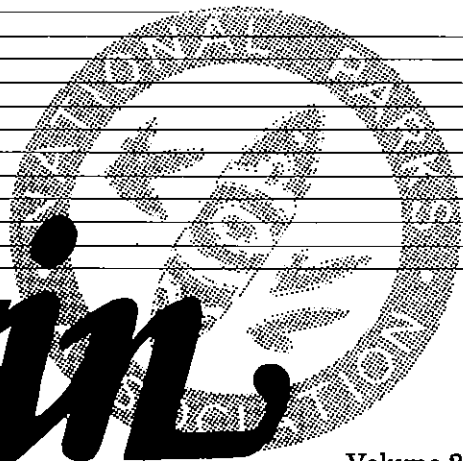


NPA Bulletin



Volume 29 number 3
September 1992

NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION (ACT) INCORPORATED



Saving Mulligan's Flat
The un-Welcome Dam

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Cover

Photo: Rodney Falconer

Central Mulligans Flat looking south to Canberra City.

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.

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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.

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President's foreword

It was a lovely sunny day on Monday 27 July when the Mulligan's Flat Nature Reserve Proposal was presented to the Minister for the Environment, Bill Wood. Jacqui Rees, Chair of the Conservation Council, represented the six groups which contributed to the submission. She spoke of the importance of the preservation of this area of remnant woodland,

open forest and native grasslands with its rich flora and fauna. The Minister responded that the environmental significance of the area deserved recognition. He reported that the decision had already been taken to re-route the Gungahlin Plan ring road which would have cut the area in two. The Government will compare boundaries recommended in our submission with the revised, enlarged area for a Nature Reserve, already under consideration by planners.

Members of our Association were very concerned about the new carpark built in Namadgi for access to the Yankee Hat Painting site. We made a submission to the Minister, Bill Wood, regarding the siting and size of the carpark, the use of stones and logs for its border, the environmental destruction caused in removing those stones and the significance of the area to Aboriginal heritage. I alerted member groups of the Conservation Council at its quarterly meeting in

May—you may have seen the follow-up visit reported in the *Canberra Times*. At a meeting with Conservation Council Groups in June, senior officers of the ACT Parks and Conservation Service acknowledged that the carpark was wrongly sited and formed. An assurance was given that in future more rigid work approval procedures would be used in accordance with the *Plan of Management for Namadgi National Park*. The stones and logs have already been removed although not yet replaced. The carpark will be less conspicuously relocated and a comprehensive survey of the Aboriginal heritage of the old Gudgenby property will be undertaken.

As we approach the Annual General Meeting I would like to thank members of all our committees for their contribution to NPA in the last year. Thank you to those who worked on submissions, who laboured at work parties at Orroral and in the Budawangs, who led outings or increased our knowledge of heritage features in Namadgi. This Bulletin is a tribute to our editor and to many contributing writers and photographers. A special thank you to Laraine Frawley for her cheerful work in the office.

Beverley Hammond



*Our active President crossing the Nattai River
Photo by Fiona MacDonald Brand.*

A useful guide

The ACT Land (Planning and Environment) Act which came into effect in April this year is an important and complex piece of legislation. In addition to planning and lease administration, the Act covers many environmental and heritage matters and the administration of public land including national parks and nature reserves. The Department of the Environment, Land and Planning

has produced a 50-page guide to this Act and a number of associated pamphlets addressing particular issues.

The guide contains a glossary of terms, an outline of the Act and a summary of its main provisions in the areas of planning, environmental assessment, heritage, land leasing, public land administration and approvals and orders. It also provides some other useful

related information such as a summary of the Heritage Objects Act.

The guide is available from Shopfronts without charge.

Department of the Environment Land and Planning: *The Guide to the Australian Capital Territory's Land (Planning and Environment) Act 1991*. (1992).

Syd Comfort

Mulligan's Flat submission

Very few natural lowland areas remain in the ACT: one of the last is Mulligan's Flat. Mulligan's Flat lies to the north of Canberra City, amongst the new suburbs of Gungahlin.

The area around Gungahlin has always been set aside for housing, and as a result, grazing in the area has been very limited. The lack of interference from introduced animals has left Mulligan's Flat an oasis for native species.

On July 27, seven conservation groups—the Conservation Council of the South-East Region and Canberra, the Society for Growing Australian Plants, Canberra Ornithologists Group, the NPA, Canberra Archeological Society, the ACT Herpetological Association and the Field Naturalists Association of the ACT—presented a submission on Mulligan's Flat to the Minister for the Environment, Bill Wood. This is an extract from that submission.

The crucial objective of this submission is to obtain the ACT Government's agreement to the preservation of a large, continuous and regularly shaped area of Mulligan's Flat, Gungahlin, as a nature reserve:

- including not only the northern, hilly and forested areas
- but also and more importantly, the flatter and deeper soiled southern portions.

This submission requests the ACT Government to depart, in this instance, from previous urban planning practice in the ACT — where essentially only the hilly areas have been preserved — because of the very special nature of the Mulligan's Flat site as a complete ecosystem

This submission recommends that the valuable ecological resources at Mulligan's Flat be protected by appropriate management practices and that the effectiveness of the erection of a vermin proof fence be the subject



Bear's Ear (Cymbonotus lawsonianus)—an understorey species.

Photo by Rodney Falconer.

of expert assessment.

Despite a recent declaration by the ACT Government, which has resulted in a highly commendable 52 per cent of the total land area of the ACT now being reserved as National Park or Nature Reserves, several important habitat types (including those currently in a good state of preservation at Mulligan's Flat) are either unrepresented or poorly represented in these reserves. There are no extensive national parks or nature reserves in the surrounding area of NSW which sample the ecosystems similar to those at Mulligan's Flat.

The remnant of native woodland, open forest and native grassland at Mulligan's Flat in Gungahlin contains outstanding ecological and conservation values. Some of the species and communities present are rare, endangered or environmentally sensitive. Mulligan's Flat is one of the largest and best preserved remnants of such habitat types in the ACT and the surrounding area of NSW. It also contains sites of cultural and geological significance.

Mulligan's Flat is regarded by some scientists as having major regional or even national significance when considered in the context of the poor conservation status of lowland temperate

grasslands in south-eastern Australia.

Before European settlement, habitats similar to that at Mulligan's Flat covered a large area of the region which now comprises the northern part of the ACT and the surrounding area of NSW. To an extent which varies from site to site, the native habitat in almost all of these areas has been degraded through clearing, heavy grazing and more recently, through urban development. Mulligan's Flat represents an oasis of relatively undisturbed native forest, woodland and grassland.

Current draft development plans are understood to include the clearing of a large part of the ecologically rich and flatter southern portion of the wooded area of Mulligan's Flat in the establishment of Gungahlin. The organisations jointly making this submission are unanimously and strongly opposed to the concept that this flatter southern portion should be lost to development.

The vegetation at Mulligan's Flat embraces communities of open forest, woodland and grassland. The open forest communities are confined largely to the northern hilltop areas and include — in addition to Scribbly Gum, Brittle Gum, Red Stringybark, Blakely's Red Gum and Yellow Box — a stand of Bundy, a eucalypt which is uncommon in the ACT. The understorey includes both regenerating eucalypts and woody shrubs and grasses.

The grassland located in the moist gullies and on higher slopes varies considerably in species and in condition, dependent upon the pressures of past grazing. There are extensive grassland areas where there has been little degradation.

The woodland areas which have resulted from past forest clearing, fires and grazing include most of the tree and shrub species mentioned above.

The current vegetation mix on

MULLIGAN'S FLAT



*View of part of Mulligan's Flat looking south-east to Mount Majura.
Photo by Rodney Falconer.*

hills and flat lands, together with the abundant water resources, supports a varied population of birds, mammals and reptiles in a sustainable community — one of the very few such communities in the region — including:

- populations of at least 17 mammals, including the Red-necked and Swamp Wallabies, uncommon in the ACT and not found near urban areas;
- more than 120 native bird species — including some rare and endangered species such as the Regent Honeyeater and Painted Button-quail, and some uncommon and declining species such as the Hooded Robin, Diamond Firetail, Brown Treecreeper and Speckled Warbler. The last four species are breeding residents and are considered sensitive to human disturbance. The populations would be threatened by urban development. The site as a whole is rated by

ornithologists as one of the best in the whole region for woodland birds.

- at least 14 species of reptiles which were recorded by wildlife biologists in a very brief survey. These include an uncommon black form of the Shingleback lizard, and another uncommon skink which currently has no English name. These reptiles are associated with regenerating woodland and/or native grassland.
- a rich variety of frog species with some in high populations. Amongst the eight species recorded in a brief survey are the Whistling Tree Frog, which has declined in the ACT in recent years but is still common at Mulligan's Flat, and the Spotted Burrowing Frog which is confined to areas of unimproved pasture.

The Mulligan's Flat area was classified as a Site of Significance

by the NCDC in 1988, due to the high state of preservation of important native botanical and zoological species, and its diversity — including as it does open forest, native grassland and woodland communities within one area.

The Gungahlin quartz ridge is an outstanding example of quartz intrusion along a geological fault line. The ridge which traverses the Mulligan's Flat area in a roughly north-easterly to south-westerly direction, was classified as a site of significance by the NCDC in 1988.

Sites with considerable archaeological and heritage interest at Mulligan's Flat include a portion of the 19th century Murrumbateman to Bungendore Road Reserve which traverses the flatter southern portion of the area from west to east. Parts of the road are well preserved, and the road reserve is lined throughout much of its route with mature

MULLIGAN'S FLAT

gum trees which are prime habitat for native fauna. Other sites of historical interest include the location of the first Gungahlin school, and several rural dwellings and out-buildings. Remnants of early settlement could be used in an historical display on the site.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- The ACT Government maintain its progressive and far sighted policy for protection of ACT habitats (as a natural extension of its recent protection of additional alpine and wet forests in the southern and western ACT) by reservation of a large, continuous and regular shaped area at Mulligan's Flat, sampling three important habitat types; and habitat types whose conservation status in the ACT and the surrounding area of NSW can only be described as grounds for serious concern.
- The Mulligan's Flat area be conserved in its entirety, as a Nature Reserve, under the *Land (Planning & Environment) Act 1992*, reflecting the need to conserve the natural environment, and to provide opportunities within the area for approved types of recreation, education and research.
- Given the range of plant and animal species within the region, and the diversity of hab-

itats, a large, continuous and regular area be preserved, including the area of Themeda grassland to the north-west of the existing Gundaroo Road, the western, northern and eastern ridges and, importantly, the flat wooded area immediately to the north of the large dam.

- Strong measures need to be taken to protect native animals and birds within the Nature Reserve by assessing the effectiveness of a vermin-proof fence around the perimeter of the reserved area, along with removal and control of pest animals.
- Early action be taken with current and potential residents of Gungahlin to foster the setting up of a Park Care Group to assist the ACT Administration with the restoration of the reserve, and to advise on the preservation of its outstanding natural values.
- The following changes be considered to the draft plans for Gungahlin:
 - Re-defining the boundaries to include the South-East Flat, the southern and central portions of Mulligan's Flat proper and the *Themeda* paddock;
 - Providing an internal buffer, such as a fox and cat proof fence, at a cost of approximately \$300 000, subject to expert assessment;

- Providing an external buffer, such as a 10 metre wide mown area or road, to reduce any perceived fire hazard from a conservation reserve in close proximity to urban dwellings;
- Investigate the possibility of providing further external buffers in the form of special use areas, such as a golf course, playing fields, school sites or other manners by which the urban/reserve interface can be made more remote;
- Re-route the planned ring road which (on the basis of current draft plans) would serve to cut the area in two and degrade its ecological integrity.

