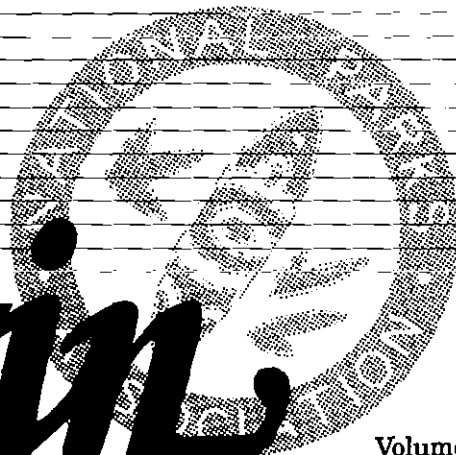
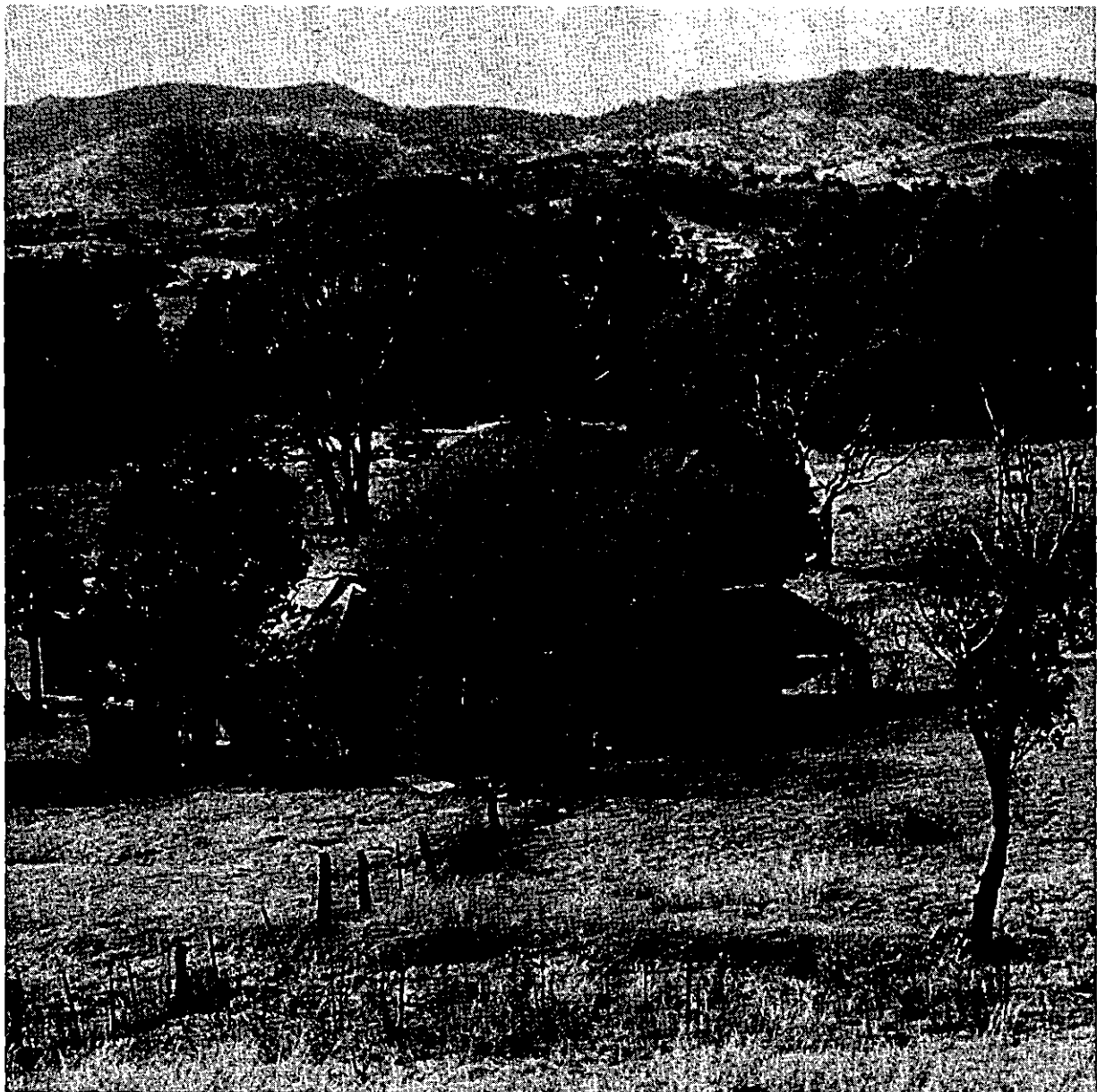


NPA Bulletin



Volume 31 number 3
September 1994

NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION FACT INCORPORATED



Namadgi National Park

National parks and entrance fees

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Cover

Photo: Matthew Higgins
Tennent Homestead

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.
- Cooperation 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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Immediate past president Beverley Hammond 288 6577(h)
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Membership inquiries welcome

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Contribute to your *Bulletin*

Contributions of articles (news, descriptions 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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World Environment Day

Our National Parks Association (ACT) was involved in two activities to celebrate World Environment Day.

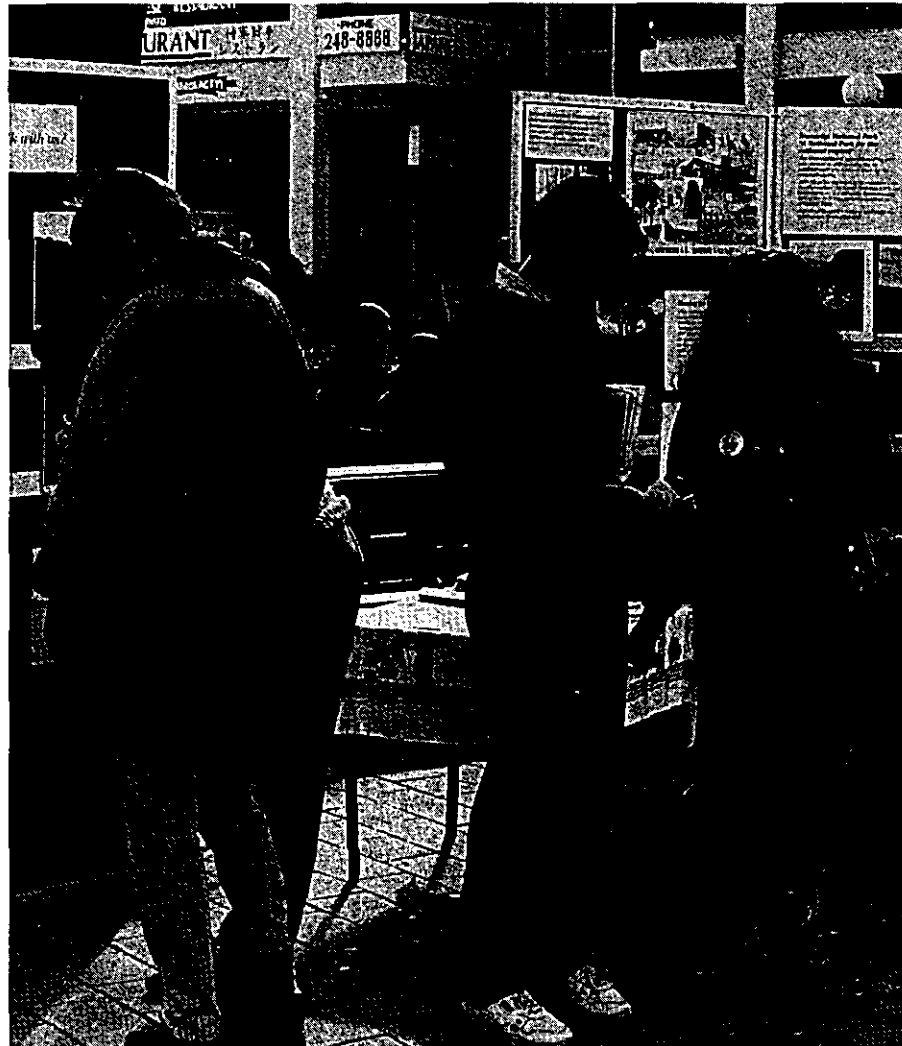
Firstly thank you to Les Pyke and those members who looked after our display in Garema Place on Saturday 4 June 1994. Adrienne Nicholson, Doreen Wilson, Clive Hurlstone and others have revamped our photographs and information boards which promote our Association by telling the community about our objectives and activities.

The second event was a function at the Namadgi Visitors' Centre on Sunday 5 June 1994 hosted by Bill Wood, Minister for the Environment, Land and Planning, to mark the tenth anniversary of the declaration of Namadgi, to acknowledge the service of members of the Environment and Conservation Consultative Committee and to announce the ACT Landcare grants.

Greg Fraser, acting secretary, Department of the Environment, Land and Planning, opened the proceedings under the trees in front of the centre. He spoke of the formation of the National Parks Association to lobby for a national park for the national capital.

An extract from Greg Fraser's speech appears on page 16.

Beverley Hammond



World Environment Fair in Garema Place. Photo Len Haskew

President's departure



Thanks to Beverley for her determined and thoughtful leadership over the last three years

A change to the constitution?

At the general meeting on Thursday 17 November, your committee will put the proposal to you that the Association should add to its present aims and objects a statement to include the protection and conservation of sites of cultural heritage value (both Aboriginal and European) and particularly those in Namadgi National Park. Many people may see this as a significant change of emphasis for the Association and so the committee wishes to present to you two differing viewpoints so that you can make an informed decision.

The proposed rewording of the constitution plus arguments for and against the changes all appear on the following pages.

Changing the constitution

No—not the Australian constitution, but our own NPA constitution which requires, in some members' minds, an update.

It is thought that in the Association's aims there should be the mention of the protection of our cultural heritage, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal.

In the original constitution, written in the sixties, the founding committee and others who followed only considered flora and fauna and geographical features in a national park. Why? Because the original national park proposal of 1963 contained no (known to us) cultural sites either Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal. Mt Namadgi stone arrangements had not been documented then and so were unintentionally ignored.

All other cultural sites that we now acknowledge are in the sections added to the park over the years. The Aboriginal rock paintings, axe-grinding grooves, stone arrangements, European huts, homesteads, woolsheds and stockyards were on freehold or leasehold farming land. What a richness these cultural sites have added to the national park! The NPA (ACT) can proudly claim that it prevented Orroral Homestead becoming a ruin by agitating over ten years to be allowed to work on it and make it a centre of interest for visitors to Orroral Valley.

The most recent addition of land to the park also contains a

homestead complex begun in the 1880s by a pioneer family but now needing protective work. As ecotourism is all the go, this homestead—Tennent Homestead—which is not far from the Visitors' Centre, could be another site the tourists visit when they enter the park after visiting Lanyon which is an example of how the wealthy landowners lived.

Sadly, in the past, too much of our cultural heritage has been destroyed—at least four homesteads knocked down and removed in Namadgi and stone arrangements disturbed—so let us recognise and treasure what remains and work to keep them secure.

Fiona MacDonald Brand

In favour

• As our Association has evolved there has emerged naturally a growing commitment to the restoration and/or preservation of items of cultural significance. Many members have given a great deal of their time and effort, for example, in the restoration of Orroral Homestead. Work parties there have generated considerable interest and have always been well attended. Many of the outings programmed to coincide with Heritage Week activities have been among the best attended of all outings for the year.

So it seems obvious that there is a significant interest in the cultural aspects of our landscapes. The committee believes that this interest has not had any negative effect on our Association's other activities and interests.

- The Namadgi National Park Management Plan states on page 37 that 'Management of the cultural resources of the park is regarded as of equal importance as the management of its natural resources.' Also at the Cultural Heritage Symposium (coordinated by the Australian Alps Liaison Committee) at Jindabyne in October 1991, the final session affirmed that cultural heritage of the Australian Alps is a fundamental component of their significance, called for park management to follow principles of cultural heritage management, sought listings on the Register of the National Estate and examination of cultural values as part of the proposal for World Heritage listing. As your Association seeks annual grants from the ACT Government to enable it to undertake its activities, it seems reasonable for the Association to have an expressed interest in areas resulting from human activity in the national park as well as its already expressed interest in natural phenomena. In practice the Association has entered into contractual-type arrangements with the Parks and Conservation Service for this type of activity and our attitude has generated much goodwill within the service.
- Historically, too, there generally seems to be a gradual fusion of wilderness and cultural interests. Initially, conservationists emphasise the natural landscape and its visual, aesthetic and even spiritual qualities to ensure protection and preservation, but as time passes and the area is secured, then there is a growing interest in detail and with that an appreciation of cultural resources.

Committee

Committee's proposed changes

The proposed constitutional changes are emphasised below in bold type.

Aims and objects of the Association

- Promotion of national parks and of measures for the protection of fauna and flora, scenery, natural features **and cultural heritage** 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, natural phenomena **and cultural heritage** by organised field outings, meetings or any other means.
- Cooperation 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.

Changing the constitution

—an argument against

The NPA is currently discussing the need for amendment to the NPA (ACT) constitution so that it states that one of the main objectives of the Association is to promote cultural heritage conservation.

It appears that the committee is reacting to pressure from the current ACT Government for the Association to become more active in the realm of cultural heritage conservation and so justify its annual financial grant from the government.

