

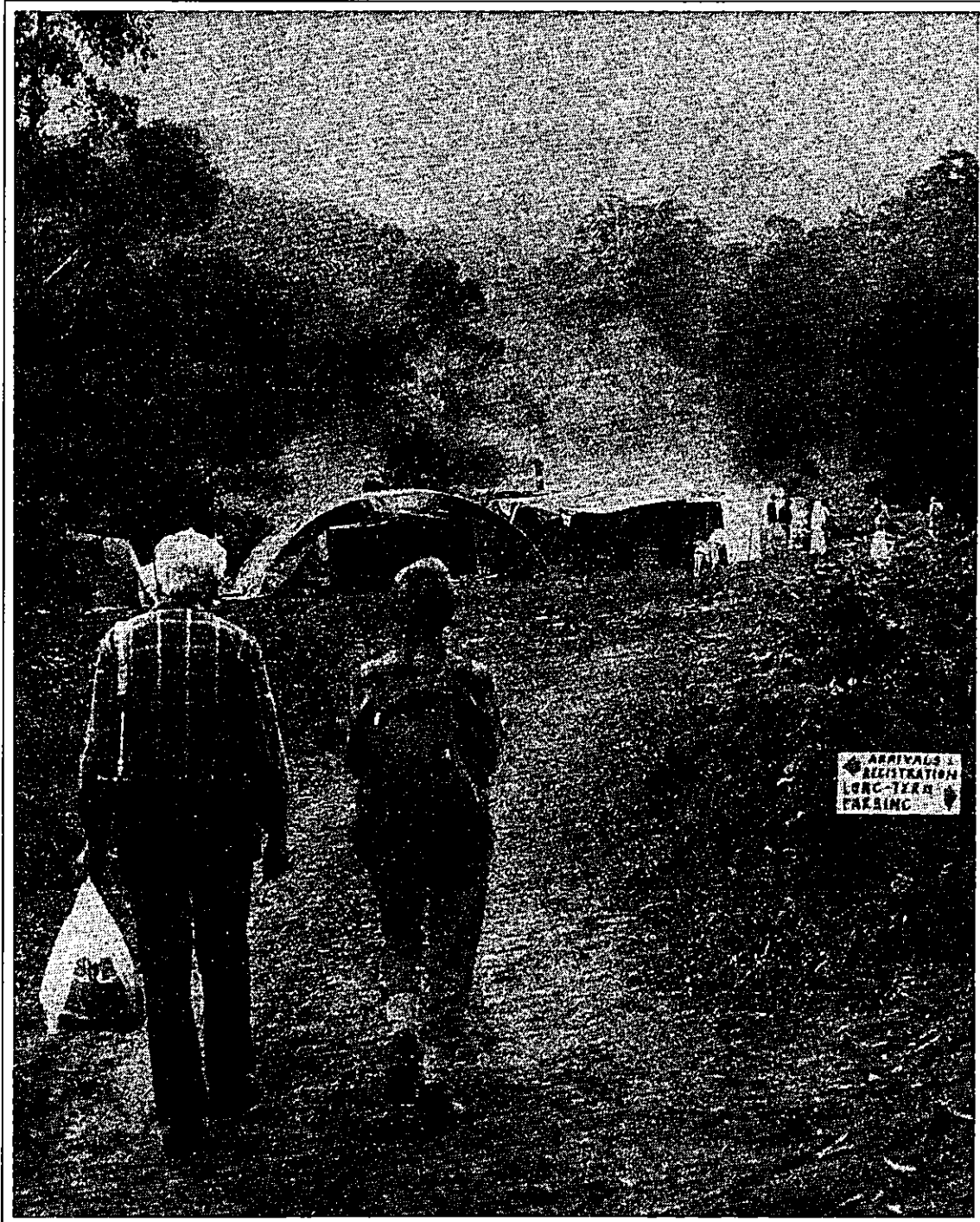


NPA BULLETIN

National Parks Association of the ACT

Vol 26 No 2

June 1989



Into the fray in Coolangubra forest

Why the Jerrabomberra Wetlands are worth saving

National Parks Association of the Australian Capital Territory Incorporated

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 organised 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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Membership enquiries welcome

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NPA Bulletin June 1989

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Cover: *Reg Alder and Shirley Lewis enter the conservationists' camp at Reedy Creek near Eden. See story page 5.*

Photographs and other contributions

The photograph of fog over Canberra on page 5 of the March 1989 issue of the *Bulletin* was taken by Hedda Morrison. The picture of Pigeon House by Babette Scougall was taken from the Folly Point track, not the Monolith Valley track.

The *Bulletin* is always seeking black and white photographs. Please label them with the name of the subject, the name of the photographer and the date.

Contributions of articles (news, description or fiction) and line drawings are also sought for the *Bulletin*. Creative works will be given a high priority for placement. Letters to the editor should be brief (less than 500 words). Leave contributions at the office or telephone the editor, Roger Green, on (062) 470059.

Deadline for next issue: 25 July, 1989.

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

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President's foreword

Recent meetings have set out to revitalise two of the Association's important sub-committees: Namadgi and Environment. Both meetings were well attended. The original division of responsibilities of these sub-committees was simply: (i) Namadgi National Park and closely related matters; (ii) other environment matters. I have interpreted the latter to be primarily conservation matters in the rest of the ACT and the southeastern New South Wales region. This does not preclude supporting conservation activity elsewhere and we regularly do this, for example, in recent times with issues such as the Victorian alpine park and rainforest conservation in Queensland. Sub-committees provide an opportunity for members to become involved in Association activities without the

continuous commitment of full committee work.

The Environment sub-committee meeting identified some current areas of focus: ACT planning issues (Murrumbidgee River corridor, Canberra Nature Park), alpine parks (World Heritage consideration, Kosciusko development), southeast forests, coastal development, Jervis Bay and the national parks of the coastal ranges (Morton, Deua and so on). See Neville Esau's report on page 23. Because of the diversity of these matters, a start was made on forming working groups which could focus on each issue. It would be ideal to have a nucleus of three or four people who became the Association 'minders' for each under the sub-committee umbrella. This should be possible in an asso-

ciation with 700 members. Contact the committee if you would like to become involved.

For those with sights set higher, the annual general meeting is not far away. At least four members of the current committee will not be standing for re-election. Indicated vacancies include: President, Secretary and two committee positions (the current incumbents being the Namadgi and Environment sub-committee convenors). In addition, the Vice-President's position has been vacant for the last three years.

Kevin Frawley

Namadgi's history

The ACT Parks and Conservation Service has given the Association the opportunity of having an input into the permanent display being prepared for the new Namadgi visitor information centre at Riverview. The centre is expected to be finished late in 1989.

NPA is providing information about the history of public recognition of the natural values of the area leading up to its declaration as a national park in 1984 and the current moves towards incorporating Namadgi in the proposed Australian alpine world heritage nomination.

This history emphasises the importance of community action in the protection of the country's remaining natural areas and we hope will make the point to all who view it that if people value national parks, they have to continue to fight for them. The Namadgi story, of course, parallels the history of our association which was formed in the early 1960s with the aim of

establishing a 'national park for the national capital'.

A working group from the Namadgi Subcommittee is meeting frequently to compile the information, as we have to supply it to the parks and conservation service within the next few weeks.

We have started by developing a chronology of significant landmarks and are searching for photographs, maps, slides and other material which may be used to illustrate aspects of these events.

Already we have realised that this project is the beginning of something bigger and when we have met the present deadline we hope to start a more comprehensive history which one day might be published.

If you have any early photographs tucked away or would like to work with us on the project, please contact one of the working group members: Fiona Brand, Bob Story, Reg Alder or Den Robin.

Den Robin

New members

The following new members are welcomed to the Association. The two new members from Lyneham won their memberships as prizes in the NPA lucky dip at the Greener Fair at Weston Park last March.

Virgilio Bettanin, Gilmore; Trevor Bills, Rivett; Davis Family, Canberra; Coral and Murray Dow, Ainslie; L. Feeney, Lyneham; Warwick and Marian Fulton, Kambah; Guy Hodgson, Hackett; Dr Keith McLean and Dr Lesley Cadzow, Cook; Elizabeth Martin, O'Connor; Warren Martin, Queanbeyan; Michael Morriss, Narrabundah; Jane O'Donohue, Kaleen; F.A. Parkes, Pearce; Peter Rayner, Lyneham; Anne Ritchard, Griffith; Helen Smith, Mawson; Susan Sutherland, Jamison; E. Van der Straaten, Rivett; Karen Wilson and Paul Kisley, Farrer; Pam Wintle, Tharwa.

Committee news

Australian alps

The Association's theme for Heritage Week in April was the World Heritage nomination of the Australian alps. Outings highlighted the natural heritage of the high country near Canberra and Dr Geoff Mosley spoke to the April general meeting about the case for world heritage nomination (see page 18).

The President has written to the Commonwealth and New South Wales governments, expressing the Association's support for nomination of the alps for world heritage listing. The Association has donated \$100 to the Victorian NPA fund to campaign for the creation of a Victorian alpine national park.

A Greener Fair was held in Weston Park on 5 March and the NPA display – staffed by Kevin Frawley, Neville Esau, Tim Walsh and Frank Clements – focused on the world heritage nomination of the Australian alps. A free lucky dip brought in two new Association members who won a year's free membership in the draw.

Summer in the alps

The Australian Conservation Foundation is planning a festival at Jindabyne on the Australia Day long weekend in 1990 and the Association has agreed to assist, probably with day walks and similar activities to promote appreciation of the natural heritage of the alps.

Victorian alps

The President wrote to the Victorian Liberals urging them to support the Alpine Park Bill in the Victorian parliament. No doubt this letter tipped the balance as the Liberals decided to support the Bill (see page 18).

Environment Subcommittee

The Environment Subcommittee

met on 27 April and resolved to meet regularly. This is an informal committee and offers an opportunity for anyone to get involved in some way, whether writing a letter or joining a small group to comment on an environmental impact statement or a draft plan of management. The subcommittee covers a broad field and members have expressed interest in specialising in a number of areas. See the report on page 23.

Tharwa Sands

Kevin Frawley and Tim Walsh have inspected the site of a proposed expansion of Tharwa Sands' red-gravel quarry near the Ginninderra Falls tourist site. As reported in the last *Bulletin*, a letter has been sent to the Yarrowlumla Shire Council suggesting that the proposed extension seems to cross the boundary of the declared scenic area under the local government environment plan.

Nature appreciation course

The Publicity and Education Subcommittee has prepared a proposal for a nature appreciation course to be conducted by the Centre for Continuing Education and the Australian National University. An advertisement for a course coordinator appears on page 17.

Conservation Council environment policy

The Committee is preparing a response to the Conservation Council's *Policy statement on ACT environment issues*. This document will be used to lobby the minister responsible for the environment and other members of the new ACT Assembly.

Julia Trainor

Namadgi matters

The Namadgi Subcommittee is gathering material on the history of the declaration of Namadgi National Park. The subcommittee is also considering preparing a booklet on the national park's history. See the article on page 3.

To complement the recently released Yerrabi track brochure, a joint NPA/ACT Parks and Conservation Service production, the Association is preparing a second brochure on the natural history of Boboyan Trig area. The new brochure will provide more information on the birds, plants and geology of the area and will be targeted at track users who require more detail than that provided in the track brochure.

At a recent meeting of the subcommittee Ian Garven from the parks and conservation service answered member's questions on issues relating to Namadgi National Park. From this meeting it was resolved to rekindle an Association project to undertake restoration work on the Orroral homestead. This project had been stalled for a number of years. Other issues discussed at this meeting which are likely to be considered by the subcommittee in coming months included the gazettal of the Lower Cotter, Blue Gum Creek, and Mount Tennant areas under appropriate legislation, such as the *Nature Conservation Ordinance*.