Mr Wood has acknowledged that accepting this submission will cost the government a lot of money, but that this cost is balanced by the importance of Mulligan's Flat.

He intends to fix the boundaries of the Mulligan's Flat nature reserve—about six square kilometres of land—by the end of August. Mr Wood has said that he 'would take a generous view of those boundaries'.

For copies of the submission—*The natural and cultural significance of Mulligan's Flat, Gungahlin, ACT. A nature reserve proposal*—ring the Conservation Council on 247 7808.



Rare black form of the Shingleback (Tachydosaurus rugosus) photographed in south eastern area of Mulligan's Flat near dam.

The legal side of planning

Mr John Mant who is Head, Government Group, Phillip Fox, Solicitors is also a townplanner. Now living in Sydney, he worked for some years in Canberra and has wide experience in land and environmental law. In May he addressed a public meeting convened by the National Environmental Law Association and the Australian Institute of Administrative Law on the subject 'The New ACT Planning and Environment Legislation'.

In opening, Mr Mant drew a metaphor between the ACT Land (Planning and Environment) Act and a smorgasbord meal. The Act, like a hungry diner returning to the table, picked up item after item so that it finally provided legislation covering a wide spectrum: planning, lease administration, environmental assessments, heritage, control of public land and the machinery for approvals and appeals related to these areas. From this array of legislative detail Mr Mant distilled three issues which he considered significant from a legal viewpoint.

The Act gives the plan for the ACT a statutory status it did not have before. Previously this status resided in the conditions set out in each lease of land; the sum of these was effectively the statutory plan.

In this situation lease conditions were changed through the courts, which meant that the judiciary had power to change the plan. The 1991 Act changed this situation by

authorising the government to make changes to lease conditions. The Act also gave greater power to the legislature which has authority to approve a plan prepared by the Planning Authority. This statutory authority also has the quite considerable power of being able to initiate changes to the plan.

Thus the 1991 Act changes the power relationships between the various players involved in the plan with the government, legislature and Planning Authority increasing power at the expense of the courts.

The 1991 Act provides two jurisdictions for appeals and enforcement: the Administrative Appeals Tribunal for appeals on merit and the Supreme Court for injunctions and supervisory issues. Mr Mant commented that the establishment of this arrangement may have been influenced by a reaction against the pivotal position occupied by the courts in the previous regime, highlighted by some particularly controversial cases resulting in claims that the Supreme Court was the de facto planning authority. Be that as it may, he considers that the introduction of the two jurisdictions opens the way for delaying decisions by issues being in both jurisdictions or being passed from one to the other. He strongly favours the NSW system in which a single court, the Land and Environment Court with Supreme Court stand-

ing, has jurisdiction over both matters of merit and enforcement. He is of the opinion that the NSW arrangement has worked well and would form the model for new Queensland legislation.

The extent of the rights of third parties to appeal planning decisions was a controversial issue during the period of public consultation preceding the 1991 Act. It is an issue on which Mr Mant also expressed firm views. He claims that the existence of third party appeal rights sets very real limits to the discretion exercised by officials in areas where they are empowered with discretion. Why, he asks, empower people with discretion when the discretionary decision may be appealed to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal? The effect, he claims, will be to reduce the area for discretion because there is a strong demand for certainty in planning decisions. This has happened in Victoria where, rather than risk the uncertainty of discretionary decisions being overturned on appeal, the emphasis has shifted to seeking changes to the plan (which usually involves rezoning). A similar trend can be expected in the ACT.

Mr Mant's opinion of the new Act is 'more complicated than it need be but not as disastrous as many claim'. Nevertheless it has the potential for those wishing to delay the processes to do so.

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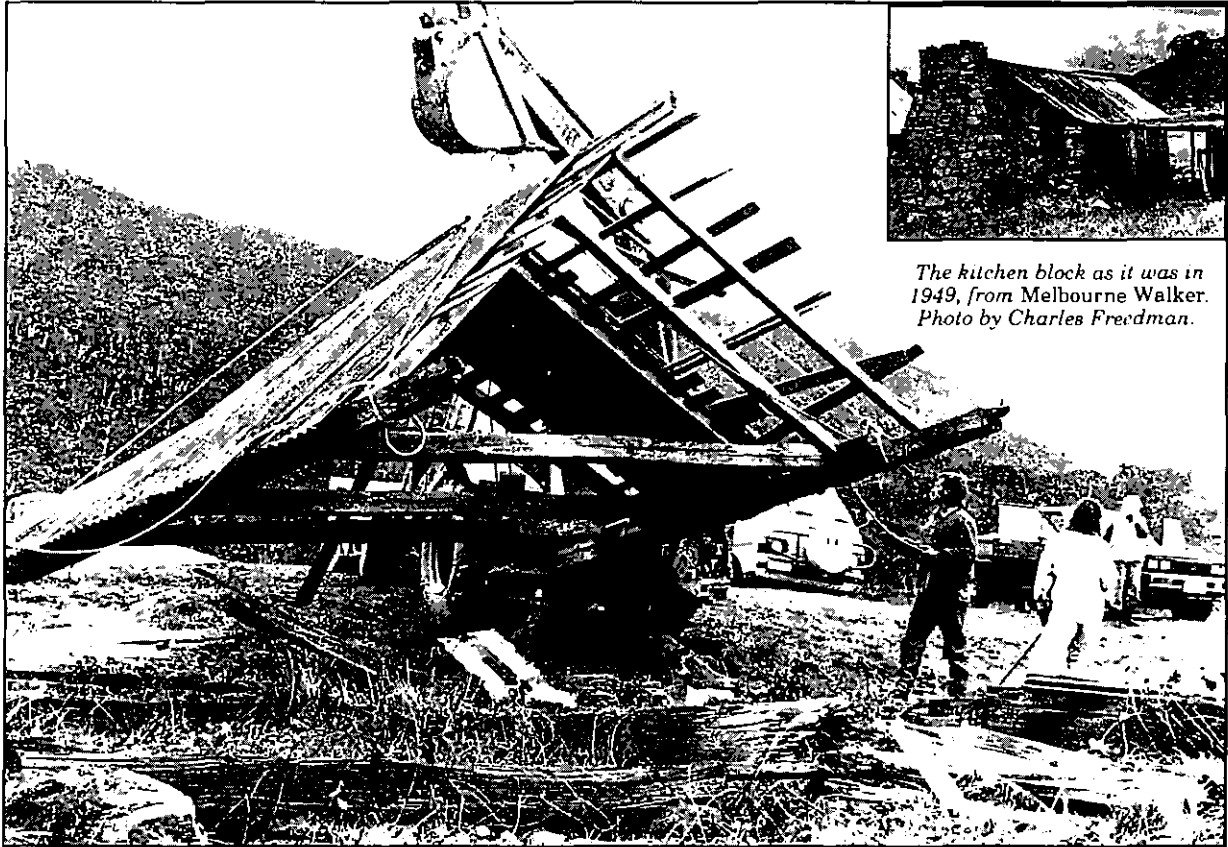
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The kitchen block as it was in 1949, from Melbourne Walker. Photo by Charles Freedman.

Lifting the lid on the kitchen block at Orroral Homestead. Photo by Graham Guttridge.



Reg Alder and Len Haskeu. Photo by Syd Comfort.

Kitchen work party June 1992



Volunteers prepare for a hard day's labour on the kitchen block at Orroral. Photo by Syd Comfort.

Project on women's bushwalking

Women have been very active in bushwalking and outdoor recreation in Australia. To date, however, the National Museum's collections in this area mainly consist of equipment used by men. Because of this bias, a new project has been initiated which aims to build collections to explore and interpret the issues that surround women's bushwalking and outdoor recreation.

Two consultants have been hired to help in this task: Sarah Waight, who is working in Tasmania, and Sue Hodges, who is covering Gippsland and the Australian Alps. We are focusing on the period from the 1920s to the 1950s as there are women who were active in bushwalking and recreation at that time still alive. An important part of the consultants' work will be locating such women and carrying out oral history interviews with them.

The consultants have already been successful in finding networks of women bushwalkers who knew one another and are advertising the project through local newspapers. They are also contacting some of the important clubs

that women were involved in, such as the Melbourne Women Walkers Club and the Hobart Walking Club.

The project aims to find out what motivated these adventurous and energetic women. What were the particular problems they faced in taking up these traditionally male-dominated pursuits? Did they find they had to adapt equipment designed for men to suit their own needs? The kind of items that will help us to address these questions could include diaries, photographs, clothing, equipment, camera gear, field guides, maps and sketches.

We also intend to explore the long history of connections between bushwalking and outdoor recreation and the conservation lobby. Another important link is that between outdoor recreation and nature study. For example, many women participated in bushwalks with the Field Naturalists

Clubs where they mingled with both professional and amateur scientists and exchanged scientific knowledge.

If you have suggestions or information that could be useful to this project, please contact Ruth Lane on (06) 242 2117 or toll free on (008) 02 6132 or write to the National Museum of Australia, GPO Box 1901, Canberra ACT 2601.

Ruth Lane
National Museum



Cooking breakfast at Kiera River, Victoria, 1933.

Photo by Richard Courtney, courtesy Centre for Gippsland Studies.

Speak up for wilderness

Ten wilderness assessments in NSW are being reviewed, and could be at risk if supporters of wilderness do not send their submissions to the review.

The ten assessments are Deua (near Moruya), Lost World (Lismore), Mann/Bindery (Glen Innes), Binghi (Torrington), Nadgee (Eden), Kanangra-Boyd (Oberon), Goodradigbee (Tumut), Guy Fawkes River (Dorrigo), Macleay Gorges (Armidale) and Washpool (Glen Innes).

Onetime NSW Minister for the Environment, Tim Moore, has asked 'everyone who cares about this issue to take the time to study the nominations and send in their comments', particularly as many anti-wilderness groups have already made submissions.

Currently only half of this wild-

erness, which makes up about 35 per cent of wilderness in NSW, is included in national parks, and it is possible the NSW government will take this opportunity to downgrade management of all areas outside national parks.

If you have experience of any of these wilderness areas, send a submission to

Mr Gillooly
Director of the NPWS
PO Box 1967
Hurstville NSW 2220.

It is important that you include a reference to the existing NPWS wilderness code which must be applied to all wilderness areas. The code lays out behaviour for wilderness areas, including:

- no private motor vehicle use or animal transport
- wilderness will be maintained

- free of signage and markers
- minimal impact bushwalking will be encouraged
- motor vehicle trails closed, except for essential management
- scientific research permitted by written consent
- Aboriginal sites managed in accordance with the Burra Charter
- control of introduced plants and animals where necessary
- prescribed burning permitted where necessary.

Closing dates for submissions:
Deua, Lost World and Mann/Bindery—closed 4 September
Guy Fawkes River, Macleay Gorges, Washpool—18 September
Binghi and Nadgee—2 October
Kanangra-Boyd and Goodradigbee—30 October

The un-Welcome Dam

It seems no one wants the proposed Welcome Reef Dam.

Even officials of the Water Board charged with planning for the dam are hard-pressed to come up with a rationale or any enthusiasm for it.

Managing Director of the Water Board, Mr Robert Wilson, told a public briefing held by the Tallaganda Shire Council at Braidwood on 23 May that the Board was 'not anxious' to build the dam, but, because of political imperatives 'must plan for it'.

The dam, which would hold five times the volume of water in Sydney Harbour, would cover grazing land and natural areas north north-east of Braidwood. It could augment the Sydney water supply by the year 2005.

Welcome Reef Dam has been on the drawing board for 30 years—long before concepts of ecologically sustainable development and before the advent of modern technology enhancing conservation and recycling.

