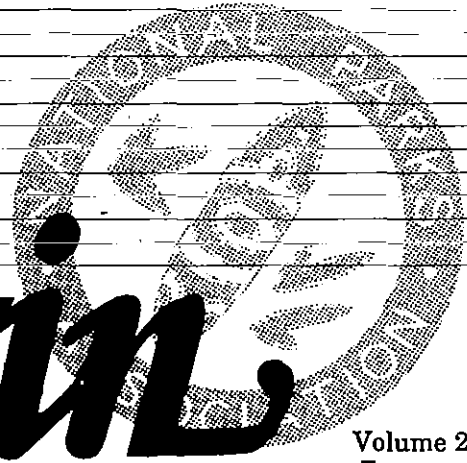


NPA Bulletin



Volume 29 number 2
June 1992

NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION (A CT) INCORPORATED



What future for the NPA?

Walking in Europe

CONTENTS

Open spaces inquiry	4
What future for the NPA?	5
Interstate parks	6
Jervis Bay management plan	9
Namadgi meeting	10
Travellers' Tales (part one)	12
Orroral Homestead	16
We are not alone	18
Bimberi awakens	22

Cover

Photo: Len Haskew
Climbing Mount Gudgenby

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

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

Subcommittee conveners

Environment Tim Walsh 285 1112(h); 274 1465(w)
 Len Crossfield 241 2897(h); 263 3536(w)
Outings Dianne Thompson 288 6084(h);
 244 7549(w); 244 7934(fax w).
Namadgi 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 September issue: 1 August, 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



Kangaroo grass, drawn by Helen Hewson-Freund

On a recent walk around the lake in Tuggeranong I discovered a fenced plot of Australian native grasses prepared by ACT Landscape and CSIRO for the ACT Parks and Conservation Service. An illustrated board explains that the ACT Government is seeking to increase direct seeding of native grasses as a means of providing low maintenance, low cost landscape, where the situation is appropriate.

Tussock (*Poa labillardieri*) is vigorous, evergreen, thrives in moist conditions, especially on river flats and creek lines. Wallaby grass (*Danthonia richardsonii*) has leaves which support white fluffy seed heads in late spring and early autumn and grows on the slopes and tablelands. It prefers poor soil and low rainfall. Kangaroo grass (*Themeda triandra*) is a perennial

bunch grass with attractive foliage which is green in winter and red in autumn but is affected by winter frost. The long, twisted back awns at the tip of the seed respond to changing humidity, drilling the seed below the soil surface where it later germinates. Kangaroo grass grows in all states of Australia, in PNG, Indonesia, Africa and Asia.

Choice magazine of April 1992 reports on the investigations of CSIRO's researchers Richard Groves and Mark Lodder. They have developed a variety to be known commercially as Hume wallaby grass, to be available soon from Heritage seeds in Melbourne. Dr Groves is currently working on a kangaroo grass cultivar as it has the advantage of not dying back in summer and would provide an ideal environment for the introduction of native flowering herbs.

Mowing regimes are important in the maintenance of native grasslands, as vigour and persistence are reduced if mowing is performed more than once or twice a year—autumn to remove spent flower heads and winter to reduce litter load. Firing once every three years would rejuvenate grasses.



The submission for Reserve status of Mulligan's Flat in Gungahlin, to which NPA is contributing, appeals for preservation of a natural area of Themeda grass. It is easily identifiable—I have been pleased to find some recently on walks at Rendezvous Creek and the Naas valley.

It only takes about one and a half hours to walk around the Tuggeranong lake and you will see groves of immature native and exotic trees on the way.

Beverley Hammond

Sub-committee's lively activities

Interest in, and activities of, the NPA's environmental sub-committee continue to soar. Often when I'm at social events—gallery and concert first nights, P&C barbecues, interdepartmental committee meetings, NPA pack walks and the like—I am besieged for information about this lively group. Here are a few recent examples of our activities.

Submissions have been prepared to: the Joint Parliamentary Committee on the ACT's Inquiry into Nature Conservation in the ACT, the Australian Telecommunication Authority's National (Environment) Code Inquiry, the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service's inquiry into the proposed Jervis Bay Marine

National Park, the Draft Territory Plan Inquiry, the Inquiry into the natural values of Mulligans Flat, the Review of the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Lake Burley Griffin Draft Plan of Management.

Other subjects discussed and acted upon by the sub-committee include: proposed Commonwealth Biodiversity, Endangered Species and Resource Security legislation, fishing in national parks, the Alpine Walking Track, the Resource Assessment Commission's Coastal Zone Inquiry and subsequent activities by the Commonwealth Government to protect the coastline, Greenhouse Strategy for the ACT, proposed developments at West Belconnen, ACT Flora Guide, Budawangs

working parties, amendments to the Kosciusko Plan of Management, ACT Decade of Landcare, mining in national parks, and weed and fire control measures.

The sub-committee continues to support the activities of the Australian National Park Council by bringing 'national' matters to its attention and supplying background information for lobbying and other purposes.

Don't hesitate to call convenors Tim Walsh or Len Crossfield if you'd like further information on these or other environment matters of interest to the NPA. Better still, come along to a meeting and participate in NPA's lobbying and research activities.

Timothy Walsh

Inquiry into open spaces

The ecological, symbolic, landscape and recreational values of Canberra's open spaces (those areas defined as the National Capital Open Space System—NCOSS in the National Capital Plan) are the subject of a current inquiry by the Parliamentary Joint Committee on the ACT.

The inquiry which held public hearings in early April is investigating the present legislative and other protection afforded these areas, identifying potential threats, and considering the administrative and financial management arrangements for the NCOSS which exist between the ACT and Commonwealth Governments.

Areas being looked at include: the inner hills such as Mt Ainslie, Mt Majura, Black Mountain, Mt Mugga Mugga, Red Hill, Mt Taylor, and Mt Wanniasa; the open spaces around Lake Burley Griffin; Namadgi National Park and adjacent mountains and bushland; and the Murrumbidgee and

Molonglo River Corridors.

As Project Officer for the NPA (ACT) I prepared a detailed submission to the inquiry with some assistance from members of the Environment sub-committee, and with considerable assistance from the NPA's Remnant Woodland and Native Grassland report prepared by Kevin Frawley (see NPA *Bulletin* volume 28 number 2 June 1991 for a review of this).

Our submission pointed out that the National Capital Plan emphasises the landscape value rather than the ecological role of the NCOSS, and suggested that as the ecological values are considerable, a variety of legislative measures and management regimes are necessary to ensure adequate recognition and protection.

The submission provided a detailed account of the ecological attributes of NCOSS, based substantially on the Woodland and Grassland Report. A summary of the current status of areas within NCOSS was then given, with rec-

ommendations for appropriate legislative protection under the ACT *Land (Planning & Environment) Act 1991*.

The submission also dealt with: threats to NCOSS; planning and management arrangements; impacts on future urban and transport planning; and funding.

Following receipt of our submission by the Committee I was invited to attend a public hearing held by the Parliamentary Joint Committee as a witness for the NPA, to answer questions Members might have about our submission.

The Members of the Committee present at the hearing seemed sympathetic to the views expressed in our submission. It is to be hoped that the recommendations made when the Committee tables its report in September will lead to the protection of the ecological attributes of Canberra's open spaces.

Anne Taylor

Daring Tops to Myall walk

The Myall sub-branch of the NSW NPA is holding an ambitious 246 kilometre pilot walk from Carey's Peak in the Barrington Tops to Hawks Nest.

Drawing by Ken Johnson



The 11 day walk traverses about 200 000 hectares of mountainous national parks and rainforests through the second highest mountain range in NSW. The walk trav-

els from the snowgums, waterfalls and antarctic beeches of the mountains to the coastal state forests and the palm forests, dunescapes and heath of the Myall Lakes: a World Heritage Area waiting to be discovered?

Held from 27 September to

7 October 1992, the walk follows little-used walking tracks and forest trails. Packs are carried between campsites by volunteers of local Lions clubs, who carry them to the towns during the day, get ordered supplies and bring them to the evening campsite by devious routes possible for four wheel drives.

Test walks and delivery rehearsals so far promise an exciting and original holiday and learning experience at hardly more cost than staying at home.

Information is available from Dr Hanns Pacy, secretary of the sub-branch in Tea Gardens, phone (049) 970 212 or Peter Spears, President, 19 Margaret Street, Hawks Nest NSW 2324, phone (049) 971 210.

What future for the NPA?

The recent NPA advertisement in *The Canberra Times* of 8 March makes me wonder if it is desirable to review the present status of our Association. National Parks arouse varying views among the public, some of them hostile in nature. Farmers close to National Parks blame them for blackberry infestation and for stock losses from wild dogs. The mountain graziers resent the loss of their grazing on mountains and high plains. Developers see National Parks as impediments to their making money. 4WD Trailbike enthusiasts see them as interfering with their ability to use modern and destructive technology to tear over the countryside. Some bureaucrats of the lesser kind—and bureaucrats often influence politicians—see National Park Associations as little more than glorified walking clubs.

The Canberra Times advertisement laid stress on bush-walking and camping activities and, interestingly, resulted in some 60 enquiries from members of the public.

Of course walking activities are important. They help introduce people to the countryside on well-organised and safe excursions. Some, though unfortunately only a small minority, of those taking part develop a serious interest in the problems of protecting what is left of the Australian countryside.

But too much emphasis on walks and camping can result in failure to understand the true aims and objects of the Association. It is open to question whether many of our members are fully familiar with the NPA's objectives printed on the inner front cover of our *Bulletin*.

This is regrettable because those objectives are of fundamental importance and the achievements of our Association in carrying them out have been considerable.

It was the NPA which first proposed the establishment of a National Park in the ACT. We get little credit for this nowadays but we were putting forward proposals for the National Park long before

any other organisation or government department became involved. We also took the lead in proposing the Molonglo Gorge and Gibraltar Falls reserves. The Association provides well-informed comment on many matters and on legislation affecting the countryside. Preparing such comment involves a great deal of work and consultation.

The NPA plays a useful part in environmental protection through its relationship with the ACT Parks and Conservation Service. It promoted and built the Yerrabi



*Michael Dowling's hut near Quilty's Mountain, Morton National Park.
Photo by Babette Scougall.*

Track which is arguably the best and most interesting walking track in the ACT. We took the initiative in calling for the preservation of the Orroral homestead and members did some of the work of reconstruction. But for the intervention of red tape the work would have been completed long ago.

An excellent booklet on the trees and shrubs of the ACT has been produced and there are proposals to produce a guide to many other native plants in the ACT.

The regularly published *Bulletin* is a model of its kind.

These are considerable achieve-

ments for the relatively small body of enthusiasts who actually do the work. That body must be drawn from the membership and encouraging membership can increase the pool of those who are interested in doing rather more than going on walks organised by someone else.

Unfortunately, although the membership of the NPA has increased, the attendance at monthly meetings has declined. There is some danger of membership complacency.

The NPA has so far lacked the stimulus of conflict with authority be it political or departmental. Our relationships have, on the whole, been cordial.

We cannot, however, count on this to continue indefinitely. Canberra has changed immeasurably since the NPA was founded 30 years ago. With the growth of the population it will continue to change. This will bring increasing pressures on land use.