Namadgi Subcommittee meetings are held on the second Thursday every second month. The next meeting will be at 7.30pm on 10 August 1989. Any Association member is welcome to attend. For details of the venue contact the subcommittee convenor, Philip Gatenby, on 543094.

Philip Gatenby

A report on the Environment Subcommittee appears on page 23.



*Conservationists at the Reedy Creek camp form a circle of peace as a police helicopter flies overhead.
Colour negative Fiona Brand, print Reg Alder. Below: Tantawangalo Creek . Photo Reg Alder.*

'Send us more people'

Hundreds of conservationists have been arrested, and some gaoled, after protests in the Coolangubra and Tantawangalo forests of southeastern New South Wales. FIONA BRAND, who wrote this account, SHIRLEY LEWIS and REG ALDER went to see what was going on.

The sound of a helicopter breaks the quietness of mid-morning at the Reedy Creek camp. 'Make the peace sign,' a voice declares and a hundred people dash into the open space surrounded by the information tent, the cook house and the fire shelter. People link hands in a circle, faces upturned, then at a signal crouch down and jump up with a joyous yell. Thus a non-violent positive action is the

answer to a threatening intrusion. The police helicopter has done its patrol for the day. However, little did we know the outcome of that flight.

The South-East Forest Alliance (SEFA) camp is a quietly busy place where a group of dedicated people

organise non-violent protests against the logging of areas which were about to be declared national parks just before the last New South Wales elections.

Incredibly one of these areas, the Tantawangalo Mountain, is to
continued next page





*Some of the 120 tents pitched at Reedy Creek on the weekend before Anzac Day.
Below: Planning the next day's action while the billy boils. All photos Reg Alder.*

'Send us more people'

continued from previous page

be logged even though it is the catchment for Tantawangalo Creek, a source of water for the Bega valley.

SEFA welcomes long-term or short-term campers so that they can learn about what is happening in the forests, see the need for protection of the old forests and wildlife, and expend some energy in action to save the forests from complete destruction.

Over public holidays there is a great influx of interested people. During the Anzac weekend over 200 people were in 120 tents and three campervans. People who wished to join in protest action were instructed in non-violent action (NVA) or peaceful resistance (PR). One young man under instruction said that he had just come to the camp to see what all the publicity was about but since he had been spotlighting the night before and had seen greater gliders, he knew he wanted to save the forests for their sake. Another said he had walked on the Saturday into

an area which had been clear felled and it was so shocking he wanted to stop this 'stupid action'.

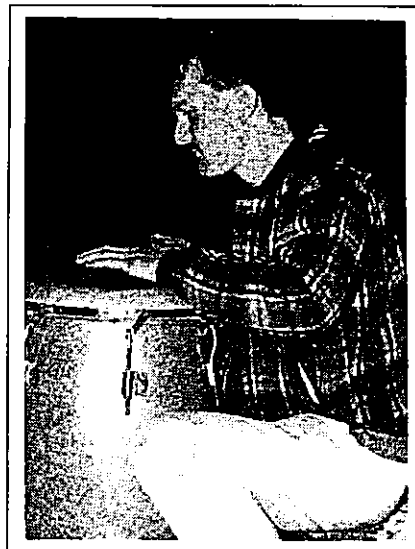
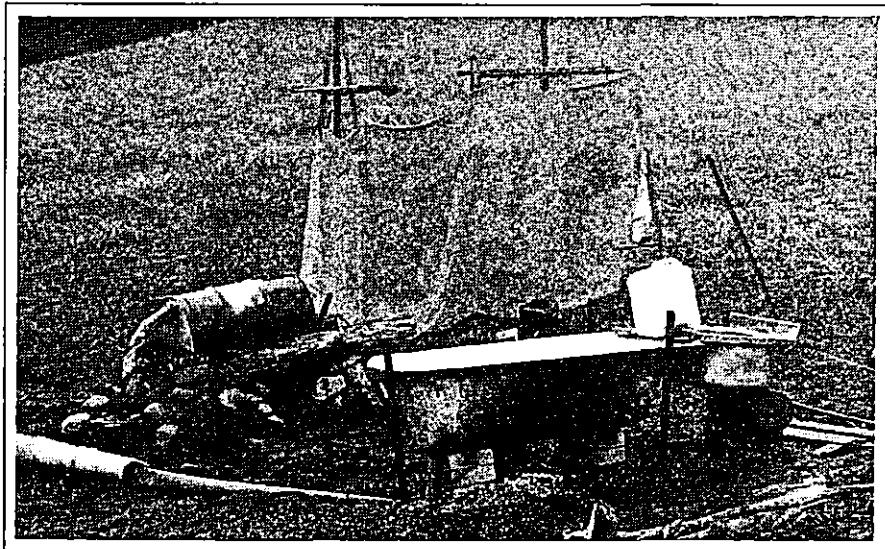
It is most rewarding to hear the testimony of people who were not totally committed conservationists but have become committed.

The camp site is set in lovely bushland but the camping area has become very sodden after 16 days of rain or drizzle. A cheerful volunteer cook and helpers working in difficult conditions provide meals for \$2 a day to resident campers.

Most people at the camp are young people – students on holidays, people who work part-time, others who have taken annual leave and others there for the weekends only.

Many local residents support the cause and we met one young man (married with two children) who had chained himself to logging equipment to delay its use and to attract publicity. He and five others had been arrested. It is no light matter to volunteer for protest work, as arrest by police for some people like nurses and teachers, can be the end of their careers. Yet despite this, brave people step forward and protest against the logging and woodchipping of areas which are on the interim list of the





Register of the National Estate.

There is a lighter side. It is obvious that there is a great comradeship amongst the forest alliance people. They are gentle people, living a simple life style, with illegal drugs and alcohol banned. They still enjoy themselves, as was witnessed at their response to a dance at Rocky Hall hall.

The forest alliance needs more volunteers with home bases in Sydney and Canberra and at the forest. They need your support

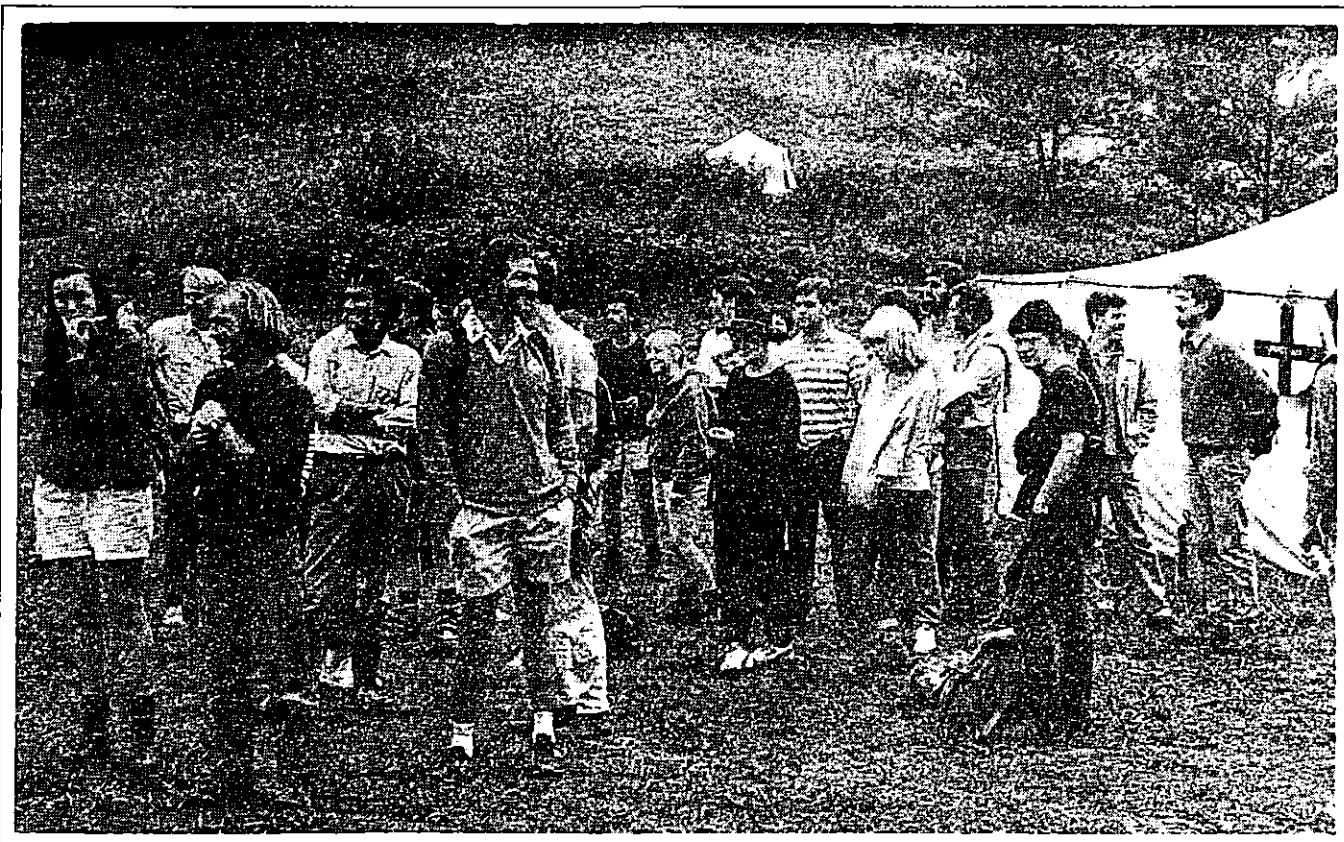
physically, morally, financially. How about it?

Postscript

And what was the outcome of that flight by the police helicopter? The arrest of 42 people from the camp who went on a Sunday bush walk into a section of their native land – the Coolangubra forest which has been put out of bounds to all but the loggers. What would you do if that was a prospect in your area, say Namadji National Park?

First take a shower or a bath, left, then head for the music, above. You might as well dance the night away for tomorrow you could be arrested.

Below: Unsuspecting bushwalkers prepare for a Sunday morning stroll. The members of this menacing-looking group were charged and brought out of the forest in police vans.





Jerrabomberra birdlands

At first glance the management of Jerrabomberra Wetlands may not look like a great environmental issue. IAN FRASER explains why, on closer inspection, the wetlands are worth conservationists' support.

Latham's snipe. Drawings courtesy of the ACT Parks and Conservation Service.

Twenty-five years ago there was the best reason for even the most informed environmentalist or bird-watcher not to have heard of the Jerrabomberra Wetlands – they didn't exist. On Kelly's farm cattle grazed, as they had for well over a hundred years, across the east-west ridges of the ancient channels – the palaeochannels – of the Molonglo as it meandered in its current bed across the grassy plain between Mount Pleasant and Red Hill. Occasionally the plains flooded but there was nothing to retain the water.

Fifteen kilometres downstream, however, the dream of a Chicago architect was about to come to fruition, 46 years after being committed to paper. As the valley changed into Lake Burley Griffin with the closing of Scrivener Dam, few

would have thought of the filling of the distant palaeochannels lying beyond the eastern end of the lake between the Molonglo and Jerrabomberra Creek.