A number of people within the Association are concerned at this proposal and feel that it represents a dilution of the reasons why the Association was established and continues to exist.

The Association was established to promote the creation of national parks, particularly Namadgi, and to encourage measures to protect flora and fauna, scenery and natural features in the ACT and elsewhere. It was not established to promote the conservation of Aboriginal and European heritage. There are a

number of effective bodies in the ACT that exist for this purpose including the National Trust, the Kosciusko Huts Association, the Canberra Archaeological Society and the Canberra Historical Society.

This is not to say that the NPA has not played, and will not continue to play, a role in heritage conservation. It would be naive to suggest that cultural and natural conservation can be placed in separate compartments. Nevertheless, the great strength of the NPA has been its determination to be first and foremost a nature conservation organisation.

There are a number of threats to our natural areas including feral animals, endangered species, the proliferation of four-wheel-drive vehicles, the so-called 'ecotourism' movement and various governments' lack of will on such matters as wilderness and forest protection and bushfire management. There are also government moves to introduce 'user pays' principles to

natural areas, a move that could well sacrifice nature conservation on the altar of 'balance'. A strong and vocal NPA is needed more than ever to promote and mobilise opinion on green issues within the ACT. We believe that our aims and objectives should not be compromised at this stage by reacting to short-term government demands for 'relevance'.

The NPA constitution as it exists has not prevented us from undertaking a number of cultural heritage projects. However, it does give us a clear and unequivocal natural conservation focus that allows us to speak to the government and the public in terms that they can understand. Amending our constitution to include 'cultural heritage' in our aims and objectives can only blur our sense of direction, dissipate our energies and confuse our public image.

Timothy Walsh and
Neville Esau

The concept of cultural heritage embraces all ethnic origins

Within the Australian context, the non-indigenous cultural heritage we would preserve is readily identifiable within the environment we seek to protect, appreciate and enjoy. Thus many people relate to, for instance, the preservation of huts for their heritage value.

However, the environment which inspires in us that very response to protect, appreciate and enjoy is, itself, the legacy of the caring and custodianship of the indigenous people of Australia.

Within this environment are many recognisable indigenous cultural features such as stone tools and rock art sites. Not so readily discernible as a well-crafted stone tool are the many places of complex spiritual significance which form an integral part of the indigenous peoples' rich cultural heritage.

Perhaps by adding a few words to our aims and objectives we can acknowledge this generation of the custodianship of the land, which we also seek to achieve.

Joan Goodrum

Joan Goodrum's proposed amendment to the aims and objects of the constitution is shown here with the added words depicted in bold type.

- Promotion of national parks and of measures for the protection of fauna and flora, scenery, natural features, **Aboriginal and non-indigenous cultural heritage** 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, natural phenomena **and cultural heritage** by organised field outings, meetings or any other means.
- Cooperation with organisations and persons having similar interests and objectives.
- Promotion of, and education for, conservation, **Aboriginal and non-indigenous cultural heritage** and the planning of land-use to achieve conservation.

New Kosciusko plan disappoints

The National Parks Association (ACT) has written to the New South Wales Minister for the Environment, Mr Chris Hartcher, expressing its concern and disappointment with amendments to the Kosciusko National Park plan of management announced in May. The Association has played a role in alpine conservation, including Kosciusko National Park, for many years.

The changes

On 1 May Mr Hartcher announced a number of changes to the plan of management, the document which controls the conservation and use of the national park. The changes included:

- allowing an increase of 987 public beds at existing resorts—673 at Perisher Valley, 174 at Guthega and 140 at Smiggin Holes. There are already about ten thousand beds allowed in the national park.
- making an allocation of twenty-five beds to volunteer ski patrols
- preparing a proposal for better arrival facilities and the development of a village centre in Perisher Valley
- moving the national park visitors' centre from Sawpit Creek to Jindabyne (What will happen to the old visitors' centre?)
- sealing the Alpine Way, from Thredbo to Geehi, at the rate of \$1 million a year
- planning the conservation and economic use of three historic sites—Yarrangobilly Caves House, Currango Homestead and the Kiandra Courthouse/Chalet
- extending the terms of existing accommodation leases so that they expire in 2025
- supporting a ski circuit linking the Perisher—Smiggins and Blue Cow—Guthega resorts.

The NSW Government rejected the idea of creating head leases for the Perisher Valley, Smiggin Holes and Guthega resorts. The head lease at



View from Mt Pilot, Kosciusko National Park. Photo by Babette Scougall

Thredbo helps integrate the management of the village, and removes municipal responsibilities from the National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Mr Hartcher said the announcement 'concludes probably the most exhaustive community consultation program ever undertaken by the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service'. Over 2600 submissions responded to the *Ski 2000* discussion paper in 1990 and draft amendments to the plan of management released in 1991. 'Today's decisions are in keeping with the bulk of the views expressed by the many respondents,' he said.

Unfortunately the views of conservationists were ignored. The NPA wrote that 'despite the lengthy consultation process, to which the NPA (ACT) contributed two submissions, the input from conservation groups aimed at protecting the ecological integrity of the alpine environment has been disregarded in favour of maximising the profit of the ski

industry. Both the *Ski 2000* document and the amendments that have arisen from it have considered the alpine ski area in terms of ski slope carrying capacity without consideration for the environmental carrying capacity of the area. The developments proposed to fill this identified ski capacity will have some serious impacts on the alpine environment.'

Indeed, Mr Hartcher's press release proudly proclaimed, 'Expert advice on safe and sustainable development was also received from international consultants who helped plan facilities for the Calgary Winter Olympics.' This shows how the interests of skiers and resort owners took precedence over those of conservationists and national park managers.

In its letter, the NPA stated that the provision of a thousand more beds inside the national park would have a greater impact on the park than the provision of a thousand beds elsewhere. 'An overnight

visitor uses more water, creates more sewage and generates a great deal more rubbish than a day visitor. Waste disposal in particular is at present far below acceptable standards. Sewage treatment and rubbish disposal services need to be vastly improved to cater for existing visitor levels as well as the proposed 10 per cent increase in overnight visitors and increases in day use. These improvements **must** be in place before accommodation increases are permitted.'

The director-general of the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, Dr Neil Shepherd, has said that sound environmental management and protection was the service's paramount concern. Funds raised from the sale of bed allocations will be used to improve sewage treatment, water supplies and roads, and to support scientific research beyond the resorts. New lease arrangements will require major operators to contribute to environmental monitoring and research.

Notes attached to Mr Hartcher's press release also promised to pursue regional waste disposal and recycling strategies, and to take initiatives which 'will also address the enhancement of the viability of rare and endangered species throughout the park'. Presumably this includes the mountain pygmy possums that live under the ski runs at Blue Cow resort.

NPA's letter to the minister concluded, 'Over the last decade we have witnessed a constant watering down of the protection provisions of the management plans and we are desperately concerned that too many compromises are being made. Without a moratorium on further developments and without greatly improved environmental controls on existing developments we may not be able to sustain Kosciusko's unique natural qualities. Australian citizens will lose an important part of their precious alpine heritage.'

Roger Green

Mining and the environment

What do miners and conservationists have in common? Some answers to this question were given to members at the April general meeting by Dr Don McMichael, CBE, a member of the board of directors of the Australian Minerals and Energy Environment Foundation. Don has impeccable references as an environmentalist, being the first head of the Commonwealth Department of the Environment. He has also been head of the National Museum of Australia, the director of the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, chairman of the Landscape Conservation Committee of the National Trust and a director of the Australian Conservation Foundation.

While he was occupying these positions he came face-to-face with many mining and environmental problems. So much so, in fact, that he was able to give us a very interesting history of conflicts between miners and conservationists. (I feel sure that there is a book here just waiting to be written.)

Don's involvement with miners began during his term at ACF when mining the Barrier Reef became an issue. Later, when with the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, other issues relating to mining began to build up. Of these the Colong wilderness was probably the most significant, and showed, through the victory of the Colong committee, the powers of lobbying and coalitions. In Don's time with the Parks and Wildlife Service, though, it was the NSW Mines Department rather than miners which was most opposed to the establishment of parks and reserves. While Don was with the Department of the Environment, mining was again a major source of conflict with strong opposition to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park and Kakadu becoming very active. These and related issues were solved when the government, with the later support of the High

Court, prevented further sand mining on Fraser Island.

All these incidents resulted in the public image of mining becoming very bad and the Australian Mining Industries Council wanted an independent body to improve both the image of miners and the impact of mining on the environment. This was the genesis of the Australian Minerals and Energy Environment Foundation with a board of directors made up of environmentalists, miners and academics. The foundation's charter is to promote the implementation of sustainable development principles in Australia's mineral, energy and related industries. It sees the sustainable development of mining as the maintenance of a balance between the needs of population, the needs of the environment and the level of mining activity necessary to support the population.

Don believes that the Australian Minerals and Energy Environment Foundation has won respect in its field because it is seen to have the necessary expertise and independence as well as being socially aware.

The Australian Minerals and Energy Environment Foundation has set up Environmental Excellence Awards and Don showed us a series of slides depicting the work of recent recipients. One winner was Hammersley Iron Pty Ltd which was highly commended for its 'innovative environmental approach' in designing the Marandoo mining project adjacent to the Karijini National Park in Western Australia.

Don's address was followed by vigorous questioning and I am sure members left the meeting with an enhanced appreciation that today mining companies are more prepared to invest resources and capital to improve the area around their mines.

Len Haskew

REPORTS

Participate or perish!

Environment Subcommittee

The sad news is that, after a number of years of active and effective participation in the activities of the subcommittee, Dianne Thompson has decided to hang up her environmental indignation for the moment and concentrate on things economic. The good news is that recent returnee to Canberra and NPA (ACT) Stephen Johnston has immediately thrown himself enthusiastically into the ACT environmental battle. Stephen is particularly keen to get the Association more involved in Canberra Nature Park's 'Parkcare' activities.

During the period under review the subcommittee has laboured long and hard over a number of issues—some old, some new. These include the following items.

Ecotourism: Meetings have been held with David Lawrance, chief executive of the ACT Tourism Commission, who is preparing an options paper for the ACT Government. The Association's view was put to Mr Lawrance that while we appreciate the government's desire to promote tourism in the ACT and to derive some revenue from parks and reserves to assist their maintenance, we will insist that the paramount purpose of nature conservation not be compromised in any proposals adopted by the government.

Kosciusko National Park: The NSW Government has recently revised the plan of management for the park. This follows the *Ski 2000* exercise conducted several years ago in which the NPA (ACT) participated. The revised plan is a great disappointment. The decision to allow a further thousand beds in the ski resorts will, we believe, compromise still further the ecological integrity of the park. A strong letter detailing our concerns has been sent to the NSW Minister for the Environment. This latest effort in watering down the protection provisions for our precious alpine area has sharpened our determination to

assist and participate in NPA Victoria's forthcoming analysis of the impact of ski resorts on the alpine environment.

Telecommunication towers: For several years the subcommittee has been concerned by the intention of the telecommunication industry to cause visual and environmental harm to many of our natural areas. Other members of the Canberra community have belatedly realised what damage unregulated towers can cause. In a recent letter to the Association in reply to our latest protest, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Housing and Regional Development, Mr Brian Howe, assured us that at last the ACT Planning Authority and National Capital Planning Authority are working to develop a comprehensive telecommunications plan for the ACT. Public consultation has been promised. Mr Howe states, *inter alia*, 'there is no legal basis on which telecommunication carriers may proceed to construct further towers (until the plan is approved) and I do not expect to have to intervene in limiting further construction.' Just how the carriers were allowed to put the towers they already have on Canberra's hills without proper planning consideration and approval is a mystery. Canberra's bureaucrats must have been sleepier than usual.

ANPC: The subcommittee continues to work closely with the Australian National Parks Council, our peak body. At our July meeting we were fortunate to have as our guest Doug Humann, director of NPA Victoria and ANPC representative at peak meetings with the new Commonwealth Minister for the Environment. Doug was able to bring us up to date on a number of national and regional issues, including the Alps World Heritage proposal, NPA Victoria's policy on fishing in national parks, the Commonwealth Govern-

ment's disposal of lighthouses, the national reserves system and biodiversity strategy.

Let me end my stewardship of the position of convener of this subcommittee by yet another plea for greater participation by ordinary members in the activities of our subcommittees. We have an active and lively core group aided marvellously by the Association's research and project officer, Nicki Taws. Nevertheless, the issues we as a nature conservation organisation have to face diminish neither in number nor urgency. Participate or perish!

Timothy Walsh

Environment and Conservation Consultative Committee

Native grasses: Peter Cullen and Ian Fraser met with Brendan Godfrey, deputy secretary of the Department of Social Security, to discuss the native grass planting around the department's building in Tuggeranong. Mr Godfrey cited allergic reaction by staff to the grass and visual appearance as reasons for their being mown, fertilised and irrigated.

Mr Godfrey's complete lack of understanding of what might be expected from native grass planting led to a recommendation by the committee that public education about native grasses, their establishment and their appearance is necessary. The committee also agreed that Senator Faulkner should be approached about the use of native planting on Commonwealth sites.

