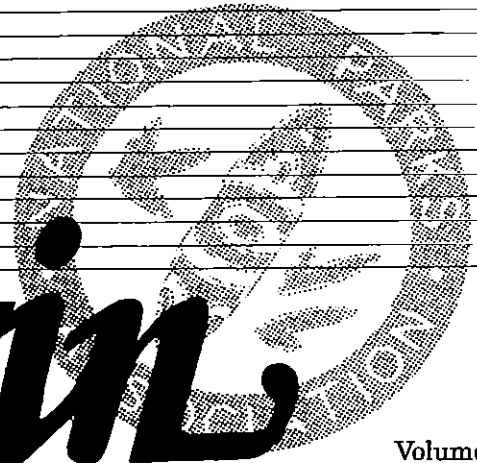


# NPA Bulletin



Volume 37 number 2  
June 2000

**NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION (ACT) INCORPORATED**



## Annual General Meeting

Gudengby Homestead

A little-known Eden

## CONTENTS

Annual General Meeting .....	3	News from the NPA office .....	11
NPA member subscription and other financial changes .....	3	<i>Neville Esau</i>	
<i>Neville Esau</i>		Celebrating 40 years .....	11
<i>NPA Bulletin</i> – can you help? .....	3	<i>Len Haskeu</i>	
<i>Syd Comfort</i>		Brindabella National Park, so close and yet so unknown .....	12
Gudengby Homestead .....	4	<i>Gösta Lyngå</i>	
<i>Reg Alder and David Mackay Large</i>		VIP – the Vegetation Investment Project .....	13
The Boboyan Pines – still going .....	6	The push for a national park .....	14
<i>Eleanor Stodart</i>		<i>Fiona MacDonald Brand</i>	
News from the Environment Sub-committee .....	7	Parkwatch .....	16
<i>Neville Esau</i>		<i>Len Haskeu</i>	
Special Anniversary supplement .....	7	Surveyors at the Snowline .....	17
<i>Matthew Higgins</i>		Book reviews .....	18
The ACT draft budget .....	8	<i>Philip Gatenby and Phil Bubb</i>	
<i>Ray Polglaze</i>		Calendar .....	19
A little-known Eden .....	10	General meetings .....	19
<i>Len Haskeu</i>		New members .....	19
		Weeding continues on Lord Howe Island .....	19
		<i>Eleanor Stodart</i>	

### 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, committee and convenors

<i>President</i>	Clive Hurlstone 6288 7592(h); 040 788 3422(w)
<i>Vice President</i>	Vacant
<i>Immediate</i>	
<i>Past President</i>	Eleanor Stodart 6281 5004(h)
<i>Secretary</i>	Max Lawrence 6288 1370(h)
<i>Treasurer</i>	Mike Smith 6286 2984(h)

#### Committee members

Steven Forst	6251 6817(h) 6279 1326(w)
Neville Esau	6286 4175(h)
Jacqui Cole	6241 9984(h)
David Large	6291 4830(h)

#### Convenors

<i>Environment Sub-committee</i>	David Large 6291 4830(h)
<i>Outings Sub-committee</i>	Max Lawrence 6288 1370(h)
<i>Bulletin Working Group</i>	Syd Comfort 6286 2578(h)

The NPA (ACT) office is located in Maclaurin Cres, Chifley, next to the preschool and is staffed by volunteers. Office hours are: 9am to 1pm Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays.

**Telephone/Fax:** (02) 6282 5813

**Email:** npaact@spirit.com.au

**Address:** PO Box 1940, Woden ACT 2606

**Internet:** <http://www.spirit.net.au/~npaact>

#### Membership

New members are welcome and should enquire through the NPA office.

#### Subscription rates (1 July to 30 June)

Household members \$40	Single members \$35
Corporate members \$30	<i>Bulletin</i> only \$30
Concession \$25	

For new subscriptions joining between:

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

#### NPA Bulletin

Contributions of articles, line drawings and photographs including colour prints are welcome and should be lodged with the office or Syd Comfort (02) 6286 2578.

**Deadline for September issue: 1 August 2000.**

*Articles by contributors may not necessarily reflect association opinion or objectives.*

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**Cover photo:** The NPA display at ACT Alive held on March 20. Photo Reg Alder.

# Annual general meeting

8.00pm Thursday 17 August 2000

## Forestry House, Yarralumla

Business at the AGM includes the President's report on progress during the financial year just concluding, and election of a new committee to steer us through the coming financial year. In addition, there will be the usual monthly business including a presentation by invited guest speakers.

All office bearer and committee positions are up for filling at the

AGM: President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Immediate Past President (ex-officio), and up to eight other members.

Membership of committees is both stimulating and rewarding, and offers you the opportunity to make a significant and personal contribution to conservation and the national parks movement.

Come along, have your say, get involved, and help us make a real difference in advancing the things that really matter to us. We would

be pleased to discuss with you, and to arrange a nomination, if you are a volunteer. Please phone Clive (6288 7592), Max (6288 1370), or the NPA office (6282 5813) for more information.

Our guest speakers at the AGM will be Judy Kelly and Phil Bubb, who will entertain us with tales of the excellent (and very well attended) NPA car camp recently held at Coolah Tops National Park in the Liverpool Ranges.

## NPA member subscription and other financial changes

From the start of the 1999-2000 financial year the NPA ceased to receive administrative and bulletin grants from the ACT Government. This was a policy decision by the Government. Environment grants are now awarded on a project basis, and NPA currently receives a grant to support a range of environmental projects. None of this money, however, is available to support our member services or Bulletin publication and distribution.

In addition to these reductions in funding, there will be additional expenditure for the NPA following the changes to a GST on July 1. The NPA has decided to apply for GST exempt status as a voluntary organisation. This will mean that while we have to pay GST on all our purchases of goods and services, we will not have to charge GST on our subscriptions or sales. Nevertheless, the overall impact of the GST on NPA finances is estimated at approximately \$5 per member for the next financial year.

To enable the NPA to operate sustainably with this reduced level of administrative funding and taxation changes, the Committee has recently reviewed all levels of NPA expenditure and drawn up plans to progressively implement changes to current income and expenditure items. The key changes will be:

### Income:

1. An increase membership fees by \$10 per year, primarily to cover GST and increased insurance costs.
2. Reviewing the selling price of merchandise, both for current prices, and projected pricing after the start of the GST on 01/07/2000.
3. Reviewing alternative sources of grants for core operations, including private foundations.
4. Reviewing and upgrading our fund-raising methods and skills, including training for NPA volunteers, to tap additional fund-raising sources to increase our core funding.
5. Developing and implementing a strategy to gain new members and retain existing members.

### Expenditure:

1. Developing and implementing a strategy to provide office services on a voluntary basis.
2. Reviewing the expenditure of all office requisites and other office expenditure.
3. Terminating the storage contract at Tuggeranong and either disposing of the stored material or re-housing the material at the office.
4. Reviewing the costs of the Bulletin publication and

distribution. Investigating ways to reduce costs including incorporating more voluntary input in Bulletin preparation.

The NPA committee will continue to monitor our financial status as we move into the new financial year to ensure that our core conservation and outings activities can continue and flourish.

**Neville Esau**  
For the Committee

## NPA Bulletin - can you help?

The Bulletin Working Group is seeking help in laying out issues of the Bulletin. I would like to hear from any member who could assist by setting out copy using a desktop publishing program such as Pagemaker. Arrangements could be made for a second member to be involved so as to provide cover for unavailability for a particular issue.

I would appreciate a call if you have any suggestions which may help the association in this area.

**Syd Comfort**  
Convenor, Bulletin Working Group

# Gudengby Homestead

*The proposal by Environment ACT in the 1999 budget to spend money on a campground integrated with overnight accommodation and visitor facilities based in the Gudgenby House drew a sharp response from the NPA. Environment ACT responded with an undertaking to prepare a recreational use plan for the Gudgenby valley. Late last year a policy discussion paper on Gudgenby was prepared for members of the Environment Sub-committee that included the option of demolition of Gudgenby House. The NPA Committee endorsed this discussion paper for distribution to interested members at the March meeting. The July general meeting will be devoted to consideration of the association's policy on Gudgenby. In the following articles members Reg Alder and David Large set out their views on the subject.*

## The retention of Gudgenby Homestead

To my knowledge, the only future use of Gudgenby homestead that has been addressed is its retention as part of the cultural heritage of Namadgi. Any argument for its demolition to avoid commercial use is hypothetical and detracts from the image of the association as a protector of the cultural heritage of Namadgi. The following information, gathered from many sources, supports the protection of the homestead as part of the heritage of the earliest settlement of Namadgi and should be carefully considered before making any recommendation for demolition of the homestead.

The importance of protecting Namadgi's *cultural heritage* is reflected in the aims and objectives of the NPA which includes: "Protection of national parks and measures for the protection of flora and fauna, scenery, natural features and cultural heritage (author's italics) in the ACT." Further, the Namadgi Management Plan states: "The management of the natural resources in the park is regarded of equal importance as the management of the cultural resources."

Gudgenby Homestead, erected in 1845, is the longest continuously occupied homestead site in Namadgi and one of the oldest in the ACT. The present homestead was erected in 1964 on the site of the original homestead. The 1845 homestead, purchased by the Kosciusko Huts Association with a heritage grant, awaits funds and a decision on a site before re-erection. The homestead has continued to be occupied as a residence since the termination of the Boots family lease.

Gudgenby Homestead and valley have National Trust classification and are included in the Register of the National Estate of the Australian Heritage Commission as being in a registered area. The homestead is also listed in Sites of Significance in the ACT which also recommends a management strategy which would emphasise and maintain the cultural values, both historical and Aboriginal.

At the 1991 Symposium on the Cultural Heritage of the Australian Alps, the director of the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service emphasised that attitudes for the removal of all European culture in national parks required revision. Author David Malouf in his keynote address at the NSW 2000 Heritage Week was reported by the *Sydney Morning Herald* as drawing attention specifically to how no evidence of a century of industry in Namadgi had been retained following the demolition of homesteads, graves, stockyards and huts since the park's declaration because they were deemed not to meet heritage criteria, and thus to be unworthy of preservation.

Peter Read, of the Australian National University, in "Returning to Nothing" devotes a whole chapter to describing the physical loss of evidence of past historical activities in Namadgi and the emotional reaction of former occupants to this destruction of evidence of their former way of life.

