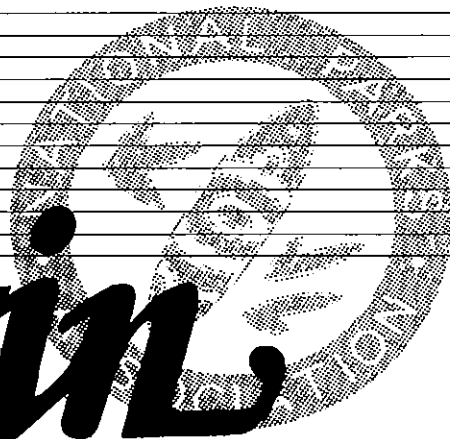


NPA Bulletin



Volume 33 number 2
June 1996

NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION ACT INCORPORATED



Milo Dunphy obituary

Boboyan Pines

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Cover photo

On Canberra Day, the NPA tent displaying the Association's activities. Photo by Reg Alder.

National Parks Association (ACT) Incorporated

Inaugurated 1960

Aims and objectives 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, such 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, and the planning of landuse to achieve conservation.

Office-bearers and committee

<i>President</i>	Eleanor Stodart 281 5004(h)
<i>Vice-president</i>	Clive Hurlstone 288 7592(h); 246 5516(w)
<i>Immediate past president</i>	Beverley Hammond 288 6577(h)
<i>Secretary and outings coordinator</i>	Max Lawrence 288 1370(h); 272 2032(w)
<i>Treasurer</i>	Mike Smith 286 2984(h); 248 3624(w)
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David Large	291 4830(h)
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Robin Miller	281 6314(h); 201 2191(w)

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- 1 January and 31 March—half specified rate
- 1 April and 30 June—annual subscription

Membership inquiries welcome

Please phone the NPA office.

The NPA (ACT) office is located in Maclaurin Cres, Chifley. Office hours are:

- 10am to 2pm Mondays
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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.

Deadline for September issue: 1 August 1996.

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President's foreword

As foreshadowed in the December *Bulletin*, NPA has been busy with preparing responses to the draft plan for the rehabilitation of the Boboyan Pine area and the Draft Management Plan for the Murrumbidgee Corridor. We need to recognise that rehabilitation of the Boboyan Pines area is likely to be less than ideal, at least in the short term, but hopefully regeneration will continue to improve the area over many years. NPA has already had one weekend this year working at removing pine wildings from the surrounding bush. At the instigation of Ray Polglaze we have consulted other organisations to gain wider support for and give greater weight to our submission on the Murrumbidgee Draft Management Plan.

After looking at our financial prospects, the committee concluded there were three important avenues for increasing revenue. One was for a membership drive, with greater attempts to satisfy present members. As a result you will be receiving a questionnaire with this *Bulletin* and we ask you to take the time to fill it in so that we can see where gaps need filling. Our stall at ACT Alive on Canberra Day received a number of queries about the NPA and brought in some new members, for which we thank those members who gave time to the stall, particularly convener David Large. But more work needs to be done. If every member could bring in one new member our membership would double.

The second avenue for increasing revenue is an appeal to members. Some already send in donations with their membership renewals, but we need to seek wider support in this area and we ask that all who can will respond generously. I will continue to report in the *Bulletin* on the work done by NPA.

The third avenue is through different government grants. Ray Polglaze is looking at areas where we might profitably apply.

Ray Polglaze attended the Ramsar Conference in Brisbane representing the Wetlands Conservation Society of WA. He has returned bubbling with enthusiasm for the experience of working with conservationists from around the world representing both government and non-government organisations. He was disappointed to find, however, that no-one from ACT Parks and Conservation attended, even though an area in Namadji National Park, Ginini Swamp, was nominated as an important wetland site under the Ramsar Convention.

NPA continues to be represented at various functions important to our interests. I attended a workshop on the upper Murrumbidgee catchment area on 23 March. Clive Hurlstone and I represented NPA at the Parkcare display at the Botanic Gardens on Sunday 24 March and were able to talk to members of the various Parkcare groups in the ACT. Syd Comfort and I represented NPA at an information session on rabbit calicivirus, which I have written about in this issue.

In response to a request from the government, the environment subcommittee looked at possible nominations for faunal emblems for the ACT. At their recommendation,

the committee has nominated the southern striped earless dragon, which everyone who was on Sarah Sharp's grasslands outing last year will agree is a little charmer, and the gang gang cockatoo. Although seemingly a small thing to do, such a nomination can be an important aid for the protection of endangered species. We await the result of the nominations with interest.

On a more everyday matter I have to report that Maureen Blackmore, who has served us extremely well as office manager for over a year, resigned in February to take up a job offering more hours of work. We are sorry to see her go, but wish her well in her new job. After advertising in the *Canberra Times*, selecting a short list from the respondents and interviewing five, the committee has appointed Dianne Bostjancic to the position. Dianne has considerable experience in office management and we look forward to working with her. The gap between appointments has shown clearly how much the office manager's position helps with the smooth running of the NPA and enables us to carry out all the activities mentioned above.

Eleanor Stodart



Len Haskew's photo of the Orroral homestead in the March issue was wrongly captioned as the Cotter Homestead. This photo is of the Cotter Hut / Homestead / House taken c.1943 on its site on the western bank of the Cotter near the present ranger's hut. Photo by Bill Holesgrove / Reg Alder.

Wollemi Pine location exposed

Directions to the secret location of the ancient Wollemi Pine – believed to be the oldest living tree species in the world – have been revealed in a newsletter circulated by a NSW state MP.

The newsletter, published by a lobby group who call themselves The Public Users Alliance, gave general details of which area of the Wollemi National Park to enter in order to find the tree that has been hailed by experts around the world as the botanical find of the century. In an article in the *Daily Telegraph* (25/4/96), Public Land Users Alliance convener, Chris Bourne, denied the publishing of the information was irresponsible. She claimed it was intended for responsible people.

It has also been revealed that a large number of bushwalkers and nature enthusiasts have since visited the ancient pines, possibly putting them at risk. This is despite the fact that anyone caught disturbing the Wollemi Pine site risks a gaol term or at least \$10 000 in fines under the NSW Crimes Act.

The Wollemi Pine has been the subject of a major campaign by the NSW Government to be kept a public secret since it was discovered some 350–400kms north of Canberra by a NSWPW Officer in late 1994.

I recently had the opportunity of covering the story of the Wollemi Pine for ABC radio and visited the Mt Annan Botanical Gardens in Campbelltown where I spoke to Cathy Offord, a horticulturist working on propagating the Wollemi Pine.

Ms Offord said that the major reasons for keeping the site secret were:

- to stop poachers selling the seed as a rarity on the world market
- to stop pathogens being carried in on walkers' shoes
- to minimise the risk of fire.

Ms Bourne, of the Public Land Users Alliance, suggested that people who go through the area of the Wollemi Pine were not going to do anything to the tree. However, as can be seen from the reasons given by Ms Offord above, a walker can

unwillingly put the stand of trees at risk to disease and fire.

The lack of seed available (there are only around 40 trees in the wild) and the slow growing nature of the pine have meant that researchers have had to look at using cuttings and tissue culture. Humans carrying in pathogens could potentially harm the trees in the wild, decreasing the number of seeds that could be collected and hence hindering the research into the botanical find of the century.

After viewing a small and frail propagation, and recognising that the horticulturists need as many seeds from the wild as possible, I can only hope that those who now know of the secret location don't spread the word.

The whole 'debacle' of letting the Wollemi Pine secret out raises the question of whether ACT Government authorities would be better able to deal with all the associated issues if a find of similar significance occurred in Namadgi one day.

Tim the Yowie Man

Environment Subcommittee

The Environment Subcommittee of the NPA met once again on Thursday 28 March, to discuss important and interesting matters.

Present at the meeting were Ray Polglaze, Ross Scott, Robin Miller, Clive Hurlstone and Stephen Johnston.

Apologies were given by Nicki Taws and Tim Walsh.

Issues covered included Response to the Draft Management Plan for the Murrumbidgee River Corridor.

Most of the meeting was taken up with comments, revisions and additions to the NPA response to the draft plan which was due on 17 April 1996.

Ray Polglaze reported that the NPA ACT had contributed to the NPA NSW submission on the Proposed Route for the Proposed Eastern Gas Pipeline and was therefore included as one of the organisations endorsing that joint submission.

Ray also reported that the NPA's influence on the ACT Legislative Assembly Planning and Environment Committee Capital Works Report, through its written and verbal submission, was quite evident but that the report had failed to recommend delaying proposed works until management plans were ready. The report had,

however, recommended that management plans be prepared as a matter of urgency.

It was agreed that the NPA should recommend to the ACT Legislative Assembly Tourism Committee that the earless dragon and gang gang cockatoo be adopted as the ACT faunal emblems.

Ray gave an account of the Ramsar Conference held in Brisbane. He noted the strength of the contribution of non-government organisations and particularly the influence of Australian NGOs on the proceedings.

The Flora and Fauna Committee

Would you recognise a *Delmar impar*, a *Gentiana baeverenii* or a *Pseudophryne corroboree*? They have all been classified as either vulnerable or endangered species by the Flora and Fauna Committee. Debbie Worner and Bill Logan from the Wildlife Research Unit of the Parks and Conservation Service spoke about this committee at our March general meeting.

The function of the committee (comprising seven expert members and four 'lay' members) is to advise the minister on nature conservation matters with particular emphasis

on identifying native species and ecological communities that are threatened with extinction. As of 21 March 1996, 19 nominations had been received and recommendations had been made to recognise eight species and one community as either endangered or vulnerable.

When a species is declared as endangered – that is, the danger of extinction is immediate – special statutory protective measures are applied immediately. The Conservator of Flora and Fauna is required to develop a conservation action plan for each declared species or

community. (The conservator is the statutory and administrative head of the ACT Parks and Conservation Service.) Thus the ACT is fortunate that there is formal recognition that a component of the ACT biological resources is in danger and that special conservation measures are needed.

