali, but in Alaska generally there seems to be low people-pressure in national parks, no doubt due to long distances and access difficulties.

DENALI NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE

Denali lies 350km by good road north of Anchorage, the largest city in Alaska. Its total area is 24,000 sq km; it is noted for its animals and for Mt McKinley 6195m (20,320ft), the highest in North America. Almost half the Park encompasses the main part of the spectacular and beautiful Alaska Range which is permanently ice covered and dominated by Mt McKinley, soaring head and shoulders above the other peaks. The remainder is elevated tundra, spruce forest, lower ridges and mountain peaks usually bare of snow in summer. The Alaska Range catches most of the precipitation which comes from the south. The northern part, where the road and facilities are located, is in a precipitation shadow and the average depth of snow in the winter is about 0.6m.

We travelled by comfortable express train, a six-hour journey to the small village of McKinley Park. We were met there by a small bus and spent another six hours travelling along the one road in the Park with numerous stops to observe and photograph animals. It was an exciting journey even if low cloud prevented us seeing the higher mountains.

We stayed in a small, comfortable log cabin at Camp Denali, a privately run accommodation centre just outside the wilderness area. Scenery is magnificent and the staff are very friendly and helpful. We could walk by ourselves or with staff guides and transport was provided when needed. White river rafting and canoeing were available. Guided walks were oriented to the study of botany, animals, birds or scenery and terrain; attunement to the wilderness atmosphere was encouraged.

During our five days there we saw grizzly bears and cubs, moose and calf, caribou, Dall mountain sheep, a fox, a wolf, beavers, arctic ground squirrels, pikas, hoary marmots and a variety of water and other birds. These were not fleeting glimpses but opportunities to observe their activities; binoculars were a great asset.

The day after arrival it was still cloudy over the mountains. We walked by ourselves through the damp forest and up the slopes behind the Camp, Audrey delighted with the different plants, whilst I made myself familiar with the lie of the country and kept a lookout for bears and moose. Then returned for a film on local animals and in the afternoon a guided bus/walk to have the botany of the area explained. We were encouraged by Nancy, the cook, to pick blueberries on the promise of blueberry pie. We did and she kept her promise — scrumptious!

Next day was perfectly clear and the Camp was agog from an early hour. All the cabins had a good view of McKinley and its NE neighbours; cameras and binoculars were put to use and one could almost see the waves of exhilaration arising from the visitors. We opted to climb the ridge behind the Camp and walk NE along it, parallel to the Alaska Range. Five walkers and a staff guide made up the party and we had a delightful day mainly off tracks, with the magnificent scenery of the Range in view continually. The ridge was as easy to walk along as that between Mt Carruthers and Mt Twynam in the Kosciuszko area. The lunch spot was typical ACT — a few metres below the crest to cut off the breeze, bright sunshine and an excellent view; the view was definitely Alaskan — glacier valleys, rivers, kettle ponds and lakes spread out below and soaring above them, white icy peaks and glaciers with intriguing bands of medial moraine clearly visible. That night Mt McKinley was

still being admired from our cabin at 10p.m. as we wrote notes and a letter or two.

An early start next morning for a quick solo climb up the ridge to take rising sun photographs. Then after breakfast we set off in a bus to look at animals, birds and scenery and walk in a different area. It was a warm morning and we got within a metre or two of caribou twice; the first was distracted by insects which are active when warm and which lay eggs in nasal passages; the second was cooling its large feet in a mountain stream as it chewed its cud. A moose and its calf were grazing in and beside a lake. A young gyrfalcon took off and engaged a raven in aerial combat; this was spectacular but it appeared to be a practice exercise to sharpen flying skills; after several minutes the combatants retired. We walked up Little Stony Creek canyon, had lunch watching a dipper swooping and feeding in the creek and then climbed briskly over a pass. The views were of close bare hills and mountains with tundra on the lower slopes and rocks of multi-colours towards the steep peaks.

The day after we set off on the journey back to the train. The clouds were low again but animals were still of interest and Audrey excelled herself by spotting a wolf padding along a nearby creek bed. There were only two other sightings of wolves by Camp Denali people that season.

One cannot leave the subject of Denali (The High One) without a few words about the mountain and the challenge to climbers. Mt McKinley is reputed to be not a technically difficult climb, but sub-arctic temperatures, high winds and often foul weather with little warning take their toll. It was first climbed by two of a party of four miner 'sour-doughs' in 1910. They climbed the last 10,000 feet (3048m) and back in one day carrying a 14 foot spruce tree as a flagpole, a thermos of hot chocolate and a bag of doughnuts.

Even today with modern equipment, climbers have to allow 2 weeks to get up and back down the final 10,000 feet. About 500 climbers attempt to reach the summit each year, but only a handful succeed. Most save a long preliminary slog by being flown in to a base camp on the Kahiltna Glacier, managed by a woman who spends the brief summer living in a canvas tent on wooden floorboards whilst the glacier groans and creaks underneath. For the rest of the year she is a computer analyst at the University in Fairbanks and plays the violin in a symphony orchestra.

PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND

This Sound is in the northern part of the Gulf of Alaska and borders the Chugach Mountains which have large ice-fields, spectacular peaks and many glaciers. Only one road and the Alaskan pipeline cross them and both terminate at the port of Valdez. At the eastern end of the Sound is the deepwater, icefree port of Whittier which can only be reached by train from Anchorage. The train runs through long tunnels under the mountains which generate the Portage Glacier and many others. The Sound is a popular boating place for Anchorage people and on our train were large boats on trailers towed by cars or trucks and driven on to railway flattop wagons.

The Sound is protected from the temperamental seas of the Gulf by many islands, and large inlets and fiords pierce the Chugach Mountains. We travelled nearly 150km by a small motor cruiser west across the Sound to Valdez. It was a perfect day with peaks, glaciers and fiords continually in view and constantly changing; sea birds, seals, sea lions and porpoises enlivened the scene. After some hours pack ice appeared ahead and as we started slowly to thread our way through it, we had our first view of the Columbia Glacier. It is 60km long, 10km wide at the terminus in the sea with ice cliffs over 100m high above the water and extending much further underneath. Harbour seals were lying on many of the ice floes; they use these floes when they are about to pup as they are safe from most predators.

