



# NPA *Bulletin*

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National Parks Association of the Australian Capital Territory Inc

*Golden  
anniversary  
edition*

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

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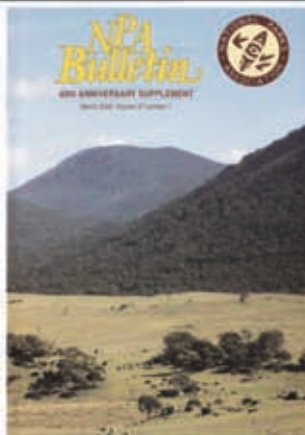
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## Editor's Note

This special edition of the NPA *Bulletin* celebrates NPA ACT's 50th birthday.

There was a very comprehensive and encompassing coverage of the first forty years of NPA ACT in the 48-page *Anniversary Supplement* to the NPA *Bulletin* Vol. 37, no. 1, March 2000.

This 50th Anniversary NPA *Bulletin* celebrates and commemorates the same history and all of the same wonderful people (and many more) who got us so far along the path we have travelled. It does not seek to duplicate the *40th Anniversary Supplement*, but to add to it.



Readers truly interested in following our history are urged to access the earlier *Anniversary Supplement* on our website by following the links through [www.npaact.org.au](http://www.npaact.org.au) > Our Publications > The Bulletin > Back Issues or alternatively by seeking to borrow one of our (scarce and treasured) copies by contacting the NPA office.

In preparing this 50th Anniversary issue, NPA ACT is especially indebted to Judy Kelly and Annette Smith who have together conducted the bulk of the historical research, and who have convened Anniversary events.

**Editor**

# From the President

## Our 50th anniversary

Congratulations to all our members, supporters, officeholders and life members who have made NPA ACT such a wonderful organisation for the past 50 years. For us to have survived and thrived for 50 years is a significant achievement, and for us to have achieved as much as we have is inspiring.

What has sustained us? What Clive Hurlstone wrote 10 years ago in his President's column for the *Bulletin* on the occasion of our 40th anniversary remains true today:

*... the camaraderie, the shared enjoyment of bushwalking and the intellectual stimulation of turning ideas, research and practical experience into submissions, have all been part of the sustaining process.*

Many other things have changed, but the need for a strong, active NPA ACT is greater than ever. The worst tragedy we experienced in 50 years was the 2003 fires which devastated Namadgi and swept through our city, killing four people and destroying over 500 homes. Since that awful day, NPA ACT has led community efforts to establish environmentally sustainable and effective fire-management regimes in our park and nature reserves. But even tougher challenges lie ahead. Drought and climate change are altering the seasons, intensifying fire danger, supporting new pest and weed invasions, and threatening the survival of key species.

In response, NPA ACT has got smarter and more effective. We have taken advantage of new technology to find innovative ways of promoting our national park and its conservation values in the community. Our photographic exhibitions are once again attracting

public attention to the beauty and value of Namadgi. Our website is an absolute joy to log into, full of information and inspiration. Our email newsletter is making communication with our members quicker, easier and more effective.

Our publications program has grown substantially. The *Bulletin* has gone to colour, at least on its cover, to do justice to member's passion for capturing the beauty of our natural world with digital photography. Think about it: how many of us actually owned a digital camera 10 years ago? We have been fortunate to have had a succession of excellent editors over the past decade and *Bulletin* articles have continued to canvass ideas and issues, stimulate debate, and inform and educate us all. We have put all past issues of the *Bulletin* on the website. That was a mammoth task made possible by many willing volunteers, and what a treasure-trove it has proven to be.

We have published new editions of our field guides and added new works to our list. Our series of conferences brought prominent local scientists and national parks staff together with the community to discuss local and regional challenges for managing environmental issues in these difficult times. The third in this series, to be held in May this year, will take this debate out into the national context and we hope it will be equally successful. Papers from these conferences have been distributed to ACT schools and libraries, and have been a rich resource for submissions and papers.

Our outings program has continued to be a major feature of our activities. Though there may be slightly more car camps and perhaps a few easier walks than 10 years ago, our members still stride through forests, across the open



fields and up tall mountains every weekend with good grace and camaraderie. We have been entertained and informed at a grand total of 100 general meetings over the decade, and our Christmas parties have become legendary.

Moving our office was a big event, as was the archiving of many important records with the ACT Heritage Library, making us feel a bit like a teenager leaving home with our parents putting all our stuff in the garage. Volunteers continue to staff the office and take care of business, and without them we would be lost. In a hundred different ways, our members, volunteers and supporters have fulfilled Clive's charter of 10 years ago and that of our founders 50 years ago: we have created and sustained a dynamic, successful organisation that has worked in so many different ways to protect and conserve our challenging but beautiful environment.

The exciting events that have been planned for the year ahead will give us a chance to pause, reflect and celebrate who we are and what we have achieved. I hope to share a glass of Namadgi Red or Gudgenby White with you all in 2010.

**Christine Goonrey**  
**February 2010**

## National Parks - can they take the heat?



### NPA ACT Symposium 2010. **Registration form with this Bulletin**

Friday 7 May, 1pm - 5pm

Saturday 8 May 2010, 9am - 5pm

Dinner Friday night

Discovery Centre, CSIRO

Clunies Ross Street, Acton

Convenor: Kevin McCue 02 6251 1291

[kmccue@grapevine.com.au](mailto:kmccue@grapevine.com.au)

### Themes

Changing expectations of national parks

Timelines for climate change

Treasures in national parks

After the drought?

Reducing the risk for threatened species

Resilient cities/natural parks

Tourism, population and recreation pressure

Living with fire



# Celebrating the 50th year of the National Parks Association of the ACT



The National Parks Association of the ACT is a quiet achiever.

Fifty years ago an association of people striving to protect the natural landscapes and the wildlife within them, came together in the Canberra Institute of Anatomy (now the Australian Film and Sound Archives). Under the leadership of Dr Nancy Burbidge, the National Parks Association of the ACT was founded with the aim to gain a National Park for the National Capital.

Fifty years of striving has achieved that goal, plus several smaller reserves,

Molonglo Gorge being the first one.

For 50 years, talented people have worked as presidents, secretaries, treasurers, committee members, walks and outings leaders and organisers of social events, publicity, and school essay and art exhibitions.

Creative editors have produced the NPA *Bulletin* every quarter, or more frequently, and several books have been published.

Energetic people have worked on track making and tree planting and weeding. Skilled members have restored historic buildings in the park, and others have organised seminars to publicly discuss conservation issues.

Members have learned to appreciate more deeply the value of the natural environment, and their lives have been enriched by such knowledge. Monthly meetings, walking together, working together, camping together, yarning around the campfires have created many long friendships.

The strivings of the National Parks Association must never cease, as each new generation of public administrators has to be educated to the idea that natural

environment protection is of the utmost importance and must not be compromised by allowing human activities to intrude and destroy.