Whilst the homestead as presently constructed has little commercial value except as a residence, its demolition would allow greater exploitation of the site for future redevelopment. However, the commercial viability as a site is low because of its aspect and facilities.

The Corin Forest Ski Facility is an example of limited demand. On the other hand, if retained, its maintenance would be minimal because the homestead is of brick veneer construction.

The removal of the outer buildings of the Lunar Laser Station in Orroral cost \$130 000. Gudgenby, larger and more complex with its outbuildings and manager's residence, and needing site restoration and power line removal, could cost at least two or three times this amount. The money could be better spent elsewhere or in the development of the building as an educational or research centre.

Options for the use of the homestead are either for it to continue as a residence or to be used as an education or research centre or for occupation by a ranger or park worker. It is essential that occupancy be maintained so as to provide some form of security in the Gudgenby valley to discourage illegal activity such as night shooting.

If the homestead were demolished, no form of signage could restore any form of empathy to the site. Evidence of 150 years of occupation would be destroyed on the grounds of environmental purity and the remote possibility of commercial development. The association would be alone in recommending demolition and this would do little to enhance its reputation as a responsible organisation.

How could we ever pretend to be interested in the future if we neglect the past?

**Reg Alder**

## References:

Gudgenby Area Policy Plan 1984.  
ACT Parks and Conservation Service

Namadgi Policy Plan 1986. *ACT Parks and Conservation Service*  
Namadgi Management Plan 1986. *ACT Parks and Conservation Service*  
Scenic Spectrums Report 1989.

Gudgenby – The Last 150 Years. *Tony Corp, Kosciusko Huts Association.*

Sites of Significance in the ACT – The Gudgenby Area 1990. *National Capital Planning Authority.*

Our Bush Capital – 1992 Report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on the ACT.

Cultural Heritage of the ACT – 1991

## **Gudgenby Homestead – asset or liability?**

### **Background**

The general background to Gudgenby Homestead has been covered in recent articles in the September, December and March issues of the *NPA Bulletin*. *Two other papers have been circulated by Neville Esau and Reg Alder.*

### **Current situation**

The homestead buildings require occupation to provide security from vandalism. At present they are deteriorating, the caretaker is only able to provide minimal maintenance, and there is no rental income.

Environment ACT will be criticised if the buildings continue to deteriorate or if they are pulled down.

The NPA view has been that the buildings be retained for a use that reflects national park values. This could be for an environment/field study centre or other sympathetic activity, such as ranger accommodation. However, there is no demand for ranger accommodation and no organisation has come forward to establish a centre, and it seems clear that such a use is unlikely to occur.

NPA has resisted any suggestion that the buildings be used for a commercial activity, although there is a view that a use for Gudgenby along the lines of Currango would be acceptable: that is, low-key accommodation.

We understand that Environment ACT proposes to refurbish the homestead to establish a commercial accommodation facility for use as a base for recreational activities.

### **The issue**

In the light of our current understanding, we need to formulate a policy on how we would respond if a fully commercial accommodation facility was proposed for Gudgenby.

### **Discussion**

Clearly, Environment ACT would not want to invest sorely needed Parks and Conservation Service funds in refurbishing and upgrading the sewerage system at Gudgenby for what would probably be a marginal business. Their proposal seems to be in response to a perceived need to find a use for the Gudgenby site and an attempt to maintain the buildings with no ongoing cost to the service.

If we feel so strongly about the cultural and heritage value of the buildings, the Environment ACT proposal could be supported. Certainly, it would be a way to see the buildings retained in good condition. The proposal would probably be supported by other groups.

However, what would be the cultural and heritage value of the buildings if there was major structural change to the buildings and development of the site?

It is probable that significant upgrading and additional accommodation and recreational facilities would be required to make the proposition viable. This would alter the cultural and heritage values of the site.

A major concern for the NPA must be the fact that establishing a commercial activity in Namadgi National Park is against our policy. It is contrary to the purposes of a national park, and we have been vigilant in the past to limit any such activity as much as possible.

Experience elsewhere has shown that once the door is opened there is constant pressure to widen the scope of activities and authorities usually acquiesce. This would be

particularly the case for Gudgenby, where Environment ACT will need the operator to be successful so they can recoup the initial expenditure and provide a financial return.

### **Conclusion**

NPA should continue to resist any moves to use Gudgenby Homestead for commercial accommodation purposes.

NPA should continue to support all efforts to utilise the Gudgenby site in accordance with national park values.

Gudgenby should be conserved as a cultural and heritage site. If this cannot be achieved, then the buildings should be removed rather than developed.

**David McKay Large**

### **References:**

*National Trust, Australian Heritage Commission, Royal Australian Institute of Architects.*

*Returning to Nothing. P Read. 1996 ANU*

Paper by Josephine Flood in *Australian Alpine Area Management for Conservation 1986, NPA of the ACT.*

## **Steps for reconciliation**

Australians for Reconciliation (ACT) Inc. are holding a two-day reconciliation workshop over the weekend 2 and 3 September 2000 in the ACT region.

*“Walking and Talking the Land – Is this the road to reconciliation?”*

The workshop aims to create ongoing cooperation and dialogue between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the various people and environmental groups and organisations who also care for the land.

For further information and bookings contact Flora Macdonald, telephone: 6296 5428, fax: 6231 7884, email mopar@cyberone.com.au.

The workshop is supported with a grant from the ACT Adult and Community Education Council.

# The Boboyan Pines – still going

This title has a double meaning, for many of the pines are still going strong, unfortunately, but others are going down as the felling of non-commercial timber has continued, fortunately, paid for through the Parks and Conservation Service's capital works money, even though ACT Forests has not continued to contribute to the felling of their trees.

The latest area felled is adjacent to the Yankee Hat carpark and so is the most visible area to casual visitors. The Gudgenby Bush Regeneration Group has been granted funds through Olympic Landcare to plant out part of this area with 2000 trees before the Sydney Olympics. A section has been fenced to keep out the kangaroos (people too, perhaps!) and 500 trees have already been planted by GBRG and by an NPA workparty on Saturday 15 April. More will be planted in the enclosure and around it in spring, so that growth will have begun and the carpark will not become highly visible and exposed when the rest of the pines eventually go.

The Parks and Conservation team felled the pines immediately adjacent to the carpark, carefully ensuring that a group of small eucalypts next to the carpark was unharmed. More planting within the carpark area has also been done by Greencorps members. Fortunately,



*Frank Clements tenderly sets weed mat around a seedling. Photo Eleanor Stodart.*

the trees which were planted there originally have had a burst of growth within the last two years and are now ensuring the cars parked there are a bit less obtrusive.

A much-needed composting toilet has been installed adjacent to the carpark. It is rather obtrusive at the moment but that small group of eucalypts should thicken up, now that they are not surrounded by pines, and our planting next spring will provide further screening in time.

As part of the Olympic Land care project GBRG is being assisted by Monique Allen, Olympic gymnast, who will visit the site and do some planting on Saturday August 12. The short planting ceremony will be followed by a ranger-guided walk around the regeneration area.

Areas of pine slash from trees felled last summer/autumn were burnt on April 12, after a spell of fine weather (just before rain would have raised moisture levels again), and quite an assortment of people gathered in by ranger Steve Welch, have broadcast seed in the fresh ash. NPA contributed through two work parties, on the afternoon of Tuesday April 18 and on Wednesday, April 19 (instead of the work party scheduled for Sunday April 16).

The Natural Heritage Trust funds received by GBR have given a boost to the project. The group has purchased a covered, lockable trailer which will make it easier for rangers to organise materials for the work parties, and we have employed a contractor to erect several exclosures to keep kangaroos out. As well, Chris Webb, an honours student at ANU has been building exclosures with two types of electric fencing - people may have observed the signs and solar panels. He has been planting out these, as well as unfenced control areas, and a few of our netted exclosures in order to study the effects of kangaroo activity and the effectiveness of the two designs of electric fencing. His project lasts just for the one year. but the fencing will remain and so longer term observations can be recorded. It will be interesting to see his results, and to see what happens in a dry year.



*Gudgenby Bush Regeneration Group members unload material from the group's new trailer. Photo Eleanor Stodart.*

**Eleanor Stodart**

# Environment Sub-committee News

The sub-committee has continued with a busy schedule of meetings, submissions, reports, and presentations since the last *Bulletin* report.

As foreshadowed in the last *Bulletin*, the NPA presented its submission on the 2000–2001 budget to the Planning and Urban Services Committee. The submission, researched and prepared by Ray Polglaze, analysed in some detail both the losses in funding to Environment ACT over the past several years and the lack of new funding in key areas. We felt that the submission was well received by the committee. Of course, we will have to wait for the final ACT budget to see if any changes have been made to environment funding in the ACT.

The NPA has been cooperating with the Conservation Council in follow-up discussions with the Minister and with the Shadow Minister in an effort to ensure that our views on environment funding are well understood in the Assembly before the budget debates commence.

Ray has also prepared a submission on the draft Lower Molonglo River Corridor Nature Reserve (LMRCNR) Management Plan which will be presented to the Planning and Urban Services Committee on June 2. The submission on the LMRCNR is a very large and comprehensive document, describing many changes which we feel are required to the

current draft plan. Our key comments on the draft plan include:

- Conservation of natural values must remain the highest priority in the plan and take precedence over all other values. This must be stated in the plan.
- The natural environmental values of the reserve are not adequately outlined; the significance of the reserve for endangered and threatened species, including legless lizards, Macquarie perch, painted honeyeaters, and brown treecreepers are not adequately described.
- The plan leaves key planning issues unresolved. The use of existing roads and tracks and the use of the reserve for a range of recreational activities including fishing, orienteering, horse riding and car rallies is not specified. A key objective for a management plan is to develop policies for these activities.
- The plan should include strategies for monitoring and surveying biodiversity in the reserve including surveys of endangered and threatened species.

Copies of the submission are available in the NPA office.

Work on our other projects, including the next Namadgi Management Plan and Management of native forest remnants in ACT Forests, is continuing.

As outlined in the last report, the NPA has now submitted a funding

submission to enable our projects to continue for the next two years: successful submissions are usually announced about August.

The sub-committee has continued with the program of field surveys, led by Clive and Ray, to enable members to gain a better understanding of some of the issues and conflicts involved in our current projects. In the winter period trips are planned for Lower Molonglo, Tidbinbilla, and Kowen. The trips have so far been an outstanding success. If you would like to participate in future field trips give me a call and I will keep you informed of the dates. They will enable you to inspect and discuss environmental issues on the ground, and sharpen your skills in identifying trees and plants, including all those problem weeds.