Sydney currently wastes huge quantities of water. If this waste can be stopped, Water Board projections indicate existing supplies are enough to meet the demand of a city of twice its current population.

The pertinent question now is whether governments have the courage and capacity to stop Sydney's excessive water consumption.

The Welcome Reef Dam proposal, therefore, is something of a test case on water conservation for the whole of Australia.

Water Board planner, Mr Alan Dodds, expressed the view that the dam was a 'last resort'. He said the priority of the Water Board was to debunk the fallacy that 'water would always be available' and to implement measures for water conservation. The Water Board had a demand management program which aimed to achieve a 5 per cent reduction in water consumption by 1994/95. The long



Grazier Barry McDowall, a fifth generation landholder in the Braidwood district, describes the district's history to May Leatch.

Photo by Den Robin.

term target was a reduction of at least 15 per cent by 2011.

Mr Dodds said that in 1960 Sydney and the surrounding region, with a population of 2.3 million people, consumed an average of 996 megalitres of water a day.

In 1990, 3.7 million people consumed 1845 megalitres a day.

In the year 2001 the Water Board expects the population of Sydney to be 4.2 million, consuming 2210 megalitres of water a day, Mr Dodds said.

Landholders in the Shoalhaven-Braidwood districts are expressing grave doubts about the proposal.

As one speaker pointed out, farmers and graziers—who live with the vicissitudes of the Australian climate—know about conserving water. They should not have to give up their properties to provide water for city folk hundreds of kilometres away used to wasting it with the turn of a tap.

Should the dam go ahead, families with as many as five generations of continuity in the Braidwood area could lose their land. Others may not lose all their

land but may find it uneconomic as they lose the lower, more fertile tracts. Restrictions on the use of fertilisers in the 'buffer zone' (the extent of which has yet to be defined) could make some properties untenable.

The Water Board is looking at pumping water from Welcome Reef Dam to the Wollondilly River which feeds into Warragamba Dam and the Sydney Water Supply System. It might be used to supplement supplies to areas such as Yass, Canberra, Goulburn and Braidwood.

A serious concern expressed at the meeting was about the quality of the water from the Welcome Reef Dam. Covering former grazing land, it will be laden with phosphates and almost certainly will lead to algal growth in the dam and to the risk of contaminating the Sydney system. Reduced flow in the Shoalhaven River could lead to salinity, siltation and pollution downstream, possibly even affecting the coastal oyster and fishing industries.

Tallaganda Shire Council has expressed concern that it could lose between 16 per cent and 20

The details

- Welcome Reef Dam will dam the Shoalhaven River near the deepening of the river gorge at Mogo.
- It will flood the Upper Shoalhaven and Mongarlowe Rivers
- Its configuration is determined by the 606 metre contour and resembles an ivy leaf with the central lobe crossing the Kings Highway west of Braidwood. The Warri Bridge would be about a metre under water.
- The dam would hold 2.7 million megalitres (approximately five times the volume of Sydney Harbour) and cover an area of 16 000 hectares.
- As well as augmenting Sydney supplies by 2005, the Water Board envisages it could provide additional supply to Braidwood, Canberra, Goulburn and Yass.
- Already the Water Board has purchased 34 properties (covering a total area of 12 000 hectares) in Tallaganda and Mulwaree Shires.
- Some significant pioneer homesteads dating back to the early and mid-nineteenth century (for example, Arnprior, Oronook and Larbert) would be submerged. Other historic and Aboriginal sites would be lost.
- The Water Board is proposing a 'buffer zone' around the dam to protect water quality. The boundary of the zone has yet to be determined, but if it follows a contour, it could consume considerable amounts of additional land because the topography is flattish.
- Artificial wetlands may be constructed by the Water Board to filter nutrients to maintain water quality.
- At this stage the Water Board says that preliminary surveys of the proposed storage area have indicated no rare species would be threatened.
- Land use and further studies are 'programmed'.
- Managing Director of the Water Board, Robert Wilson, has said a decision on the construction of the dam cannot be made 'until the turn of the century'.

per cent of rateable land in the shire as statutory authorities such as the Water Board do not pay rates. In this situation the shire would, in fact, be subsidising Sydney residents.

May Leatch, from the Shoalhaven Branch of the Australian Conservation Foundation (who prepared the leaflet on the Welcome Reef Dam proposal inserted in NPA's March *Bulletin*) made some interesting points about the economics of the proposal.

Her research has shown that the Water Board—which has a monopoly on water and sewerage supply in all major metropolitan areas of NSW—in 1990-91 made a profit of \$198 million and paid the NSW Government \$101.7 million.

She claims that instead of being

syphoned off to the government, this profit should have been used for necessary works like upgrading sewage treatment, replacing leaky pipes, controlling and fixing up pollution, and the recycling of sewage effluent rather than dumping it into the rivers and oceans.

May has also found that the \$80 environmental levy paid by Sydney households netted the Board \$98 million. It seems the government is collecting money from the people of Sydney, putting it into the Water Board and then syphoning it out the other end as a so-called 'profit'. When the Water Board cries poor mouth, the charges and special levies go up again.

'The water pricing policy of the Water Board is greatly distorted due to political interference', May

said. 'For instance, household users have long been undercharged, while commercial users have been overcharged.'

'While undercharging households sounds nice, it makes no sense. It simply encourages the squander of water which damages us environmentally and economically'.

Interestingly, there was no case put at the meeting (attended by about 400 people) in favour of the dam. Local Member of State Parliament, Mr Peter Cochran, gave a guarantee that if the people in his electorate were opposed to the dam, he would move a Private Members' Bill against its construction.

At the time of the NPA Bulletin going to press, residents' groups in the Braidwood district, including the graziers association, were canvassing their members' opinions with a view to formulating a public stance. Shoalhaven City Council has agreed to hold a public meeting on Saturday 19 September to inform its residents about the proposal. Conservation groups in Sydney, Nowra, Braidwood and the ACT have formed a coalition to oppose the dam proposal and are gathering information.

This is a critical stage. We must be watchful or otherwise a plan which has lain dormant for 30 years might just turn into an expensive and socially and environmentally damaging dam which, with sense, we can all live without.

Den Robin

New members

William Baker	Ainslie
Jacqui Cole	Cook
Mary Jenkins	Campbell
Elisabeth Lewis	Pearce
Peter and Patricia McNicol	Curtin
Mr and Mrs K Mallett	Charnwood
Margaret Rumble	Hughes
Lyn and Tony Thew	Hawker

Jervis Bay convocation

A meeting of representatives from conservation groups campaigning for the protection of Jervis Bay met in Nowra on Saturday 25 July 1992.

The purpose of the meeting was to bring the plethora of conservation organisations up to date with recent developments in the Jervis Bay national park campaign and to consider future campaign strategies.

The various groups are now aligned under an umbrella title, 'Jervis Bay Convocation'.

The following topics were presented:

Wildlife corridors

Kevin Mills has prepared, at the behest of the local department of Planning, a document which sets out the minimum requirements for land to be reserved around Jervis Bay to ensure that both Bherwerre (Jervis Bay National Park Stage 1) and Beecroft Peninsulas remain linked by corridors of natural vegetation.

Park viability

Martin Fortescue, a ranger at Jervis Bay Nature Reserve for seven years and now a ranger for the National Park area under ANPWS, spoke about the viability of the present Jervis Bay National Park (see NPA Bulletin December 1991 for map).

The Park is on a peninsula which is connected to the surrounding land area by a narrow neck of land. There has already been considerable disturbance in this neck and the remaining strip of natural vegetation is as narrow as 400 metres at one point and is cut by roads and tracks. Martin suggested that the terrestrial area of the Park is not viable in terms of biodiversity and quoted examples of extinctions over the last 50 years. These include: koalas, goannas, dingos, ground parrots, little penguins (mainland) and the southern brown bandicoot. These species have been unable to re-establish due to the narrow corridor of natural vegetation joining

the Park to other natural areas.

As well as this, the Park is under considerable pressure from urban encroachment—40 cats (both domestic and feral) and 100 dogs have been caught in a trapping program over the last 18 months! The program also captured 31 foxes. High visitor numbers—around 800 000 per year—is an added burden on what is a very small Park.

Environment plan

The Jervis Bay Region Environment and Planning Committee was reconstituted under the new NSW State Minister for Local Government and Planning following the local government elections on 15 September 1991 (see NPA Bulletin December 1991 p. 8 for details of the previous committee).

Sue Hanley, a member of the committee, gave some details of the new planning document, 'Jervis Bay our Heritage our Future', produced by the committee and due to be released for a two-month public consultation phase at the end of August 1992.

The document uses Kevin Mills' wildlife corridors suggestions with some modifications as a basis for a proposed system of 'green belts' through the area.

The document apparently gives detail about the area and makes a series of policy suggestions. It does not make any decisions but rather develops 'points of discussion' for the community. It would seem that while the document may help to focus some of the debate about management and planning of the area, real decisions about its long-term future are still a considerable way off.

A vision for Jervis Bay

Graeme Worboys, the Regional Manager NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service South East Region, detailed the international, national and regional significance of the Jervis Bay region and talked about the existing opportu-

nities available to protect: critical heathlands; wetlands; woodland and forest communities; migratory bird habitats; cultural heritage sites; aquatic environments; linkage of peninsulas through a system of natural corridors; and the integration of management to achieve these.

Graeme stated that the NSW NPWS officially supports the concept of a national park for the NSW area of the Jervis Bay region and will be working to present the idea to government and the means by which it might be achieved.

NPA proposal

The Milton branch of the NSW NPA produced in August 1991 the most comprehensive and detailed proposal for a National Park at Jervis Bay yet compiled. A copy of this proposal is available in the NPA office.

The meeting used this proposal as a basis for our discussion about future campaign strategies.

You can help

It is essential to the success of our campaign for the preservation of the remaining natural areas of Jervis Bay as a national park that as many people as possible write **individual letters** in response to the regional planning document, 'Jervis Bay our Heritage our Future'.

It is on the basis of this document and the public response to it that the NSW Government and the Shoalhaven City Council will make future planning decisions affecting Jervis Bay. The pro-development lobby will be both vocal and vehement in their response to the document, so it is vital that the conservationists' viewpoint is expressed both equally and coherently.

Members wishing to write letters could contact Den Robin on 281 4837 or Anne Taylor on 258 9668 for details of some specific points which may be included in your letters.

Anne Taylor

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.

27 September Sunday Walk
Brindabella Range Ramble

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. 80 km drive (\$16 per car).

26/27 September Pack Walk (2/A/B)
Mt Talaterang

Leader: Steven Forst

Contact leader by Wednesday. A long drive but a very easy 2 and a half hour packwalk into 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. 500 km drive (\$100 per car).

29 September Tuesday Mid-week walk
Molonglo and Murrumbidgee Rivers

Leader: Olive Buckman

Meet at Murrumbidgee lookout (sign) off Stockdill Drive, Holt 9.30 am. A pleasant riverside walk of about 6 km down to Molonglo River, across and along the Murrumbidgee to East Uriarra and return. (If bridge underwater, return to cars and walk up Lower Molonglo Gorge).

3/4/5 October Long Weekend Walk
Quillies Mountain and surrounds

Leader: Steven Forst

Contact leader by Wednesday. A moderate walk up and over Quillies Mountain. Views to the coast. Visit Aboriginal Bora grounds, historic cattle pass, Styles Creek. 300 km drive (\$60 per car).

7 October Wednesday Walk
Gibraltar Peak

Leader: Ken Johnson

Meet at corner Eucumbene Drive and Cotter Road at 8.30 am. A 10 km walk, 400 m climb, steep grades, some forest walking along tracks, water required, good views. 65 km drive (\$13 per car).