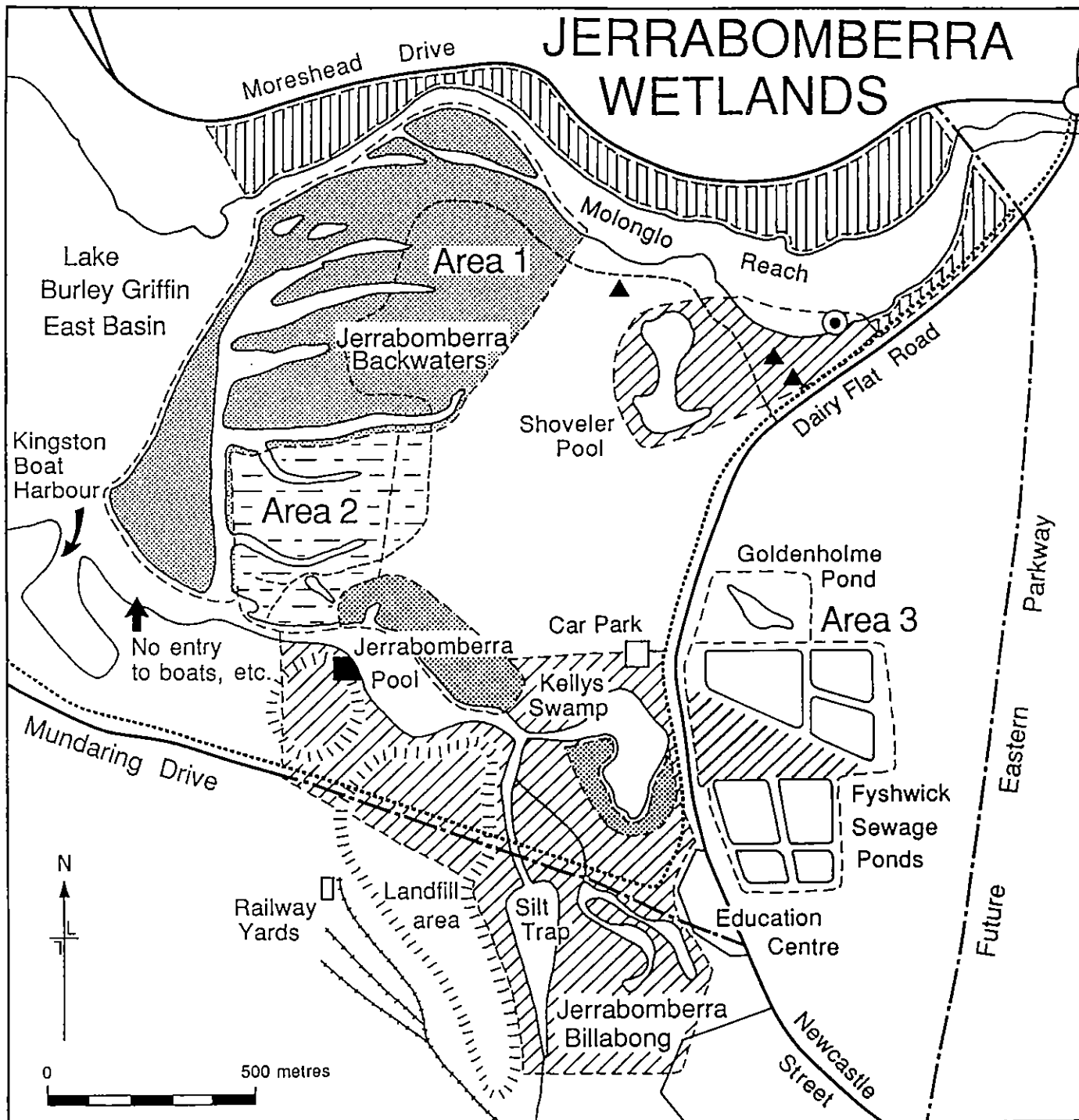
While most Canberra residents remained oblivious to the formation of a new channel and marsh system, one group of visitors was quick to avail themselves of the benefits. Australian waterbirds are of necessity opportunistic wanderers and new feeding, breeding and refuge areas are soon discovered and colonised by the sedentary species and added to the visiting list of the nomads and migrants.

Since the filling of the lake no less than 69 species of waterbirds (and over 100 other species) have been recorded in the area, many of them breeding. To the casual human observer – if indeed one

can observe casually while avoiding the frustrated Stirling Mosses who hurtle their delivery trucks along Dairy Flat Road – the impression is of a rather scruffy paddock with untidy earth piles and as the highlight, perhaps, a group of pelicans on a muddy island in a pond.

A closer look may not improve the impression either: the place is infested with weeds grazed by cattle; the watercourses – of dubious quality due to the industrial effluent, heavy metal pollution and rural runoff upstream – are willow-choked, the earth piles are reminiscent of a dump; roads wind throughout and a network of powerlines dominates the skyline. Quite frankly, you'd have to be a pretty dedicated birdo to stop, if it were anywhere else.

continued page 10



delineated by J.R. Goodrum May 1989, after ACT Parks and Conservation Service

- Visitor Centre site
- ▲ Soil stockpiles
- ⊙ Cormorant breeding site
- Cycle path
- Service road to powerlines
- Gazetted alignments
- Area 1: Refuge – protection and habitat enhancement.
- Area 2: Limited access under controlled conditions.
- Area 3: Proposed withdrawal from lease. Bird viewing opportunities.
- Public access facilities to be developed.
- Access discouraged to protect bird viewing opportunities.
- Recreation. Barbeques north of Molonglo Reach.

Jerrabomberra birdlands

continued from page 8

In those last five words is one of the keys to the place. It isn't anywhere else; it's right in the middle of a city of 270,000 people and thus provides a near-unique natural classroom and bird observatory within minutes of a huge concentration of people.



Another key can be seen by standing atop nearby Mount Pleasant (a public reserve only accessible via Duntroon) and getting a view of the area. This key is diversity. Across Dairy Flat Road are the deeper ponds of the Fyshwick sewerage treatment works, rich in nutrients. Diving ducks and filter feeders (including less common species such as pink-eared ducks, shovelers, white-eyed ducks, blue-billed ducks, various grebes and even the famed freckled duck) find their niche there. Just west of the road are the reed-beds of Kellys Swamp sheltering swamp hens and other rails, reed warblers, grass-birds and cisticolas; the mudflats of the swamp attract various migratory waders and probers such as ibis, as well as somnolent pelicans. Beyond Kellys Swamp the deeper permanent waters of Jerrabomberra Pool and Molonglo Reach, support fish breeding areas and the fish predators – cormorants, darters, pelicans, herons and egrets – as well as surface-feeding ducks, platypus and water-rats. Reed-free banks provide secure resting areas for ducks and others. In the trees along the streams – alas willows – nest and roost cormorant species, darters and night

herons. And along the lake edge the fingers of the palaeochannels – called 'Jerrabomberra Backwaters' in the ACT Parks and Conservation Service's draft management plan – provide the most varied and valuable habitat of all. As well as open water and reed-beds they provide rich marshlands and wet grasslands which are refuge and food source for a variety of ibis, herons, egrets, large and small plovers, and migratory waders including the uncommon Latham's snipe. This snipe, along with various other small waders, is the subject of agreements on migratory birds between Australia and both Japan and China. An international stage!

Unfortunately it's become a pretty crowded stage over the years. Its conversion to cow pasture has been so successful that the retention of stock has become necessary, or at least convenient, to keep the grass to a manageable height. Against this is balanced the perceived benefit in the cows deterring the faint-hearted from bird refuge areas but this is, to say the least, a little-used tool in reserve management.

The electricity lines that festoon the site (no less than five) are a hazard to birds and no aesthetic benefit either. ACT Electricity and Water (ACTEW) did paint the latest addition – the massive 132-kilovolt poles – green, but that was the limit of their environmental enthusiasm. Several years after completion, the massive earth dumps that were to provide grass-covered flood-protection mounds at the base of the poles still adorn the Molonglo River/Dairy Flat Road corner. Meantime, the poles are at risk from a major flood, the dumps are eroding away (albeit all too slowly), a high-quality access road must be maintained through the bird refuge area and a potentially valuable refuge island in Molonglo Reach must be joined to the land by a causeway, allowing predator access.

The predators – foxes, cats and dogs – are a serious problem that can only be resolved by fencing all non-water frontages. Meanwhile islands are valuable refuges. Rabbits and especially hares are problems for replanting programs.

Another major restriction is the proximity of the airport – birds and planes are incompatible. One may well observe that an airport built in a fog-bound frost-hollow with an emergency flight path over a hospital could be moved to everyone's benefit, but this is hardly likely to appeal to the Treasury. Figures from the draft management plan show that of 149 reported bird strikes from 1969 to 1987, only four unfortunate ducks came from the Jerrabomberra Wetlands; nonetheless there is a blanket moratorium on any works which would encourage bird numbers in the wetlands.

All in all this is a rather discouraging scenario for a would-be reserve manager, even ignoring the proposals which have failed, such as a National Capital Development Commission (NCDC) plan to run a bicycle track along the powerline levee through the refuge area – apparently one commissioner reasoned that since all greenies ride bicycles this would win us over to the power line. Well, we weren't bought that cheaply, but the powerline went in anyway. Meantime, rumours of development on the waterfront at Kingston – the last proposal was Disneyesque – still abound.

Despite all this, the ACT Parks and Conservation Service remains resolved to manage the wetlands with the dual objectives of preserving its natural values and interpreting them to the public. To that end a subcommittee of the ACT Parks and Conservation Consultative Committee was convened to provide detailed input to a draft management plan. The subcommittee drew its membership from the ACT Schools Authority, the Australian

National University Faculty of Science, Canberra Ornithologists Group, the Conservation Council of Canberra and the South-East Region, the CSIRO Division of Wildlife and Ecology, the NCDC and the tourist industry. At the end of 1988 a draft management plan was released. Public comment on this plan has now closed but it may still be consulted at the NPA office or the Environment Centre.

The most essential element of the wetlands' protection is gazettal under the ACT *Nature Conservation Ordinance 1980*. It is not too late to press for that, quite independently of the detail of the management plan. A crucial part of that detail is the declaration of refuge areas with very restricted access along the western end of the wetlands around the backwaters. This is to protect Latham's snipe and to provide breeding and retreat areas for other species. Boats will be kept out as well as land intruders.



Educational facilities are to be based in the first instance on an interpretation centre south of Jerrabomberra Pool, off Mundaring Drive. (Dairy Flat Road will become a cul-de-sac on completion of the Eastern Parkway). A classroom will be included in this interpretation centre or built on Dairy Flat Road.

The only catch is that there are no resources to produce and execute the final management plan; nor are there resources for the Murrumbidgee corridor management plan, nor the Paddys River management plan, nor the Canberra Nature Park management

plan, nor ... This is a ludicrous situation and one on which NPA members may care to voice an opinion to the new government, either as individuals or collectively, along with the question of gazettal under the *Nature Conservation Ordinance*.

Meanwhile, take the time, and a pair of binoculars, and visit the wetlands. From the carpark on the north side of Dairy Flat Road, cunningly sited on a nasty bend, follow the track to Kellys Swamp hide and across to Jerrabomberra Pool. Across the road, visit the sewage ponds, after informing the ACTEW office on the site. Further north along the road go in past the soil dumps to view Molonglo Reach and the shallow Shoveler Pool.

Don't compare the Jerrabomberra Wetlands with the Macquarie Marshes or the floodplains of Kakadu National Park. Compare them rather to the suburban or industrial sprawl such a central site would be in most cities. I think they are worth a bit of support.

Ian Fraser is joint co-ordinator of the Canberra and South-East Region Environment Centre.

Some further reading

ACT Parks and Conservation Service (1988), *Draft Management Plan for Jerrabomberra Wetlands*.

NCDC (1984), *Ecological Resources of the ACT*, (Technical Paper 42) pp 41-43.

David Pfanner (1988), 'A Management Plan for Jerrabomberra Wetlands', *Bogong* 9(1).

Neville Rosengren (1988), *Sites of Significance in the ACT 2. Inner Canberra*, NCDC, pp 163-167.

Doug Ross (1985), 'Jerrabomberra Wetlands', *Bogong* 5(6).

Eroding the west

The western division of New South Wales, which encompasses 41 per cent of the state, is a vast area of low rainfall country vegetated with spinifex, saltbush, mitchell grass, acacia and eucalypt woodlands.

Conservationists have long been concerned at the rate of clearing for cropping or improvement of native pastures. In May 1988 the Western Lands Commission refused any further clearing licences in the Murray-Darling Geological Basin, that is, south of the Broken Hill railway, pending completion of a research study.

Unfortunately this decision does not apply to the Forestry Commission which owns all the commercial timber in the western division. The Colong Foundation has stated that immediate action should be taken to stop the logging of river red gums on lessees' properties.