Tourism and the demands of developers interested in quick profits can easily affect the countryside adversely but will be presented as job-creating. Furthermore, Namadgi lacks strong, statutory protection. It is a priceless national asset but is under the control of the ACT Legislative Assembly and not the national government.

I would suggest that it follows from this that we have to be active and vigilant. Walking and camping activities are important and will remain so but they should not dominate the scene to the exclusion of other and equally important needs. Social outings will not in themselves protect the environment that we cherish.

It is to be hoped that more of our new members will come forward to play active roles in Association affairs. We are lucky to have an energetic and capable leadership but it needs to be recognised that not all the individuals who play a part in the leadership are in the first bloom of youth.

Alastair Morrison

More WA parks to be mined?

The mining industry has once again called for more national parks to be opened up to mining exploration.

Peter Ellery, the Chamber of Mines Chief Executive, said that 'under special environmental safeguards' there should be the opportunity for exploration in all national parks. He complained that few conservation areas had been assessed for mineral resources before being declared.

Currently, all Western Australian nature reserves and five national parks are open to exploration. The Kintyre uranium deposit has been excised from the Rudall River National Park, while legislation is passing through the Western Australian Parliament to excise leases from the Neerabup and Watheroo National Parks. At the same time, exploration for mineral sands is being carried out in the D'Entrecasteaux National Park.

If further mining is allowed, the Karinji National Park in the Hamersley Range could be under particular threat. CRA has already excised part of the park and BHP has also approached the government for a mining lease. It is possible that the government is considering dividing the park, which is rich in iron ore, amongst a number of mining interests.

New parks for Kimberleys

Two new and two expanded national parks have been announced in the Kimberley region by the Western Australian Minister for the Environment. At the same time the Wilderness Society is proposing another park, to be Aboriginal owned, in the same region.

The parks announced by the Western Australian Government are in areas previously owned by the WA Cattle Company, which recently went into receivership. The two new parks will be in the Mt Hart/King Leopold Range area and at Brooking Gorge. The Geike Gorge National Park is to be expanded, while negotiated excisions from the Brooking Springs Station will make up the Devonian Reef National Park. While the

announcement of these parks is a positive move, there is unfortunately no guarantee that the government will actually go ahead and create the parks.

The park proposed by the Wilderness Society would cover around 7 380 000 hectares in the same area, of which over one third would be marine national park. The Society, which launched the proposal in March, says the park would be on a par with the world's greatest national parks and would feature Australia's longest wilderness coastline and the only major savannah wilderness remaining in the world, as well as the only area of Western Australia where there have been no documented extinctions since European settlement.



*Skiers enjoy an NPA visit to Kosciuszko last August.
Photo by Chris Bellamy.*

Park created on Aboriginal land

An Aboriginal group, the Kuku Djungan Aboriginal Corporation, has agreed to part of its property becoming a national park.

The corporation has bought 148 000 hectares in the north of the state and has surrendered Mount Mulligan, on the property, to the government. Mount Mulligan supports about 200 species of plants. Ten of these plants

are listed as rare or threatened.

The new park, to be known as Nurrabullgin Kuku Djungan National Park, will be managed by representatives of the Aboriginal community and of the Department of Environment and Heritage.

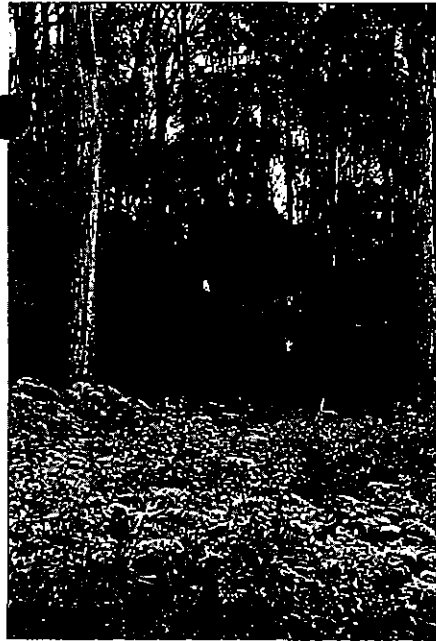
Another national park has been declared on 82 000 hectares of land near Mount Isa. The new Riversleigh National Park is sig-

nificant for the 25 million-year-old fossils it protects. Fossils of prehistoric Australian animals, including marsupial lions, meat-eating kangaroos, seven-metre-long pythons and wombats the size of hippopotamuses, have been found in the area. The park will also preserve significant riverside vegetation along the Gregory River.

New forest bodies recommended

The final report of the Resource Assessment Commission's (RAC) Forest and Timber Inquiry was forwarded to Prime Minister Keating by the Chairperson, Justice Stewart, on 27 March and tabled in Parliament on 2 April 1992. It is now available to the public.

The main message of the report



Forest near Fitzroy Falls, Morton National Park. Photo by Hamish Percy.

is the need for institutional change at Commonwealth, State and Territory levels. This requires better coordination of forestry decision making and more open and transparent processes to increase community confidence in forest management.

The report strongly recommends the establishment of a new national institution, the National Forests Council, by reconstituting the existing Australian Forestry Council. This new council would include state, territory and Commonwealth ministers with responsibility for conservation as well as ministers with responsibility for forestry matters. As an adjunct to this recommendation, the inquiry proposes the establishment of an Australian Forests Research and Development Authority and a Forest Product Development and Marketing Corporation.

It also recommends the creation of a Commonwealth Department of Renewable Resources which would have responsibilities covering forestry and fisheries as well as land management and

agriculture.

These recommendations reflect the inquiry's concern about existing intergovernmental arrangements. It finds the respective roles of governments in relation to forest use unclear, with no effective mechanisms for intergovernmental coordination of policy and few national standards, criteria and guidelines for forest use decisions when the interests of governments overlap.

The report identifies the need for state forest agencies to integrate resource management and conservation functions, and to separate those functions from land-use allocation decisions. According to the report, much of the community's apparent mistrust of forest management agencies can be attributed to frustration caused by lack of information and lack of opportunity to comment effectively on forestry plans and hence calls for greater community consultation and participation in forestry decisions through these new integrated agencies.

Resource Assessment Commission Bulletin

WA forest deal 'doubtful'—NGOs

Non-government conservation organisations in Western Australia have raised doubts about the recent agreement between the Department of Conservation and Land Management and the Australian Heritage Commission.

The agreement revolves around CALM's draft forest management strategies, which continue current forest management practices until 2002. This continuation means old growth native forests will be intensively logged for the next ten years, wiping out all those forests which are unprotected. In addition, forest areas listed on the

Register of the National Estate will continue to be logged and burned.

A spokesperson for the Western Australian Forest Alliance, which represents 17 WA-based forest conservation organisations, says the CALM-AHC agreement has been reached without any input from non-government organisations or the public because of a secrecy agreement between the two organisations.

Despite Resource Assessment Commission findings that the supply of hardwood sawlogs in WA is running out, the Alliance says the agreement is working on the

principle that there is much more wood available for industry than previously stated.

Another problem with the agreement, according to the Alliance, is the reduction of existing road, river and stream reserves. While the agreement has proposed the creation of buffer areas along forest streams, these buffers are to have flexible widths. This flexibility, the Alliance says, will make it impossible to monitor logging in these reserves.

Heritage Week activities

Heritage Week '92 opened with a mixed gathering at the High Court on Friday night of the 24th April.

Several members from each participating group were present and after drinks and finger-food and a browse around the exhibits we listened to excellent speeches. John Feint of ACT's Heritage Unit acted as Master of Ceremonies introducing Mrs Caroline Forster, Chairman of the Heritage Week Committee, then Ms Rosemary Follett, our Chief Minister, who officially opened the week. Both speakers displayed their more than passing knowledge of things historical and our guest speaker,

Ms Follett, drew our attention to a once very prominent statue which once 'resided' in the vicinity of the Albert Hall, was relocated due to road works on Commonwealth Avenue and is now somewhere 'hidden' among displays at the War Memorial. The question was posed "Should 'Bellona—Goddess of War' be restored near her old position?" to be once again the target of university students? Smiles and nodding heads indicated remembrance of many a student prank. NPA participation in Heritage Week was our heritage oriented walks. It can be reported that our Rendezvous Creek walk

attracted 18 walkers, whilst 38 people visited the Yankee Hat paintings and axe grooves the following Sunday.

Doreen Wilson

Picture credits

The Christmas photos from page nine of the last issue, which appeared to be taken by Hal Borland, were in fact taken by Fiona MacDonald Brand. The drawing on page 15 was by Ken Johnson.

A big year for conservation committee

The ACT Parks and Conservation Consultative Committee of which I am a member has recently completed its second year of operation.

The Committee provided advice to both the ACT Parks and Conservation Service and the ACT Minister for the Environment, Land and Planning on a range of issues relating to park management, nature conservation, and outdoor recreation in the ACT. The following are some of the issues dealt with:

Draft Territory Plan

The Committee's comments on the Draft Territory Plan covered: grazing in Namadgi; environmental assessment; population growth; environmental planning principles; regional context for Namadgi; water issues; and Lake Ginninderra.

West Belconnen planning proposals

The Committee had a number of reservations regarding this proposal and was critical of the Environmental Impact Statement relating to it. A number of deficiencies in the ecological assessment component of the statement were commented on.

Canberra Nature Park

I and two other members of the Committee worked through early draft material for the CNP management plan and provided advice on content and structure. Much of the material is of an excellent quality and should go together to form a comprehensive plan. It is hoped that the draft plan will be available in the latter half of this year.

Rural tree destruction

The Committee raised the problem of mature trees dying in some areas from irreversible ringbarking by a high concentration of horses, and suggested that remaining trees be protected from further damage through an effective fencing program. In the longer term there needs to be a critical look at management strategies for rural landscapes. This could be achieved under the Decade of Landcare Plan. As a first step to raising awareness amongst local and regional land managers a seminar on rural tree destruction was suggested.

Rutidosia leptorrhynchoides on Red Hill

More commonly known as Button Wrinklewort, this plant species is listed on the Register of the National Estate and is officially recognised as being rare and endangered. The plant occurs on Red Hill and is regenerating in areas where it is relatively undisturbed. Members of the Committee were concerned that grazing, which is detrimental to the survival of the plant, may be adversely affecting regeneration. The Committee backed negotiations by the Service with the current landholder to exclude grazing from those areas where the plant occurs. The landholder agreed to this; there is now no grazing in the major areas of occurrence and the plant is continuing to regenerate.

Fishing in Cotter Dam

The Committee is considering a request to allow recreational fishing in Cotter Reservoir. As a follow-on from this the Committee plans to develop a recreational fishing policy for the ACT which would include a policy on fishing in national parks.

Anne Taylor

Management plan for Jervis Bay

On Monday 6 April the Minister for the Environment, Mrs Ros Kelly, declared the Jervis Bay National Park. The declaration, held at Green Patch picnic ground, signalled victory for all those who have worked so hard to achieve a park for this unique area.

The new park covers the majority of the Bherwerre Peninsula, excluding navy land, Wreck Bay Aboriginal land and some small private holdings: a total area of 6312 hectares of land and 875 hectares of water. The declaration of the marine park is particularly important, in that it will protect the incredibly diverse ocean life of the Bay area.