Environment Grants Program: This program was initiated following a review of the ACT Heritage Grants Program which previously provided some funding to ACT environment groups. Although the program is defined as project-based, it is possible to define the current activities of NPA in terms of a project. The

Hilltop towers

The proliferation of telecommunications towers on hilltops in the ACT has become a concern to many ACT residents. The hills around Canberra provide a magnificent backdrop to the 'bush capital' and it has always been the plan to leave them in a natural state. They are included in the soon-to-be-gazetted Canberra Nature Park, an area managed for nature conservation and a park enjoyed for its natural, aesthetic and recreational values by many Canberra residents.

The addition of man-made structures to these hilltops spoils their beauty and generates greater traffic to these areas, scarring the landscape, creating noise and possibly putting at risk flora and fauna.

Of particular concern to the NPA

is that our environment is being damaged for the benefit of technology that will very soon be obsolete. Moreover, the NPA fails to see why the federal government exempted telecommunications carriers from local planning laws.

Because of their concerns, the NPA wrote to Brian Howe, Minister for Housing and Regional Development, in June, expressing the view that the exemption from planning laws should be overturned, and asking him to ascertain whether environmental protection in the national code on telecommunications should be strengthened. As well, the Association suggested that the code include provisions for the demolition of towers and their infrastructure when they become obsolete, and

provision for complete restoration of the landscape.

In the minister's response, he stated that advice from the Australian Government Solicitor's office made it clear that the carriers are subject to Commonwealth law and are consequently subject to the provisions of the National Capital Plan. A telecommunications plan is therefore being formulated which will result in an amendment to the National Capital Plan—this will involve full public consultation. This should occur in September 1994. He concluded by saying that, meanwhile, there is no legal basis on which telecommunications carriers may proceed to construct further towers.

Environment and Conservation Consultative Committee

continued from previous page

Environment Centre, for example, has titled its project 'Support for environmental and educational resources' in its application for a grant through the program. The Environment and Conservation Consultative Committee will be reviewing applications.

Applications for funding for a six-month period (1 July to 31 December 1994) have now closed and are currently being reviewed. Priorities for projects to be funded over this period include: assessment of natural heritage values, preservation of locally occurring plant and animal species, monitoring of air and water quality, and community education. Priorities for funding will be reviewed by the committee annually.

NPA subcommittees

All members are invited to attend subcommittee meetings to contribute to the work of the NPA. Please check the calendar or the back page of this *Bulletin* and telephone the

office on 282 5813 (we now have an answering machine if the office is unattended) if details of the venue are not provided.

Current agenda items are as follows.

Namadgi Subcommittee

- Review of aims and objects
- Orroral Homestead and walking track
- Tennent Homestead
- Boboyan pine forest
- Tenth anniversary of Namadgi National Park
- Ecotourism policy for the ACT
- Marketing strategy for ACT parks and reserves
- Namadgi work parties

Environment Subcommittee

- Review of aims and objects
- Alpine areas study
- World Heritage nomination for alpine areas in NSW, Victoria and ACT
- Telecommunications towers
- Ecotourism
- Jervis Bay
- Bushfire seminar
- Fishing in national parks
- Budawang work parties
- ANPC peak group meeting

Bushfire submission

NPA's ever-active campaigners have sent yet another submission on bushfires to the NSW Government—this time to the NSW Select Committee on Bushfires. In the last issue of the *Bulletin*, a summary appeared of the NPA's first submission on bushfires.

Biodiversity and fire

The effects and effectiveness of fire management

October 8-9 1994



A conference organised by the Victorian National Parks Association

For information contact Jenny Barnett phone (03) 650 8296

Queensland's national parks

A 51 200 hectare extension to Bladensburg National Park means the conservation of Mitchell Grass plains, now protected for the first time in Queensland—alluvial plains, low ranges and footslopes—and includes areas of vegetation types previously not well represented in the park.

Lochern National Park of 24 300 hectares has a twenty-kilometre frontage along the Thompson River and incorporates that river's permanent billabongs, known as the Broadwater. The park was acquired because it is an excellent example of the major land types found within the Channel Country Grass Downs biogeographic region. It incorporates nine ecosystems, two of which are not represented anywhere else in Queensland's national parks.

An 8200 hectare extension to Blackdown Tableland National Park includes much of the rugged southern escarpment of the tableland, a rough sandstone plateau at the junction of the Dawson, Expedition and Shotover ranges. The extension increases the park area to 32 000 hectares.

A 1031 hectare extension to Sundown National Park has conserved the distinctive riverine habitat along 10 kilometres of the Severn River. There are high scenic values associated with this section of the river which features a number of small waterfalls and rapids. The extension is mountainous, traprock country supporting diverse species of vegetation, including tumbledown gum, silverleaf ironbark, white box, black cyprus, open forest and woodland.

NPA News, NPAQ, June 1994

Fraser Island

There will be no sand mining on World Heritage-listed Fraser Island or the remainder of the Great Sandy Region; there will be no exploration for, or extraction of, minerals or oil

and gas on Fraser Island or within the remainder of the Great Sandy Region. There will be no logging on Fraser Island. The new management plan sets out four major outcomes: a secure future for the natural and cultural environment of the region; a secure community setting for people living in the region; community access to the reserves and opportunities of the region; and a basis upon which to sustain the activities occurring within the region.

NPA News, NPAQ, June 1994

Worms and waste

Worms are the new weapon against waste and they're on trial at Fitzroy Falls in Morton National Park.

The worms are being used in the new compost toilet system which has been installed at the recently completed \$2.6 million visitor centre at Fitzroy Falls.

With protection of the environment a major aim of the three-year redevelopment program, devising a system of handling human waste was just one of the challenges facing the redevelopment project team.

The area's high rainfall combined with the predominant sandstone geology were two major considerations when designing the toilet system which had to cope with more than 600 000 visitors a year.

Fitzroy Falls Newsletter, NPWS, July 1994

Compost technology

When Melbourne's Preston City Council drastically reduced the charge for residents to dump their green waste at the council's resource recovery centre, more garden waste was collected in just six months than had been recovered in the previous three years! The council has now found a way to reduce disposal costs and divert the green waste from landfill. The waste is now the raw material for an innovative technology which processes it into a com-

mercial growing medium for nurseries, home gardeners, landscapers and horticulturalists. There is now a ready market for this waste material which has been contributing about 20-40 per cent of landfill by volume. Food and green waste together total at least 50 per cent of volume in landfills.

Habitat, ACF magazine, May 1994

Jervis Bay

Marine reserve

The NSW Government will extend the newly established 6000 hectare national park at Jervis Bay to include a marine reserve, giving the bay similar protection to the Great Barrier Reef.

'The government recognises the special qualities of Jervis Bay and is keen to see them protected for future generations,' Mr Fahey said.

'Jervis Bay and its adjacent waters are endowed with a unique marine heritage of national significance recognised in its inclusion on the Register of the National Estate in June last year.'

The Weekend Australian, May 28-29 1994

Botanic Gardens

Jervis Bay Botanic Gardens, the frost-free annexe of the Australian National Botanic Gardens in Canberra, received national heritage status on 8 March 1994 when it was entered in the Interim List of the Register of the National Estate.

The director of the Australian Botanic Gardens, Dr David Kay, said that the listing was important in that it recognised both the role of the gardens as part of the national collection and its regional focus in displaying the flora of the south coast of New South Wales.

Trust News, National Trust of Australia, May 1994

Logging of native forests

It's been another year of unabated logging in around 200 000 hectares of native forest. Another 5.5 million tonnes of woodchips have been exported to the northern hemisphere. In return we have increased our foreign debt by borrowing tens of millions of dollars to subsidise this industry. In Victoria alone the industry was subsidised to the tune of \$10.5 million in 1992-93.

The increasing supply of wood from our pine and eucalypt plantations is more than adequate for our domestic need and will readily supply an export market by the end of the decade. So why are our native forests and woodlands being logged at such an alarming rate? The huge subsidy to the industry has allowed logging to accelerate unabated to supply the overseas market with cheap woodchips and to meet the domestic demand for firewood.

The best chance we have of curbing this madness is to deal with the woodchip licences and this year the battle continues.

ACTwild, The Wilderness Society newsletter, Winter 1994

Tropical timber

The two warring parties in the continuing dispute over the logging of tropical rainforest came together in Sydney in April to discuss the possibility of a cooperative approach to the problem. Delegates came from Japan, Malaysia, UK, Switzerland, NZ, New Guinea and the Solomons.

Under the capable chairmanship of John Kerin, a rational, though at times emotional, exchange of views took place as the eighteen speakers presented papers.

The best presentation of all must have sent a chill through the importers. The environmental coordinator of B & Q, Britain's largest hardware retailer, told of the company's response to a very torrid campaign waged by Friends of the Earth against them in 1990. After trying

to ignore the escalating publicity asking the public not to buy from B & Q because of its import of tropical timber, the directors took a policy decision to stop buying timber from unknown sources by the end of 1995. They have also decided to buy only timber which has been independently certified by a reliable and objective organisation to have come from forests, the harvesting of which has not caused destruction or severe damage to a natural forest anywhere in the world. Their concern over the role played by retailers in environmental issues soon spread to their competitors, who had to come on side because there was just no alternative. Similarly their suppliers in the timber trade, who initially refused to cooperate in the certification process on the grounds that it was impossible, soon found that cooperation was more practical than losing the business of B & Q.

The Colong Bulletin, The Colong Foundation for Wilderness, May 1994

Drowning Blue Mts rivers

Recent modifications to Warragamba Dam added 5 metres to the dam wall, pushing flood waters upstream into the Greater Blue Mountains National Parks system. The Fahey Government now proposes to further raise the Warragamba Dam wall at a cost of \$250 million. The water level from the massive new dam will raise Lake Burragorang by up to 36 metres. That would double the lake's surface area and have enormous upstream effects.

Upstream of the dam, key parts of the Nattai and Kanangra wilderness areas will be flooded. These wild places are the cradle of the Australian bushwalking movement, part of our cultural heritage.

According to the Water Board, Sydney could easily reduce water consumption by a third. This reduction in water demand would enable greater flood storage in the existing

dam and defer the need for a new water supply dam. A new spillway as originally proposed by the Water Board can make the dam safe under any circumstances. The former Greiner Government questioned whether the proposal was needed and the credibility of the Dam Safety Committee members when studying the 'mega-dam'.

The Colong Bulletin, The Colong Foundation for Wilderness, May 1994

Bat rediscovered

In March this year a team of researchers from the Centre for Resource and Environment Studies at the ANU trapped an endangered spider-eating bat in the Badja State Forest.

The golden-tipped bat *Kerivoula papuensis* is highly unusual because it eats only spiders plucked from their webs as it flits among forest trees. Growing to only 60 millimetres long as an adult, the bat was believed to be extinct in Australia until it was rediscovered in 1984 after an eighty-year absence.

State Forests (formerly NSW Forestry Commission) were notified of the find which is on the border of the Deua wilderness. Their response was that the bat was unlikely to stop logging in the area, and the commission would review what impact 'if any' logging might have on it.

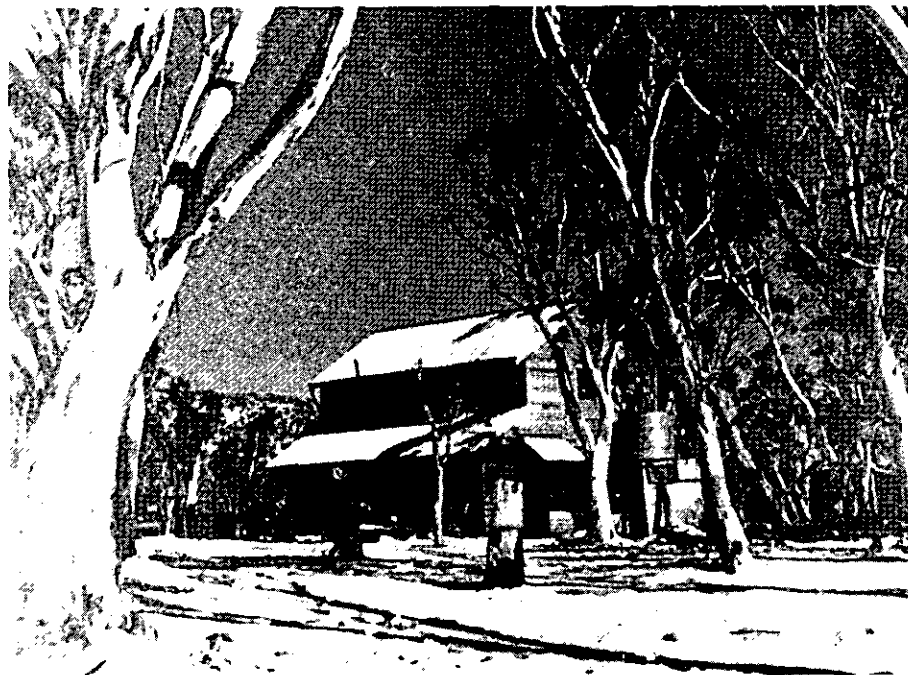
ACTwild, The Wilderness Society newsletter, Winter 1994

Saulwick poll

A national poll published in *The Age* and the *Sydney Morning Herald* in April showed that the majority of Australians across all ages believe that environmental protection must be pursued even if there is some reduction in economic growth. Significantly, supporters of all political parties place environmental protection as their top priority.