The rangers and park workers in the National Parks Service have half of the ACT to care for and protect. Over the past 50 years many rangers have become good friends of the Association and its members as we work together. Climate change and population growth will bring challenges to the administration of our National Park, and extra funding will be needed to increase staff numbers.

Namadgi National Park's beautiful mountains, clear streams and alpine vegetation is special amongst Australia's many varieties of landscapes. My hope for the next 50 years is that there will continue to be a body of people called the National Parks Association of the ACT who will strive to protect the natural environment of the ACT and all Australia.

**Fiona MacDonald Brand**  
Foundation member, NPA ACT

## The birth of the NPA ACT

Up until 1958, Canberra was a small quiet town. In the 45 years since its declaration as the national capital of Australia, the population had increased from that of a very small rural community in 1913 to only 39 000 by 1958, despite the opening of Parliament House in 1927. In 1958 the National Capital Development Commission was given the task of planning, developing and constructing Canberra, with the money to do the job. The population increased by 22 000 (that is over 50 per cent in just 2 years) to 52 000 in 1960. It was destined to double every 5 years for many years to come.

Up to that point, apart from people whose work supported the Federal Parliament, a sizeable proportion of the Canberra population was involved in research, either at CSIRO or the Australian National University. Now the city was invaded by public servants, and developers and builders. Many of the new arrivals were initially housed in hostels, and many were single, employed and looking for social and

recreational activities. The locals realised that, with a population explosion, existing legislation that said that the ACT was protected as a 'park' wasn't sufficient to guarantee the water catchments, let alone preserve natural flora, fauna and geology.

### Catchment clearing and water quality concerns

There is inevitably a provocation before action and, in Canberra, water quality was that provocation. Leading up to 1959, the quality of the water supply that Canberrans had taken for granted deteriorated, and Nancy Burbidge and other established citizens of the town blamed clearing for pine plantations. Letters to the editor of the *Canberra Times* voiced that concern. Nancy wrote on 20 March 1959:

*Sir — Your correspondent 'Rumex' is surely correct in indicating the relationship between the condition of the Canberra water supply and the practice of continuing to establish*

*pine plantations in the Cotter catchment area. It is indeed imperative that this interference with the natural vegetation should cease ... So continuous has erosion of such slopes been over the last four or five years, at least, that we have almost forgotten what good water is like. ...*

*If the Health Department accepts no responsibility beyond that of ensuring a water supply free of harmful bacteria of known types and the Advisory Council is without power to request remedial action, the sooner we press for the establishment of a committee of properly qualified persons to guard our community against exploitation, the better.*

*While the fundamental purpose of the catchment area in relation to the provision of a first-class water supply to the National Capital is all-important, our community interests are not limited to this. Any committee that is appointed should, therefore, include not only persons able to*

*(continued next page)*



# The birth of the NPA ACT *(continued)*

*advise the Minister in such matters as water supply, water conservation and the prevention of soil erosion but also experts in other subjects, so that the full potential of our mountain areas can be realized for as many interested and possible users as can be included. At present there is no competent authority responsible for the proper integration of utilization of the mountains, including the Cotter catchment, for such purposes which placed in order of priority are: water supplies, outdoor recreation of all types and the provision of floral and faunal reserves.*

## Public support comes early

Letters that followed were quaintly passionate and frustrated. On 1 November 1959 'Disappointed' of Turner wrote:

*Sir, — I wholeheartedly support those writers who feel concern at any possible threat to some of the natural beauty which surrounds this city ... I am more and more dismayed at the apparent apathy and even hostility with which any conservationist action is regarded. Here, as in most other cities, anyone who wants to preserve something ... must be prepared to fight. The fight is against heavy odds, usually money-making interests, but even more cursing, public apathy ... But here in the A.C.T. it seems there is no National Parks Association or other democratic body where the citizens who care can voice their opinions and contribute their ideas to the establishment of national parks or fauna and flora reserves in the A.C.T. Indeed, having observed the general attitude towards conservationists' activities, I wonder whether there would be any support for a movement such as a National Parks Association or Fauna and Flora Preservation Society, both of which are active in other States.*

But 'Disappointed' had support. This letter from J. Long on 30 November 1959 pleads for leadership for the cause: *Nancy Burbidge suggests that 'our interests may best be served by forming a community organization to include all those interested in the matter'. 'Does anyone else think so?' asks Miss Burbidge.*

*Yes indeed — very many of us usually silent citizens think so, and we must hurry up and join forces before T.V. aerials start sprouting from the top of our loveliest hill. I belong to no*

*organization but am full of crusading fervor. Will somebody give us a lead?*

As early as 1901 William Farrer had suggested that there ought to be a National Park in what is now the ACT but that suggestion wasn't pursued. Now though, the idea of spearheading the formation of the NPA obviously was growing in Nancy's mind. Nancy had support from many colleagues, including members of the Academy of Science. She had recent precedents as National Park Associations had been established in Victoria (in 1952) and NSW (1957).

## Promoting the natural environment

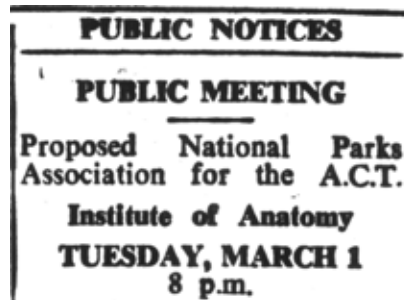
To test support for the environment Nancy organised a photographic exhibition of the alpine area at the Institute of Anatomy in late 1959. It received an encouraging response.

Another exhibition, organised by a committee representing the nature conservation societies, was held at the Academy of Science in the first week of February 1960 to increase interest in national parks and to impress upon people the importance of preserving wildlife, native plants and natural scenery. More than 700 people inspected the exhibition. An article in the *Canberra Times* on 5 February 1959 reported an unnamed 'preservation committee' member as saying that there were ACT mountain areas which could form the heart of a first-class flora and fauna reserve. He (or she) called for a local society or association to be formed to promote these interests.

On 12 February 1960 Nancy gave a speech to the National Council of Women in which she outlined a scheme for the formation of a National Parks Association. Apart from working to establish a National Park in the ACT, one aim of the association would be to encourage children in field naturalist activities.

## Public discussion

Just two weeks later, on 27 February 1960, the following public notice appeared in the *Canberra Times*:



On the day of the meeting, support for a national park for the ACT came from an unexpected source. The Australian Primary Producers had a letter in the *Canberra Times*, signed by I.L. Waight, their Federal Secretary. His support stemmed not from the usual conservation reasons, but because people seeking a 'country' experience, were trespassing onto private agricultural lands and, he wrote, in the process 'often damaging fencing, pastures, animals and equipment. There is such a small area now remaining in the A.C.T. which could be made available that it is a matter of grave concern to farmers and many other people'.