In her declaration speech, Mrs Kelly described Jervis Bay as an area of 'exceptional natural and cultural significance.'

'What is special about this national park,' she said, 'is that it includes land, coastline and sea. The park will protect a rich variety of coastal and marine wildlife, and the magnificent scenery of clear waters, sweeping beaches and spectacular cliffs.'

One of the more important features of the declaration is the park management plan which it also creates. The plan is designed to balance the pressures of 700 000 visitors a year with the needs of the park's natural inhabitants, maintaining the area as both an important tourist attraction and a relatively untouched natural environment.

The plan will lay out how the park is to be cared for over the



A fungus on Bherwerre Peninsula. Photo by Reg Alder

next few years, including improvements to recreation services and new nature conservation measures. It will protect cultural sites, such as the St Georges lighthouse, as well as natural areas. The plan will increase opportunities for visitors to the park to learn about its resources and will also provide for many different ways of enjoying these.

The plan hopes to reduce visitor pressure on some of the overused camping and picnicking areas by promoting sites which are currently used less often. Extensions to some areas are proposed and

toilet facilities will be upgraded.

Recreational activities will also be affected by the plan, particularly those revolving around the water. While recreational line fishing and scuba diving are still permitted, further restrictions on spear fishing will be introduced and commercial fishing will be banned. Jet skiing and water skiing will also be prohibited because of the danger they pose to boaters and swimmers.

Ignorance is one of the most frequent reasons people break the park's rules, so the management plan will introduce new information and education resources for locals and park visitors. Rangers will put up new signs, produce literature on the area and make displays for the visitor centre. They will also run educational programs, such as

tours, slide shows, environmental games and talks, with themes like cultural history, natural history, and conservation.

The management plan is open to public comment and anyone who would like to submit their views should write to the Director, Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service, GPO Box 636, Canberra ACT 2601 by June 1994. The draft plan will also be available for public comment.

Jane Rawson

Supervisor shares his knowledge

A well attended April meeting welcomed Mr Greg Hayes, Supervising Biologist in the Parks and Conservation Service and responsible for Namadgi National Park and the Murrumbidgee River Corridor, who joined the committee in discussion.

Tracks

The meeting was told that the Service's priority in establishing tracks in Namadgi is to provide interpretation and to meet the higher demand for short rather than long walks. The Service welcomes informal consultation with the public on tracks and prefers this to a formal arrangement. The extension of the Alpine Walking Track into NSW and the ACT is being progressed but in Namadgi this work must conform to the Plan of Management, in particular, the requirements for wilderness. For longer tracks, markers should be at the lowest practicable level. Consistency in the use of the term 'track' for walking tracks is favoured but is, at times, difficult to implement. Tracks being worked on or planned include Yankee Hat due to be opened in early May, a track from the Orroral Campsite to the Homestead and Tracking Station site, and an interpretive walk on the west side of Corin Dam. The Canberra Alpine Club is working on the Wombat Walk from the Franklin Chalet to the old ski tow while a half-hour interpretive walk in the Bendora area is being considered. In respect of the old ski runs in the Brindabellas, the Service does not favour keeping them clear but rather letting nature take its course while recognition is given them through interpretation.

Gudgenby

The area of Namadgi National Park covering the old Gudgenby property is substantially in the form it will retain, while a slow change in the landscape will occur as natural regeneration occurs. The 1964 homestead is currently occupied by a member of the Service but could be considered for

some form of lease occupancy—now permitted under the *Land (Planning and Environment) Act*. It is intended to retain the 'Hudson' house. Consideration is being given as to whether something should be done about the willows in the waterways. Weeds remain a serious problem but control measures are expensive and will be limited by the availability of funds. A further pig eradication program is planned for May.

Boboyan pines

The Service has previously advised that it was intended to remove the pines from the Boboyan plantation within Namadgi in 1993 and then to regenerate the area. Greg informed this meeting that as a consequence of the Pierce's Creek forest fire, the forest authority intended to defer removal of the Boboyan pines to some time in the next five years. Committee members expressed concern about this. In answer to questions about the desirability of Association work parties clearing burned-out areas of the plantation, Greg indicated that the Service priority was to hold present boundaries rather than work within the plantation and suggested that it may be more profitable to attack weeds such as hawthorns.

European Artifacts

Some members of the committee have been concerned that old European items of cultural interest found in Namadgi are apparently not being protected. The Service policy, Greg explained, was generally to leave items in situ, but if of particular value, to remove them to storage. Isolation in many cases gave protection.

Native fish

There has been concern about the protection of native fish in the streams of Namadgi. In the ACT, unlike neighbouring NSW where a separate authority exists, the Parks and Conservation Service has responsibility for fish in park waterways. The Namadgi Plan of Management gives priority of protection to native fish over intro-

duced species. However it remains anomalous that fish may be taken in the park when no other animal or plant may be removed. In Namadgi it may be that trout numbers are insufficient to affect native fish, but there is a general lack of knowledge on such matters. However some investigative work is being undertaken and the Consultative Committee is to examine recreational fishing policy.

Plan of management

There have been suggestions that with the Namadgi Plan of Management some five years old and with substantial recent additions to the Park, revision of the Plan is now due. Greg indicated that the Service would like to do this but that plan of management revision is an extensive task and that other management plan issues will divert resources from Namadgi for at least two years. However the existing plan has continuing validity. The Murrumbidgee River Corridor, Canberra Nature Park and Tidbinbilla are being worked on and the new legislation calls for plans of management for other categories of public land.

Mount Burbidge

The Association has put forward a proposal that the mountain commonly known as Burbidge be officially so named. Greg outlined the criteria for naming features but indicated that the Nomenclature Committee has not yet considered the Burbidge proposal.

Orroral

The Orroral Homestead restoration was not discussed in detail but members drew attention to the Association's wish that the work of the NPA on this project be recognised in the interpretive preparation of the area and during guided tours. The meeting was told that the Heritage Committee has agreed to a clean-up of the kitchen area. It is now agreed that the process of removal of the Gregory house was wrong although the house's significance was not high. The intention is to

retain the house footings. Tenders for the removal of the Orroral Tracking Station buildings will close soon.

Aboriginal sites

All known Aboriginal sites in Namadgi are recorded and are shown on a map maintained in the Visitor's Centre. Sites reported by the public as having possible significance are examined and if confirmed are added to these records.

World Heritage

There is a proposal that the Australian Alpine Park which includes Namadgi be put forward for World Heritage status and in this context an ACT study of the world heritage value of Namadgi has been completed. Similar studies have been undertaken in NSW and Victoria.

Other Matters

In discussing areas adjacent to Namadgi, Greg expressed the Service's interest in adding a 200-300 ha area in Bush Fold Flat to the park at the expiration of current leases and also in retaining the Castle Hill area as public land because of its importance for wildlife.

Greg informed the meeting that the presence or otherwise of Giardia in Namadgi waters had not been subject to specific study but, because the infection was widespread and occurred in other parts of the Alps, it was probably present in the ACT.

Asked about low impact camping in Namadgi, Greg responded by saying that the Service promotes some aspects of low impact camp-

ing but because of the comparatively low usage at present, there had not been a requirement to be more active in this matter.

In response to questions about the number of people visiting Namadgi, Greg indicated an annual usage of 100 000 to 120 000 increasing by over ten per cent yearly but cautioned about the interpretation of these figures due to difficulties in data collection. Visitation to the Murrumbidgee River Corridor was put at 750 000 per annum.

Appreciation

Association members present expressed their appreciation to Greg for his participation in this meeting and in response Greg offered to join the group at some future meetings.

Syd Comfort

Huts, homesteads and cultural heritage

Members were pleased to welcome Matthew Higgins as our main speaker for the March meeting. He gave an abbreviated version of a paper presented to the October symposium on the 'Cultural Heritage of the Alps'.

Matthew received a Heritage Grant to prepare an oral history of people who settled and worked in what is now Namadgi National park. The transcript and tapes are available at the National Library. He has collected a number of photographs and slides of the people as well as facts and anecdotes about their families, their homes and their way of life.

The oldest remaining homestead providing permanent housing to residents was built in the 1860s. This is the slab, stone and shingle roof home of the McKeahnie family in the Orroral valley, on which members of our Association have worked. Further south the Brayshaw home, erected in 1903, is noted for its vernacular construction. Not far away is the Westerman home on Grassy Creek, built about 1916. This is weatherboard with some lathe and plaster walls and distinguishing decorative bargeboards. Conservation work is proceeding

at these two homesteads in the hands of the Kosciusko Huts Association.

The chimney is all that remains of the Brayshaw's second homestead on the old Boboyan Road; decay and vandalism led to its demolition in 1971. Other 'silent sentinels in stone' are the chimneys of homes scattered throughout the Park—Chalker's, Potter's and Crawford's to name a few. All enlighten us on family land acquisitions in the area and, when studied with the documentary and oral records available, help reveal patterns of settlement and the relationships between owners.

Many stockmen's huts, such as Waterhole (1939), Horse Gully (1940s) and Hospital Creek (1966) are built of weatherboard and iron. Hut use was shaped by the season and climate/availability of feed; a cyclical annual farm round; lambing, mustering, shearing or drenching times; and when fencing and rabbit control jobs made shelter necessary.

Other manifestations of Namadgi's pastoral heritage include shearing sheds, sheep dips and yards, drop log fork fences and wire dingo fences. Numbers of early tracks and stock routes have

been overlaid with fire trails. Some of these took sheep and cattle to snow leases.

Each of Namadgi's main valley pastoral areas—Orroral, Gudgenby, Boboyan, Cotter and Grassy Creek—have had their natural open spaces expanded by clearing.

Mention was made of other heritage items: winged yards used to trap brumbies; the 1938 Mt Franklin ski lodge; the now abandoned Alpine Botanic Garden near Mt Gingera; various arboreta planted to obtain botanical and forestry data; and tracking stations and reservoirs.

Knowledge of Namadgi's wide ranging cultural heritage continues to grow and Matthew concluded his paper by stating "Through the preservation of that cultural heritage our experience of this National Park will be all the richer".

Maurice Sexton, Huts maintenance officer (Namadgi) for Kosciusko Huts Association, completed the evening with a brief overview of that group's current program.

Beverley Hammond

Travellers' Tales (part one)

Is it really already a year since John and I began our overseas trip? With the approach of Canberra's winter, I am reminded of last May when we flew off to Europe and Britain, on a trip to see relatives but which became so much more. Walking holidays were sandwiched between visiting relatives (or was it vice versa!) and a brief sailing adventure added another filling/flavour!

On 17 May we flew from Sydney to Amsterdam and after a 24 hour stopover, flew to Lyon in France.