Conservation News, ACF newsletter, May 1994

Mt Franklin chalet



Mt Franklin chalet, 1939. Photo by Reg Alder

The Canberra Alpine Club was formed in 1934 and there must be some credit to the dedication and enthusiasm of its members that a substantial chalet was built on the slopes of Mt Franklin during 1938-39. It is a two-storey building of wood, the lower floor having a kitchen and a large common room with a skillion room along one side used as a ski room with lovely stable doors. Upstairs is divided into cubicles with four bunks in each. The kitchen stove originally came from the Prime Minister's Lodge.

Today the chalet stands deserted and unused but still maintained by the Canberra Alpine Club. The siting of the chalet was perhaps unfortunate. It is still a source of debate to all but surveyors with precision instruments whether it is astride the border of the ACT or is just within it. Most believe that the toilet at least is in NSW. This unfortunate location makes it out-of-bounds now for occupation because it is in the protected water catchment area between the Corin and Bendora dams and also in the

designated wilderness area, with restrictions on occupation, of Namadgi National Park. In addition the diminution of snow falls over the past years has reduced its viability as a snow resort.

The length and depth of the snow in the seasons of the 1930s must have been substantial for the club to even consider building a large chalet. The population of Canberra at that time was small and there must have been considerable commitment among the few members. The viability of the chalet was recognised at the onset and the constitution of the club was drafted to allow for visitors to have the use of the chalet.

Originally it would appear that there was no limitation on the number of visitors, since in 1939 I was one of a weekend party of seven Sydney Bush Walkers to visit the chalet. In 1947 the number of non-member weekend visitors was limited to four with twelve during weekdays and only then if accompanied by, and guest of, a member.

The visit to the chalet was to be

my first experience of snow and the weekend was not without incidents. A six-seater sedan car was hired for the trip from Sydney and the seventh passenger, Dot English (Butler), either squeezed between, sat on or laid across knees in the back seat for the journey. Our driver had only recently qualified and with a strange and more powerful vehicle showed little skill in negotiating corners or bends and less in the snow.

We first visited a shock-absorber factory in Woolloomooloo, operated by Wally Reid who had a chalet at Kiandra. Here he also had a ski hire facility and had built a ramp, covered by coir matting, from an upper floor so that novices such as I could practise at least remaining upright on the slope. I recently saw an assemblage of newsreels of the 1939-45 era in which there were a number of segments on skiing during that era. One clip showed a factory building with a coir mat practice ski slope built between floors. It was probably the one that I attended.

With the late practice start and the road conditions then, it was not until somewhere between one and two in the morning that we bundled out of the car to sleep alongside it just over the Murrumbidgee bridge. Snow was met well below Piccadilly Circus and we had a skidding drive on to the chalet. There was no ski tow, skis had to be waxed and skins fitted for coming back up the slopes. My practice at the factory didn't help much and the main skill that I acquired was to fall over without injury when the downhill rush became too fast or rough.

Heavy mist and snow set in late on Saturday afternoon and it was more with luck than good management that we managed to find our way back to the chalet without compass from the summit.

Although more parties of Sydney Bush Walkers may have visited the chalet, I can only quote those who

recorded their visits in the club magazine. In August of 1940 a party of four stayed at the chalet for a few days to eventually go on to Coolamine Plains to visit Molly Taylor, who was once a Sydney Bush Walker before her marriage to Tom Taylor.

They came to Canberra through an avenue of wattles in magnificent bloom and, like most strangers in those days, drove around and around the circuitous roads trying to find people to tell them about the chalet. On securing sufficient information they set off and after passing the Cotter noticed a car with snow on it. The driver stopped and handed over the key to the chalet—rather a fortuitous meeting considering the information gained.

They soon met snow and, with light failing and a boiling radiator, came to the end of the road, but no chalet. Back-tracking, they saw a faint wheel track in the snow and following it came to the chalet. On the next day there was a blizzard and the time was spent indoors. Two more days were spent in sunshine and it seems that the snow experience of the party was no better than my earlier party. The drive down to Brindabella without chains was, luckily, without mishap. At the post office Miss Franklin was met to tell the party they would need all of their woollies 'up in them thar hills' while she was in short sleeves and with bare legs.

In November 1942 Laz Pura, who often walked alone, travelled by mail car to Brindabella and down in the valley met Mr McMahon and Mr Bluett who both gave food and advice on the route to the Franklin chalet. The food was in exchange for some fresh shared perishable supplies that Laz had brought with him. The two men of the valley impressed a stamp of human kindness upon the heart of Laz for the rest of his life. Laz died alone from a heart attack on a track near Cradle Mountain in Tasmania in 1949.

On arrival at the chalet Laz found it unlocked, deserted and very ne-

glected. He later learned that the club had lent the chalet to the Royal Dutch Air Force for the end of the winter season. He spent some time cleaning it up and making it comfortable. In the chalet he found plenty of food, to some of which he helped himself, later reimbursing the club. One of his delights, whilst luxuriating in the use of a soft bed and protected from the storms and rain, was to find a piano in the dining room. On it he was able to express his feelings with folk songs of his native land. Laz was a Russian and earned his living as a bespoke tailor in Sydney.

In July 1943 a party of seven Sydney Bush Walkers, after a good deal of war-time organisation to obtain leave, equipment, transport and to dispatch food by train, mail car and pack-horse, found their first snow 40 kilometres from the chalet.

They had quite a struggle through the snow, although only carrying equipment, clothes and a little food, to reach a comfortable 'cubicle' near Maxwell's.

Next morning Mr Maxwell loaded his two packhorses with over 100 kilos of food and it took six hours of solid plugging over the 19 kilometres of road to reach the chalet. On the way they met an outgoing party

who had had to abandon their car. They felt better when they were congratulated on not having a car. The party initially came in three groups, the last having found another 'cubicle' about 10 kilometres from the turn-off. With only about 14 kilometres to go and never having skied before and with no tuition, they arrived in good trim.

A group of eight members of the Canberra Alpine Club arrived on the Saturday night, having skied 14 kilometres from their car. Snow continued to fall heavily and by Monday there was a blizzard which continued for three days. One of the party had to leave and it took him six hours to reach Maxwell's, almost exhausted through ploughing often knee-deep in the freshly fallen snow.

The chalet today remains locked and barred except for maintenance parties; the snow has receded and no more does it resound to the community singing around the piano or to the often retold experiences in the heaviest of the snow falls. An era has passed and for those who have experienced the camaraderie of the chalet, the hope remains that it at least may be spared destruction until a time when a bushfire might engulf it.

Reg Alder



Hilma Galliot, Flo Alsworth at Mt Franklin Chalet, c.1940. Original photo by Alex Colley, copy by Reg Alder

Namadgi National Park

Ten years ago Namadgi National Park was declared. Since 1979 it had been formally named Gudgenby Nature Reserve. Great was our rejoicing as our slogan of 'A national park for the national capital' had been achieved.

Having achieved the park, our Association has continued to work for and in the park in conjunction with the Parks and Conservation Service.

Over the past decade we have been involved in many projects as the photographs illustrate. Willing members have built walking tracks, eradicated weeds and feral pines, stabilised and preserved historic buildings, published interpretative pamphlets and nature books, and organised publicity and informative displays.

We look forward to a continued involvement in working for the preservation of our heritage in Namadgi National Park.



Reg Alder and Frank Clements at Orroral Homestead.
Photo by Fiona MacDonald Brand



Tennent Homestead. Photo by Reg Alder



Anticlockwise: Yerrabi Track work party; Charles Hill and David Hall working at Tennent Homestead; reconstructing Orroral Homestead. Photos by Reg Alder



Briar cutting in Gudgenby valley. Photo by Fiona MacDonald Brand

Road closures in northern Namadgi

In 1991 Namadgi National Park increased in size from 94 to 106 thousand hectares. Included in the 12 000 hectares were several kilometres of fire trails and breaks mainly in the northern Cotter area. Recently a few of these trails were closed off as you may have noticed if you frequent the area.

The 'trails' that have been closed are the Pago Break, Old Mill Fire Break and many smaller tracks associated with these two. The breaks were originally created as part of a previous fire management strategy and as such were not designed to cater for much traffic. The main reason for the closures was erosion, associated with steepness of the trails and uncontrolled use by vehicles.

To help the rehabilitation of the trails, a bulldozer was used to rip across the tracks and to put in cross drains. These will assist in stopping water flow down the tracks. They should also help encourage the establishment of native plants from the surrounding bush. In the interim a special grass mix developed for reserves was used along the trails to help with the stabilisation of the soil. To help protect this work the



After the fire. Photo by Reg Alder

areas have been signposted and fenced to try and stop access by vehicles. It will be interesting watching these areas come back over the next few years.

On a sadder note it would be remiss of me not to mention the passing of Rowleys Hut. The hut was accidentally destroyed by fire on 13 July. It appears that the fire was

started by a log that rolled out of the fire during the night. The fire then spread rapidly, engulfing the hut. The fellows involved in the incident reported the fire that morning and were visibly shaken. This mishap must go down as a tragic accident.

Craig Richardson
Namadgi National Park

...we're in this together

(This is an extract from the speech given by Greg Fraser on World Environment Day, which was launched by Bill Wood at Namadgi.)

The National Parks Association of the ACT was formed in 1960 with the aim of having a park created in the southern part of the ACT.

In 1963 the Association prepared a proposal for a park around Mt Kelly. The Association was reported in the *Canberra Times* as believing that the growing population of Canberra needed such a park as 'breathing space'.

The proposal to the government was signed by the then office-bearers of the Association, Dr Nancy Burbidge and Fiona Brand. Both have had enduring links with

Namadgi.

The proposal from the Association to name Mt Burbidge as a tribute to the efforts of Nancy Burbidge was supported by the ACT Parks and Conservation Service and came to fruition in 1992.

I am pleased that Fiona Brand has joined us today. While that proposal was submitted in 1963, Fiona has continued her links with the park and is currently serving as a member of the Environment and Conservation Consultative Committee.

Other members of the NPA who were instrumental in promoting the proposal through the 1960s and 1970s were Dr Robert Story and Juliana Henry.

While the community kept alive

the proposal for a national park, there were many within the government who similarly endeavoured to promote the concept. John Turner, Ron Murray, Dr Brian Pratt, Dr David Shorthouse, Frank Gnauck, David Kerr and Paul Davies were but some of the dedicated land management professionals whose contributions over the last ten years should be recognised.

Both Peter Hann and Brian Terrill have made long-standing contributions as managers of the park, and the Namadgi that we are so proud of today is the result of their efforts assisted by the ranger and park worker staff.

The combination of interest and initiative from community

5-13 November One Week Murrumbidgee Canoe Trip
Leader: Kevin Frawley Phone: 271 2883(w) 299 3995 or 282 2973(h)

This is a joint NPA/Canberra Bushwalking Club trip. Canoe from Darlington Point to Hay over a week. A relaxing trip. Sandy beaches, bird watching, wildlife, red gum forest and river scapes. Canoe based camping and a need to be self sustained over a week. Suit fit beginners. Contact leader by 26 October. Costs to be negotiated.

6 November Sunday Walk 3/A/D/E
Mt Gudgenby Ref: Yaouk 1:25000
Leader: Mick Kelly Phone: 241 2330(h)

Meet at Kambah Village Shops at 7.30am. A demanding 18 km walk mainly through areas of thick scrub and regrowth. Total climb about 700 m, some rock scrambling involved. 100 km \$20 per car.

6 November Sunday Walk 2/A/B
Orroral to Fishlock Rock Ref: Rendezvous Creek 1: 25000
Leader: Reg Alder Phone: 254 2240(h)

Meet at Kambah Village Shops at 8.30am. A walk up the Cotter Hut Road to the rock near Fishlock Yard and on to the sheep yards near Sawpit Creek. 80km \$16 per car.

12 November Saturday Walk 2/B/C/E
Mt Lincoln Ref: Corin Dam 1:25000
Leader: Stephen Johnston Phone: 254 3738(h)

Meet at Kambah Village Shops at 8am. From Smoker's Trail cross the broad expanse of Jumbuk Flat, scramble over the northern rocky side of Mt Lincoln to the open summit for views. Return via the western ridge and swampy frost hollows to Smoker's Trail. 80km \$16 per car.

13 November Sunday Walk 2/A/C/E
Tolwong Mine Bungonia Ref: Caoura 1:25000
Leader: Mike Smith Phone: 248 3624(w) 286 2984(h)

Meet at Southwell Park and corner of Northbourne Avenue at 8am. Descend to the Shoalhaven River by the old flying fox trail. Wade across river at old mine workings. Return by different route to entrance of Bungonia State Recreation Area. 500m descent and ascent. Small car shuffle required. 250km \$50 per car.

16 November Wednesday Walk
Phone Phyl Goddard on 254 8279(h) or NPA office on 282 5813 for details.

19/20 November Pack Walk 3/A/B
Kiandra Area Ref: Tantangara 1:10000
Yarrangobilly 1:10000

Leader: Steven Forst Phone: 274 8426(w) 251 6817(h)
Contact leader by the Wednesday for details. A walk from Kiandra Goldfields to Four Mile Hut exploring the tributaries of Four Mile Creek. 360km \$72 per car.

