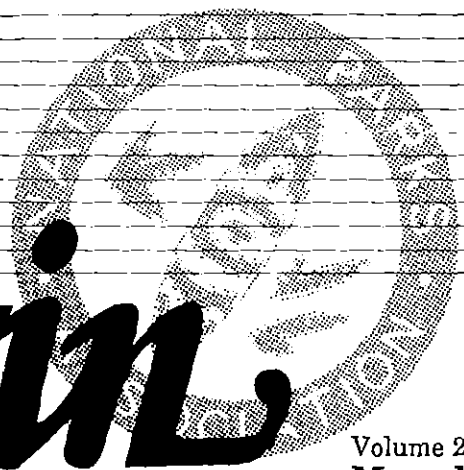
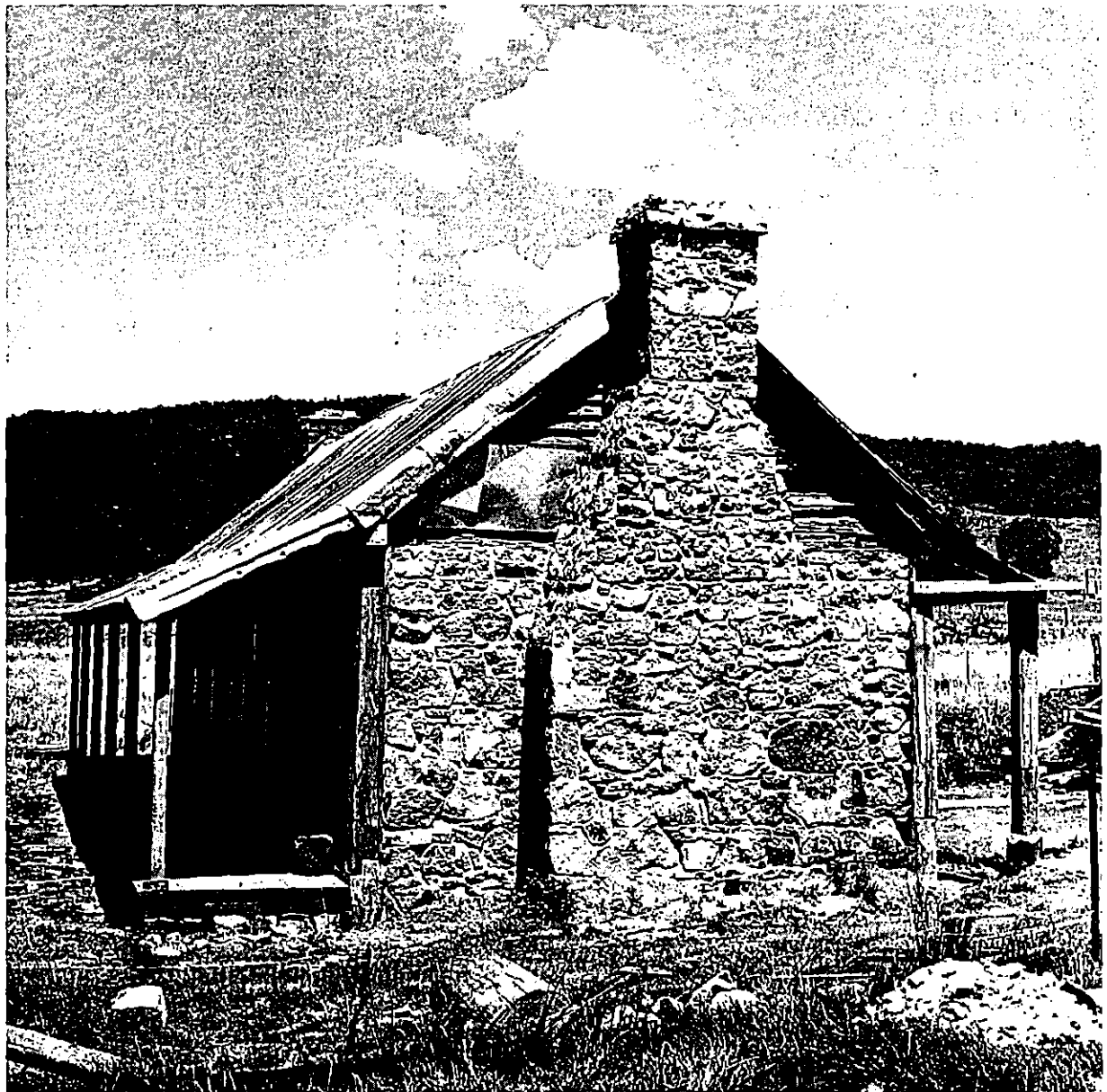


NPA Bulletin



Volume 29 number 1
March 1992

NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION, INCORPORATED



Orroral homestead and its history

Origins of Namadgi National Park

CONTENTS

Jervis Bay	4
Hedda Morrison obituary	5
Parkwatch	8
NPA Christmas party	9
Orroral—a history	10
Ten years of Orroral involvement	11
Origins of Namadgi	14
Paddling down the Lachlan	22

Cover

Photo: Reg Alder

The reconstructed Orroral Homestead,
2 February 1992.

National Parks Association (ACT) 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.

Office-bearers and Committee

<i>President</i>	Beverley Hammond 288 6577(h)
<i>Vice-President</i>	Dianne Thompson 288 6084(h); 244 7549(w); 244 7934(fax w).
<i>Immediate Past President</i>	Les Pyke 281 2982(h)
<i>Secretary</i>	Len Haskew 281 4268(h)
<i>Treasurer</i>	Mike Smith 286 2984(h); 248 3624(w)

Subcommittee conveners

<i>Environment</i>	Tim Walsh 285 1112(h); 274 1465(w) Len Crossfield 241 2897(h); 263 3536(w)
<i>Outings</i>	Dianne Thompson 288 6084(h); 244 7549(w); 244 7934(fax w).
<i>Namadgi</i>	Dugald Monro 231 8776(h)

Other Committee members

Neville Esau	286 4176(h); 249 9500(w)
Syd Comfort	286 2578(h)
Clive Hurlstone	288 7592(h); 246 5516(w)

Subscription rates (1 July - 30 June)

Household members \$20 Single members \$15
Corporate members \$10 Bulletin only \$10
Concession: half above rates

For new subscriptions joining between:
1 January and 31 March - half specified rate
1 April and 30 June - annual subscription

Membership enquiries welcome

Please phone Laraine Frawley at the NPA office.

The NPA (ACT) office is located in Kingsley Street, Acton. Office hours are:

10am to 2pm Mondays
9am to 2pm Tuesdays and Thursdays

Telephone: (06) 257 1063

Address: GPO Box 457 Canberra 2601.

Contribute to your *Bulletin*

Contributions of articles (news, description or fiction), black-and-white photographs and line drawings are keenly sought for the *Bulletin*. Please label photographs with the name of the subject, the name of the photographer and the date. Leave contributions at the office or phone the editor, Roger Green, on (06) 247 0059. The editorial fax is (06) 249 7373.

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

Deadline for June issue: 1 May, 1992.

NPA Bulletin is produced by Green Words for the National Parks Association (ACT) Incorporated. It is produced with the assistance of an ACT Heritage grant.

Printed on recycled paper by Union Offset Co Pty Ltd, Fyshwick, ACT.

ISSN 0727-8837

President's foreword

Association committee members have been busy in recent months in preparing written responses to issues, in meeting with representatives of government instrumentalities and in physically working on the Orroral homestead.

Information shared at a meeting at the Queanbeyan office of NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service strengthened our submission on the review of the NSW Act. Discussions with the officer of the Australian National Parks & Wildlife Service who is preparing the Management Plan for Jervis Bay National Park reaffirmed the importance of our input into such initiatives. We have also contributed to a joint submission on the need to preserve important areas in Gungahlin and valued working with other local conservation groups on this issue.

Thank you to many members who worked at the Orroral Homestead. We look forward to the fruition of this ten year-old

At Orroral homestead, left to right, Brian Tyrell, manager of Namadgi; Eric Martin, chairman, ACT Heritage Committee; Reg Alder; Beverley Hammond.
Photo by Len Haskew.

project. Included in this Bulletin are background information about our involvement there, an updated history of valley settlement and photographs of the work parties.

Following the partial demolition of the nearby Gregory home, this Association wrote to the Director of the Environment and Conservation Bureau concerning the implementation of some aspects of the Namadgi National Park Management Plan. His reply is elsewhere in this Bulletin. We will be making further representations to the Bureau and the ACT Heritage Committee in pursuing the need for decisions to be made about the future of other buildings in Namadgi. The Namadgi subcommittee would value your contribution.



Thank you to members who contacted the committee regarding issues we might support and practical suggestions to improve meetings. You are most welcome at subcommittee meetings. Please look at the Calendar on the back page.

Beverley Hammond

Antarctic progress

The protocol on environmental protection to the Antarctic Treaty, adopted in October in Madrid, represents a significant shift within the Antarctic Treaty System away from the exploitation of the region for minerals, and toward the preservation of Antarctica as a World park.

The protocol established a minimum 50-year prohibition on all commercial mining activities in Antarctica, a committee on environmental protection, as well as legally binding measures governing waste disposal, marine pollution, the conservation of native fauna and flora, and environmental impact assessment procedures. This agreement provides a foundation for the future protection of Antarctica.

The protocol must now be ratified and implemented by the Antarctic Treaty consultative parties.

The environmental protection

Penguins at North Point, Signy Island, Antarctica.

Photo by Nigel Bonner reproduced from A Strategy for Antarctic Conservation published by IUCN.



measures included in the protocol regulate human activity in Antarctica. All activities must be planned to limit negative impact on the marine and terrestrial environments, on the basis of prior assessment of potential impacts.

Special regulations are provided for in five annexes — environmental impact assessment, conservation of flora and fauna, waste disposal and management, prevention of marine pollution, and protected areas.

Test case for modern planning

The Editor
NPA Bulletin

Congratulations on the articles on Jervis Bay in your December 1991 issue of the *NPA Bulletin* and on the efforts of the Jervis Bay Working Group.

The way I see it, Jervis Bay is a test case for modern planning. We either continue the destructive practices of the past, or make a commitment to put the principles of ecological sustainability into practice.

But can we get it right this time?

I want to take this opportunity of bringing you up to date with sewage planning in the Jervis Bay area.

Shoalhaven City Council, like most other coastal councils in NSW, has used its rivers and adjacent ocean as dumping grounds for effluent. (In the case of Shoalhaven, this effluent is secondary treated). Sludge is spread around the sewage works or used as landfill.

Since the 1970s, Jervis Bay has received effluent from the townships of Huskisson and Vincentia and from HMAS Creswell. Effects on the marine environment of Jervis Bay are unknown because of the lack of studies and monitoring.

With other Jervis Bay and St Georges Basin villages now being

connected to the sewage, the debate about what to do with the increasingly larger volumes of effluent has raged, prompting an EIS.

Shoalhaven City Council's preferred option has always been for an ocean outfall at Governors Head—with pipeline through the proposed Stage 1 of the Jervis Bay National Park.

This EIS began over a year ago, and has taken a meandering course to reach a very interesting stage now.

Slowly and inevitably there has been a turnaround in focus from the initial headlong rush to an ocean outfall, to now taking a serious look at agro-forestry production using secondary treated effluent, and the use of artificial wetlands combined with the restoration of degraded wetlands near Nowra.

Also, there is an increasing interest by local people in things like using effluent to water golf courses and to recycle back to households for use in toilet flushing and on gardens.

The Federal Government holds one of the keys to the eventual outcome. Either it can give permission for the pipeline to go through the National Park and discharge into waters adjacent to the park (and near the penguin colony at Bowen Island) or it can

take a firm stand against this.

Another key is held by the NSW Government. The State Pollution Control Commission (SPCC), under the Minister for Environment Tim Moore, has issued an interim licence for nutrient stripped effluent from Huskisson and St Georges Basin sewage Treatment Works to flow into Jervis Bay via the existing pipeline at Plantation Point, Vincentia. We must insist that the SPCC keeps to its commitment to have all effluent removed from the Bay. Unfortunately the SPCC does not have any control over Federal establishments like HMAS Creswell which continues to insist in putting secondary treated effluent into National Park waters.

Another key lies with the regional planning exercise which has been started by the NSW Department of Planning.

This could set policies which limit population and industrial growth and preserve Jervis Bay and its surrounds. One of these policies could be for the safe and productive re-use of 'wastes' such as sewage effluent.

All of these keys need to turn together if Jervis Bay is to be spared.

May Leatch
Nowra

Shark Bay

Shark Bay has become the ninth place in Australia to be included on the World Heritage List. A recent World Heritage committee meeting in Carthage, Tunisia, decided that Shark Bay in Western Australia fulfilled the four natural criteria.