The sub-committee meets at the Conservation Council Offices, Acton, on the second Thursday of each month. NPA members who would like to contribute to the work of the sub-committee are always welcome.

On a final note, I would like to advise that David Large will be taking over the convening of the sub-committee following the May meeting. I would like to thank all those members who have supported the work of the sub-committee over the past year and look forward to your continued support under David in 2000–2001.

**Neville Esau**

*For the Environment Sub-committee*

## Successful Anniversary supplement

NPA is to be congratulated on its 40th Anniversary Supplement published in March. This time of celebration was an important one for the association, and the Supplement was a fitting tribute to all those who had laboured over the years for the NPA's objectives.

All the major areas of the NPA's activities were covered. The campaign for a national park for the national capital, the work of individuals such as Nancy Burbidge

and other life members, political issues fought through the years, promotion of environmental awareness, NPA's field guides, the evolution of the outings program and the *Bulletin*, the many work parties both within and outside the ACT, and some key landmarks such as the Yerrabi Track, Orroral Homestead, and Boboyan Pines were included, and more. As well as looking back, the publication also looked forward. Well illustrated, the Supplement was

topped off beautifully with the so-appropriate colour cover showing one of the signature views of Namadgi National Park.

The team responsible, Fiona, Adrienne, Len, Beverley, Reg and Graeme, have done a very good job indeed.

**Matthew Higgins**

Copies of the *Supplement* may be purchased at the NPA office or at general meetings



# The ACT draft budget

*This article was written before the ACT Government's budget for 2000 was brought down, so may have been overtaken in some areas. However, it contains some valuable insights into the budget process as it affects environment and conservation issues and will repay study by association members.*

In January 2000 the Carnell Government circulated a draft budget for comment. This provided the NPA with an opportunity to comment on both the 1999 budget and the 2000 draft budget.

The NPA made its comments in a submission to the Planning and Urban Services Committee in February 2000. Clive Hurlstone, Neville Esau and Ray Polglaze represented the NPA in the Committee's hearing on the draft budget.

## Numbers without explanations

The Treasurer, Mr Humphries, claimed that the draft budget "contains all of the relevant information needed to allow the ACT community to provide input to the Budget Process". The Committee accepted that this was not true.

The draft budget did not include explanations for the numbers in the operating statement for environment and heritage.

The Committee recommended that "explanatory notes be provided for each large dollar item in the operating statements and output tables".

## Cuts to environment funding

Although the numbers in the draft budget indicated that there was no major change in environment funding, these numbers covered significant cuts in the 1999 budget and further cuts in the 2000 budget. These cuts probably amount to more than 10 per cent, or about \$2 million, in the 1999 budget and a further 3.5 per cent, or about \$700 000, in the 2000 draft budget. But, without explanations for the numbers in the draft budget, it is impossible to know the actual cuts.

The probable cut of more than 10 per cent in the 1999 budget was the combined effect of:

- a loss of 16 staff equivalent to a more than 4 per cent cut;
- a 2 per cent salary increase equivalent to a 1 per cent cut;
- \$880 000 in ongoing IT costs equivalent to a 4 per cent cut; and
- a 2.5 per cent CPI increase equivalent to a 1.25 per cent cut. The probable cut of 3.5 per cent in the 2000 draft budget is the combined effect of:
- another 2 per cent salary increase equivalent to a further 1 per cent cut; and
- a 5 per cent CPI increase (with GST) equivalent to a further 2.5 per cent cut.

These are large cuts. A cut of \$2 million is equivalent to all of the core funding for management of the Murrumbidgee River Corridor plus all of the Natural Heritage Trust funding received in the ACT. To lose \$2 million in one year is a significant loss.

## Effects on park management

The draft budget did not indicate what these cuts mean for management of Namadgi National Park and the nature reserves. There was only a single figure of \$10 283 900 in the draft budget for the cost of nature conservation services. This single figure, without any break down, covered administration, visitor facilities, monitoring, feral animal control, weed control and a range of other activities on the 53 per cent of the ACT in Namadgi National Park and the nature reserves.

The 1999 budget did not include a comparable figure for the 1998 budget. The \$10 283 900 in the 2000 draft budget was \$26 500 less than the \$10 310 400 in the 1999 budget. There were larger effective cuts in the 1999 budget and the 2000 draft budget through staff reduction, salary increases, IT costs and CPI increases. These effective cuts would exceed \$1 million.

## Cuts to operating funds

The cuts to park management in the 1999 budget were largely achieved through cuts to operating funds. On a pro rata basis, reductions of about

\$600 000 would be required to cover the IT costs, salary and CPI increases. This points to a loss of more than \$100 000 from Namadgi National Park and each of the other districts. This is equivalent to about 30 per cent of the operating funds.

A reduction in operating funds means fewer activities like feral animal and weed control, monitoring, fire preparedness and vehicle use. It is not possible to cut these activities without jeopardising management of the parks. Cuts to these activities also breach the assurance given in the 1999 budget that "similar field effort will be maintained".

## Staff cuts and Environment ACT

The 1999 budget cut staff in Environment ACT by 16 from 211 to 195 personnel (a cut of 7.5 per cent). It was suggested that this staff cut could be achieved through "market testing, bench marking and reorganisation" without affecting nature conservation and environmental protection. The NPA said in its submission on the 2000 budget that it did not believe this was possible.

The NPA stated that in its view Environment ACT "is a generally efficient organisation with many highly committed and talented staff", that its "performance is primarily constrained by lack of resources" and that we "do not think that you can take staff out of it without reducing what it is able to do".

The NPA said that any savings achieved through efficiencies should be allocated to greater implementation of the ACT Government's nature conservation and environment plans.

## Staff cuts and park management

The 1999 budget staff cut was focused in the environment protection, planning, and policy areas of Environment ACT. This has meant a loss of staff in areas like management planning that are essential for effective park management. The direct staff cuts in the Parks and Conservation



Service may have been limited to one staff member from Tidbinbilla and three maintenance staff from the Murrumbidgee River Corridor. There may also have been a reduction in temporary staff.

It is predictable, though, that, if the current budget practice continues, the ongoing effects of salary and CPI increases will lead to cuts of a couple of staff a year from the Parks and Conservation Service. Indeed, with operating funds already cut by 30 per cent, it is likely that further staff cuts will need to be made.

#### **Additional resources required**

The NPA submission identified a number of areas where there was an apparent need for additional resources. These included:

- increasing the ranger presence in the nature reserves;
- meeting the maintenance costs from increasing visitor numbers (up by 15 per cent last year alone);
- increasing control of ferals, particularly pigs and foxes in Namadgi National Park;
- improving management planning and consultation with the ACT community;
- implementing a comprehensive survey, research and monitoring program; and
- supporting nature conservation in Canberra Urban Parks, ACT Forests and rural leases.

#### **What the NPA and Conservation Council have proposed**

In response to cuts to funding when additional resources are required, the NPA proposed that funding to Environment ACT be increased to above the levels before the 1999 budget. The NPA proposed funding increases to:

- restore the staff numbers to 211;
- provide for IT costs, salary and CPI increases; and
- address the need for additional resources.

This would require an increase in funding in the 2000 budget of more than \$3 million.

The Conservation Council has proposed an increase of 30 per cent or about \$6.6 million to both restore

the funding lost through cuts and fund the ACT Government's many announced but unfunded environmental initiatives.

#### **Options for additional funding**

The NPA outlined the following options for increased environment funding:

1. Maintaining environment expenditure as a percentage of general expenditure in the 1999 and 2000 budgets. This would increase environment funding by more than \$2 million.
2. Increasing funding for management of the 53 per cent of the ACT in national park or nature reserves from 0.64 per cent to only 1 per cent of general expenditure (\$6.6 million).
3. Allocating the funds raised by the Water Abstraction Charge to environmental expenditure (\$6.7 million). These funds have disappeared into general revenue even though the 1999 budget stated that they would fund environmental initiatives.
4. Increasing the Water Abstraction Charge from an average of \$28 per resident to \$80 per resident. An environmental levy of \$80 was acceptable to the people of Sydney (\$12 million).
5. Allocating the funds raised by the Pollutant Loading Fee to environmental expenditure (\$600 000).
6. Introducing a Bushland Preservation Levy of \$30 per ratepayer. This has been accepted by Brisbane residents (\$3.5 million).

The Planning and Urban Services Committee recommended that the Government carefully consider the suggestions by the NPA for additional funding. These funding options would, together, provide an additional \$10.8 million for environment expenditure.

We said in our evidence to the committee that in allocating the funds from the Water Abstraction Charge to general revenue "that if the goal is to generate money for environment, the Government is doing exactly the wrong thing". The committee supported this concern

and emphasised "that higher charges will only be tolerated by the community if the increased revenue is seen to be going, in its entirety, to measures that improve the environment".

#### **Performance criteria**

The NPA commented in the submission that the primary performance criteria in the draft budget for nature conservation were measures of public perception rather than actual performance. The committee supported this concern. It recommended that "quality performance measures for each output class include, not just annual ratings or surveys of client satisfaction, but measures of actual performance". It gave as examples "actual changes in the number of feral animals and increases or decreases in the area of weeds".

#### **Capital works**

The NPA also commented on the capital works proposals in the draft budget. The NPA supported the proposed \$100 000 for the Boboyan Pines Landscape Restoration Project as "an appropriate allocation to maintain the momentum of the project".

The NPA expressed concern at the 50 per cent reduction in funding for Landcare projects and called for a commitment to Landcare funding beyond the Decade of Landcare that finishes in 2000.

The NPA argued that the proposed funding for weed control and fencing of nature reserves should be related to the required funding for weed control and fencing. It noted that the \$100 000 for fencing would provide for 50 kilometres of easy fencing but only 7 kilometres of difficult fencing when Namadgi National Park alone has 100 kilometres of boundary with rural properties.

#### **Genuine interest**

The committee of Harold Hird, Dave Rugendyke and Simon Corbel showed a genuine interest in the NPA's views.

In addition to supporting a number of the NPA's concerns, the committee also commended the NPA "for the high quality of its submission".