20 November Sunday Walk 2/A/E
Fishing Gap to Cotter River Ref: Tidbinbilla 1:25000
Leader: Phil Bubb Phone: 246 6128(w) 281 4929(h)

Meet at Kambah Village Shops at 9am. Drive to Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve. Climb on fire trail to Fishing Gap. From the gap a track drops down to the Cotter River. Extended lunch. Seasonal timing should see the track passing through areas covered in Dillwynia (egg and bacon) and Mountain Boronia. 14km. 60km \$12 per car.

26/27 November Car Camp/Walk 1/A
Mt Budawang/Shoalhaven River Ref: Braidwood 1:25000
Leader: Len Haskew Phone: 281 4268(h)

Contact leader by the Wednesday for details. Climb Mt Budawang for 360 degree views on Saturday. Car camp at Warri Bridge Reserve on Saturday night. On Sunday walk downstream along the Shoalhaven River looking for good swimming places. Come for both days or either one. 260km full trip (or 160km to Warri Bridge only). \$52 or (\$32).

27 November Sunday Stroll 2/A
Mt Ainslie-Duntroon-Mt Pleasant Ref: ACT 1:100000
Leader: Gary Schneider Phone: 254 8901(h)

Meet at the carpark behind the War Memorial at 10am. A full days walk that includes excellent views of Canberra and RMC Duntroon. Visiting General Bridges' Grave, Changi Chapel, Duntroon Chapel, Duntroon House (outside only) and the Duntroon Dairy. Bring your lunch, drinks and binoculars.

27 November Sunday Canoe Trip
Lake Googong
Leader: Christine Higham Phone: 269 1425(w) 238 1391(h)

This is a joint NPA/ Canberra Bushwalking Club trip. Easy day trip launching from northern end of dam wall, heading for the lovely gorges at the southern end, enjoy lunch and then return. Ideal introductory trip for beginners. BYO canoes or hire. 40km \$10 per car.

3/4 December Pack Walk 2/A/C/E
Gungartan Area Ref: Khancoban 1:50000
Kosciusko 1:50000
Leader: Mick Kelly Phone: 241 2330(h)

Contact leader by the previous Wednesday (23/11/94) numbers limited. Leave Canberra Friday, by 4pm and if possible walk to Disappointment Spur Hut in evening. Saturday proceed to Schlink Pass, Gungartan, Tin Hut and maybe as far as Mawson's Hut. Return via Mawson's, to Schlink Pass across the Kerries and back to cars on the Sunday. If folks are interested, will convert to a three day walk and take in the Rolling Grounds, Consett Stephen Pass and Mt Tate on the Monday, Low impact camping; however may use huts if weather not good. Good gear required. 480km \$96 per car plus park entry fee.

4 December Sunday Canoe Trip
Yass River Gorge
Leader: Brian Palm Phone: 248 9245(h)

This is a joint NPA/Canberra Bushwalking Club trip. Easy day trip on Lake Burrinjuck, starting from Woolgarlo on the Yass River arm of the Lake heading north west through Devils Pass into the Yass River for lunch. Woolgarlo is 90 minutes drive from Civic

6/11 December Ranger Pack Hard
High Country cross over Guthega to Mt Selwyn Ref:
Kosciusko 1:100000

Tantangara 1:100000
Leader: Peter Tedder Phone: 282 171(h)

A six day FBI walk along the main ridge and alpine heath lands of the Kosciusko National Park. The walk features, spring and alpine flowers and huts which will form the daily objectives. We plan to visit Tin, Mawson, Cezack, Mackeys, Boobie, Brooks and Broken Dam with possible side trips to Valentines and Happys Huts. If sufficient numbers prevent a cross over, then the route will be modified or we will arrange collection on a commercial basis. Please ring Peter by 21 November. Total walking about 70km

10/11 December Weekend Canoe Trip
Murrumbidgee
Leader: Jill Roberts Phone: 249 1390(h)
Brian Palm 248 9245(h)

This is a joint NPA/Canberra Bushwalking Club trip. Whitewater/flat water trip from Childowiah, through Jugiong to Gundagai over 2 days. Up to grade 2 rapids. Distance will vary with water level. If you can handle the pace and the lovely beaches contact the leaders by the previous Wednesday. 320km \$80 per car.

11 December Sunday Christmas Party
Orroral Valley Ref: Rendezvous Creek 1:25000
Leader: New president Phone: 282 5813 (office)
Meet at Orroral Valley picnic ground at 3pm for the annual NPA Christmas get together. Members and friends welcome, bring a picnic tea.

17 December Saturday Walk 2/A/B/C
Orroral Ridge and Valley Ref: Corin Dam 1:25000
Leader: Stephen Johnston Phone: 254 3738(h)
Meet at Kambah Village Shops at 8am. From the site of Honeysuckle Collimation Tower, traverse the ridge above Orroral Valley past massive granite tors to Emu Flat. Descend to Booroomba Creek Valley and down the Orroral Valley for a 400 metre climb back to the cars. A long and challenging (particularly the last climb), but rewarding walk. 90km \$18 per car.

Points to note

New faces to lead, new faces 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 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.

Outings program

October to December 1994



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.

Outings convenor: Phil Bubb

7 Geerilong Gardens

REID ACT 2601

Phone: 281 4924(h)

Welcome. I am taking over (once again) the job of Outings Convenor from Mick Kelly and look forward to your cooperation over the next 12 months. I am currently preparing the outings program for January to March 1995. If you have any offerings (walks, car camps, bike or canoe trips) please phone me or post details to the above address before 26 October 1994.

Third Wednesday of every month

Phone Phyl Goddard on 254 8279(h) or NPA office on 282 5813 for details.

1/2/3 October Pack Walk

2/A/C/E

Nangar, Kanimbla and Weddin Mtns NP's

Leader: Stephen Johnston

Phone: 254 3738(h)

A combination of easy/medium to fairly rigorous off-track walking in these unique National Park areas of our mid-west (to the east and south-east of Forbes). Wildflowers and bird-life, together with great views of the surrounding plains. Please contact leader early, for bookings and further detail. 500km \$100 per car.

1/2/3 October South Coast Canoe Saga

Leader: Peter Roe

Phone: 291 9535(h)

Christine Higham

Phone: 269 1425(w)

This is a joint NPA/Canberra Bushwalking Club trip. Three days of easy paddling in places like Lake Brogo, the Bega River Estuary and Wallaga Lake. Car based camping at Beauty Point near Bermagui. Hire canoes or buy. Contact leaders by previous weekend. 600kms \$150 per car.

8 October Saturday Walk

2/A/B/C/D/F

Point 1526

Ref: Rendezvous Creek 1:25000

Leader: Peter Tedder

Phone: 282 1711(h)

Meet at Kambah Village Shops at 8am for this joint FBI/NPA walk. The ridge NW from Yankee Hat (Major) passes over a rocky Knoll marked as point 1526 GR 733425, and promises good views. We will approach this knoll across Gudgenby Plains, through medium timber at first, followed by 2km of thick scrub. Walk is partly exploratory. Total climb approximately 500m, distance 14km. 120km \$24 per car.

9 October Sunday Walk

2/A/B/E

Nursery Creek Area

Ref: Rendezvous Creek 1:25000

Leader: Martin Chalk

Phone: 292 3502(h)

Meet at Kambah Village Shops at 8.30am. From the Nursery Creek carpark climb to the top end of Nursery Swamp, walk to Nursery Creek rock paintings. Will then traverse ridge between Nursery Creek and Rendezvous Creek. Return to vehicles via the stone axe site. Total walking distance about 12km. 100km \$20 per car.

15/16 October Work Party

Budawangs

Ref: Corang 1:25000

Leaders: Jenny Atton

Phone: 247 3175(h)

Debbie Worner

249 6968(h)

Please phone leader at least seven days beforehand to work out details. This is the annual Budawangs track maintenance work party for 1994, most probably in the Burrumbeet Brook area just beyond Corang Peak. 300km \$60 per car.

19 October Wednesday Walk

Phone Phyl Goddard on 254 8279(h) or NPA office on 282 5813 for details.

22 October Work Party

Namadgi National Park

Ref: ACT 1:100000

Leader: Syd Comfort

Phone: 286 2578(h)

Something for everyone—either clear briars near Yankee Hat or pine wildings near Boboyan, both based on Boboyan car park. Meet at 8.30am at Kambah Village Shops. Please confirm with leader beforehand. 120km \$24 per car.

22 October Saturday am

1/A

Black Mountain Nature Ramble Ref: Canberra Street Map

Leader: George Chippendale

Phone: 281 2454(h)

Meet at the Belconnen Way entrance to Black Mountain Reserve (several hundred metres to the east of Caswell Drive) at 9.30am. A morning ramble to see the birds and flowers. Suitable for those aged 4 to 80. Bring your morning tea, camera, binoculars. (and your *Field Guide to the Birds of the ACT* and *Wild About Canberra* field guide). Finish by midday.

23 October Sunday Walk

2/A/B/D

Bullen Range

Ref: Tidbinbilla and

Tuggeranong 1:25000

Leader: Syd Comfort

Phone: 286 2578(h)

Meet at the corner of Eucumbene Drive and Cotter Road at 8.30am. This is a follow up, of a walk in March, and will start near Tidbinbilla Tracking Station, cross the Bullen Range to Red Rocks Gorge, this time exploring an easier return route at the southern end of the range. Some steep climbs. 70km \$14 per car.

30 October Celebratory

1/A/B

Namadgi National Park

Ref: Rendezvous 1:25000

Leaders: Reg Alder & Fiona Brand

Phone: 247 9538(h)

Namadgi National Park 10th Anniversary celebration. Come and walk the Yerrabi Track with historic interpretation from Reg; eat an early lunch at the Trig, while admiring views of the park and surrounding peaks. Afterwards gather beside the Gudgenby River (the first paddock on the Old Boboyan Road Northside) at 2pm for a stroll along the river towards the Gudgenby homestead and then a chat, drinks, nibbles and afternoon tea. Please phone Fiona for further information closer to the date. 100km \$20 per car.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander involvement in natural resource management in Australia

Steve Szabo, assistant director, Australian Nature Conservation Agency, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Programs Section, addressed the NPA general meeting in May. Below are extracts from his talk.

Modern science tells us that Aboriginal people have lived in Australia for at least 50 000 years. Aboriginal people believe that they have been here and owned the land since creation. From an Aboriginal perspective all of Australia was divided into defined clan estates over which particular groups of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people maintained control and access and had exclusive rights. Along with their rights to utilise resources on their land went the obligation to care for the land in perpetuity. They occupied and utilised all of Australia as hunters and gatherers within their estates and survived because of the specialised knowledge of, and adaptability to, the land and sea areas for which they were responsible. Their movements across the land and their relationships to the land, other people and the elements can still be

seen and heard through law, myths, legends, song, dance and art. Much of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture survives today and that presents the broader Australian population an opportunity to learn more about their country and gain a greater understanding of the bond that exists amongst Aboriginal people and of their strong cultural link to the land.

The natural environment and its wise use or conservation has always been and continues to be an integral part of the Aboriginal lifestyle and existence. From the earliest time, laws, stories, songs and art forms have depicted the natural environment as the provider of life. The art, stories and songs show historical events prior to and since European occupation of Australia. Because indigenous Australians' physical, cultural and spiritual well-being depended on the natural environment, they developed a deep understanding and respect for the land. Importantly they learned to understand the limitations as well as the wealth of their land. They believed

they were always here and intended that they always would be. They were very effective in the management of their natural resources and thrived in often very hostile habitats. However, it must be recognised that Aboriginal people shaped the environment of Australia in the same way as other nations have shaped their environments. The Australia of 1788 was an artefact of Aboriginal management of the land.

The emergence of and development of national and state parks around Australia became a major issue during the 1960s and 1970s. During this period the aspirations and expertise of Aboriginal people were largely ignored. Efforts were directed to securing areas with nature conservation values, often areas not required for recognised economic activities. National parks were seen as pristine areas and utilisation of their resources was seen as compromising their conservation values. Protected area status was another form of dispossession.

Aboriginal access to sites and traditional resource gathering was denied. Even in areas where there were obvious Aboriginal heritage values (such as extensive rock art and archaeological sites) consultation with or involvement of Aboriginal people did not occur. Aboriginal people in Australia regard the collection and utilisation of traditional food and other resources as being their birthright and essential to their physical, social and cultural well-being. The issue of hunting native animals particularly remains contentious and emotive and one where real evidence plays very little part in the debate.

In 1979, with the proclamation of Kakadu National Park, perceptions of what a national park could be began to change. This park is largely owned by the traditional Aboriginal owners. They were granted title to

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...we're in this together continued

organisations such as the National Parks Association and the commitment and foresight by individuals in the land management agencies had another lasting benefit.

1986 saw the signing of the agreement for the cooperative management of the Alps parks: Namadgi, Kosciusko National Park and the Victorian Alpine Park.

This cooperation now extends beyond regular liaison to a joint work program between the agencies which will have lasting benefits for the protection of these valuable areas.

The involvement of the NPA in Namadgi continues today with projects such as the restoration of the Orroral Homestead, walking

track works such as Yerrabi Track and the production of interpretive information.

Other groups are contributing, including the Kosciusko Huts Association in its efforts to conserve huts and the Canberra Alpine Club helping to maintain the Franklin chalet.