The spectacular scenery of cliffs, bays and beaches combined with marine and land fauna make the bay unique. Large marine animals, including dolphins, dugongs, manta rays, whales and sharks, use the bay. The islands that form the outer barriers are the last

refuge of a range of endangered animals such as the Shark Bay Mouse.

The Commonwealth and Western Australian Governments are cooperating on the production of a comprehensive management plan for the Shark Bay region.

Shark Bay Mouse.



Hedda Morrison, 1908-1991

The death of Hedda Morrison on Tuesday the third of December occurred just too late to be included in the last issue of the Bulletin. The Canberra Times of the fifth of December carried a full story of her varied and adventurous life as a photographer in China before and during the Japanese occupation and later with Alastair when he was an administrative officer in Sarawak. The *ITA* magazine of May 1991 carried a ten page article of her life as a photographer.

Hedda and Alastair joined the Association in the 1960s when they moved to Canberra. They both have contributed, by their support, much to the environmental movement. In my earlier years with the Association, when I spoke about some new and wonderful place I had discovered, it came as a surprise to me to learn that both Hedda and Alastair had already been there. Although Hedda was partially disabled through polio, my greatest surprise was when I learned that she had climbed Currockbilly.

In her latter years, (she was within ten days of being 83 when she died), when she could not take long or rough walks any more, it was her delight to have breakfast in one of the many bush retreats she had found in Namadgi within easy driving distance. Her last activity with the Association last year was to accompany the Association's fact-finding party to investigate the proposed extensions to Namadgi around Mt Coree.

Few could equal her skill with her cameras. She used none of the modern aids, even to the extent of not owning an exposure meter,



using a stop watch or a developing tank. Hedda had many books published and these included:

- *Sarawak* (MacGibbon and Kee, London, 1957)
- *Life in a Longhouse* (Borneo Literature Bureau, 1962. Reprinted, 1988, Summer Times, Singapore)
- *Vanishing World* (The Ibans of Borneo, Serasia, Hongkong, 1971)
- *Photographer in Old Peking* (OUP, 1985)
- *Travels of a Photographer in China 1933-46* (OUP, 1987)

Until quite recently she had been receiving commissions from overseas for her photographs. In her work of fulfilling these commis-

sions she was meticulous in maintaining her standards of perfection.

Hedda left thousands of negatives, all painstakingly catalogued, and many mounted photographs. It is a great pity that, during her lifetime, our national and state galleries and libraries did not secure portfolios of her work. However, Alastair has now been able to arrange for her Australian negatives and proof prints accumulated since 1953, to be lodged with the pictorial section of the National Library. A map of Australia marked with coloured pins to indicate overnight stops shows their degree of penetration into the remote areas of Australia. The Australian National Gallery has selected 56 exhibition prints which are mainly portraits, and the Powerhouse Museum, Sydney, has the remaining 347 prints from the extensive portfolio of a lifetime dedicated to photography. Negotiations

are in progress for the China component of her negatives to go to Harvard University and the remaining negatives of Asia and Borneo to Cornell University in the USA.

Hedda was always willing to give the Association photographs for the Bulletin and displays. Those in the display collection should be treasured and cared for, because I am sure that after her death her work will achieve greater recognition.

Recent members will probably not know Hedda because of her inability to join Association outings, but I am sure those of us who knew her, with her camera always cocked to expose another negative, will sincerely regret her passing.

Reg Alder

Photo by Anne Morris.

The first national parks

Maligne Lake in Jasper National Park. Photo by Barbara Comfort.



When Barbara and I were preparing for a campervan tour of western USA and Canada we were fortunate in receiving lots of ideas and suggestions from friends, many members of the Association. At the June general meeting I plan to talk about this trip and

hope to be able to pass on some travelling information to would-be travellers and to comment on the national parks as I saw them. There will be a display of maps, travel guides and information used on the trip and, I hope, Barbara's albums of colour prints.

The audience will be subjected to a viewing of some of my slides which should rest them before participating in a discussion of these fascinating parks.

Syd Comfort

Budawangs track

Last week the NPA received notification under the NSW Heritage Assistance program that it had been granted \$1000 under the National Estates Grants program. This is the first time the NPA has applied for assistance under this program and it is a significant accomplishment.

The submission demonstrated our long term commitment to the Budawangs and summarised our track maintenance activities. It also addressed issues relating to history, heritage and conservation.

We have until February 1993 to use the grant. Plans were already afoot for an autumn workparty, but this event has given us greater impetus. So, look at the Outings Program, and join the band of workers at Canowie Brook for the weekend 30-31 May.

Dianne Thompson

Two new books on the Snowy Mountains

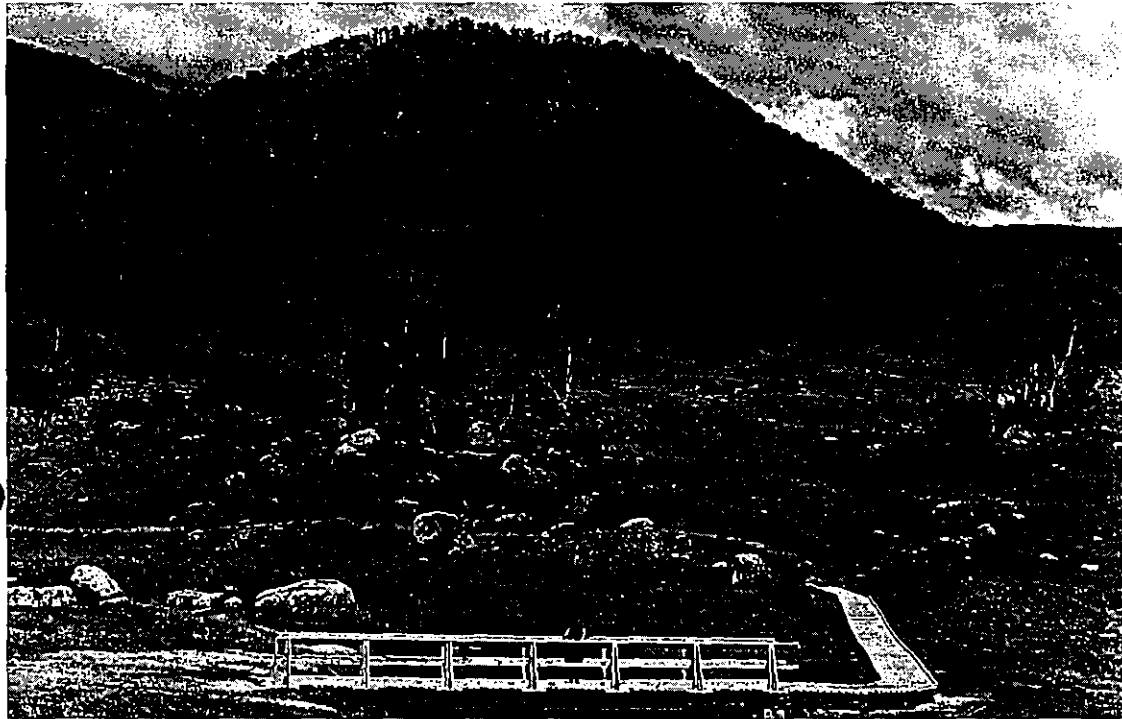
Skiing off the roof: The Kosciusko Chalet at Charlottes Pass and its place in the history of the Australian snowfields by Rick Walkom, Arberg Press, \$39.95.

Rick Walkom spent nearly a decade living, working and skiing from the Kosciusko Chalet. In the book he explores the story of the chalet's birth and growth and follows the pioneers of Snowy Mountains skiing.

Alan Andrews has taken a larger subject for his book. *Kosciusko: The mountain in history*, Tabletop Press, \$39.95, is a study of every significant event that has occurred near the mountain from 1830 to 1900. The chronicle is a parade of explorers, scientists, geologists, clerics, fishermen, painters, surveyors and squatters.

The book is illustrated with drawings, old maps and lithographs. Recent photographs have been placed alongside drawings to show how accurately artists have portrayed the mountain.

Yankee Hat track



The new bridge over Bogong Creek with the walkway over a potential bog section. Yankee Hat is in the background, the painting rock shelter is at its base among the first line of trees. Photo by Reg Alder.

The Yankee Hat rock shelter paintings are now easily accessible. There is a carpark a couple of hundred metres before the locked gate on the Old Boboyan Road and a mown track leads walkers down to a bridge and walkway over Bogong Creek. The track continues

across the grassy flats adjacent to the creek and climbs a wooded ridge up to the shelter. Walkways are to be constructed over several potential bog sections of the track.

The shelter is entered from the opposite side to that from which walkers taking the more direct

route have been accustomed. A descriptive pamphlet is available from the Information Centre or at the track head and there is an information board just before the shelter is entered.

Reg Alder

At the November 1991 meeting of the NPA of the ACT, Andy Spate, presently an investigation officer (doing caves research) with the NSW Parks and Conservation Service, gave an illustrated talk on caves.

According to Andy there are two main reasons why we should be interested in caves: for their recreational value and for the scientific study they provide of the climatic changes of past countries.

Tourist and recreational use often lead to problems of cave management, which can be quite challenging. How do you deal with pit toilets and the consequent seepage? Where do you place signs in the cave that will not interrupt the view? How do you avoid the bizarre lighting effect seen in so many caves?

Much scientific research takes place in caves, for example, studies

Caves

of climatic change. In a way not quite understandable to me, calcium carbonate deposits in stalactites act as a thermometers indicating temperatures of past centuries. Further details of caves research I feel I should leave alone—my notes are too sketchy. Perhaps one day Andy will write an article on caves for the *NPA Bulletin*, hopefully featuring the anecdote on how to use size six frozen chooks to measure the evaporation of limestone from caves.

Some cave areas have problems beyond the everyday concerns of overuse, vandalism and visitors touching formations, for example, the Exit cave system in southern Tasmania. This system consists of

over 20 kilometres of caves and is of world heritage significance. Yet the cave has a limestone quarry in the middle of it and the mining company wants to extend its activities. Studies show that if bulldozing and disturbance of the area is increased, the caves will be damaged through the drainage system of Exit Creek.

While Australia has relatively few caves when viewed on a world scale, it still has a large number—about 10 000. Andy Spate has visited and photographed a great many of these and generously shared his knowledge of them with us. The slides he showed included some of the spectacular scenery outside the caves as well as the exquisite formations in the caves, such as showers, star bursts and feast effects.

It was an enjoyable night.

Babette Scougal

Across the border

Conservationists face a difficult struggle protecting wilderness along state borders. Off road vehicle users, horseriders and shooters have unrestricted access to wilderness by crossing state borders because of poor interstate cooperation between park administrations.

The Snowy-Indi wilderness, identified by the Colong Foundation, is approximately 324 800 hectares made up of 168 900 hectares in Kosciusko National Park and approximately 150 000 hectares in Cobberas-Tingaringy Unit of the Victorian Alpine National Park. Most of the identified wilderness is protected in NSW, but adjoining wilderness in Victoria is not.

The identified area ties together the Davies Plain, Cobberas, Buchan Headwaters and Tingaringy wilderness areas in Victoria with the Pilot and Byadbo areas in NSW. The Colong Foundation's proposal would add 54 700 hectares of wilderness to the Victorian Land Conservation Council's Alpine wilderness proposals, making an effective Alpine wilderness area which can be protected from the incursions of off road vehicles and horseriders.

*The Colong Bulletin,
November 1991*

New green Blue Mountains

The newly-elected Blue Mountains City Council has already demonstrated its public support for the World Heritage listing of the Blue Mountains by writing to the state and federal governments urging that they notify the World Heritage Committee of the IUCN of their intent to proceed with the nomination.

The council has already recalled the previous council's draft Local Environmental Plan from the Department of Planning. If the green Independents and the ALP councillors can agree on the form of the amendments, it is probable that the Blue Mountains will have effective environmental protection zones to control development of

private bushland. These moves, together with steps to improve sewage treatment, will ensure that the Blue Mountains satisfy the integrity criteria of the World Heritage committee when they meet to review the Blue Mountains World Heritage proposal.

*Total Environment Centre
Newsletter, November 1991*

Hard words on Hat Head

Recent maintenance work in Hat Head National Park has turned a scenic coastal walk into a three metre wide bulldozed track, destroying native plants and shrubs. Bitou bush is invading the disturbed area.

The original walking track, opened in 1986, was installed from The Gap Picnic Area just south of Korogoro along the coast to the Hungry Rest picnic and camping area. For the next few months four wheel drive vehicles broke barriers and drove across the new track. A new road, suitable for conventional vehicles, was built from Hungry Rest to the top of a hill to allow people to drive closer to cliff side fishing places. Vehicles then remained out of the walking area.