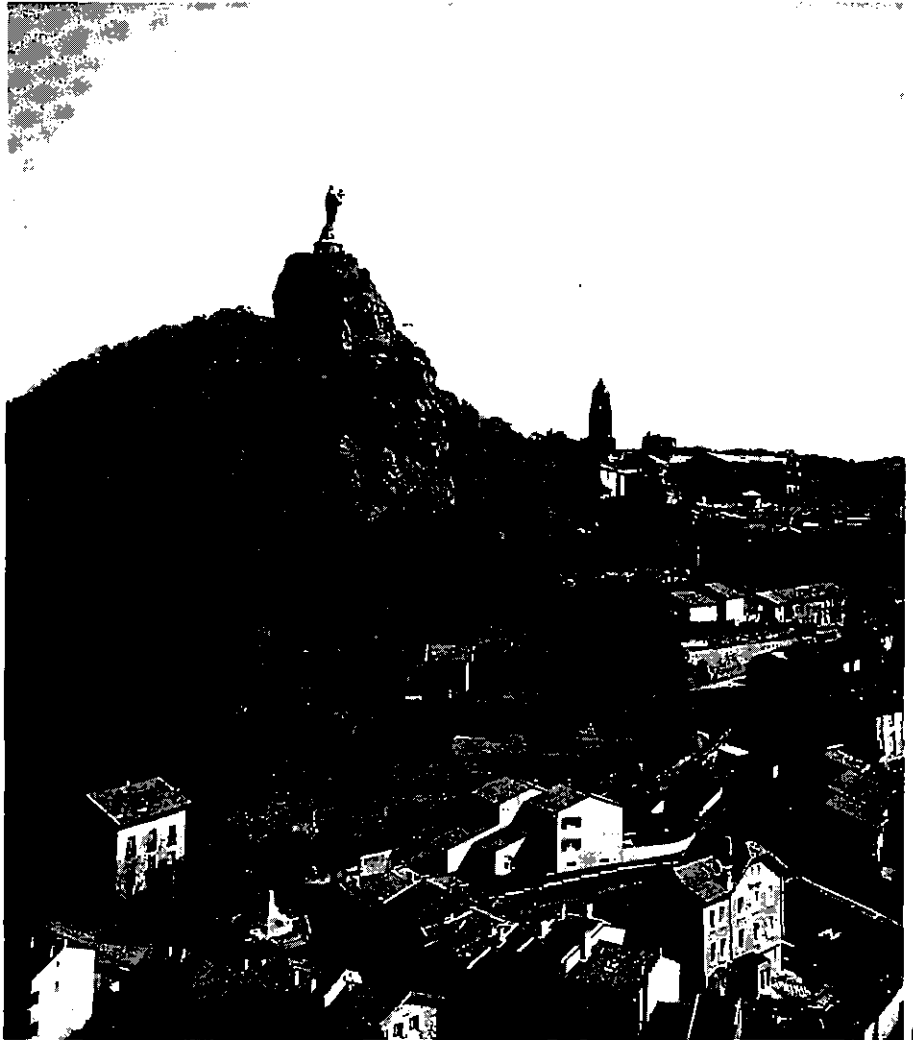
France 20-31 May

NPA members June and George Cross recommended the Hotel De Couvert, 'situated in the heart of the Boutieres mountains, between the deep valleys of the Ardeche and the green plateaux of the Velay' and on Monday 20 May we caught a train from Lyon to St Etienne and then local train to Dunieres where we were met and driven to the hotel.

The hotel is an old converted monastery. From the front of the building was a lovely view across the springtime countryside. Our bedroom at the back of the building scored a less attractive view - the side wall of the church with a broken window! However, the proximity to the church was useful; a tolling bell about 7 o'clock each morning acted as our alarm clock.

On arrival, John and I took a stroll around the village which is situated on top of an exposed ridge. Plain grey stone houses fronted directly onto the main street with no gardens or street trees. This narrow, rather stark street, acted like a funnel for a chilly breeze so that St Bonnet le Froid (the Cold) lived us to its name.

In the evening we met the other guests, who had arrived the previous day and been out walking when we arrived. They were a mixture of English, French and Belgian. Andre, our host, had arranged a "barbecue". Because of the cold wind outside, kebabs and continental sausages were grilled



*Statue of the virgin Mary with Christ looks down over Le Puy, France.
Photo by Judith Webster.*

over an open fire in a long room on the lower level of the hotel. This was usually the games room and indeed the casual meal became a getting-to-know-each-other party as Andre involved us in an evening of songs. A little French song (in which we had to participate in turn) ended up with a "glug glug" chorus when we had to drain our wine glass in one swig! Suitably mellowed and relaxed after this, we each had to contribute a song (national or regional) for the entertainment of all. John and I rendered an enthusiastic but not very tuneful "Waltzing Matilda". This is so internationally well-known that everyone joined in the

chorus and relieved our embarrassment at this public performance!

Next day the walking program got into full swing. We were driven by bus to Le Rouvey to start a walk. Initially it was through pine forest along a stony track. Near the top of a hill were stunted trees not yet in leaf. These were scrub oak. Beeches and hawthorn were freshly adorned with the tender green of new leaf. Other trees and bushes were heavy with fat buds ready to unfold. Beneath the forest trees lay a bright green ground cover of myrtleberry (also known as bilberry or wineberry).

Outings program

July to September 1992



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.

27th June Pack Walk (1/A/C)
Shanahan's Mountain and Horse Gully Hut
Ref: Colinton 1:25,000
Leader: Jack Smart Ph 248 8171 h 249 2191 w
Contact leader by Wednesday. A walk from Shanahan's Mt car park on the Boboyan road at 814 323, down Shanahan's Falls Creek to the junction with Naas Creek camping near Horse Gully Hut at 865 334. Return exploring some of the gorges on Naas Creek.
120km drive (\$24 per car)

5th July Sunday Walk (2/A/C/D)
Booth's Creek Ref: Michelago 1:25 000
Leader: Jack Smart Ph 248 8171 h 249 2191 w
Meet at Kambah village shops at 8:00 am. A walk from the Brandy Flat car park on the Boboyan road at 809 427 to a grassy flat on Booth's Creek at 846 462 and return.
100km drive (\$20 per car)

8th July Midweek Wednesday Walk (2/A)
Fishing Gap Ref: Tidbinbilla 1:25 000
Leader: Len Haskew Ph 281 4268
Meet at the corner of Eucumbene Drive and the Cotter Rd at 9.30 am. A walk on tracks over generally moderate terrain but with some steep bits.
60km drive (\$12 per car)

8th July Wednesday Meeting
Outings Sub-committee Meeting
Leader: Di Thompson Ph 288 6084 h
Meet at 41 Maranboy Street Fisher at 7:30 pm. All welcome to help work on the programme for October thru December. Ring leader if you cannot attend, and willing to offer to lead or co-lead a walk, car camp, cycle or other activity. Supper to be provided for those who attend.

12th July Sunday Walk (2/A)
Mt Tennent Ref: ACT 1:100 000
Leader: Len Haskew Ph 281 4268
Meet at Kambah Village Shops at 8:30 am. Climb Mt Tennent the "easy" way - Up and down the fire trail. Good views from the summit.
80km drive (\$16 per car)

15th July Midweek Wednesday Walk (2/A/B)
South Bulleen Range Ref: Corin Dam & Tidbinbilla
Leader: Syd Comfort Ph 286 2578
Meet at the corner of Eucumbene Drive and the Cotter Rd at 9:00 am. A walk of about 12km from Murray's Corner up the fire trail to Bulleen (230 m climb) and following the range south, for extensive views returning via Flint's Crossing. Short car shuttle.
35km drive (\$7 per car)

18th July Saturday Walk (2/A/C/D)
Gigerline Gorge Ref: Williamsdale 1:25 000
Leader: Syd Comfort Ph 286 2578
Meet at Kambah Village Shops at 8:30 am. A walk of about 11 km in the Gigerline Nature Reserve along the Murrumbidgee River from near Tharwa through the rugged Gigerline Gorge to

Angle Crossing. Rock hopping and some scrub to contend with. Car shuttle.
30km drive (\$6 per car)

19th July Sunday Walk (2/A/B)
Horse Gully Hut Ref: ACT 1:100 000
Leader: Len Haskew Ph 281 4268
Meet at Kambah Village Shops at 8:30 am. A pleasant walk along a bush road to a pleasant hut for lunch. Conditions permitting, the return journey will follow the banks of Naas Creek.
140km drive (\$28 per car)

18/19th July Weekend Ski Trip (3/A/F)
A Weekend of Skiing Ref: Kosciusko/Thredbo 1:50 000
Leader: Damien Browne Ph 248 9948
Contact leader by Wednesday. Day tours, camping over night in either the Guthega Area or Deadhorse Gap area depending on weather and snow conditions.
400km drive (\$80 per car)

22nd July Midweek Walk (1/A)
Casuarina Sands - Bulgar Rocks Ref: ACT 1:100 000
Leader: Olive Buckman Ph 248 8774
Meet at the corner of Eucumbene Drive and the Cotter Rd at 9:00 am. A 16 km walk on undulating tracks above Murrumbidgee river to a lunch spot just past Bulgar Creek.
40km drive. (\$8.00 per car)

26th July Sunday Walk (3/A)
Upper Orroral Valley Ref: Corin Dam 1:25 000
Leader: Reg Alder Ph 254 2240 h
Meet at Kambah Village Shops at 8:30 am. A 16 km walk up the fire trail to climb the peak at 1339 metres and down to Sawpit creek returning by the valley. 400 metres climb.
100km drive (\$20 per car)

26th July Sunday Ski Tour (1/A)
The Kings Cross Road Ref: Mt Selwyn Ski Touring Map
Leader: Steven Forst Ph 251 6817 h 274 8426 w
Contact leader by Wednesday. An easy trip between Mt Selwyn Ski area and the Cabrumurra Ski area. Good views weather permitting. Suitable for near beginners or fit beginners or those looking for an easy start to the season.
Subject to cancellation due to weather or snow conditions.
300km drive (\$60 per car)

1st August Saturday Walk (1/A)
Lake George Ref: ACT 1:25 000
Leader: Margaret Aston
Meet at the coast road junction at Bungendore at 10:00 am. A Gentle walk of 7 km along the Lake George foothills with some bird watching. Bring Binoculars and Lunch.
80km drive. (\$16 per car)

5th August Wednesday Walk (2/A)
Majors Creek / Araluen Ref: Araluen 1:100 000
Leader: Les Pyke Ph 281 2982 h.
Meet at Canberra Railway Station at 9:00 am. Starting inside the Pub at Majors Creek, finishing inside the Pub at Araluen, a

13 km downhill walk along historical road. Car shuffle. Phone leader by Sunday.
244km drive (\$49 per car)

8 th August Saturday Walk (1/A)
Mt. Budawang Ref: Braidwood 1:25 000
Leader: Les Pyke Ph. 281 2982 h.
Meet at Canberra Railway Station at 9:00 am. A 400 m climb on trails to a magnificent 360 deg. view of the coast, mountains and inland from Mt Budawang. Depending on time and party we may visit another feature in the same area.
224km drive (\$45 per car)

9 th August Sunday Walk (1/A)
Fishing Gap, Tidbinbilla Ref: Tidbinbilla 1:25 000
Leader: Margaret Aston Ph. 288 7563 h
Meet at the corner of Eucumbene Drive and the Cotter Rd at 9:00 am. An 8 km walk on a vehicular tracks with a few steep spots to slow us down.
60km drive(\$ 12 per car).