The Canberra Bushwalking Club regularly assists in track construction and weed control in the more far-flung areas of Namadgi.

It is all the more appropriate to acknowledge the efforts of these people today on the tenth anniversary of the announcement to create Namadgi National Park and on World Environment Day 1994 when we celebrate the theme 'Environment Australia—we're in this together'.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander involvement in natural resource management in Australia *continued from page 17.*

the land through the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act, 1976* and agreed to lease it back to the director of the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service to be managed as a national park. The lease-back agreement outlines the roles and responsibilities of the parties involved. A board of management has been established with a majority Aboriginal membership and an Aboriginal chairperson. The board makes decisions on all major issues affecting the park.

Within the park there are a number of small Aboriginal communities—outstations—with a total population of around 300 people. They generally occupy areas with which they have traditional affiliations and continue to practise many aspects of their traditional lifestyle. This includes obtaining a significant proportion of their food requirements from the land.

In addition to the role of the board of management representing the views of the traditional owners, there is significant employment of Aboriginal people on the park. Currently 40 per cent of the ranger staff is Aboriginal, all from local communities and trained on-the-job at Kakadu.

Aboriginal involvement in national parks has steadily increased since the successful experiment at Kakadu. A similar management regime to that at Kakadu has been developed at Uluru/Kata Tjuta National Park involving lease-back of the park to the director of the Australian Nature Conservation Agency. Title to this area was granted to the traditional owners in 1985 and the joint management arrangements stem from that period.

The success of joint management depends on a commitment from all individuals and institutions involved. The term 'bothways' is often used by traditional owners at Uluru to describe the integration of two diverse approaches and values

in terms of land management. It also describes the way management takes place at Uluru and is essentially what is required to succeed.

A marriage between the traditional knowledge, skills and understanding of Aboriginal people and the modern scientific approach to natural resource management is clearly in the best interests of the whole nation. It also assists in the maintenance and continuity of the indigenous culture of Australia and supports important human rights for indigenous people.

Benefits to conservation and the environment

The development of joint management has resulted in several positive outcomes for the management of the environment.

A large body of knowledge not previously accessed by western learning becomes available. Knowledge of all aspects of the ecology of Australian native flora and fauna, seasonality, characteristics and uses of plant and animal resources, understanding and interpretation of cultural sites and changing of values and paradigms in relation to the environment are all direct results of new relationships with Aboriginal people.

National parks and other protected areas promoting an Aboriginal perspective provide an added dimension and a richer experience for visitors. They contribute to better understanding of the natural world and enhance the relationship between people of different cultures.

Many native species reintroduction programs have been facilitated through the intimate knowledge of Aboriginal people of the habits, habitat, diet, breeding cycle and predation of these endangered species.

Knowledge of local history (including that of non-Aboriginals) has been enhanced through assessing the rich oral traditions of indigenous people, thereby contributing to the knowl-

edge base of all Australians.

The potential of Aboriginal knowledge of natural resource uses to develop into new and valuable products is only just beginning to emerge. The potential for contemporary medicines developed from traditional medicines is well known but many other resources are beginning to have their commercial potential recognised. There is already commercial production of foods such as the acacia seed and quandong, while various value added products derived from native animals like the emu have ready markets. The potential for this new field for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal entrepreneurs is enormous.

Benefits to Aboriginal people

The programs involving Aboriginal people in national park management and nature conservation allow increased access by Aboriginal people to mainstream employment opportunities. It also gives the opportunity for less formal employment through contract work or consultancies.

The above results in increased self-esteem for Aboriginal people individually and collectively for the whole community. Aboriginal knowledge, skills and traditions are being recognised, valued and rewarded, and it is this that contributes to the heightened self respect.

These programs also provide better access to educational and training opportunities for Aboriginal people. Importantly there is also a reason for educational achievement for Aboriginal people in isolated areas for the first time because there may now be a relevant career opportunity close to where they live.

The programs referred to also contribute to the strengthening of the social structure in communities. It provides meaningful employment.

continued

Bellchambers appointed

Glenn Bellchambers was recently appointed to the position of director of the Environment and Conservation Division, Department of the Environment, Land and Planning. The National Parks Association (ACT) met Glenn to welcome him to his new position and to introduce the Association and discuss matters of interest to the NPA.

Before this appointment Glenn worked in economics and the tourism area. Glenn believes one of his most notable achievements so far was the declaration of Mulligans Flat. He is quite aware of the costs this declaration imposed on the development of Gungahlin and felt that this highlighted an important lesson for planners and developers. If sufficient funds had been provided for survey and assessment before the development plans, then a great deal of the cost and inconvenience associated with Mulligans Flat could have been avoided.

On the question of updating the management plan for Namadgi

National Park, Glenn admitted that this issue was on the agenda for Parks and Conservation staff but cutbacks in resources had meant that it could not be attended to at the moment.

Glenn felt that there was the possibility of marketing parks and conservation areas to raise additional funds and was quite keen that this happen in appropriate areas and within environmental constraints. However, having worked in the tourism area, he was aware of why the majority of people visit the ACT and consequently was somewhat sceptical about large numbers of 'ecotourists' arriving in the ACT.

Glenn was quite interested in the concepts and achievements of the Landcare movement and how these might be applied to Parkcare. He would be happy to receive information about the highly successful Victorian 'Friends' movement to see how the concept might be implemented to a greater extent than it currently is in the ACT.

The director speaks

The July general meeting of the National Parks Association was addressed by Glenn Bellchambers, director of Parks and Conservation Services for the past six months or so. Glenn's talk was well received and gave members an interesting insight into many of the issues confronting the park administration.

Glenn is a graduate from ANU in science (honours) and economics. During his career in the public service he has been involved in a variety of conservation and heritage issues including the setting up of Kakadu National Park and the prohibition of sand mining on Fraser Island. His attraction to his present job was in large part the sense of partnership between the park service and the community. Glenn assured us that the service is very grateful to the community and groups such as NPA for their participation; indeed it would not be

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Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander involvement in natural resource management in Australia *continued from page 18.*

improves stability, values things Aboriginal and empowers Aboriginal people.

These parks provide a very positive image of Aboriginal people and the contribution they are making to the management of Australia's natural and cultural resources.

In addition to the programs at Kakadu and Uluru national parks, the Australian Nature Conservation Agency also administers the Contract Employment Program for Aboriginals in Natural and Cultural Resource Management

This program aims to increase the involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the management of natural and cultural resources right across Australia. The program provides funds to relevant federal, state, territory and

local government agencies to contract Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to carry out works in natural and cultural resource management. It also provides funds directly to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations. The nature of the works undertaken is extremely varied and reflects the range of skills, knowledge and interests that exist in these communities. The main requirement is that the project undertaken in some way benefits the knowledge and management of our natural or cultural heritage.

The types of projects funded in the past include:

- rehabilitation of degraded areas and erosion control
- seed collection and propagation of native plants

- recording of oral histories
- identification of uses of traditional natural resource usage such as medicinal and food plants
- recording, identifying and interpreting sites of cultural significance

The employment program is designed to provide employment in areas where few opportunities exist and where there is a skilled pool of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

An important outcome of the program has been to provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities with the confidence and competence to successfully tender for contract work on the open market.

Bellchambers appointment *continued from page 19.*

possible for the parks service to work efficiently if it were not for enthusiastic community involvement and cooperation.

Glenn pointed out that Canberra is now an important regional centre and it is this fact that is generating population growth. There are prospects for half a million population by about 2015 and in the foreseeable future Canberra will overflow its borders. The community is also ageing and as the population matures, pressures of use are increasing on parks and reserves. Our large area of reserves (65 per cent of the ACT) are out of all proportion to similar state reserves and this is inducing great budgetary pressures. As an example, Glenn pointed out that fourteen people are responsible for 50 per cent of the ACT.

However, despite budgetary and other restraints, Glenn believes that the Parks and Conservation Service can be justly proud of its achievements. Recent examples listed by Glenn include:

- declaration of new reserves, for example, Mulligans Flat
- amendments to the Nature Conservation Act to protect endangered flora and fauna
- a conservation strategy for the legless lizard
- progress (and in some cases finalisation) of many management plans including Jerrabomberra Wetlands, Murrumbidgee River Corridor and Canberra Nature Park
- the growth of Parkcare groups
- biological control of St Johns Wort
- feral animal control
- smoky mouse survey
- the development of retail outlets within the service
- education of developers to assist with the preservation and protection of natural and cultural heritage sites.

Glenn identified some of the challenges now facing the service.

- **Ecotourism:** Glenn believes that the people who generate increased pressures on the park should be prepared to pay for the cost of maintaining the natural values of the area. The cooperation of groups such as NPA will be essential to press this point of view.
- **Changes to the conservation Act:** an adequate conservation strategy must be developed, again with much community support and input.
- **Weeds strategy:** this needs to be developed so that limited funds can be put to their best use.
- **Australian Alps agreement:** this is a great challenge as it will require a regional approach and the cooperation of like-minded groups across state borders.

Glenn also itemised major capital works planned for the near future including:

- extensions to the Tidbinbilla Visitor Centre
- improvements to the Cotter Recreation Reserve and the Googong Foreshores
- the development of Mulligans Flat.

The talk concluded with a lively question and answer period.

I believe that we left the meeting with the feeling that Glenn is committed to the conservation of the ACT's parks and reserves and that he and his colleagues will value NPA's continued active involvement in the area.

Len Haskew

Help save endangered species

There are around seven hundred species of plants and animals on NSW's Threatened Species list. These species desperately need help to prevent their extinction. Governments have responsibilities to protect our native flora and fauna through legislation, planning, management and provision of resources but they can't do it by themselves. The National Threatened Species Network believes that only a combination of government and community action will prevent a second tragic wave of extinctions in this state and throughout Australia.

The National Threatened Species Network hopes soon to launch a program called 'Species Care'. The aim of this is to encourage, focus and coordinate community action to help conserve threatened flora and fauna at a local level. There are many ways to become a Species Care group and many local community groups have been doing this type of work for years. The National Threatened Species Network hopes to be able to harness this knowledge and use it as the catalyst for widespread community participation in locally-based threatened species conservation programs.

There are many ways in which local groups can help save threatened species. Whether they focus on field survey work, hands-on habitat protection or restoration, animal care and rescue, raising community education and awareness or campaigning against threatening developments, these groups are contributing to Species Care. With so much work to do, community involvement is vital. If you would like to become involved in Species Care contact:

The NSW Threatened Species Network Coordinator
Mr Kim Brebach
Shop 2, Gloucester Walk, Sydney 2000

Native alternatives

Alternatives to pampas grass, firethorn, cotoneaster and English hawthorn (as recommended by the ACT Weeds Committee)

Native plants

Botanical name	Height x width (m)	Flowering period and flower colour	Other characteristics
Acacia beckleri	2 x 1.5	winter/golden yellow	fragrant
Acacia boormanii	3 x 2	spring/golden yellow	suckering habit
Acacia buxifolia	3 x 2	spring/golden yellow	blue-green foliage
Acacia cardiophylla	3 x 4	spring/golden yellow	feathery foliage
Acacia cultriformis	2 x 2	spring/golden yellow	grey foliage
Acacia vestita	3 x 5	spring/golden yellow	grey-green foliage, weeping habit
Baeckea virgata	4 x 3	summer/white	dark green foliage
Banksia ericifolia	3 x 4	autumn-winter/orange	birds attracted to flowers
Callistemon citrinus	3 x 2	summer-autumn/red	birds attracted to flowers
Callistemon pallidus	3 x 2	summer/yellow	
Callistemon 'Reeves Pink'	3 x 3	summer/pink	
Grevillea asplenifolia	3 x 4	most of year/red	most grevillea species attract birds
Grevillea juniperina	2 x 2	most of year/red	prickly foliage
Grevillea victoriae	2 x 2	winter/rusty red flowers	pendulous flowers, grey-green foliage
Grevillea 'Canberra Gem'	2 x 2	most of year/red	
Hakea gibbosa	3 x 1.5	spring/creamy white	prickly foliage
Hakea nodosa	3 x 4	autumn-winter/yellow	fragrant flowers
Kunzea ambigua	3 x 3	early summer/white	also pink forms
Melaleuca erubescens	3 x 1.5	summer/mauve	
Melaleuca squarrosa	2.5 x 2.5	summer/creamy white	

Exotic plants

Botanical name	Height x width (m)	Flowering period and flower colour	Other characteristics
Choisya ternata	1.5 x 1.5	summer/white	fragrant
Escallonia rubra	2 x 1	autumn/deep-red	
Escallonia macrantha	3 x 2	summer/rosy-pink	
Feijoa sellowiana	3 x 2	summer/white	edible fruit
Photinia glabra 'Rubens'	2.5 x 2	summer/white	red spring foliage
Pittosporum eugeniioides	5 x 2	summer/yellow	variegated foliage
Prunus laurocerasus	3.5 x 3	summer/white	
Viburnum tinus	3 x 2.5	spring/white	

Heights, widths and flowering times are offered as a guide only.

Contact numbers: Park Care 207 2193; Garden Advice 207 2222; ACT Weeds Committee 207 2500

Bush tools training

The Kosciusko Huts Association has invited members of the NPA to attend a series of bush tool workshops featuring:

- the broadaxe
- the morticing axe
- the froe, maul and wedges
- the adze, draw knife and spoke shave
- tool grinding
- hut conservation.