The Western Lands Commission has a policy of education and persuasion in dealing with its 1700 lessees. The ultimate sanction of forfeiture of the lease has never been used and destocking orders are rare.

Another major problem in part of the Western Division is the spread of inedible native shrubs known locally as 'woody weeds'. Encroaching hobbush, turpentine, budda, purity bush and several others form dense stands which kill off all ground cover and ruin semi-arid grazing lands.

The worst environmental problem in the west of the state is salinity. The dispersal of saline groundwater is causing degradation of large areas adjacent to the Murray River. It is clear that irrigation practices should change in order to make more efficient use of water and treatment of irrigation waste water.

The Colong Bulletin
March 1989

Resource assessment: boon or burden

In outlining a series of new principles to apply in future conservation and development decisions, the Prime Minister, Bob Hawke, in November 1988 announced the Government's intention to establish a resource assessment commission. This will be an independent body to inquire into major, complex land-use decisions referred to it by the Australian government.

It is intended that the commissioners for each inquiry will be appointed by the government on the recommendation of the Australian Science and Technology Council and the Industries Assistance Commission, and that the commission will draw on the resources of government departments and agencies and on other appropriate specialists. Hearings will be public and opportunity will be provided for interested parties to give evidence before the commission. Transcripts will be available and draft and final reports will be published. Any action or decisions flowing from an inquiry will be matters for the government. At the time of writing legislation to establish the Resource Assessment Commission was expected to be introduced during the current parliamentary session.

Confident that their standpoint on major environmental issues would be vindicated by rational, unbiased investigation based on all relevant values, conservationists could be expected to welcome the establishment of the commission as a mechanism by which these processes could properly be carried through. However there are concerns that inquiries may not adequately reflect environmental viewpoints and if this were to be the case the existence of a commission report, rather than assist resolution of the issues, would make advancement of the conservation stance even more difficult.

Crucial to this issue is the process of selection of commissioners for each inquiry. It is important that environmental values be adequately observed in the determination of the appropriateness of the persons being considered to conduct an inquiry. In the selection process the advice provided to the relevant minister will clearly be very significant and it is important that this advice takes full account of the conservation and environmental credentials of possible appointees. Above all, the commission has to establish its credibility so that its findings have high standing and are beyond challenge in the areas of competency and objectivity. The shadow of the Helsham inquiry into Tasmania's forests is long indeed.

A further concern for environmental and heritage groups is how they are to provide the resources needed to prepare adequately the submissions to be placed before any inquiry. Noting that it is the intention for the commission to consider only major and complex land use issues, the identification and development of the conservation values involved could be expected to be difficult and specialised – a formidable task requiring substantial resources for research, investigation, compilation and presentation. Environmental and heritage groups have grounds for concern that they may be less advantageously placed in this regard than the protagonists of other values such as resource development and short-term economic gains. It may be that the government intends to make provision to redress any imbalance which could occur in this way. It is to be hoped so, otherwise the value of the findings of an inquiry could be seriously impaired.

The establishment of the Resource Assessment Commission offers the prospect of

machinery which will allow Australia, from a national viewpoint, to develop a data base on vital land-use issues from which rational decisions may be taken, based on a knowledge of all relevant values both short and long term. However, if this process is to contribute to the resolution of these issues, it is essential that the commission has credibility and that its machinery and processes are free of serious flaws. Should unsound conclusions be reached, the authority which the commission could be expected to attain would make their rectification even more difficult.

Syd Comfort

Ecopolitics IV

An international conference about politics and the environment, called Ecopolitics IV, is to be held at the University of Adelaide from 21 to 24 September. Themes to be covered at the conference include:

- a sustainable economy
- technology, society and the environment
- the politics of reform
- education
- philosophy
- aid, indigenous peoples and the environment
- urban environment
- arid lands
- tourism and national parks
- women and the environment.

For information, contact the Graduate Centre for Environmental Studies, the University of Adelaide, GPO Box 498, Adelaide SA 5001. Telephone (08) 228 5835.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL 1989/90

Annual subscriptions fall due on the 1st July 1989 and may be paid at a general meeting, at the NPA office Kingsley Street Acton, or by post to GPO Box 457 Canberra 2601.

Members renewing before 31 July 1989 are entitled to a free NPA cloth badge (Household members one only) which may be obtained at a general meeting or from the NPA office. Donations over \$2 may be claimed as a tax deduction under Section 78(1)(a) of the Income Tax Assessment Act.

NAME OF MEMBER(s) (Please Print) _____

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<u>Subscription Rates</u>				<u>Payment</u>	
Household	\$20	Corporate	\$10	Subscription	\$ _____
Single	\$15	Bulletin only	\$10	Donation	\$ _____
				TOTAL	\$ _____

Concession Half above rates

PLEASE IGNORE THIS REMINDER IF YOU HAVE ALREADY PAID YOUR 1989/90 SUBSCRIPTION.

2 September-Saturday Walk (1/A)

Square Rock Ref: Corin Dam 1:25 000

Leader: Olive Buckman 48 8774

Meet at Kambah Village Shops at 9am. A pleasant 8km walk, on tracks, through a variety of scenery, to a fascinating rock formation with wide views. A climb of 270 metres. Approximately 5 hour trip including lunch and exploration. 80 km drive.

3 September-Sunday Walk (3/A)

Mt Coree Ref: Cotter Dam 1:25 000

Leader: Phyl Goddard 54 8279

Meet at the corner of Eucumbene Drive and the Cotter Rd at 8.30 am. A 17 km walk from Blundell's Flat up Mt Coree. A 600 metre climb along fire trails for excellent views of Canberra and the Brindabella Range. Bring warm clothing for a possibly bleak lunch hour at the summit. Returning along Pabrals Road Fire Trail. 80 km drive.

9/10 September-Pack Walk (2/B/C)

Folly Point Ref: CMW Budawangs

Leader: Les Pyke 81 2982

Contact leader by Wednesday for details of this walk in the northern Budawangs. Excellent views over the Clyde River Gorge. 300 km drive.

9 September-Saturday Walk (1/A/B)

Blue Gum Creek Lookout Rock

Ref: Corin Dam 1:25 000

Leader: Lyle Mark 86 2801

Meet at Kambah Village Shops at 9.00 am. A 9 km walk across Brumby Flats from the Corin Dam Road to Lookout Rock at reference 784648, with views over Blue Gum Creek Gorge to Canberra. 90 km drive.

16/17 September-Pack Walk (2/B)

Murramarang NP Ref: Klaloea 1:25 000

Leader: Den Robin 81 4837

Contact leader by Wednesday for details. A gentle walk in the northern section of Murramarang National Park visiting Depot Beach, Pebbly Beach and Durras Mountain. Possibly the first swim of the season! Limited Numbers. 320 km drive.

16 September-Saturday Walk (3/A/B)

Mt Tennant Ref: Williamsdale 1:25 000

Leader: Charles Hill 95 8924

Meet in Kett St next to the Kambah Village Shops at 8.15 am. A 16 km walk on a pleasant earth access road to a fire spotting tower with excellent views. A total climb of 750 metres. Optional return partly down the ridge through open forest. 70 km drive.

17 September-Sunday Walk (4/A/D/E)

Tidbinbilla Range Ref: Tidbinbilla 1:25 000

Leader: Phillip Gatenby 54 3094

Note: Not for beginners. Contact leader by Friday. A long walk in the Tidbinbilla Range, including Tidbinbilla Peak, the Pimple, Tidbinbilla Mountain and Mt Domain. An overall climb of nearly 1200 metres. Will require an early start. 100 km drive.

23 September-Saturday Walk (3/A/B)

Bullen Range / Murrumbidgee River

Ref: Cotter 1:25 000

Leader: Syd Comfort 86 2578

Meet at the corner of the Cotter Road and Eucumbene Drive at 8.30 am. A 15 km walk involving a 120 metre climb to the ridge then along the ridge to the trig station with good views of the Paddy's and Murrumbidgee Rivers and surrounds. A 220 metre descent to the river and return over the range. A short car shuffle involved. 20 km drive.

24 September-Sunday Walk (3/A/D/E)

Mt Gudgenby Ref: ACT 1:100 000

Leader: Neville Esau 86 4176

Meet at the Gudgenby Bridge at 8.00 am. An 18 km walk with excellent views. A total climb of 700 metres.

27 September-Wednesday Walk (2/A)

Isaac Ridge Ref: ACT 1:100 000

Leader: Syd Comfort 86 2578

Meet at 87 Shackleton Circuit Mawson at 9.00 am. A 11km walk with extensive views of Canberra. The walk is mainly on tracks and involves two 120 metre ascents. The walk takes in three sections of the Canberra Nature Park, Isaac Ridge, Wanniasa Hills and Farrer Ridge.

30 September / 2 October-Canoe trip (2/A)

Shoalhaven River Ref: Braidwood 1:100 000

Leader: Chris Bellamy 49 7167

Contact leader by Monday 25 September for details. A canoe trip from the Warri Bridge near Braidwood to Oallen Ford, subject to water levels. River grade 1, 2. Car based camping overnight. BYO canoe or rent one. Suit beginners. 150 km drive.

Points to note

New faces to lead, new places to go. Please help keep our outings program alive by volunteering to lead a walk occasionally. Telephone the walks convenor, Steven Forst, on 516817 (h).

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

The Committee suggests a donation of FIVE cents per kilometre (to the nearest dollar) be offered to the driver by each passenger accepting transport. Drive and walk distances quoted in the program are the approximate distances for return journeys.

Outings program

July to September 1989



Outings guide

- Day walks** carry lunch, drinks and protective clothing.
Pack walks two or more days, carry all food and camping requirements. CONTACT LEADER BY WEDNESDAY.
Car camps facilities often limited or non-existent. Vehicles taken to site can be used for camping. BOOK EARLY WITH LEADER.

Other activities include nature rambles, environmental and field guide studies and ski tours.

Walks gradings

Distance grading (per day)

- 1 - up to 10 km
- 2 - 10 km to 15 km
- 3 - 15 km to 20 km
- 4 - above 20 km.

Terrain grading

- A - Road, firetrail, track
- B - Open forest
- C - Light scrub
- D - Patches of thick scrub, regrowth
- E - Rock scrambling
- F - Exploratory.

The walks program contains additional information. If necessary, contact the leader.

1 July-Saturday Walk (3/D/E)**Cotter Gap/Mt Orroral Ref: Corin Dam 1:25 000
Rendezvous Creek 1:25 000****Leader: Phillip Gatenby 54 3094**

Note: Not for beginners. Contact leader by Thursday for details of this walk in Namadgi National Park. The plan is to walk to Cotter Gap and then explore some of the rock outcrops around Mt Orroral. Return via Nursery Creek. Total climb of about 800 metres. A short car shuffle is intended. 100 km drive.

9 July-Sunday Walk (2/A/B)**Googong Reservoir Ref: Captains Flat 1:25 000****Leader: Peter Roe 91 9535**

Meet at Woolworths car park Queanbeyan at 8.30 am. A 12km walk through London Bridge to Curleys Falls and into Compo Canyon walking on some fire trails then back to the cars via London Bridge. 50 km drive.

13 July-Thursday Walk (3/A/B)**Sawplt Creek Ref: ACT 1:100 000****Leader: Bob Story 81 2174**

Meet at Kambah Village Shopping Centre at 8.30 am. Please contact leader by 12 July. A 16 km return walk from the car park at Orroral Valley Tracking Station on fire trail and bridle track towards Cotter Gap. 80 km drive.

13 July-Thursday Sub-committee meeting**Walks program for October to December****Leader: Steven Forst 51 6817 H 562426 W**

This meeting is to be held at Beverley Hammond's place, 21 Hyndes Crescent Holder, from 7.30 pm. The contents of the next outings program will be discussed, along with any other business. All welcome.