Not surprisingly, the meeting on 1 March 1960 voted unanimously to establish the National Parks Association. The chairman of the meeting, Professor L.D. Pryor, head of the Botany Department of the then Canberra University College, said continual development was 'pinching' natural lands in the A.C.T. It was important, he said, to have a 'forward-looking' attitude towards preservation.

## The first committee

A temporary committee was formed, with Dr Robert Carrick, from the CSIRO Division of Wildlife Research, as president and Nancy Burbidge as secretary. At that stage, there was a faith that the influence of such prestigious scientists and a logical argument would quickly achieve the goal of a national park.

Motives for supporting the Association varied. Bushwalkers supported it to ensure remote places where they might walk to experience anything from exercise to spiritual renewal. Many, including the scientists, wanted it protected to conserve the existing plants, animals, geological features and unblemished scenery. Some graziers supported it as a means of regulating bushwalkers trespassing on their properties. In addition to these interest groups, the report of the inaugural meeting in the *Canberra Times* said: 'It is hoped that representatives of the Tourist Advisory Council, forestry and pastoral interests will be appointed on the Association's committee'. Clearly, the ideas about the purpose of a national park and what should be NPA's policy had yet to crystallise.

*(continued on page 6)*

# The 1962 walk to Mt Kelly

The initial proponents of a national park for the national capital were very largely members of the scientific community in CSIRO and the ANU, as personified by Nancy Burbidge who was herself a botanist with the CSIRO Division of Plant Industry. As such, their primary motivation was conservation of the precious natural habitats and biodiversity of our mountain areas. However, the prospective areas for a national park were very remote and rugged, and therefore, as now, one had to do some quite serious bushwalking to get into them. As a result the bushwalking fraternity of Canberra became involved at a very early stage.

Two perspectives on the historic walk into Mt Kelly in 1962 are presented here. The first is an edited excerpt from an article by the late **Dr Bob Story OAM** published in the September 1984 edition of the NPA Bulletin and subsequently repeated in large measure in the 40th Anniversary Supplement in March 2000.

The initial meetings of the newly elected Committee covered the routine of constitution etc. that one would expect, and also a letter to the appropriate Minister telling him, or perhaps warning him, of our intentions. Understandably the Committee rather lacked direction at



Julie Henry on the summit of Mount Kelly in 1962.

first as they cast round to see what areas might be suitable and made a few smash-and-grab surveys and some recommendations.

The first recorded survey was in the spring of 1962 when Alan Bagnall of the Canberra Alpine Club invited representatives of our association to join a club trip to Mount Kelly. Julie Henry, Fiona Brand and I went along to spy out the land. A faint bridle track came and went and came, and then went for good, and except that Alan Bagnall knew the way, the trip would have been much rougher than it was.

A committee recommendation that the way in should be blazed would be

greeted with disbelief today, especially when there is a four-wheel-drive track to the foot of the mountain [now overgrown, Ed.], but was acceptable in 1962. My notes at the summit I have confirmed many times since then—'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'. The northern view took in what is now Namadgi National Park, the snowy bits were on Mount Jagungal. I had a rather nice colour slide of the summit, with Pat Green on the skyline licking something sticky from her fingers.

I collected 59 plant specimens which Nancy Burbidge subsequently determined and which are listed in the report I made. I am ashamed to say that I have forgotten who the other contributors were—all except Dick Schodde, who dealt with the birds. My apologies to them. They dealt with the mammals, freshwater invertebrates, entomology and geology.

Probably in 1963 Julie Henry and Sandy and Fiona Brand chartered a light plane and made an aerial inspection of the Kelly area. It was a bit of a disappointment, for visibility was poor, but it did give them a background for the aerial photographic work that was to follow and that played such an important part in the drafting of our original proposal.

*(continued next page)*

## The birth of the NPA ACT *(continued from page 5)*

### A constitution drafted

On 1 June 1960, at the first annual general meeting, a draft constitution was produced. Dr A. Nicholson, recently retired head of the Division of Entomology at CSIRO, became the first elected president, and Nancy Burbidge the first elected secretary. They were two distinguished biological scientists, Dr Nicholson having been awarded a D.Sc. in 1939 for his work on mimicry in insects, and Nancy Burbidge well recognised for her body of work on Australian botany. She would be awarded a D.Sc. in 1961.

The original aims and objectives of the Association, passed at that meeting were:

- The promotion of measures for the protection of fauna and flora, scenery and natural features in the Australian Capital Territory and reservation of

specific areas as National Parks.

- Stimulation of interest in and appreciation and enjoyment of such natural phenomena by organised Field Outings, Film Nights, etc.
- Interest in the provision of suitable outdoor recreation areas.
- Cooperation with organisations and persons having similar interests and objectives.

In later years, a fifth point was added:

- Promotion of and education for natural conservation and the planning of land use to achieve conservation.

Other small changes in the first point were to add 'and elsewhere' after 'Australian Capital Territory' and to delete 'of National Parks and' and insert 'as National Parks' after 'specific areas'.

On the third point, 'film nights' has

been replaced with 'meetings or any other means'.

Also, the first and second points have been broadened to include 'cultural heritage'.

In the fifty years since 1960 the NPA ACT has seen many of its initial goals realised. It took until 1984 for the establishment of Namadgi National Park to come about, but the Association has been very active throughout its existence in pursuing all of its stated aims and objectives. With ever increasing pressures on our natural areas and species coming from rising population, competing development, global warming, and the introduction of feral fauna and flora, as well as other issues yet to emerge, the need for an active and effective National Parks Association in the ACT will likely go on for ever.

**Annette Smith**



## The 1962 walk to Mt Kelly *(continued)*

*The second perspective on the 1962 Mt Kelly walk is presented by Alan Bagnall AM, recalling today the historic events of nearly 50 years ago.*

The Canberra Alpine Club (CAC), of which I am a member, has been leading bushwalks in the ACT and southern tablelands since its formation in 1934. I first started my bushwalking career in the mountains of southern ACT in 1950.

In the spring of 1962 with close friend and Club member John Cameron, I invited members of the National Parks Association to join us on a trip to Mt Kelly at the headwaters of Sams Creek on the southern border with NSW to show them the potential of the region as a national park. NPA members who accepted the invitation were Julie Henry, Fiona Brand and Bob Story.

In 1962 the access from the Boboyan Road (now Old Boboyan Road) up the Naas Creek valley was much easier than today, with the unlocked gates allowing us to drive virtually up to the tree line at the head of the valley. Initially we were walking through lightly timbered country which gradually changed to very thick *Daviesia*—up to head height. Fortunately the old bridle track used during the cattlemen days, linking Boboyan to Cotter Hut, was still reasonably visible with some sections being significantly ‘upgraded’ by the regular use by local brumbies.

Continuing on the bridle/brumby track we crossed over the low ridge that divides the Naas Creek and Sams Creek catchments, with Mt Gudgenby looming high above us. On dropping down on to Sams Creek we were surprised to discover a bushfire access track had been recently bulldozed along the banks of Sams Creek. This made for much improved walking conditions, though its impact on the environment left a little to be desired.