As we neared the ice cliff a crew member scooped a few smaller pieces of ice out of the sea with a large landing net. This 10,000 year old ice was then crushed to cool drinks in the bar. Our craft hove to about 0.8km from the multi-coloured ice pinnacles for about 45 minutes and we

watched and listened as the glacier calved icebergs. Not unexpectedly, a cold breeze blew off the glacier but that did little to cool the excitement and enthusiasm of the passengers. Research indicates that this glacier is about to retreat and there are predictions that as much as 200 cubic km of ice could be released as icebergs in the next 30-50 years into the shipping arm of Valdez!

Valdez was completely destroyed by earthquake on Good Friday 1964. Like small stones and sand in a tilted gold-pan, the shaking settled the moraine on which the town was built into the deep sea arm -- houses, equipment, wharves and all. This collapse caused a tidal wave which rushed back and forth across the glacier-carved valley, finishing the destruction and drowning some 70 people. The town was rebuilt 10km away on a site stabilised by some bedrock hills between the town and the edge of the sea arm.

Superficially Valdez is very much a work-a-day town directed to the oil pipeline terminus. However it is in a very beautiful setting with steep peaks and glaciers close at hand in all directions. Walks along the steep-walled valleys bring one to dozens of waterfalls and mountain streams in which salmon spawn. Attempts have been made to put roads along these valleys to bring the scenery within easy reach, but the thaw after each winter wipes out these puny efforts of man.

What comes back strongly to us when we think of Valdez is not just the beauty or mind-boggling technical achievements of the pipeline and oil shipping terminal, but the warm hospitality of the people. Our visit there had been organised by a prominent citizen who had enjoyed and remembered the hospitality he was shown on a visit to Australia. Our Australian group was taken to the magnificent high school, indoor sporting complex, civic centre and other facilities paid for by oil company taxes and of markedly different standard from the rest of the town; to a salmon hatchery and the local advanced college; to the former site of the town etc, etc, with afternoon tea, and in the evening a salmon bake with all the people concerned. Best of all, we were able to talk to these people about their unusual country and their experiences in it.

We hope we can treat visitors to Australia in a similar way when the opportunities occur.

GLACIERS IN ALASKA AND WESTERN CANADA

This article by Charles Hill is based on part of a talk he gave to the Association in April 1984.

There are hundreds of thousands of glaciers in Alaska and western Canada, and Audrey and I were fascinated by their spectacular beauty and awesome power. It is only in the last 150 years that glaciers have begun to be understood, and most research has been in the last 40 years.

The glaciers in these countries vary in depth from about 100m to over 600m; the top 30-50m of ice is brittle and cracks (crevasses) with movement around bends and changes in slopes; the lower ice is under tremendous pressure from the weight of ice above and this changes its physical characteristics so that it becomes plastic and flows. Glaciers gather rocks from the valley walls and grind these as they move. There is always rock debris (moraine) at both edges of a glacier and if it has tributaries, the moraines of the meeting edges join and continue along the body of the main glacier. Each tributary contributes a separate medial moraine and further ice movements tend to spread these bands of rock debris.

The length of a glacier depends on the balance between the supply of snow at the higher altitudes and the rate of ice melting down towards the terminus. If the supply is greater than the melting, the glacier will advance at its terminus. If the melting is greater, its terminus will retreat and usually will be covered more or less with rock debris; moraines will be left along and across its former bed. Many variable factors affect this balance including amount of

snow precipitated, cloud or atmospheric dust, changes in the rocky bed and of course temperatures of rocks, air and sun's radiation. Even half a degree Celsius increase in average temperature maintained over a few years can reverse an advancing glacier.

A retreating glacier still flows downwards, but the rate of flow to the terminus is less than the rate of melting. The flow rate varies greatly even for an individual glacier, both over time and in different sections at the same time. Two metres annually would be considered quite normal. However one glacier surged 6.5km in one year and another under study surged 350m in one day!

Most glaciers in Alaska are in retreat and have been since 1920, the end of the last mini-iceage which started about 1700. However some are advancing and a few are stable.

Many large glaciers (called 'tidewater glaciers') have their terminuses in the sea and calve icebergs with horrific noise and spectacular splashes and waves. The biggest icebergs are those that break off under water and surge to the surface, upsetting anything that happens to be above. It is in icebergs and the terminus cliff, often rising 100m above waterline, that the blue colour of pure, dense ice can best be seen. Ice which has been penetrated by ground moraine debris can be varying shades of biscuit and huge ice pinacles of these varying colours in the terminus cliff keeps cameras clicking.

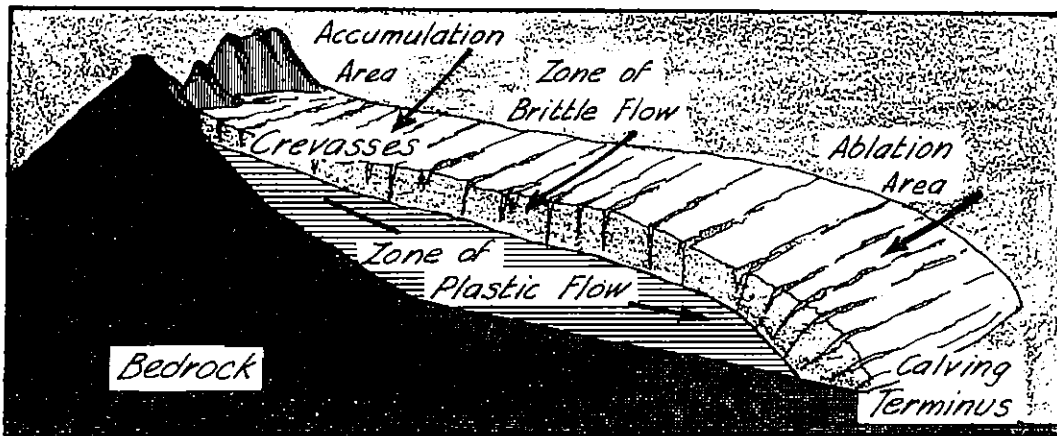
Ice at depth in glaciers has all the air squeezed by the tremendous pressure into small bubbles. Near the terminus of a glacier or floating iceberg one can sometimes hear

what is called 'ice sizzle' as these high pressure bubbles burst under melting conditions. The story is told of a research team who decided to celebrate reaching 2000 feet deep with a coring drill in a glacier. The carefully carried drink and glasses were set out and it was thought fitting to add ice from the bottom core. Pleasure turned to dismay as melting allowed the highly compressed bubbles to burst and the glasses were shattered one by one!