15/16 July-Ski Day (1/A)**Beginners Ski Day Ref Perisher Ski Touring Map****Leaders: Steven Forst/Nick Gascoigne****51 6817 H 56 2426 W/51 5550 H**

Contact leaders early for details. This day trip is an easy introduction to cross country skiing both for the beginner and for those looking for an easy refresher at the beginning of the season. Beginners please contact the leaders early so that some notes on snow survival can be sent out. Numbers limited. Subject to postponement or cancellation depending on snow and weather conditions. 400 km drive.

22 July-Saturday Ski Tour(2/A)**Kings Cross Road Ref: Cabramurra 1:25 000****Leader: Dugald Munro 31 8776**

Phone leader for details of this ski day. An easy 12km trip along the Kings Cross Road from Mt Selwyn towards Cabramurra and back. Very easy grades. Suitable for all except absolute beginners. Numbers limited. 400 km drive

23 July-Sunday Walk (4/A/D)**Rock Flats Ref: Rendezvous Creek 1:25 000****Leader: Frank Clements 31 7005**

Meet at Kambah Village Shops car park at 8.30. A longer walk half on fire trails and half through bush. The walk includes two steep climbs of about 200 metres each. There are some patches of rough bush to traverse. 80 km drive.

29/30 July-Ski Camp Weekend(2/B)**Island Bend Ref: Kosciusko 1:50 000****Leader: Garth Abercrombie 81 4907**

Contact leader by Wednesday for details. Day tours from Guthega with an overnight car camp below the snowline at Island Bend. Exact details of trips will depend on snow and weather conditions. Numbers limited. 450 km drive.

29/30 July-Weekend Walk (2/A/B)**Southeast Forests****Ref: Eden State Forest 1:125 000****Leader: Shirley Lewis 95 2720**

Contact leader by Wednesday for details. A walk in the Tantawangalo Forest with a base camp at Reedy Creek to see the beautiful forests threatened with destruction. The program will depend upon the situation in the forest at the time. Numbers limited NPA Members only. 550 km drive.

5 August-Saturday Ski (2/A)**Three Mile Dam and Reeds Hill****Ref: Cabramurra 1:25 000****Leader: Neville Esau 86 4176**

Contact leader by Wednesday as numbers are limited and venue may vary with weather and snow conditions. An easy day ski tour of approximately 10 - 12 km. This outing should be suitable for less experienced skiers but is not meant for beginners 350 km drive.

6 August-Sunday Walk (1/A)**Googong Reservoir / Hell Hole****Ref: Hoskinstown 1:25 000****Leader: Peter Roe 91 9535**

Meet at the Woolworths car park Queanbeyan at 8.30 am. A 10 km walk to Hell Hole on Bradleys Creek. Some good climbs to panoramic views of Canberra and Queanbeyan. 25 km drive.

8 August-Tuesday Walk (1/A/B)**Honeysuckle Creek area****Ref: Corin Dam 1:25 000****Leader: Shirley Lewis 95 2720**

Meet at Kambah Village Shops at 9.30 am. A 10 km walk in the Honeysuckle creek area on tracks and in open forest. Contact leader for further details 100 km drive.

12/13 August-Ski Camp (2/A)**Broken Dam Hut****Ref: Mt Selwyn Ski Touring Map****Leader: Steven Forst 51 6817 H 56 2426 W**

Contact leader by Wednesday for details. A weekend ski tour camping in or at Broken Dam Hut (above the snowline hopefully). Good views from Tabletop Mountain. The route from Mt Selwyn and return is fairly easy and would be okay for those who have never carried a full pack on skis before. Snowshoe users will also be considered. Numbers limited. Subject to cancellation due to weather or snow conditions. 400 km drive.

13 August-Sunday Walk (1/A/E)**Mt Palerang Ref: Braidwood 1:100 000****Leader: Les Pyke 81 2982**

Meet at Canberra Railway Station at 8.30 am. A 6km walk along a forest road and back over a prominent rocky ridge. Good views over the Clyde Mountain and Braidwood area. 240 metre climb. 100 km drive.

19 August-Saturday Walk (4/C/F)**Booth Range Ref: Colinton 1:25 000****Michelago 1:25 000****Leader: Phillip Gatenby 54 3094**

Note: Not for beginners. Contact leader by Thursday. An exploratory walk in the Booth Range Area. Overall climb of 700 metres. May involve a car shuffle. 110 km drive.

20 August-Sunday Walk (2/C)**Nursery Hill from Orroral Valley****Ref: Rendezvous Creek 1:25 000****Leader: Graham Guttridge 31 4330H 45 1618W**

Meet at Kambah Village Shops at 8.15 am. A 13 km walk mainly on tracks to Nursery Swamp then through about 2 km of bush up to the peak which has a very rewarding view. A climb of 350 metres and some bush bashing is involved. The return journey may be through medium density bush. 100 km drive.

26 August-Saturday Walk (2/A)**Shoalhaven Gorge Ref: ?****Leader: Steven Forst 56 2426 W 516817 H**

Meet just past the Dickson Traffic lights on Northbourne Ave at 8.30 am. A 12 km walk into the Shoalhaven Gorge near Talong. Most of this walk involves climbing either up or down. Great views and not a walk for those with a fear of heights. Total climb 680 metres. Lunch on the river. 260 km drive.

27 August-Sunday Morning Walk (1/A)**Uriarra Crossing Ref: ACT 1:100 000****Leader: Beverley Hammond 88 6577**

Meet at the corner of Eucumbene Drive and the Cotter Rd at 9.00 am. A 6 km morning walk along the river from Uriarra Crossing. Bring morning tea and binoculars. 30 km drive.

How giardia affects bushwalkers

Giardia is a microscopic parasite that lives and feeds in the upper intestine. It produces enormous numbers of cysts which are shed in the faeces. The cysts are extremely infective and the disease giardiasis is most often contracted by hand to mouth. Food and water may become contaminated under conditions of poor hygiene and sanitary practices.

The disease is a debilitating one causing diarrhoea, fatigue, dehydration, malabsorption of food, weight loss, cramps and abdominal pains. It is not life threatening. What else could there be you might ask to make you feel wretched? *Giardia* takes about four days to make the victim unhappy and many doctors prefer to wait ten days before treating giardia as the cause of the gastroenteritis and diarrhoea.

Giardiasis is difficult to diagnose by clinical methods and the only certain method is by withdrawal of a specimen from the intestine or microscopic examination of a faeces sample. Few laboratories are equipped for such examinations but techniques such as immunofluorescence are being developed to make identification more certain. A negative finding in a faeces examination may not be conclusive as the cysts are shed intermittently and may not be in the sample.

Drugs used in the treatment of giardia are metronidazole (Flagyl), tinadazole (Fasigyn), foroxone and furazolidone. Repeated doses may be necessary if the first is not effective or if there is a re-occurrence.

Giardiasis is not a new disease and outbreaks occur regularly. Mostly it is a disease of the young and persons in contact with them. The curve of infection falls off rapidly after the ages of 4 to 5 as children learn more about hygiene, but it rises among mothers with young children. It is rare among the aged. There is little difference in

infection between the sexes except for mothers.

There has been a rise in infection with the growth of childcare centres because of the increased mixing of preschool-age children. In one childcare centre which had an outbreak, it was found that a daily ritual was for the children to jointly mix with their hands the cut-up fruit for a fruit salad. It was said to be 'a socially rewarding experience'.



The giardia parasite

Extensive plotting of outbreaks has been carried out in South Australia and it was found that the incidence of infections was greatest in the newer suburbs with a higher juvenile population and in the rural areas. Adelaide is supplied with water from five sources and it was found that there was no correlation between water supply and outbreak. In Mt Isa an Anti-Giardia Association was formed because some people were concerned about the contamination of their water supply. Extensive tests showed that this was not the case and interest in the society lapsed.

Changes in modern living – childcare centres, earlier grouping of the young, internationalisation of food markets, freezing, recycling of animal and human wastes and the consumer fad of uncooked foods – have increased the possibility of infection.

Giardiasis is called backpackers disease in North America and mountain streams there are known to be infected. Beavers are considered to be a source of infection but in Australia our wild animals are not known to be carriers. The cysts survive best in cold waters and die off

rapidly with an increase in water temperature.

Although water may be thought to be a source of contamination testing is difficult because of the large volume of water required for the test. ACT Electricity and Water has been carrying out tests on the domestic water in the ACT but so far has not been able to find any source of disease in water. A survey is to be carried out on the stream waters of an alpine national park.

To avoid giardia when bushwalking:

- Practice careful hygiene, bury all faeces and wash well away from streams.
- Boil all raw water. Even though giardia may not be present, tests have shown higher levels of faeces contamination in some raw water than is permitted in domestic water.
- Do not place complete reliance on water-purifying tablets. Instead add 12.5 cubic centimetres of a solution drawn from iodine crystals dissolved in water to one litre of drinking water. This has been shown to kill giardia cysts. Only a small portion of the iodine crystals dissolve and the original solution may be regularly topped up. Use only as required on walks.
- Conduct an education campaign on hygiene and the risks from giardia infection. Realise that most newspaper stories are good copy and that the disease has long been with us. It is nowhere near epidemic proportions.
- Resist the pressure of vested interests to promote the sale of beverages as being the only source of pure water to drink.
- Remember that there may be other sources of infection in raw and especially turbid water.

This article is based on papers presented by speakers at the conference, *Giardia - an emerging issue in water management*, held at the Australian National University on 21 April 1989.

Reg Alder

Park proposal for Jervis Bay

The Jervis Bay Protection Committee has written to Federal and State ministers urging protection for Jervis Bay. The committee thinks this should take the form of a marine reserve and national park for Jervis Bay.

The National Parks Association of NSW first proposed a national park for Beecroft Peninsula over 14 years ago. NSW Agriculture and Fisheries has prepared a marine reserve proposal, which is being held up by the navy's plans for a munitions depot and other facilities.

The Jervis Bay Protection Committee has suggested the entire Bay and associated waters should be declared a marine reserve, zoned for different degrees of protection. Publicly-owned land listed by the Heritage Commission, and private land between Wowly Gully, Lake Wollumboola, Warrain Beach and Carama Inlet, should be declared national park, except for areas of aboriginal land claims.

The NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service has shown interest in the northern side of the bay, but the committee feels this falls short of the protection required.

The New Bush Telegraph

(Shoalhaven environment and peace magazine)

The Illawarra Branch of the NSW National Parks Association carried the following motion:

It is the policy of NPA to protect in a marine reserve and national park all remaining natural areas in the Jervis Bay environs, including the waters of Lake Wollumboola and Jervis Bay, Beecroft Peninsula and the northern foreshore, the forests to the south and west, and natural areas which form links with the national parks to the west.

Newsletter, Illawarra Branch, National Parks Association of NSW
March 1989

Logging plan for Ben Halls Gap forest

The NSW Forestry Commission has drawn up plans to construct roads and log the Ben Halls Gap State Forest 60 kilometres southeast of Tamworth. Logging would destroy many plant communities and wildlife habitats. In 1986 the National Parks Association of NSW proposed that the State Forest be converted to nature reserve.

The Ben Halls Gap is a beautiful and unique area of mature forest on the Liverpool Range. It is relatively small, less than 3000 hectares, and has not been logged.

Ben Halls Gap forest:

- is at the junction of three mountain ranges – the Great Dividing Range, the Liverpool Range and the Mount Royal Range
- is in the headwaters of three river systems – the Peel River (Tamworth's water supply), the Barnard River and the Hunter River
- has vegetation with unusually large growth habits because of rich basalt soil, the altitude and the climate
- has three major plant communities including snow gum open forest, wet sclerophyll forest and remnant rainforest in gullies.

There is a serious lack of land reserved for nature conservation in the Tamworth district and the Ben Halls Gap Forest is of state significance. The Forestry Commission manages over 100,000 hectares of State Forest in the Nundle-Walcha region so the Hunter Branch of the National Parks Association believes this one small area should be left untouched.