We pitched camp on a tributary to Sams Creek. John Cameron with his improvised ‘tea tree fishing rod’ and grasshopper bait was able to land two nice sized trout from the pool just below the camp site. These were a very pleasant addition to the evening meal. It was the first time I had met Bob Story



and that camp was the foundation of a very close friendship between us which extended over some 30 years of bushwalking.

Next morning we left camp and continued along the fire trail up to the side of Mt Kelly, from there it was good solid bush bashing to the summit. It was worth it, the weather was good and the view was outstanding. As Bob Story described it: ‘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’.

The Mt Kelly visitors’ book was signed to record the significance of the occasion. This book was placed here in 1957 on my CAC President’s Bushwalk. The metal container and box were made by a group of recently arrived Austrian migrants. Prof. Erwin Koch Emery, a member of the party, had encouraged them to come on the bushwalk to obtain an appreciation of the Australian bush. I replaced the book in 1982 but unfortunately the new book was left unboxed and was destroyed by the weather a few years later. The original book is held at the Namadgi Visitor Centre.

Our trip back to the cars was uneventful but in hindsight it was a great advantage to have been able to drive so far up the valley.



*NPA walkers on Mt Kelly more recently.*

*Above: Phil Gatenby, Stephen Johnston and Eric Pickering, 1997.*

*Top right: Phil Gatenby with Barbara Edgar in 2003.*

*Photos Max Lawrence*

Mt Kelly was selected as it is an excellent peak to view the Cotter valley and the rugged ACT skyline—Gudgenby in the SE, Scabby in the south, Murray, Bimberi to the west and the Brindabella Range continuing through to the north.

## Dream on ...

Despite its popularity with the members, the NPA was obviously disappointed with the lack of real progress in obtaining a national park after its **first 15 months**.

*It is obvious that to achieve our aims we shall have to continue working vigorously for some time yet.*

**(1960–61 Annual Report)**

In fact, it was the best part of **twenty five years** before we got the park, and the vigorous work still goes on, **another** twenty five years down the track.



# What is a ‘national park’?

If you don't know what a national park is, the following definitions and descriptions may help.

First, there is the definition used by NPA ACT in its 1963 submission to the government seeking the creation of a national park for the ACT:

*The expression “National Park” shall denote an area*

- (a) placed under public control, the boundaries of which shall not be altered nor any portion be capable of alienation except by the competent legislative authority.*
- (b) set aside for the benefit and enjoyment of the general public, as far as this is compatible with the propagation and protection of wild animals, and wild vegetation and the preservation of objects of aesthetic, geological, prehistoric, historic, archaeoological, or other scientific interest.*
- (c) in which the hunting, killing, or capture of fauna and the destruction or collection of flora are prohibited except under the control of the park authorities, and then only for bona fide scientific purposes.*

This is the definition accepted and supported by this Association.

In 1969 the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) declared a national park to be a relatively large area with particular defining characteristics. On the basis of the characteristics, a national park was deemed to be a place where:

- one or several ecosystems are not materially altered by human exploitation and occupation, where plant and animal species, geomorphological sites and habitats are of special scientific, educative and recreative interest or which contain a natural landscape of great beauty.*
- the highest competent authority of the country has taken steps to prevent or eliminate as soon as possible exploitation or occupation in the whole area and to enforce effectively the respect of ecological, geomorphological or aesthetic features which have led to its establishment.*
- visitors are allowed to enter, under special conditions, for inspirational, educative, cultural and recreative purposes.*

In 1971 the IUCN added further criteria:

- a minimum size of 1,000 hectares within zones in which protection of nature takes precedence*
- statutory legal protection*
- a budget and staff sufficient to provide sufficient effective protection*
- prohibition of exploitation of natural resources (including the development of dams) qualified by such activities as sport, fishing, the need for management, facilities, etc.*

Meanwhile the NPA Bulletin of October–November 1970 had provided, from the 4th Ministerial Conference on National Parks held in Melbourne in 1970, a definition that is generally accepted by the Park management agencies throughout Australia and New Zealand.

*A National Park is a relatively large area set aside for its features of predominantly unspoilt natural landscape, flora and fauna, permanently dedicated for public enjoyment, education and inspiration and protected from all interference other than essential management practices so that its natural attributes are preserved.*

The IUCN Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas in 1987 reviewed reserves around the world, and came up with a list of eight categories meeting different functions, one of which was national parks. National parks in this review were described as:

*... areas which contain representative samples of major natural regions, features and scenery of national or international significance and provide opportunities for outdoor recreation and tourism in natural settings to an urban population.*

The 1986 Management Plan for Namadgi National Park includes a definition from a 1984 paper by S. Barrett and L. Mitchell on ‘Nature conservation in the Australian Capital Territory’, published by the Conservation Council of the South-east Region and Canberra, Canberra. They identified national parks as ideally being land with the following characteristics:

*A relatively large area:*

- (a) where one or several ecosystems are not materially altered by human exploitation and occupation, where most of the area can be defined as wilderness, where plant and animal species, geomorphological features and cultural heritage sites are of special scientific, education and recreational interest, or which contains a landscape of great beauty;*
- (b) where steps have been taken to prevent or eliminate exploitation or occupation in the whole area and to protect the integrity of the ecological, geomorphological, cultural and aesthetic features which led to its establishment; and*
- (c) where visitor access and use are permitted under specified conditions, for inspirational, educational, cultural and recreational purposes.*

Regardless of the definition, it is the legislation and good management plans, and adequate funding for implementation of the plans, that matter.

**Annette Smith**



*Stone arrangements near the summit of Mount Namadgi.  
Photo Martin Chalk*





# And the winner is ...

*Richard Shine, was the winner of NPA ACT's schools essay competition in 1966. His winning essay, as published in the Canberra Times of 17 February 1968, is reproduced below.*

*He is now Professor Richard Shine, Professor of Evolutionary Biology at the University of Sydney. And he is guest speaker at the NPA's fiftieth anniversary meeting.*

## A.C.T. NATURE NOTES

### The red-bellied black snake

The black snake has been the most interesting of the number of snakes that I have had in captivity.

It is distributed along the east coast of Australia, but extends inland also from New South Wales southwards, always near water, usually in reedy areas. Swimming and diving come naturally, and it can remain under water for long periods.

It is common in the ACT, and along major rivers there are probably five to 10 black snakes per mile. Often, especially on the Murrumbidgee, there are more – near Kambah Pool I saw 5 in 250 yards. The Molonglo has fewer, probably because the river is badly polluted.

The black snake has a relatively small head not distinct from the neck. It is a shiny purplish black except on the belly, where the scales are pink to white, edged with black. The last pair of lateral scales adjoining the ventrals (“belly shields”) is crimson, and this heightens the general impression of a red belly. Most ACT specimens have a brown snout. This startling combination, which neglects camouflage and invites attention, probably serves as a warning.