A similar procedure of assessment, declaration and management response applies to threatening processes – processes of such ecological significance that they threaten or may threaten the survival in the wild of native species and communities. Such processes are typically human-induced and may include things like the effects of pest plant or animal species or the degradation or destruction of habitats important to the well-being of native species.

Debbie and Bill pointed out that any person or organisation may make a nomination to the committee requesting that they recommend the declaration of a species, ecological community or threatening process. With this in mind the committee makes freely available a set of guidelines and examples of the criteria applied and procedures to be followed. The booklet is well set out and easy to follow.

At the conclusion of their presentation, Debbie and Bill showed excellent slides of all the nominations received. Consequently those present at the meeting could identify the creatures mentioned in the first paragraph as the striped legless lizard, a subalpine herb and the corroboree frog. In an interesting aside they pointed out that among the ACT's endangered species are a legless lizard, an earless dragon and a mouthless moth! (What does this say about the ACT?) Also of interest is that our few remaining remnant areas of natural temperate grasslands are recognised as endangered ecological communities.



Open grassy forest on the slopes of Mt Tennent. Photo by Babette Scougall.

Nature trail opens on Coleman Ridge

On June 5, World Environment Day, the Coleman Ridge Nature Trail will be opened by

Kate Carnell

The formal opening will be at 1.30pm after which the trail will be walked; 2.7km with 16 points of interest marked – trees, mountains and other features. Meet at the end of Kathner Street, Chapman.

Len Haskew

NPA concerned about ACT planning

A major concern of the National Parks Association (NPA) is the urgent need for updating the management plan for Namadgi National Park and completing management plans for the nature reserves.

The NPA is concerned by moves towards single issue management decisions that bypass addressing problems with ACT management planning. A particular concern is planning for increased recreational use of the reserves.

The NPA states the urgent need for management plans in its submissions to the inquiry into the Expansion of Nature Based Tourism in the ACT by the ACT Assembly Economic Development and Tourism Committee; the inquiry into the ACT Government's 1996-1997 Draft Capital Works Program by the ACT Assembly Planning and Environment Committee; and its submission on the ACT Parks and Conservation Service (P&CS) draft Marketing Strategy and Options Plan.

The NPA emphasises that the primary purpose of Namadgi National Park and the nature reserves is nature conservation, and recreational use of these reserves should be consistent with maintaining their nature conservation values.

The NPA argues that management plans are essential to define the opportunities for recreational use of the reserves that are consistent with conservation management objectives such as protection of endangered species or erosion and pollution control.

It follows that management plans must be updated or completed prior to decisions about increased recreational use of the reserves.

Management plans, through the legislative requirement for public consultation and review of management plans by the Legislative Assembly, also provide

a key opportunity for public participation in decisions about the future management of Namadgi National Park and the nature reserves.

The problem in the ACT is that there is only one recently completed management plan - the one for Jerrabomberra Wetlands completed in 1994. The management plan for Namadgi National Park was completed in 1986 and is now ten years old. Management plans have not been completed for the Murrumbidgee River Corridor, Canberra Nature Park, Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve or the Lower Molonglo River Corridor.

Without updated or completed management plans for all except one of the nature reserves, the ACT Government is not in a position to make decisions about increased recreational use of the reserves without a risk of compromising their nature conservation values.

It is of great concern to the NPA that the ACT Government appears anxious to proceed with decisions on increased recreational use of Namadgi National Park and the nature reserves. This is reflected in the ACT P&CS draft Marketing Strategy and Options Plan and the capital works proposal to proceed with developing a camping strategy and design of recreational facilities.

There is a clear trend in the ACT towards developing single issue management strategies. For example, in addition to general proposals for recreational use of the reserves, there are now separate strategies being developed for recreational fishing, weed control and fire management.

All of these issues can only be addressed in an integrated way through the development of management plans. The damage to O'Connor Ridge from the construction by the ACT P&CS of multiple unsealed fire access roads demonstrates the risks of single

issue' management decisions.

The ACT Legislative Assembly committees have clearly heard these NPA concerns. The Economic Development and Tourism Committee recommended in its December 1995 report on Expansion of Nature Based Tourism in the ACT that: 'the ACT Government finalise draft management plans for the Lower Molonglo, Murrumbidgee River Corridor and Canberra Nature Park and Tidbinbilla, and update the management plan for Namadgi as a matter of urgency'.

The Planning and Environment Committee reaffirmed this recommendation in its March 1996 report on the ACT Government's 1996-1997 Draft Capital Works Program. It also commented that: 'The committee considers the Government should increase the priority accorded to the development of management plans for nature reserves and forest areas, including Namadgi National Park. The process of developing management plans should provide for comprehensive consultation with all those interested in the areas, including conservation groups such as the National Parks Association, Conservation Council and other groups in Canberra with knowledge of and concern for the natural values of Canberra's nature parks. The Committee considers the management plans should reflect best practice in the states and local government. The committee finds it unacceptable that campground development is intended to proceed without reference to updated and comprehensive management plans.'

The ACT P&CS advised the Planning and Environment Committee in February 1996 that 'the plans of management for other areas will be coming out by the end of this year' and that it guessed that 'by the end of 1997 we would have a revised management plan available

(continued overleaf)

Ramsar Convention

With the Ramsar Convention to be held in Brisbane during March, 1996, it was considered appropriate to ask a representative from the Australian Nature Conservation Agency (ANCA), who are organising the convention, to speak to our February general meeting. Russell James from ANCA's Wetland Unit gave a most informative talk to those present and left an abundance of leaflets and pamphlets for us to read at our leisure.

Russell's theme was that wetlands are a resource of great economic, cultural, scientific and recreational value to people, as well as supporting a diversity of flora and fauna. He told us that about 50 per cent of Australia's wetlands have been destroyed since European settlement and, unfortunately, that many of the remaining wetlands are becoming degraded or are under threat from many quarters. This is true not only with regard to Australia but to most countries of

the world. These alarming facts gave the impetus for the establishment of the Ramsar Convention.

The Ramsar Convention (named after the Iranian town in which the first conference was held) was established in 1971 and provides a framework for intergovernmental and international cooperation in the protection and sustainable use of wetlands. The convention recognises the value of wetlands to all life forms, and their importance to the health, welfare and safety of people who live in or near them. It also recognises that often wetland systems are international in nature, either because they lie across geographical frontiers, or because they are used by migratory species that cross national boundaries. For these reasons it promotes international cooperation in the wise use of this varied and important habitat.

The Brisbane convention will be the first ever held in the southern

hemisphere and will host 1000 delegates representing some 100 countries. The conference will focus on the 'wise use of coastal wetlands'.

As well as the Ramsar responsibility, ANCA also operates a National Wetlands Program. For 1995-96 the priorities are:

- preparation of management plans for all Australian Ramsar sites
- inventory projects which will contribute to the second edition of A Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia
- research and management projects designed to contribute to the wetland manager's resource library being assembled by ANCA
- education and public information projects which foster public understanding of and involvement in the conservation of wetlands
- development of a wetlands policy for the Federal Government.

Len Haskew

NPA concerned about ACT planning *(continued)*

for public use for Namadgi...' More recently, Dianne Garood, Manager, Conservation and Wildlife, advised the NPA that 'in spite of the declining resources available to my Section, I have recently appointed two additional staff to the task'.

The Murrumbidgee River Corridor Draft Management Plan was released for public comment in February 1996 - almost 10 years after it was first drafted. We have yet to see if the draft management plans for the Lower Molonglo River Corridor, Canberra Nature Park and Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve will be released for public comment in the remaining six months of 1996. How long it takes the ACT Government to finalise the management plans after public comment is important.

The draft management plans for

the Murrumbidgee River Corridor and Canberra Nature Park are also general regional management plans covering a total of 27 nature reserves. Separate specific area management plans will be required to deal with the area-specific management issues of each of these reserves. More than two additional staff will be required to tackle this management planning task.

There are real problems with the management planning process in the ACT. There are long delays in the production of management plans due to lack of management planning staff and an elaborate internal government process of consultation delay.

ACT management plans also tend to be strong on general objectives and policy but weak on specific action and reporting commitments.

The problems with management planning in the ACT should be addressed, rather than bypassed with single issue management decisions. More management planning staff are required to tackle the ACT's management planning task. The elaborate internal government consultation process must be streamlined. There is also much to be learnt from the management planning achievements in other states. In Queensland and Western Australia, in particular, management plans are being produced with more information and better community consultation in less time and at less cost than in the ACT.

Ray Polglaze
Research Officer
National Parks Association
(ACT)

Back to Gurrangorambla

One of the tenets of Murphy's Law is that as soon as the pen dries, the typewriter stops clattering and the presses grind to a halt, additional information comes to hand. So it was with Fiona's article in the March issue proposing a name change for Mt Morgan.

For a short while Mt Morgan did have an Aboriginal name, Mt Maragwrall. It happened that surveyor Stapleton was carrying out

the instruction of Surveyor-General Major Mitchell to the effect that:

'I have now to add that you will be particular in noting the native names of as many places as you can in your map of that part. The natives can furnish you with names for every flat and almost every hill and Settlers select their Grants by these names; The names of new parishes will be also taken in most cases from the local names of the natives.'

In a circular to his surveyors in 1828 the following rules were outlined:

1. That where a g begins a syllable, it is never to be followed by h.
2. That the vowel u is always to be used instead of the diphthong oo excepting in the last syllable when the accent is upon it.
3. That no name is to terminate with h.
4. That two r's to follow the accented syllable only and no other.

Granville Stapleton traced the whole of the Goodradigbee River from its junction with the Murrumbidgee to its source under the summit of Mount Maragwrall. With his 100-link chain he measured the whole distance except that he found the gorge downstream of Cooleman caves impassable. He thought he was on the highest peak of the range, but Bimberi is partly obscured by our present Mt Murray. In a traverse to the Coolalamine Plains, Stapleton indicated on his preliminary sketch plan 'Wollong (later to become Mt Murray) in a mountainous range separating the waters of the Goodradigbee and Murram...gee.'