Hunter Branch Newsletter,
National Parks Association of NSW
February 1989

New Victorian parks require funding

Nine parks were proclaimed before the last Victorian election - Errinundra, Roger River and Coopracambra National Parks and French Island, Mount Lawson,

Black Range, Terrick Terrick, Carlisle and Lerderderg State Parks. In submissions for the next State budget, the Victorian Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands must press for adequate resources to provide appropriate management for these parks. The government deserves praise for these fine additions to our parks system, but proclamation must be followed by financial commitment.

Victorian National Parks Association Newsletter
March 1989

Suburbs threaten oldest national park

An environment plan by Wollongong City Council would allow 1500 new houses in the catchments of Camp Creek and Gills Creek which flow into the Hacking River. The Hacking River catchment makes up about two-thirds of Royal National Park. Urban development in a small part of this catchment, at Helensburgh (1700 houses) and Otford (90 houses), already pollutes the river.

The Illawarra branches of the NSW National Parks Association and the Australian Conservation Foundation and other local groups are concerned about this planning decision and hope to reverse it. They also hope to restore the natural qualities of Royal National Park through bush regeneration and water-quality controls.

Newsletter, Illawarra Branch, National Parks Association
March 1989

More wilderness declared in NSW

Congratulations to the NSW government on the declaration of the Mann, Ettrema and Genoa wilderness areas and on the acquisition of the 30,000-hectare Kunderang station, as an addition to the Apsley Wild Rivers National Park.

The Colong Bulletin
March 1989

Grazing for Coongie Lakes

South Australia continues to lead the way in compromising national park values for commercial advantage. As reported in the last issue of the NPA Bulletin, the state has created a new type of conservation zone, the regional reserve, under its National Parks and Wildlife Act. A draft management plan for one of these regional reserves, covering Innamincka Station and Coongie Lakes near Cooper Creek, suggests grazing should be the primary land use. Mining and tourism would also take precedence over nature conservation.

There is a strong case for Coongie Paddock on Innamincka Station becoming a national park. It is a valuable wetland in an arid environment, with more bird species than any other part of the arid zone. A few years without cattle has allowed thick groves of coolibah trees to grow and the desert to bloom with wildflowers. Higher than average rainfall has produced a green sward which supports rapidly recovering animal populations.

A return to grazing would devastate the Coongie wetlands and wildlife which tourists drive miles (often off-road) to see. The business plan for the reserve may seek profits from more roads, more tourist operators and even accommodation. Mineral exploration will have environmental safeguards but will still be allowed. Because negotiated leases have by-passed South Australian environmental assessment procedures, parts of the reserve actually have less protection than other parts of the state.

Conservationists believe mining and pastoral activities should be excluded from the Coongie wetlands and their surrounds.

Xanthopus

Newsletter of the Nature Conservation Society of South Australia

April 1989

Brochure on Yarrangobilly walks

The New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service has produced a brochure on walks at the Yarrangobilly Caves in Kosciusko National Park. The walks take in spectacular scenery, historic remains and the naturally heated thermal pool beside the Yarrangobilly River. The brochure, which includes a map, is available from the Caves visitor centre and other visitor centres in the area.

Cobberas-Tingaringy to be proclaimed

The Victorian Government has announced that it will proclaim the entire Cobberas-Tingaringy National Park. Parts of the park have been unproclaimed for years, due to mining interest in the area. Mining proposals have now been dropped.

The Victorian National Parks Association is still concerned that a tailings dam for mining outside the park may be located on a rare montane swamp. Unfortunately this swamp was not included in the park.

VNPA Newsletter
May 1989

Parks Act to be amended

The Victorian Government has introduced a Bill to amend the National Parks Act, in order to protect wilderness areas and ban mining in national parks (see above), except for existing contracts.

VNPA Newsletter
May 1989

World Heritage addition in NSW

The New South Wales government has moved to reserve an additional 200 hectares of rainforest as part of the World Heritage-listed Limpinwood Nature Reserve near Murwillumbah on the north coast.

The existing 2500-hectare Limpinwood Nature Reserve has World Heritage listing as one of the subtropical and temperate rainforest parks of eastern Australia.

The addition of 200 hectares includes almost the entire world's population of 20 trees of the red fruited ebony, *Diospyros mabacea*.

Volunteers in Ku-ring-gai Chase

The NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service has announced the development of a 'volunteers in parks' program for Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park.

An initial group of volunteers will take part in a pilot program of activities to be known as 'Chase Alive'. The program is designed to provide a range of interesting educational activities for the thousands of visitors to Ku-ring-gai. The volunteers would be based at Kalkari Visitor Centre and be provided with appropriate uniforms.

Economic benefits of parks

The NSW Minister for the Environment, Tim Moore, has released a study begun in 1987 examining the economic contribution of national parks and rainforests in the Dorrigo and New England areas.

The study concluded that

- protecting rainforests makes a significant contribution to local and regional economies
- recreation and tourist expenditure attributable to rainforests is about \$2.2 million a year
- rainforest protection in that region has created the equivalent of 58 full time jobs.

Total Environment Centre Newsletter

February 1989

Just briefly

Since September Karin and Ian Haynes have walked many hundreds of kilometres over greatly contrasting mountainous regions. The first episode of seven weeks walking the Flinders Ranges necessitated very detailed planning. For instance, due to the arid nature of the area it was of vital importance to first research the routes between permanent water-holes. Once the trip began though, the only real worry was coming across a dry bore – in 43 degree heat. Now **that** would increase your understanding of how the explorers felt! Karin and Ian were greatly impressed by the gorges and canyons of the Gammon Ranges which according to Ian are at least the equal of those anywhere else in Australia – the changes in topography due to geological changes are fascinating.

New Year's Day saw the wanderers taking off to tramp in Tasmania. The southwest provided 32 days of very tough climbing and mud-walking. However this inconvenience was amply rewarded by magnificent views from Precipitous Bluff and other peaks.

A variety of contrasting terrain was experienced, from unbelievably beautiful rainforests to beach walks such as those along Prion Beach and Cox's Bight, with estuary crossings by row boats. Also unforgettable was the Arthur Range culminating in the famous/infamous Federation Peak.

After the South West the 8-day walk on the overland track from Lake St Clair to Cradle Mountain was a relaxing one.

Then it was off the New Zealand with the flight from Hobart to Christchurch providing views of Fiordland and Mt Cook. An added bonus was the clear sky which assured them of a wonderful view.

During the ten weeks spent in New Zealand, Ian and Karin only managed to walk the tracks of Fiordland as well as the Hollyford, Routeburn and Greenstone Tracks, finishing the trip with some

walks and climbs around Mount Cook and its glaciers.

Oh, and by the way, between the Flinders Ranges and the Tasmanian episodes Ian kept in form by taking off for 16 days to walk in the Snowy Mountains between Mount Cobberas and the Mawson's Hut-Valentine Falls area which proved to be a great introduction to Tasmania and New Zealand in respect to wetness.

News from Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve. The winter sessions at the bird-feeding area have begun. They start at 2pm each day.

A spectacular sight recently was a flock of the large yellow-tailed black cockatoos on the wing. During one notable day they settled in the trees around the visitors centre – a rather nice sense of public relations don't you think?

Those of you who remember the little female wombat, affectionately known as 'Pig', who so delighted visitors to Tidbinbilla will be saddened to hear that several months ago she became ill and died. An autopsy found that the cause of death was heart failure and one theory is that it could have been brought on by an intake of junk foods.

It is therefore timely to remind visitors PLEASE DO NOT FEED THE ANIMALS at Tidbinbilla.

The recent record rains caused considerable damage to fences and tracks at the nature reserve and the staff has been kept busy repairing these.

There they were, in pouring rain, positioned across the football field – some strategically near the goals – alert for the referee's whistle. The ANU home team and visitors? No indeed, a dozen or so grey wood ducks interspersed with about the same number of sea-

gulls. Woodgers Wood Ducks and the Sydney Seagulls perhaps?

In December 1985 I was asked to take over *Just Briefly*. 'What on earth will I write about?' I thought. In the absence of sufficient items from members I took to reporting animal activities at Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve and, dare I say it, received feed back to the effect that that was more interesting. I never actually managed a spectacular scoop of world-shattering proportions for *JB*, indeed some would say that the column tended toward tediousness and trivia. If that were so, then the solution is imminent as this is the last *Just Briefly* in the name of Melliodora. It's been fun but now it's time to change from "melli" to another flavour. Thanks to all those members who helped by contributing items. Please keep them coming and make the new *Just Briefly* entertaining with lots of lively little legends. Best wishes.



It certainly hasn't been tedious. We wish Melliodora well in the future. If anyone would like to contribute more melliferous words, or even phrases tart or spicy, please contact the editor.

Plan for marsupials

The International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) and World Wildlife Fund Australia, are preparing a conservation plan for Australian marsupials.

Any comments should be addressed to Michael Kennedy, Australian Marsupial Action Plan, PO Box 302, Avalon NSW 2107.

Tasmania's least known wilderness

The Tasmanian Conservation Trust has urged the reservation of the Meredith Range in the northwest of Tasmania as a national park. The coastal wilderness, north of the Pieman and Savage Rivers, is threatened by mining and forestry operations.

The rugged peaks of the Meredith Range rise from rolling plains and deep river valleys. It includes a dissected granite plateau and limestone cliffs, tall eucalypt forest, rainforest and button-grass moors.

In 1982 bushfire charred part of the area, possibly shifting the ecological balance towards fire-tolerant plants. Abandoned mines have also left scars, and mineral exploration licences still cover most of the region. Recently, most of the area was allocated for logging operations to supply the proposed Wesley Vale pulp mill. The lapsing of the proposal offers only a temporary reprieve from other logging.

In 1986 the Tasmanian National Parks and Wildlife Service recommended reservation of part of the area but without effect. A survey of wilderness by the Australian Heritage Commission confirmed the region's status as one of Tasmania's major wilderness areas. The Trust has nominated the area for National Estate listing.

The Tasmanian Conservationist
February/March 1989



Outdoor education: would you like to do it?

The National Parks Association is seeking expressions of interest from suitably qualified persons to develop and conduct a course highlighting the role of national parks in nature conservation. This would be conducted through the Centre for Continuing Education, ANU, for its autumn program beginning in March 1990, and would comprise a series of two-hourly lectures over a period of between six and 18 weeks. The course should include one or two day-long field outings. To meet centre requirements it must have an academic or theoretical component but should also be sufficiently practical to attract at least 12 to 15 participants.

The person undertaking the direction of the course should have an academic background appropriate to the subject matter. Teaching qualifications and/or experience are highly desirable. A demonstrated ability to communicate effectively is essential. Persons conducting courses are paid on an hourly basis, the current rate being over \$46 an hour. Personal expenses incurred, for example in the conduct of field outings, are compensated.

For further information contact:
Glyn Lewis 952720
Anne Robertson 889633 ah
or the NPA office 571063
no later than Friday 14 July 1989.

World Rainforests Action Day

On 24 April around the world a day of action opposed the logging of tropical rainforest. This date was chosen to highlight the plight of the tribal Penan people of Sarawak who were brought to trial for blockading logging of their traditional lands.

A number of protests took place in Australia. In Sydney the cast of *Les Misérables* demonstrated their support by singing in Martin Place. And the federal environment minister, Senator Graham Richardson, announced the government would review Australia's policy on importing rainforest timbers and the effect a ban on such timbers would have

on the Malaysian economy.

In Canberra a gathering of about 30 people outside the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade also marked the inauguration of the local Rainforest Action Group. Some bemused bureaucrats watched as a spokesperson donned a dinner suit and, with a ritual Japanese bow, took his chainsaw towards a tree trunk.

The Rainforest Action Group has called on the Australian government to ban imports of tropical timber and to assist Malaysia and other rainforest countries to establish plantations as an alternative source of export income.