10 October Saturday work party
Yankee Hat Paintings

Leader: Reg Alder

Meet Kambah Village shops 8.30 am. Propose to cut briars down adjacent to track from car park to rock shelter. Bring secateurs/prune saw/tomahawk/length of cord or rope/gloves. 100 km drive (\$20 per car).

11 October Sunday social

The President's BBQ

Leader: Beverley Hammond

The return of: 'THE PRESIDENT'S BBQ'. Follow the NPA signs to Vanity Crossing picnic spot in Uriarra Pine Forest. Bring chairs and all the comforts of home. Settle in for the day, starting any time after midday. Only minor exercise permitted.

14 October Wednesday walk
Gudgenby

Leader: Matthew Higgins

Meet at Kambah Village shops at 8.30 am. So you've walk around Gudgenby

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Ph. 2480972 h

Ref: CMW Budawangs Sketch Map
Ph 2516817 h
2748426 w

(1/A)
Ref: ACT 1:100,000
Ph 2488774 h

(2/A/B)
Ref: CMW Budawangs
Ph 2516817 h
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Ph 2485979 h

(1/A)
Ref: ACT 1:100,000
Ph 2542240 h

Ref: ACT 1:100,000
Ph. 2886577 h

(2/A/B)
Ref: Yaouk, Rendezvous Cr 1:25,000
Ph. 2477285 h

before - but have you seen the old hut sites? This ramble around the perimeter of this former pastoral property will visit 5 or 6 sites. 140 km drive (\$28 per car).

17 October Saturday walk
Gungahlin

Leader: Helen Cook

Meet at the Gem Museum car park at Ginninderra Village 9 am. Drive and walk around a number of historically significant sites in the Gungahlin region. This was one of the earliest settled regions in the district. You can finish the day with cakes and tea at the Village if you wish.

17/18 October Weekend car camp
Wog Wog, Corang Arch and Peak

Leader: Olive Buckman

Contact leader by Wednesday. Leave Canberra Saturday afternoon to camp (or sleep in cars) at Wog Wog between Braidwood and Nerriga. Sunday, early on the track to Corang Arch (lunch) and return via Corang Peak (excellent views of Pigeon House, Castle, etc). Approx. 20 km. Bring drinking water for camp site. Good 'introduction' to the Budawangs. 300 km drive (\$60 per car).

20 October Tuesday mid-week walk
Brandy Flat and Beyond

Leader: Olive Buckman

Meet Kambah Village shops at 9.30 am. A pleasant 10 km walk on fire trails from Glendale Crossing, with lunch at Brandy Flat hut, where water and fireplace are available for billy tea. Continue on tracks to Old Boboyan road. Total climb 430 m. Short car shuffle. 90 km drive (\$18 per car).

24 October Saturday walk
Murrumbidgee River

Leader: David Henry

Meet at the entrance (but outside) of the Belconnen Golf Club at 8.30 am. A short car shuffle is required. We start at Shepherds Lookout and proceed to the meeting of two rivers, the Molonglo and Murrumbidgee. Walk along the river with many opportunity for paddling or the early season swim. Exit at Ginninderra Falls. \$3 donation to owners of that property towards the maintenance of this beautiful creek and its surrounds. 20 km drive (\$4 per car).

24/25 October Pack Walk
Pond Creek, Coronet Peak

Leader: Gary Thompson

Contact leader by Wednesday. Walk from Orroral to Cotter Gap and Pond Creek. Visit Cotter Hut in the afternoon, and Coronet Peak Sunday morning. Total climb 800 m. 100 km drive (\$20 per car).

25 October Sunday walk
Ginini Falls

Leader: Lyle Mark

Not for beginners. Meet Eucumbene Drive and Cotter Road at 7.30 am. 8 km walk from Mt Franklin to Falls and return. A demanding 550 m climb. Worth it for the experienced walkers who wish to see this 180 m set of falls and cascades. 120 km drive (\$24 per car).

31 October Saturday walk
Black Mtn Nature Ramble

Leader: George Chippendale

Meet at the Belconnen Way entrance to Black Mountain Reserve (several hundred meters east of Caswell Drive) at 9.30 am. A morning ramble to see the birds and flowers. Suitable for those aged 4 to 80. Bring your morning tea, your camera, and/or binoculars. Finishes at midday.

(1/A/B)
Ref: ACT 1:100,000
Ph. 2931798 h

(3/4/A)
Ref: Corang 1:25,000
Ph. 2488774 h

(2/A)
Ref: ACT 1:100,000
Ph. 2488774 h

(2/A)
Ref: ACT 1:100,000
Ph. 2543974

(2/A/D)
Ref: Rendezvous Cr
1:25,000
Ph. 2447558 w
2886084 h

(1/D)
Ref: Corin 1:25,000
Ph. 2862801 h

(1/A)
Ref: Canberra Street Map
Ph. 2812454 h

**31 Oct/1 Nov Weekend canoe trip
Mongarlowe River**

Leader: Chris Bellamy

Contact leader preferably by Wednesday before because of transportation and portage arrangements. Easy 2 day trip on a sparkling unspoilt river known only to platypus, past old gold mines. Shoot some easy rapids. See it before the Sydney Water Board drowns it with the Welcome Reef Dam. Camping from canoes en route. BYO canoe or hire. Suit fit beginners. 250 km drive (\$50 per car).

**1 November Sunday walk
Googong Reservoir**

Leader: Mike Smith

Meet at Canberra Railway Station at 8.30 am. A walk from carpark at the southern end of Googong Reservoir past London Bridge, old homestead, Curley falls and then across the Queanbeyan River to Compo Canyon. Return to cars by similar route. Old footwear for crossing river would be advisable. 50 km drive (\$10 per car).

**4 November Wednesday walk
Emu Flat**

Leader: Ken Johnson

Meet at Kambah shopping centre Primmer Ct. at 8.30 am. An 11 km walk, undulating ridge, with views of Ororral River from Rocky areas (used by ANU rock climbers). We pass the Eyrie, the Elephant and Legoland. Walk starts and ends at the site of the old Honeysuckle Creek Collimation tower. Water required. 100 km drive (\$20 per car).

**7 November Saturday walk
Peppercorn Creek and Falls**

Leader: Chris Leslie

Phone leader before Thursday for details of transport. This is a combined walk with the Canberra Bushwalking Club. A 12 km walk in the northern Kosciusko National Park along the largely open banks of a pleasant alpine creek with several nice falls and cascades. There may be an optional rough scramble to the base of the largest falls. 150 km drive (\$30-\$35 per car).

**8 November Sunday cycle
Lake Burley Griffin**

Leader: Gary Schneider

Meet 10 am near Acton Ferry Terminal. Local bike ride mainly on cycleways along Lake Burley Griffin, to Mt Pleasant, RMC Duntroon and Jerrabomberra Wetlands.

**14 November Saturday walk
Bulleen Range**

Leader: Syd Comfort

Meet corner Eucumbene Drive and Cotter Road at 8.30 am. In Bulleen Nature Reserve from Paddy's River, over Bulleen Range to Murrumbidgee. Good views from range and along river. Partly on trails but also a stiff climb. 35 km drive (\$7 per car).

**15 November Sunday walk
Rendezvous Creek, Nursery Swamp**

Leader: Mick Kelly

Meet at Kambah Village shops 8 am. Circular 15 km walk up from Ororral Valley (Nursery Swamp car park), across to, and down, Rendezvous Creek. Climb saddle between spot heights 1351 and 1337 to southern end of Nursery Swamp. Follow Nursery Creek upstream to complete walk. (2 climbs 200 m and 300 m). 80 km drive (\$16 per car).

**Ref: Natmap
Braidwood 8827
Ph. 2497167h**

**(1/A/C)
Ref: Captains Flat
1:25,000
Ph. 2862984 h**

**(2/B/C)
Ref: Corin 1:25,000
Ph. 2485979 h**

**(2/B/C/D)
Ref: Peppercorn
1:25,000
Ph. 2516123 h**

**Ref: ACT street map
Ph. 2549801 h**

**(2/A/D)
Ref: Cotter 1:25,000
Ph. 2862578 h**

**(2/A/B/D)
Ref: Rendezvous Cr
1:25,000
Ph. 2412330 h**

**14/15 November Pack walk
Shoalhaven River Lookouts**

Leader: Mike Smith

Contact leader by Wednesday for details. Starting at Long Point lookout and descend 600m to a campsite next to the Shoalhaven River in the vicinity of McCallums Selection. Follow river downstream to spur leading up to Badgerys Lookout. Several river crossings involved. 250 km drive (\$50 per car).

**18 November Wednesday walk
Square Rock**

Leader: Olive Buckman

Meet Kambah Village shops at 9.30 am. A pleasant walk on tracks through a variety of scenery to a fascinating rock formation with wide views. An 'inside outside' rock scramble through and back is optional. Total climb 270 metres. Ideal for beginners and families. 80 km drive (\$16 per car).

**21 November Saturday walk
Big Hole/Marble Arch**

Leader: Mike Smith

Meet Canberra Railway station at 8 am. A walk mainly on tracks past the 'Big Hole' to the 'Marble Arch' in the Deua National Park. Wading across the Shoalhaven River is required and it could be slippery in wet weather at the Arch. 180 km drive (\$36 per car).

**22 November Sunday Social
87 Shackleton Circ, Mawson**

Leaders: Barbara and Syd Comfort

Barbara and Syd invite you to join them for afternoon tea and a stroll in their garden.

**22 November Sunday geological excursion
Geological trip**

Leader: Mac Dickins, Monica Yeung

Meet 9.30 am at the carpark at the entrance to the University of Canberra, Cnr College and Kirinari Sts, Bruce. The day will cover around 7 stops to view and examine geological features in the region, from close to the War Memorial, Woolshed Creek, lunch at Pine Island, and others. This means we will drive between each site and walk where necessary. We will endeavour to limit the number of cars to 8 because of parking restrictions at some sites. Car numbers will be rationalised at the meeting point. 100 km drive (\$20 per car).

**29 November Sunday walk
Mt Domain**

Leader: Judith Webster

Meet Kambah Village shops 9 am. This is a short walk but has a steady climb of about 680 m without respite. However, the pace will be moderate. Fire trail initially and then open forest. 80 km drive (\$16 per car).

**28/29 November Canoe trip
Shoalhaven River**

Leader: Chris Bellamy

Contact leader preferably by Wednesday before because of transportation and portage arrangements. Classic two day paddle to Oallen Ford from Larbert, below Warri bridge, past sandy beaches, old gold mines and some gorges. This area is at risk, should the Sydney Water Board build the Welcome Reef Dam. The Warri bridge will be under water with the stage 2 dam plans. Car

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Ph. 2483624 w
2862984 h**

**(1/A)
Ref: ACT 1:100,000
Ph. 2488774 h**

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Ref: Kain 1:25,000
2483624 w 2862984 h**

**Ref: Canberra Street
Map
Ph. 2862578 h**

**(2/A)
Ref: ACT 1:100,000
Ph. 2805439 w
2487638 h**

**(1/A/B)
Ref:
Ph. 2414646 h**

**Ref: Natmap
Braidwood 8827
Ph. 2497167 h**

based camping. BYO canoe or hire. Suit fit beginners. 300 km drive (\$60 per car).

**2 December Wednesday walk
Ginini Flats**

Leader: Ken Johnson

Meet at Cnr. Eucumbene Drive and Cotter Road at 8.30 am. The 9 km walk starts at Mt Franklin Road and Mt Ginini car park, down the ski run to Ginini Flats, NW to Ginini Creek and the start of a small waterfall 60 m back along the flats, join the 4 wheel drive track and walk to the Arboretum. Return along the same track to the car park. 110 km drive (\$22 per car).