A few months ago Jim Tedder of the NPA Three Valleys Branch took some visitors along the track and became concerned that the track was not being maintained. Some work was needed to stabilise erosion and clear wet area drains. The NPA Three Valleys Branch asked the District Headquarters of the Service for information on the maintenance program for the track. The Service did not reply.

However, by late July some maintenance work had been done. A small bulldozer had been taken to what was once a narrow bush track and made it into a three metre wide track. Banksias had been pushed over, rocks dislodged and debris pushed over the side. The newly disturbed soil was alive with bitou seedlings.

*National Parks Journal,
December 1991*

Threat to Killalea

Killalea State Recreation Area is a small reserve to the north of the Minnamurra River estuary. Until recently it was managed by the NPWS of New South Wales, but in 1991 Nick Greiner announced that the management of inland State Recreation Areas would be transferred to the Department of Conservation and Land Management.

The committee of the Illawarra branch was concerned about the future of Killalea State Recreation Area and approached the director of the NPWS. In a letter in November the director, Mr W Gillooly, inferred that Killalea had little or no conservation value and stated that its management would be transferred to the Department of Conservation and Land Management.

Illawarra Branch believe that this opinion is unfounded and incorrect, and have requested that, instead of removing Killalea from the National Parks Estate, the area be expanded so that the neighbouring Dunmore Swamp is also protected.

*Illawarra Branch NPA newsletter,
January-February 1992*

Art in the park

Three of Queensland's most popular national parks will host artists in residence under a state government program. The program is designed to offer writers, painters, sculptors, composers and all other visual and performing artists the opportunity to pursue their art within the environment of a Queensland National Park. The three parks selected for the program are Girraween in south-east Queensland, the Mount Moffat section of Carnarvon National Park and Heron Island on the southern Great Barrier Reef.

Free accommodation in the parks will be provided for the selected artists. In return they could donate an example of their work which represented their stay and which could be used to further the promotion and understanding of the park.

*NPA news Queensland,
January 1992*

NPA Christmas party

A sunny afternoon, leafy shade to shelter from the summer sun and members of NPA chatting.



*You can't be suspicious
of a tree, or accuse a bird
or a squirrel of
subversion, or challenge
the ideology of a violet
—Hal Borland*

Cultural heritage at Namadgi

Members who volunteered to work on the old Orroral homestead were concerned to see the 1950s Gregory homestead being demolished. The Namadgi National Park Management Plan of 1986 states as an objective:

to ensure that all developments and works undertaken within the park comply with the plan of management.

In response to our letter, the Director of the Environment and Conservation Bureau, Greg Fraser, wrote:

Thank you for your letter of 22 December 1991 concerning the 1950s homestead at the Orroral Valley in Namadgi National Park.

I regret that the work you described at the Gregory homestead at the Orroral Valley was undertaken without full Heritage consultation. I have put an immediate stop to the project and instructed that no further work at the site be undertaken until a proper Heritage assessment has been made and advice received on what action should now be taken.

Relevant staff at Namadgi National Park have been instructed that in future any modification or removal of structures or historic sites will not take place without reference to the Heritage Unit and appropriate community consultation.

Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention.

Canyons and Crags

**General Meeting
Thursday 18 June 1992**

**An illustrated talk on
national parks in North
America by Syd Comfort.**

Orroral—a history

Stock stations in the Canberra district were established towards the end of 1824 and several years later the more daring pioneers set up stations in the mountain valleys west of the Murrumbidgee, beyond the limit of the 19 counties. About this time, William Herbert staked his claim over a run in the Orroral valley for which he gained legality for its occupation and use by the payment of £10 for a pasturage licence in 1837. In Sept-Oct 1839, Land Commissioner Bingham conducted an inspection of these licences and his comments suggest that Herbert had established Orroral over a number of years:

*4th Oct 1839
Tidbinbilla to Orroral 18 miles,
William Herbert owner and super-
intendent, 10 persons living in slab
huts, 9 acres of cultivation, 700
cattle, 37 horses, no sheep. Produce
of dairy estimated as 20 cwt, esti-
mated area 20 sections (12800*

*acres). Lofty mountains watered by
Little River, Box timber etc, 4
miles to nearest station (Naas). No
remarks.*

Commissioner Bingham's spelling 'Orrooral' highlights some of the variations which have been recorded over time, viz:

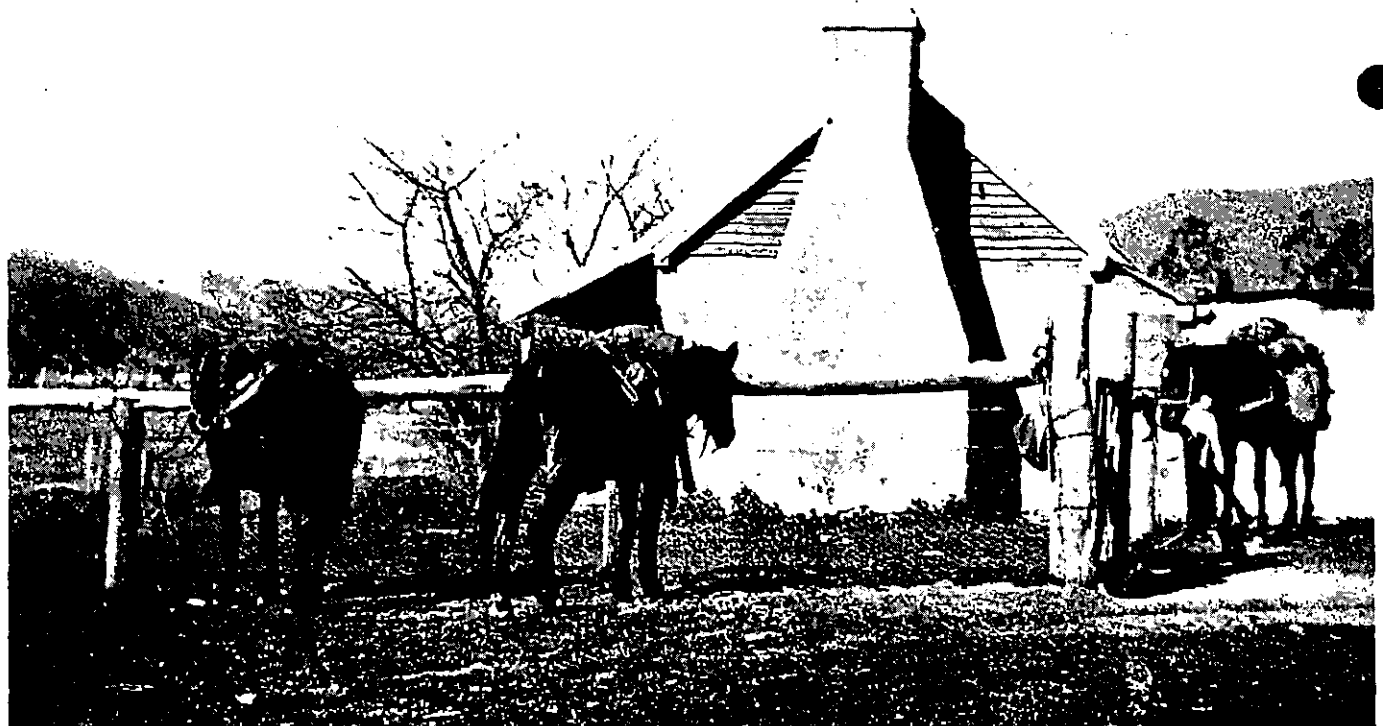
- *Urongal*, an Aboriginal word meaning 'tomorrow' used on Mitchell's 1834 map of the area
- *Ararel*, NSW Government Gazette, 1847
- *Orrorall*, Fussell's Squatting Directory, 1865
- *Oralla*, Bailliere's Post Office Directory, 1867.

Following William Herbert, Gilchrist and Watt had 'Orroral Run 166' until 1864 when it was transferred to Charles McKeahnie. McKeahnie (1809-1903), a bounty emigrant, arrived at Port Jackson in 1838 with his

wife Elizabeth and baby daughter Ann, on the sailing ship 'St George'. Charles McKeahnie was first employed by Joshua John Moore on his Canberry run before working for John Gray, at Boboyan. On Gray's bankruptcy, McKeahnie acquired Boboyan, before moving north to Gudgenby as overseer/manager for Edward Severne in 1845. Gudgenby was purchased by Charles McKeahnie in 1853 and in 1860 he completed the acquisition of Booroomba and moved there, leaving his son Alexander (who married Mary Cochrane the same year) in charge of Gudgenby.

On 24 November 1864 Charles and Elizabeth's eldest son, Archibald, married Mary McMillan in a ceremony at Booroomba and the couple made the short 23 km journey to the newly acquired Orroral. Construction of the Orroral home probably continued over a number

Orroral homestead c1931 from A Journey Around the ACT by Jefferis and Whelan. Photo copy by Reg Alder.



Outings program

April to June 1991



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 April - Wednesday Walk (1/2/A)

Boboyan Trail Ref: Rendezvous Cr 1:25,000
Leader: Frank Clements 231 7005h
 Meet Kambah Village shops 8.30 am. Walk along the fire trail (which was the old Boboyan Road) through the pine forest; visit Frank's (own) hut and other places of interest. A gentle, flat walk for as long as the party wants. 100 km drive (\$20 per car).

4-5 April - Weekend Pack Walk (3/D/E/F)

Upper Woila Creek/Big Badja Hill Ref: Badja 1:25,000
Leader: Mike Smith 286 2984h, 248 3624w
 Contact leader by Wednesday. A walk from Pike's Saddle over Big Badja Hill and down to Woila Creek along unnamed water course which alternates between constricted gorges and grassy banks. A long hard climb of 1,000 metres next day back to cars after leaving Woila Creek. 200km drive (\$40 per car).

4 April - Saturday Day Trip (1/A)

Sketching Outing Ref: ACT 1:100,000
Leader: Ken Johnson 248 5979h
 Meet Kingston Railway Station 9 am. Not come and see my 'etchings,' but come and do your own. Try your artistic representations of the valleys and landscapes close to home. Participants must bring their own equipment (eg paints, markers, pencils, water colours and paper). If at all in doubt phone Ken beforehand. 50 km drive (\$10 per car).

8 April - Wednesday meeting.

Outings sub-committee
 7.30 pm 41 Maranbooy Street, Fisher
 This time I hope I've got the date right. All members welcome - supper will be served. Covers program July - September. Phone Di Thompson (288 6084) if unable to attend but willing to offer a walk, car camp, cycle or other trip.

8 April - Wednesday Walk (2/A/B/C)

Rendezvous Creek Ref: Rendezvous Creek 1:25,000
Leader: Les Pyke 281 2982h
 Meet Kambah Village shops 9 am. Scenic 15 km walk up from Or-roral Valley to, and down Rendezvous Creek to Boboyan Road. One 300m climb. Car shuffle. 100 km drive (\$20 per car).

11 April - Saturday Walk (2/A)

Blue Bell Swamp Ref: Tinderry 1:25,000
Leader: Les Pyke 281 2982h
 Meet Canberra Railway Station 9 am. A scenic historical walk along trail from near Tinderry Station to swamp. Total distance 10 to 12 km. The trail climbs 150m. 115 drive (\$23 per car).

12 April - Sunday Walk (2/D)

Tidbinbilla Skyline Ref: ACT 1:100,000
Leader: Frank Clements 231 7005h
 Meet at the gate into Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve at 8.45 am. A 15km walk from Fishing Gap along the Tidbinbilla Ridge to Tidbinbilla Mountain and The Pimple. Total climb of 800m in stages. Short car shuffle involved. Not for beginners. 70 km drive (\$14 per car).

17-20 April - Easter Car Camp

Mallacoota Ref: Vicmap
Leader: Barbara de Bruine 258 3531h 259 2642w
 Contact leader before Tuesday. Numbers limited. Plan to camp on the spare block adjacent to Barbara's house. Toilet facilities will be available and water from taps, otherwise people are expected to be self-sufficient. Explore lake, beaches, rivers, forests, estuaries, and participate in crafts festival. 720km drive (\$104 per car).

17-20 April - Easter Pack Walk

Namadi National Park Ref: ACT 1:100,000
Yaouk, Rendezvous Cr 1:25,000
Leader: Steven Forst 251 6817h, 274 8426w
 Contact leader by Tuesday. Start at Boboyan Forest. Walk over Gudgenby divide to Sam's Creek. Climb Mt Kelly and follow ridge to Scabby Range, descend to old fire trail and Yaouk Gap and along Lone Pine Fire Trail to Oldfields Hut. Return via Cotter Valley - short car shuffle. Route depends to some extent on party. Drive 150 kms (\$30 per car).