After hibernating in any shelter it can find, the black snake mates in early summer and produces a brood of up to 20 live young from December to February. The young are about eight inches long at birth and are immediately capable of fending for themselves. The have slightly larger heads in proportion to body length than their parents, but are otherwise exactly similar. Few reach maturity – natural enemies, especially foxes and hawks, and a hostile environment from man-made hazards like the damming and pollution of watercourses, and man himself, combine to reduce their numbers. Some, however, manage to survive until they reach four to five feet, five feet being the usual ACT maximum. The record is 8 feet 4 ½ inches.



Food is mainly frogs, lizards, small snakes and birds, fish, and eels, but they will accept mice in captivity.

The snake is shy and, as noted by Eric Worrell, usually retires into reeds or undergrowth when alarmed. It will bite only when cornered or attacked. It flattens its body, hisses and feints, but its behaviour looks more threatening than it is. When caught it excretes a strong smelling fluid from the vent as a means of defence, but this ceases after a period in captivity. Several of my specimens have “sweated” a greyish-black urine through their skin when frightened – I have never seen this mentioned and am investigating.

The reptile authority D.R. McPhee writes of the rare blue-bellied black snake, “If captured ... this snake employs its tail as a secondary means of defence, and knotting the last few inches of this member it thumps it vigorously against its aggressor, creating the impression of another head attempting to bite”. I have observed several red-bellied blacks doing the same thing, but to my knowledge this has never been ascribed to the red-bellied species which is more common and more frequently kept in captivity than the blue-bellied.

The venom is mainly nerve affecting, but it acts to some extent on the blood as well. J.R. Kinghorn states that severe haemorrhage and shock are possible, but not more than one per cent of bites proves fatal.

**Richard Shine  
Schools Essay Competition  
June 1967**

**Provided by the National Parks  
Association of the ACT,  
Box 457, Canberra 2601**

## Earth widens

*loping  
through yellow box woodland  
crunching frost  
listening to birdsong –  
pardalotes rosellas magpies*

*walking  
slowly up the spur  
breathing hard  
and wondering—  
how long can I go for?*

*as I climb  
Earth widens beneath me ...  
the southerly  
wind grows colder ...  
I put on my fleece*

*out of the mist  
looms the hilltop ...  
pale ghosts  
of kangaroos ...  
brightness of rosellas*

*on the ridge  
great trees with presence  
standing still  
for three hundred years—  
Eucalyptus melliodora*

*the dark cloud  
slowly lifts  
and I see  
snow covered hills  
shining in distant sunlight.*

**Gerry Jacobson**



# NPA's fortieth to fiftieth anniversaries

The following article mainly details the period between NPA ACT's fortieth and fiftieth anniversaries: issues, activities and submissions.

[In this summary, NPA ACT is abbreviated to NPA.]

## Pre-2000 is covered in detail in the NPA Bulletin, 40th Anniversary Supplement, March 2000.

- 1960** Inaugural meeting at Institute of Anatomy: 1 March  
Annual General Meeting in June: draft constitution.
- 1979** Gudgenby Nature Reserve proclaimed: 26 April.
- 1984** Gazettal of Namadgi National Park: 3 October.
- 1991** Namadgi NP additions: Lower Cotter catchment, Mt Tennent/Blue Gum Creek, parts of Gibraltar Range.

## 2000

### Issues

- ACT Government's Nature Based Tourism Strategy for the ACT; accommodation proposal for Gudgenby Homestead; NPA discusses demolition vs retention and non-commercial use.

### Activities

- NPA celebrates its 40th anniversary.
- Matthew Higgins completes recording interviews for NPA's oral history; the Heritage Library and NPA each retain a copy.

### Submission

- Draft Lower Molonglo River Corridor Nature Reserve Management Plan.

## 2001

### Issues

- Wilderness Protection Plan for South East NSW includes Brindabella Areas 1 and 2, and additions to Bimberi, Deua and Coolangubra.
- Interim Namadgi Advisory Board established.
- 'Transgrid' clears down to bare earth under power lines in Brindabella and Namadgi National Parks.
- Liability insurance for walkers.

### Submissions

- On implementation plans for recommended actions in Murrumbidgee Corridor, Canberra Nature Park and Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve management plans, and Nature Based Tourism Strategy.

## 2002

### Issues

- NPA opposes Gudgenby Homestead upgrade.
- Indigenous wilderness interpretations.
- Publication of NPA's *Caring for Namadgi together*.

### Submission

- Monga National Park recreational concept plan.

## 2003

### Issue

- January bushfire: 90–95 per cent of Namadgi burnt.

### Activities

- Alpine advisory body proposed.
- Assessing tasks for NPA work parties: i.e. surveys, repair, regeneration, cleaning up.
- Commencement of monthly e-newsletter, *Burning issues*.
- Fire forum at ANU.

- The Canberra Spatial Plan Summit (11–12 June).
- NPA members attend Namadgi Management Plan Review Workshops.
- NPA web page created.
- Bushfire Regeneration Walk.

### Submissions

- ACT Recreation strategy.
- Inquiry into the Operational Response to the January Bushfires (MacLeod Inquiry): joint NPA and Council of the South East Region and Canberra (CCSERAC) submission.
- Study into the Future Uses of Non-Urban Bushfire Affected Areas.
- Draft ACT Lowland Woodland Conservation Strategy.
- Shaping our Territory: report after Non-Urban Study commissioned by ACT Government to provide advice on best pattern of future non-urban land use in the ACT after January 2003 fires.

## 2004

### Activities

- Twentieth anniversary celebration of gazettal of Namadgi National Park (NNP).
- Environment ACT conducts community workshop for Namadgi National Park Plan of Management.
- Third reprint of NPA's *Field guide to the native trees of the ACT* launched.
- NPA's publications working group formed.
- NPA's policies developed and discussed at three general meetings.
- First Great Australian Bushwalk (GAB).

### Submissions

- Draft plan for Alpine Resorts.
- Draft plan for Kosciuszko National Park (KNP).
- Draft Strategic Fire Access Plan.
- The ACT Lowland Woodland Conservation Strategy.
- Draft Strategic Bushfire Management Plan (SBMP) for the ACT (version 1).

## 2005

### Activities

- Belconnen Naval Transmission Station: protection of grassland.
- National Heritage List nomination of the Australian Alps for their natural values.
- NPA hosts National Parks Australia Council (NPAC) annual conference in Canberra.

### Submissions

- Perisher Village, KNP Development Application.
- ACT Lowland Native Grassland Conservation Strategy.
- Draft Budawangs Walking and Camping Strategy.
- Molonglo Valley Draft Structure Plan.

## 2006

### Issues

- Ecotourism proposal for Namadgi's wilderness areas.
- Environment ACT incorporated into Territory and Municipal Services (TAMS).
- Budget cuts to Namadgi and Canberra Nature Park's staff and resources.
- New *Land (Planning and Environment) Act*: open-ended criteria.