**5 December Saturday walk
Lake Ginninderra**

Leader: Gary Schneider

Meet at 2 pm at Emu Bank wooden bridge between College/Sail Restaurant. Easy walk around the Lake Ginninderra - approx. 2 hours. Return distance approx. 7 km.

**5/6 December Pack walk
Mt Murray and Bimberi**

Leader: Chris Leslie

Contact leader before Thursday. We will be joining members of the Canberra Bushwalking Club for this trip. Approach via Oldfields hut as this is the shortest and easiest way to climb ACT's highest point at Mt Bimberi, and the sister peak of Mt Murray. It is intended to sleep at the summit of Murray with a quiet, low impact camp. Check with leader about stoves. 400 km drive (\$80-\$100 per car).

**13 December Sunday
Xmas Party**

Leader: Beverley Hammond

Meet at the Ororral Valley picnic ground at 3 pm for the annual NPA Christmas get together. Members and friends welcome. Bring a picnic tea.

**23, 24, 25, 26 January 1993 Pack Walk
Ettrema Gorge**

Leaders: Eric and Pat Pickering

Australia day falls on the Tuesday. This could be a collaborative walk with the Canberra Bushwalkers. Details are not finalised and are subject to change. However, its a spectacular area - lots of swimming and rock scrambling. Not for beginners. Phone leaders at least a week beforehand for details.

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

Management plan for Jervis Bay

While the campaign continues for the declaration of stages two and three of Jervis Bay National Park, much activity is going into establishing an appropriate management regime over the area so far secured.

The Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service, responsible for the portion declared in April, is now drafting the management plan. It is considering 60 submissions, about half from community groups and half from individuals.

The plan is expected to be a weighty and comprehensive document reflecting the complexity of the issues in the area. A draft is due for release for public comment in the last quarter of this year. After comments are taken into account and the plan completed, it will be tabled in the Autumn session of Federal Parliament. This means it is likely to come into effect by the second quarter of 1993.

NPA's Jervis Bay Working Group has had several meetings this year with officers of ANPWS and has been satisfied that the Service is considering, in a sympathetic way, all the major issues. Therefore, in our submission we chose to address only the issues of major concern. Briefly, the points we made covered:

Visitors

Already nearly one million people visit the area each year, most during summer holidays. The Service should develop indicators to determine the carrying capacity of the park and then implement strategies for reducing visitor pressure.

No new tracks should be developed. The proposal for the establishment of a new information centre at the Jervis Bay Village is acceptable.

Defence activities

No defence exercises of any sort should take place within the national park or adjoining waters.

Damage done by exercise 'Termite Spray' last year demonstrated the incompatibility of such activities with the area. The fact that visitors to Jervis Bay National Park soon will be paying for the privilege means that more than ever before, people are entitled to a high quality national park experience without the intrusion of military vehicles, machinery or personnel.

Wildlife protection

Spotlighting of the Little Penguins from the colony on Bowen Island should be banned and access to the rookeries restricted.

Another questionable activity is the 'dolphin watching' launch cruises now being operated from Huskisson which follow pods of dolphins around the Bay.

Bird feeding at Green Patch is supported. It presents a marvelous opportunity for visitors to be educated about the value of these species and of Australian wildlife generally.

Commercial fishing in territorial waters should be phased out. Fishermen should not be allowed to take penguin-prey species and fishing should be restricted in the penguin feeding area. Recreational fishing should be monitored with restrictions introduced if necessary. Educational information should be developed to explain to visitors the fragility of the marine resource.

Commercial activities and future developments

This stage of the park is not large enough to cope with further commercial development and particularly not any more permanent accommodation. Other commercial activities, such as guided tours, diving classes and 'eco-tourism' developments should meet the Guidelines for Concessions as set out by CONCOM.

Liaison and consultation

Formalised administrative arrangements need to be developed between ANPWS and other authorities with interests in the park (for example, Department of Defence, the Aboriginal people, Fisheries Department) and with outside authorities that have an impact on the neighbourhood (for example, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, Shoalhaven City Council).

Law enforcement and education

Staff resources should be sufficient to provide an adequate ranger presence at all times to facilitate monitoring of activities and when necessary, law enforcement. This should be supported by appropriate interpretation, through the visitor centre and in adequate signage and literature.

A representative Advisory Committee should be established to enhance public support for the park and to promote understanding about the management initiatives within the wider community.

Need for an integrated Jervis Bay National Park

As a final point, we urged ANPWS in all its activities not to lose sight of the larger goal of a marine national park protecting the integrity of the natural values of the whole Jervis Bay area and to move wherever possible towards achieving this goal.

Den Robin

Heritage values for Jervis Bay

Guest speaker at the July meeting was Mr Graeme Worboys, South-east Regional Manager, NSW NPWS.

Graeme said that he would like to speak mainly about the heritage values of Jervis Bay because the issue of land-planning for the area would be coming up soon, and proposals for national parks will need strong support. Firstly, however, he commented briefly upon various other aspects of the NSW NPWS, and gave an outline of its staffing structure. He went on to mention that the new NSW Minister for the Environment is Mr Chris Hartcher.

A copy of *Corporate Plan* was on display. This is a booklet available to the public, and contains information regarding N.S.W. National Parks, such as walking tracks, methods of expenditure, etc.

Graeme said that at present the Service is concentrating on threatened species. A survey by Mike Saxon, assisted by the ANU, has now established that the long-footed potoroo survives in an additional five sites in NSW. By agreement with the Forestry Commission of NSW, logging has been stopped, and there is a 90% probability of potoroos existing in seven locations. Another important step taken is the decision to have an equivalent survey carried out on koala populations.

When asked about the current situation regarding south-east forests, Graeme replied that in October 1990, six reserves were set aside for National Parks, but these have not yet been established. We were told that there is an inventory of wildlife being carried out in co-operation with the Forestry Department, in preparation for the taking over of these areas.

Whereas there is no further logging in the proposed national park and reserve areas, there is still some logging in the south-east forests.

Documents relating to proposed wilderness areas for the south-eastern part of NSW, together with submissions, pro- and anti-

are open to public viewing in the library of the Conservation Council of the South-East Region in Canberra. Fiona commented at this point that submissions are still needed for the wilderness areas.

On view at the meeting, in handy kit form, was literature regarding the South-East Regional National Parks. This folder contains separate brochures for each of the Parks, with maps, information on facilities, etc., and costs \$10.

Jervis Bay

About two years ago, the NSW Department of Planning convened a Regional Planning committee to deal with Jervis Bay. In addition to the Commonwealth & State Governments, membership on the committee included the EPA, Lands Department, CLM, NPWS, Department of Fisheries, ACF, Jervis Bay Protection Committee, the Mayor and Council, business and private owners.

Land tenure of Jervis Bay is complicated. It includes some freehold and some crown land. Existing conserved lands include the 6190 ha Jervis Bay National Park, and the Gurumbi and Abraham's Bosom Nature Reserves. The total wetlands recognised as SEPP 14 wetlands amount to 1522 ha, and SEPP 26 rainforest, 25 ha. (SEPP - State Environment Planning Policy.)

Jervis Bay is unique in its diverse landscapes of ocean beaches, lakes, estuaries, marshes, tree-clad slopes and heathlands.

There is a wide range of vegetation which includes rain forest, wet sclerophyll and dry sclerophyll forests, casuarina stands, and mangroves—an essential part of the eco-systems for marine life. The area is home to many species of terrestrial fauna and birdlife, and is an important destination for about twenty migratory bird species.

The iron-impregnated siltstone of the headlands is only one feature of the important geology of

Jervis Bay. The area has value for research into pre-history, with the dating of sea level and climatic changes, and, due to extensive evidence of middens and cave shelters, changes also in Aboriginal diets over the last 20,000 years.

The slides

Maps projected onto a screen, aided by aerial photographs taken from a helicopter, conveyed graphically the layout of the area.

It also conveyed a lack of planning foresight in the mere 400 metres left for a wildlife, or habitat corridor, between a primary school and a high school, both recently built. A little to the north, it was pointed out, was a golf course where possible extensions may occur. We learned that there are threatened species in the heath communities where large water tanks have been located. Another cause for concern was the view of the new sewerage plant, built next to wetland which leads into a wildlife corridor.

A scientific study undertaken by Dr Kevin Mills recognised the need for wildlife corridors to link state forest and Morton National Park. They should also exist to the Beecroft Peninsula so as to avoid creating isolated 'islands' of reserves, but this is made more difficult by the complicated land tenure.

To the north of Beecroft Peninsula, there were magnificent aerial views of the Bay offshore from Abraham's Bosom Nature Reserve. The coastline here presented a dramatic view of rugged cliffs. Next to state forest in this vicinity, is a large tract of freehold land, some of which goes right to the shoreline. This land could be sub-divided into farms or other development.

The clear waters of Jervis Bay are attributed to the fact that the catchment areas of streams in the vicinity are small in area and run through relatively undisturbed areas. Development here could have the undesirable effect of runoff into the streams, and thus into the Bay.

In addition to Aboriginal Heritage sites, special values of the Jervis Bay area are the seagrass beds, the littoral rainforest areas, the wetland and saltmarsh communities. The latter two are of international importance because of their use by migratory birds.

In its comprehensive report for the ANPWS, the ACT Parks and Conservation Service and the NSW NPWS, *Jervis Bay - Conservation Strategy*, the University of New England Centre for Coastal Management states that seventeen of the twenty-seven migratory birds at Jervis Bay are listed on the Migratory Bird Agreement with China and Japan.

Other significant conclusions reached in this report are that Jervis Bay has:

- 40 species which are rare, or of special interest.
- Many 'closed forest' species which are at the southern limit for Australia.
- Rare and endangered heath species.
- Among seabirds, 3 species of shearwater, sea-eagles, penguins.
- A little-tern site.
- Tiger quolls, yellow-bellied and squirrel gliders.
- Eastern bristle birds.

'The existing reserves are hopelessly inadequate for conserving species in the long term.' - Dr Kevin Mills, 1991.

A good example of the popularity of camping at Jervis Bay is the massive figure of 800,000 visitors per year for Greenpatch.

The Australian Conservation

Foundation and the National Parks Association of NSW propose Jervis Bay as a National Park and eighteen months ago, the ACT National Parks Association put in a submission of 31 pages for Jervis Bay.

Graeme commented that the Department of Planning is sympathetic to listening to submissions, but it will take a considerable groundswell of support from individuals as well as from groups for any of the above proposals to succeed.

After answering several questions from members, Graeme received a vote of thanks from Les Pyke, which was heartily endorsed by everyone present.

Val Honey

Exotics in national parks

Willows are familiar, beautiful trees in all seasons, planted in Australia by the European settlers along with other deciduous trees to remind the homesick of their homelands. The weeping willow—*Salicaceae salix babylonica*—is a native tree of Central Asia and its beauty is extolled in many Asian poems like the following written by Zhu Shuzhen, a woman poet of the 13th century:

Beyond the pavilion, the drooping willows with thousands of threads

Intend to fasten young spring,
Which, having stayed for a while, still is leaving
Nevertheless, the willow-catkins floating before the wind

Follow spring to spy whither it goes.

In Australia willows were planted along creeks and rivers once the native casuarinas, tea-tree, river gums or eucalypts had been removed. They grew relatively easily from cuttings in the moist soil of the river banks and in time the roots held the banks when the floods came. However, they also sent roots into the soil of the stream beds thus sometimes



Willows on the Naas River near Naas Homestead.
Photo by Fiona MacDonald Brand

choking the streams and causing more frequent flooding. This has occurred in the Molonglo River near Oaks Estate and willow trees have been removed to lessen the

flood depths and destruction.