I found it interesting to learn that most of the permanent ice in Alaska and contiguous Canada is south of the Arctic Circle, as the factor of altitude in mountain systems is more critical than northern latitude. A huge icefield will cover a whole mountain system with just the peaks poking through; all around the edges glaciers will be spawned, rather like a rocky Christmas cake with over-generous icing.

I was surprised to learn also that the Pleistocene iceage, which ended 10,000-14,000 years ago, did not cause permanent ice or snow north of Denali National Park which again is just south of the Arctic Circle. Mammoths and other large animals were able to graze in these far northern latitudes in summer during the iceage. Evidence of man has been found dated 30,000 years ago just north of Denali National Park entrance.

Coming down to warmer earth in Australia, there is considerable evidence here (readily seen in Kosciusko National Park) of glacier sculpturing well back in our own geological history. Next time you stand on one of our mountain peaks, imagine what the view would have been like in those days with the mountains many thousands of metres higher and huge glaciers filling the valleys.



Zones of brittle and plastic flow, and areas of accumulation and ablation are shown in this diagram of a glacier.

Illustration drawn by Ken Johnson

BOURDA STATE RECREATION AREA — QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY WEEKEND

Judith Webster

An assorted bunch of NPA members from tiny tots upwards enjoyed this weekend in a delightful forest setting on the shores of Lake Wallagoot, only a ten minute's walk from a beautiful two mile ocean beach.

On the Saturday afternoon a slow amble through the bush beside the lake revealed a few birds but a lot more chatterboxes!! Those lucky enough to be on the ocean beach at dusk were entertained by a large black seal frolicking around in the waves.

On Sunday some chose to enjoy the pleasure of the beach, others the quiet of the campsite with the departure of the rest of us on a walk. After a mile along the beach we took a track up onto the headland through thick tea-tree scrub (sea eagles gliding overhead). The track turned inland through pleasant rainforest, down into a gully, crossing the creek by a rather nifty suspension bridge and along the side of a lagoon where lots of birds held our attention — azure kingfishers, hoary headed grebes, chestnut teals and cormorants. The track looped back towards the beach and here behind the dunes was a shallow lake, beautiful in the golden late-afternoon sunlight, graced with

sedate black swans and glimpses of white egrets and herons. Skirting this flat swampy area we returned to camp to light our fires for cooking, warmth and socialising.

Later that evening a number of us went down to the beach for a bonfire and fireworks display. It was beautiful on the beach — just us; the bright moonlight, a glowing fire, the pounding of the surf on the sand, the intermittent cracks and fizzes of the fireworks; the joyful shrieks and exclamations of the children and a faint aroma of musk (an incense stick was being used as a cracker lighter).

On Monday the party divided roughly into three equal parts, the camp dwellers, the bird watchers and the walkers. Those of us who walked, explored the northern coastal track which heads towards Tathra. We had time to cover only three of its nine kilometres but it was worthwhile with fine views up and down the coast. Our keen angler had set off much earlier up this track to a good fishing spot she knew. She came back with wild tales of catching three sharks — one so big it not only got away but nearly took her with it . . .

The Bourda State Recreation Area has diverse scenery and provides excellent walking tracks. These, together with bright sunny company and weather to match, ensured we all came home with memories of happy and varied experiences.

BRAYSHAWS HUT

Babette Scougall

It's a forlorn sight that speaks of neglect and indifference. Do we care?

The Hut, which is now called Brayshaws but has also been known as Tin Dish Hut and Russells, is situated at the southern end of the Boboyan Road between the turn-off to Mt Clear and the NSW/ACT border. A shearing shed used to stand on the other side of the road, but it has been moved elsewhere.

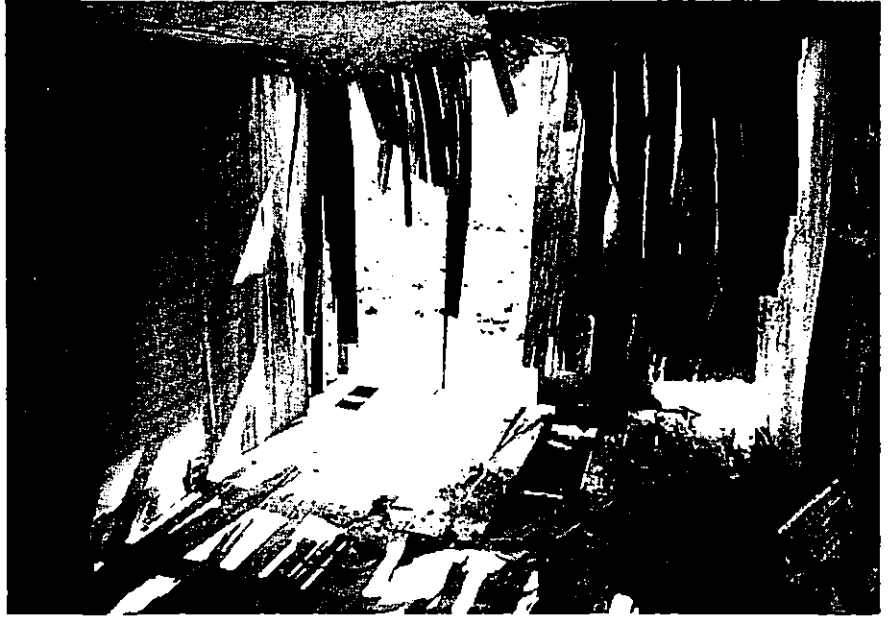
According to Jonathan Winston-Gregson in his register of archaeological sites in Gudgenby, the Hut was constructed in 1903 and occupied until 1960 when it was converted to shearers' quarters. He found it to be in good condition in 1978.