The training weekend will be held at the Happy Valley farm, five minutes from Adaminaby on 15 and 16 October.

For bookings and information about costs, contact Steve Brayshaw, phone (06) 294 1974.

If your issue of the *Bulletin* has a red spot on the label it means it will be the last one you receive until you renew your membership.

National parks

...should we pay entrance fees

With the inevitable decline in the world's natural areas, increasing pressure is being felt on those remaining areas. Pollution, encroaching development, mining and tourism all threaten the integrity of our natural resources. There is, however, another emerging factor threatening the integrity of our national parks including our very own Namadgi.

In July Bill Wood, the Minister for the Environment, Land and Planning, announced an ACT Government commitment to develop a marketing plan for the ACT's national park and nature reserves. The media release stated: 'The marketing plan will carefully consider park management policies ...and the possible introduction of entrance fees for visitors.' The plan is to focus on Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve, Googong Foreshores, Canberra Nature Park, the Murrumbidgee River Corridor and the ACT's only national park, Namadgi National Park, which covers over 40 per cent of the ACT.

Whereas 'user pays' in national parks was previously restricted to Kosciusko, today many national parks have use fees, for example, Jervis Bay National Park, Kakadu National Park and Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. However, the threat of economic rationalism of natural resources now focuses on our very own doorstep.

Should we have to pay to use what is rightfully ours as a community or have we been privileged so far for not having to reach deep into our pockets to be able to enter our nature parks?

This is a question which entered my mind while standing atop an unnamed snow-covered peak in Namadgi last winter. At the time the altruistic part of my brain immediately replied with 'How can you put a price on this beautiful park; na-

ture is surely off-limits when calculating tangible monetary values.' However, being an economist, the economically trained side of my brain quickly chipped in. 'With our society becoming more and more user pays orientated each day, it will probably be only a matter of time before the authorities will consider imposing fees on parks such as this one.'

Unfortunately my economic training must have been better than I first thought. While a marketing plan is formulated for Namadgi National Park, across on the other side of the world exactly the opposite is happening. Americans in the past few decades have come to love their national parks too much, using them in such large numbers that they are inadvertently bringing to many of the nation's parks the very things they had hoped to leave behind: traffic jams, accidents, overflowing parking lots, smog, litter, crime and noise.

While many argue that a marketing strategy will bring significant revenue gains to the ACT, particularly the local tourism industry, there is no clear non-financial reason why a fee should be charged to enter Namadgi National Park. If Namadgi were as congested as some of the world's parks, it could be argued that a fee would help reduce overcrowding and overuse by discouraging those who value the park less from entering. The reason, however, for the marketing strategy in the ACT in the first place is that Namadgi is seen to be underused, not overused, so to those who currently use Namadgi, the introduction of entry fees would be seen as an immoral and callous way of squeezing revenue out of nature.

Apart from the tradition that public recreation has been free to the user in the past, the major reasons people oppose user pays for national parks include the following.

- It is unfair to charge park users twice, firstly through taxation and secondly through user fees.
- User fees discriminate against people who cannot afford to pay. Shouldn't our national parks be available for *everyone* to use, regardless of their economic circumstances? (After all it is the community that owns them.) Placing entry fees on Canberra's nature parks would mean we would have to pay to enter over 50 per cent of our territory.
- Once fees are established there is seemingly no end to how much will be charged and what we will be charged for.
- Fees could deter tourism and all the associated benefits it brings.
- Fees are not always returned to the area being used and are often placed in the general revenue 'kitty'.
- The natural experience is degraded by the fee collection process and associated signs, rules and policing. Most people, including myself, go to national parks to escape such man-made objects to experience nature at its purest.
- Fees effectively reduce the number of people using national parks. As a significant amount of park use involves 'healthy' pursuits involving exercise, it is argued that the funds collected are more than offset by a larger health cost to governments.
- National parks are created primarily for the conservation of nature. Government policy should not be allowed to compromise the integrity of national parks for revenue-raising.

However, when fees are introduced it is usually claimed that they are to be used to help cover management costs of the park in question. Those in favour of user-based fees argue that the direct beneficiaries of recreation management costs should contribute at least part of the costs incurred. In the final report of the Commonwealth Ecologically Sustainable Development Working Group on Tourism (1991) it is argued that 'All Australians are the beneficiaries of the nature conservation role of national parks and other protected areas and therefore should contribute to the costs of management. However, it is also reasonable that those persons obtaining direct additional benefit through their recreational use of these areas should make additional contributions to the costs of management and protection.'

Apart from this argument of recovering management costs, another used by proponents of user-based fees is that of helping to reduce vandalism and crime. Not only does the fee reduce the number of visitors at the park who are there for non-park values, but the presence of collection points reduces deviant behaviour. From my own personal experience and discussions with local rangers, such behaviour does not seem to be much of a problem in Namadgi.

It is also argued that public subsidy of recreation puts private enterprises that provide similar opportunities at an economic disadvantage. For example here in the ACT the privately owned Ginninderra Falls is limited in how much it can charge, when similar publicly owned areas such as Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve and Namadgi National Park are free.

While Namadgi is definitely not overcrowded at the moment, with Canberra's ever-increasing population and expanding tourist industry it could very soon be so. Even with

the marketing plan aside, it seems only a matter of time before we will have to reach deep into our pockets to use and experience some of the ACT's natural beauty. One can only hope that the authorities get the timing right, for if they are introduced too early there will be detrimental effects on the tourist industry and also a broad public backlash from a community which has taken free entry into our public recreational and nature areas for granted.

Naturalist Henry David Thoreau once said, 'You cannot perceive beauty but with a serene mind.' I wonder if at some time in the

future as the commercialisation of, and placing a dollar value on, nature necessarily increases, I'll be back atop that mountain peak in Namadgi having difficulty perceiving the beauty surrounding me because my mind will be filled with the thoughts of how much I had to pay to get into the park, how I struggled to find a parking spot and then climbed up the overworn and littered Coca Cola-sponsored track to Optus peak—it just wouldn't be the same would it?

Tim Bull

Media Release

Marketing ACT nature parks to bring tourism benefits

A new approach to marketing the ACT's nature conservation areas will bring significant revenue gains to the ACT, particularly the local tourism industry, according to the Minister for the Environment, Land and Planning, Mr Bill Wood.

The minister announced details of the government's \$73 000 budget commitment to develop a marketing plan for the ACT's national park and nature reserves after launching a new walker's and driver's guide to eastern Namadgi National Park in July.

The marketing plan will identify potential ecotourism and associated economic benefits which can be developed in conjunction with the enhancement of our environment and water catchment values.

'With more than 50 per cent of the ACT reserved for nature conservation, there are likely to be many future opportunities for the ACT community to benefit from a considered approach to marketing these areas,' Mr Wood said.

The marketing plan will carefully consider park management practices, potential economically sustainable developments and the possible introduction of licences for tour operators and entrance fees for visitors.

The plan will focus on Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve, Namadgi National Park, Googong Foreshores, Canberra Nature Park and the Murrumbidgee River Corridor.

The minister said the marketing plan would be based on consultation with the business sector, appropriate interest groups—including conservation organisations—and the broader community.

The project will be consistent with the ACT Ecotourism Strategy currently being developed by the ACT Parks and Conservation Service and the ACT Tourism Commission.

Mr Wood said work had begun on the marketing plan which was due to be completed early next year.

Ecotourism in the ACT

The following is a summary of the NPA's response (by Nicki Taus) to the paper.

1.2 The definition and scope of ecotourism

Any definition should contain:

- a natural area component
- ecological sustainability
- education and interpretation
- provision of local and regional benefits.

Ecotourism should encompass all visitors to nature-based tourism facilities and resources. In the ACT it should include day visitors as well as overnight visitors because of the proximity of many of our natural areas to the city.

2.1 Sustainability

Sustainability must refer to ecological sustainability; often the term is thought of as only referring to economic sustainability. The two are interlinked because an ecologically unsustainable ecotourism activity will not survive economically. However, the two are not always linked in people's minds and there is often a strong temptation to make an economic gain at the expense of the resource base. Ecotourism activities must not compromise ecological sustainability; this is a critical issue in developing and managing an ecotourism industry.

A critical point in developing an ecotourism industry is to be able to determine the level of activity that is ecologically sustainable. This cannot be measured in financial or numerical terms, only in the amount of impact and the degree of change the activity has caused. The degree of change can only be measured if initial baseline studies have been undertaken. These studies need to be completed before ecotourism activities commence, otherwise there is no means of assessing impact and determining sustainability. As yet there is little apparent government support for increasing the number

of baseline studies, whereas there seems to be much support from the government for increasing the level of ecotourism activities through marketing.

2.3 Marketing and promotion

Ecotourism should be seen primarily as an opportunity to protect and conserve natural areas and to educate people about them. Of secondary importance, ecotourism is an industry with some growth potential in the ACT.

The ACT has a number of attractions for the ecotourism market, the major one being that much of the territory is still in a relatively unpolluted and undisturbed state. Any marketing strategy should therefore be aimed at people who respect nature and wilderness and value these qualities. Another major advantage of the ACT is the proximity of the natural areas to the city. Tourists can easily stay in Canberra overnight and make day trips into the natural areas. The ACT has an excellent range of parks and reserves from the easily accessible and more controlled environments (for example, Canberra Nature Park, Cotter reserve, Tidbinbilla) to the wilderness areas of Namadgi.

The traditional idea of marketing and promotion can be an antithesis to the whole ecotourism ethic. Marketing simply to increase numbers of ecotourists is unlikely to assist attempts to keep the industry ecologically sustainable as pressures from large numbers of people wanting to experience ecotourism will result in unsustainable impacts.

Sensitive marketing can have some positive outcomes. It can help the industry diversify which will assist attempts to be sustainable. Marketing can also assist in directing people pressures to less sensitive locations. Positive ecotourism experiences will increase the number of people aware of the natu-

ral resource and the issues involved with its conservation and management.

2.4 Training and accreditation

In order to ensure that activities in the conservation areas encourage respect for the qualities of these areas, training and accreditation should be a prerequisite for any commercial operations. If activities are run where the operators do not respect the values of the area, the qualities that attract visitors in the first place could be destroyed.

2.5 Involvement of indigenous Australians

Aboriginal heritage in the ACT is currently promoted as a feature of some of the natural areas. The involvement of indigenous Australians in the management and promotion of their heritage should be strongly encouraged.

2.6 Viability

The ecotourism strategy should outline the ecological guidelines and the training and accreditation methods. It is then up to the market to decide whether the operations would be viable within those boundaries. Viability will depend to a great deal on the experience, ability and marketing capacity of the operator. The strategy could not and should not try to hypothesise who or what would be viable.

3. Natural resource management

Ecotourism activities must recognise that the primary purpose of national parks is nature conservation and everything else (including tourist recreation) is, while important, still secondary. Ecotourism sustainability must be in relation to the natural resource and operators must abide by the decisions of those who manage the natural resource.

Before an ecotourism strategy is

implemented there is a need to update management plans for conservation reserves or prepare new ones where they do not already exist. Amongst other things, these plans need to address the issues of zoning and appropriate use within each reserve. Consultation with the full range of interested groups, including the ecotourism industry, should occur during this process. Any development within protected areas must be in accordance with the agreed plan of management. Ad hoc development must not be allowed.

3.1 Regulation

Industry should develop a code of conduct for operators but total self-regulation has problems—economic issues can easily take priority over environmental issues. Operators must be aware that they are using a public resource that requires special conservation protection and this can only be adequately overseen by the public body, that is, government.

ACT regulation should attempt to be consistent with national standards; however, if special cases require different standards to avoid adverse environmental impact, then these should be formulated. Inconsistent standards, if they are designed to protect the natural resource, should not be removed just to make things easier for the operator.

Non-profit organisations must be included under the regulations; ecological sustainability must apply to all tour operators. Whether ecotourism is ecologically sustainable or not will depend on the *sum* of impacts on the natural resource, including impacts from non-profit, private or government ecotour operators and other tourists, as well as other environmental impacts.

Correction

An article which appeared in the last issue of the Bulletin stated that Namadgi was declared a national park in 1979. Gudgenby Nature Reserve was declared in 1978 but Namadgi National Park was declared in 1984.

3.2 Infrastructure and development

The management plan and regulations for a park will determine the level, if any, of ecotourism infrastructure and development. Appropriate management of natural areas will mean that there are some places where there will be no infrastructure or development at all such as wilderness areas, protected catchments, reference areas.

The statement 'Development needs to integrate reasonable access with sustainable management of the environment' offers encouragement to operators to push for the opening of tracks to four-wheel-drives, the upgrading of roads for two-wheel-drive access, provision of access for horse riders and so on. The statement should read, 'Ecotourism development and infrastructure must accord with and be limited by the park's conservation values and requirements.' If any proposed development does not abide by these principles, then by definition it cannot be called an ecotourism development.

It must be understood that the presence of infrastructure in any part of a natural area may downgrade the ecotourism experience. Once infrastructure is established it often forms the thin edge of the wedge. Demand is created by the provision of facilities. It is easy to expand and upgrade once even the most rudimentary infrastructure is in place. It is very difficult to remove infrastructure even when there is an environmental necessity.