19 April - Easter Sunday (2/A)

Booroomba Rocks Ref: ACT 1:100,000
Leader: Olive Buckman 248 8774h
 Meet Kambah shops at 9 am. A pleasant 9 km walk on fire trail and track to Canberra view point, then some rock scrambling and scrub to highest point of the vast granite outcrop, with 360 degree views. Return through light bush to fire trail. 100km drive (\$20 per car).

26 April - Sunday Heritage Walk (2/A)

Rendezvous Creek Rock Paintings Ref: Rendezvous Creek 1:25,000
Leader: Beverley Hammond 288 6577h
 Meet Kambah Village shops 9am. A 12km walk across open paddocks to hut and Rendezvous Creek valley to paintings; return along same route. Drive 100km (\$20 per car). Joint KHA/NPA outing.

28 April - Tuesday walk (2/A)

Brandy Flat and beyond Ref: ACT 1:100,000
Leader: Olive Buckman 248 8774h
 Meet Kambah Village shops at 9 am. A pleasant 10 km walk on fire trails from Glendale Crossing, with lunch at Brandy Flat hut, where water and fireplace are available for billy tea. Continue on tracks to Old Boboyan road. Total climb 430m. Short car shuffle. 90 km drive (\$18 per car).

2, 3 & 4 May - 3 day weekend pack walk (1/D/E/F)

Myrtle Creek, Jillacambra Ref: Bellowra 1:25,000
Leaders: Eric and Pat Pickering 286 2128h
 Two walks in one. An easy 2 day version and a harder 3 day version. Drive cars (4 WD including Subarus) along steep fire trail but no clearance problems. Day 1: 4 km walk along Tuross River with 5 river crossings to a delightful camp site with large pool (150 x 60m). One group may wish to spend 2 or 3 days here (swim, fish, read, short walks). Day 2: 800m climb to Jillacambra Mtn, 500m descent to Myrtle Creek to camp. Day 3: Along Myrtle Creek to the Tuross River - 7 kms back to cars. Joint NPA/Canberra Bushwalking Club trip. Contact leaders one week ahead. 300 km drive (\$60 per car).

3 May - Sunday Heritage walk (2/A)
Gudgenby Property Ref: **Rendezvous Creek 1:25,000**
Leader: Reg Alder 254 2240h
Meet at Kambah Village shops 8.30 am. A walk of 12 km to view Yankee Hat paintings, axe grinding grooves on Middle Creek, and relics of early and more recent European settlement. 140 km drive (\$28 per car).

9-10 May - Weekend pack walk (4/A/D)
Mt Kelly Ref: **Rendezvous Creek, Yaouk 1:25,000**
Leader: Frank Clements 231 7005h
35 km walk to Mt Kelly via Middle Creek - Bogong Gap Creek and returning by Sam's Creek and Naas River fire trail and Gudgenby Saddle. 100 km drive (\$20 per car).

10 May - Sunday walk (1/A/B)
Ginini Flats Ref: **Corin 1:25,000**
Leader: Lyle Mark 286 2801h
Beginners/family walk. Meet cnr. Eucumbene Drive and Cotter Road 8.30 am. 6 km walk from Mt Ginini through abandoned Arbo-return No. 26 to Ginini Flats. Lunch at Ginini Cascades. An optional 100m return climb to Mt Ginini summit at leisurely pace. 120 km drive (\$24 per car).

13 May - Wednesday walk (1/A)
Lower Molongo Gorge Ref: **ACT 1:100,000**
Leader: Ken Johnson 248 5979h
Meet at the water treatment works gates 9 am. Walk up-stream along the top of the cliffs, going down to the river at selected spots. Steep and narrow sheep tracks. Approx. 6 km return. Grazing land, some scrub, marvellous views, lunch by the river.

17 May - Sunday walk
Orroral wander Ref: **Corin 1:25,000**
Leader: Steven Forst 251 6817h 274 8426w
Meet Kambah Village shops 8.30 am. A rambling walk along the banks of the Orroral River. Relatively little or no climbing. Kangaroos galore. Bring picnic lunch and jumper. 100 km drive (\$20 per car).

16-17 May - Weekend pack walk (3/A)
Grey Mare region Ref: **Khancoban 1:50,000**
Leader: Phil Bubb 248 6769h
Start Round Mountain and camp in the vicinity of the fire trail. Tracks all the way. Enjoy walking in the open. Approx. 19 km/day. 350 km drive (\$70 per car).

23 May - Saturday walk (3/D/E/F)
1711 feature above Big Creamy Flats Ref: **Rendezvous Creek 1:25,000**
Leader: Peter Tedder 282 1711h
Meet 7.30 am Kambah Village shops. Starting at Nursery Swamp car park, walk to Rendezvous Creek along an old fire trail, then climb 600 (+) m up a steep scrubby slope to the rocky knoll (1711 m) on the spur line to the south of Rendezvous Creek. Expect 360 degree views of Brindabellas, Namadgi, Kelly and Burbidge. Not for beginners. 100 km drive (\$20 per car).

24 May - Saturday cycle
Lakeside and 'mountain' ride Ref: **ACT 1:100,000**
Leader: Gary Schneider 254 9801h
Meet 10 am near Ferry Terminal. An easy cycle, viewing the late autumn colours - Lake Burley Griffin, Mt Pleasant, RMC Duntroon.

23-24 May - Weekend pack walk (4/A/D)
Bimberi Peak Ref: **Rendezvous Creek Corin Dam 1:25,000**
Leader: Mick Kelly 241 2330h 275 6119w
A challenging walk to Bimberi Peak. Several climbs - including from Orroral Valley to Cotter Gap, plus the 900 m ascent to Bimberi Peak (1911m - the highest in the ACT - without packs). Camp Cotter Valley. Grand, 360 degree views including those into the Cotter and Goodradigbee River systems. Some tracks. A long walk, not suitable for beginners. 100 km drive (\$20 per car).

26 May - Tuesday walk (1/A)
Square Rock Ref: **ACT 1:100,000**
Leader: Olive Buckman 248 8774h
Meet Kambah Village shops at 9 am. A pleasant walk on tracks through a variety of scenery to a fascinating rock formation with wide views. An 'inside/outside' rock scramble through and back is optional. Total climb 270 m. Ideal for beginners and families. 80 km drive (\$16 per car).

31 May - Sunday walk (1/A)
Westbourne Woods, Yarralumla Ref: **Canberra Tourist Map (16th ed)**
Leader: Fiona Brand 247 9538h
Meet at gates of Royal Canberra Golf Club - 10 am. An easy stroll through the woods. George Chippendale will co-lead with Fiona and identify plants and trees for the party. A picnic lunch by the lake will follow and an afternoon walk along the lake shores for those who want to make a day of it.

30-31 May - Weekend workparty (2/A)
Budawang Ref: **Corang 1:25,000**
Leader: Di Thompson 288 6084h 244 7549w
An opportunity to revisit the track maintenance work carried out by NPA and to participate in both new and ongoing work. Lay planking, place logs and provide drainage near Canowie Brook and the new by-pass track that NPA cut last spring. Alan Norman (NPWS) will be working with us again. Hard work, but a good campsite and good company to compensate. Please phone early to confirm participation. 300 km drive (\$60 per car).

5,6,7 & 8 June - Long weekend car camp
Bournda Reserve Ref: **Wolumla 1:25,000**
Leader: Gary Thompson 288 6084h
Contact leader by Tuesday 2 June. Highly probably that leader will drive down Friday pm. Your choice of coastal or forest walks and birdwatching - beaches, lakes, swamps, tidal creeks, headlands, moors and Bournda Island. 400 km drive (\$80 per car).

6, 7 & 8 June - Long weekend pack walk (3/A/C/D)
Coolamine Homestead-Orroral Valley
Ref:Peppercorn Rules Point **Rendezvous Creek 1:25,000**
Leader: David Hall 292 5262h
A joint walk with the Family Bushwalkers. This walk was originally 'devised' by Ross Carlton of the NPA. Contact leader by 21 May for details, costs, etc. The walk requires that transport be hired to take the party to Coolamine, so the leader needs to know numbers early. Walk back to the ACT following tracks used by settlers in colonial times. One or two peaks could be climbed depending on the group's progress.

10 June - Wednesday walk (1/A)
Yankee Hat Paintings Ref: **Rendezvous Creek 1:25,000**
Leader: Len Haakew 281 4268h
Meet Kambah Village shops 9.30. An old favourite, but this time experience the new track and Bogong Creek crossing. 100 km drive (\$20 per car).

13 June - Saturday walk (3/A/B)
Woden Rim ACT: **1:100,000**
Leader: Syd Comfort 286 2578h
Meet 8.30 am at Easty Street carpark, off Launceston St, opposite Phillip College, Woden. Walk of 17 km following the ridges from near Red Hill through Mugga, Isaacs, Wanniasa, Farrer, Mt Taylor to Torrrens. Return to Woden by bus. Bring change. Plenty of ups and downs but compensating views.

14 June - Sunday walk (1/A)
Local mountains ACT: **1:100,000**
Leader: Gary Schneider 254 9801h
Meet 10 am behind the War Memorial. Complete the weekend of Canberra's skyline by walking up Mt Ainslie, visiting the RMC Duntroon, over Mt Pleasant and back to the War Memorial.

20 June - Saturday walk (2/A/C)
Black Springs Ref: **Tidbinbilla 1:25,000**
Leader: Lyle Mark 286 2801h
Meet corner Eucumbene Drive and Cotter Road 8.30 am. 14 km walk up Fishing Gap fire trail and beyond to the Cotter River, partially on historic bridle trail. Long, steady 300 m climb back to Gap. 70 km drive (\$14 per car).

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.

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 TWENTY cents per kilometre DIVIDED BY THE NUMBER OF OCCUPANTS in the car, including the driver, (to the nearest dollar) be offered to the driver by each passenger accepting transport. Drive and walk distances quoted in the program are approximate distances for return journeys.

of years from this time. Alpine ash taken from near the junction of Sawpit Creek and the Orroral River was used, and the building plan was virtually identical to the Gudgenby home built by Charles McKeahnie 20 years earlier. With an increasing family, a more substantial home was clearly a necessity. Charles (14/10/1865), Elizabeth (6/11/1867), Mary (May) (5/12/1873) and Jane (7/11/1877) were all born at Orroral. The obvious skill of Archibald and Charles as builders resulted in an 1893 valuation of £100 for the house and £30 for the kitchen block, and evidence of that skill remains today. As one of the oldest buildings of its kind in the ACT, conservation is clearly warranted.

It was not until 1878 that Archibald McKeahnie first gained official title to land in the Orroral valley. This was Portion 1, Parish Orroral, County Cowley, south of the homestead plot (Portion 28). However, in the early 1880s Archibald McKeahnie and family moved to take over Well Station and Orroral continued to be run as an extension of the family's successful Booroomba property.

From 1883, for about 10 years Charles Henry McKeahnie,

Archibald's brother, took up other holdings in the Orroral Valley. In 1911, 8 years after Charles' death, Orroral was sold to the Bootes family from Bangus and Mundarlo, near Gundagai. Riverina people brought stock up to the higher country to escape the hot, dry summers and the Bootes family would travel by car to Naas, where they would be met in a wagonette and horses to continue the journey beyond Fitz's Hill. William Sydney and Albert George William ('Boy') Bootes stocked Orroral with Hereford cattle and from about 1914 Tom Oldfield was employed as overseer/manager and was the builder of the two-room school house for the subsidised teacher and the children of the area. Another member of the family, Harold Bootes, was also involved with the running of the property over a number of years.

The Bootes family purchased other land: Bywong, Sutton in 1923 and Gudgenby in 1926, the same year they sold Orroral to Andrew Twynam Cunningham. Tom Oldfield moved to Gudgenby as manager for the Bootes, and stayed until 1935 when he took up land in the upper Naas Valley. The teacher from Orroral also moved

from Orroral to Gudgenby since the Oldfields had a large family.

Andy Cunningham, the new owner of Orroral, became well known for his exploits in his small De Havilland Moth plane, the 'Orroral Dingo', and his landing field was between the homestead and the Orroral River. For many years the wooden propeller of this plane lay discarded in the Orroral house, a reminder of Andy's untimely death when his plane crashed at Cronulla on his way to the big East-West Air Race of 1932. It was Andy Cunningham who built the woolshed at Orroral and a big dance was held to celebrate its opening in 1930.

Sid Cleary managed Orroral for Andy Cunningham and about 1940 portion of the property was leased to Edward George (Ted) Gregory of Tharwa, who finalised purchase on 5/12/1947 and held the land until it was acquired by the Commonwealth on 1/3/1964 to establish the NASA Tracking Station. The Gregorys were granted a tenancy of the property from 1/5/1964 and Ted's son, Gordon, continued to run stock there for a number of years.

Tony Corp

Ten years of involvement with the old Orroral homestead

The Gudgenby Nature Reserve was dedicated in 1979 after many years of planning and urging by our National Parks Association. Members wanted to continue interest in the reserve, to encourage its development and preservation, and to give practical assistance as appropriate.