Haven for brumbies

'The Australian brumby has been given a \$300 000 sanctuary in the Northern Territory by a Swiss conservation group concerned about helicopter shooting of the horses. The Francis Weber Foundation purchased a 500-square-kilometre former cattle property near Katherine after helicopter shooting of the wild horses sparked an international outcry when television

footage of the slaughter was shown overseas last year.' *Australian Financial Review*, 13 March 1989

A member of the Canberra Field Naturalists Association comments that this item has reinforced her view that there is a lack of real understanding of environmental issues outside Australia, and inside Australia as well. She says that,

while she has no desire to see animals suffering, she finds it hard to condone spending large sums of money to protect introduced animals, particularly when they can be directly implicated in the degradation of the habitat of so many truly endangered native species.

Newsletter, Field Naturalists Association of Canberra
April 1989

Geoff Mosley on the alps

The April meeting of the Association was addressed by the noted conservationist and author, Dr Geoff Mosley. For the large audience he elaborated on the proposal to have the alps of Victoria, News South Wales and the ACT nominated for the UNESCO World Heritage List (see *NPA Bulletin*, March 1989).

Dr Mosley explained the concept of world heritage, the convention that establishes the list and the procedures for listing. So far there are 315 properties on the World Heritage List, 88 of them for their natural qualities. Australia has eight sites listed, fewer than the USA, Canada, Britain or France. The World Heritage Committee, which decides on nominations for listing, has asked for lists of potential world heritage sites from each country. Australia still has not submitted its tentative list; this may delay some particular listings.

The merits of the alps were described in the last issue of the *Bulletin*. The alps are the only areas of Australia that show interesting glacial and periglacial features. The alps are also the best area of Australia to show a wide range of gum trees, with 50 genera of eucalypts ranging from high to low altitude, wet to dry climate.

Of course the scenery of the alps – the wildflowers on rolling ridge tops, the snow gums clinging to wind-blasted crags, the block streams spilling down valleys, the rugged gorges filled with ash forests, the corroboree frog croaking by a sphagnum bog, and the birds and animals that live in these habitats – are special attributes of the Australian alps worthy of world heritage listing.

Dr Mosley raised a couple of issues that caused some discussion. One was the use of the name 'alps' to describe an area that extends almost to the coast in Victoria. The name is popular and has come to apply to a region rather than a strict topographical zone.

Another problem that could

affect listing is the state of conservation of the area. The World Heritage Convention requires the country containing a listed area to maintain the site's integrity. The integrity of the Australian alps is compromised by tourist development and, in Victoria, logging, mineral exploration and grazing.

Last year an officer of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), which advises the World Heritage Committee on the value of nominated areas, said that the Victorian alps were too degraded to be worthy of listing. Dr Mosley disputed this comment and said that world heritage listing would be a spur to protecting the integrity of the alps.

Dr Mosley said that a task force in Victoria, headed by Dr John Busby, was preparing a nomination for East Gippsland and the Victorian alps. Roger Good, of the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, was studying the World Heritage values of Kosciusko National Park. The Commonwealth Government was waiting for the states.

There was also discussion of the rerouting of the Victorian alpine walking trail from Tom Groggin to Cowambat Flat and the management of four-wheel-drives in that area. Others expressed a fear that tourist development, with its millions of dollars of investment, would be harder to stop than grazing. However, so far the developers have not shown the cattlemen's talent for public relations.

Alps Bill passes Victorian lower House

The Victorian Government, with the support of the Liberal Party, has passed a Bill to create an alpine national park. The Liberal leader, Jeff Kennett, wrote to the Association in May advising that

the party would not oppose the Bill but would 'seek assurances from the Government regarding management of the parks and security for the mountain cattlemen.'

The Bill would allow grazing in many areas and would even extend some of the summer grazing licences. The National Party has pledged to oppose the legislation and defend the oppressed cattlemen.

Scientists criticise alpine grazing

The Victorian National Parks Association recently reviewed 40 years' research on the effects of grazing in the alps and found that it consistently revealed deterioration of moss beds, soil erosion, loss of plant species and diversity, changes in vegetation structure and damage to soil structure.

This was announced in Melbourne when a number of Australia's leading conservation groups endorsed the Victorian Government's efforts to phase out grazing licences in a number of sensitive alpine areas. This follows a 1979 recommendation of the Victorian Land Conservation Council to eliminate grazing from five per cent of Victoria's publicly owned alpine region by 1991.

The VNPA, the National Trust, the Wilderness Society and the Australian Conservation Foundation together endorsed the proposal.

The joint statement was endorsed by two biologists. Dr Richard Williams from Monash University said that grazing was incompatible with nature conservation. Dr Malcolm Calder from the University of Melbourne said, 'Over 50 years of study and observation by botanists, ecologists, agricultural scientists, soil scientists and hydrologists has shown irrefutably that grazing by domestic stock has had adverse and long-term effects on Victorian high-country environments.'

Shots fired at Grassy Creek

The Grassy Creek walk at Easter highlighted two management problems of Namadgi National Park: one, the rapid loss of our historical glimpses into a lifestyle that ended with world war two and two, the control of people in this remote corner of the park.

As to the first problem, the huts and homesteads of the sheep and cattle farms in Grassy Creek and Sheep Station Creek are collapsing or have disappeared with only introduced shade and fruit trees marking the sites. Decisions about the repairing of the old buildings will have to be rapid as many have collapsed *only over the past 10 years*. Their presence is important as they are all part of the long history of human use and occupation of the high country. The historical section of the Kosciusko Huts Association has interviewed past residents of the old dwellings and are storing the details of the lifestyle when the valleys were closely settled.

The second management problem – control of visitors – was illustrated violently to us when shooters fired their guns around our lower Grassy Creek campsite from 11.30am Friday until after dark. A frightened mob of kangaroos which came near us only reflected our own fear at being the lodging place of a bullet.

One would think that everyone knows that shooting is not allowed in national parks but a sign is obviously needed at the entrances to the park stating NO SHOOTING. A resident ranger at the southern entrance would be a good deterrent.

Despite this alarming first day, on Saturday we enjoyed the quiet beauty of the upper Grassy Creek valley fringed by olive-barked black sally groves and with waterholes containing a small-leafed waterlily.

Our camp that night was below the Lone Pine homestead site and near Sheep Station Creek. A lovely spot with a spectacular display of stars after a grey day.



Babette Scougall on the banks of Grassy Creek in Namadgi National Park at Easter. Slide Dianne Thompson, print Reg Alder.

Next morning we set off in rain to climb Sentry Box Mountain and were forced to shelter at one stage in a rock overhang.

The grandeur of the view from the mountain summit was increased by rain clouds on distant peaks and dark colour in the valleys. A lyrebird sang as we explored the extensive granite platforms and found a stone arrangement made by the Ngunawal people.

As there are no tracks on the mountain we descended quickly before the low cloud moved in and we enjoyed the downward slope, walking past huge moss and lichen-covered granite boulders and under tall trees. The weather cleared for our camp at the Lonesome Pine site with its old chimney and stone dog's kennel.

On Monday the walking party of eight inspected the sites of two old homesteads near a shearing shed in the Naas valley, and Boboyan homestead site with its orchard and dam on the creek.

These open, grassy valleys with quietly moving streams have a soothing charm and must have been restful places for the

Aboriginal owners. The reminiscences of the descendents of the European settlers certainly reflect a love of the area. We later visitors enjoyed our walk, the scenery, the fellowship round the campfire and the sense of history. Many thanks to Diane Thompson who carefully planned and led the outing.

Fiona Brand

Along the Shoalhaven

I led a very successful Sunday walk from Warri Bridge, which is located on the Kings Highway between Bungendore and Braidwood, downstream along the Shoalhaven River on 12 February. About 30 people turned up, including a number of children.

After a rather rough but short walk the party reached the beautiful sandy beach, the base for swimming, talking together and shorter walks down the Shoalhaven Gorge. About the middle of the afternoon the sun had swung around to make this beach the focus for light and heat. A good day was had by all.

Allan Mortlock

National Estate listings

On 18 April the Australian Heritage Commission entered 256 Aboriginal sites, buildings and natural areas on the Register of the National Estate. The register, which now lists 8769 sites, is an inventory of places that have aesthetic, historic, scientific or social significance or other special value for the present community and future generations. It is designed to inform decision-makers but places no legal constraints on state or local governments, or the owners of private property. The Commonwealth has some legal requirements to protect these places.

The latest list includes a good number of road bridges, rail bridges and sewer aqueducts around the countryside. Here is a list of some sites which may be of interest to readers.

ACT

Royal Military College, Duntroon, a conservation area covering the central part of the college

Canberra Baptist Church and manse, Kingston

Blythburn Cottage, kitchen block and surrounds, southeast of Booroomba homestead

Orroral Valley homestead

New South Wales

Dr George Mountain, about 65 hectares, east of Bega

Bredbo River rail bridge, south of Bredbo

Ingelara Creek rail bridge, north of Bredbo

Lansdowne bridge, on the Bungonia Road over Mulwaree Ponds, Goulburn

The suspension bridge over the Queanbeyan River at the intersection of Isabella and Collett Streets, Queanbeyan

Parkwood Homestead and Chapel west of Belconnen

Victoria

Red Rock Craters and Lakes, about 550 hectares northwest of Colac

Coopracambra extension, 28,000 hectares northeast of Cann River

Errinundra Plateau, 40,000 hec-

tares northeast of Orbost, containing relatively undisturbed examples of the Monaro tablelands and supporting significant plants and rare animals such as the tiger quoll, sooty owl and yellow-bellied glider.

Rodger River area, 58,000 hectares north of Orbost, the largest contiguous wilderness in eastern Victoria, containing diverse plant communities from rainforest to snow gums.

Tasmania

Norfolk Range, 90,000 hectares between Savage River township and the northern part of the west coast of Tasmania

Savage River area, 84,000 hectares between Waratah and the preceding area

Douglas River area, 14,500 hectares northwest of Bicheno on the east coast of Tasmania

Northern Territory

Wildman River catchment, 314,800 hectares west of the West Alligator River

Interim listings

The commission also gave notice of its intention to enter places in the Register of the National Estate. Written objections to these proposals should be made, by 19 July, to the director of the commission, GPO Box 1567, Canberra 2601.

ACT

Site of a rare herb with yellow button flowers, *Rutidosia leptorhynchoides*, on Red Hill, about 4 hectares on the western slopes

Sites of other rare plants, *Drabastrum alpestre* and *Pomaderris pallida*, near Paddys River, total of 6 hectares south of Cotter Reserve

Glebe House trees, original plantings from 1855 to 1906, mainly English elms, around the former Glebe House in Glebe Park. Glebe House was demolished in 1954.

All Saints Anglican Church, Ainslie, built from the ruins of the Mortuary railway station at Rookwood in Sydney



Trees in Glebe Park, Canberra.

Wells Station, homestead and other buildings from the 1850s to 1930s

Beaufort Steel House, 25 Cowper Street, Ainslie, built like an aircraft in 1947, mostly of steel

Horse Park homestead, sedge-land and other buildings, Gungahlin

Former Ginninderra police station, residence and stables, off Barton Highway

Church of St Andrew and former manse, Forrest, an adaptation of Gothic Revival architecture for Presbyterian use

Mugga Mugga homestead and outbuildings, Symonston

New South Wales

Dromore homestead, former homestead, dairy and stables, northwest of Chakola, in Cooma-Monaro Shire

Site of *Zieria* species east of Numeralla, 41 hectares

Former courthouse, police station and residence in Batemans Bay

Pigeon House Mountain and surrounding areas of significance to Aboriginal people, 8500 hectares west of Ulladulla

Martin Place, Sydney, and the buildings fronting it

Spectacle Island explosives complex in Sydney Harbour

Three sites of rare *Grevillea iaspicula* near Lake Burrinjuck and

ACF conference tapes

Wee Jasper, total of about 13 hectares

Yass, 45 hectares in central Yass

Victoria

Gabo Island, 154 hectares covering the lighthouse and the rest of the island

Rodger River, 16,500 hectares northeast of Buchan extending the previous listing

Errinundra Plateau, 1600 hectares extending the previous listing

Queensland
White Mountains area, 41,000 hectares northeast of Hughenden, a large scenic area in natural condition dominated by sandstone plateaux and gorges and containing the rare Queensland wattle, *Acacia uncifera*.