It's in a sad state of repair now, six years later. A fence has been built around it to keep out animals and a sign identifying it as Brayshaws has been erected, but nothing else has been done to preserve it.

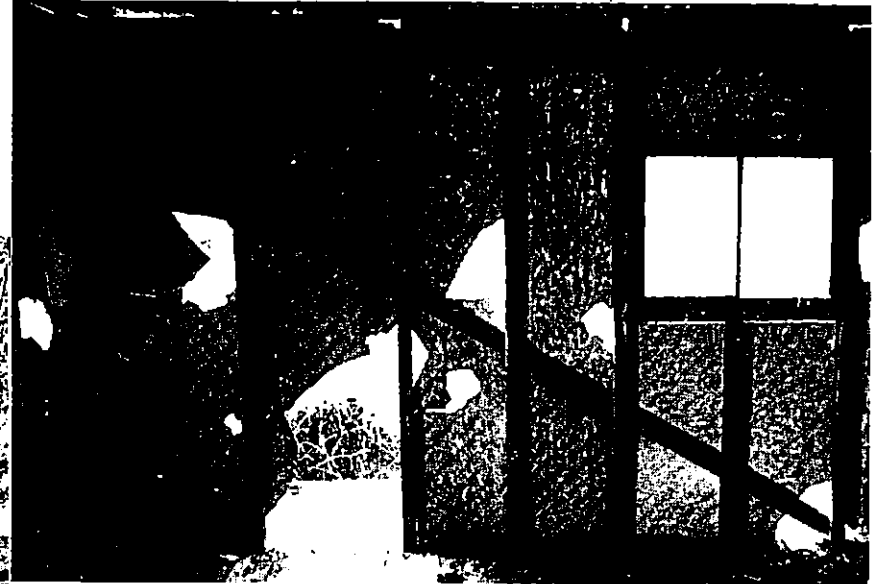
It was a bright sunny day when I took these photographs, the sky was bright blue overhead, the grass and bushes were green all around and I had time to give it only a quick glance as I drove past and immediately thought: 'What a lovely romantic corner of our national park!' Later that day I drove back, got out and had a closer look, and came away with a quite different impression: 'What a desolate place! Such isolation! What hardships families must have endured there!' The hard realities of the dilapidated building, the smells, the decay and sordidness of the area made me angry. It has the potential of being a corner we could be proud of. Right now, it's one we must be ashamed of.

Reg Alder brought the condition of the Hut to our attention in his article 'Gone and Going' in the March issue of the *Bulletin*. The Kosciusko Huts Association has written to the NPA suggesting that caretaker groups be formed, similar to the ones operating in the Kosciusko National Park, to look after huts in the ACT.

If we really do care about these few remaining relics of our cultural past, just what are we going to do about them? And when?



Vandals have worked the building over. Was this damage done by mindless people having a bit of 'fun' or was it done by extremist 'greenie' types trying to wreck the structure enough to warrant it being demolished? In this front room the fibro wall has been holed in a number of places, the floor is littered with rubbish and thick with animal manure. In the corners, the exposed edges of the floor boards are damp and rotting, the whole building stinks.



Strips of plywood wave in the breeze making a weird sound. This is what is left of one of the two back rooms that had been added to the original wooden structure. These flimsy fibro rooms had been lined with plywood to which had been pasted a number of layers of newspaper, no doubt to help insulate them. A sheet of fibro is missing from the end wall and a section of the roof is also gone. Rain, wind and farm animals have done much damage. Some floor boards have been levered up, much of what is left of the flooring is rotting, the long ribbons of plywood flutter incessantly with the slightest breeze. This corner especially is in a pitiful condition.



Smashed beyond repair by vandals. Pieces of metal that once was a stove litter the grassy patch outside the front door.



left

The central and oldest part of the building. In this section, the wooden slabs are still quite solid, but for how long? The wooden shingles on the roof appear to be in a very fragile condition. Someone has buckled back the protective layer of galvanised iron exposing the decomposing shingles to the weather, and allowing rain into what was a reasonably rain proof (though not wind proof) part of the hut.

right

A close-up of one corner of the end wall of one of the back (bed?) rooms. The fibro has been kicked in, the plywood wall lining is beginning to buckle and break up, a large strip of plywood from the ceiling has broken off and has fallen through the hole, the twisted floor boards, thick with manure, are rotting away. Just how much of this relic of our cultural history can be saved?



PARK PERSONALITY PROFILES

THISTLE YOLETTE STEAD

by Allen A. Strom

After a period of teaching in the country, I returned to Sydney in 1937 and soon became involved in the upsurge of interest in bushwalking that characterised the 1930s. My compelling interest in the bush was a quest for knowledge about the rocks, landforms, plants and animals that had been no part of my education. It was very difficult to secure references and publications on these subjects... very different from the position to-day, a change in which Thistle Y. Stead has been very much involved.

In 1938, a Thistle Y. Harris (Stead) was responsible for a book entitled 'Wildflowers of Australia' coming onto booksellers' shelves, and I quickly secured a copy which is to-day still bearing the dirty finger prints from use in the field. The many more sophisticated amateur botanists of to-day have learned to use botanical keys... the best I could do was learn to recognise genera from Thistle's book, but this encouraged me to undertake more serious studies in Botany.