9 th August Ski Tour (2/A)
Four Mile Hut Ref: Mt Selwyn Ski Touring Map
Leader: Ben Thompson Ph 288 6084
Contact leader by Wednesday. An easy day trip to Four Mile Hut at the Four Mile diggings from Mt Selwyn. A part from one short steep slope ,easy skiing with views weather permitting. Subject to cancellation due to weather or snow conditions.
300km drive (\$60 per car)

16 th August Ski Tour (3/A/B)
Brindabella Range Ref: ACT 1:100 000
Leader: Damien Browne Ph 248 9948
Contact leader by Wednesday. A day ski touring along the Brindabella range. If the snow conditions look like being bad the tour will be in the Kiandra Area.

15/16 th August Car Camp (1/A)
Wombeyan Caves Ref: Wombeyan C. Sketch Map
Leader: Len Haskew Ph 281 4268
Contact leader by Tuesday for travel details. A relaxed weekend with cave inspection (s), walking some easy nature trails. Camping with full facilities including a communal refrigerator.
360km drive

23 rd August Sunday Walk (2/A/B)
Honeysuckle Creek Ref: Corin Dam 1:25 000
Leader: Graham Guttridge Ph 231 4330
Meet at Kambah Village Shops at 8:30 am. A 12 km walk along tracks and through bush visiting some interesting rock formations. Some scrub.
80km drive (\$16 per car)

30 th August Sunday Walk (2/C/E)
Billy Billy Rocks Ref: Corin Dam 1:25 000
Leader: Mick Kelly Ph 241 2330 h
Meet at Kambah Village Shops at 8:30 am. A ten km round walk via the Bogong caves and Billy Billy rocks. Magnificent views.
Suitable for fit beginners.
100km drive (\$20 per car)

29/30 th August Ski Tour (3/A/B)
Broken Dam Hut Ref: Mt Selwyn Ski Touring Map
Leader: Steven Forst Ph 274 8426 w 251 6817 h
Contact leader by Wednesday. An overnight ski tour to Tabletop Mt and Broken Dam Hut. Camping in / at Broken Dam Hut.
Great view from Tabletop Mountain. Depends on weather and snow conditions.
300km drive (\$60 per car)

6 th September Sunday Walk (2/A)
Hume and Hovell North of Lake Burrinjuck
Leader: Marty French Ph 258 3528 h 264 2477 w
Contact leader by Wednesday for details. Meet at 8:am sharp in the car park at the end of the red pedestrian bridge to Belconnen Mall (off Lathlain St.) A 12.5 km walk on fire trails and tracks with one wet creek crossing before finishing on the shores of Lake Burrinjuck. Car shuffle.
200km drive (\$40 per car)

6 th September Sunday Ski Tour (2/A)
Perisher Valley Ref: Kosciusko 1:50 000
Leader: Mike Smith Ph 286 2984
Contact leader by Wednesday. An easy to medium ski tour in the Perisher area visiting Mt Duncan, the Porcupine, and Betts Camp. Subject to snow and weather conditions.
400km drive (\$80 per car)

12 th September Saturday Day Trip (1/A)
Sketching Outing Ref: ACT 1:100 000
Leader: Ken Johnson Ph 248 5979
Meet at the parking lot at the rear of Campbell Park Offices, nearest to Mt Ainslie at 9:00 am. Bring your own equipment, approximately 1 hour stops with help and critiques on the way.

12/13 th September Pack Walk (2/A/C)
Tantangara Ref: Tantangara 1:25 000
Leader: Di Thompson Ph 288 6084 h 244 7558 w
Contact leader by Wednesday for details. A walk to Blankety Plain and Wises Hut. Returning along the Big Bogy. Walk mostly on tracks or tussock grass.
300km drive (\$60 per car)

16 th September Midweek Wednesday Walk (1/A)
Yerabi Track Ref: Yaouk 1:25 000
Leader: Beverley Hammond Ph 288 6577 h
Meet at Kambah Village Shops at 9:30 for a pleasant 4 km walk. The track was established by NPA members in 1987. It descends 50 m to grassy swamp and ascends 150 m to Mt Boboyan for magnificent views. Many plant identification signs.
100km drive (\$20 per car)

20 th September Sunday Walk (3/A/D/E)
Gudgenby Ref: Yaouk 1:25 000
Leader: Mick Kelly Ph 241 2330 h
Meet at Kambah Village Shops at 8:00 am. A 15 km walk with a 700 m climb through scrub for superb views and splendid rock mazes. Some rock scrambling.
140km drive (\$28 per car)

19/20 th September Pack Walk (1/B/C)
The Scaby Range Ref: Rendezvous Ck & Yaouk 1:25 000
Leader: Andrew Lynne Ph 296 1165 h 250 9460 w
Contact leader by Wednesday. A short walk up through Yaouk Gap onto Mt Scaby and along the Scaby Range for Great views.
Fuel stoves only. 500m climb.
260km drive(\$52 per car)

27 th September Sunday Walk (2/A/B)
Brindabella Range Ramble Ref: ACT 1:100 000
Leader: David Frost
Meet at the corner of Eucumbene Drive and the Cotter Road at 8:30 am. A moderate walk mainly on tracks in the tall natural forest above the Cotter just off the Brindabella road with some good views in places. Short car shuffle.
80km drive (\$16 per car)

26/27 th September Pack Walk (2/A/B)
Mt Talaterang Ref: CMW Budawangs Sketch Map
Leader: Steven Forst Ph 2516817 h 2748426 w
Contact leader by Wednesday. A long drive but a very easy 2 and half hour packwalk in to a base camp at the top of Nyang Falls. From the base camp we do a solid day walk up Mt Talaterang including climbing and scrub with magnificent views on the way or an easier walk to the base of the falls depending on the party. Returning to the base camp for an early afternoon tea before the walk out.
500km drive

Points to note

New faces to lead, new places to go. Please help keep our outings program alive by volunteering to lead a walk occasionally.

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.

We stopped at the small village of St Symphoinein for lunch. Andre's wife Badou and her young assistant had driven to the village bringing our lunch. Tables and chairs were carried out of the local bar into the little square and we had a grand picnic which set for pattern for the week. A typical meal might be - lentil or pasta salad for starter; plenty of crusty fresh French bread; slices of roast meat; a selection of about eight interesting cheeses; mild red wine and fresh fruit.

We looked around the 12th Century church at St Symphoinein and an older one in a nearby hamlet. The group had now split into two: - the "sportif" (tougher) walkers and the "tranquil" (gentler) walkers. We rambled through flower-bedecked meadows, while larks trilled endlessly in the blue skies above and cuckoos called in distant woods.

The springtime flowers became one of the highlights of our time in France. Clusters of delicate, lemon-coloured Cowslips; pale Anemones; glossy golden Kingcups; Potentilla; white and mauve Lady's Smock; Spotted Orchid; Lousewort; Speedwell; thick clumps of deep purple Heartease; the more delicate hue of Violets; cheery Dandelions, Buttercups and Daisies; Stitchwort; Chickweed; Sorrel; Saxifrage; Thrift; Viper's Bugloss (Patterson's Curse/Salvation Jane to Australians!); Bryony; green Hellebore; Crosswort; red Campion; Vetch; Self-heal and Forget-me-nots. At higher altitudes there were acres of pale yellow daffodils and at lower altitudes and further south, masses of sunshine yellow broom and scarlet poppies.

It was a very relaxed week in the awakening springtime scenery of rural France with delightful balmy weather. The walking terrain was not very demanding - mostly on paths through shady forests, along quiet lanes through sleepy villages or 'olde worlde' farmyards where a noisy commotion of barking dogs, gobbling turkeys and agitated ducks announced our passing.

Mid week we had a break from

walking and all went by coach the 60km to Le Puy. It is a historic little town with the distinctive geological features of two volcanic cores thrusting into the sky. These act as pedestals; one for a large statue of the virgin and child and for the other the small chapel of St Michael. The statue of the virgin is made of cast iron sections (beaten out from old cannons, I believe) and bolted together, and the little chapel is so ancient and cave-like as to appear to have been chiselled out of the volcanic rock rather than built on top of it.

In amongst the narrow cobbled streets that surround the Cathedral are small shops selling beautiful hand-made lace which is another feature for which Le Puy is known.

After six days at St Bonnet we, in company with several other of the guests, transferred to a hotel at Le Estables, about 50km away. This is run by Andre's younger brother Eric and provides a similar style holiday to St Bonnet. Les Estables is a new hotel which in the winter operates as a ski lodge for cross country skiers. It has an indoor swimming pool, sauna and gym. The games room at this hotel has large windows on two sides and offers the best view in the building.

After a pleasant few days here,

we set off on the next stage of our trip.

When we left Les Estables we were headed by train to Sete, the French port on the Mediterranean, where we hoped to catch a ferry to La Palma on Majorca. The only information John had been able to find out about the ferry was that it went once a week on a Saturday. Well it did and it didn't!! It did go once a week but didn't start operating until the middle of June so we were too early. After a night in Sete we continued on by train to Barcelona and caught a ferry from there.

Majorca 1-16 June

We spent a pleasant week at Puerto Pollensa on the northern coast of Majorca. It was rather touristy after the quiet and peaceful rural atmosphere of central France. It was full of British and German holiday-makers enthusiastically sun-bathing!

There were compensations that went with the tourist development - plenty of good places where we could dine (I really loved the Paella and Sangria!) and a good public transport system that enabled us to get out and about and use a guide book for various walks.

Majorca was hot, dry and rugged with some spectacular views.

continued on page 14



Picnic lunch in the village square of St Symphoinein, France.

Photo: Judith Webster

TRIPS

Travellers' Tales continued from page 13

Our first walk was a gentle one along the Boquer Valley, "silent and peaceful, save for the bleating goats", to quote the guide book. The path led through gaps in old stone walls which spread in extensive network all over the valley and some way up the side of the Cavall Bernat range. The track then went through a wild west ambush scene of fallen rocks and boulders and eventually we looked down to the sea - all indigo and aquamarine, and an enormous rock Es Colomer, just off the impressive upthrust of the Formentor peninsula. It was a great view but when we reached the little stony cove it was quite disappointing. It was strewn with washed up litter of plastic and polystyrene and sticky with black oil! We scrambled around rocks away from this to a spot where we could drop off the rocks into the water and swim in the bright sparkling water ruffled by a fresh breeze into little slapping waves.

On the way back from this cove, we explored the valley, crossing some old stone channels about two feet deep - which had been part of some old water supply system - so that we could take a closer look at a ruined stone building. Returning to the main track we



*Boquer Valley, Majorca, where the author saw black vultures.
Photo by Judith Webster.*

met two people with large telescopes set up on tripods. This was birdwatching in earnest - their sights set above the rocky peaks of Cavall Bernat where a number of black spees wheeled and soared - black vultures being harried by gulls and a peregrine falcon.

During the next few days we had several more successful walks but one we attempted was thwarted. It was to be through a private property, Ternelles Farm, to a ruined fortress - El Castell del Rei.

Although our guide book said

pedestrian access was OK, the security guard at the gate said otherwise and we had to turn back. Apparently visitors were permitted only on Saturdays - for a fee!

Later in the week (on Saturday at it turned out) we set off on an entirely different walk - a short stroll from Cala St Vicente to a coastal lookout. It afforded a great view and further along the coast John espied the ruins of El Castell del Rei! This fortress became a lure and our walk became quite an adventure when we decided to follow a little track, marked by stone cairns and the odd splash of red paint, which led us directly to the cliff edge. I peered over this in trepidation but John turned around, lowered himself down out of sight and called back that it was OK there was a way down!