Out in the countryside of the ACT, willows have replaced the native flora along many streams and, especially in autumn, make a great show. In Namadgi National Park they are found along the Gudgenby, Orroral, Cotter and other streams wherever Europeans settled and farmed. The question arises, should they be removed and replaced with native trees or left as a reminder of farming settlement and activities in the area? Replacement would have to be carefully done as the stream banks cannot be left bare whilst one species goes and another becomes established. Information received from both the ACT and NSW conservation services is that willows in the right place do a wonderful job at bank strengthening and now have become part of the Australian scene. However, they are not the native trees that originally held the banks and form a different habitat to the original species.

Should they stay or should they go? ... What do you think?

Fiona MacDonald Brand

Significance of Namadgi

The Australian Alps National Park comprises the alpine national parks of Victoria, NSW and the ACT and has been raised as an area deserving of world heritage status. A preliminary to progressing this concept further is the systematic identification of the features of significance in the parks. NSW and Victoria have published reports directed towards this end and *The Review of the Significance of the Natural and Cultural Features of Namadgi National Park* provides this service for the ACT.

This review is based on a critical examination of available documented information supplemented by discussion with specialists in particular disciplines. The study did not involve any additional fieldwork. The report was commissioned by the Parks and Conservation Branch and prepared by Robert Boden with Ian Fraser responsible for the fauna section.

The report sets out the natural features of Namadgi under the three headings of Geology and Geomorphology, Flora and Vegetation, and Fauna. Cultural features are assembled under the headings of Aboriginal occupation and use of resources, European settlement and use of resources, and heritage values of Namadgi. The text is supplemented by a comprehensive bibliography and a number of appendices. Almost half the report is devoted to these appendices which include flora

and fauna check lists and lists of classified, registered and significant sites and plants.

The text of the report with its accompanying tables presents, under the one cover, a comprehensive and readable account of the important attributes of Namadgi. The concluding chapter related these to the requirements for world heritage listing. In respect of cultural significance, the report finds that World Heritage Listing criterion (iii) which required cultural properties to 'bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a civilisation which has disappeared' is relevant to Namadgi's extensive evidence of Aboriginal occupation.

In relation to natural heritage, the report finds that Namadgi has claims to world significance in relation to all four criteria for natural heritage but that these claims are stronger as part of the larger Australian Alps than alone. This flows from Namadgi's position at the northern end of the Alps, determining that some species are at the northern extremity of their natural range. Two plant communities are identified as having special value: Ginini Flats sphagnum bog community and the swamp in the 'hanging' Nursery Valley. Attention is also drawn to the significance of Upper Cotter Valley above Bendora which, because of its relatively undisturbed condition, suggests it as a scientific reference area for comparison with other mountain

catchments subjected to logging and grazing.

The value of the report rests both on its relevance to the world heritage listing proposal and on its consolidation of much important data on Namadgi.

I understand that it is not intended to offer the report for sale but that it is available for reference at the Namadgi Visitors Centre and the Parks and Conservation Head Office. There is a copy in the NPA library.

R. Boden (Fauna by I. Fraser): *Review of the Significance of the Natural and Cultural Features of Namadgi National Park* (1991).

Namadgi rock art

At the May general meeting of the Association, the guest speaker, Helen Cook, put on display a report on Aboriginal Rock Art Sites in Namadgi. This report commissioned by the ACT Heritage Unit and the Parks and Conservation Service, provides a detailed and exhaustive record of the six rock art sites in the Yankee Hat, Nursery Swamp, Rendezvous Creek area. The author, Kelvin Officer, speaking at the opening of the Yankee Hat track was very guarded in attributing meaning or interpretation to components of the paintings. But in preparing this record of the paintings, as well as showing *meticulous attention to detail*, he has presented the results in a sympathetic and attractive manner. As ACT residents we have been well served by the ACT Administration in commissioning, and Kelvin Officer in preparing, this comprehensive record of these important sites.

Only a limited number of copies of this report has been prepared. It may be referred to at the Heritage Unit office in Tuggeranong.

Officer, K: *Namadgi Pictures; the Aboriginal Rock Art Sites within the Namadgi National Park* (2 vols) (1989).

Syd Comfort



Fork fence at Boboyan.
Photo by Matthew Higgins

A question of value

What is of value in the natural environment? Everything you would say, as all is part of the web of life; everything animate or inanimate is interwoven and a unity.

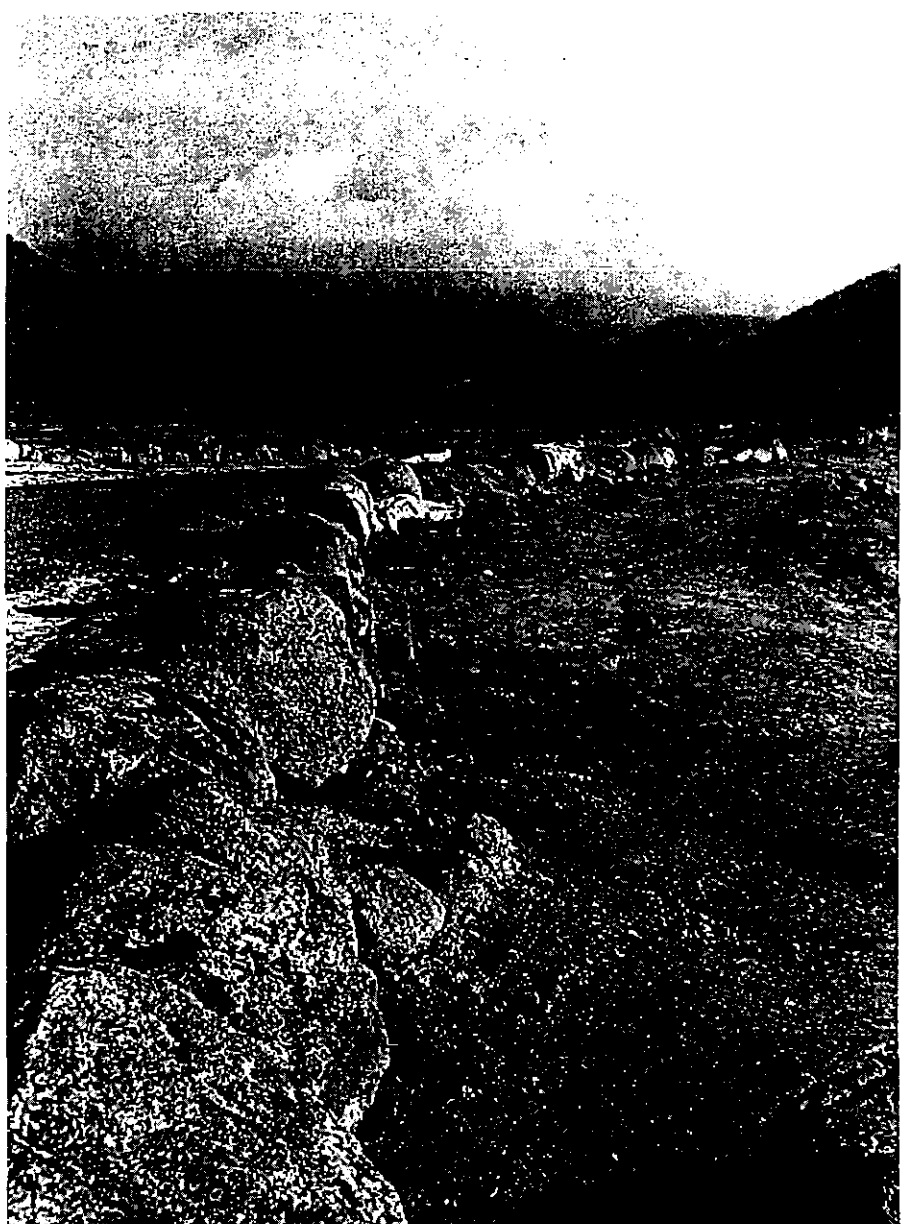
What is the value of changes and additions made to the natural environment by human activity? This is the difficult question. Some people see value in old buildings only if they are still pleasing to the eye. Others see value in old buildings because of their design, the use of old building techniques or their usefulness as a shelter. What then is the value of the much older stone tool worksites, axe sharpening grooves, stone and ochre quarries, rock art sites, stone arrangements, carved trees which tell of the culture which once encompassed all Australia?

What is valuable as an asset is an interesting question. In recent months this question has arisen regarding all human-made sites in Namadgi National Park. The list of assets in the park only includes the buildings to be maintained, that is the toilet blocks, buildings for storage, information centres but not homesteads, huts and Aboriginal places. These last categories are only 'site listed' with no understood essential element of maintenance being involved.

This would seem to be a dangerous situation as has been witnessed of late when a building and rock sites were removed because they were not considered to be an asset and are only recorded on an impermanent computer database.

All things in Namadgi (except feral plants and animals) are of value—are an asset—as they show future generations what the natural landscape/environment was like and with their culture, what changes the Aboriginal people made, how the European settlers farmed and built in the 19th and 20th centuries and finally how this area was set aside to keep all these valuable examples intact.

Fiona MacDonald Brand



Circumscribed by over 190 large boulders, the Yankee Hat Rock Shelter car park visually was most obtrusive and had been built over a site of possible Aboriginal significance.

Photo by Reg Alder.

Weeding party

The current outings program includes a working party in Namadgi during which we plan to deal with weed plants in a section of the park. Eradication of weeds is a continuing requirement in all our reserves, one that has considerable support in the Landcare plan, but one that is expensive for the park authorities to undertake.

Over the past months the association has put a great deal of effort

into the restoration of Orroral Homestead but our responsibilities for the natural components of Namadgi must not be overlooked, hence the work party.

The Namadgi Sub Committee needs your support to keep abreast of our commitment to our national park. All members are welcome to attend our monthly meetings, details of which are set out in the Calendar.

Honeysuckle Creek and Orroral Valley Tracking Stations

The issue of the impending demolition of the Honeysuckle Creek and Orroral Valley Tracking Stations in Namadgi National Park came again onto the public agenda in June when Senator Margaret Reid pursued the issue in the supplementary public hearing of the Inquiry by the Joint Committee on the National Capital into Nature Conservation and Environmental Management. The *Canberra Times* subsequently ran a front page article and editorial critical of the demolition referring to 'gross neglect' and 'narrow-minded vision' on the part of those responsible for the decline of the buildings. Apparently, neither Senator Reid nor the *Canberra Times* were aware of, or made the effort to find out (in the case of the latter), the consideration that had been given to the future of the buildings over a number of years and the reasons for their decline. NPA (ACT) had been closely involved in this process and made a quite detailed submission to the ACT Legislative Assembly Standing Committee on Conservation, Heritage and Environment when it examined the matter in 1990. Following careful consideration of the issue, that submission concluded that the buildings should be demolished. While differences of opinion might be expected on this issue, it seems appropriate at this point to outline in the *NPA Bulletin* some of the features of the buildings, the evaluation of heritage value and possible future uses, and the actions taken by the Parks and Conservation Service following acquisition of the buildings.

History

The tracking stations were built in the 1960s as part of the US National Aeronautical and Space Administration (NASA) space exploration programs including the Apollo program to put a 'man on the moon' and the Jupiter and Saturn space probes. The need for the stations declined in the late

1970s as NASA was able to consolidate its activities at the Tidbinbilla Deep Space Communications Centre. Both stations were closed in the early 1980s. By 1985 they had been handed to the (former) Department of Territories which administered the ACT. The Commonwealth provided no funds for their maintenance.