At a committee meeting in June 1981, members discussed the fact that Heritage Grants were available from the Department of the Capital Territory (DCT). Follow up investigations, discussions and excursions revealed that a vertical-slab building in the Orroral valley had been identified in the Gudgenby Management Plan as being worthy of preservation. It was felt this might be a worth-

while long-term project for NPA. Ross Carlton accepted the challenge of coordinating the project. In the NPA *Bulletin* of December 1981 he appealed for members to declare their interest in working on the grant submission, in providing specialist advice or in providing physical help when the time came.

Meanwhile, following representations from NPA, DCT repaired the fence around the building to keep stock out and installed posts to prevent the front verandah from sagging.

A grant of \$2,800 was received on 22 July 1982. Under the terms, work carried out was to be consistent with the principles of the Australian ICOMOS Charter of

the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance, a conservation plan was required, a consultant architect was to be nominated, and the approval of the ACT Heritage Committee had to be obtained before physical work commenced.

Peter Corkery, principal lecturer in Architecture at the Canberra College of Advanced Education, undertook the task of determining the significance of the structure, of recording and documenting its construction features, and of proposing a policy for future management. NPA members used original sources, including interviews, in researching the history of

continued on page 12



David Frost, left, and Len Haskew.
Photo by Dianne Thompson.

7 August 1983 - Excavation of a row of stones at the back of the house and attempts to improve surface drainage.

4 March 1984 - Clearing of thistles and of the drainage trench.

In July of 1983 the committee applied for a \$10,000 grant.

On 16 December we received a Heritage Grant of

Ten years/continued

the site. This was published in November 1983. Workparties began.

10 October 1982 - 30 people cleaned and tidied to allow access for measurement and assessment.

26/27 March 1983 - To weather-proof the building temporary chimney caps were installed, guttering was adjusted, windows boarded and roofing iron secured.

25/26 June 1983 - Following the receipt of a further Heritage Grant for an archaeological survey of the area between the house and separate collapsed kitchen block, excavation began in temperatures of 6°C and was abandoned when it snowed!

23/24 July - Further archaeological work.

\$5,620.

Namadgi National Park was declared on 3 October 1984.

During 1984, '85 and '86 Ross Carlton (now NPA President) wrote several letters to the Secretary of the Department of Territories and to the Heritage Commission seeking information and expressing concern about delays before the building deteriorated "beyond the point where it could reasonably be saved".

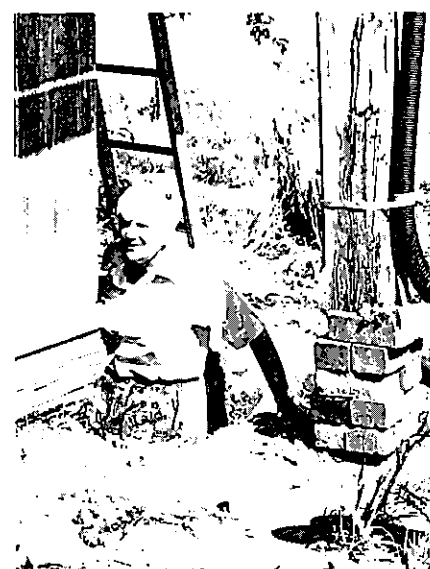
A letter to Ross on 8 July 1986 states "Stabilisation of the existing structure is viewed by the Department of Territories as being consistent with the Namadgi National Park Management Plan which indicates that the Department will coordinate stabilisation and other conservation work."

NPA would continue to provide volunteer labour and, of course, would make available Grant funds as required.

The Orroral Valley Homestead was nominated by the National Trust in August 1986 for registration by the Australian Heritage Commission. This occurred on 18 April 1989.

In November 1986 NPA was advised that the architects Peter Freeman and Partners had been employed to prepare a stabilisa-

Reg Alder with his adze.
Photo by Fiona Brand



Fiona Brand waist deep in the hole that had to be dug to remove the base of the corner post that had rotted above and below ground.
Photo by Reg Alder.

tion plan for the homestead.

Our next written communication from the ACT Heritage Unit of the Parks and Conservation Service was dated January 1990. It indicated that National Estate Grants Program funds would be used for the project. Stabilisation would be supervised by Peter Freeman and Partners based on documentation previously provided by that firm and consistent with the conservation plan commissioned by NPA. We were asked if volunteers could assist with Stage 1 of the schedule of works. A workparty in May was

organised to remove flooring, to assist with archaeological excavations and to once again work on drainage problems. The Service did not continue with Stage 2.

At a symposium of Cultural Heritage of the Australian Alps in October 1991 attention was drawn to the lack of action at the Orroral homestead (see members' articles in NPA Bulletin for September and December 1991).

The ACT branch of the Kosciusko Huts Association had also expressed concern about the building, noting that chimneys were collapsing. A stonemason had assisted them in restoration of other buildings in Namadgi. They believed the time was right to approach the Conservation and Environment Bureau for work to be done on the homestead and kitchen chimneys.

At meetings with members of the Heritage Unit in October, it was agreed that the remnants of our Heritage Grant would be used to pay the stonemason. A ranger had been given the responsibility for coordinating homestead projects. NPA volunteers assisted at workparties from 14-19 December and again from 13 January 1992 to work with Park employees under the guidance of Pip Giovanelli in conservation of the timber structure.

The ACT Heritage Committee will give advice on completion of the chimney surface. On the rec-

ommendation of its Chairman, details of variations to the original construction techniques and materials have been fully documented.

When finally completed the Old Orroral Homestead will be open to the public. It will house a display of interpretive materials and photographs etc.

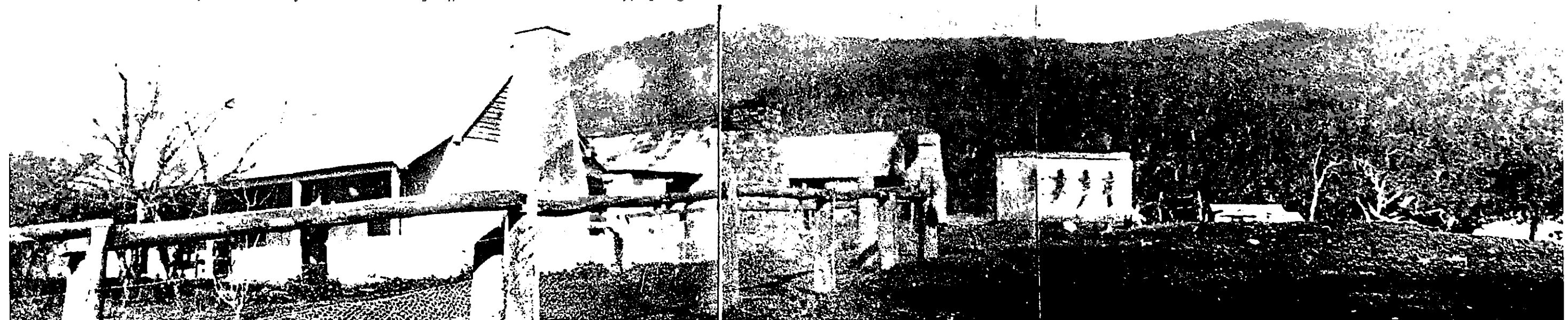
The National Parks Association looks forward to that day.

Beverley Hammond

Beverley keeping an eye on things.
Photo by Fiona Brand.



Orroral Homestead c 1931 from A Journey Around the ACT by Jefferis and Whelan. Photo copy by Reg Alder.



The origins of Namadgi National Park

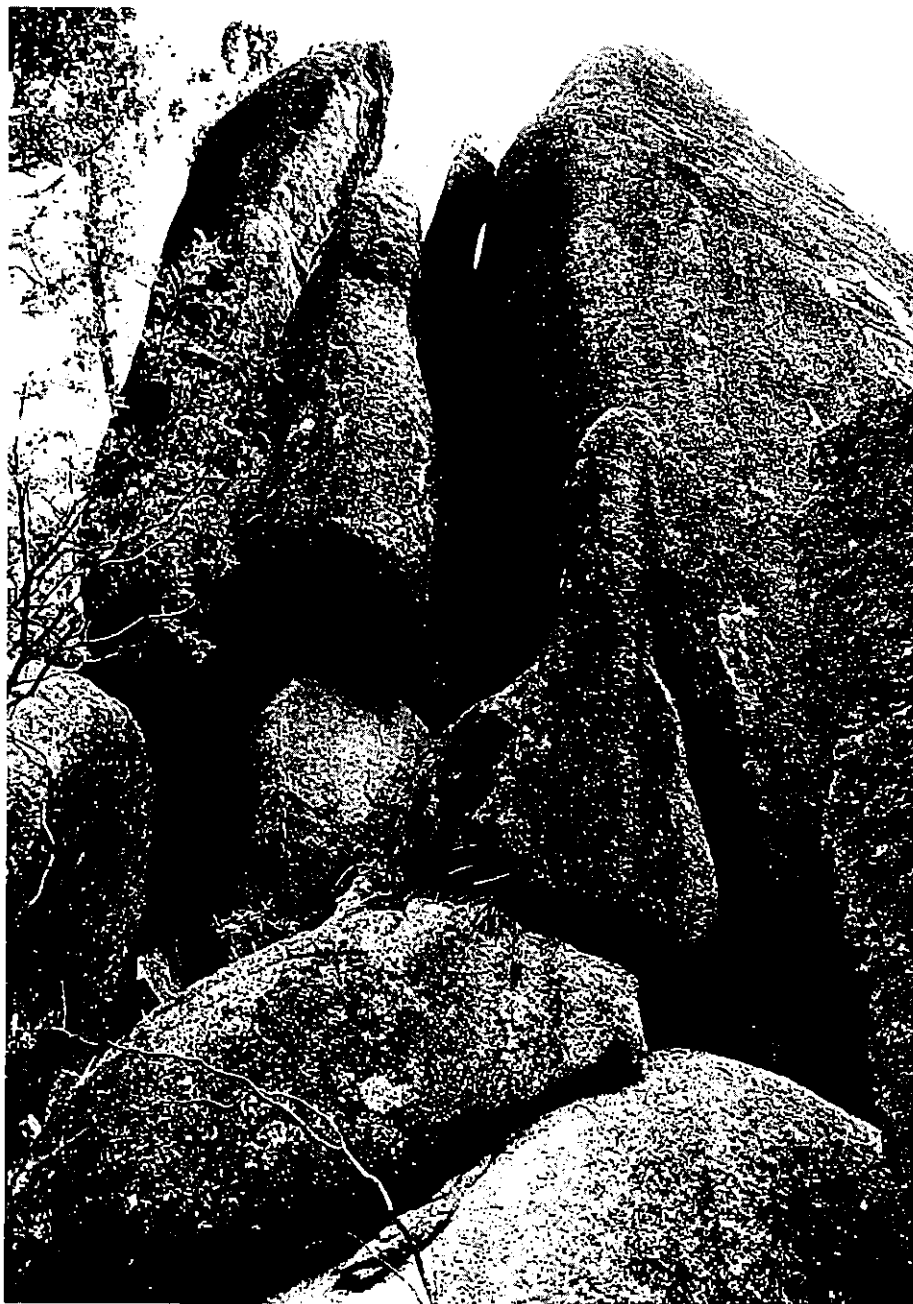
As part of a history degree at the Australian National University, CATHERINE TIGHE has written a history of Namadgi National Park. The author acknowledges that this is not the definitive account of the creation of the park; comments from those who took part would be welcome.

The National Parks Association (NPA) of the ACT came into being in 1960 for the express purpose of working towards the creation of a National Park for the National Capital. This was to be its motto for the next 24 years.

By 1960 there was nothing unique about the concept of national parks, Australia already had many. The National Parks Association of the ACT also had precedents with similar organisations having been formed in Queensland in 1932, NSW in 1957 and Victoria in 1952. These organisations came about because of an upsurge of interest in bushwalking in Australia. The term 'bushwalking' originated in Australia in the 1920s when Maurie Berry, a member of the Mountains Trail Club in NSW, which was only for males, moved a motion at a meeting in 1927 to form a mixed-sex club and that the new club be known as the Sydney Bushwalkers. 'Bushwalking' as an expression was taken up from this.

Bushwalking as an activity had grown in popularity in Australia because of the uniqueness of our landscape, that is, there is so much wilderness and much of it of spectacular beauty. This, combined with the extra leisure time people found themselves with in the 1950s and 1960s, and the relative ease with which they could now get to isolated places via motor vehicles meant that more and more people could now appreciate the bush and coastline.