Once this tricky bit had been negotiated, the ground continued to fall away steeply. It was a long slow descent through small scrubby bushes, cutty grass and over scree. The day was very hot and the ruins didn't look much closer so we contented ourselves with admiring them from the road that wound passed the bottom of the hill near them. This road eventually took us out through the property which we had been unable to enter earlier in the

John with large olive oil jars in Majorca. Photo by Judith Webster.



week. We had come in from the back way!

For our second week in Majorca we rendezvoused with my brother, David and sister-in-law, Pam. They have a tiny terraced house in Bunyola, a small town in the mountainous region of the north west. Pam's artistic touch has transformed a rather dark little house into a light fresh attractive holiday home which still retains its Majorcan character.

There was no tourist accommodation in Bunyola but David had booked *John and I in a hostel* at the little village of Orient which was about 10km away, over a pass, in a valley where apple orchards flourish. David and Pam have holidayed in Majorca for many years and know the island well. They had their car with them and took us touring quite extensively so that we saw many parts of the island - coastal and inland.

One day we took the scenic Edwardian train down to Soller and then the tram to Puerto Soller. Another time we did a lovely coastal cruise from Puerto Soller. We also visited La Granja, an old 'stately farm' which is now a museum depicting farm activities.

John and I did a couple of walks near Orient but the increasing heat and lack of public transport in this remoter area curtailed our zeal! On one of our excursions, we strayed into a tiny hamlet where a some enormous earthenware olive oil jars conjured up the story of Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves. Another time we wandered along a stony track through olive groves and climbed through shady evergreen oak woods to the ruined castle of Alaro. Further along the hill from the castle ruins was an old watch tower, and concealed amongst the boulders close at hand, the entrance to a short cave which led into a huge cavern in the side of the hill.

The interesting variety of things we did and the extensive touring of the island, left us with a real feel for this distinctive and attractive island.

Judith Webster

*Wondering what to take on your next big trip?
This is Di Thompson's handy*

Backpack list

Clothes

sun hat
hooded rain proof jacket or poncho
underclothes
chux, small towel
toilet gear
woollen socks (extra set)
woollen jumper
thermal underwear and/or
tracksuit bottom
fleece shirt
woollen slacks or
pair of shorts (summer)
long sleeved/short sleeved shirt(s)
beanie and/or
scarf
mittens/gloves
spare light footwear

Food

nuts
dried and fresh fruit
tea, coffee, wine, chocolate
powdered milk
dried custard, mousse
spaghetti, deb, rice, lentils
dried peas, beans, carrots
curry, spag. bol, sausages,
casserole
fresh vegetables
sweet and savoury biscuits
cheeses
tinned capers, oysters
buns, bread, Lebanese bread
tinned fish, ham, chicken
packet soups
cereals, porridge
lollies, chocolate bars, after dinner
mints

Equipment and other items

rucksack
tent/fly/bivvie bag
sleeping bag
ground sheet/rescue blanket
inner bag for sleeping bag/thermal
mat
spare smaller plastic bags
two large plastic bags (one to line

rucksack, one to put over rucksack
at night)
empty wine cask/water carrier
salt
blow up pillow, cushion
billy
plate, cup, spoon
torch and spare batteries
water bottle and water
ice cream container (to wash in)
sit-upon (small item to sit on wet
logs or ground)
firelighters and matches
comprehensive medical kit (see
below)
sunburn cream
insect repellent
map, compass
notebook
gaiters
overpants
toilet paper
plastic trowel
safety pins
spare shoe-laces
whistle
fuel stove
small tin opener
candles
camera
money

Medical kit

one 100mm heavy elasticised
bandage
one 50mm gauze roller bandage
one roll of sticking plaster
five sterile non-adhesive pads
12 bandaid type dressings
12 soluble aspirin tablets
12 strong pain relief tablets
antiseptic liquid
antiseptic cream
scissors or razor blade
needle
tweezers
sun screen

Carry in a cloth bag, lunch box or
plastic cylinder.

Spare clothing to be left in car

Most of these items are in addition to what you may be wearing.

Orroral Homestead and the Burra Charter

An International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites was ratified in Venice in 1966 and, with the passing of additional resolutions in Moscow by the International Council on Monuments and Sites, an Australian Charter was adopted by the Australian ICOMOS at Burra Burra in South Australia in August 1979, with revisions in 1981 and 1988. The Australian version of the International Charter is known as the Burra Charter. The Charter is binding on Commonwealth departments and as a guide to respective state and territory governments for their legislation.

Guidelines for the establishment of cultural significance were adopted by the Australian national committee and its concept of cultural significance defined. In the establishment of the cultural significance of a place, among the many aspects to be considered are the developmental sequences of the place and its relationship to the surviving fabric, the existence and nature of lost or obliterated fabric, and the rarity and/or technical interest of all or any part of the place. In the establishment of the cultural significance, the retention or removal of the fabric is to be in the terms of the Charter.

Terms used in the Burra Charter have a different significance to that which many people would place on them and unless the terms as defined are used, there can be confusion as to the work which is to be undertaken.

Conservation means all the processes of looking after a place so as to retain its cultural significance and includes maintenance, and may, according to certain terms,

include preservation, restoration and reconstruction.

Maintenance means the continuous protective care of the fabric such as cleaning of gutters etc.

Repair involves restoration and reconstruction and should be treated accordingly.

Restoration means returning the existing fabric of a place to a known earlier state by removing secretions or reassembling existing components without the introduction of new material.

Reconstruction means returning a place as near as possible to a



This photograph, taken in Bhutan, illustrates the conditions using pit-saw techniques under which the builders of Orroral homestead would have worked. Photo by Reg Alder.

known earlier date and is distinguished by the introduction of new or old materials into the fabric.

In the conservation process, reconstruction is limited to the completion of the depleted entity and reproduction of the fabric, the form of which is known from physical and/or documental evidence. Stabilisation may be effected as part of a reconstruction process and new materials introduced such as grouting or the insertion of a reinforcing rod in a masonry wall.

The Orroral Valley homestead was nominated by the National Trust on 1 September 1986 for register on the National Estate and was accepted for registration on 18 August 1989. In the statement of significance it is recorded to be 'an extant example of one of the oldest surviving examples of a rural homestead in the ACT where the relative intactness of the original plan, structure and interior spaces, together with fine workmanship, detailing and use of materials, collectively represent an archetypal dwelling in architectural form and construction. The design of the building has a simple but impressive dignity, with quite elegant proportions and a clear statement of its materials and technology.'

As an example of the traditional methods used in the construction of rural dwellings over 125 years ago, the building has many features exemplifying the traditional hand tools used during that period. The original roof covering, now covered with corrugated iron, was of shingles, the flooring was pit sawn, and the heavier scantlings and wall slabs were shaped by broad axe and adze. The post supports for the building were unique in that whole trees were used for the bases and buried over a metre down to the clay subsoil. The original trunks were retained in size to above-ground level and reduced to a square shape to form a ledge supporting the lower wall plates from which the floor bearers were, in turn, supported.

When the homestead was undergoing reconstruction in January, the contractor, as a matter of practical expediency, did not duplicate

the form of the building support posts to the rear wall and instead scarfed or butted the replacement in-ground sections of the posts with timbers of approximately the same diameter as the diagonal of the upper square sections.

The lower wall plates of the rear wall now rest on a stone wall instead of being supported on a ledge as it was on the original posts. Two replacement supports on the front wall have been formed in the original manner.

This major departure from the original design has been recognised by the park management and is being recorded in the homestead files. However for practical purposes, this significant design feature has been lost to future generations interested in vernacular construction and would take little effort to rectify.

The floors were originally supported by heavy hewn joists and these have been replaced by conventional 100 mm x 50 mm bearers and joists. This feature is, of course, hidden but is recorded here so that members may be aware of this departure from the original construction. The replacement floor boards are of plain, rectangular section without any tongues or grooves as they were originally, but were supplied already sawn. The original floor boards were sawn by hand in a style known as 'pit sawn'. The word 'pit' is a bit of a misnomer as the simplest method and best arrangement for the lower man to work in, is to build a gantry. In some instances, to provide easier placement of logs the gantry would be built out from a slope with possibly some excavation to reduce the platform length. By any method, the role of the man at the bottom end of the saw is not to be envied on a humid, hot and windy day. The photographs show a typical set-up for pit sawing and approximately 1 cm is cut with each cut of the saw. Some of the floor boards which were replaced were so rotten that a veneer of only about 2 mm of good wood remained to support the rotted core.

The Burra Charter states that reconstruction involves returning a place as near as possible to a



Detail of a reconstructed post supporting the rear wall of the homestead. The shaded area shows how the stump should have supported both the lower and top wall plates and so made all elements an integral part of the structure.

Photo by Reg Alder.

known earlier date and I would think that anyone interested in architectural integrity would support this view.

The design details of the supporting posts need to be seen and not hidden in a file in some obscure filing cabinet where access is normally denied to the public. It would be but a small matter to obtain timber of appropriate size to correct this anomaly. Where there is the will there is a way—the Burra Charter requires it.

Reg Alder

Homestead work party

A work party will be held to tidy up the kitchen block of the homestead on Wednesday 24 June at 9am. Members of the Heritage Unit of the Parks and Conservation Service will record findings. Please phone Len Haskew 281 4268 or Beverley Hammond 288 6577 to record your interest in working on this project.

We are not alone

I have just received a copy of *Newsweek* of 30 September 1991 from my nephew in Kansas, USA. The reason for his sending it was readily discernible—the cover pictured a rancher with a turned-up brim felt hat, lasso on one shoulder and over the other the head of his faithful horse, soulful eyes and nuzzling his hand, all bathed in the golden glow of the setting sun. The rancher, an old hand with a friendly face, was tanned from a life of exposure to the sun and had keen piercing eyes accustomed to penetrating the distant vista of the mountains.

This picture, with which we are all very familiar, is very emotive. So was the cover legend 'The War for the West—Fighting for the Soul of America's Mythic Land'. Inside, the article was sub-titled 'In America's mythic land, environmentalists, ranchers and loggers collide over the future of the frontier'. Somehow journalists cannot describe environmentalists' pleas for the retention of what little natural countryside is left from exploitation in other than belligerent terms.

To replicate all the issues which have been prominent over the past couple of decades in Australia, the article would only have had to change place names to Coronation Hill, Franklin, Southeast forest and high country, American endangered species to our species, the tactics of ranchers to cattlemen, logger to forest worker and native Americans to Aborigines.

The first heading of the article in bold type highlights that 'White settlers thought the west's riches would last forever.' Waves of white settlers, lured by the promise of free land, came to test their force of will and character against the frontier. They drained the swamps, they irrigated the deserts, they fenced the range. Those who didn't farm survived by extracting the land's raw wealth. Ranchers raised cattle and sheep. Miners punctured mountainsides in search of gold, silver and copper. Loggers tore into the dense

old-growth forests of the Pacific north-west. Later, thirsty new western cities diverted the rivers with massive dams. Native Americans with original claims to the land were pushed aside. The federal government encouraged the plunder with policies that all but handed stretches of the wilderness to extractive industries. Does this not seem all too familiar but in a different continent?