*continued on page 11*

# A little-known Eden

Guided by the Friends of the Mongarlowe River, NPA has conducted two recent outings in the Monga State Forest. The first of these outings was to see the rare and beautiful Monga waratah. Fortunately for us the Friends knew exactly where we could see this magnificent shrub in abundant bloom. (The Monga waratah is providing breeding stock for the popular Braidwood Brilliant, now in many local nurseries, and other waratah hybrids). On the second occasion we were shown some areas of old growth forest and also taken to a most accessible rainforest gully of pinkwood. These amazing trees may live for upwards of 5000 years and are relics from the continent of Gondwana. Our party, which numbered in excess of 30, was just able to link arms around the gnarled base of one magnificent specimen. We were also taken to another rainforest gully where the tree ferns had been illegally removed some years ago. To us it seemed unbelievable that anyone could even contemplate such wanton destruction in such a beautiful place. However, the old saying that "every cloud has a silver lining" carries some ring of truth, because the one to two-metre high butts of these ferns provided a safe habitat for the seeds of pinkwoods to germinate protected from the kangaroos. So, not only did we see the tops of these new trees but also a good part of their root systems.

It is very easy to understand why the Friends of the Mongarlowe River are passionate protectors of this unique area. The Monga/Buckenbowra area has very important and distinctive environmental characteristics and these have been identified by Dr Brendan Mackey, Reader in Ecology and Environmental Science at ANU:

- Monga contains the headwaters of the Mongarlowe River, which flows through the tableland country before joining the Shoalhaven River;

- the area has a distinctive climate, with tableland temperature regimes but high year-round rainfall;
- the landscape contains significant flat and undulating land areas and consequently hydrological gradients are low;
- because of the above factors, Monga is a highly productive environment which makes for ecologically viable populations;
- furthermore Monga contains very substantial and significant areas which have been largely undisturbed by modern forestry practices, if logged at all.

Those of you who read the pamphlet enclosed with the March issue of the *Bulletin* will also be aware of the many species of wildlife, some rare or endangered, that call Monga home.

While we were with the Friends it was most instructive to see their approach to gaining support for the cause. As we were walking along one of the many forestry fire trails we came upon a dozen or so 4WD drive vehicles on a "training" exercise. Instead of throwing their hands up in horror or becoming confrontational, the Friends quietly approached the expedition's leader and several of the drivers "under instruction". A bit of quiet but informed lobbying then took place and in next to no time the Friends had a small army of converts. Most, if not all, the vehicle occupants had no idea of what a special place Monga is and that it was under threat because of the current Regional Forestry Agreement process. The expedition leader realised that his livelihood could be under threat and the others were all impressed by the forest's unique beauty. There were many promises of letters to the NSW Premier and local MPs. No doubt these intentions were not realised in every case, but nevertheless they had all been successfully introduced to the conservation ethic.

It was a pleasure to observe this small success, because the Friends

had just been very disappointed with lack of support coming from other conservation groups (including NPA) for their innovative proposal to seek funding to establish an environmental centre in the area. The centre was to be built near the old sawmill site adjacent to the village. It was also proposed that a system of walking tracks and a tourist drive should be developed. Designated tracks would also be set aside for horse and mountain bike riding. The interpretive program would draw on the wealth of stories in the area about its Aboriginal history, its biogeographic history as a refuge area preserving rainforest and flora distributions before the last ice-age as well as stories about the history of logging and the old-timers. The Friends' proposal was an innovative effort to counter intense local opposition to wilderness proposals in general, but particularly the Buckenbowra wilderness proposal. A casual stroll down Braidwood's main street reveals that the anti-wilderness campaign is well supported, well funded and well organised. The Friends saw their option as undermining the opposition without harming the wilderness proposal as their submission was for the use of land not identified as being in the proposed wilderness.

It is probably now too late to give expressions of support for the Friends proposal, (which did receive a positive response from Tallanganda Shire Council's Tourism sub-committee), but those of you who are concerned about the future of this beautiful and unique forest could contact either Robyn Steller, phone 0248422001 or Val Plumwood, phone 0248461173 or email [vplumwood@braidwood.net.au](mailto:vplumwood@braidwood.net.au). Moral support would be most welcome.

The group, like the forest, is small, but the task, like the trees, is gigantic.

Len Haskew

## News from the NPA office

Members may be aware that volunteers now staff the NPA office. We undertook this step following the resignation of Dianne Hastie to save NPA operating funds. We no longer receive administrative support grants from the ACT Government and without these it is not possible for NPA to provide paid office staff.

We are relying on NPA volunteers through a monthly roster to continue to provide the membership, committee, and sales support to keep our services running. We have had an excellent response following an appeal for volunteers at the March general meeting. This group of volunteers has now almost completed the May roster and we are looking for further members for the June and July rosters.

As with all new ventures there has been a steep learning curve for all of us involved to become proficient with the office equipment and services. Our training is ongoing.

With this in mind we ask members to be a little patient if services sometimes seem a little slow. In common with all modern office systems there is heavy reliance on computer systems to provide and support services and communications. We are currently re-designing our computer systems to better meet our needs in a volunteer environment. Again, we seek your patience while these changes are implemented.

We have formed an Office Subcommittee to plan and implement the change to a volunteer system and to provide ongoing support to our gallant band of volunteers.

If any members feel able to support the NPA by staffing the office about once a month please let me know and I will arrange convenient roster times and training.

**Neville Esau**  
For the Committee

## The ACT draft budget

*continued from page 9*

If you would like a copy of the NPA's submission, please contact the NPA office on 6282 5813 or Ray Polglaze on 6247 1024. Copies of the Committee's report are available from the ACT Assembly Committee Office on 6205 0435.

**Ray Polglaze**

Note: This article was developed with the support of the ACT Government Environment Grants Program.

## Westbourne Woods walks

Westbourne Woods is one of the best arboreta in Australia, being a testing ground for about 150 species of Australian and exotic trees planted mainly between 1914 and 1920.

All are welcome to enjoy a free, two-hour guided walk through Westbourne Woods on the second Sunday of each month.

Meet at the entrance to the Royal Canberra Golf Club, Bentham Street, Yarralumla, at 9:30 am.

Ken Eldridge, phone 6281 5685, can give further information on the walks.

## Celebrating 40 years



*Watched by Fiona MacDonald Brand, Sybil Story cuts the association's 40th birthday cake.  
Photo Reg Alder.*

Attaining the age of 40 is often regarded as something of a milestone in our personal lives, and celebrations to mark this event are quite common. Fiona MacDonald Brand had the foresight to realise that the 40th anniversary of NPA would also be a significant milestone in the history of the association and

that a special celebration would be appropriate. The Committee agreed with her and a variety of activities were planned. These included a Supplement to the March Bulletin, a talk at Namadgi Visitor Centre and a "birthday party", held in conjunction with the March general meeting.

More than 50 members came along to the party, to celebrate and to share in another part of NPA's history.

Syd Comfort acted as Master of Ceremonies and kept things moving along at a lively pace. Syd had the great idea of arranging the seating in a large circle, just as if we were sitting around a campfire, somewhere in Namadgi, (with a fire permit, of course). Members were invited to share their memories of their association with NPA and there was no shortage of willing volunteers. The notice of meeting in the Bulletin advertised 'an evening of reminiscence and fellowship enlivened by tales, some short, some tall but all entertaining'.

This was one occasion when there was truth in advertising! It was amazing to hear the many and various things that people remembered from a particular occasion - and it was delightful to be reminded what pleasant memories people cherished. Interspersed with the tales were accounts of the early days and the herculean efforts made by pioneer members to gain Namadgi for the people of the ACT. Most telling perhaps though were the reminiscences about friendships made, the ready acceptance of children at outings and the enduring appreciation of the environment that membership of NPA had engendered and nurtured.

Fiona was given the pleasant duty of proposing a toast to NPA and then Sybil Story was asked to cut the magnificent birthday cake. An excellent supper followed with more informal yarns and reminiscences. A memorable night for all attending.

**Len Haskew**

# Brindabella National Park, so close and yet so unknown

It is odd that our closest national park is so rarely visited by bushwalkers, and yet the Brindabella National Park offers so much: grand forests, spring flowers in abundance, clean water in lively creeks, tracks for those who like them and as rough bush bashing as anybody could wish for. Having led five different exploratory walks to see what is there, it is time for me to describe the area so that others feel inspired to put on trips into the area.

## Where is it?

The Brindabella National Park extends northwards from Mount Coree approximately 15km and covers more than 12 000ha. It includes the slopes and ridges around the Brindabella Range. It was gazetted as national park in 1996. It is open to four-wheel driving, but the walks that we have done so far have not been unduly disturbed by that. Most of the area is on the Umbarra 1:25 000 map.

## How to get there

There are basically two entry roads into the area: Two Sticks Road and Doctors Flat Road. Both go off Mountain Creek Road, which can be reached via Cotter or Uriarra Crossing-Fairlight Road. Both entry roads are easily accessible by four-wheel drive or by mountain bike. My first exploration was in fact made on my mountain bike. In fair weather the roads are also negotiable for two-wheel drive cars with reasonable ground clearance.

## Camping

The main creeks seem to have water at all times. We have camped at Mountain Creek, California Creek and Jago Creek, in all cases nestling into the vegetation. Such camp sites can be found reasonably close to the access roads, and I have chosen to walk in with full packs, set up camp and then make trips from there with day packs.

## Walking routes

Five different trips have been made with the Canberra Bushwalkers:

1. With base at Mountain Creek just north of the Dingi Dingi Range we walked across to the Waterfall Creek view point.
2. With base at California Creek we took one walk up the Grevillea Ridge (new name) and one into the Sardine Flat area.
3. A day trip around and across the Dingo Dells flat.
4. With base at Jago Creek we took one walk to and along Wombat Ridge and one down Bag Ridge and up Pea Flower Ridge (new name).
5. From the Baldy Range trail we walked down along a ridge (fairly scrubby) to Mountain Creek which we followed to Top Crossing, enjoying swims in the clear pools on the hot summer day.

## Plans

There are a lot more trips to be made in the area apart from repeating old trips. Some time I hope to explore



*Above California Creek. Photo Gösta Lyngå.*

the Grevillea Ridge to its full extent, but there is also sure to be interesting country on the western slopes of the Brindabella Range. We are really lucky to have this area so close. Let us get up there!