The buildings

The Tracking Stations were purpose-built structures, located in a remote area to minimise electrical interference from urban development. The operations buildings are the main features at both sites. Orroral Valley Tracking Station is a single-storey, steel column and beam construction building of 1540 square metres with brick walls and banks of windows. Honeysuckle Creek Tracking Station is a two-storey, reinforced concrete column and beam construction building of 1522 square metres with brick and metal cladding and banks of windows. In themselves, the buildings have no special architectural merit.

The buildings were self-contained with regard to services. To the surprise of many, they were not connected to the ACT power grid and 60 hz diesel generators provided the power requirements compatible with American electrical equipment (110 v). The power installation was quite large, with backup generators and fuel storage tanks. Water was pumped from local streams and sewerage disposed of through mini-treatment plants. The cost of such service provision, incidental probably to NASA, would have represented a major expense to any less well-funded user.

Before and after the decommissioning of the buildings, virtually all the features and facilities that linked the buildings to the historic space program were removed. However most of the

reusable items, from office furniture to the communication dishes, were salvaged. The dish and some equipment from Honeysuckle Creek were transferred to Tidbinbilla Tracking Station, while the Orroral Valley dish and some equipment went to the University of Tasmania in Hobart. The diesel generators are now used by ACT TAFE in mechanics' courses.

Management and evaluation after 1985

The focus of early attention to the buildings from 1985 was not so much on historic value but on finding a new use for them. On the surface the buildings seemed to be a significant asset.

The Tracking Stations became the responsibility of the Department of Territories at the time the Plan of Management for Namadgi National Park was being prepared. Den Robin, who was then the NPA representative on the former Namadgi Consultative Committee, arranged for an NPA inspection of the buildings. This was very useful because it allowed those who went to make a better assessment of the practicality of proposed alternative uses.

In 1985, the (former) National Capital Development Commission investigated the feasibility of modifying the buildings for other uses and provided indicative costs. A field studies centre was considered for Honeysuckle Creek. Costs for conversion at the time, including power connection, were estimated at \$2-3 million. Orroral Valley was considered for a conference centre with conversion costs of \$1.4-2 million. The NCDC concluded that it would probably be more cost effective to build new purpose-built buildings than refurbish the old ones. The assessment did not include the environmental impacts of the powerline construction.

The Namadgi Management Plan

(1986) did not specifically list the tracking stations in its section on historic sites (S. 8.3.3) but did refer to the Orroral Valley overall. The Stations were considered in the context of field studies (pp. 49-51). With regard to Honeysuckle Creek, the Plan concluded that if no feasible, cost effective or operationally sound use could be found, then the site would be cleared of the main buildings. Various community groups and others considered the use of the buildings (e.g. for holiday adventure camps, tourist developments, retreats for corporate executives and politicians) but concluded that the cost of modifications was too high. Honeysuckle Creek was even inspected by a prominent media magnate (with not inconsiderable investments in Kosciusko National Park) for use in association with Sky-Channel. The question of the appropriateness of some uses within the national park setting appeared to be overlooked at times. In 1985, a Parks and Conservation Service employee was placed at Honeysuckle Creek as caretaker, but running a large diesel generator for small power requirements was very expensive.

During 1988, the Parks and Conservation Service sought expressions of interest from government agencies in using the buildings. There was no response, but ACT TAFE expressed interest in some of the equipment which has since been transferred to their use (as noted above). Public expressions of interest in the buildings were not called for, though as noted above, groups and individuals investigated uses in response to the Management Plan and other publicity.

Vandalism of the buildings began to occur as their abandoned presence became public knowledge during 1986. While they were part of regular ranger patrols, their remoteness but easy access made security extremely difficult. They could only have been secured by permanent ranger presence or by the employment of a commercial security agency. Before Honeysuckle Creek was transferred to the ACT Administration,

the Commonwealth maintained a full-time security guard on-site at considerable cost. Such expense may have been warranted in the short term if another use for either of the buildings had become apparent. Given finite budgets, the costs would have had to be drawn from other programs or activities of the Parks and Conservation Service.

In 1990, the ACT Government agreed that the Legislative Assembly Standing Committee on Conservation, Heritage and Environment should hold an inquiry into the future of the tracking stations. This was an opportunity both for the statement of historic values and an exploration of the re-use of the buildings which were now not only suffering vandalism, but showing the effects of lack of regular maintenance (inoperable sewerage disposal system and disintegration of the plumbing).

By this time NPA (ACT) had given considerable thought to the questions of re-use and heritage value and made a submission to this Inquiry in June 1990. It stated:

Noting the following factors:

- (a) the need to take action on the buildings
- (b) the inherent limitations of the buildings, their deteriorated state and the cost of conversion
- (c) the lack of support for the proposed uses
- (d) the primacy of the nature conservation objective in Namadgi and
- (e) that heritage requirements may be met without retaining the buildings

the Association concludes that the buildings should be demolished.

The Standing Committee recommended that the tracking stations be removed following recording of the sites by the (then) ACT Heritage Committee but that the 'footprint' of the structures be left intact. In August 1991 the ACT Government accepted the thrust of the Standing Committee's recommendations and in December 1991 a Preliminary Assessment of the

environmental impact of the removal was prepared on behalf of the ACT Department of Environment Land and Planning. This was advertised in the press with call for public comment. Among other things, the Preliminary Assessment addressed the removal of hazardous materials and cultural heritage considerations. It recommended the integration of information on the Orroral and Honeysuckle Creek Tracking Station installations into the display at Tidbinbilla Deep Space Communication facility which was already on a well-established tourist route.

The total cost of site documentation, demolition and restoration has been estimated at \$200 000 of which the Commonwealth is to contribute \$100 000. While attention has been drawn to this sum in the recent publicity, no mention has been made of what cost would have been involved in ongoing stabilisation, maintenance, and security. (This would have probably approximated \$200 000 annually).

Heritage aspects

As noted above, most of the early interest in the buildings was on finding another use. The historic significance of the buildings themselves has always been a difficult issue because virtually every feature that associated them with the space program was removed either before or after NASA withdrew from the sites. (Most of this equipment, as noted above, has been put to good use). To a visitor without prior knowledge of the former uses of the buildings only a few clues remain. It is a matter of individual judgement as to the balance of significance between the gutted buildings themselves and the activities they were associated with.

The Preliminary Assessment considered the question of cultural and historical significance, noting that in terms of the Burra Charter, the Tracking Station sites have varying degrees of historic, scientific and aesthetic

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NPA and ex-NPA meet up in NZ

For me one of the great joys of travel is in meeting up with old friends and making new ones.

On my second visit to New Zealand over two months early this year, I accomplished this to the full, staying with seven friends—some known up to 32 and 46 years—and also visiting Stewart and Auckland Islands, (hopefully more anon in the *Bulletin*).

Among the old friends were two I had met through NPA and have remained in contact with—Sylvia Outridge and Bob Stoothoff.

Sylvia was a very active member from 1983 to 1986. She readily admits that she found her niche in life through her first backpack with NPA. This was to Mt Clear (led by Reg Alder) and she was then very new to the game and a little unsure. At one point Frank Clements remarked on the weight of her pack, then walked off carrying same and leaving his lighter one for her—a small act that led a long way.

After her years in Canberra she

returned to Queensland, and then, some 4-5 years ago, took a holiday in New Zealand where she got hooked. She worked for the Department of Conservation for a year in the office, and for the last three or four years has been a Seasonal Ranger on various tracks. Along the way she has taken climbing and abseiling courses and climbed many of the famous peaks in South Island while finding untapped capabilities.

My timing in the south was just right as she was on a five months' duty on the Greenstone track (15 days on, 5 off). At the end of March we had a great reunion as I stepped off the bus at the Divide, complete with her requests of a cask of wine and various food items. These soon vanished into her HUGE rucksack, so large that when I went to pick up my fairly loaded day pack, I discovered it had been put in hers! I soon took it out, and off we went.

Her duties as a Ranger cover a multitude of things and she regu-



Sylvia Outridge in the Budawangs.

Photo by Olive Buckman.

larly carries 50 lbs and over, including tools and sometimes a chain saw, as truck maintenance is all part of the job and may involve fallen trees of up to a metre in circumference. (I was to see them).

With tongues wagging and in glorious sunshine we climbed up and down, with a diversion to Key

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value. The historic value was considered most significant in that the sites had 'influenced an historic event'—the landing of men on the moon. However the guidelines describe sites where the association with the event, or the setting, survives intact as having greater significance than those which are much changed. The Preliminary Assessment noted that the most recognisable elements of the stations, in particular the dishes, were no longer on-site. It also noted that the sites were joined to Tidbinbilla in the historic events, so opening the potential to interpret their place in the space program through the currently operational facility at Tidbinbilla.

Though the heritage aspects of the question about the future of the Stations began to be raised more in recent times, it is curious that in the seven years since their acquisition by the ACT Administration, no individual or

community group in the ACT has nominated the sites for the Register of the National Estate (as any citizen or group is entitled to do) and they do not appear on the list of places to be considered for the ACT Heritage Places Register.

Three other aspects are also worthy of mention. The first is the persistence of the view that a use would eventually be found for the buildings—despite the investigation over five years which was unsuccessful and the lack of recognition on the part of some proposals that the sites were in a national park. The second is the failure to attempt to realistically assess the costs involved in certain suggestions (such as the suggestion to simply maintain the buildings until a use materialised in the future) and to consider where funds might come from out of already hard-pressed budgets. The third is the question of how heritage aspects would be effec-

tively retained if the building shells were converted to another use which involved substantial refit—when it was the association of the buildings rather than their intrinsic architectural merits which was the object of conservation.

Despite the recent publicity, it would appear that little has changed in the circumstances or potential of the tracking stations that would justify any change to the NPA conclusions expressed to the 1990 Legislative Assembly Inquiry and which were the product of careful and informed deliberation developed over a number of years. Any justifiable alternative view developed within the Association which fully addressed aspects such as costs should have been presented to the ACT Government and its managing agencies in the normal form of a lobbying submission.

Kevin Frawley

Summit for a magnificent view of the heavily snow-capped length of the Ailsa Range (up to 6,600 m) and so down to Lake Howden. This was as beautiful as I remembered it when doing the Routeburn track years ago. We had lunch in the staff quarters of the Freedom walkers hut and continued through the magnificent beech forest to Lake Mackenzie hut. We spent two nights in staff quarters using the day between to clean the hut, for Sylvia's five month tour of duty finished the following week.

On again, back into sunshine, we continued down the delightful valley. The Greenstone River was a roaring, rushing, glacial sight, while everywhere was very boggy and on all sides creeks were tricky to cross due to snow melt and heavy rain. In many places the track crosses HUGE stone screes often up to half a kilometre long and a glance upwards to the left showed the rugged rocky mountain top from which this had fallen, almost directly overhead. A lot of the track was through the beech forest, a joy, with autumnal colours both above and at our feet, and the track was often right on the edge of the river bank. Our tongues hardly stopped. The next week Sylvia was heading for a climbing holiday in Tasmania and hoped to find seasonal work either there or perhaps in the ACT, or back in New Zealand. Our last night was at her base, the Greenstone Hut, and on my fourth day, after farewells and thank yous I walked out for a launch trip across Lake Wakatipo and coach to Queenstown.

Sylvia asked to be remembered to all those NPA members she knew and she will, I am sure, continue to speak warmly of her greatly changed life, which she loves, and her time with us that led her into it.

My second reunion took place two days later in Christchurch with Bob and Judy Stoothoff. Bob, a friend and colleague of Jack Smart, had been a member of NPA for some months back in 1987 when visiting the ANU. Always a keen walker, climber and skier, he took part in a



Bob, Judy and Kiri Stoothoff at their home in Christchurch.
Photo by Olive Buckman.

number of our outings—especially backpacking—until the snow called him south. Bob and Judy plus son Adam, cats and delightful 'Kiri', a Doberman that stole my heart, live in a fascinating late 18th Century house a few kilometres from the city and have now added a 50-acre farm to their interests and in readiness for Bob's retirement.