Industry lobbyists try to present a united front for those who stand to gain from exploitation but are thwarted by those who are far-sighted enough to see that renewable resources are not renewable if regrowth is not allowed. A rancher is barred from moving his livestock in the summer to the high country because it has been damaging creek banks by loosening the soil to shroud trout eggs with silt. Overgrazing has eroded soil, polluted water and denuded ranges of vegetation. Ranchers claim livestock are a boon to the land: their waste fertilises the soil, their browsing prunes plants. The grazing fees are a give-away. The graziers come into committee meetings wearing boots, silver buckles and hats. They are very forceful, and the aura works. Environmentalists retaliate with 'Cattle free by 93' and 'No Moo in 92'.

From the air, stretches of land resemble the barren remains of a laboratory dissection. Buzz saws have left stark swathes of clear-cut hillside. Logging roads wind through the blackened stumps and brush. Timber is where 45 per cent of the economy hinges—on the cutting and milling of trees. A federal proposal to protect spotted owl habitats makes an area even more desirable to the forestry industry. Environmentalists were hanged in effigy in a supermarket parking lot. Timber employment fell 19 per cent, largely due to automation and imports. A forest worker says he is just trying to make a living like anyone else, while others resent a consumer culture that condemns them yet

craves wood and wipes its nose with its forests. A forest service provides timber at below cost. The Wilderness Society concluded there was a loss of \$256 800 000; the Service said it only lost \$48 000 000.

A Boston developer considered himself an environmental supporter. He recycled, he wrote cheques to the Sierra Club and Save the Whales. When he moved to Teton Valley he had great ideas—an Italian-styled village to serve 250 000 skiers a year. A coalition of Mormon farmers, sheep herders and environmentalists managed to block the expansion in court—hardly the success our movement has achieved to stop ski resort expansion in our alpine areas.

The first gold rush in 1907 to the Castle mountains was rapacious but only lasted three years. Now the gold miners are returning with earth movers and chemicals. Because it is an old area the government does not extract any royalties. The government sold \$47 000 000 worth of public land to miners for \$4 500. Miners say that they already pay plenty to the government. Critics say the mining law is an invitation to pollute and there is a mythology that miners have done the right thing by the land. Mining is just one of the pressures; motor cycles and off-road vehicle enthusiasts savour the wild expanses, while suburban sprawl brings civilisation closer to threatened lands.

At least we are not alone in our endeavours to prevent excessive exploitation. The old slogan 'Populate or Perish' should be changed to 'Populate and Perish'. It is the expectation of the population at large that nature's bounty is infinite and free to all that is causing our country to be plundered.

Reg Alder

Democrat plan to save species

Hard on the heels of the Labor Party's threatened species legislation comes the Democrat's contribution to the debate. Democrat leader Senator John Coulter introduced a draft Threatened Species Bill on 9 September, later amended to take account of public comment and reintroduced on 5 March.

One of the most outstanding parts of the Democrat's Australian Conservation Plan, of which the Bill is only a part, is its commitment to funding for endangered species recovery. In comparison with the current government's \$5 million funding of the Endangered Species Program, the Democrats are offering to spend \$50 million in the 1992-93 financial year: \$15 million for habitat protection, \$21 million for survival of species in the wild and \$14 million for the control of feral animals and introduced plants. They are also proposing to increase this amount to \$100 million for 1993-94.

The main focus of the Bill is the creation of recovery programs for endangered species and habitats. These plans will either devise strategies to conserve a species or to reverse a process which threatens species diversity.

These plans will be overseen by a Commonwealth Threatened Species Management Committee of nine people: three from government, two from conservation organisations, two representing rural interests and two from the scientific community. The committee will also manage a Threatened Species Conservation Fund, both to support the plans and to compensate landholders affected by those plans.

Landholders are given particular consideration by the Bill. Those



*An endangered orange bellied parrot at the nest.
Photo by Dave Watts.*

who have threatened species on their lands will be encouraged to enter into a Habitat Management Agreement to assist them in implementing conservation plans. If this results in a loss of income for them they can apply for compensation from the Conservation Fund. They are also eligible for assistance in managing land, restoring vegetation, or researching areas related to threatened species.

The Democrats believe their Bill is more far-reaching and more powerful than that proposed by Labor. As well as allowing the Minister to make Conservation Orders, which can halt any activity adversely affecting a threatened species, the Bill requires the

Commonwealth to fully exercise its constitutional powers to protect threatened species, populations and ecological communities. The Bill controls activities of Commonwealth Government agencies, Australian citizens outside the country and activities within Commonwealth Territories, as well as foreign and trading corporations. It encourages states and territories to create their own endangered species legislation but, where they fail to, enables the Commonwealth to step in to protect threatened species. In any case, this should not be necessary, as most states are ahead of the Commonwealth as far as endangered species legislation goes.

Of course, all of these promises are largely hypothetical. The chances of the Democrat Bill getting through Parliament are, at best, minimal, particularly as

even the Labor Party Bill does not have the support of the whole of government.

Jane Rawson

Senator John Coulter will be talking about the Democrats' Threatened Species Legislation at an NPA meeting on 17 September. See *Meetings* on the back page for more information

Territory plan not sustainable

Canberra is a planned city. The introduction of self government into the ACT reinforced this dictum by requiring not just one plan but two: the National Capital Plan and the Territory Plan. The former, which is the responsibility of the National Capital Planning Authority (NCPA) is now in place while the latter is the responsibility of the ACT Planning Authority and was released late last year in draft form for public comment. The object of the Territory Plan as set out in Commonwealth legislation is to ensure, in a manner not inconsistent with the National Capital Plan, the planning and development of the Territory with an attractive, safe and efficient environment in which to live, work and have their recreation'. Thus the Territory Plan provides the overall planning framework for land use decisions (except for land controlled by the NCPA) and policies for guiding future growth.

The draft Plan allocates land in the ACT into a number of zones based on the predominant land use in each, and proceeds to set out requirements governing the use of land in each zone and developments permitted in it. Of particular interest to the Association are the zones termed Hills, Ridges and Buffers; River Corridors; and Mountains and Bushland, because our emphasis is on matters affecting natural and environmental values and the declaration and management of open spaces.

Our submission drew attention to the absence of an expressed vision in the draft which sets out where the Territory is headed. The draft Plan is not strategic and to a large extent reinforces the ad hoc approach to planning that has emerged in recent times. As a consequence of this, the Plan should not propose major changes but defer these until a more fundamental review of the ACT plan, now overdue, is undertaken in conjunction with the NCPA. For instance residential development on the fringe of the lower Molonglo

Valley has been proposed in the draft Plan before a systematic study of the whole area has been undertaken. Such a study may well find that development in the form proposed is inappropriate.

We are concerned on the one hand about the complexity of the Plan and on the other about the difficulties of interpretation brought about by a lack of specificity and the introduction of discretion in many areas. Preparation of a plan for the ACT is a complex task but the result should be something accessible to the community. We feel that more should be done to present the Plan in a form more readily comprehended by the public. In many areas the Plan appears indicative of lack of direction thus leaving much to discretionary judgement or interpretive argument, and this will almost certainly generate a legal challenge.

The Association submission questions whether the draft really has incorporated the principle of Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) into the plan. The Plan 'promotes' ESD but it should go further and provide for it through the plan itself and its implementation processes. There is a need to integrate protection of environmental quality into all aspects of the planning process and to ensure that growth is not at the expense of the environment.

We have expressed concern about proposals to reduce some areas of urban open space. This proposal is based on some 'standard' provision for open space derived from other cities but which fails to recognise the uniqueness of Canberra. It also derives from the reduced population in some older suburbs. However as urban consolidation takes effect, population densities will rise and the basis for reduction of open space will be largely removed.

There has been much discussion about the rights for third party appeals on planning decisions and

our submission has more to say on this matter. This concerns the restrictions on third party appeals in the Hills, Ridges and Buffers, River Corridor and Mountain and Bushland zones. These zones cover most of the nature reserves and open spaces. Third party appeals on the siting and design of buildings in those zones are only permitted for buildings with a gross area in excess of 2000 square metres. This represents a substantial building in areas managed primarily for nature conservation. The Association submits that all building proposals in these zones should be open to third party appeal. The Plan exempts major public works in these zones from third party appeal and also exempts a number of other matters subject to discretionary decisions. We consider appeal rights should be available in these circumstances. We also consider that in these zones the circumstances under which mandatory preliminary assessments are required should be widened.

A further concern in the Hills, Ridges and Buffer zones is that the Plan permits developments on the slopes provided they do not intrude on major vantage points. This is seen to be in conflict with the National Capital Plan which requires that the hills remain 'substantially undeveloped'. It also places landscape values ahead of natural values. In other parts of the Plan this emphasis on landscape values is evidently at the expense of habitat, education, recreation and natural values.

A disappointment in the Plan is its failure to allocate Public Land into the various categories (nature reserve, wilderness etc) provided in the *ACT Land Act* enacted last year. Because the status and management objectives of Public Land depend on the approved category, it is not possible to properly evaluate the draft Plan in respect of open space and public land until the various categories are delineated. Thus, for example, the Plan

has done little to improve the status of Canberra Nature Park, most of which lacks any statutory or zoning protection.

The Mountains and Bushland zone in the Plan is largely made up of Namadgi National Park and Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve, but the Plan fails to specify the relationship between the requirements and rules applicable to the zone and those relating to these reserved areas. Although the Plan requires that development in this zone be kept to a minimum, it still spells out development possibilities in this zone such as timber production and tourist facilities. Specific exclusion of nature reserves from these developments is required. There is also a need to make explicit the relationship between the plans of management

now required for Public Land and the zone policies set out in the Plan. Our submission also expresses concern about the wide range of secondary land uses permitted in the Hills, Ridges and Buffers, River Corridors and Mountain and Bushland zones. We consider that implementation of these secondary uses needs much greater control and monitoring to remove the risk of abuse.

The Plan proposes a network of trails in the Mountain and Bushland zone. This is too sweeping a statement; trails need to be justified on an individual basis. In nature reserves establishment of trails needs to be limited to protect natural values and in wilderness areas there is little justification for trails at all. The Plan states in a number of places

that access by vehicles should be 'limited and controlled'. This statement is almost meaningless as the purpose and type of limitation are not specified. In most open space areas there should be no access by private vehicles other than by public roads and access by official vehicles should be limited to that required for maintenance, safety and fire management.

The Territory Plan is a vital document for all ACT residents not the least for those concerned about the maintenance of natural values and retention of open space. Vigilance and energy are needed to ensure that the plan emerging from the succeeding stages of preparation meets our needs in these areas.

Syd Comfort

"AUSTRALIA: EVOLUTION OF A CONTINENT" (full-colour illustrated book)

BMR
GEOLOGY AND
GEOPHYSICS
AUSTRALIA

Rocks and fossils can tell us environments and ages from which we can map the past geography of Australia through time.

Reconstructions of these past geographies, by geologists, are revealed in this full-colour book through a set of 70 maps—each with a simple illustrated text.

The past patterns of land and sea, mountains and rivers, lakes and deserts have been quite different from those of today.