I am sure that the publication of 'Wildflowers of Australia' marks an outstanding checkpoint in the move towards community concern for nature conservation and the spread of local and statewide bodies with nature conservation as a major aim, during the 40s, 50s and 60s. Without this widespread concern, legislation which now covers national parks, wildlife management and environmental protection, would never have eventuated. It is very true to say, that Thistle Y. Stead has been in the forefront of most developments in nature conservation over the last fifty years, and particularly in that aspect of nature conservation dealing with education of the community, through her production of publications and writings regardless of the time and effort necessary.

But Mrs Stead also had a professional career in the education of children and teachers. Graduating in Science from the University of Sydney towards the end of the First World War, she was soon to realise that women in those days were not considered adequate to fill the positions held by men. She was refused an appointment with the Botany Department of the University because she was a woman... perhaps this event was important in developing her determination for women's rights.

Thistle Stead turned to school teaching and spent some time on the staffs of Murwillumbah, Broken Hill and St George Girls' High at Kogarah. I expect she made very good use of the opportunity to enjoy and study the natural environment at Murwillumbah and Broken Hill. She certainly left behind her at St George, the record of several activities that stimulated the interests of pupils in the natural sciences. As a consequence, in 1939 she was appointed Lecturer in Biological Science at the Sydney Teachers' College, and so for two decades, Thistle Stead was in a position to influence many hundreds of young men and women to know more about Australian wildlife and the importance of nature conservation. There is no doubt that Thistle Stead made much effort to extend herself in giving young teachers something of her dedication to wildlife and conservation. But she did more: I have been told on many occasions by ex-students of the College, that she had stimulated their social consciousness and encouraged original thinking.

Meantime, Thistle had been very much involved over the years, in the community-based activities for natural history and nature conservation. Because of her interests in field-work, she then Miss Thistle Harris met up with several notable persons who were active during the 20s and 30s in the natural history societies. She met David George Stead who had established the Wild Life Preservation Society of Australia in 1909, the single most important event in nature conservation prior to the First World War. David G. Stead was a man of considerable drive and dedication, and besides marrying David at a later time, Thistle must surely have been infected by that drive and dedication. She has been a Councillor, President and Honorary Secretary of the Wild Life Preservation Society of Australia in a very long term of

service to an organisation that has a considerable number of achievements in nature conservation to its credit. The Fauna Protection Act of 1949, recognised as the major breakthrough in nature conservation in New South Wales, may be rightly seen as an outcome of the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia's continuing and persistent efforts.

With the establishment of National Fitness Camping in 1939, I became very involved in working with young people in field studies in these camps. I prepared a set of handbooks to assist the field studies, copies came into the hands of Thistle and she asked me to meet her at the Teachers' College. This meeting led to a whole series of events and my forty years of association with Mrs Stead. Her first 'achievement' was to persuade me to become Honorary Secretary of the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia during the early 1940s which led to my appointment to the Fauna Protection Panel in 1949 and my nine years as Chairman of the Panel (Chief Guardian of Fauna) from 1958. A major personality feature of Thistle Stead is her persistence when she sees that some event should take place. My life may have been quietly uneventful if it hadn't been for my meeting Thistle in the early 1940s!

Over the years Thistle and I have teamed together in many projects for nature conservation and environmental education. Sometimes the team didn't work too well, but characteristically, Thistle didn't allow disagreement to interfere with new efforts in a new adventure. There have been two outstanding achievements in my mind to her credit. Firstly, during the late 40s and early 50s, there were the Annual Nature Study Camps for trainee teachers at the Teachers' College Camp at Castlereagh. For the first week the teachers spent their time assessing the resources of the area for nature study teaching and during a second week, they worked with small groups of children that 'lived in' at the Camp. The result was of considerable benefit to all involved. The second achievement, has been at 'Wirrimbirra', Bargo, where only Thistle's persistence has ensured that a dream has become a fact. Wirrimbirra has made a major contribution to environmental education and nature conservation. Now into her eighties Thistle, although living at Watsons Bay, Sydney, still travels to Bargo to continue with her work at Wirrimbirra. In a recent radio interview by the ABC in its Profile series the value of her work at the Sanctuary was stressed.

The boundless energy of Thistle Stead is shown by the many publications that bear her name and what is more, they are still coming. The publications cover a wide area of helping the reader to better understand the natural environment, to grow native plants, to teach natural science or assess the effectiveness of science teaching and related matters. At one time she was Editor of the 'Junior Tree Warden' which circulated to all Primary Schools in the State and provided resource material in natural science for teachers. Thistle was a foundation member of the Society for the Growing of Australian Plants, but she was growing native plants and communicating with other growers all over Australia, long before the Society for Growing Australian Plants came into existence. In 1963 she was awarded the Australian Natural History Medallion for her contribution to the expansion of knowledge of Australian flora and fauna.

Most of us who achieve some academic award in connection with our interests or profession, are satisfied with our initial studies. For Thistle it was not enough to graduate in science. Over several years she engaged in experimenting and research in science education and subsequently received a Master of Education degree from Melbourne University, and to cap a very busy academic career, following retirement, she undertook a course in Landscape Architecture at the University of New South Wales resulting in the award of a diploma.

Thistle Yvette Stead has made a very considerable contribution to the advancement of nature conservation and environmental education at a time when both were almost completely ignored. The fact that they are to-day, much more carefully respected by Government and administration in this State, is in not small measure due to the devoted efforts of Thistle Stead.

THE OCTOBER L-O-N-G WEEKEND (1984) — Blue Water Holes Walk

by Dianne Thompson with assistance from Kevin Totterdell

A little band of seven gathered amidst the last of the melting snow at the meeting place on the Cotter Road at 7a.m. Saturday morning, little dreaming of the dramas, rigours and fun that our leader had in store for us over the following days. Our drive to Ginini became crisper and more spectacular with every kilometre as the snow around us grew deeper. Apart from one vehicle temporarily 'spinning out' we made it safely to the top and were able to enjoy the scenery, literally 'sniffing' with prospective delight the three days of peace and splendour before us.