**Gösta Lyngå**



*On the Dingi Dingi Range. Photo Gösta Lyngå.*

# VIP – the Vegetation Investment Project

*The guest speakers at our November General Meeting were Mark Thomas, Director, Greening Australia, and Alison Elvin, Greening Australia's VIP Project Coordinator. Mark spoke briefly about the history of Greening Australia, its aims and objectives and handed over to Alison who spoke enthusiastically about her project. The following article is an outline of Alison's address – it first appeared in Bush, the national magazine of Environment Australia and is reprinted with permission.*

## **This is a story about the Hooded Robin.**

It involves partnerships; biodiversity; the application of scientific theory; and large-scale, on-ground re-vegetation works.

Its greatest success will be when species such as the Hooded Robin are commonplace, and all the small, forgotten woodland plants bounce back.

There are partnerships between CSIRO (scientific theory and research), Greening Australia (on-ground implementation), all manner of landholders (free-hold farmers, nature reserves, public spaces, developers, planners, and rural leaseholders, to name a few) and ACT and NSW. government agencies.

The project aims to preserve, extend and enhance native vegetation communities with the purpose of bringing back species of insectivorous woodland birds, including the threatened Hooded Robin.

## **How can this be done?**

Greening Australia received funding from the National Heritage Trust (NHT) for a three-year Vegetation Investment Project – affectionately known as VIP – to maximise flora and fauna diversity by buffering, linking, and re-vitalising native remnant vegetation in northern and western ACT, and into surrounding

NSW in accordance with scientifically determined revegetation guidelines.

To achieve this, VIP provides landholders with \$1,200 per km for 80km of fencing; equipment and herbicide for weed control during site preparation; and local provenance seed and/or tubestock to re-vegetate at least 95ha of land. As with all NHT funding, every dollar provided to the landholder needs to be matched by an in-kind, one-for-one contribution from the landholder.

All this sounds good, but there are some basic questions that need answering first: Which species are to be planted? Which remnants protected? How large should the re-vegetation patches be? How far apart should they be?

Enter CSIRO, and Dr David Freudenberger, Wildlife and Ecology Division. He developed revegetation guidelines based on Rob Lambeck's "Focal Species Approach". This approach to landscape analysis assesses features of the landscape that are potential threats to the persistence of native plants and animals by identifying the animal species most sensitive to each threat. The most sensitive species becomes known as the "Focal Species", and if the threats can be overcome to the point where the focal species persists, so too will many other less sensitive species.

CSIRO focussed on bird species in the VIP area, and analysed specific landscape features, including:

- The minimum size and shape of each vegetation patch;
- The structural complexity of the vegetation in each patch;
- The diversity of plant species and their composition;
- The physical distances between each patch.

Analysis of a three-month bird and habitat survey of 72 sites within the VIP area showed 23 of 25 species of insectivorous woodland birds

depended on a vegetation patch size of at least 10ha. These patches must be within 500m to 1km of each other, and include quite complex habitat – for example, fallen timber for nesting and shelter and diverse plant species with structural integrity. These results form the basis for the VIP re-vegetation guidelines detailed in David Freudenberger's final report.

However, the locally threatened Hooded Robin needs a very large, complex patch of 100ha to maintain its lifecycle. This sensitivity to habitat fragmentation identified it as the Focal Species for the project. The long-term success of VIP will be when Hooded Robins are a common sight again. Short-term, the Rufous Whistler is the Intermediate Focal Species – its renewed presence in re-vegetated sites will be an early indicator of success.

The enthusiasm from local farmers, and other private and government bodies, to participate in this project has been overwhelming, especially in NSW. I am working closely with each landholder so we can ensure appropriate site preparation, tackle problems arising on-site quickly, develop effective site-management plans, and monitor the successes and failures of the project.

Harnessing partnerships, putting theory into practice, linking flora and fauna conservation, and being open to new knowledge and techniques along the way, makes VIP an extremely interesting and challenging project.

For further information, please contact Alison Elvin, VIP Project Coordinator, Greening Australia, on 6253 3035.

Alison also provided the association with a copy of David Freudenberger's *Guidelines for Enhancing Grassy Woodlands for the Vegetation Investment Report*. A copy of the report is held at the office and may be inspected during office hours.

# The push for a national park

*This is the edited text of the talk given at Namadgi National Park Visitor Centre on 19 March 2000 by Fiona MacDonald Brand.*

As well as being a story about Namadgi Park, this is the story about the foundation of the National Parks Association of the ACT. It is also a very personal story as one cannot be involved for nearly 50 years in environmental groups without the issues of the environment dominating one's thoughts.

It is most fitting that this talk be given in the month of March as it was on the 1 March 1960 that the NPA of the ACT held its first general meeting. The association has been celebrating its 40th birthday this month and has published a special *Bulletin* which tells of the events and issues of those 40 years.

Not many parts of the world have been untouched by human activities over thousands of years. Some landscapes have been drastically changed and others show little change to the casual eye. A rare place that escaped until the late 1700s was Lord Howe Island. When discovered no human hand had changed that landscape. The English captain who found it marvelled at its pristine beauty and lack of fear shown by the birds. He wished that the island could always remain in that state but history tells us that within 50 years of occupation by humans one half of the species of birds had become extinct. As we now know, protected areas are needed to ensure survival of plant, animal and sea species.

National parks were first declared in the USA and Australia in the 1880s. They are large areas containing mountainous grandeur, desert landscapes, lakes, forests, beaches or rugged coastline and are for the nation and not for individual ownership.

It must be remembered that most often these parks were proposed by individual citizens or groups who thought the landscape was worthy of special protection. They then lobbied governments to have these declared. An exception is Kosciuszko National

Park which was declared by the state, which took the initiative without too much community effort to protect the area containing the Snowy Mountains Scheme.

By the 1950s all Australian states had national parks. Usually these had been proposed by bushwalking groups or local citizens. I cannot emphasise enough that citizens or groups raise the issue to protect natural areas and then have to convince government authorities to declare protected areas.

In the ACT, in the 1950s, the Royal Society consisting mainly of CSIRO scientists was giving advice to the Development Commission on the value of the Tidbinbilla valley and the surrounding mountains becoming a reserve. One of the society's members, Dr Nancy Burbidge, (perhaps influenced by events in NSW) had a larger vision: a National Park for the National Capital.

Nancy was a fine botanist in the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) and a leader in many community groups to which she belonged. In 1959 she asked Edric Slater, an excellent photographer in the CSIRO, to mount a display of nature photography so that public interest in the environment could be gauged. I attended, as I had been appointed to Turner school, in the ACT, in 1958. The ABC reporter interviewed viewers, including myself, and the exhibition was well advertised.

Nancy was very encouraged by the attendance and interest of people and after planning with fellow scientists, including Dr Max Day and Dr Alex Costin, a public meeting was called for 1 March 1960 in the lecture theatre of the Institute of Anatomy (now ScreenSound). The purpose was the forming of a national parks association. Professor Lindsay Prior was chairperson and Mrs Wright. Dr Max Day spoke about national parks in Australia, and others at the meeting spoke about the

Queensland, Victorian and NSW National Parks Associations. Nancy Burbidge then moved that a National Parks Association of the ACT be formed, and this proposal was passed unanimously by the approximately 145 people present. Much discussion followed about aims and objectives and activities of this new association. Monthly meetings were organised beginning on 31 March 1960. At this meeting a very local environmental issue was discussed and action taken deploring the suggestion that the land set aside on Black Mountain for a botanic garden be absorbed into the university grounds.

The membership subscription rate was declared at the June meeting at 15 shillings adults, 5 shillings for junior members and 30 shillings for a family. Allan Strom was guest speaker at this meeting, bringing greetings from the NSW NPA and talking about NSW national parks. Committee meetings were held monthly in the main building of the CSIRO with Dr Carrick, Professor Pryor or Dr Nicholson as chairperson.

The 1961 annual general meeting appointed Dr Nicholson as President and Dr Nancy Burbidge as Secretary. In 1962 Nancy Burbidge became President and I became Secretary - no typing skills - handwritten minutes, letters and addressing of news sheets and bulletins.

Another local issue which arose in 1960 was the announcement that Westbourne Woods, Yarralumla would be closed to the public and the Royal Canberra Golf Club would lease it as a golf course. These woods were planted by Mr Weston in the early days of Canberra to test the growth of non-native trees in the Canberra climate. Forestry had cared for these trees over the years, with Andy Wood (one of our members) and another worker, hand-watering the trees from a tanker during the 1939-42 drought.

There was a great public outcry at the suggestion of closure as the

general public were used to walking and picnicking in the woods. The scouting movement held outdoor activities there and Sunday School picnics were always held there. Our August 1960 meeting became a public meeting to decry the proposal: it was almost swamped by Royal Canberra members, but our protest was passed. In the event, the association and the community lost out on this issue. However, some forestry men were determined that the public would not be denied access, so every second Sunday of the month a walk is led through parts of the former Westbourne Woods.

The association's first reserve proposals were for the Molonglo Gorge and Gibraltar Falls. These were granted in a reasonable time. The question now to be answered was: where should the national park be? We knew where it could not be (at that time in the 60s): in the Cotter valley catchment, and on grazing land, as money would be needed to compensate the graziers.

Fortunately, Alan Bagnall of the Alpine Club had a walk organised into the Mount Kelly region in the southern area of the ACT, so in March 1962 three committee members who were packwalkers volunteered to go on that walk to see if the area would be suitable as a national park. These members were Dr Robert Story, Ms Julie Henry, a Queensland NPA walker and public servant, and Ms Fiona Brand, secretary of the NPA of the ACT and former member of the Caloola Club.

We drove along the Old Boboyan Road to the Boboyan-Naas valley, then walked up the valley following a bridle path (no roads or fire trails) under Mount Gudgenby to camp at Sam's Creek under Mount Scabby and then climbed Mount Kelly the next morning. Bob Story's description of this event is most accurate. "The view in all directions is spectacular, very wild and tumbled and thickly wooded to the north, bare and with streaks of snow far to the south-west." Several mountains such as Mount Burbidge

and Mount Namadgi were then unnamed but we took in the beauty of the 306-degree view.