Tasmania

Temma coastal area, 5000 hectares of the northern west coast extending from Arthur River to Sandy Cape

Elsewhere

North Keeling Island, the whole of the island and lagoon

Intention to remove from list

Parts of Gossan Hill (listed 1983), Bruce, ACT.

Coolangubra and Tantawangalo

The larger part of the Coolangubra forest and the Tantawangalo Creek catchment were entered on the interim list of the Register of the National Estate in December 1986.

In April 1989 the commission decided to proceed with entry of the areas in the register. This will come into effect when public notices are published detailing the exact boundaries. At the same time the commission decided in principle to enter the Yowaka forest-Egan Peaks area in the interim list. Neighbouring areas are already listed or are being assessed.

ABC radio cassette tapes of the keynote addresses given at the Australian Conservation Foundation 1988 national conference in Sydney have been acquired by the Association. They may be borrowed from the library in the Civic office. The recordings are of speeches given by Petra Kelly, Judith Wright, Professor Charles Birch, Dr David Bellamy and Robyn Williams.

The following is an excerpt from the address to the conference by the West German green politician, Petra Kelly.

The title of this meeting, *The Next 200 Years*, is well chosen because for at least 40,000 years prior to the European invasion, this remote, large and beautiful continent was in the custody of Aboriginal people, truly friends of the earth. The European so-called settlement had a devastating impact upon the Australian environment ... as the 1988 report of the Conservation Foundation demonstrates.

Taking stock of the cost of so-called development and progress is shocking.

- over half of your native forests are cleared including three-quarters of your rainforests
- one-third of your continent has been degraded through erosion
- there has been increased pollution
- there has been increase of your desert area from 20 to 40 per cent
- Australia has lost more than 100 plant species and another 2000 species are at risk
- 18 species of wildlife have been made extinct
- one-third of rivers are polluted or contaminated.

If no efficient and effective wildlife management programs are devised, 270 Australian plants and animals will disappear in the next 10 years. The 200-year anniversary hopefully marks a turning point in planning for an ecological,

sustainable, just and non-violent Australian society.

We must realise that the post-war economic philosophies, whether capitalist or state socialist, have proven themselves unable to produce an ecological, socially just and democratic economy. Both systems are variants of a social structure characterised by alienating factory and office work and both are grounded on destructive industrial growth.

We need to work together towards an ecological economy that does not regard industrial growth as a guiding economic value.

This goal requires the partial dismantling and conversion of our industrial system. We favour the dismantling of those branches of industry hazardous to life itself, above all the nuclear and defence industries.

In order to learn to sustain our life supporting planet rather than ravage it, we must realize that environment, economy, human rights and peace are inextricably linked. Our holistic ecological understanding of the need to halt the destruction of the planetary environment must provide the impetus for radical social and economic transformation throughout the world.

We together have the power to bring about a radical change and that means transforming not only the institutions through the power of our vote and the power to create green parties and the power of our pressure, but also beginning to transform our own lives, changing our way of life and beginning to see that each and every one of us can make a difference.

Tapes can also be purchased from Quickcopy, PO Box 8213, Sterling St, Perth 6000. Telephone (09) 328 2266 or fax (09) 227 8881.

Moore talks

A recent interview in the *Wilderness Society newsletter, Wilderness News*, with the New South Wales Minister for the Environment, Mr Tim Moore, revealed some of that minister's thoughts on national parks.

Wilderness News: Does your government intend to implement the Wilderness Act?

Moore: Yes. We have made a decision in cabinet for three declarations of wilderness areas, arising out of the Wilderness Act references and processes. Indeed, in the case of an extension to the Morton National park for the creation of the Ettrema Wilderness area, cabinet authorised Mr Causley to refuse an Aboriginal land claim on the grounds that the land was required for essential public purpose, namely the creation of the Ettrema wilderness. I'm meeting with two Victorian ministers about a cross-border wilderness declaration in southeast New South Wales involving the Nungatta National Park in New South Wales and Coopracambra National Park in Victoria. The Queensland government has agreed to co-operate on a single plan of management for the Lamington and Border Ranges National Parks on the New South Wales-Queensland border. We are looking at the question of World Heritage listing for the alpine areas; this is a joint Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales and Victorian proposal.

Wilderness News: Do you agree that there is a need to protect wilderness outside national parks?

Moore: Where it is appropriate to do so, those areas will be protected by addition to national parks as is happening with the Bindery and Ettrema wilderness. I certainly don't see the need to take absolutely every piece of conservation-sensitive land in the state into the ownership of the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Wilderness News: On the point of national parks, concern has been raised about four wheel drive and horseriding access. Does your government intend to initiate strong conservation management plans?

Moore: Each issue of access will be looked at on its individual merits. One area which I'm familiar with, Barrington Tops, I understand that the plan of management will close a number of environmentally sensitive trails, but still leave some areas open for access... It's my desire to see those sorts of issues resolved at the local level.

Wilderness News: The biggest issue at present is the south-east forests. How is the Greiner government going to resolve this issue?

Moore: The state government when in opposition announced its policy in 1986, Cabinet recently reaffirmed that. I well recognise the rights of progress and peaceful assembly and the like, and there are those who will exercise it. People in the state government will carry out the policy on which it was elected and which it made abundantly clear on a large number of occasions before the election.

Wilderness News, April 1989

Park committees dissolved

The New South Wales Minister for the Environment, Tim Moore, surprised national park advocates when he dissolved all national-park advisory committees and state recreation area trusts on 31 March. Mr Moore said that this followed a review of the composition and appointments procedures for the bodies.

The restructuring 'was aimed at providing a more representative and balanced advisory unit, with the emphasis on local involvement.'

TWS guide to Tasmania

One of the most galling post-tour experiences a traveller can have is to learn about fascinating places he or she could have visited had they been known before travelling into the area. Obtaining good guide books beforehand is good prophylactic treatment for avoiding this form of post-holiday depression; for visitors to Tasmania, I would prescribe this slim volume* from the Wilderness Society.

Attractively presented and logically organised, the book does not set out to be a comprehensive guide to the whole island but rather to highlight the wealth of natural experiences open to those not intending to venture deeply into the wilds. It does this by providing succinct details of a selection of beauty spots in many parts of the state, all accessible by a conventional vehicle. The time needed to enjoy the places described varies from a few minutes to a whole day or longer. The choice of sites reflects a close feeling for their natural values by the contributors.

The industrialisation around the city of Burnie receives its full share of publicity and forces itself to the attention of visitors to the area by its tell-tale plumes of smoke and scars on the landscape, but at Fern Glade Reserve some five minutes drive from the city is a delightful, peaceful sanctuary along the myrtle and fern-lined banks of the Emu River. This is the sort of information in this booklet. And for each entry there are details of the facilities available and means of access.

There is also much useful information on the human and natural history. The book is written in a concise and easy style completely free of the dreariness which compilers of guide books not infrequently manage to impute to the most fascinating of sights.

Syd Comfort

**Explore Tasmania's Wild Side, Everyone's guide to easy walks and nature reserves; published by the Wilderness Society, Hobart, 1986, 88 pages.*

Grading walks

The Outings Committee has discussed proposals and comments from members and decided to adopt a new distance and terrain grading system for walks. This method of grading applies to both day and overnight walks.

Distance grading, per day:

- 1 – up to 10 kilometres
- 2 – 10 kilometres to 15 kilometres
- 3 – 15 kilometres to 20 kilometres
- 4 – above 20 kilometres.

Terrain grading

- A – road, firetrail, track
- B – open forest
- C – light scrub
- D – patches of thick scrub, regrowth
- E – rock scrambling
- F – exploratory.

In some cases two designations may be made, although the higher gradings may be assured to include the lower.

Leaders are asked to still include a description of their walk which indicates special features of topography. Please make the workload of the Outings Convenor much lighter by using the following format:

Date month day. Walk carcamp packwalk other. Grading.

Location of walk. Map reference.

Leader's name. Telephone numbers.

Meeting place and time.

Approximate distance of walk.

Comments on terrain, noteworthy features, educational or recreational characteristics, ascents or descents in metres, other comments. Return trip distance for cars (this also guides passengers accepting lifts).

Beverley Hammond

The Environment Subcommittee

An important meeting of the Environment Subcommittee was held recently to restructure and revitalise the work of the subcommittee. It was very pleasing to welcome a large number of new subcommittee members to the meeting.

As well as considering a range of environment issues the work of the subcommittee was restructured with new arrangements to spread the workload more effectively among the subcommittee members. Under these new arrangements various members or groups of members will take responsibly for geographic areas of interest such as Kosciusko National Park, Morton National Park and Jervis Bay.

Other members or groups will cover broader issues, such as forests or wetlands, as these issues arise.

The issues discussed at the last meeting and the members volunteering to monitor these issues included:

- Alps issues (covering Kosciusko, Victorian alps, and alps world heritage issues): Julia Trainor, Kevin Frawley, Phil Pritchard, Bernadette O'Leary.
- Coast issues (including Jervis Bay): Den Robin, Karen Wilson, Jane O'Donohue, Tim Walsh, Neville Esau, Jacqueline Rees.
- Southeast forests: Shirley

Lewis, Glyn Lewis, Den Robin, Greg Hodgson.

- Eastern parks of the escarpment (Morton, Budawang, Deua, Wadbilliga): Dianne Thompson.
- ACT regional issues (Murrumbidgee, Canberra Nature Park, and so on): Jacqueline Rees.
- Australian National Parks Council annual conference, election of delegates, action on conference motions: Kevin Frawley, Neville Esau.

As you can see from this list some important issues need more member support. All further volunteers will be most welcome.

The subcommittee took a number of initiatives in relation to the issues mentioned above and hopes to follow these with many more in the coming months.

Regular updates of the subcommittee's work will be issued through the *Bulletin* and at the Association's monthly meetings. Minutes of the last meeting are available from the office.

The next meeting of the subcommittee will be held at 7.30pm on Thursday 13 July in the Cornick Common Room, Research School of Physical Science, ANU. Any member who would like to join the subcommittee is very welcome. Please contact any of the members mentioned above for further details or discussions.

Neville Esau

Sunship Earth

A professor of environmental education at Aurora University in northern Illinois, Steve Van Matre, will deliver a talk on an outdoor education program for high-school students, called *Sunship Earth*, in Canberra in August. He says:

'We want to help people understand the environmental crises we face, but we also want to help them enjoy the journey. For this is the greatest trip of them all – as we travel together with all the other

wild and weird and wonderful creatures here on this small, self-contained vessel of life – on our journey among the stars.'

The talk, which is free, will be in the dome at the Australian Academy of Science, Gordon Stree, Acton, on Thursday 3 August, from 7.30 to 9.30pm. For further information write to the Institute for Earth Education, c/- Birrigai Outdoor Centre, RMB 142, Tharwa ACT 2620.

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POSTAGE
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AUSTRALIA

General meetings

Held at 8pm, room 1, Griffin Centre, Bunda Street, Civic.

June – Thursday 15

Jeff Angel, from the Total Environment Centre in Sydney, will speak about the campaign to save the southern forests of New South Wales from woodchipping.

July – Thursday 29

Will Osborne, a wildlife officer with the ACT Parks and Conservation Service, will speak about alpine ecology and corroboree frogs.

August – Thursday 17

The annual general meeting, followed by Reg Alder's slides and story of a 350-kilometre trek, promoted as 'not for the faint-hearted', from Lamayuru Monastery in Ladakh through the phantasmagoric Zaskar Ranges and over the Himalayan Range to Darcha in northern India.