Some of this enthusiastic self-satisfaction was soon blown with the wind and eddying snows when we emptied from the cars and endeavoured with numb hands to don our warmest gear and re-sort packs after the reallocation of tents.

Present were our leader Ian Haynes, Dirk Von Behrens and a bold, strong and stalwart young Rolf (age 11), Di Thompson, Kevin Totterdell, Tim Walsh and Len Crossfield. Off we charged down Harrys Spur and were soon out of the wind. It took nearly 1½ hours to walk clear of the snow, but what beauty encompassed us during that time. Lunch was had at the foot of the Spur while plans were made to cross the swirling Goodradigbee. Out with the stout poles, off with the long pants (remember to wear 'good' underwear on NPA trips particularly those led by Ian) and on with the gym shoes. This was to be the first of many creek and river crossings.

During the rest of the day we were able to enjoy some grand views of the snow capped Brindabella and Bimberi Ranges, but mostly it was darned hard slog. Some of us literally ran out of 'lift' — the ability to climb over logs, up hills, out of wombat holes, etc. During one rest stop, whilst slumped upon a hillside we saw a lyre bird sprint up a dead tree trunk and launch itself from the top to flap and glide a considerable distance down the mountainside.

Dusk found us sliding down a steep limestone slope to our camp site on Cave Creek. Morning highlighted the skill of the leader, having dropped us on to the one flat patch available on that side of the river. The area was surrounded by dense bush on one side and sheer cliffs and gorges on the other.

Apart from a short scramble around the camp to take photos, how else could we start the new day but by grabbing long poles, stuffing sore feet into soggy shoes and launching our way into yet another freezing body of water.

It was decided to lunch early at a delightful spot above the spectacular Cave Creek Falls. The wisdom of this was later justified by a demonstration from Kevin on just how long it can take to boil a billy. In between his bouts of industry with fanning, blowing, stoking and poking the fire and while the troops got thirstier, resorting to cool drinks from the creek, our bushman Kev reverted to periods of necessary recuperation on his bed-roll!! Finally the billy boiled and by mid-afternoon we were able to shamble on to experience the grandeur and beauty of Cave Creek Gorge and the Blue Water Holes. It was good medicine, and spirits were high in spite of a further ten river crossings. By this time although we all had it down to a fine art, true finesse was demonstrated yet again by our able leader who could move so fast he could 'walk on water'. The rest of us mere mortals contented ourselves with de-booting and wading as usual.

Late afternoon found us at an old copper mine dump, fossicking and pondering over the removal by machine of large portions of the rubble and thence further on to explore the karst country around us. After marvelling at a swiftly running creek which disappeared into a sink-hole, a rather threatening weather change forced us to make a cosy camp on a wooded hillside, preventing the budding speleologists from delving further into the depths of the region.

Our leader had warned us of a long day ahead so we all turned in early and were up even earlier than on the previous morn. We had broken camp by 7a.m., and set off in the fog, enthusiastically (?) facing our usual early morning wade

across a suitably freezing stream!

By 9a.m. we had descended a hill to the gate of Coolamine Homestead. Not long beforehand we had startled an enormous wild pig. At Coolamine we examined the restoration work which has been carried out to date, some of us through a camera lens, others from their backs while sprawled out in the warm sun with their packs for pillows.

Our sojourn on the flats was nearing its end and we soon began the long uphill slog to Mt Jackson and Circuits Mountain, where the views towards Brindabella Valley and of the ranges south-east towards Namadji well repaid our efforts. Soon the exhaustion of uphill dragging fell into relativity as we jarred our way forever downwards to the valley of the Goodradigbee. By this time some knees were swollen, calves and thighs were screaming and throats were allowing groans and unutterables to escape. We scuttled across the swollen Goodradigbee as the dusk closed around us, and strode (or was it dragged ourselves) up yet another 'pinch' as Ian called it (about 1,000 feet as I remember!!). He was always so accurate when describing the terrain ahead. By this time we had become so adept — or was it blase — at river crossings that the next slosh across the Goodradigbee (this time by moonlight) was nothing more than a slight aberration to our pace.

Finally at 7.40p.m. we made Koorabri at the head of the Brindabella Valley and were relieved and overjoyed to find Rosemary Von Behrens waiting with patience and good humour for us.

But no time to rest on laurels, Ian had one more trick up his sleeve. He had not elaborated until then on any details of the wondrous structure that was the swing bridge at Koorabri. A dissertation of its shortcomings would take another column, but a brief description may assist others with their preparedness (by taking a course in aerobatics) before venturing into the region — in the dark, utterly exhausted and with full packs. A lopsided physique would be a distinct advantage in grappling with the guide-cables (there are no sides of course). Next, a certain developmental skill in tight-rope walking would assist when balancing on sections of single planking which lie randomly between you and the raging river below. Finally the energy and spring of an Olympian long jumper would be a handy attribute for negotiating the fearful stretch at the far side of the bridge. Only the warm homely lights of the Von Behrens' van got me across. Personally, had I known what was before me I would have willingly settled for a good stout log and several strong males to wade the river with.

All bodies and packs made it safely to the van and were driven to the top of the Slide and thence to the cars at Ginini, but it was to be a long drive home, with both drivers and passengers alike longing for the opportunity to sleep.

I arrived home about 11.30p.m. truly worn out, but, oh! what a feeling of elation at having managed the trip. Both the company and scenery were outstanding and I'd like to thank all for a real 'high'. I'd also like to express my gratitude to *all* members of the party who so willingly assisted with the hoisting of my pack throughout the trip without complaint through periods of jocularity, strain and exhaustion.

And I'm sure all would join me in thanking Rosemary for being there with transport at the end of a long, hard day.

Incidentally we crossed 17 waterways on foot, wading 16 of those.

Churchill Trust invites applications

The Winston Churchill Memorial Trust offers scholarships for study overseas, usually for about ten weeks. No field of endeavour, no matter how unusual, is excluded, but its value to the community will be taken into account. The scholarships are not for basic study, nor for formal qualifications. Details are available from the NPA office in Kingsley Street.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

ARE YOU MOBILE?