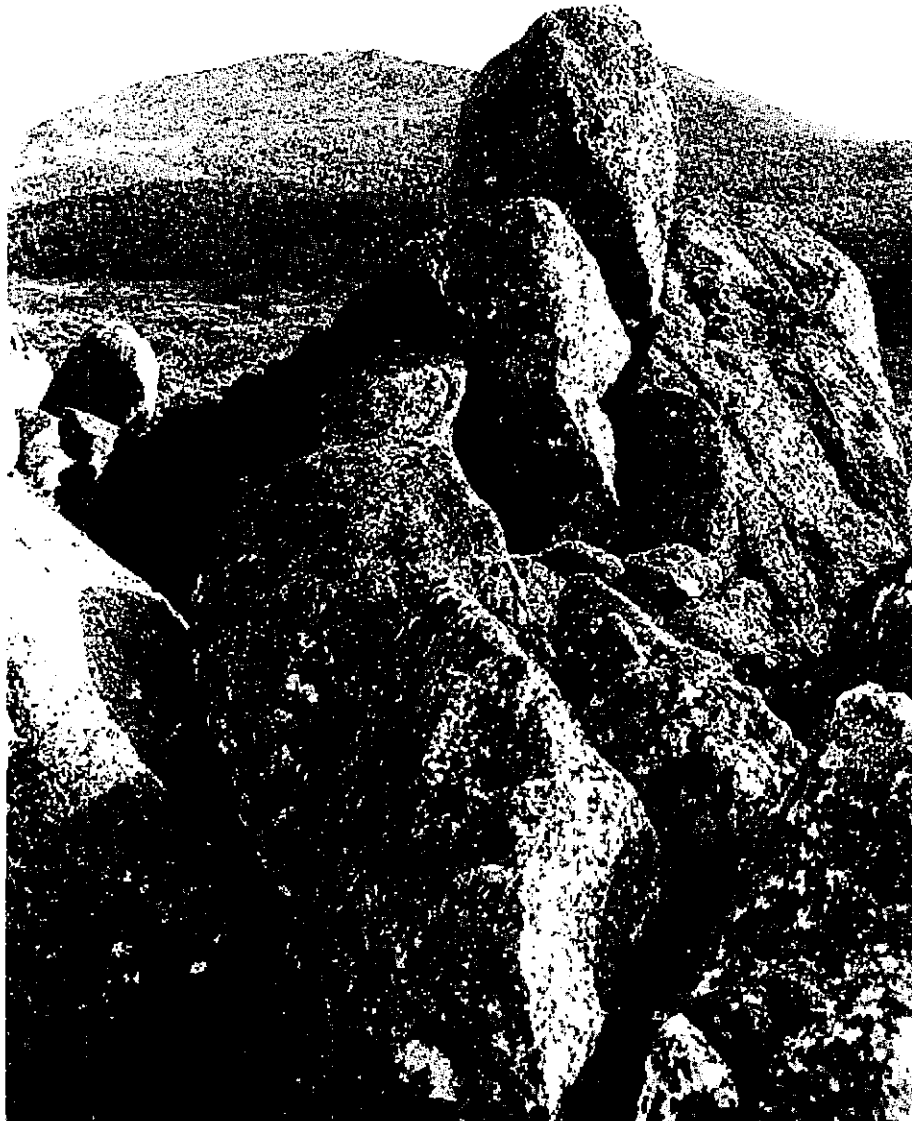
Sir George Murray, Secretary of State, had been instrumental in securing Major Mitchell's appointments and in gratification, despite his instructions, Maragwrall was changed to Murray. However, the dual name appeared on maps until the 1850s. At a later date Maragwrall became Mt Morgan.

Is it now possible that Morgan and Murray could revert to their original Aboriginal names?

References

- Sassafras - The Parish of Sixty Farms.* Robert Snedden.
Kosciusko - The Mountain in History. Alan E.J. Andrews.

Reg Alder



Looking back over the source of the Goodradigbee River from Wollong (Mt Murray) to Maragwrall (Mt Morgan). Photo by Henry Gold / Reg Alder.

Brayshaw's Hut restored



Formal acceptance of the five-year task of work by the Kosciusko Huts Association on Brayshaw's Hut in Namadgi was made by Environment Minister Gary Humphries on 14 April. The work undertaken was extensive, involving a drainage trench completely around the building to remove water which was lying permanently under the floor, renewal of the floor timbers and supports, replacement or scarfing of the supporting posts, renewal of wall plates and adjustment of the slab walls, renewal of gable end, part demolition of the chimney and rebuilding, removal of fibro wall of the verandah and rebuilding it.
Photo by Reg Alder.

**Please note:
Membership
renewals are
due from 1 July**

Survey of members

Enclosed in this issue you will find a questionnaire. Please take the time to fill it out and return it, to help the committee's work to increase membership and thus the effectiveness of NPA.

Cottage to let

Mallacoota – Mudbrick cottage available. Sleeps 6–8. Adjacent bush/beach. Easy to walk to town. Abundant birdlife and wildlife. Ideal base camp for coastal walks. Reasonable rates. Contact Barbara or Chris de Bruine (wk) (06) 258 6478 (h) (06) 258 3531.

PARKWATCH

Monga threatened

Some of the best old growth forest and cool temperate rainforest in southern NSW are situated just east of Braidwood in the Monga State Forest. Giant eucalypts up to 10 metres in diameter support a wide range of wildlife and endangered plants, giving this area its rich biodiversity. The area is enhanced by the largest area of pinkwood (*Eucryphia moorei*) rainforest anywhere, containing ancient rainforest trees which may well be two or three thousand years old.

Unfortunately, the area known as compartments 830, 835 and 836 are due to be logged in the very near future. Braidwood residents and the ACT branch of the Wilderness Society are campaigning vigorously to protect this wonderful area. If you would like to add your support contact the Wilderness Society and/or write to the Premier of NSW, Bob Carr.

ACTwild, Wilderness Society magazine, Autumn 1996

Harris's Hut a heritage lost

When Harris's Hut burnt to the ground in the early hours of 28 January 1996 not only did the national park and the local district lose a unique and irreplaceable historic hut, but two Tumut women (Phyllis and Shirley Dowling) were saddened by the loss of their childhood home and their high country heritage.

Harris's hut was the most varied, complete and well-established vernacular homestead of its size that existed within Kosciusko National Park.

Since the 1970s the Canberra Speleological Society has acted as caretaker/maintenance group for Harris's Hut and no doubt they, too, will be saddened by its destruction.

Kosciusko Huts Association Newsletter, Autumn 1996

Eucalyptus: the good oil?

The delicate balance of nature in the mallee regions of Victoria's box-ironbark country is under direct threat from the low-income eucalyptus oil industry. Eucalyptus oil production in Victoria pays limited dividends to seven operators and a small handful of people involved in the production of essential oil from naturally occurring mallee plantations on Crown land. Large machines are used to slash and mow naturally occurring plantations to ankle height every one to two years. When the harvesters finish, they leave behind a scene of destruction and huge piles of mulch are left to rot or to be burned.

Habitats and biodiversity are the casualties. The ground becomes compacted until it is like concrete. Among the species endangered by the process are some rare orchids and the brush-tailed phascogale, considered to be vulnerable in Victoria.

Parkwatch, the magazine of the VNPA, March 1996

A new neighbour for Namadgi

Brindabella National Park is located to the north-west of the NSW-ACT border and lies to the north of Namadgi National Park. The new national park covers about 12 050 hectares. The area is significant as a corridor for native animal movement. The importance of the area is enhanced by the protected lands of the Cotter catchment and the Kosciusko National Park to the immediate south and south-west. The national park will aim to provide protection for the conservation of many species of flora and fauna. This includes species listed as vulnerable, such as the powerful owl, common bent wing bat, yellow-bellied glider and the koala.

Four-wheel-driving has long been a popular activity in this area and access for this activity is proposed to continue.

For further information or your comments contact the NSW Parks Service at Queanbeyan.

Community Relations Bulletin, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service

A new record

The total number of visits to Victoria's national parks and conservation reserves rose to a record high of over 12.5 million visitor days in 1995, according to official estimates by the Victorian National Parks Service.

Nine of Victoria's parks – Port Campbell, the Grampians, Wilsons Promontory, Mornington Peninsula, Dandenong Ranges, the Otway National Park, the Alpine National Park, Angahook-Lorne State Park and the Bay of Islands Coastal Park – now each attract more visitors per annum than Kakadu National Park.

Outdoors, magazine of the Victorian Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

Protecting the marine environment

In November 1995, 110 governments took a major step towards enhancing the health and economic well-being of the 3.5 billion people who live at or near coastal areas by unanimously adopting the Global Program of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities. UNEP (United Nations Environment Program) will manage the program and one of the major tasks will be to address the global threat posed by persistent organic pollutants.

Our Planet, magazine of UNEP, 1996

Cape York Peninsula: reconciliation and world heritage

Monday 5 February, 1996, saw the signing of a Regional Heads of Government Agreement on future land use in Cape York Peninsula.

NPA

Membership Renewal 1996/97

Name/s.....

.....

Address.....

.....

.....

Postcode.....

Telephone.....home

.....work

Membership categories

Single

No. @ \$20 \$

Household

No. @ \$25 \$

Full time student, pensioner

No. @\$10 \$

Corporations and Bulletin only

No. @ \$15 \$

Donation

(amounts over \$2 are tax deductible)

Total \$

Please mark the appropriate boxes and send this form with payment to the address overleaf.

Receipt required? no yes

Annual subscriptions cover the period 1 July to 30 June.
Enrolments between 1 January and 31 March are at half rates.
Enrolments between 1 April and 30 June are at annual rates
and cover membership until the end of the financial year.

Special interests

Have you any special interests, experience or expertise that you would like to follow or put to good effect for the Association?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Would it interest you to:

- Lead walks, field excursions
- Join committees
- Write for the *NPA Bulletin*
- Help with exhibitions
- Address meetings
- Project slides, films.