For the weekend during my stay, Bob and I drove the beautiful and interesting two-hour run to the Southern Alps in the Arthur's Pass area. Everywhere was a joy—under low, early snow. On the Saturday afternoon we did two short walks before settling for the night in the 'Stoothoff Bach'. On the Sunday under clear, blue skies and in glorious sunshine we joined the Avon Tramping Club to climb Mt Bruce—1639 metres. This was in a range where most peaks had a steep sloping side, finishing in curves along their ridges then falling steeply via scree slopes into a basin on the other side. Our start was through beech forest then sloping areas of new pine plantations and finally the long, long haul up a steep, grassy slope, round the snow-capped curves with steep drops to our left to make the top. Views were out of this world almost the whole way round, range upon snow-covered range with Mt Rolleston, at 2,271 metres the

highest in the Arthur's Pass National Park, dominating the skyline. Below were the wide river beds of the Waimakariri River running east to west and being joined by the Bealey River from Arthur's Pass to the north in the middle of our vista—very memorable. We dropped off westward via a vast scree which never seemed to end, back into the beech forests, past a number of clear tarns and slowly contoured back through masses of tussock grass, reeds, ferns and up and down creek beds, coming down from Mt Bruce to make base seven hours after starting out.

The day finished with a memorable sunset on the drive back. On our right the fluted peaks of the ranges were jet black against a vivid red sky and those across the valley to our left glowed in various shades of pink, with deep shadows and the snow itself glittering like rosy icing.

Judy kindly took me on two afternoons to different parts of interesting, beautiful Banks Peninsula—a fascinating volcanic area. Like Sylvia, Bob wishes to be remembered to all those he knew and walked with and again reiterates an invitation he put in the *Bulletin* when he left here. This was/is to take any NPA member visiting Christchurch on a walk, climb or backpack, depending on his workload. Perhaps any members, especially those he knew, wishing to take up this offer could contact me on 248 8774.

Olive Buckman

NB If there is a red dot on your mailing label this is your last *Bulletin* and you need to renew your subscription.

America by campervan

We left Canberra on a very cold morning on Friday 26 July 1991 and after a 13-hour flight from Sydney arrived in Los Angeles at 10.30am still on Friday 26 July, having crossed both the equator and the International Date Line.

On the next day we flew from LA to JFK Airport, New York, where it took over 30 minutes from landing until we reached the terminal because of the number of arrivals, including Concorde on the next runway. We had one day in New York which we spent sightseeing: Empire State Building, Columbus Square, Central Park, Harlem, Times Square, The Bowery, Wall Street, before crossing to the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island and returning to Battery Point.

We spent 29 July to 9 August on a bus tour visiting first Boston with a re-enactment of the Boston Tea Party and then across the Canadian border at Armstrong and on to Quebec for two nights. Here we walked through the old walled part of the city with 17th century houses and churches before making our way to the Promenade of the Governors and the Plains of Abraham. From Quebec we drove to Montreal and then Ottawa where we toured Parliament House and in the evening enjoyed an impressive *Son et Lumière*. On our way to Toronto we cruised through part of the Thousand Islands National Park which is a very beautiful area indeed. On the next day we drove along the shores of Lake Ontario, crossed the Welland Canal which links Lakes Ontario and Erie, and then on to Niagara Falls. These were a definite highlight of this part of the trip because of the immensity of the falls and the close approach to the waters provided by the walking paths. During the afternoon we donned bright blue hooded raincoats and boarded the *Maid of the Mist* which took us along the waters to just below the Horseshoe Falls—very dramatic and rather wet. That evening we dined on the 26th



*Barbara braves the weather at Maligne Lake, Jasper National Park.
Photo by Syd Comfort.*

floor of the Minolta Tower overlooking the floodlit falls. We were up by dawn the next morning to catch the early morning light on the spray from the falls then we made our way back across the border into the USA and through farmlands to Lancaster for the night. At our next stop, an Amish settlement at Intercourse, we looked over a traditional farmhouse before going into the town. It was rather incongruous to see Amish men driving their buggies drawn by beautiful high-stepping horses while their wives shopped in the local supermarket.

Washington DC was our next stop and we arrived there in time for a picnic lunch in the Mall with Capitol Hill at one end and the Lincoln Memorial at the other. We had time for brief visits to the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum, the Sculpture Garden and the National History Museum before boarding our bus for the hotel. A bus tour the following morning took in Capitol Hill, the House of Representatives, the Arlington National Cemetery and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. After lunch we drove to Alexandria in Virginia which

retains many fine old town buildings, and then on to Mount Vernon and George Washington House which is beautifully preserved and retains much of the original furniture. The last day of our tour was very wet and we drove directly to Philadelphia where in between downpours we visited the Independence Hall and saw the Liberty Bell. From here we made our way to JFK Airport where most of our fellow travellers left for the UK, and then on to New York. The next morning, in glorious sunshine, we took the subway to downtown New York. Highlights of the day included walking through Central Park, looking at the New York skyline through the Rodin sculptures on the roof garden of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and a ride on the Staten Island ferry.

From New York we flew to San Francisco where we had the obligatory ride on the cable car and declared Fisherman's Wharf vastly over-rated. However the Automobile Association (AAA) was first class and on the basis of our NRMA membership, set us up with maps, guide books and plenty of good advice.

It was in San Francisco that we had trouble getting stamps. First of all the main Post Office had moved and the next post office in a store only had stamps from a machine for which we had no change and neither did the post office. Our third try produced stamps but they could not give change for a \$20 bill, so we had to part with some of our small bills which seem to be as scarce as hen's teeth.

Thursday 15 August actually saw us on our way with the campervan which we had hired for the next three and a half months, although we didn't get far that day as we were delayed collecting the vehicle and then had to negotiate peak-hour traffic out of San Francisco.

We headed north along the coast driving through the magnificent redwoods which form the Avenue of the Giants and on to Humboldt State Park. We made a short detour to Ferndale, a small town noted for its beautiful wooden Victorian houses, some of which have since been destroyed in an earthquake which occurred earlier this year and was seen on TV in Australia. At Redwood National Park we encountered our first wildlife, a herd of elk. The camp



The Sentinel, Yosemite National Park.

Photo by Syd Comfort

fire area in this park is spectacular. Set amongst forest giants, it has seating for 200 people cut out of huge redwood logs together with lighting, amplification and projection facilities. That evening we listened to a park ranger's bear stories and afterwards joined the line for hot chocolate served by the camp hosts (own mug please). We crossed into Oregon with a lot of low cloud and mist on the coast but no actual rain. However water was very scarce in this part of the country and showers on camp sites were restricted to two hours daily. We by-passed Portland and made our way to the Columbia River which reputedly has the best wind surfing conditions in the world—there were wind surfers everywhere. We saw Mount Hood, at 11 239 feet, the highest point in Oregon, and Mount Adams, 12 276 feet, across the border in Washington State, both snow-capped.

Next we had our first distant view of Mount St Helens and then paid a visit to the National Volcanic Monument Visitor Centre which was most informative and very well presented. The next day we were able to drive right to the mountain and examine the devastation on foot. A straight line runs down the mountain with, on the left, pine trees still growing and on the right, grey ash and the remains of the forest with huge stripped trees thrown about like matchsticks. There are signs of regeneration with some wild flowers growing through the devastation.

Still travelling north we spent two nights at the coastal resort of Dungeness and then crossed on the car ferry to Vancouver Island. Our main aim here was to see the Butchart Gardens which were quite magnificent despite some rain. We spent a very interesting day in Victoria where we visited the outstanding Royal British Columbian Museum and the harbour where there was a gathering of all types of wooden boats. We then boarded another ferry, this time to Vancouver, where we spent the Labour Day holiday. We booked into a commercial recreational vehicle Park a few miles out

of the city and used public transport which was very efficient and cheap—about \$3 Australian for a day ticket which we used on bus, Sky Train and ferry.

We now travelled east and made our way through Sevana, Revelstoke, Glacier National Park, Golden, Yoho National Park and along the Icefield Parkway to Jasper National Park. The Icefield Parkway has magnificent scenery along its entire length with snow-capped mountains reflected in the blue and green lakes. We walked to the toe of the Athabasca Glacier which over the years has receded a considerable distance. It was on this part of the highway that we had our one and only sighting of a grizzly bear. We spent five nights in Jasper National Park before moving on to Banff National Park where we had a bathe in the thermal pool at 40°C.

Our next stop was for two nights just out of Calgary where again we used public transport to reach the city. I was very impressed with the Devonian Gardens which comprise two acres of landscaped gardens and pools on the third floor of a building all completely enclosed.

From Calgary we drove to Waterton Lakes National Park in very cold and windy conditions. There we had an enjoyable boat trip along the length of the lake and crossed the 49th Parallel which is marked on the shore and boasts a Customs House and entry point to the USA.

We crossed the border back into the USA by road and then had a magnificent drive along the 'Going to the Sun' road over Logan Pass and on to West Glacier. We stopped at the National Bison Range at Moise for nearly two hours where we saw long horned sheep, elk, pronghorn deer and a herd of about 1,000 bison. We also visited the Madison Buffalo Jump where the Indians herded buffalo and drove them over the top of the cliff to kill large numbers.

Barbara Comfort

Look out for the second instalment of this article in the December issue of *NPA Bulletin*.

Calendar

SEPTEMBER

- Thursday 3 Committee meeting, 7.30 pm, 21 Hyndes Cr, Holder. Beverley Hammond, 288 6577(h).
Thursday 10 Namadgi sub-committee, 7.30 pm, 87 Shackleton Circuit, Mawson. Syd Comfort, 286 2578(w).
Thursday 24 Environment sub-committee, contact President for venue.

OCTOBER

- Thursday 1 Committee meeting, 7.30 pm, 21 Hyndes Cr, Holder. Beverley Hammond, 288 6577(h).
Thursday 8 Namadgi subcommittee.
Wed 14 Outings sub-committee, 7.30 pm, 14 Maranboy Street, Fisher. Di Thompson 288 6084(h) 244 7572(w)
Thursday 29 Environment sub-committee.

NOVEMBER

- Sunday 1 *Deadline for December NPA Bulletin*
Thursday 5 Committee meeting, 7.30 pm, 21 Hyndes Cr, Holder. Beverley Hammond, 288 6577(h).
Thursday 12 Namadgi sub-committee.
Thursday 20 Environment sub-committee.

DECEMBER

- Thursday 3 Committee meeting, 7.30 pm, 21 Hyndes Cres, Holder, Beverley Hammond, 288 6577(h).
Thursday 10 Namadgi subcommittee

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General meetings

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

Thursday 17 September: Threatened Species Legislation

Senator John Coulter, Leader of the Australian Democrats, or a member of his staff, will discuss the influence of the Threatened Species Legislation introduced by the Democrats on subsequent government legislation.

Thursday 22 October: Greening Australia

Val Wiseman, Manager of Greening Australia for the ACT and South East NSW, will give an illustrated address on programs. The organisation is dedicated to helping Australians conserve and establish trees and other vegetation.

Thursday 19 November: Exotic Plants Invasions

Dr Stella Humphries, an ecologist with CSIRO Division of Wildlife and Ecology, co-authored a report on exotic plant invasions in Australian ecosystems. She will present the national pattern of these invasions and the threat environmental weeds pose to conservation. She will discuss some of the reasons for their spread and indicate management options.

December

No meeting.

Sunday 13 December, 3 pm: NPA Christmas Party

Orroral Picnic Area