By the 1960s there was a proliferation of groups and organisations



Middle Creek, Namadgi National Park. Photo by Babette Scougall.

interested in natural history and conservation, including the Australian Conservation Foundation which was set up in 1965. This decade began to see a new urgency in the move to preserve the Australian landscape.

The 1960s were generally characterised by the questioning of old faiths and direct action to redress problems was beginning to become more and more a part of the Australian political scene. There were certain moral inadequacies in

society, for example inequality for females and Aborigines, and this coincided with an environmental conservation movement which grew stronger.

People had started to become aware of their environment, both the one in which they lived and their natural surroundings outside suburbia and with this went a desire to improve the former and preserve the latter.

The speed of technology and the mass industry and consumerism that this resulted in had begun to make an impact on the consciousness of some Australians in that the new found affluence was not without cost, and what had seemed before to have been limitless resources and lasting natural beauty was beginning to diminish, and be spoiled. What had been taken for granted now appeared to be threatened, and concerned citizens began to organize themselves into groups to lobby for their particular cause.

The city areas were not forgotten either. The saving of old buildings of historic value and of inner city houses was also of importance.

Donald Horne states in his book *Time of Hope* that the faith in development at any cost was being questioned for the first time.

This was happening at a time when Australians were growing aware of their country as a whole—the search for an Australian identity began to emerge, as did a growing pride in what the country had to offer. There was a need to preserve the evidence of its short history, discover more and to experience its natural attributes.

The conservation movement was also part of a world wide movement and this influenced Australians.

The First World Conference on National Parks was held in America in 1962. It was sponsored by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN). This body set standards and a definition for national parks and these were taken into account by the NPA when putting up the proposal for a national park and later on by the Federal Government in deter-

mining whether the features of the new park were up to the standards set.

This conference signified that plenty was happening on the international front and that it was widely accepted that national parks were necessary.

There are national parks across the world, the earliest being Yellowstone in America which was set up in 1872. They are important symbols of nationality and are important as tourist attractions as well as being intrinsically valuable for the people.

The Royal National Park in NSW was one of the earliest parks in Australia. It was declared a park in 1879 with the expressed purpose of being 'for the use of the public forever'. This was to become the usual purpose for national parks.

Other States followed this example. Capital cities also made provision for parks within cities and suburbs, demonstrating a recognition of the importance of space and a connection with nature, for the people.

National Parks were not solely for the recreational use by the community however. Even in the early 1900s it was becoming obvious that there was a need to set aside parks so that they could be protected from the greed of developers. Bushland was being eroded and unless protected, those in the community who saw no further than their own immediate economic gain would destroy whole forests and unique and rare flora and fauna.

Queensland was one of the first states to preserve precious wilderness areas with rainforest being reserved on Tamborine Mountain between 1909 and 1913, and the Lamington National Park being proclaimed in 1915. Legislation to preserve particular areas also began to be passed in the early 1900s with one of the most important being the establishment of the Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park in Tasmania. In fact Tasmania was very progressive, for obvious reasons, passing the Scenery Preservation Act in 1915.

Later on legislation would also



be passed to protect native plants in the 1920s and 1930s in NSW, Qld, Victoria, the Commonwealth, WA and SA.

All of these moves provided a basis for the future establishment of national parks. National parks were established for various reasons. Some, like the Royal National Park, were to be for recreational use, others were to be preserved in their pristine state, some were a combination of these and other factors, such as scientific research.

Geoffrey Bolton takes the view that the attraction for the bush was due to a wish to maintain the uniqueness of the Australian landscape as well as making a statement that the everyday environment in which we live is not particularly good. These assertions are probably true. There is also, however, a spiritual element. To some extent it would be fair to say that the people living in the modern era were a bit bewildered by the rapidity of technology and how it had changed their lives. The resulting pollution and chemicals added a frighteningly artificial edge to life. Morals and the old social order were breaking down and there was a general falling away from religion.

To more and more people it was becoming important to seek some sort of relaxation or spiritual communion in the bush or the coast. It was psychologically beneficial to be close to nature because we had

continued on page 16

continued from page 15

moved so far away from it, with our artificial implements and processed food, in such a short time. There is a sacredness about the bush simply because no one has yet been able to spoil it.

This is the sort of thing that people spoke about when praising or justifying the need for national parks. Because it is a relatively new concept, and foreign to the exploitative nature of man, it is always necessary to try to explain **why** there is a need for a national park. Why should a large tract of (often) virgin land be set aside and left undeveloped purely so that people can spend time there pursuing various leisure or scientific activities?

Explaining why it was so necessary to have a national park in the ACT was fairly prominent in the NPA's submission to the government on the subject. Included in the submission were several extracts from some of the world's leading scientists and conservationists, including Australians. The common threads are that economic viability cannot transcend the importance of parks in terms of their ideological and natural value, that the power of mankind to transform the face of the world entirely makes it doubly important to preserve our heritage for future generations, and modern civilisation has quickened pace and brought with it all kinds of stresses and there is now a need to escape from the cities.

The 'Proposal for a National Park for the ACT' was submitted three years after a group of people, many of them professionals in scientific fields, met on 1 March 1960 at the Institute of Anatomy to discuss the possibility of forming a National Parks Association in the ACT.

The group of people who formed the Association took time to organise themselves—they did not originally even have a particular area in mind for a national park. The main driving force behind their decision was the need to set aside an area of land for recreational use because of the predicted increase in the population of the ACT.

The impetus for a park also came from the fact that other states had established several national parks and were passing legislation to protect wildlife. The parks in other countries also influenced them because of the resulting benefits to tourism. It was seen to be a good thing and it was considered that the ACT was remiss in not having a park. With a lead from the government, and no likelihood of this happening, the group decided to take action. Therein ensued a discussion of what the purpose of a national park should be with opinions generally covering:

- recreation
- preservation of untouched wilderness in its pristine state
- protection of flora and fauna.

The NPA eventually chose the following definition for their proposal:

"The expression 'National Park' shall denote an area

(a) placed under public control, the boundaries of which shall not be altered nor any portion be capable of alienation except by the competent legislative authority

(b) set aside for the benefit and enjoyment of the general public, as far as this is compatible with the propagation and protection of wild animals and wild vegetation and the preservation of objects of aesthetic, geological, prehistoric, historic and archaeological, or other scientific interest

(c) in which the hunting, killing or capturing of fauna and the destruction or collection of flora are prohibited except under the control of the park authorities, and then only for *bona fide* scientific purposes."

The movement for a national park in the ACT was rather humble in origins, and a bit hazy on detail. The initial demands for the actual size of the park were quite modest, but out of it all emerged a well-organised, dynamic group of people who were prepared to give up their time and energy to work towards something for the benefit of all Australians.

Once formed the NPA began to go through a process of determin-

ing which site should be chosen, what they would aim for and who they should approach for support, and to collate information for a proposal to be put to government. They were fortunate in that a few of their members had skills of the sort which were useful in putting together a viable proposition; for example, at least two had expertise in botany and compiled a comprehensive list of flora for the proposal.

The first demands put to the National Capital Development Commission were not of any great significance. The demands were for:

- wilderness area in the Upper Cotter with limited access
- faunal reserve on Mt Tidbinbilla with animals on display
- holding of certain areas in the southern ACT so that the Parks Association would have an opportunity to express its opinion regarding future use ...
- reservations of small specific areas such as the Molonglo Gorge, certain geological sites and scenic points.

The Upper Cotter was a catchment area with restricted public access and therefore unlikely to be chosen for an area for public recreation. A site at Tidbinbilla had already been set aside with a report from the Royal Society of Canberra before the government for consideration, the third point was ambiguous and the fourth was of little consequence.

However the project began to develop as people began to know what to look for as a result of initial investigations and how to approach it. This was assisted by the cooperation and interest from other organisations and the government bodies approached by the NPA.

The NCDC was among the first to be consulted and the response was positive. In fact one of the things that characterises the whole history of the setting up of the park was the cooperation of all who were involved with the project. There was never any opposition to the idea in principle. There were delays and a few problems

along the way, but the idea of a national park was accepted by the government and the NCDC as perfectly reasonable. Rather than throw up obstacles, a thing which government staff are often accused of, reaction was positive, and the matter handled in a sensible and logical manner to its conclusion. In fact the government took the proposal and expanded it far in excess of the original plan and commissioned studies of the area for management of every aspect of the proposed park area.

The fact that it all ran relatively smoothly probably had something to do with the professional way in which the NPA handled the matter. Members lobbied all the relevant departments and gained support from other interest groups, and made themselves available to discuss each stage. They were consulted at each stage by the Department of the Interior and the NCDC, demonstrating that they were respected as a group of people who, in the absence of anyone else taking on the role, were the acknowledged authorities on the subject. They were not content to push the total responsibility onto the government, but were prepared to give up their time to gather information to help the process along.

It was eventually decided that the southern part of the ACT was the best area to focus on as there were really no other appropriate areas within the ACT.

After some investigation by members of the NPA, the Mt Kelly area and its surroundings were chosen for the proposal.

The Proposal for a National Park in the ACT was eventually sent to the Minister for the Interior on 17 June 1963. The letter accompanying the proposal stated its intention was to seek a national park in the Mt Kelly region as a suitable area for conservation.

The reasons for requiring a park covered the need for 'breathing space' for Canberra, as the existing picnic sites were already being overused, and as the population was predicted to increase quite substantially by the turn of the century, an area for recreational purposes was important.

There was also a need for a site for scientific research, especially as Canberra was becoming the centre for research.

The reasons for the Mt Kelly area in particular were that there was a need to preserve our unique bush and the area chosen was bounded by the upper Cotter Valley and Kosciusko National Park, meaning that that area would be part of a larger wilderness area and therefore better protected.

The Cotter Valley was more attractive, but in its capacity as a water catchment area, it was not appropriate.

Mt Kelly however had many features worthy of being conserved. The area itself is extremely beautiful and includes mountainous regions which are sub-alpine and often covered with snow in winter.

Grazing has been minimal so that much of the countryside is unspoilt.

The flora and fauna are plentiful and diverse and there are some rare species. Also there are Aboriginal rock paintings in two known areas.

For these reasons it was considered a suitable area for a national park.

To back up their proposal and give it additional weight, an exhaustive list of the flora and fauna of the area had been drawn up from information compiled on investigative journeys by the members. Suggestions for the administration of the park were also provided. Assistance in the way of blazing tracks, collecting information, preparing information in the form of brochures and helping to build facilities was also offered.

The area proposed was only small (36 square miles). One reason for this was because the land was all leasehold and the NPA considered that there was a better chance of success if the government did not have to buy the land.

The emphasis was on the park being protected in its natural state—there should be no improvements other than visitor facilities, or nothing introduced that would be likely to harm the existing ecological systems.

The park was to be primarily for recreational use then but only so far as this was compatible with the protection of everything within that area. In this sense then the park would fall into the category of being protected wilderness.

The proposal was scattered around to various bodies and individuals for consideration.

The Minister for the Interior at that time, Mr Doug Anthony, expressed his support for the idea. Despite this, a long wait was to begin, mainly because there were other priorities; for example, he advised that the government was committed to developing 10,000 acres at the Tidbinbilla Reserve and it would be some years before funding would be available.

Other delays in the form of land use studies and the acquisition of freehold and leasehold land came later on as the park plans developed. There was also a need to consult many different areas and government departments, and the usual time lapse that goes with the various processes of any project occurred as correspondence had to be sent, meetings and outings arranged, redrafts of proposals discussed and legislation prepared. Other factors which contributed to the delay were the changeover of government and public servants and restructuring of departments. (In 1972 a draft *ACT Conservation Ordinance* had been prepared—there was a change of government and the Ordinance lapsed and was shelved). The area of land to be developed eventually became quite large, and therefore it was to be a massive undertaking and the implications to be addressed required time and resources.

In the meantime the NPA was not idle, continuing to write and place pressure on the appropriate authorities, research and prepare papers on the area and articles for the *NPA Bulletin* and to obtain assistance from other interested parties such as the Canberra Alpine Club, the NPA of NSW, and the Canberra Bushwalking Club. Nor was the Department of the Interior idle—it carried out a preliminary survey of the topography

continued on page 18

continued from page 17

of the area in 1968.

The Canberra Bushwalking Club prepared an extensive submission on its views about the southern region of the ACT in 1968. Some important points were made in that the park should cater for two types of visitors both of whom need different facilities because they would be using the park for different reasons. The two categories identified were:

- the motor tourist, and
- the bushwalker,

the former requiring roadside facilities, the latter requiring very simple facilities, such as tracks, or none at all (that is, the primitive wilderness is what they seek).

The Canberra Bushwalkers also recommended a larger area because it was considered that the area proposed by the NPA was not large enough to cope with the expected increase in population.