Please send this form to:

The Secretary
NPA of the ACT
GPO Box 1940
WODEN ACT 2606
Phone and Fax (06) 282 5813

The NPA office is located in front of the Chifley
Preschool, Laclaurin Cres, Chifley

Office Hours are:

Monday, Tuesday and Thursday 10am to 2pm

SURVEY OF NPA ACT MEMBERS

To help us be as effective as possible, your committee is asking you to fill out this questionnaire and return it to the office: PO Box 1940, WODEN ACT 2606.

To make the questionnaire as quick as possible, most questions are multiple choice; please tick the correct answer but also please add comments where you feel they are needed.

1. Please state your sex and membership category

Male _____	Female _____
Single _____	Family _____

2. Please indicate your age bracket

under 18..... 18 - 25..... 26 - 40..... 41 - 65..... over 65.....

3. For how long have you been a member?

1 year or less..... 2 - 5 years..... 5 - 10 years..... over 10 years.....

4. Where did you hear about NPA?

Friends..... NPA Bulletin..... Other clubs..... Other..... Don't remember.....

5. Reasons for membership

	When you joined NPA	What purpose does your membership now serve
To voice concern on conservation issues		
To learn more about conservation issues		
To participate socially in activities		

- To voice concern on conservation issues
- To learn more about conservation issues
- To participate socially in activities

Other.....

6. Please indicate your level of involvement in NPA.

	Work parties	Other Day	Outings Weekend	General Meetings	read Bulletin
How often did you take part in the previous year					
Would you like to do more for the NPA (tick)					
Which are you most likely to bring an interested non-member to (tick)					
Which activity do you most value? (number, using 1 for most value)					

How often did you take part in the previous year

Would you like to do more for the NPA (tick)

Which are you most likely to bring an interested non-member to (tick)

Which activity do you most value? (number, using 1 for most value)

7. If not actively involved in NPA:

(a) is your membership to demonstrate support for conservation of parks Yes.....
 Other.....

(b) what changes would mean that you would attend outings?.....

(c) what changes would mean that you would attend general meetings?.....

8. Would you participate in outings aimed at including children Yes.....No.....
 Teenagers Yes.....No.....

9. Would you support an event to make new members welcome? Yes.....No.....

Preferred event: Special Evening..... Outing..... Other.....

10. What other activities might NPA provide for members?.....

11. Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the *Bulletin*.

	Quality of Production	Frequency	Reports from Committees	Parkwatch	Articles on cons & env issues	Articles on cultural heritage	Photographs	Members trips
same								
more								
less								
omit								

12. NPA's involvement in lobbying to influence government decisions is probably as active as its present committee structure and funding can achieve. Do you:

- (a) feel the lobbying is adequate..... poor.....overdone.....don't know.....
- (b) feel our exposure in the media is adequate.....too little.....too much.....don't know.....
- (c) how would you help us increase our influence on government decisions?

Remain a member.....Serve on committee.....Donate funds.....Write for *Bulletin*.....

14. Have you any other comments you would like to make? (use more paper if desired)

15. Name (if desired)_____

Outings program

June 1996 – September 1996



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.

8–10 June long weekend pack walk
Clyde Valley Circuit

Leader: Mick Kelly

A three day walk in the Central Budawangs. From Yadboro to Castle Gap, on to Clyde River Gorge, Hollands Creek, Crooked Falls, Monolith Valley and return to Yadboro via Kalianna Ridge. If time permits, a side trip will be made to Darri Pass. Please contact leader early as numbers limited.
350 kms, \$70 per car.

16 June Sunday walk
Mount Coree
Leader: Len Haskeew

Meet at the corner of Eucumbene Drive and Cotter Road at 8.30am. A steepish climb through light scrub, return along fire trail through an interesting variety of forest types.
100 kms, \$20 per car.

22, 23 June Namadgi Work Party
Leader: Len Haskeew

Contact Len by Wednesday to express your interest and find out what work is to be done. This is an opportunity for members to demonstrate how much they value Namadgi by doing their bit to maintain and improve it. Attend either day or both.

22 June Saturday walk
Mount Tennent
Leader: Max Lawrence

Meet at Kambah Village Shops at 8.30am. A walk from the Namadgi Visitors Centre to the summit of Mt Tennent, using the Alpine Walking Track for part of the way. A climb of 750 metres to excellent views over southern Canberra and Namadgi from this striking landmark at the end of the Tuggeranong Valley. Return via the access road down the western side and a short car shuffle from the Honeysuckle road.
40 kms, \$8 per car.

30 June Sunday walk
Googong Dam to Hells Hole
Leader: Mike Smith

Meet at Canberra Railway Station at 8.30am. A walk from Googong Dam picnic area to Bradleys Creek via Gormans Trig along fire trails. Then down Bradleys Creek to a suitable lunch spot in Hells Hole area. Return through open bush to Gormans Trig and then back to cars by fire trail. Two climbs of 250 metres each.
40 kms, \$8 per car.

6 July Saturday walk
Lake Burley Griffin circuit
Leader: Stephen Johnston

Meet at Regatta Point carpark at 9.00am. A bracing walk around our lovely lake, all on a pathway and hardly a hill. But it's at least 20 km, so it's more than a stroll.

2/D/E/F
Ref: Corang 1:25 000,
CMW Budawangs
Phone: 241 2500 (h)

2/A/B/C
Ref: Cotter Dam 1:25 000
Phone: 281 4268 (h)

Phone 281 4268

2/A
Ref: Williamsdale 1:25 000
Phone: 288 1370 (h), 272 2032 (w)

2/A/E
Ref: Hoskintown 1:25 000
Phone: 286 2984 (h), 248 3624 (w)

4/A
Ref: Canberra street directory
Phone: 254 3738 (h)

13 July Saturday walk

Tidbinbilla to touch the snow
Leader: Steven Forst

Meet at Kambah Village Shops at 9.00am. An easy walk up Fishing Gap fire trail to the snow line to play in the snow at the base of Mount Domain before returning to the cars. See the beauty of the forest in mist and snow, or in winter sunshine as the case may be.
300 metre climb.
60 kms, \$12 per car.

14 July Sunday walk
Molonglo Gorge
Leader: David Large

Meet at Canberra Railway Station at 10am. A 6 km return walk on tracks with some rocks and a short climb.
30 kms, \$6 per car.

20 July Saturday walk

Latham to O'Connor
Leader: Stephen Johnston

Contact leader for bookings. Between Latham and O'Connor lie rural vistas, historic sites, sweeping views from Mt Rogers, Ginninderra Creek and Lake, and Bruce and O'Connor Ridge bushland. An energetic but most interesting walk.

21 July Sunday walk

Southern Namadgi chimneys
Leader: Martin Chalk

Meet at Kambah Village Shops at 8.30am. Walk from Mount Clear campground to look at Potters and Chalkers historic chimneys. Return to campground via different route. Mixture of tracks and open bush.
140 kms, \$28 per car.

27 July Saturday ski tour

Guthega to Main Range
Leaders: Phil and Leonie Bubb

Contact leaders by Wednesday 24 July to arrange logistics. A tour for experienced skiers exploring highlights of the Main Range if weather is suitable, otherwise more sheltered locations. Leaders will also be skiing most other weekends, and would welcome the company of other experienced skiers. Phone for details.
400 kms, \$80 per car.

28 July Sunday walk

The hills of Weston Creek
Leader: Colin McAlister

Meet at the corner of Eucumbene Drive and Cotter Road at 8.30am. Visit five trig points: Oakey Hill, Mt Taylor, Mt Arawang, Cooleman Trig and Narrabundah Hill. Magnificent views to Canberra City and beyond, and over the Murrumbidgee valley. Short car shuffle.

4 August Sunday walk 3/A
Grassy Creek Ref: Namadgi National Park 1:100 000
to Boboyan Valley
Leader: Robert Wright Phone: 281 5234 (h), 263 3789 (w)
 Meet at Kambah Village Shops at 7.30am. A firetrail walk with the opportunity to visit Boboyan and Westermans homesteads. There will also be a visit to some remnants of the first border surveys in the most southern part of the National Park. Short car shuffle. 150 kms, \$30 per car.

11 August Sunday walk 2/A
Horse Gully Hut Ref: Colinton 1:25 000
Leader: Colin McAlister Phone: 288 4171
 Meet at Kambah Village Shops at 8.00am. From Mt Clear campground follow the Naas Valley fire trail to Horse Gully Hut and return. A lovely walk through the valley and open woodland. 140 kms, \$28 per car.

17 August Saturday ski tour
Four Mile Hut Ref: Mt Selwyn Ski Touring Map
Leader: Mike Smith Phone: 286 2984(h), 248 3624 (w)
 Contact leader by preceding Wednesday for details. A day ski trip to Four Mile Hut in the old gold mining area for lunch. Depart from Selwyn Quarry. Depends on snow conditions. 300 kms, \$60 per car.

18 August Sunday walk 1/C/E
Orroral Tor Ref: Rendezvous Creek 1:25 000
Leader: Murray Dow Phone 257 4371 (h)
 Book with leader. Orroral Tor is the rockclimbers' name for the outcrop east of Orroral gate, across the river. Starting at the gate and finishing at Nursery Swamp carpark, explore the Tor's spectacular boulders, tunnels and platforms, some polluted with rockclimbers' bolts. Generally easy, some light scrub, scratchy rock and a 240 metre climb. 80 kms, \$16 per car.

24-26 August three day pack walk 1/D/E/F
Yerriyong State Forest Ref: Sassafras, Tianjara 1:25 000
Leaders: Pat and Eric Pickering Phone: 286 2128
 Joint NPA/FBI walk in the Wandandian/Gnatilia Creeks area, mainly in the bush but some track work. Should be some waterfalls and early spring flora. Contact leaders by Monday 19 August for details and bookings. Numbers limited. 400 kms, \$80 per car.