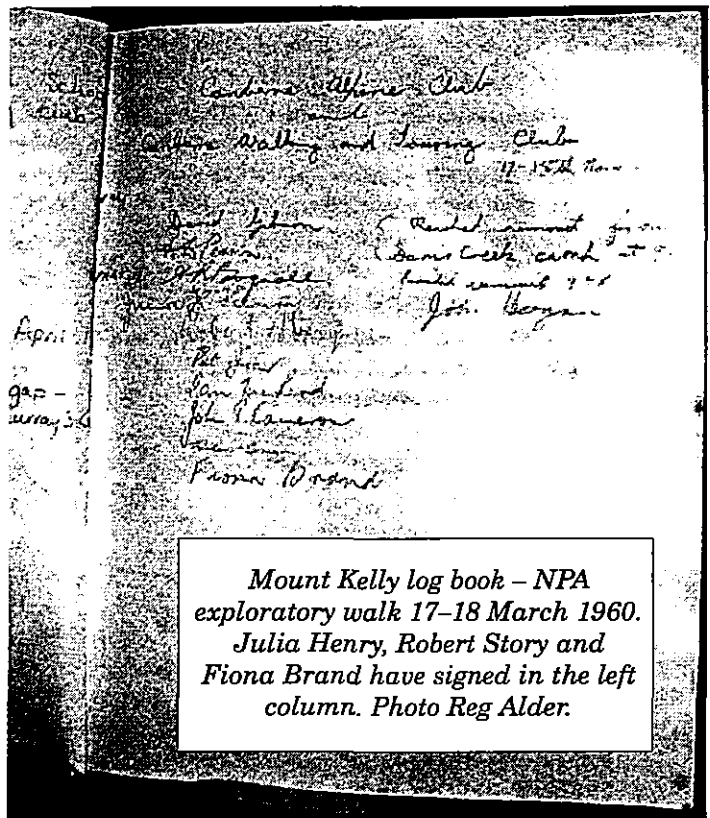
We reported most enthusiastically to the committee and were instructed to prepare a proposal - Bob and Julie were in charge and C S I R O scientists helped by providing lists of birds, fauna, vegetation, geology etc. Dick Shodde did the bird list,

but memory fails on the other names. It was a very well-thought-out document, typed and supplied with maps and photographs. It was such a small area when compared with the size of our national park now, but it was a good beginning.

To give us more knowledge of the area Julie Henry, Sandy Brand and myself did a couple of walks up Middle Creek and we asked our pilot friend John Gray to fly us over the area to get a bird's eye view.

The proposal was presented to the Minister for the Interior, Gordon Freeth, in 1963. There was no opposition to the idea but reluctance to commit money. In 1964 we presented the proposal to the new Minister, Doug Anthony. Nancy, Julie and Bob took time off work to visit him but there was no reward for their effort. However, Senator J A Mulvihill championed our cause in the Senate for a national park in the ACT.

In 1968, the Federal Department of Interior called a meeting of interested groups including the Canberra Bushwalkers and ourselves to disclose details of the extra areas researched to be added to the original park proposal. These were the Mount Clear range, Mount



Mount Kelly log book - NPA exploratory walk 17-18 March 1960. Julia Henry, Robert Story and Fiona Brand have signed in the left column. Photo Reg Alder.

Tennent and the Cotter divide. NPA had recommended a wilderness area for Mount Kelly and Nursery Swamp. In 1973 Minister Ralph Hunt encouraged us not to give up hope and in 1979 the Gudgenby Nature Reserve was declared. However, it was not until 1985 when the NPA President, Neville Esau, and members took the Minister for Territories and Local Government, Tom Uren, out to view the Gudgenby Nature Reserve that further action was taken. He responded with "Of course, it should be a national park" and turning to his departmental head, John Enfield he said: "You'll see to that, won't you John." What excitement and joy - but sadly Nancy wasn't alive to know that. As Den Robin says in our 40th anniversary Bulletin: "The declaration of Namadgi National Park demonstrated something conservationists are always searching for - political will." The area of the park has continued to grow northwards and eastwards so that it now covers half the area of the ACT.



# PARKWATCH

## Keeping sightseers at bay

A study of interactions between wildlife and tourists at Montague Island has provided some common-sense management solutions for the New South Wales NPWS.

Montague Island National Park, situated nine kilometres off the coast in southern New South Wales hosts important non-breeding populations of Australian and New Zealand fur-seals, and breeding populations of crested terns and little penguins.

A study, by Peter Shaughnessy and Nick Nicholls of CSIRO Wildlife and Ecology, and Sue Briggs of the NPWS, looked at ways of minimising the effect of tourism on wildlife populations.

The first conclusion was that tour boats did not unduly disturb fur seals hauled out on the rocks. There were exceptions to this, and the study recommended that tour boats approach the colony so that the fur seals could see them.

Giving penguins personal space proved a little more of a challenge as some of the birds used the ramp to the jetty for the nightly parade to their burrows. The authors recommended an alternative method of departure for the tourists be developed.

The crested tern also needed a private place to breed. Providing it involves roping off their breeding ground to prevent tourist access.

"It's pretty straight forward," Shaughnessy says, "but the Parks Service requires such information to make the right decisions about wildlife conservation."

*ecos, January-March 2000*

## Grazing relief for burnt alpine areas

Parks Victoria (PV) made the very welcome decision not to allow cattle grazing during the 99/2000 season in parts of the Alpine NP affected by a wildfire in January 1998.

The Mountain Cattleman's Association of Victoria (MCAV) disputed this decision and an independent panel of three was

appointed to resolve the dispute. After a lengthy hearing that cost tax-payers tens of thousands of dollars, the panel unanimously supported PV's decision, stating that it "accepts that the current condition of the vegetation of particular relevance to cattle grazing, namely sub-alpine grasslands and alpine wetlands, has not yet reached a level of rehabilitation which would support the resumption of grazing".

However, the panel provided some "gratuitous advice" which indicated that it may not be possible to make a similar decision next season, that while PV has already successfully fenced out some significant alpine wetlands, they must only include a reasonable area of grassland catchment in the future. They also stated that management practices ought to be clearly identified and spelt out in a more detailed and more readily defined way.

The panel felt that an opportunity was missed to put some stock in the National Park in late 1999 so that grazing behaviour could be observed and that it would have been possible to, take up MCAV's offer of reducing stock allocations to 70% of their maximum allocations across all license areas. This of course ignores the fact that any grazing would be damaging.

The VNPA congratulates Parks Victoria and the Panel for making and upholding this decision. We strongly believe that as a plethora of science indicates, cattle grazing has an adverse impact on alpine biodiversity and must be excluded from the Alpine National Park, as it has from the NSW alpine region. *vnpa, people caring for nature, March 2000*

## Map grid references

The November issue of the Confederation's *Bushwalker* carried an article on Search and Rescue which indicates that the normal six (6) figure grid reference number for the location of an emergency, is not sufficiently accurate for the GPS

navigation of a helicopter and what is needed is a fifteen (15) grid reference which is readily available from NORMAL 1:25 000 Topographic maps.

*The Sydney Bushwalker, February 2000*

## Kaputar Wilderness tangle at the crossroads

The Colong Foundation has recently nominated additions to the wilderness areas in Mt Kaputar National Park. The nomination includes the area transversed by the proposed "Barraba Track" and covers approximately 15,900 hectares. The nomination consists of:

- Link area between the declared Nandewar and Rusden wilderness areas;
- The headwater catchments of various tributaries of Bullawa Creek within the Mount Kaputar National Park;
- Parts of the Plagyan, Rusden and Deriah State Forests - the latter being within the South Brigalow Forest Region; and
- Various steep ridgelines and gullies extending out from the existing park boundaries, and are privately owned/managed but which appear to be in an essentially natural condition.

These nomination areas would increase by sixty per cent the wilderness reserved within Mt Kaputar National Park, the only wilderness in north-west NSW. The fragmentation of these relatively small wilderness areas has always been a concern. For this reason the Tamworth Branch of the National Parks Association are opposed to a new road from Barrabra through the park to Narrabri, first proposed in 1974.

Current NPWS park management philosophy tends toward accommodating vehicle access and taking more risks with nature conservation. In line with this approach the NPWS met with Barraba Shire Council in 1998 to develop a 4WD access for the

Barraba Track proposal. Over last Christmas holiday break an amendment to the parks plan of management was put forward seeking to open a Barraba track for exclusive 4WD vehicle use.

The Foundation's wilderness nomination seeks to advance an environmentally superior park management alternative to the development of more vehicle dependent park access in this small park.

*The Colong Bulletin, March 2000*

### The fatal shore

The largest sand island in the world, Fraser Island was proclaimed a national park in 1971 and given international recognition as a World Heritage Area in 1992. Tragically, however, this protected status is not delivering the environmental security we would hope for and expect. Fraser Island's wildlife populations are declining and its vegetation patterns are changing. This is because the priority and preoccupation of Fraser Island managers has been to maximise its tourist potential - it attracts over 300,000 visitors per annually - and to concentrate almost exclusively on vehicular based recreation. Catering for four-wheel drives is taking precedence over protecting the environment. In 1998-99 the Queensland government spent almost 16% of its total budget for Fraser Island on road and waste management while less than one per cent (\$32,000) was dedicated to natural resource management. Ultimately, the island ecology is being adversely altered by negligence.

This negligence has been devastating for the island's wildlife. Shorebird populations, in particular, have suffered. There have been regular reports of vehicles charging at birds to make them take off, on some instances leaving vehicles splattered with blood and feathers.

The ecological balance in Fraser Island's magnificent forests has been upset by the failure to adopt, let alone implement, a fire management plan. If a wildfire were to occur now Fraser Island would be an ecological disaster.

## Surveyors at the Snowline



Matthew Higgins's display, *Surveyors at the Snowline*, was launched at the Canberra Museum and Gallery by Mr Harold Hird MLA on March. About 60 people attended. The display includes a wide range of text panels and historical and present-day images relating to the 1910-15 survey of the ACT-NSW border. A great many of the highly significant survey marks on the border (some of which are illustrated in the display) are on the

boundary of Namadgi National Park, and the display includes some Namadgi views dear to many of us. The display, funded by the ACT Government's Heritage Grants Program, remained on view until the end of the Heritage Festival in April. Now in the possession of the Institution of Surveyors, the display will be mounted at other events in the future.

(Photo by Stephanie Haygarth)

The Fraser Island dingo is regarded as the purest genetic strain in eastern Australia. The population was estimated to be between 1000 and 2000 in the 1920's, but has now been reduced to 100. Despite this, some are killed by rangers after each dingo attack on humans. Fraser Island has indeed become a fatal shore for wildlife.

Fraser Island is renowned for the purity of the water in its beautiful lakes and streams. These icons, however, are increasingly being filled and dogged up with sediments sluiced off the roads and camping grounds.