One of the major development impacts in a protected area can be the provision of accommodation and any proposal for this needs to be very carefully considered. In the ACT there is no need to locate accommodation within a reserve because nearly all parts of the territory are within one hour's drive of accommodation in the city.

3.3 Impact monitoring

Establishing baseline data and monitoring the effects of ecotourism activities will be a vital part of ensuring the industry remains ecologically sustainable.

The use of community groups in monitoring impacts and collecting baseline data should be considered, for example, 'friends' groups, National Parks Association, Canberra Ornithologists group, Field Naturalists, bushwalking groups and so on. Monitoring and collection of data often involves the activities that these groups enjoy participating in. Other organisations which can assist with monitoring include universities, Australian Trust for Conservation Volunteers, Earthwatch volunteers.

However, provision of resources for, and a willingness by land managers to undertake, monitoring must not be used simply as a justification to allow ecotourism development, particularly in pristine or sensitive natural areas. Additionally, if monitoring demonstrates that an activity is not ecologically sustainable, then there must be the means to remove the degrading activity.

3.4 Funding and equity

Any increase in ecotourism will increase pressure on the natural resource base and therefore management costs. Additional funds will be needed to assess impact and manage the increase in activities and number of people. A system of levies and permits to ensure user pays is needed.

If entrance fees or other charges are introduced, or fund-raising activities are run by government agencies in conservation areas, the proceeds should be used for park management in the ACT but not necessarily in the area in which the revenue was collected.

NPA bird book —under field test

The author of the *Field Guide to the Birds of the ACT*, McComas Taylor, had told me that the best time to see birds was early in the morning. So early one Sunday morning I drove down to Uriarra Crossing to see what I could see.

As soon as I got out of the car I came across blue wrens (now known as superb fairy-wrens) darting through the bushes below the river oaks. I already knew what male blue wrens looked like but the book immediately helped me confirm sightings of the females and separate them from silvereyes and other small, dun-coloured birds.

Across the sand and onto the rocks and I came across more small birds flying fast across the rocks. After a couple of quick looks I narrowed the possibilities down to the page on thornbills. But what was the colour of the rump? Brown, buff or yellow? Another bird high on a branch was too far away to examine its rump without the aid of binoculars. Then another of the same sort landed on a dead branch near me. I referred to the book and back to the bird. I reckon it was buff-rumped.

But then I looked up another section of the book, which lists the birds commonly seen at a number of 'favourite birdwatching locations' around the ACT. This is one of the advantages of a local field guide: the author's experience can dramatically reduce the number of thornbills from which one has to choose. He suggested that yellow or yellow-rumped were the types of thornbills most likely to be seen at Uriarra Crossing. I am not convinced but it is handy to have another piece of evidence.

From the sand I wandered up a small creek that flows from the west into the Murrumbidgee. Many small birds were playing around the water, resting on rocks or the fence. I identified a grey fantail; others were hard to be sure. There might have

been white-plumed honeyeaters, a satin flycatcher and an olive whistler. A blackbird shot across the scrub like a black bullet.

On the other side of the bridge I followed the wheel ruts of an old track. Some gang-gangs creaked overhead, flying through the casuarinas.

Further along the river bank the tall trees became less dense and tangled heath filled the gaps. I sat on a fallen bough. There were some tiny birds with flashes of red. I found the page of robins. Another view of the bird suggested the red was not in the right place for a robin (the breast). What else could it be? I leafed through the book a number of times. Then I got a better look at the bird—red on the throat and under the tail. I found the only picture that could fit: that of a mistletoebird. The blue back in the picture did not match the birds in the bush but the position of the red made it certain. Suddenly I was seeing lots of these birds that I had never known before, flocks of mistletoebirds all around; flashes of red and olive in the undergrowth. My life had been brightened by new knowledge.

I walked up the river on the rocks, jumping over channels of water. There were some ducks (maned) making a mess on the far side of the stream. They kept well clear of two dogs romping on the opposite bank.

As I walked back along the track another dog leapt at me. The people were arriving and the birds retreating.

Since its launch last December the NPA bird book has sold 2500 copies. Thanks to one of them, I can now identify a number of species I could not before. Taking the book into the bush adds meaning to places like Uriarra Crossing. The book is a must for every nature-loving resident of the ACT.

Roger Green

Parks and people of Malaysia

John and Judith Webster come to the most challenging part of their visits to Malaysian national parks—the ascent of Mt Kinabalu.

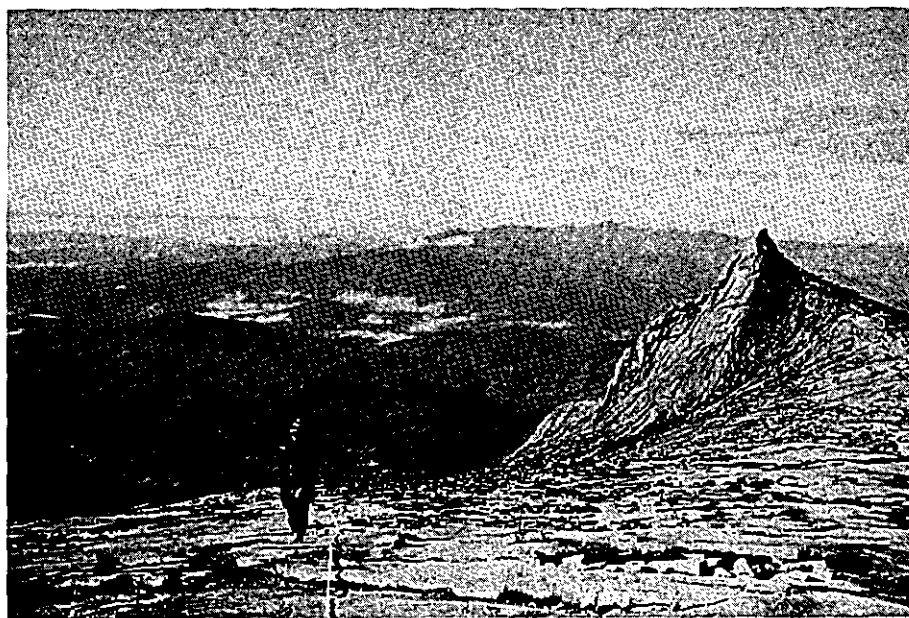
Kinabalu (Sabah)

The whole park covers an area of 754 square kilometres and its vast variety of vegetation includes oaks, rhododendrons and hundreds of species of ferns and orchids. The world's largest flower, *Rafflesia arnoldii*, with a metre-wide bloom, is found between altitudes of 600 metres and 1200 metres. This flower is a parasite and takes its nutrition from a passive host plant.

The focal point of the park is Mt Kinabalu, the highest mountain in South-East Asia. It is a vast granite massif rising to 4101 metres. The mountain was formed less than one million years ago, when a hard granite plug forced its way upwards through the overlying sandstone of the Crocker Range. Winds and rain eroded away the softer sedimentary rock and then the Ice Age completed the carving of the jagged peaks and precipices above the smoothed summit plateau.

Sir Hugh Low first climbed Mt Kinabalu in 1852 and again in 1856. Although he stood on the edge of the huge chasm of Low's Gully which splits the summit in two, he didn't climb the highest point which was, nevertheless, named Low's Peak after him. It was John Whitehead, a zoologist, who did this in 1888.

We spent two nights at the park headquarters at 1524 metres acclimatising ourselves to the altitude and then we were ready to begin the climb. The official start of the track is marked by the decorative Tipohon Gate at 1829 metres. We were accompanied by a registered park guide (compulsory) and also a porter, and began walking about



South Peak, Mt Kinabalu. Photo by Judith Webster

very cold. They were already descending when I finally made it to the top at 6.10am. However, being a little slower proved fortuitous: the sun had been hidden by a layer of cloud and the first rays broke through just as I arrived. I was delighted and watched the increasing sunlight illuminate the strangely shaped pinnacles and peaks of Mt Kinabalu and gradually reveal the wide vista below. It had all been very worthwhile and I had been lucky—some of our group were affected by the altitude and unable to complete the climb.

We returned to Laban Rata resthouse and finished the descent to park headquarters the following day. We had taken a leisurely three days to climb Mt Kinabalu. Sapinggi, our guide, told us he had done the return trip in less than three hours and that the record, achieved in an annual race, was about two and a half hours! Sapinggi has been a guide for sixteen years and climbed the mountain about 1485 times! This may make our 'mountain' adventure sound like a 'molehill', but no! It did not diminish the pleasure and sense of achievement we felt.

Judith Webster

New members as at 1 August 1994

John Gardiner	Woden
Nicholas Coppel	Griffith
Naarilla Hirsch	Fisher
Annette Wrightson	Garran
Kathryn Kerr	Waramanga
Richard and Jenny Kemmis	Melba
Ralph Snowdon	Calwell
Tony and Robyn Cavuoto	Higgins
Derek Synnott	Kambah
David Luskin	Canberra
David Howe	Yarralumla
Nola and Allen Atkins	Calwell
Sally Cameron-Stephen	Swinger Hill
Dianne Garth	Narrabundah
Stephen Garth	Narrabundah
G L Winchester	Macquarie
Veronica Sheen	Holder
Alison Elvin	Holder
Roger Hobbs	Bungendore

9.20am. We took the climb slowly, with stops to look at the vegetation and for lunch. John and I arrived at Laban Rata resthouse, at an altitude of 3353 metres, at 3.30pm.

The Mt Kinabalu trail is a bit like the Milford Track in New Zealand or the Overland Track in Tasmania—it is trodden by thousands of people each year who come from all over the world. Among the busy international pedestrian traffic was a lively Aussie group from Newcastle University.

At 2am next morning a loud banging of doors and thumping of feet up and down the corridor was a sign that everyone was getting into action. A breakfast of pancakes and fried eggs had been ordered for us which was viewed aghast by some in our group who felt no great appetite for such fare in the middle of the night! Indeed, you may wonder why we were getting up so early when there was only 750 metres of the climb to complete! The reason was two-fold: it is considered a special experience to be on the summit for the dawn and secondly it is advisable to be well off the summit before mid-morning when clouds regularly roll in.

At 3am, rugged up in warm gear and equipped with torches, dozens

of people left the resthouse with their guides. It was a steep climb with wooden ladders in places. Looking back down, one could see the bobbing torch lights—truly a kind of pilgrimage. We plodded on, each at their own pace. Leaving the cover of the bush, we emerged onto bare granite, still in the dark. Here there were ropes to help you heave yourself up.

By now our group had become spread out. John was ahead whilst Evelyn, the New Zealander in our party, and I were not far behind. Evelyn used a stick to help her walk. My torch bulb failed when climbing up a steep slab of granite so I stuck very close to Evelyn. When we caught up to John he commented, 'Here comes the three-legged Kiwi,' to which Evelyn quickly responded, 'Followed by the blind kangaroo!'

Now we were traversing the summit plateau, and the two distinctive rocks known as the 'Donkey's Ears' were silhouetted against the first red glow of dawn. I realised it was unlikely we would reach the summit in time to see the sun emerge over the horizon and felt disappointed, but pressed on up the final rocky scramble of Low's Peak.

The faster folk, those uni students from Newcastle, had sat on the peak from 5.30am and were now feeling

Calendar

SEPTEMBER

- Thurs 1 Committee meeting 7.30pm, 146 Lambrigg St, Fisher, Mike Smith, 286 2984(h)
Thurs 8 Namadgi Subcommittee 7.30pm, 27 Aston Cres, Cook, Steven Forst, 274 8426(w), 251 6817(h)
Thurs 22 Environment Subcommittee 7.45pm, 8 Woinarski Pl, Latham, Stephen Johnston, 254 3738(h)

OCTOBER

- Thurs 6 Committee meeting, venue to be arranged
Thurs 13 Namadgi Subcommittee 7.30pm, 27 Aston St, Cook, Steven Forst, 251 6817(h)
Thurs 27 Environment Subcommittee 7.45pm, 8 Woinarski Pl, Latham, Stephen Johnston, 254 3738(h)

NOVEMBER

 Tues 1 deadline for *Bulletin*

- Thurs 3 Committee meeting, venue to be arranged
Thurs 10 Namadgi Subcommittee 7.30pm, 27 Aston St, Cook, Steven Forst, 251 6817(h)
Thurs 24 Environment Subcommittee 7.45pm, 8 Woinarski Pl, Latham, Stephen Johnston, 254 3738(h)

DECEMBER

- Thurs 1 Committee meeting, venue to be arranged
Thurs 8 Namadgi Subcommittee 7.30pm, 27 Aston St, Cook, Steven Forst, 274 8426(w), 251 6817(h)

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General meetings

Held at 8pm, Room 1, Griffin Centre, Bunda Street, Civic

Thursday 15 September: Eucalypts

Long-time member of NPA, George Chippendale, will speak to us on the topic 'Trivial pursuit of eucalypts'.

Thursday 20 October: How the south-west was won

Dr Brian Pratt, formerly director of Parks and Conservation, will give an introduction to the history of Namadgi National Park and share some revealing reminiscences.

Thursday 17 November: The Great Silk Road and beyond?

Peripatetic member and former vice-president, Di Thompson, will entertain us all with an illustrated account of her travels in Kyrgyzstan, one of the five central states of the former Soviet Union.