25 August Sunday walk 2/B/C
Honeysuckle Creek area Ref: Corin Dam 1:25 000
Leader: Mick Kelly Phone: 241 2330 (h)
 Meet at Kambah Village shops at 8.30am. Starting from Apollo Road about 2 km before the tracking station, a climb of some 400 metres will take us to the ridge running to the SW and ending at spot height 1364 metres. From here we will walk down the un-named flats (portion 23) for lunch. Return to cars will be via Spinnaker Rocks and the firetrail. 60 kms, \$12 per car.

31 August - 1 September overnight ski tour 3/A
Broken Dam Hut Ref: Mt Selwyn Ski Tour Map
Leader: Steven Forst Phone: 251 6817 (h), 279 1326(w)
 Book with leader before Thursday 29 August. Overnight ski tour to Broken Dam Hut from Kiandra. Depending on weather, a visit may also be made to Table Top Mountain for views of the Main Range. 400 kms, \$80 per car.

1 September Sunday walk 1/A
Blue Range area Ref: ACT 1:100 000
Leader: Doreen Wilson Phone: 288 5215
 Meet at corner of Eucumbene Drive and Cotter Road at 8.30am. An easy walk on tracks and steps from Blue Range Hut to Sherwood homestead historic site in its spring glory. Leisurely lunch and interpretation of site before returning to cars. 35 kms, \$7 per car.

8 September Sunday walk 2/A/B
Rendezvous Creek Ref: Rendezvous Creek 1:25 000
rock paintings
Leader: Bev Hammond Phone: 288 6577 (h)
 Meet at Kambah Village Shops at 9.00am. A nice walk on tracks up the broad open valley of Rendezvous Creek to visit a rock shelter used by the area's original inhabitants, and to inspect the paintings they left there. 90 kms, \$18 per car.

15 September Sunday walk 2/A/B
Boboyan Pines Ref: Yaouk 1:25 000
Leader: Frank Clements Phone: 231 7005 (h)
 Meet at Kambah Village Shops at 8.30am. Logging might commence this coming summer in the eastern Boboyan pine forest, so this walk offers what may well be a last look. After inspecting the pines, Hospital Creek falls will be visited, we will cut through bush to the western pine forest, and explore that also. 100 kms, \$20 per car.

21 September Saturday walk 2/A/C/E
Pierces Creek Falls Ref: Tidbinbilla 1:25 000
Leader: Lyle Mark Phone: 286 2801 (h)
 Meet at the corner of Eucumbene Drive and Cotter Road at 8.30am. This is a twelve kilometre walk along the Hardy Range fire trail and through some light scrub. Optional 50 metre scramble to base of falls. Return via Cotter Hill trig and Pipeline trail. 50 kms, \$10 per car.

28 September Saturday walk 2/A/B
Bushfold Flats Ref: Williamsdale 1:25 000
Leader: Stephen Johnston Phone: 254 3738 (h)
 Contact leader for bookings and enquiries. Visit the most recent addition to Namadgi National Park via the start of the Alpine Walking Track, and return along the Mt Tennent ridge. 40 kms, \$8 per car.

5-7 October long weekend pack walk 2/C/D/E
Talaterang Ref: CMW Budawangas
Leader: Steven Forst Phone: 251 6817 (h), 279 1326 (w)
 Contact leader before Thursday 3 October. After a long drive with stops at Fitzroy Falls and Cambewarra Mountain, an easy two and a half hour walk to camp at the top of Ngaityung Falls - a spectacular spot with views into Pigeon House gorge. Next day walk to Mt Talaterang without packs, returning to campsite. Return to Canberra Monday. 400 kms, \$80 per car.

13 October Sunday walk 2/A/B
Fishing Gap to Cotter River Ref: Tidbinbilla 1:25 000
Leader: Max Lawrence Phone: 288 1370 (h), 272 2032 (w)
 Meet at Kambah Village Shops at 9am. Drive to Tidbinbilla, walk on fire trail to Fishing Gap. From there a track drops down to the Cotter River, where we will have a leisurely lunch before returning. 60 kms, \$12 per car.

19 October Saturday walk 1/A
Black Mountain Ref: Canberra street directory
Nature Ramble
Leader: George Chippendale Phone: 281 2454 (h)
 Meet at 9.30am at the Belconnen Way entrance to Black Mountain Reserve (several hundred metres to the east of Caswell Drive). A morning ramble to see the birds and flowers. Suitable for ages 4 - 80. Bring your morning tea, camera, binoculars and field guides. Finish before midday.

Points to note

Please help keep our outings program alive by volunteering to lead outings. New leaders are welcome. The outings covenor is happy to suggest locations suitable for a walk if you do not have something in mind yourself. Feel free to send in suggestions for outings to the association's office as soon as you think of them, with a suggested date.

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.

Negotiated between the Cape York Land Council, the Cattlemen's Union of Australia, the Australian Conservation Foundation and the Wilderness Society, the agreement sets out a framework to allow the three goals of:

- rights of traditional access to pastoral leases on the Cape
- development of a secure and ecologically sustainable cattle industry
- the world heritage listing of the largest area of high quality wilderness left on the east coast of Australia.

There is now wide consensus on the need for the Federal Government to put in place an acquisition fund to allow for the purchase of pastoral properties, their return to Aboriginal ownership, and the peninsula-wide assessment of world heritage values.

Cape York, an area that we call wilderness and 8000 indigenous people call home, the refuge for 60 per cent of Australia's butterflies, a fifth of our rainforest, half of our bird species, a third of our mammal species, and a quarter of our reptiles, ultimately depends on the decisions of politicians, and the judgement of the Australian electorate.

Wilderness News, the magazine of the Wilderness Society, Autumn 1996

From banks to biodiversity

Tucked away behind CSIRO's lab complex on the slopes of Canberra's Black Mountain is a new building that's home to more than a million plant specimens, and a whole new concept in biodiversity monitoring.

The building houses the Australian National Herbarium, a unique collaboration between CSIRO Plant Industry and the nearby Australian National Botanic Gardens.

The herbarium is part of the Centre for Plant Biodiversity Research which plays a key role in

monitoring, analysing and researching Australia's unique botanical richness. Director of the centre, Dr Judy West, says biodiversity is essential both for Australia's future economic prosperity and its environmental health. Documenting Australia's botanical biodiversity, 80 per cent of which is found nowhere else in the world, is the main function of the herbarium.

Ecos, CSIRO magazine, Autumn 1996

African national park overrun by squatters and cattle

In the midst of almost infinite human suffering in Rwanda, the plight of the last of Rwanda's wildlife has been forgotten. With maybe a million people killed in one of the worst massacres in history, it is little wonder that the world's attention has not been directed at Rwanda's great African wildlife reserve, the Akagera National Park, which spans the escarpment and flood plains of the eastern part of Rwanda. It is home to most of the selection of wildlife that is associated with the great African game parks. It also has a remarkable selection of birdlife in its swamps and wetlands. For over 60 years it has been preserved intact thanks to dedicated conservationists. But it now seems inevitable that the park will soon cease to exist as the Rwanda Government moves to degazette the park. At least 600 000 and maybe as many as two million cattle have entered the park, causing serious overgrazing. The Rwanda army has been sent in to destroy the lions which were attacking the cattle, and then slaughter vast herds of animals which could pass on diseases to the cattle.

From an article by Dr Eric Wolanski of Townsville. Further details may be obtained from Tom Heinsohn, ph 247 5917.

The Dunphy legacy

All conservationists will be saddened by the death of Milo Dunphy on 13 April 1996. Milo was a long-time director of the Colong Foundation and campaigned tirelessly for wilderness objectives. It is timely then that Premier Bob Carr has proposed to rename the Kanangra Wilderness as the Dunphy Wilderness as an honour to the father and son team of Myles and Milo. No two men have worked harder for the cause of wilderness protection.

The Bushwalker, newsletter of the Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs, February 1996

From the newspapers

The crew of a boat on the Murray River attempting to better the world distance record for solar-powered craft has encountered huge armies of carp.

Team leader Malcolm Gray said the enormous schools of carp, seen downstream from the river town of Swan Hill, looked like armies on the march.

Herald Sun 9/2/96

A fashion has emerged, fostered by a few pundits of an extremist economic rationalist bent, to depict environmentalists as a new species of fundamentalist crank. But by and large we owe a large debt to those who have alerted us to the fragility of our ecosystems and have aroused our consciousness about the damage inflicted on the environment by reckless development and sheer human vandalism.

Jim McClelland in the *Sydney Morning Herald* 5/2/96

Rabbit Calicivirus Disease – an aid to conservation

With outbreaks at Broken Hill last spring and Bendigo this autumn, Rabbit Calicivirus Disease (RCD) is on its way, although it would be more effective as a control measure to have a deliberate release rather than just let it arrive haphazardly.

It is already occurring over a large part of South Australia. After it arrived in the Flinders Ranges, rabbit populations dropped 95 per cent in six weeks, as measured by a research project already in the area counting rabbits. In western Victoria it is estimated that over 20 million rabbits have died. So we now have the best opportunity in 45 years (since the release of myxomatosis) to eradicate rabbits, at least from fenced properties, if follow-up work is done to reduce the successful breeding of remaining rabbits.

The virus mainly spreads gradually, but occasionally leaps

over long distances. Possible agents for the distant spread are blown insects, predatory birds and humans. It seems to occur in spring and autumn. Deliberate release at the moment can only be done by catching and inoculating rabbits, but it is hoped a successful method of baiting will be developed. Relocating dead rabbits is not an effective way of spreading the virus, and relocating sick rabbits is too likely to achieve the spread of resistant rabbits or less virulent strains of the virus. The planned program for deliberate release would use 200 sites around Australia, five in the ACT. Because of the necessary legal processes it is unlikely before mid-1996; preferably it would be done when there are few young rabbits about. Vaccine to protect pet rabbits will be available through ACT vets.

For some reason young rabbits

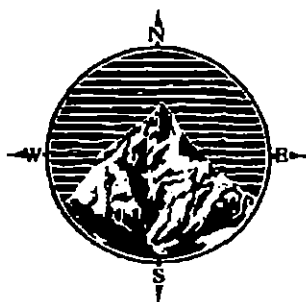
survive the virus. They are immune for life but do not pass the immunity to their young. For example, in the Flinders Ranges where the overall loss was 95 per cent, 99 per cent of adults died. Most survivors were 3–6 weeks old and two-thirds of these had antibodies; the other one-third apparently escaped infection.