Fraser Island's World Heritage status has done nothing to improve its management, while visitor numbers continue to increase

without restriction. Despite the nominal acceptance of the Great Sandy Region Management Plan in 1994, the island has deteriorated. Part of the problem is the plan has no legislative status and no money earmarked to implement it. Yet the Orchid Beach airstrip, which was closed under the Management Plan, was not only re-opened, but has received over \$200,000 - funding that should have been spent on natural resource management.

QPWS's obsessive catering for vehicular recreation has blinded it to its conservation responsibilities. It seems to have lost sight of protecting Fraser's biodiversity as its main objective.

*habitat, February 2000*

# Book reviews

Namadgi and Tidbinbilla Classics: tough bushwalks in Canberra's high country. *By Graeme Barrow, Dagraja Press, 2000, \$17.95.*

Graeme Barrow's latest book describes 21 day-walks in Namadgi National Park and Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve. This is the best written and presented of the books on walks by the author that I have read. It is well laid out and includes coloured photographs and maps. The photographs clearly indicate the ruggedness of the terrain that some of the walks involve. *Namadgi and Tidbinbilla Classics* complements the author's *Exploring Namadgi & Tidbinbilla: Day Walks in Canberra's High Country* (second edition 1995).

The book includes, in addition to a description of each walk, introductory information about the walks, the grading system (hard, moderate and easy), weather conditions at different times of year in Namadgi National Park and road distances to the start of each walk. At first glance the table on road distances seems overly complicated, but on reading through, it is easy to follow. Distances are measured from a variety of well-known locations, such as the Canberra GPO and the Namadgi Visitor Centre just past Tharwa. There is information about which roads are sealed and which are unsealed, something important for those drivers who like to keep to the bitumen.

Accompanying this section is a map of access roads to Namadgi and Tidbinbilla that also shows the location of the walks relative to these points of access. Before the author gets into the detail of each walk, another small section of the book tells the reader about camping in Namadgi at the park's three designated campsites. Readers interested in camping in the bush are reminded to check with the visitor centre as to the restrictions that apply in the park.

As to be expected, the bulk of the book describes the 21 walks. The author classifies 16 of them as hard, three as moderate and two as easy. They cover much of the mountainous

area of the ACT and are a very good sample of the more difficult day-walking opportunities available in Namadgi National Park and Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve. While at times the language is florid, the descriptions are interesting and informative. Reference to the route followed and the type of terrain encountered is complemented in places by local history and with information on points of interest, such as things to look out for at various places while on the walk.

A coloured box of key details and a map of the track are included with each description. Importantly, the author stresses that the maps shown in the book should not be used for navigational purposes. The maps referred to in the key details are the 1:25 000 series published by New South Wales Central Mapping Authority. Also contained in the key details is information on road access, travel distance, walk distance, the time it took the author to complete the walk, and the total climb in metres involved.

This book is a valuable addition to the series of books now available from the author and others on walks in the local area.

**Philip Gatenby**

*The Bush by Boot and Ski. By Malcolm Bennett. Published by M. G. Bennett, PO Box 9039, Deakin, ACT 2600. \$24.95.*

The book aims to convey the author's love for the mountains, his enjoyment of bushwalking and ski touring and the companionship that these activities have developed. It is a personal memoir of the activities and a retrospect of their significance, without any claim that the trips are the furthest, the fastest or anything other than the ordinary fare of bushwalkers and ski tourers.

In a book of almost 200 pages, Malcolm devotes about 50 pages to introductory essays, about 110 pages to notes made at the time and about 20 pages on pen portraits of his companions. It is accompanied by a sensible selection of maps to help readers follow the text. The 3 photos

are a feature. I wish I had photos which so vividly conveyed the beauty and the atmosphere of the scenes presented. The cover photo of a cross country skier is poetry.

A book of this kind is of interest to family and friends, to social historians and, possibly, to other walkers and skiers in the areas covered. It may also provide information about the day-to-day perceptions on walking or skiing trips for people thinking about taking up these activities.

The book gives a reasonable account of a bushwalker and cross country skier and a pleasant insight into a life. It does not claim to be other than a low key and modest book. To my mind its coverage is too narrow and its information too slight to be of great value to anyone considering taking up walking or backcountry skiing. For the experienced, it is easy to read and expressed in a pleasingly colloquial and informal, but sometimes irritating, prose.

Despite an engagingly colloquial prose, the trip notes lack the turn of phrase or the perceptiveness to engage the reader to seek more. For intending participants, they lack the selective detail or the sense of immediacy needed to convey a more comprehensive picture of life on the move. They are capable of evincing echoes in experienced readers, but how they make me yearn for a book of trip notes from the early walks of Reg Alder or a collection of anecdotes about the walking misadventures of various NPA members!

The thought occurs about the benefits of walking with a club, instead of only with a selected group of friends. How much richer and more varied are the walking experiences of those of us who have participated extensively in the overnight programs of walking clubs than the accounts of the trips in this book.

Leaving aside the bushwalking notes, the skiing trip notes have pride of place. In some ways ski touring it is a very different activity

*continued on page 19*

## Calendar

	June	July	Aug	Sep
Committee meeting	Thur 1	Thur 6	Thur 3	Thur 7
Environment sub-committee <sup>1</sup>	Thur 8	Thur 13	Thur 10	Thur 14
General meetings	Thur 15	Thur 20	Thur 17	Thur 21
Gudgenby work party <sup>2</sup>	-	Sat 8	-	Sat 9
Gudgenby Olympic planting <sup>2</sup>			Sat 12	
NPA work party <sup>3</sup>				Sat 9-Sun 10

### Further Details

- 1 - Neville Esau 6286 4176
- 2 - Yankee Hat carpark 10am Eleanor Stodart 6281 5004
- 2 - David Large 6291 4830

## General meetings

*Held in Forestry House, Yarralumla commencing at 8pm*

**Thursday 15 June.** Are the weeds taking over? Geoff Butler, the Conservation Council of the South East Region and Canberra weeds officer, will talk to us about this important threat to biodiversity and how the ACT Weeds Strategy is working.

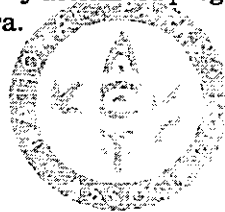
**Thursday 20 July.** Gudgenby House, Which Way? A forum for National Parks Association members. "This forum will give members the opportunity to hear how the present use policy (field studies centre) came about and what the proposal for future use might mean, why it is important to conserve the building and why commercial development or demolition are seen as options. It is proposed to structure the forum around three presentations; background, conservation and other alternatives. There will be opportunities for questions and discussion. It is not intended to hold a vote to determine what NPA policy should be, rather, the Committee will be looking for a consensus based outcome," Clive Hurlstone, President.

**Thursday 17 August.** Annual General Meeting. Please refer to the notice of meeting on page 3. After the formal business there will be a presentation, "Coolah Tops; Giant Snow Gums and Grass Trees" by Judy Kelly and Phil Bubb. At Easter the NPA held a very successful car camp at Coolah Tops, a narrow plateau on the Liverpool Range in northern NSW. Come and see the slides and hear all about this recently declared national park in the region which explorer Alan Cunningham passed through in 1823.

**Thursday 21 September.** Australian Alps National Parks Cross-Border Cooperative Management Program. State borders go unrecognised by ecosystems, indigenous species and introduced pests. Hear how park agencies have broken down the borders with this internationally acclaimed program. Presented by Program Coordinator Brett McNamara.

## New Members

The association extends a warm welcome to the following members: Jayne Baker *Ainslie*, Georgina Binks, Glen Couchman *Theodore*, Paul Dalglish & Jo-Anna Clancy *Rivett*, Adrian Davey *Ainslie*, Greg Foster *Kambah*, Peter Franklin & Joanne Davidson *Deakin*, Ernest Frohlich *Griffith*, Allison Jocabson, Jory Family *Gunning NSW*, Kathryn Kelly *Chifley*, Margaret McCawley *Garran*, Sue Mathews *Florey*, Jennie Marsh & Jim Croft *Campbell*, Chris & Marie Paterson *Downer*, Herbert Robey *Florey*, Hugh Saddler *Yarralumla*, Sarah Sharp & Peter Raymer *Lynham*, Wendy Stow *Gowrie*, Chris Webb *Flynn*, Patricia Young.



## Weeding continues on Lord Howe Island

In September 1995 and December 1997 I reported on trips to Lord Howe Island to raise awareness of the weed problem and to do some weeding. Although no NPA ACT members have been involved since then, weeding trips are continuing, with more visitors from the mainland being involved each year removing the ground asparagus fern from the Transit Hill area. The islanders themselves (who number just a few hundred) are also doing more work, mainly on the climbing asparagus fern and the guava trees, funded through federal government grants.

The three trips I organised had about eight people each but now that we have started the ball rolling by using volunteer visitors in such a project, groups number in the 20s and a Friends of Lord Howe Island is being formed.

Ian Hutton, is organising three week-long trips this year. The first two in June are fully booked through the Friends of Lord Howe Island, The Australian Museum Society and Friends of the Royal Sydney Botanic Gardens. The third trip, on September 2-9, still has some vacancies. Anyone interested can contact Ian Hutton, P.O. Box 6367, Coffs Harbour NSW 2450. I personally can vouch for it, that in the beautiful setting of Lord Howe Island, it is possible to have a good holiday with good company and give something in return.

**Eleanor Stodart**

## Book review

*continued from page 18*

to walking. Ski tourers are not inclusive people, like those in a bushwalking club, and tend to move about the mountains in small private groups.

The problem with ski touring is how rarely weather and snow conditions combine to produce heavenly skiing. Walkers tell fond anecdotes of their ordeals, but skiers remember the heavenly days. Malcolm's trip notes reflect this to an extent and have a jaunty tone not so evident in the sections about walking.