Dear Madam,

I recently faced not being able to join a day walk, as I had no means of getting to the meeting point. Frustrating, as once there, one can get a lift to the walk start, and home again (or bus).

I wondered, with older members giving up cars and younger ones not owning one etc, just how many members would like to take part in the walks program, but are unable to do so because they cannot get to the meeting point? Buses are not around early on Sundays, and a taxi from Civic to Kambah would be in the region of \$12.

If any members have this problem, even for the odd walk every now and then, please phone me on 488774 (NOT between 1p.m. and 3p.m.), and I will take details. Should there be large numbers missing out, the compiled information will be passed to the Walks Committee and maybe we can come up with some solution.

Olive Buckman

Bogong

is the bi-monthly journal of the Canberra and South East Region Environment Centre containing photographs, drawings, articles, reviews and poems on local, national and international issues.

It gives you information on activists and campaigns, flora and fauna, forests and parks, resource use and abuse, law and planning, peace and war, nuclear and alternative energies, the practicalities and philosophy of environmentalism.

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Please send this form and your cheque/money order to CASEREC, PO Box 1875, Canberra City 2601, or call in at the Environment Centre, Kingsley Street (off Barry Drive), Acton, or phone 062-473064 for more information.

NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION OUTINGS

All persons joining an outing of the National Parks Association of the A.C.T. 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 A.C.T., 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.

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.

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

DECEMBER 1/2 PACK WALK

Byadbo Ref: Jacobs River 1:25,000, Numbla 1:25,000 Leader: Craig Allen 525746(w), 549735(h)
Ring leader for details of this walk in cyprus pine country of the Byadbo wilderness area. Walk upstream from junction of Jacobs and Snowy Rivers for a couple of hours.

DECEMBER 2 SUNDAY WALK

Ginninderra Falls Ref: ACT 1:100,000 Leader: Gladys Joyce 956959
Meet: Entrance to Ginninderra Reserve 10.00a.m. Short walk to view Falls and walk about 4km on other paths in the Reserve. Entry charge; pensioners free.

DECEMBER 2 SUNDAY WALK

Middle Creek Ref: Rendezvous Creek 1:25,000 Leader: Neville Esau 864176
Meet: Kambah Village shops 8.30a.m. Walk for 16km with 600m climb; up Middle Creek, climb over ridge between Middle and Bogong Creeks and return via Bogong Creek. 55km drive.

DECEMBER 5 WEDNESDAY MID WEEK WALK

Murrumbidgee Corridor, Pine Island to Red Rocks Ref: Tuggeranong 1:25,000 Leader: Charles Hill 958924
Meet: Kambah Village shops 9.30a.m. Walk along attractive river valley now under threat from Tuggeranong Town Centre development. Swim if warm. Some tracks, some sand and rock walking. Distance 8-9km.

DECEMBER 8 TREE MAINTENANCE

Glendale Crossing Ref: ACT 1:100,000 Leader: Charles Hill 958924
Anytime from 9.00a.m. Contact leader for details.

DECEMBER 9 CHRISTMAS PARTY

Orroral Valley Picnic Area Ref: ACT 1:100,000 Leader: Ross Carlton 863892
Gather any time after 3.00p.m. Bring tea.

DECEMBER 26... PACK WALK

Anyone interested in a high country walk of about 6 days after Christmas is invited to contact Neville Esau 494554(w), 864176(h).

JANUARY 11/12/13 LODGE WEEKEND

Perisher Ref: Kosciusko 1:100,000 Leader: Ian Currie 958112
A walking and flower observation weekend staying at the Canberra Alpine Club's Lodge at Perisher. \$10 per night; arrive Friday or Saturday. Limit 28 NPA members. Contact leader for details.

JANUARY 19/20 CANOE – CAR CAMP

Gundillion, Shoalhaven River

Ref: Kain 1:25,000

Leader: Ian Haynes 514762

Contact leader for details about this canoe/camp weekend on the Shoalhaven River. 95 km drive.

JANUARY 26/27/28 PACK WALK

Ettrema and Bundundah Creeks

Ref: Burrier 1:31,680 Yalwal 1:31,680

Leader: Phil Gatenby 416284

Walk and swim (?) in lower Ettrema Creek and Bundundah Creek. Overall climb of about 500 metres; may be some scrub and rock scrambling. 200 km drive.

FEBRUARY 3 SUNDAY WALK

Oallen Ford

Ref: Braidwood 1:100,000

Leader: Les Pyke 812982

Meet: Kingston Railway Station 9.00a.m. Shoalhaven River and goldmining area. Swim, walk, explore as may suit party. 120 km drive via Tarago.

FEBRUARY 9 SATURDAY TREE MAINTENANCE

Glendale Crossing

Ref: ACT 1:100,000

Leader: Charles Hill 958924

Working party at our tree plantation. Anytime after 9.30a.m. Ring leader for details.

FEBRUARY 9/10 PACK WALK AND SWIM

Micalong Creek

Ref: ACT 1:100,000

Leader: Fiona Brand 479538

Easy pack walk 2 km up Creek by Goodradigbee. Contact leader for details. 80 km drive.

FEBRUARY 10 SUNDAY WALK

Swamp Creek

Ref: ACT 1:100,000

Leader: Dianne Thompson 886084

Meet: Cotter Road and Eucumbene Drive 9.30a.m. Bring bathers. Easy walk from Uriarra Crossing to waterfall with swims along the way. 20 km drive.

FEBRUARY 14 THURSDAY MID-WEEK WALK

Uriarra Crossing

Ref: ACT 1:100,000

Leader: Shirley Lewis 952720

Meet: Cotter Road and Eucumbene Drive 9.30a.m. Short walk and swim near Uriarra Crossing. If transport required please telephone leader. 20 km drive.