In these semi-arid areas where the virus has taken hold, the immediate response of predators is to move in and feast on dying rabbits. For example, a large number of black kites, which normally take smaller food than rabbits, moved in. After the first wave of the virus had passed and rabbits were much reduced in number, the kites moved away again. Wedge-tailed eagles, however, hung around and fed on carrion left by kangaroo shooters. Cats and foxes were observed more, probably because, being hungry, they were active by day. The diet of

continued overleaf

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RCD update

Since the above article was written, RCD has become established in a broad band between Moulamein and Bendigo. It is now in the Monaro on the ACT border and sites in the ACT are being tested. However, reliable diagnosis requires fresh carcasses so it is difficult to obtain before the virus is well established.

Parks and Conservation are seeking funding for eradication work to follow the expected outbreak, and for monitoring its effect on predators and alternative prey species. Fortunately Peter Banks already has a study on the effects of fox predation under way in Namadgi, and further studies can build on work started.

Owners of pet rabbits would be wise to approach their vets for vaccination.

foxes went from 80 per cent rabbits down to 20 per cent but, if this was accompanied by a drop in fox numbers, the impact of other prey would not be as great as those figures suggest.

Where rabbit numbers drop below a critical figure, the regeneration of arid zone acacias follows. After the myxomatosis outbreak acacias regenerated in bare areas along the Birdsville track. These areas still have acacias, but not young ones. RCD will enable regeneration to proceed again.

One of the problems that could result from the RCD spread is that predators could switch to native animals. Unfortunately no adequate studies were done after the spread of myxomatosis so most of our information about what happened then is anecdotal. Other information derives from normal eruptions and crashes of rabbit numbers.

After a drop in rabbit populations, foxes still focus on the rabbits that are left, and so can be effective in regulating numbers. Cats mostly eat younger rabbits and so would be helpful in reducing the young rabbits left after an RCD outbreak. If foxes are removed, cats become more evident. Foxes and dingoes tend to avoid each other.

A computer model using the known information about rabbit population dynamics shows that RCD should prevent eruptions in numbers. Average biomass of pasture may not be any more than without RCD, but the lack of eruptions in rabbit numbers should mean that the severe drops in pasture would not occur. It is in the severe drops that species are lost.

Native mammals become isolated in safe havens in hard times. It appears that foxes prevent them spreading out again in good times.

The above information is patchy, so although additional rabbit control such as burrow ripping is important following an RCD outbreak to ensure the greatest benefit in rabbit control, it is also important that a

proportion of funds should be used to monitor what happens.

Despite alarms in the popular press about the likelihood of the virus jumping to other animals, even to people, this possibility is remote. Another virus in the same family, one that affects sea lions, does also affect other species, but even in that example no spread to people has been verified. Most other caliciviruses, particularly the rabbit calicivirus, are specific to one species.

One problem with viral agents of biological control is that the virus becomes less virulent and the host more resistant due to evolutionary pressure. After the myxomatosis release such changes were evident in a few years. So far, after 10 years in Asia and Europe there is no evidence of such attenuation for rabbit calicivirus.

As mentioned earlier, follow-up work ripping burrows is important after an RCD outbreak for greatest effect in keeping rabbit numbers down. Established warrens provide a haven for the protection of the young of survivors. Without extensive warrens these young are much more vulnerable to predators. Since rabbits are destructive of native species and cause soil erosion, following the spread of RCD the most effective way of protecting plantings, controlling weeds and countering soil erosion may be to use landcare monies in follow-up control. The NPA's interest in seeing successful regeneration of native vegetation in the Boboyan Pine area should also be well served by RCD, followed by warren destruction.

Parks and Conservation held a meeting on Thursday 4 April to inform representatives from community groups about RCD. Syd Comfort and I attended to represent NPA and this article is based on the information received then. Further information may be obtained from Don Fletcher, Vertebrate Pest Management Coordinator for ACT Parks and Conservation Service.

Eleanor Stodart

Blackberry spraying on Rendezvous Creek

When walking up Rendezvous Creek on 8 April I was startled to find wheel tracks made apparently by a small 4WD vehicle, opposite where the track from Nursery Swamp enters. On enquiries, Craig Richardson told me that for the past five years the Parks Service had been using light 4WD bikes to get in and spray the blackberries, as this is much cheaper than using helicopters. However, to reach the clearing at GR 725530, the bikes were carried by helicopter. The tracks in the swamps will quickly disappear, though where these vehicles have forced their way through a lot of cassinia, *Acacia dealbata* and *Acacia siculiformis* scrub, revegetation will be somewhat slower.

When I first saw the tracks I thought someone had stolen a 4WD and gone joy riding, but it was part of official work by the Parks Service to control weeds. Perhaps NPA members can keep an eye on the revegetation of the tracks and any blackberry infestations. One infestation that I brought to the attention of Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve was north of Mt Tidbinbilla, and has since been sprayed, but is unfortunately alive and spreading again.

Another weed problem I noticed about three years ago was high up on the slopes of Mt Bimberi, where the track was cut in the 1983 fires. Here thistles are growing at GR631525 – in fact you know you must be close to the faint track when you see the thistles. Perhaps this is another weed-clearing project the NPA should promote.

Murray Dow

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Phone: 257 4371, fax: 248 9697
email: m.dow@anu.edu.au

A burning issue

In recent times there has been much conjecture as to how to measure the quantity and type of forest (in the broadest sense of the word) that should be in our national reserve system. The Commonwealth is currently adopting the criteria of reserving 15 per cent of the pre-1750 extent of each forest biome. This percentage is way beyond the international benchmark of 10 per cent accepted by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature.

If the forest cover of 1750 is to be taken as the basis for determining a national reserve system, it is worth considering just what our forests actually looked like in 1750.

There is a common belief that Australia was a vast expanse of thick forest before the arrival of European settlers and that there has been massive clearing of that forest land ever since. However, a recent booklet released by the Murrumbidgee Catchment Management Authority titled *The Australian Landscape - Observations of Explorers and Early Settlers* provides very interesting reading in this regard.

Fire regime

The booklet indicates that nearly every early navigator or explorer mentions fire or comments on the amount of smoke seen. The Aborigines burnt all the time. Many thousands of fires were lit across the countryside on a daily basis. They regarded unburnt forest or grassland as being neglected. Following are a couple of those accounts.

William de Vlamingh, commander of the Dutch ship *Nijptang*, made the following observation during January 1697 at the Swan River:

'No men were seen but they observed many smokes.'

On November 16 1791 Governor Phillip wrote:

'The natives are so very frequently setting the country on fire.'

Forest land

The Murrumbidgee Catchment Management Authority's booklet indicates that much of the tall eucalypt forest with a developed understorey that is a common occurrence today did not exist at the time of European settlement.

Joseph Banks noted the following in his journal while at Botany Bay: '...very barren place without wood...the trees were not very large and stood separate from each other without the least underwood.'

Local observations

The following extracts and observations discussing areas in the Canberra region are of particular interest.

Dr John Lhotsky, in his journey from Sydney to the Australian Alps (via Goulbourn, Gunning, Canberra and Cooma and then on to Omeo) in early 1834, made a general observation that:

'Australian bushes are all nearly destitute of shade, the trees of which they are universally composed (I mean the Eucalyptus), growing in the first place only solitary, never in combined tufts.'

On 30 January 1834, while staying at the present site of Duntroon, Lhotsky noted:

'I ascended a fine hill (Mt Ainslie) to the W. of the cottage...about 200 feet above the plain, and covered slightly with gum trees.'

A William Buckle Bunn sketch made in 1845 from the Queanbeyan road looking toward Mt Ainslie agrees with Lhotsky's description some 11 years earlier.

Between Ingelara and Gungoandra Gap, Lhotsky commented that: 'Beyond Jungelera (Ingelara) Valley, the road turns to the S.E., and we passed all the way forests of blue and white gum, but remarkably destitute of undergrowth'.

Some thoughts

Ever earlier this century hundreds of stock were regularly driven through areas that we now call Namadgi National Park, Tidbinbilla and Brindabella Ranges. Next time you find yourself doing it tough and 'bush-bashing' through the dense undergrowth in some of these areas, ask yourself if you can imagine driving masses of stock through it?

Clearly, the incidence of disturbance by fire was much greater than it is today and most of the forests were relatively open and accessible because of frequent burning of the undergrowth. The lack of recognition of this change has critical implications for the management of national parks and wilderness today.

There is ample evidence that in most areas, the forests of 1750 looked nothing like the reserves that have been created today.

Is a desirable reserve strategy one which locks up vast quantities of wilderness, possibly leading to much less frequent but much hotter and devastating fires?

The booklet can be obtained from Mrs Hanna, NSW Department of CaLM, PO Box 26, Cooma, NSW, phone 06 452 1455.

Tim the Yowie Man

Remnant vegetation survey

The Conservation Council of the South-East Region & Canberra, with the help of other community groups, has been collecting information on remnant roadside vegetation within the ACT. Sites of significant remnant vegetation have been identified and incorporated into a submission to be sent to the Minister for Urban Services, Mr Tony De Domenico.

The Boboyan Pines project

Dianne Garood, Manager, Conservation and Wildlife Section of the Parks and Conservation Service, spoke to the April general meeting about the huge task that faces the service at the Boboyan Pines site. The area was severely affected by the 1983 fires and so lost much of its potential commercial value to ACT Forests; now the area is to be cleared of pines and pine wildings and then rehabilitated with appropriate native species. The rehabilitation will be carried out in accordance with the plan of management and will emphasise facilitating natural processes and doing the utmost to minimise potential barriers to these processes.