(continued next page)



## NPA's fortieth to fiftieth anniversaries *(continued)*

- Approval of new building adjacent to former Mt Franklin Chalet site without due process for public consultation.

### Activities

- NPA's symposium: *Caring for Namadgi—science and people*; Inaugural Amanda Carey award for best student presentation.
- Symposium proceedings published.

### Submissions

- Draft variation to Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve (TNR) Management Plan: camping proposal.
- Senate Committee inquiry into funding and resources for national parks.
- Draft Strategic Management Plan for the Lower (northern) Cotter Catchment (LCC); NPA advocates addition of LCC to Namadgi.
- Proposed changes to fire trails in the Grassy Creek area.
- NPA appears before Senate hearing into the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Amendment Bill.

## 2007

### Issue

- Proposed rerouting of Bicentennial trail along Grassy Creek.

### Activities

- Review of ACT Strategic Bushfire Management Plan.
- Launch of the second edition of the *Field guide to the native trees of the ACT*.
- NPA campaigns against Orroral and Stockyard Spur fire trails: Orroral fire trail not to proceed, modifications to Stockyard Spur plan.
- Group of NPA and NSW NPA members tour KNP with park management.

### Submissions

- Jerrabomberra Wetlands.
- Long Flat Fire Trail Diversion, Four Fire trails: Orroral Ridge, Stockyard Spur, Booth, and Bullen Ranges.

## 2008

### Activities

- NPA publishes Colin McAlister's monograph: *Twelve historic sites in the Glenburn and Burbong areas of the Kowen Forest, Australian Capital Territory*.
- Launch of NPA's publication *Field guide to the orchids of the Australian Capital Territory* by David Jones with Jean Egan and Tony Wood.
- NPA's symposium: *Corridors for survival in a changing world*; publication of symposium proceedings.
- Gudgenby Bush Regeneration Group celebrates 10th anniversary.
- NPA co-sponsors European Wasp Workshop at Namadgi Visitor Centre with Parks, Conservation and Lands (PCL).
- NPA wins Conservation Council 'Local Hero' award.
- Australian Alps National Parks, including Namadgi, added to the National Heritage List.
- Stockyard Spur fire trail proposal review.

### Submissions and proposals

- Brindabella Fire Management Strategy.
- NNP Draft Plan of Management (PoM).
- Second submission on the Namadgi PoM.



*An ABC television team interviewing NPA President, Christine Goonrey, in 2007. The issue? A proposal to construct a substantial new fire trail along this ridge.*

*Photo Adrienne Nicholson*

- Role of the Commissioner of Sustainability and the Environment.
- Draft KNP Horse Management Plan.
- Importation of Savannah cats.
- NSW Taskforce on Tourism and National Parks.

## 2009

### Issues

- National parks 'must pay their own way': tourism and development pressures.
- Re-emphasising nature conservation and wilderness protection in national parks.

### Activities

- 'Linking landscapes' summit: landscape connectivity in response to climate change.
- NPA celebrates 25th anniversary of gazettal of Namadgi National Park.
- NPA proposes a northern ACT national park for Canberra's 100th anniversary.

### Submissions

- Joint Canberra Ornithological Group (COG)/NPA letter on the 2009 Budget.
- Tidbinbilla PoM Discussion Paper.
- Kangaroo Management Strategy.
- Victorian Fires Royal Commission.
- Australia's Biodiversity Conservation Strategy.
- Report on the consultations for the development of a revised SBMP.
- Mt Franklin Fire Trail Upgrade Environmental Impact Statement.

## 2010

### Issues

- National Orienteering Championships near Gudgenby Homestead: up to 1 000 participants.

### Activities

- NPA's 50th anniversary, celebrations through the year.
- Publication and launch of special tribute edition of Nancy T. Burbidge's *Eyes or no eyes*.

**Judy Kelly**

# Sub-committees and submissions: the first forty years

The chief aims of the National Parks Association of the Australian Capital Territory (NPA ACT) were briefly stated in its first annual report in 1961 as:

*The establishment of floral and faunal reserves, the protection of the natural beauties of the ACT, the encouragement of interest in such features and an interest in the provision of outdoor recreation areas other than play grounds and games areas within the city area.*

This was an interesting statement since the NPA ACT was formed to secure a national park for the ACT. But right from the beginning, the Association had a far wider vision and sought the establishment and protection of reserves around the ACT even before its landmark submission to the government in 1963 for a national park.

Only a few months after it was formed, the new NPA in November 1960 submitted a proposal to the National Capital Development Commission for a wilderness area in the Upper Cotter, a faunal reserve at Tidbinbilla, holding of areas in southern ACT for a future national park, and the reservation of Molonglo Gorge and other geological sites of importance.

Special activity groups soon formed. An *outings group* commenced in 1960 and the newsletters of the 1960–63 period were produced by an editor, with a full bimonthly *Bulletin* from 1963.

In February 1962, the *Mt Kelly sub-committee* was formed to investigate that area's suitability for the national park. This resulted in a major submission to the government in June 1963, for the Mt Kelly area to be created as a national park. This was the first of many submissions on the subject over the next 20 years, emanating from the Mt Kelly and (from 1979) Gudgenby sub-committees.

During the early 1960s the main committee produced submissions for nature reserves at Molonglo Gorge, Gibraltar Falls and the Ginini Wetlands.

From 1964, an honorary librarian was appointed, together with a publicity officer. The publicity officer continued until 1971 when a publicity sub-committee was formed.

The education arm of the NPA was active from as early as 1961, but it wasn't until 1970 that actual sub-committees were formed to organise children's films and competitions; these later merged as the *Student Activities Committee*.

## Outings and *Bulletin* sub-committees established in 1971

A new emphasis on sub-committees led in 1971 to the outings and editorial functions being upgraded to full *Outings* and *Bulletin* sub-committees. These sub-committees have continued to this day.



*Drop-log fence remnants, southern Namadgi. Photo Martin Chalk*

In the early '70s, special sub-committees were formed to respond to specific issues. The *Black Mountain sub-committee* wrote a strong submission against Telecom Australia [now Telstra] building a large tower with an access road on Black Mountain, and another to have Black Mountain declared a reserve. It was merged with the *Mt Ainslie sub-committee* to form the *City District Reserves sub-committee* the following

year. Other short-lived sub-committees were formed to look at legislation and the NPA constitution.

During the mid-70s the *Conservation sub-committee* was concentrating on lobbying on ACT issues: Molonglo Parkway; Black Mountain Reserve; Ainslie–Majura Reserve; Murrumbidgee Corridor; bicycle tracks; and a Tennent Dam proposal. The *Mt Kelly sub-committee* worked on issues that would eventually lead to the establishment of Gudgenby Nature Reserve and then Namadgi National Park.

By the late 1970s, the sub-committees were commenting on environmental impact statements and draft plans of management for many areas within the ACT, Kosciuszko, Jervis Bay and even Kakadu National Park, as well as preparing submissions on other environmental issues.