It was recommended that the area should be completely contiguous with the Kosciusko National Park (in the NPA proposal only a portion of the boundary was common) to protect the isolated Cotter area. The Mt Booth-Mt Clear section in the far south should be included and the Orroral Valley in the north-east section (the latter because it is closer to Canberra and provides excellent bushwalking). There should be no more grazing when leases expired and roads should be kept to a minimum.

Underlying these recommendations would have been the preference of the Canberra Bushwalkers to keep as wild and inaccessible as possible most of that bushland. As the name implies, bushwalking is what the club is interested in, and the more wild and isolated an area is, the greater the challenge. The sense of adventure and the element of danger is as much a part of the pleasure as taking in the scenic beauty of an area.

Bushwalking had become a sport in its own right by this time with the associated jargon and culture. There are many reasons for pursuing the activity, but an important one is the satisfaction in escaping

from the stress of modern city life and its associated excesses and problems. The novelty of getting away from it all and surviving in primitive conditions with limited provisions in an uncontrolled environment is the essence of bushwalking. The greater the area and the less intervention by man, the better.

The extended area was inevitably supported by the NPA and also the government, which called a meeting of all interested parties in 1968 to advise that a greater area was being considered.

The NPA had by this time become better organised and more specific about what it wanted and the value of the area focussed on.

By 1973 the NPA had set up different subcommittees to meet its objectives, for example, there was an:

- outings subcommittee
- *Bulletin* subcommittee
- ACT land use subcommittee, and
- *Gudgenby National Park* subcommittee.

Their activities were not restricted to the Gudgenby area. For example, at one stage members met with the NCDC to discuss issues relating to the Molonglo Parkway, Black Mountain Reserve, Ainslie-Majura Reserve, the relationship between the use of national parks and metropolitan open space systems and locations of future trail bike tracks.

They arranged trips, slide nights, reports on conservation and environmental issues, articles on historical, botanical and other interests pertaining to the environment and the national parks. Every so often an article on *Gudgenby* would appear in the bulletins on its history and progress.

Appearing on the bulletins were the aims and objectives of the Association which were:

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

- Interest in the provision of appropriate outdoor recreation areas.
- Stimulation of interest in, and appreciation and enjoyment of, such natural phenomena by organised field outings, meetings or any other means.
- Cooperation with organisations and persons having similar interests and objectives.
- Promotion of and education for natural conservation and the planning of land use to achieve conservation.

The NPA tended to be active rather than reactive and this has remained a characteristic of their organisation.

A demonstration of the willingness of the NPA to take action when something needed to be done is evident in the project undertaken on the Old Orroral Homestead. The plight of the homestead was reported in the December 1981 issue of the *Bulletin*. The Orroral Valley was one of the first areas to be settled south of Canberra (in 1836 William Herbert had a run and a homestead two and a half kms down from the present tracking station). Traces of this homestead are still visible but the important remains are those of the Old Homestead which he built later on. A slab hut with four rooms, two fireplaces and a front verandah, the house was occupied until 1950, but since then has suffered considerable damage from sheep, cattle and use, variously, as a store. The leasehold land was due to expire sometime in 1982 and it would therefore become the responsibility of those looking after the park.

If nothing was done the building would collapse and we would lose some more of our heritage.

The prevention of this was seen as an ideal long-term project for the NPA. The article on the subject makes the following point:

From its inception NPA worked for the establishment of Gudgenby as a national park and its declaration as a nature reserve was seen as the virtual achievement of that ambition. But that is surely not

the end; it is in fact a new beginning. We must now give thought to the use to be made of the reserve. We must take stock of its assets and encourage development or protection as appropriate.

The building should be restored because of:

- historical significance—built by the first settler in the area
- architectural significance—because it is of slab construction
- significance to NPA—because it is within the Gudgenby Nature Reserve.

The NPA put an action plan into motion and received a grant from the ACT Heritage Committee for the preservation of the Old Orroral Homestead. With the aid of CCAE students of architecture and a number of other interested parties including an archeologist, a prehistorian and a person interested in reconstructing the history of the homestead, work commenced on the building on 10 October 1982. An article on the history of the homestead eventually appeared in the June 1983 *Bulletin*.

This episode also demonstrated the well-balanced approach the NPA had to conservation as a whole. The NPA did not and do not see historical artifacts as being incompatible with preserving the bush in its natural state. They saw old buildings and properties as being of historical significance and therefore there was a need to preserve them. They weren't the only group interested in such things however. Old historical buildings were also being looked after by the Heritage Commission and also the Kosciusko Huts Association.

The NPA were interested in other areas—Kosciusko, Jervis Bay, the south coast etc and working parties were formed when a need was perceived, for example the Nursery Swamp Fire Trail Regeneration. This tradition persists with working parties on a voluntary basis going into Namadgi and the Budawangs to clear, repair and build tracks etc.

The news media also played a role in getting the Namadgi National Park project off the

ground by publishing articles every so often to keep the idea alive in the public consciousness. One of the first articles was printed in 1972 which outlined the steps taken and the reasons for them. The article also explained that the reason for the delay was the need for a management plan and that information to validate the proposal was being gathered. These articles would have placed additional pressure on the government, and with the NPA continuing to lobby, the Minister eventually publicly acknowledged on 24 October 1972 that the southern third of the ACT would be progressively incorporated as a national park. Mr Hunt advised that the area being considered consisted of 178 square miles. Leasehold and freehold land would be acquired progressively and the area could not be declared or developed as a park until the land was acquired.

This led to another report by the NPA who now had something positive to work on. Among the recommendations this time was one to call the proposed park by the name Namadgi.

Other recommendations included where boundaries should lie, administrative details, and a request that an assessment of land use should be made. The area should be zoned into:

- car based recreation
- bush recreation
- ecosystem preservation
- uncommitted conservation areas, and
- a buffer zone between the active and passive areas.

The plans were now becoming more rationalised and scientific.

Around this time, as well as one lonely voice of dissent from a farmer who was concerned about who would prevent bushfires by controlled burning and culling of rabbits, there was controversy over a proposed plan to use the park as 'a bargaining chip' for more land for the ACT. The plan was reported in the *Financial Review* and the general thrust of the deal was that negotiations

were being carried out between the NSW Government and the Federal Government for the top end of the ACT to be expanded in exchange for part of the bottom end of NSW. However the plan met with opposition from the Environment and Conservation Minister who felt that it was best to have the park totally under Federal control to avoid any conflict of interest.

The area was now referred to as the Gudgenby National Park and work was continuing by private consultants on a land use study for the park. This plan was produced in 1976. It was called the 'Proposed Gudgenby National Park Land Use Study' and it recommended that work begin immediately to set up the park over 10-15 years.

The development of the plans began to escalate because people were starting to get agitated about the delays and the NCDC prediction of a population increase from 200,000 to 800,000 by the year 2000 gave rise to fresh concerns that the need for a park was becoming urgent.

The NPA wrote to the new Minister for the Capital Territory, Eric Robinson, on 13 February 1976 seeking action, and to the Opposition spokesman for environment matters, Senator Mulvihill, who asked various questions in Parliament regarding the delays. The problems mainly stemmed from having to acquire freehold lands.

In November 1976 it was announced that the Standing Committee on Lands, Planning and Environment would inquire into and report on the desirable size, boundaries and long-term administration of the park.

This came about because although a wealth of suggestions had been gathered, much work had been undertaken and the government and everyone involved wanted the park, no one had as yet made any decisions. The project was so large and unwieldy and there were so many parties to consult and an overlap of responsibility between the Department of Territory and the NCDC and no

continued on page 20

continued from page 19

one had taken responsibility for determining exactly what the park would entail, for example whether it would be a wildlife sanctuary, a wilderness area, how many roads were needed and how many staff etc.

It was getting to the point where the government was prepared to gazette it and then worry about the funding and administration when the Standing Committee stepped in. Their report would not be available until 1986.

On 26 April 1979 the Gudgenby Nature Reserve was proclaimed. A draft management plan had been prepared and was made available for public comment.

The NCDC was also preparing a policy plan which was expected to be published in 1982.

The Reserve expanded as properties were acquired by the Commonwealth and this was to continue, culminating in the announcement of a National Park to be known as Namadgi which would occupy 94,000 hectares of land. The Minister for Territories and Local Government, Mr Tom Uren, announced this on 5 June 1984 (World Environment Day) and that the park was to be declared under the *ACT Nature Conservation Ordinance*.

Mr Uren advised that:

Namadgi will extend from the Brindabella and Bimberi Ranges in the west to the Clear Range in the east, to Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve in the north and to the ACT/NSW border in the south. It will complement the adjoining NSW alpine parks (Scabby Range Nature Reserve) and contiguous highland areas in Victoria to form a major protected area.

The Namadgi park will include much of the outstanding high mountain country to the south-west of Canberra and incorporate the catchments of the Corin and Bendora Reservoirs. The area is renowned for its magnificent scenery, diverse and distinctive plant communities in alpine and sub-alpine environments, snow gum woodlands, swamps and sphagnum bogs.

There is also a wide range of interesting animals including

wombats, nine species of possums and gliders, corroboree frogs, broad-toothed rats, koalas, platypus and the freshwater blackfish. A number of the plant and animal species are considered to be rare and endangered.

Mr Uren went on to say that "the area would provide a magnificent heritage for the people of the ACT and something in which they could take pride in protecting before passing it on to their children. It would be increasingly valued by the people of the ACT and visitors to the Territory as it was a large and important area within easy reach of urban areas. Declaration of the Park would ensure that the outstanding ecological values and interesting plant and animal wildlife of the area were adequately protected under the Territory's modern environment protection legislation, the *Nature Conservation Ordinance*, whilst at the same time allowing for other necessary activity such as water catchment and recreation to be continued in a controlled environment."

The park would be managed as a series of zones, given that the area covered is diverse and ranges from a pristine water catchment area in the Cotter providing high quality domestic water to Canberra, to areas where camping, bushwalking, fishing and picnicking would be allowed. There would be specific objectives for each area.

The Parks and Conservation Service of the department would manage the area.

The Park would be fully integrated into the ACT system—the National Capital Open Space System which was being developed jointly by the Department of Territories and Local Government and the NCDC—this was a coordinated approach to a 'unique unified system of open space land management which starts at Parliament House and extends outwards throughout urban and rural parks and reserves, forests, rivers and lakes, grazing lands, pine plantations and water catchments'.

In summary, the Park was declared to be important for the recreation, conservation, educa-

tion, scientific and study needs of the people of the ACT.

The NCDC Policy Plan of June 1986 sets out planning policies for the mountain and bushland areas of the ACT encompassing Namadgi National Park and adjacent areas in the Gudgenby and Cotter Catchments. Nineteen submissions were received on draft plans for the Gudgenby Area and fourteen on draft plans for the Cotter Catchment. The following groups provided submissions:

ACT Bushfire Council; ACT Equestrian Association; ACT Fly Fishers; ACT Orienteering Association; ANU Mountaineering Club; Australian Heritage Commission; Australian Institute of Landscape Architects; Canberra Ornithologists Group; Colong Committee; CSIRO Division of Forest Research; NPA of the ACT; National Trust of Australia (ACT); Kosciusko Huts Association; NSW Department of Environment and Planning; NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service; and the Yarrowlumla Shire Council.

Some of the issues raised were taken on board, for example, that the wilderness area of the Cotter Catchment be expanded to include the Bimberi area to link up also with the Kosciusko wilderness area.

Another issue raised was that too much emphasis was given to the natural and wilderness values, and it was suggested that the 150 years of pastoral activity on the lower valley slopes should not be forgotten, but be protected.

The Aboriginal sites should also be identified and protected.

Other suggestions were for facilities for orienteering, equestrian, fishing, cross-country skiing, bushwalking and nature study.

There is a policy statement for each area and for the different reservoirs and pine plantations. These state which areas need to be restored (for example, Gudgenby Station—rural use to be phased out and native vegetation to be reestablished), what sort of recreational use each area should have (for example, open land along the Orroral and Gudgenby Rivers to be used for car-based recreation including picnicking, camping

and associated activities), and the fate of the tracking stations within the park (Honeysuckle Creek and Orroral).

The Namadgi National Park Management Plan was to be used in conjunction with the Policy Plan. This was developed by the ACT Parks and Conservation Service of the Department of Territories and is more comprehensive.

Details on the catchments, roads, bushfire protection, wildlife protection, feral animals, soil erosion, fireplaces, bushwalking access, trail bikes, etc were all to be covered in the management plan.

Management of all the different categories were detailed under the following headings:

- water catchment
- natural resources
- Aboriginal and historic resources
- scenic
- educational
- recreational
- wilderness.

In summary, the Policy Plan and Management Plan were comprehensive and provided for every aspect. They are both very good documents, particularly the Management Plan, based on solid research and extensive consultation with interest groups. The plans were to be introduced for five years and then a review of the effectiveness of them is to take place. It remains to be seen whether the practice is as good as the planning.