Dianne began her presentation pointing out that initially the area will be devastated and asked those present to remember what the forests around Tidbinbilla looked like when clearing began. Using past experience as a guide, she is sure that there will be a lot of adverse comment from the community when work begins. And the initial devastation is not the only item of bad news. The actual task is enormous, no single method of rehabilitation will be suitable and, in addition, much of the regeneration will be at the ecological limits of native tree growth, especially around frost hollows. And in addition to natural limitations, the use of herbicides and so on to control unwanted growth will be restricted.

There are several regeneration methods currently under consideration, including:

- rolling and crushing the pine slash to create a seed-bed
- creating windrows and then broadcasting seeds or planting tubestock
- creating smaller seed-beds among the slash with rakehoes, bobcats or a Rotree cultivator

- broadscale burning of slash to create a suitable seed-bed
- the use of an 'inert' cover crop to provide a fuel load for burning.

No one method looks to be the answer and perhaps all methods will have their particular place.

Suitable methods also have to be found to remove the uneconomic pines. In the past, aerial spraying has been tried out with limited success as well as chaining with bulldozers and direct blading and windrowing. There have also been instances of hand-pulling. NPA has been involved with work parties removing wildings and this work will continue and will be followed up by park staff as required.

To date, the Conservation and Wildlife Section has been actively preparing for the clearing and rehabilitation process. Current works have included:

- the preparation of a roading and harvesting plan and preparing draft recommendations for the rehabilitation of the Boboyan Pines
- a cultural resources survey was commissioned and 34 Aboriginal sites and three European sites were recorded
- blackberry spraying has been undertaken at the appropriate times

(continued overleaf)

Thanks, NPA

Below is a thank you letter sent by Peter Hann from ACT Parks and Conservation to Eleanor Stodart, expressing appreciation for the efforts of NPA volunteers in clearing wildings from Boboyan Pines on March 30-31.

Dear Eleanor,

I write to thank you for the work completed by volunteer members of the NPA over the weekend of 30 and 31 March 1996. The enthusiasm and tenacity of the hardy, pine killing volunteers was much appreciated.

As you are doubtless aware the task at hand was the removal of pine wildings from the area between the main Boboyan pines and the Hospital creek pines within the park. The eleven volunteers cleared around 300 wildings from an area of approximately 200 hectares. This work party complements others held previously to ensure that this area is completely free of any wildings likely to set seed in the next few years. With continued NPA support the area free of wildings will be expanded to include much of the bush surrounding the pines.

Your members located several larger wildings as part of their search and I would like to assure you that these will be felled over the next month or so.

The members involved are listed here:

Saturday

*Adrienne Nicholson
Syd Comfort
David Hall
Beverley Hammond
Clive Hurlstone
Frank Clements*

Sunday

*Stephen Johnston
Colin MacAlister
Max Lawrence
Cath Holtzapffel
John Holtzapffel*

If you could pass on my thanks both to them and to Len Haskew for organising in absentia I would appreciate it.

*Yours sincerely,
Peter Hann
Manager
Namadgi National Park*

REPORTS

- seed has been collected and viability tests commenced; an honours student from UC is presently researching species composition and the abundance of soil seed stores at Boboyan and this work is expected to be completed in September
- expert comment is being sought from both ANU and CSIRO and at the meeting it was suggested that this advisory assistance should be maintained throughout the life of the project.

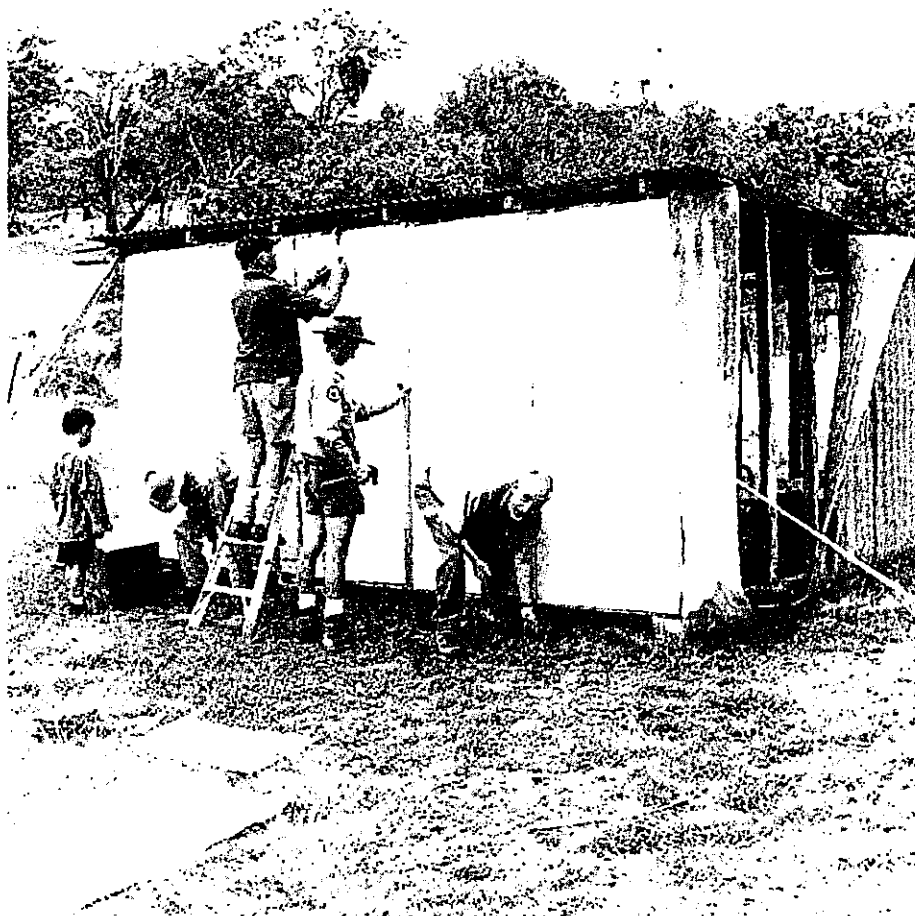
Dianne listed a series of works that are to be conducted in the future, including:

- trials of regeneration methods
- research into the potential effect of cold-induced photo-inhibition
- following up wilding control
- rabbit management trials
- interpretations strategies
- research into the use of 'inert' cover crops where fuel loads are insufficient
- hazard reduction burning as required.

NPA has had a very active involvement both in the area and with the project and this was acknowledged and applauded by park management. The Taws report of 1995 was commissioned by NPA and perhaps helped to stimulate activity in the area and this has been followed up with ongoing lobbying. NPA participated in the early hand-pulling trials, and wilding removal has been the focus of several work parties. NPA's future involvement could possibly include continuing consultation, on-site meetings, coordination of the activities of appropriate 'friends' groups, and activities such as wilding control and regeneration work.

Dianne's presentation concluded with a projected budget for the first two and a half years of the project - this will exceed \$500 000. She stressed that this is the beginning and the actual rehabilitation will continue for many years.

Len Haskew



A job can be found for everyone on a NPA work party. Young David Haskew undertook the role of nail-boy, handing up nails and retrieving fallen ones, when broken cladding was replaced on the walls of the Tennent homestead garage. Corrugated iron sheets which had previously covered broken sections were later replaced to restore the garage in appearance to what it was before work commenced. Photo by Reg Alder.

Contributions

Contributions to the *NPA Bulletin*, be they photographs or articles, are always very welcome. Please contact the NPA office on phone 282 5813, or contact the editor at Green Words, phone 247 0059.

Deadlines

Deadlines for contributions and advertising are: 1 February, 1 May, 1 August and 1 November.

NPA Bulletin

advertising rates 1996

Black and white only

For camera ready artwork:

Full page	\$15.00
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One third page	\$60.00
Column cm	\$3.00

(\$10.00 minimum)

For typesetting add 50%

Insert	\$120.00
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(supplied ready, 10g or less)

The Upper Cotter in 1912 – a world away



Oldfield's Cotter Hut. Photo from Australian Archives.

Stephen Johnston's recent article on the Alps Walking Track and the Upper Cotter was an enjoyable and informative piece which no doubt made most of us reflect on the pristine nature of the Upper Cotter valley. While the Cotter is something of an inner sanctum for those of us who have a close relationship with the wilder parts of Namadgi, we should not think that the upper valley has not been altered by past activities.

The above photo is of Oldfield's Cotter Hut and was taken in January 1912. Most of you will, I'm sure, draw breath when you see what an altered landscape the Cotter was then. This branch of the Oldfield clan had been grazing stock here for a couple of decades by this time. The river flat is particularly clear, and the dead timber in the background indicates ringbarking.

The extensive nature of the timber fencing shows how some of the timber was split and used.

Local timber was used to build the homestead. As was common at the time, the walls are slab and the roof shingle, and the complex is in two wings, with the kitchen separate from the living area. Most other photos of Cotter Hut that have previously come to light date from the 1930s, by which time the right-hand wing had gone (a stable, still standing in the 1930s, is just out of view to the right). The poplar which now so strikingly marks this historic site is just visible peeping over the centre of the roof of the right-hand building (it was then obviously a young tree). If you look closely you can see a woman near the door of the left building. Members of the Oldfield family still held the property at this time – it was

resumed as part of the Cotter Catchment the following year. (Further historical information is contained in my *Voices from the Hills* (1990) and *Namadgi Sites* (1994), and the *Canberra Times* of 15 May 1994.) For those of you more interested in geography, the high peak in the centre distance is Gingera, seen for once end-on instead of the more familiar side-on view we get from Canberra.

This superb photo, held in part of the Charles Scrivener collection at the Australian Archives, was taken by R. H. Cambage, leading NSW mines surveyor. Cambage had a passion for the routes of early Blue Mountains explorers. Perhaps some members are familiar with Cambage Spire in Kanangra-Boyd National Park.

Matthew Higgins

OBITUARY

Milo Kanangra Dunphy, AM – the great navigator (1929–1996)



Deep in discussion Milo Dunphy (left) and NPA member Les Pyke during an exploration of the Budawangs in June 1988.

Milo Kanangra Dunphy, architect, conservationist, bushwalker, dear friend to many, died in Sydney on 13 April 1996.