A *Membership sub-committee* existed from 1974 to 1981, but membership remained static at a little over 300 during that period.

The *Display sub-committee* was created in 1973. From 1982 until the mid 1990s it and its successors were very active at environment fairs, putting on annual Heritage Week displays and walks, and participating in 'Life—Be In It' and 'ACT Alive' as well as organising poster and essay competitions for school students. The *Media sub-committee* ran for two years from 1980, and the *Publicity and Education sub-committee* was formed in 1985.

On the environment front there were continuing submissions throughout the early 1980s on issues including the future of the Honeysuckle Creek and Orroral tracking stations, opposing the proposed Corin Road ski complex, the continuation of grazing in Orroral Valley, and supporting the proposed extensions to the Gudgenby Nature Reserve (including Smokers Gap, Blue Gum Creek and the Honeysuckle Creek valley).

*(continued next page)*



# Sub-committees and submissions: the first forty years *(continued)*

## The golden age from 1984

The decade from 1984 was golden: the Namadgi National Park was declared; membership soared to around 700 from the mid '80s into the '90s. The priority was to see that the new park was well managed into the future.

Ross Carlton, who became president in 1984, set about establishing new sub-committees: *Namadgi*; *Environment*; and *Publicity and Education* in addition to the existing *Bulletin* and *Outings* sub-committees. Another, *Finance and Membership*, was formed to review procedures for the maintenance of membership records. The growing book sales arm of the Association led to the formation of a succession of sub-committees with Finance, Marketing, Merchandise and Sales in their titles, indicative of a new direction for the Association to promote its own publications. The *Field guide to native trees of the ACT* was first published in 1983 and a series of reprints and related titles by other authors followed.

The *Namadgi* and *Environment sub-committees* were extremely active, sometimes with more than 15 people attending their monthly meetings, assisting in writing submissions and supporting the part-time research officers which the NPA was able to employ throughout the 1990s. Their submissions were directed through the NPA committee, and a selection of their work is outlined below, just to give some idea of their activity.

### *Environment sub-committee*

After self-government in 1988, the new ACT Government set about formulating a Territory Plan and creating land-use legislation for the ACT. From the late 1980s, this kept the Environment sub-committee busy, examining and responding to the draft plans and legislation.

In 1992, their submissions to both the ACT and federal governments emphasised the need to give greater priority to environmental values in the ACT. The ACT's revised draft Territory Plan made extensive changes in line with the NPA submission.

Over the next few years there were submissions on the National Capital Plan, the ACT Government's environmental policy, and a substantial submission on the draft land-use



Snow has fallen on Mt Gingera,  
settled into the tracks  
we trod last week;  
gathering between the snow gums  
and turning the rocks ice-white.

Birds were flying down the high ridges  
when we were there,  
remember?  
and when we turned to look back  
mist had covered the path behind us.

Now the crickets' busy song is stilled and  
snow grass bends beneath its winter load;  
the mountain is left to its own  
wild dreaming.

**Christine Goonrey**

legislation for the ACT, concentrating on environmental and heritage issues and matters affecting national parks and nature reserves.

NPA had a special interest in the Mulligans Flat area and commissioned Kevin Frawley to examine the issues. His report, *The conservation of remnant woodland and native grassland in the ACT*, was launched in 1990. It led to a proposal from conservation groups including the NPA for the creation of Mulligans Flat as a nature reserve. As a result of this submission Mulligans Flat Reserve was included in the Canberra Nature Park when it was declared in 1994. Into the late 1990s, NPA continued with submissions for improvements to the management plan for Canberra Nature Park.

In 1991, and again in 1993, the NPA lodged submissions emphasising the value of rural leases in protecting grassland habitats and, in 1999, responded to the report on Land Management Agreements for ACT rural leases.

Following the declaration of Jervis Bay National Park in 1992, NPA lodged a comprehensive submission supporting

the creation of a marine national park with a land component that could be properly managed to protect the water component. It later lodged submissions on the Jervis Bay Territory Draft Management Strategy Plan and against military armaments and exercises in the environmentally sensitive areas.

During the 1990s, there were submissions for the creation of the Murrumbidgee River Corridor, then on draft management plans for it and the Molonglo River Corridor in 1996. Changes to the boundaries of the Murrumbidgee and Molonglo River corridors occupied much of the time of the Environment sub-committee and its research assistant through to 2000.

Water-related submissions abounded in the 1990s, with one on the Lower Molonglo Water Quality Control Centre in 1993, ACTEW's water strategy in 1994, the draft Water Resources Management Plan for the ACT in 1999 and 2000, and the draft Environmental Flow Guidelines in 1999.

In 1993 and in 1995 the Environment sub-committee lodged submissions on the future development of the Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve. The ACT Government's ecotourism plan, released in 1994, and the NPA's submission in response to this plan, was summarised in the September 1994 issue of the *NPA Bulletin*. Again in 1997, Tidbinbilla was in the spotlight and NPA joined with the Conservation Council of the South-East Region and Canberra to respond to the Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve Draft Management Plan. It again raised particular concern over the nature-based tourism strategy's influence on the plan.

In 1994 the committee submitted comments on *'Our bush capital, protecting and managing the National Capital's open spaces'*. They also contributed to the draft of the first *State of the Environment* report by the Commissioner for the Environment in the ACT in 1994.

Also in 1994, the Environment sub-committee worked on a 'statement of principles and action', noting that the NPA ACT should maintain a proactive approach to nature conservation (see *NPA Bulletin* of June 1995).

In 1999, with the merging of the Environment and Namadgi sub-committees, there were submissions on

*(continued on page 14)*



# Into the new millennium: new challenges



What emerges strongly from the 2000–2010 time line (see pages 10 and 11) are the fires, their impact on the natural environment, and their ripple effect: fire management and fire trails, the number of submissions that resulted, work parties, and the countless hours that NPA ACT volunteers contributed.

Two points that are easy to overlook are the significance of *Caring for Namadgi together* and the long delay in finalising the revised Plan of Management for Namadgi National Park, which might be launched in May 2010.

## ***Caring for Namadgi together***

NPA ACT's Environment Sub-committee, under the leadership of Eleanor Stodart and Clive Hurlstone, produced *Caring for Namadgi together* in 2002

with a grant from Environment ACT. It is a seminal document, concise and comprehensive, reporting on the 1986 Namadgi Plan of Management. Its value is that it is one of the few user-friendly references to Namadgi covering the wide spectrum of natural and cultural values, in a publication that isn't overwhelmingly big or convoluted.

It also provided a valuable basis from which NPA ACT formulated its policies in 2003–04.

The document's main sections are: Planning process; Values of the park, including flora and fauna; Management; Main recommendations; References; and Appendices.