**Phil Bubb**

# National Parks Association (ACT)

*New members welcome*



*NPA group at Brackens Hut, Coolah Tops National Park where Wayne Veide and Max Lawrence led a car camp in April. Photo Reg Alder.*

## **NPA Bulletin**

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## Watch this space

Some of our leaders have foreshadowed events they plan to offer in the Spring (September – December) Outings Program. These are:

**The Great North Walk** – two weeks packwalking from Sydney to Newcastle, starting 2 October. Options to do whole or part of the walk. Contact: David Large 6291 4830

**Warrumbungles and Kaputar** – a nine or ten day car camping trip to these great parks to our north, starting around 3 November. Contact Max Lawrence 6288 1370 (Warrumbungles), Wayne Veide 02 6553 4351 (Kaputar)

**Brindabella Odyssey** – a five day packwalk in November starting from Orroral and involving two crossings of the Brindabella Range. Contact Neville Esau 6286 4176

**Hawkesbury Heights YHA** – another in our regular series of hostel weekends, this time on the fabulous Hawkesbury. Dates are 25–26 November, numbers strictly limited so get in early. Contact David Large 6291 4830

**But wait, there's more** – easy day trips to see the waratahs on the Boxvale Track, and to see the sights of Wee Jasper (including a guided caves tour). Contact Col McAlister 6288 4171. George Chippendale will be doing his annual Black Mountain nature ramble on 14 October.

Full details of all of these outings will be in our next Outings Program, which will come with your September NPA Bulletin

# NPA outings program

## June – September 2000

### 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.

### 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 FIVE 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.

### 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



17 June Saturday daywalk

Mt Ainslie

Leader: Matthew Higgins

1A

Map: Canberra street directory

Phone: 6247 7285

Half day walk on this inner Canberra hill. Mostly gentle trails, but starts with steep ruggly climb to summit. Some subtle points of interest. Return walk via Olims Ainslie Hotel Beer Garden. Numbers limited. Book with leader. 0kms, \$0 per car!

25 June Sunday daywalk

Tidbinbilla Range

Leader: Steve Hill

3A/C/E

Map: Tidbinbilla 1:25 000

Phone: 6231 9186

A day of fabulous views and a huge variety of life (including rare vegetation) on a quite rugged mountain range right on our doorstep. We climb steeply to Snowy Corner from the top of the Lyrebird Trail and then on to Tidbinbilla Mountain for great 360 degree views. Then on to Tidbinbilla Peak, Johns Peak and drop down to the Mountain Creek trail for the return. The walk is mainly off track, but no serious bush bashing is involved. Meet at Kambah Village shops at 8.30am. 60kms, \$15 per car.

28 June daywalk

Wednesday walk

Leader: Ken Free

Phone: 6295 8894

The June edition of our series of monthly mid-week walks. Phone leader for details, which will be determined nearer the date.

2 July Sunday daywalk

Upper Orroral Circuit

Leader: Mike Smith

2A/C

Map: Corin Dam 1:25 000

Phone: 6286 2984

Meet at Kambah Village shops at 8.30am. A walk from the Orroral gate along Corter Hut road until saddle at weather station. Climb to unnamed rocky peak 1339m for lunch and exploration. Continue on to Sawpit Creek and return along valley track via yards and site of Rowleys hut. Total climb of 400m. 100kms, \$25 per car.

9 July Sunday daywalk

Canberra Nature Park – Oakey Hill and Mt Taylor

Leader: Brian Slee

3A

Map: Canberra Street Directory

Phone: 6261 3509(w), 6281 0719(h)

Met 11am at South Curtin Oval carpark off Carruthers Street. Walk through parkland to Oakey Hill behind Lyons for lunch. Proceed south on track, including steep climb, to Mt Taylor. Retrace path, diverting through centre of Lyons. Despite distance, crosses only two quiet streets. Mid-winter relief from cabin fever! 0kms, \$0 per car.

16 July Sunday daywalk

Mt Lincoln/Blue Gum Hill

Leader: Martin Chalk

2A/B/D/E/F

Map: Corin Dam 1:25 000

Phone: 6268 4864(w), 6292 3502(h)

From Smokers Flat carpark follow ridge line south then east to 'Mt Lincoln' for views across Canberra. Return via a steep descent to Blue Gum Creek. Depart Kambah Village shops at 8.30am. 60kms, \$15 per car.

23 July Sunday daywalk

Waterview to Burrinjuck

Leader: Ross Walker

2A

Map: Brochure 2 of the H&H map kit

Phone: 6254 7117

A surprising short section of the Hume and Hovell track incorporating six different vegetation types. From the 'Waterview' property on the Yass-Burrinjuck road (approx 14kms past the turnoff from the Hume Highway) wooded lanes are followed down to Lake Burrinjuck, and then a track proceeds around the foreshore to Burrinjuck State Recreation Area. Meet at 8.00am at the Hall Post Office. Car shuffle involved. 200kms, \$50 per car.

26 July daywalk

Wednesday walk

Leader: Col McAlister

Phone: 6288 4171

The July edition of our series of monthly mid-week walks. Phone leader for details, which will be determined nearer the date.



**30 July Sunday daywalk**  
Yankee Hat, Yerrabi, Shanahans  
Leader: Col McAlister  
2A

Map: Namadgi National Park Map and Guide  
Phone: 6288 4171

Meet at the Kambah Village shops at 8.00am. We will crunch morning frost with the kangaroos at Gudgenby on the way to the Yankee Hat aboriginal paintings before driving on to Yerrabi to climb to Boboyan Trig for lunch with a view among the giant tors. Then we drive on to Shanahans Mountain for another stroll, enjoying views to the Naas valley and the Clear Range. Then a cuppa at Cuppacumbalong. 120kms, \$30 per car.

**6 August Sunday daywalk**  
Upper Rendezvous Creek  
Leader: Barbara Edgar  
1A

Map: Rendezvous Creek 1:25 000  
Phone: 6230 5685(h), 6264 2991(w)

An easy stroll, all on track, through some beautiful forest. From the Nursery Swamp carpark in Orroral Valley we head up the walking track to Nursery Creek, then over the relatively low saddle to the grassy flats on upper Rendezvous Creek where we will have a relaxed lunch before returning. Meet at Kambah Village shops at 8.30am. 100kms, \$25 per car.

**13 August Sunday daywalk**  
Murrumbidgee Corridor  
Leader: Col McAlister  
2A

Maps: Canberra, Tuggeranong 1:25 000  
Phone: 6288 4171

Ideal for beginners. A lovely walk on track from Kambah Pool to a lookout over the Murrumbidgee River about half way to Casuarina sands. We will have lunch at the lookout, and then return to Kambah Pool. Meet at the top carpark, Kambah Pool at 9.00am. 0kms, \$0 per car.

**18 – 20 August hostel weekend**  
Collaroy Weekend  
Leader: David Large  
Phone: 6291 4830

A weekend at Collaroy Youth Hostel on the beach (almost). Program will include the Manly to Spit Bridge walk on the Saturday, an evening inspection of the Quarantine Station at North Head, and on Sunday a tour of one or more of the islands in the Harbour. Collaroy has several twin/double rooms, first in etc ... Contact David for bookings.

**23 August daywalk**  
Wednesday walk  
Leader: Ken Free  
Phone: 6295 8894

The August edition of our series of monthly mid-week walks. Phone leader for details, which will be determined nearer the date.

**22 – 25 August four day pack walk**  
South Coast – Long Beach to Lake Tabourie  
Leader: Mick Kelly  
2A/B/C/D/E  
Phone: 02 4472 3959

Commence walk from Mick's place at Long Beach after lunch. As much as possible we will follow the Murramarang NP coastline from North Head to Pebbly Beach before climbing Durras Mountain and continuing coastwise to Lake Tabourie. Walk will need to be timed to coincide with low tides at critical spots (bring your cossies). Total distance about 45kms with short days on first and fourth days. Return transport arrangements to be advised. Please book early with leader.

**26 – 27 August weekend ski tour**  
Mt Tabletop  
Leader: Steven Forst  
3A/B

Map: Mt Selwyn Ski Tour Map  
Phone: 6251 6817(h), 6256 5236(w)

Contact leader by Wednesday for details and bookings. A weekend ski tour with overnight packs in the Tabletop/Broken Dam area. Note that shelter is no longer available at Broken Dam, and tents will be required. Depending on conditions may be some walking. Subject to cancellation if weather or snow conditions are adverse. 400kms, \$100 per car.

**27 August Sunday daywalk**  
Naas River  
Leader: Frank Clements  
3A/B

Map: Yaouk 1:25 000  
Phone: 6231 7005

Meet at Kambah Village shops at 8.30am. Walk from Boboyan Pines carpark via the pine forest bush regeneration area to Hospital Creek falls and Hospital Hut before proceeding to the Naas River along the Old Boboyan Road. Return to carpark direct along the road. 100kms, \$25 per car.

**30 August daywalk**

**Wednesday walk**

**Leader: David Large**

**Phone: 6291 4830**

August has five Wednesdays, so NPA has two mid-week walks this month. Phone leader for details, which will be determined nearer the date.

**2 - 3 September weekend packwalk**

**Southern Namadgi Exploration**

**Leader: Phil Gatenby**

**3A/B/E/F**

**Maps: Shannons Flat, Yaouk 1:25 000**

**Phone: 6254 3094**

A partly exploratory walk in the southern part of Namadgi National Park on tracks, open grasslands, and through the bush. Visit the headwaters of Grassy Creek and Sheep Station Creek. Depending on weather conditions a climb (450m) up Sentry Box Mountain may be involved. Contact leader by Wednesday 30 August for details and bookings. 160kms, \$40 per car.

**3 September Sunday daywalk**

**Pierces Creek Falls**

**Leader: Mike Smith**

**2A/D**

**Map: Cotter Dam, Tidbinbilla 1:25 000**

**Phone: 6286 2984**

Meet at carpark on Uriarra Road just off the Cotter Road at 8.30am. From locked gate at start of the Pipeline Road to Bendora Dam we will walk up the fire trail to the top of the Hardy Range, then follow the range to the south-west to drop down to the falls on Pierces Creek. Return along creek and forest tracks back to cars. Some steep ascents and descents, as well as thick scrub. 32kms, \$8 per car.

**9 - 10 September work party**

**Work Party**

**Contact: David Large**

**Phone: 6291 4830**

This is your chance to do your bit for our own National Park in a very personal and practical way. At the time this goes to press we have yet to finalise this activity with the Namadgi managers, but we are hoping to do some restoration work on the Yerrabi Track (which NPA volunteers constructed over a decade ago), including some work on the interpretive signage. Please contact David for information nearer the date.

**17 September Sunday daywalk**

**Fishing Gap to Cotter River**

**Leader: Barbara Edgar**

**2 A/B**

**Reference: Tidbinbilla 1:25 000**

**Phone: 6230 5685(h), 6264 2991(w)**

Meet at Kambah Village Shops at 8.30am. 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. The history surrounding this delightful track was written up by Matthew Higgins in the Canberra Times on 11 May. 60kms, \$15 per car.