In a full and highly productive life, Milo attracted accolades like the great navigator, conservationist, a great Australian son and a revolutionary.

At a tribute ceremony at Old Government House, Sydney, on 26 April, New South Wales Premier Bob Carr called him a 'true patriot.' 'He knew the sheer urgency of saving as much of the natural world while we can', Mr Carr said. 'He knew there was more to life than the laws of supply and demand and the GDP.'

Milo was a sometimes controversial architect whose designs included unique churches which can be found around New South Wales.

In the 1960s he became involved in the campaign to stop mining at Colong Caves in the Kanangra Wilderness, now part of the Kanangra-Boyd National Park. In a notable victory, some 200 community groups managed to have the mining lease cancelled and the area was saved.

From 1968–69 he was honorary secretary of the National Parks Association of NSW. He was also Vice-President and Councillor of the Australian Conservation Foundation, a foundation member of the Myall Lakes Committee and co-founder of the Botany Bay Committee, the Murramarang Committee and the Canopy Committee.

In 1972 Milo gave up his practice to become the full-time director of the new Total Environment Centre, a position he held for 17 years. His interest was with natural areas, but he was also concerned with the quality of life in urban Australia, covering urban design, pollution and transport issues. His work as a member of the Committee of Inquiry into the National Estate, which led to the establishment of the Australian Heritage Commission in 1975, indicated the breadth of his interest and knowledge.

From this period onwards, Milo led a wide range of battles, alerting both Coalition and Labor governments at state and national levels to the absolute necessity to life

itself of environmental protection and environmental management. He also was instrumental in putting environmental issues on the agendas of many local governments, consistently advocating the case for responsible stewardship of Australia.

Milo stood as a candidate for federal or state parliament on at least four occasions, reflecting both his tenacity and his hopes for the democratic process. In 1972 he worked for United Tasmania Group – the world's first green political party – as joint director of the election campaign to save Lake Pedder.

Milo's approach insisted that environmental campaigns should be knowledge-based and that those committed to the environment should support and encourage each other.

The hallmark of his strategy could be seen in his opposition to the logging of old growth forests. In dealing with the issue he undertook detailed research, supplementing his prodigious knowledge of natural areas and ecology with facts and figures about the economics and price structure of the timber industry.

He reinforced this strategy by taking politicians and people of influence into the bush. Issues lost their theoretical framework and gained a hard reality when he'd discuss them from various perspectives while boiling a billy sitting under an old tree which predated the First Fleet.

To be with Milo in the bush was to experience his extraordinary bushcraft and knowledge and to share his sense of peace and wonderment. He could find water in a drought, light a fire in a deluge, or reach a pre-determined campsite in a fog at the end of a long, hard day. An invitation to join him in the

continued from previous page

bush – the complete itinerary in beautiful handwriting accompanied by a meticulous hand-drawn map – brought joyous anticipation.

He was eclectic, interested in all manner of things from military history, especially the Napoleonic wars, to religion and literature. In recent years he took special pride in his family, talking enthusiastically about his grandchildren Myles and Ella.

Top among his heroes was his father, Myles Dunphy, who worked for the dedication of national parks and wilderness areas. Milo's achievements mirrored those of his father, but in a society that was more institutionalised, complex and materialistic than pre-war Australia. He worked long hours in support of community groups from Jervis Bay to Adaminaby and the

North Coast in their struggles to conserve their part of Australia.

Milo was a man who would not compromise on environmental matters and he would not be bought off or flattered by special appointments. His uncompromising commitment and direct honesty, mixed with a wicked yet completely unmalicious humour, won him the respect and affection of hundreds of Australians.

Some of the honours bestowed upon him in recent years included Member of the Order of Australia for services to conservation in 1986, the Sidney Luker Memorial Medal for services to planning by the NSW Division of the Royal Australian Planning Institute in 1988, the Global Five Hundred Award by the United Nations Environment Program in 1989, and an honorary

doctorate in science by the University of New South Wales for services to conservation in 1996.

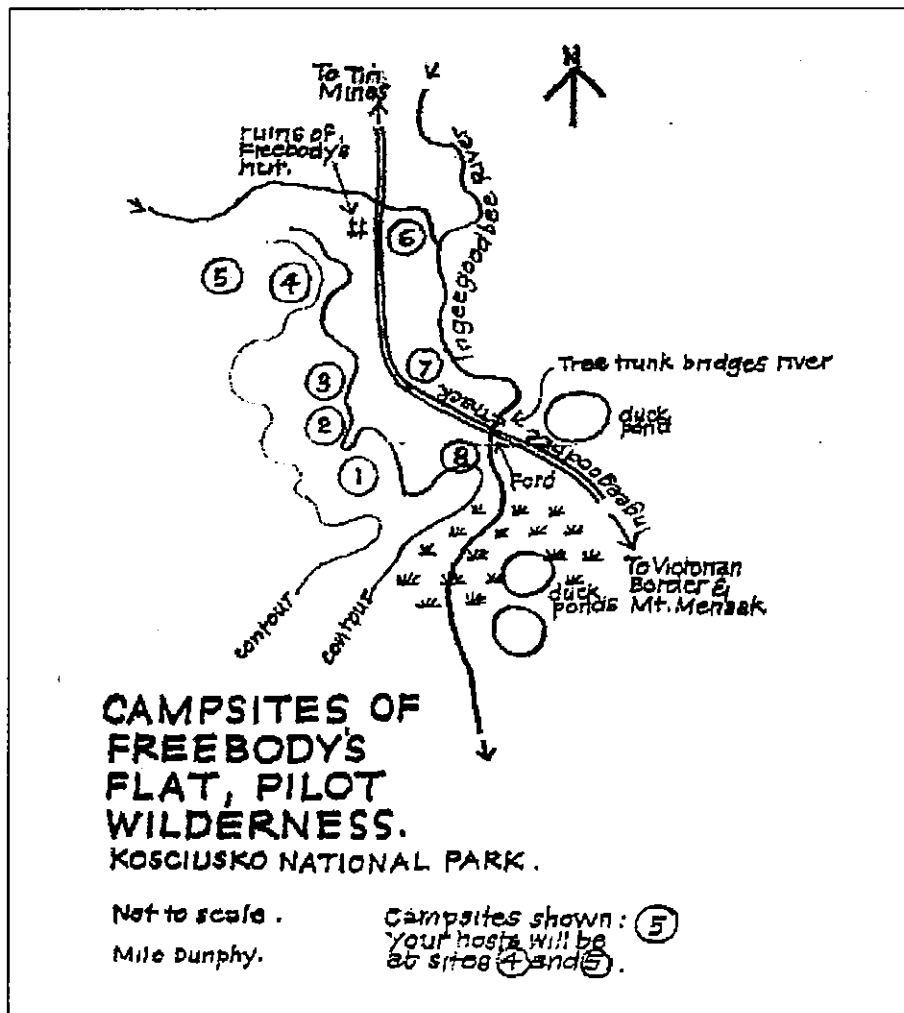
Milo faced the knowledge of his terminal liver cancer with characteristic honesty and courage. His first reaction was to head for the wilderness – to the Cobberas in Victoria – for a couple of weeks with a few friends and family. He carried his large pack over the mountains, chopped firewood, kept us on the move and made us laugh.

He was a very special man. He didn't only preach conservation, he lived it.

Milo is survived by his wife Dorothy, son Guy, his grandchildren, and brother Dexter.

His legacy to the nation is in the bush he saved and in the philosophical maps the great navigator left for us to follow.

Geoff and Den Robin



New NPA members as at 1 May 1996

Peter Wood	Deakin
Gregory and Alison Lewis	Mawson
Glenys and Enid Webster	Cook
William and Dianne Stoll	Queanbeyan
Karen and Alan Civil	Cook
Andrew and Annette Hrast	Duffy
Eric Danzi	Phillip
Denis and Mirinda Lawrence	Hawker
Abigail Hueneke	Palmerston
Trevor Francis	Mawson
Peter Holder and Margo Beales	Bruce

Calendar

June

- Thursday 6 Committee meeting, for location contact Eleanor Stodart 281 5004 (h)
Thursday 13 Namadgi Subcommittee, for location contact Robin Miller 281 6314 (h)
Thursday 27 Environment Subcommittee, for location contact Stephen Johnston 254 3738 (h)

July

- Thursday 4 Committee meeting, as for June
Thursday 11 Namadgi Subcommittee, as for June
Thursday 25 Environment Subcommittee, as for June

August

- Thursday 1 Committee meeting, as for June
Thursday 8 Namadgi Subcommittee, as for June
Thursday 22 Environment Subcommittee, as for June

September

- Thursday 5 Committee meeting, as for June
Thursday 12 Namadgi Subcommittee, as for June
Thursday 26 Environment Subcommittee, as for June

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General meetings

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

Thursday 20 June: Canberra Nature Park. ACT residents are fortunate to have access to such a rich resource as Canberra Nature Park. A quick glance at our Outings Program seems to suggest that NPA makes very little use of the facility. The Park's Manager, Odile Arman, will speak to us about the park's management and the various functions that the area seeks to facilitate, including the study of urban wildlife, the provision of fire management and the all important task of encouraging park care within the community.

Thursday 18 July: Australian Farming – An Ecological Disaster. NPA member, Chris Watson, has had a lifelong interest in the practice of sustainable agriculture. Tonight he will address this matter and tell how far short of this aim current practices are and what problems face those who intend to rehabilitate farming lands.

Thursday 15 August: Finding Fault with the Gobi Desert? Last August Kevin McCue and Sonja Lenz participated in a field workshop investigating crustal fractures caused by great earthquakes in Mongolia during the 50s and 60s. They will show slides and talk about their experiences travelling through the desert with an international group of scientists.

Thursday 19 September: Black and white. Penguins of every shape and size were among Adrienne Nicholson's most vivid memories of her recent visit to Antarctica. She photographed just about every one of them and tonight she will show us her best slides of these wonderful birds as well as entertaining us with her experiences in the ice and snow.