FEBRUARY 16/17 JUNIORS' PACK WALK AND SWIM

Mt Clear area

Ref: Bredbo, Colinton 1:25,000

Leader: Ian Haynes 514762

Pack walk and swim for juniors (12-16 years) with adult escort. Walk along fire trail over easy terrain. Contact leader for details.

FEBRUARY 16/17 PACK WALK

Broken Dam

Ref: Cabramurra 1:25,000

Leader: Neville Esau 864176

Contact leader for details of this walk. The dam on Broken Dam Creek is one of many in the area built by miners to collect water for sluicing operations. It was originally 60 metres long and 5 to 6 metres high.

FEBRUARY 17 SUNDAY WALK AND BARBECUE TEA

Vanity Crossing

Ref: ACT 1:100,000

Leader: Syd Comfort 862578

Meet: Eucumbene Drive and Cotter Road 2.30p.m. Ramble along Cotter River above the Dam from the Vanity Crossing area. Bring food for a barbecue tea. 25 km drive via Pierces Creek Pine Forest.

FEBRUARY 22/23/24 HUT WEEKEND OR DAY WALKS

Mt Franklin

Ref: ACT 1:100,000

Leader: Ian Currie 958112

Stay in the Canberra Alpine Club hut, limit 20 NPA members (\$4 adult, \$2 child) or camp nearby. Day walkers most welcome. Please arrive by 9.30a.m. for walks, probably to Ginini Falls or Mt Gingera or Mt Aggie. Contact leader for details. 50 km drive.

MARCH 3 SUNDAY WALK

Red Rocks

Ref: ACT 1:100,000

Leader: Beverley Hammond 886577

Meet: Kambah Village Shops 9.30a.m. Walk upstream on tracks with some sandy patches and rocks from Kambah Pool to steep river rock walk on the Murrumbidgee. Bring swimming gear. 5 km drive; 8 km walk.

MARCH 3 SUNDAY 'FIELD GUIDE' WALK

Cotter/Tidbinbilla

Ref: ACT 1:100,000

Leaders: Laurie Adams 465912 (w),
John Hook 959666, Peter Ormay 512428

Meet: Corner Cotter Road/Eucumbene Drive 8.30a.m. Members interested in becoming more proficient in the use of our Field Guide will be coached by the authors. Easy, short distances.

MARCH 9 SATURDAY TREE MAINTENANCE

Glendale Crossing

Ref: ACT 1:100,000

Leader: Charles Hill 958924

Bring some tools. Anytime after 9.30a.m. Ring leader for details.

MARCH 10 SUNDAY WALK

Shoalhaven River

Ref: Braidwood 1:100,000

Leader: Dianne Thompson 886084

Meet: 9.00a.m. Kingston Railway Station. Ramble along Shoalhaven River to swimming spot. 4 km walk and 70 km drive.

MARCH 10 SUNDAY WALK

Mt McKeahnie

Ref: Corin Dam 1:25,000

Leader: Frank Clements 317005

Meet: Kambah Village Shops 7.00a.m. 18 km walk, mostly along Orroral Valley with a steep 500 metre climb. 42 km drive.

MARCH 16/17/18 CANBERRA DAY PACK WALK

Mt Jagungal

Ref: Berridale 1:100,000 Kosciusko 1:100,000

Leader: Ian Haynes 514762

Five huts walk from Eucumbene Cove through Snowy Gap. Contact leader.

MARCH 16/17/18 CANBERRA DAY CAMP

Wallaga Lake via Central Tilba

Ref: Narooma 1:100,000

Leader: Denise Robin 814837

Camp on property of Warren and Lyn Nicholls by Wallaga Lake. Beach walks; climb Mt Dromedary or explore historic Tilba Tilba. Contact leader for details.

Have you ideas for walking areas?

Do you own a property suitable for weekend camping?

Do you know of some suitable camping sites?

Please talk to one of the Committee Members or telephone the Convenor of the Outings Sub-Committee 886577

National Parks Association A.C.T.

OUTINGS SUMMARY

December	1/2	Weekend	Byadbo	Pack walk
	2	Sunday	Ginninderra Falls	Walk
	2	Sunday	Middle Creek	Walk
	5	Wednesday	Murrumbidgee	Walk
	8	Saturday	Glendale Crossing	Tree maintenance
	9	Sunday	Orroral picnic area	Christmas Party
	26 ...		High country	Pack walk
January	11/12/13	Weekend	Perisher	Lodge
	19/20	Weekend	Gundillion	Canoe/car camp
	26/27/28	Weekend	Ettrema	Pack walk
February	3	Sunday	Oallen Ford	Walk
	9	Saturday	Glendale Crossing	Tree maintenance
	9/10	Weekend	Micalong Creek	Pack walk/swim
	10	Sunday	Swamp Creek	Walk/swim
	14	Thursday	Uriarra Crossing	Walk
	16/17	Weekend	Mt Clear	Juniors' pack walk
	16/17	Weekend	Broken Dam	Pack walk
	17	Sunday	Vanity Crossing	Walk/barbecue tea
	22/23/24	Weekend	Mt Franklin Hut	Hut weekend and day walks
March	3	Sunday	Red Rocks	Walk/swim
	3	Sunday	Cotter, Tidbinbilla	Tree guide ramble
	9	Saturday	Glendale Crossing	Tree maintenance
	10	Sunday	Shoalhaven River	Walk/swim
	10	Sunday	Mt McKeahnie	Walk
	16/17/18	Weekend	Mt Jagungal	Pack walk
	16/17/18	Weekend	Wallaga Lake	Car camp

GENERAL MEETINGS

Held at 8 p.m., Room 1, Griffin Centre, Bunda Street, Civic

DECEMBER -- No meeting

JANUARY -- No meeting

FEBRUARY -- Thursday 21
Prudence Hall, Plant Physiologist and Visiting Fellow at the Australian National University, talking about the Great Lakes in Michigan, U.S.A. With slides.

REMINDER -- NPA Christmas Party at Orroral Valley Picnic Ground
after 3p.m. Sunday 9 December.