The Report of the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Environment and Conservation was also produced in 1986. It was concerned with the inadequate legislative arrangements, the poor relationship between the Department and the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service, the division of responsibilities between the Department and the NCDC and the apparent lack of consideration of Aboriginal interests.

The National Parks Association of the ACT proposals have been vindicated in that the population of Canberra has indeed dramati-

cally increased and the suburbs have pushed far down south. (By 1987 the population had doubled since 1972). Tidbinbilla and Namadgi are extremely popular and well-utilised. The farsightedness of the individuals who lobbied for the park in the days when it seemed like a bit of an indulgence because Canberra was very spacious and there was plenty of bushland, should be commended.

It was indeed fortuitous that the area had not been substantially altered by graziers because far from being just an ordinary piece of bush, the area turned out to be rich in all sorts of respects and it is an extraordinarily beautiful region and one of the few wilderness areas left in NSW. The people of the ACT are extremely lucky to have this area at a relatively short distance from the capital.

The whole process demonstrated that ordinary citizens can and do lobby for major undertakings and can achieve them if they believe strongly enough in the need for them. It is, however, often necessary to pressure governments to keep things moving.

Another point to mention is the exemplary manner in which the whole project was conducted—it is a credit to all involved. The harmonious and logical way in which it was conducted went a long way towards the end result which was quite uncalled for originally—from a mere 36 square miles around Mt Kelly to a third of the ACT.

The main controversy occurred after the Park had been declared—and this was about the shakiness of the legislative basis. As it currently stands, under the *ACT Nature Conservation Ordinance 1980*, the Park is in fact a Reserve, as the Ordinance makes no provision for Parks. It lacks protection under the Ordinance as all or part of the Park can be revoked or used for other purposes at any time. There is a need to strengthen the legislation but this has not been resolved as yet.

One alternative would be to declare the park under the provisions of the *National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 1974*, but this has not been done to date.

It is hoped that annexation for

multiple purposes inconsistent with the spirit of a national park would never be contemplated as it is now obvious that the Park is necessary and of considerable importance for conservation, heritage and scenic value, and of great significance to the community, the region and the nation.

Facts about Namadgi

Namadgi National Park covers 94,000 hectares comprising one third of the ACT. It is approximately 40 kms from Canberra.

It is situated in the south-western part of the ACT. It is bounded by the ACT/NSW border along the Brindabella, Bimberri, Scabby and Clear Ranges. The northern boundary is from Mt Aggie to Bendora Dam, then to the Tidbinbilla Range near Cotter Hill. The north-western border boundary includes the Blue Gum Creek catchment joining the Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve to the Clear Range at Top Naas. It is adjacent to parts of Kosciusko National Park (NSW), the Bimberri Nature Reserve (NSW), the Scabby Range Nature Reserve (NSW) and the Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve (ACT).

The name Namadgi is an Aboriginal name and applied to the whole region of ranges south-west of Canberra now named individually as the Brindabella, Bimberri, Tidbinbilla, Scabby and Booth Ranges. The name was recorded in 1834 by the explorer John Lhotsky who had met Aboriginals in the area.

There are many Aboriginal sites in Namadgi (of occupation, painting, stone arrangement and extraction (quarry)). The Ngunawul tribe of the Gudgenby-Shoalhaven lived there. In summer they would go up into the high peaks to collect Bogong moths which formed an important part of their diet.

The highest peak is Mt Bimberri at 1911m which is only 318m lower than Mt Kosciusko.

Paddling down the Lachlan

On the Friday night of the Australia Day weekend in January 1992 13 NPA members converged on Cowra, NSW, for a canoe trip down the Lachlan. The Lachlan actually starts near Goulburn and flows through Cowra, Forbes and Condoblin before joining the Murrumbidgee west of Hay. It is also mentioned in Banjo Patterson's poem 'Clancy of the Overflow'. You may recall it starts off with this opening verse:

*I had written him a letter which I
had, for want of better*

*Knowledge, sent to him where I
met him down the Lachlan, years
ago;*

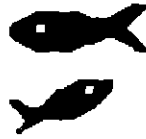
*He was shearing when I knew him,
so I sent the letter to him,*

*Just on spec, addressed as follows:
'Clancy of the Overflow'.*

Well we didn't find Clancy, yes and we don't know where he are. What we did find was an overflowing river with lots of water as a result of a bigger than normal release from the dam above Cowra and a generous addition from recent heavy local rain. This caused us a little consternation as I was reluctant to launch our flotilla into water too turbulent for beginners. The gods smiled on us next day. A keen Cowra canoeist dropped by to bid his regards and was able to recommend the Darby Falls to Cowra section as ideal in the circumstances. I had previously ruled it out as it is normally very shallow and requires lots of portages. An hour later we were paddling down the Lachlan winding our way around willows and over submerged sandbars without any problems. Eager to better enjoy rural Australia, we chose to camp at Farleigh Reserve about 8 km downstream of Cowra. It is a



pretty campsite with picnic tables and toilets, superior to the Cowra Shire Caravan Park in town.



The next day dawned with a welcome from hordes of sulphur crested cockatoos that seem to especially like the Lachlan. We also had the joy of being flown over by the local cropduster plane tending to the asparagus farms around Cowra. Farleigh Reserve proved a much easier place to launch than Cowra. As with the first day we paddled about 30 km which, while a lot for bushwalkers, is a very modest distance for canoe touring, especially bearing in mind the generous assistance from the current. We enjoyed rest and swimming breaks as well as lunch under a shady tree overlooking one of the Lachlan's many sandy beaches. We finished the day at Merriganowry Bridge.

After two days many of the inexperienced paddlers had enjoyed enough and decided to head back to Canberra. That left four of us to enjoy another night at Farleigh Reserve. The next day saw a quieter dawn and we eventually made our way by car back to the bridge where we had pulled out the previous evening. Then it was the usual car shuffle between this and the next bridge and we were set to go. On the Monday we paddled 23 km before a late lunch. Trees had fallen right across the river with little or no easy diversion around them. However, we got round or over them, even if some of us did have to take a swim to do it.

Of course, some people take any excuse for a swim during mid-summer. We made it to the bridge at Gooloogong, and had lunch in the shade of the bridge. Robert, the owner of a "Greenlander" sea kayak probably made history by paddling such a boat during the previous two days on the Lachlan. He probably did the right thing by going home. I am sure that 17 feet of sea kayak would have proved a

little awkward to portage over trees in the middle of the river.

Most of the group had either hired boats, or borrowed them from friends. I think all the paddlers enjoyed themselves. For many of them it was a new experience, even if some found it a bit tiring. I think the best way to enjoy paddling is to camp out of the boat as one goes down river. Then you can take advantage of the occasional grassy bank rolling down onto a shady beach that just begs to be camped on, but which is inaccessible by road.

Canoeing is quite a different way to enjoy the Australian environment. In some ways it is like bushwalking in an armchair, the boat carrying the load (you have still got to paddle though!). Much of the time bushwalking is spent looking at where to put your feet, whereas the paddler can look up and about and forget about feet. The birdlife along most rivers is usually very prolific. Dawn and dusk are the best time to be watching as almost all birds come to the river for a drink. I feel that paddling inland rivers also puts one in touch with the Australia the pioneers knew.

I felt inspired to write my own version of 'Clancy of the Overflow':

*For the paddlers life has pleasures
that townfolk never know.*

*And the bush hath friends to meet
him, and their kindly voices greet
him*

*In the murmur of the breezes and
the river on its bars,*

*And he sees the vision splendid of
the sunlit plains extended,*

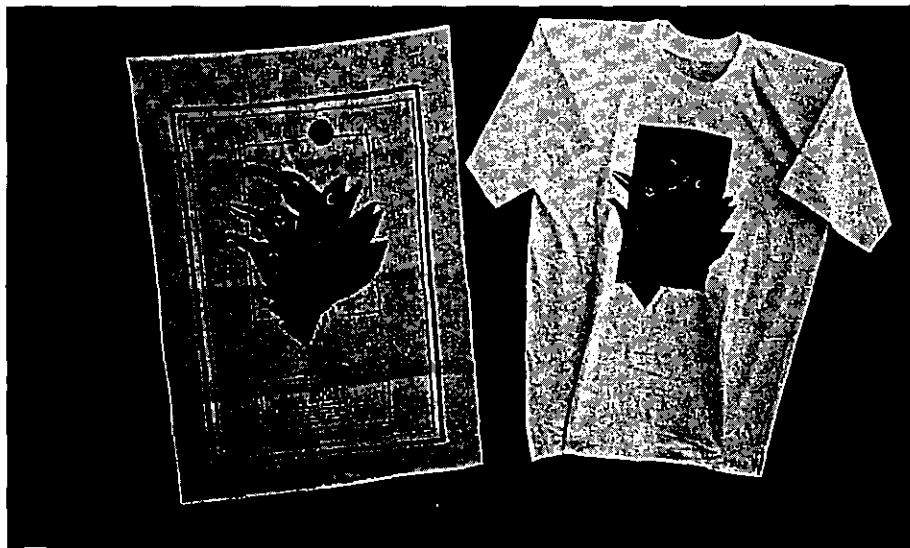
*and at night the wondrous glory of
the everlasting stars.*

Chris Bellamy



Help save Durras Lake

Contact Gutta Schoeffl on 249 2527.



Bunya Mountains and more

Environment centre and conservation council's environment tours

Eleven days in the company of Canberra authors and naturalists, Ian Fraser and Margaret McJannett.

Visit many little-known nature reserves and national parks in northern NSW and southern Queensland.

See Bunya Pines growing in their natural habitat.

5pm Friday to 7pm Tuesday 14 April.

Cost: \$840—includes all food, accommodation, transport and informed commentary.

Deposit: \$50—required on booking.

Please note: all accommodation is on a twin-share basis; all cabins are self-contained and contain all bedding.

Other environment tours include:

Harvesting the land: 20 000 years of land use in the ACT—14 March

Far south coast—21 March

True tree tales—29 March

For further information on the above tours ring (06) 249 1560.



Sunday April 5th 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Black Mountain Peninsula

Calendar

MARCH

- Thursday 5 Committee meeting, 7.30pm, 21 Hyndes Crescent, Holder. Beverley Hammond, 288 6577(h)
Thursday 12 Namadgi subcommittee, 7.30pm, contact Dugald Munro for venue, 231 8776(h), 289 5287(w)
Thursday 26 Environment subcommittee, 7.45pm, 43 Fitchett Street, Garran. Tim Walsh 258 1112(h), 274 1465(w)

APRIL

- Thursday 2 Committee meeting, 7.30pm, 21 Hyndes Crescent, Holder. Beverley Hammond, 288 6577(h)
Wednesday 8 Outings subcommittee, 7.30pm, 41 Maranboy Street, Fisher. Dianne Thompson, 288 6084(h),
244 7549(w), 244 7934 (fax)
Thursday 9 Namadgi subcommittee, 7.30pm, contact Dugald Munro for venue, 231 8776(h), 289 5287(w)
Thursday 23 Environment subcommittee, 7.45pm, 5 Lelta Place, Giralang, Len Crossfield, 263 3536(w)

MAY

- Friday 1 Deadline for June *NPA Bulletin*
Thursday 7 Committee meeting, 7.30pm, 21 Hyndes Crescent, Holder. Beverley Hammond, 288 6577(h)
Thursday 14 Namadgi subcommittee, 7.30pm, contact Dugald Munro for venue, 231 8776(h), 289 5287(w)
Thursday 28 Environment subcommittee, 7.45pm, 43 Fitchett Street, Garran. Tim Walsh 258 1112(h), 274 1465(w)

NPA Bulletin

National Parks Association of the ACT
GPO Box 457 Canberra 2601

Registered Publication No. NBH0857

SURFACE
MAIL

POSTAGE
PAID
AUSTRALIA

General meetings

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

19 March

Namadgi: huts, homesteads and cultural heritage. President of the Kosciusko Huts Association, Graham Scully, and Huts maintenance officer (Namadgi), Maurice Sexton, will present an outline of the KHA's current and future plans in Namadgi.

16 April

Night of Nostalgia. Not going away for Easter? Come to the NPA meeting of 28 May 1963. Two short films, *Escape the city* (1956, narrator James Dibble) and *White clay and ochre* (1962). Hear extracts from minutes of early committee meetings. If you were a member in the 1960s please bring old photographs.

21 May

Gungahlin before the developers. Helen Cook, President of the Canberra Archaeological Society, will give an illustrated talk on the archaeology and history of the Gungahlin district.

18 June

Canyons and Crags, an illustrated talk on national parks in North America by Syd Comfort. Syd and wife Barbara spent some months in 1991 on a 'park crawl' in North America. Syd will make some observations on US and Canadian parks, illustrating his talk by colour slides and a display of relevant printed material.