Mail to BMR Sales Centre, GPO Box 378, Canberra ACT 2601;

Telephone (06) 249 9519; Facsimile (06) 257 6466

Price: Australia A\$32.50 / Overseas A\$39.00 (postage included)

Please send me copies of: "Australia: Evolution of a Continent"

I enclose my cheque for A\$

Please charge my Bankcard/Visacard/Mastercard Expiry Date:

Name: Signature

Company: Position:

Address: Postal Address (if different)

.....

.....

Telephone: Facsimile

The Bureau of Mineral Resources Geology and Geophysics (BMR) is a research bureau of the Commonwealth Department of Primary Industries and Energy

04/92

Tribute to Peter Hunt

NPA members may remember the entertaining talk given at a monthly meeting a few years ago by Peter Hunt who had just begun his environmental program *Earthworm* on ABC radio. Peter died of a congenital heart complaint on 18 March this year aged 39. I for one was stunned by the news when it was reported on Radio National. Peter joined the ABC in 1980, working on the *Technology Report* and launched *Earthworm* in 1987. In 1992 this was combined with the *Practicalities* program into a new Saturday morning program entitled *Green and Practical*.

Noteworthy in my few meetings with Peter was his impish good humour which contrasted with the bull terrier tenacity with which he pursued those he thought were trying to smokescreen the public on some environmental issue. Peter was one of those people who inspired the fierce defence of the ABC as a patch of sanity compared with the wasteland of much of commercial radio.

Robyn Williams' summary is a suitable comment to finish on:

'The bush with its precious plants and animals has lost its most resourceful steward. Australia has lost someone who could never have come from any other place. The forces of darkness have lost one of their fiercest antagonists.'

Kevin Frawley

The awakening of Bimberi

Light cloud shrouds the noble peaks in the distance
Like an old man's hair: all wispy and wavy;
Then magically begins to move through the majestic domes
And float amidst the high country of Bimberi.

Eastern grey kangaroos bound joyfully
Through mountain hovea and alpine grevillea.
As a smokey mouse darts through
Trigger plants and billybuttons
Magpies, crows and lorikeets
All search for breakfast as high in the morning air
A lone wedge-tailed eagle
Spots a scurrying bush rat.

I see a breeze float down through a valley
Playing music through towering pines and snow gums.
A beautiful, hushed, subdued note
Wafts peacefully in the air
As the music is tossed around from branch to branch.

As this fresh cool alpine air
Pushes delicately on a kookaburra's head
A white butterfly drifts delightfully through the musical notes
And a grand cockatoo rhythmically flaps its wings
As if in accompaniment.

Cool crisp mountain water trickles timelessly
In a meandering tranquil brook.
It has carved out a tiny valley
That protects and feeds its creator.

The gold tipped fingers of the sun
Reach cautiously through the thinning clouds,
Producing brilliant flickering rays
That toy with the gleaming alpine stream,
Tantalisingly tickling its rippling surface
As the last of the clouds spontaneously interrupts
The sun's now probing rays.

As I look to the near horizon
Barren and bare peaks speckled
With tufts of alpine vegetation
Now form spectacular rugged domes.

Bimberi has awoken.

Timothy W. Bull

America's national parks: a bull-moose market

Guardians of Yellowstone by Dan Sholly, William Morrow, 317 p, \$23.

Yellowstone has the largest concentration of wild animals in the lower 48 states of the United States. On the count of Dan Sholly, its chief ranger, the 2.2m acre national park is a safe haven for 30 000 elk, 2200 bison, 1000 mule deer, 700 moose, 400 antelope, 600 black bear, 200 grizzly

bear and soon, he hopes, the wolf as well. But now another animal threatens to spoil it all: man.

Americans visit national parks in such numbers that they are bringing to them precisely those things they had hoped to leave behind: traffic jams, horrific accidents, overflowing car-parks, smog, litter, crime and noise.

Mr Sholly is a near-fundamentalist on keeping public

parks public. He fears that private interests, given half a chance, would quickly rape and ruin Yellowstone.

This book makes a wonderfully stimulating read for those willing to have their beliefs on conservation challenged.

The Economist

Epic journey on Burrinjuck

In mid-February 1992 a dozen NPA members paddled from Wee Jasper on Goodradigbee Arm of Lake Burrinjuck to Taemus Bridge where the Murrumbidgee flows into Burrinjuck. This epic journey took place over a mild summer's weekend and involved paddling some 52 km. Those who brought wandering Wobbecong plastic canoes may have done considerably more.

For most of us, Burrinjuck conjures up visions of a huge lake located somewhere west of Canberra. In fact much of Burrinjuck is narrow, quite confined in places, and the combination of islands and peninsulas can pose some interesting navigation problems if you don't have a compass and map. It is, in fact, made up of three drowned river valleys which, combined with unusual rock formations, makes for some striking topography. As to proximity to Canberra, I have since discovered that if you put in at the Good Hope or Hume Park caravan parks, the driving time is just 60 minutes from my place in Downer.

For the February trip I choose to paddle from Wee Jasper rather than Taemus to run with the prevailing westerly winds. However I should have read the fine print on the Friday weather forecast—we had easterlies instead. However we encountered nothing worse than a good swell paddling across the great open area opposite the Burrinjuck SRA.

We launched our fleet of canoes and kayaks at the bridge over the Goodradigbee, 1 km from Wee Jasper general store. Carey's Reserve as an alternative can save a little paddling but the portage to the waters edge if the water is low might make up for it. At 9.30 am we were heading north paddling down the last of the Goodradigbee, past big mobs of pelicans enjoying the morning sun on the mud flats. Where the lake proper starts we found a deep, sheltered passage on the eastern side of a large island.

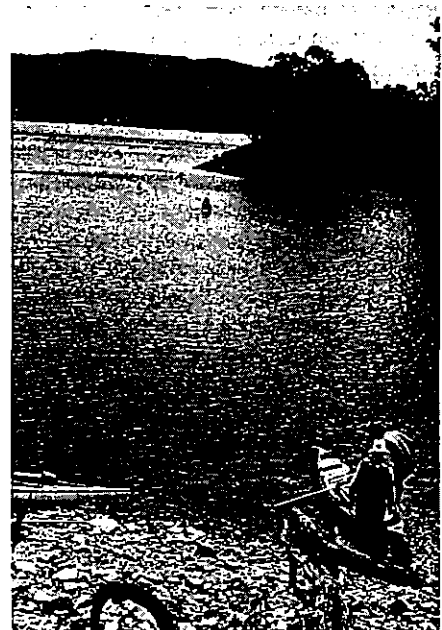
We stopped for lunch in a nice little cove just short of Dales Point where the water is quite clear and

almost blue. The line of boats leaving the cove after lunch was quite a picture as they made their way across the shimmering waters. At Dales Point we turned east and entered confined waters which remained the norm for the rest of the trip. Paddling along the steep rocky edges of the old drowned river valley, one can spy great carp basking in the shallows and stare at the Eastern Water Dragons sunning themselves on the rocks. Above, circling sea eagles, falcons and pelicans kept the fish on their toes.

If the water level is high one can find it difficult, due to the steep terrain, to find stopping places for afternoon tea in this section apart from the farm at Skillans Flats, just past Blue Bell hill. At 5 pm I chose a camping spot just before Rocky Point, the junction with the Yass River arm. The bay I found is on the south bank and at high water offers a nice peninsula for pitching tents. It also has a nice sheltered beach behind for beaching the boats. The beach is strewn with driftwood should one wish to have an evening campfire to sit around and pass the port etc. The steep hillside behind offers protection from the southerly wind.

Next day we made an early start and were away by 8.30 am. We threaded our way through the islands to have morning tea on the peninsula opposite Dales Island. This Island offers a nice flat beach to land on as well as a delightful hut, provided by a fishing club for shelter if need be. We then turned north winding our way past yet more peninsulas heading for Good Hope. If you are a keen water skier you will have been there. We did our best to get past it as quickly as we could, it being midday on a Sunday in mid-summer. We lunched opposite English Flats.

By now Murrumbidgee was making itself felt. The water was now a murky brown. On a peninsula opposite Oak Cliff we passed a grave of an early settler circa 1880. The family did well to guess the shoreline of the lake to come



*The fleet departing after lunch from cove near Dales Point.
Photo by Chris Bellamy.*

in 50 years time. Near Bloomfield we chose the northern channel approaching an old abandoned road bridge and had to do a portage to join the Murrumbidgee flowing along the south bank. We had now encountered the current of the Murrumbidgee and yet more pelicans. At Taemus bridge we beached the boats on the large, sandy beach. Then followed the car shuffle and back to Canberra. If you are interested, this article was written with the aid of the CMA 1:50000 map 'Yass' which shows most of the Lake in adequate detail and is superior to the 1:100000 Natmaps 'Yass' and 'Brindabella'.

By the time you read this the first snows may have fallen; I hope so, because it not only makes for a good ski season but also for nice full dams and rivers for the summer to come and more canoe adventures.

Chris Bellamy

Calendar

JUNE

- Thursday 4 Committee meeting, 7.30 pm, 21 Hyndes Cr, Holder. Beverley Hammond, 288 6577(h).
Thursday 11 Namadgi sub-committee, 7.30 pm, 87 Shackleton Circuit, Mawson. Dugald Munro, 289 5287(w).
Thursday 25 Environment sub-committee, 7.45 pm, 5 Lelta Pl, Giralang. Len Crossfield, 263 3536(w).

JULY

- Thursday 2 Committee meeting, 7.30 pm, 21 Hyndes Cr, Holder. Beverley Hammond, 288 6577(h).
Wed 8 Outings subcommittee, 7.30 pm, 41 Maranboy St, Fisher. Dianne Thompson, 288 6084(h) 244 7572(w).
Thursday 9 Namadgi sub-committee, 7.30 pm, 87 Shackleton Circuit, Mawson. Dugald Munro, 289 5287(w).
Thursday 23 Environment sub-committee, 7.45 pm, 43 Fitchett St, Carran. Tim Walsh, 274 1465(w).

AUGUST

- Saturday 1 Deadline for September NPA *Bulletin*
Thursday 6 Committee meeting, 7.30 pm, 21 Hyndes Cr, Holder. Beverley Hammond, 288 6577(h).
Thursday 13 Namadgi sub-committee, 7.30 pm, 87 Shackleton Circuit, Mawson. Dugald Munro, 289 5287(w).
Thursday 27 Environment sub-committee, 7.45 pm, contact office for venue.

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.

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.

Thursday 16 July: National Parks—Current Issues

Graeme Worboys, Regional Manager, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, South Eastern Region, will address issues of park management in the 90s, demands being placed upon NSW NPWS, the role of volunteer workers and meeting people's needs in parks.

20 August: Annual General Meeting

Members night—please advise Len Haskew if you have a small selection of slides of NPA outings. George Chippendale will talk to some old slides/photographs about Nancy Burbidge, her life and contribution to our knowledge of flora in the ACT.

17 September: Threatened Species Legislation

Senator John Coulter, Leader of the Australian Democrats, will discuss the influence of the Threatened Species Legislation introduced by the Democrats on subsequent government legislation. Senator Coulter apologises in advance that his attendance may be required in the Senate that night.