Many of the recommendations have a depressing permanency about them and have been repeated in many submissions

*The day before—Brindabella Range and MacIntyres Hut fires viewed from the Mt Taylor car park, evening of 17 January 2003. Photo Max Lawrence*

relating to Namadgi, nature reserves, and other national parks:

- *Protecting biodiversity is a long term commitment that requires talented and experienced staff that need to be respected and retained, so their depth of talent can be fully utilised;*
- *Recognition, appreciation and protection of the natural values of Namadgi National Park must constitute the core objective driving Namadgi's Plan of Management;*
- *Management needs to build a sound knowledge base, including*

*(continued next page)*

## **Sub-committees and submissions: the first forty years** *(continued from page 13)*

the draft management plans for Ginini Flats Wetlands, Morton and Budawang National Parks, and the draft Alpine Strategy.

### ***The Namadgi sub-committee***

A submission to the government's plan of management for Namadgi was an initial task of the Namadgi sub-committee, with a further submission in response to the final management plan in 1986. The administrative arrangements for Namadgi also took up much time, with the sub-committee members meeting regularly with government officials. NPA put a strong case for extensions to Namadgi and, in 1990, the Lower Cotter Catchment, Mount Tennent/Blue Gum Creek and part of the Gibraltar Creek valley and Gibraltar Range were added.

The prospect of the Boboyan Pine Plantation being replanted after bushfires in 1983 dismayed the NPA and the government agreed to its plan to remove the pines and rehabilitate the area. This was a major achievement.

A long-running project was the restoration of the Orroral Homestead, which commenced in 1981 and was completed in 1997. Construction of a boardwalk was also undertaken, but NPA opposed the proposal for recreational

development in the Orroral Valley. The sub-committee did support the conservation of the Tennent farm complex.

The sub-committee supported the development of the Yerrabi Walking Track in 1987 and the subsequent nature notes, and also the Australian Alps Walking Track stages through Namadgi.

The sub-committee's 1995 submission on the government's capital works program emphasised that provision of camping sites needed to be environmentally sound, and not just a response to demand. In 1995 the NPA responded vigorously to a proposal that management of Namadgi might be let to interests outside the ACT, and ecotourism that might compromise the wilderness would be allowed. In 1999 NPA opposed plans to develop Gudgenby precinct as an eco-tourist centre and argued that, instead, the ecological resources of the area should be upgraded.

In 1999 the Namadgi and Environment sub-committees were merged into one *Environment sub-committee*.

### **Namadgi National Park Plan of Management**

Since the mid 1990s, the NPA has

repeatedly expressed its concern that the Plan of Management for Namadgi National Park has not been updated. This situation makes difficult a proper assessment of, and effective responses to, issues like ecotourism and other planning and development proposals in the national park. It took 24 years to have the Namadgi National Park declared. This year we celebrate NPA ACT's 50th anniversary. It is also the Namadgi Plan of Management's 25th anniversary, not something to celebrate. We hope that the long gestation of the 'new' draft plan will end soon.

### **Sub-committees and the ongoing role of the NPA**

As much as anything, the work of the sub-committees illustrates that the NPA is not the *Namadgi National Park Association*, but an organisation that plays a role in protecting and promoting the values of natural places, especially in, but not restricted to, the ACT—helping people to realise the importance of these precious assets.

**Annette Smith**



## Into the new millennium: new challenges *(continued)*

*species lists, and lists of the values being protected and of threatening and enhancing processes.*

[Caring for Namadgi together, p.47]

A large part is devoted to feral pests, with recommendations for their management. Little mention is made of climate change which, in 2002, was only slowly gaining recognition. Perhaps it is time for a revised *Caring for Namadgi together*, incorporating recommendations for adapting to climate change and new research included in the symposium proceedings for 2006, 2008 and May 2010.



### NAMADGI

#### Your Granite Tors

They were always there ... we knew,  
Along the ridges and atop your peaks,  
Those jumbled piles of granite  
Beneath their blue bush blanket.

BUT—

It took a mighty conflagration,  
Your cover to consume  
And thus reveal  
Their full bold beauty.

Beauty of block stack; crafted with care;  
Tall mystic standing stones, and  
Blasted free, scattered round your feet  
Sharp gritty shards, or—

*In situ—*

Jigsaws of fragile fragments.

We explore with awe  
Yet sense some vague urgency  
For already these treasures  
The bush re-wraps.

Judith Webster

### Government environment agencies under-funded

Implementing recommendations requires appropriate funding for staff and equipment. With the ACT Government's budget cuts, NPA ACT's position has been that Parks, Conservation and Lands (PCL), which was absorbed into Municipal Services at one stage (!), has not overspent but has been under-funded and cannot adequately fulfil its obligations. What price the environment?

Submissions were invited in 2005 to the review of the 1986 Plan of Management for Namadgi. There were many delays, and a peculiar twist where the public was invited to comment on the modified draft plan in 2008 without having access to the entire draft plan. Only after the Greens tabled a motion in the Assembly could NPA ACT see the amendments in context.

Subsequently, one committee member astutely observed that a table showing upper limits to the numbers of participants in recreational events to be held in Namadgi had disappeared from the appendix of the amended 2007 draft. Always scrutinise appendices! Showing a similarity to the Cheshire Cat in *Alice in wonderland*, the table reappeared after NPA ACT had written to the Chief Minister, but without the upper limits to participant numbers.

At the time of writing, the Namadgi Plan of Management being used is the 1986 version. We have been waiting for 24 years for a revised plan which should be incorporating, at the very least, measures to meet the challenges of climate change.

### Environment ministers are challenging the principles of conservation

Environment ministers, both state and federal, are

challenging the principles of conservation and of minimum impact recreation in national parks. They are responding to expanding urban populations and those who have greater spending power to buy 4WDs, trail bikes, power boats, dune buggies, horses and mountain bikes; many recreationalists are demanding greater access to national parks. Others want adventure holidays with luxury accommodation. Recreation is becoming high tech, high impact and often noisy. The economy fluctuates but, in a resource-rich country, the environment doesn't get high priority.

### The pressures have reached Namadgi

Environment ministers say that national parks must pay their own way and be more accessible, incorporating development and tourism, much of it upmarket. NPA ACT opposed the low-key accommodation proposal for Gudgenby Homestead in 2000 because of the impacts of the sewerage system on the area's aquatic ecology. Increased traffic and a road upgrade would affect wildlife. Parking provisions would disturb Aboriginal sites and rubbish disposal would be another consideration.

Over time, pressure would inevitably grow to upgrade the Homestead's accommodation to a more sophisticated level, leading to effects similar to those evident at the expanding resorts in Kosciuszko National Park: overloaded sewerage systems polluting watercourses; parking lots and ski runs encroaching on wildlife habitat; feral cat and rodent numbers increasing near the resorts, which also become alternative food sources for native fauna. NPA ACT recommends that accommodation be built outside national parks, not within them.

At the moment, Gudgenby Homestead is used as a rangers' residence, with a works depot on site. This ensures an official presence in the southern part of the park.

In 1980, NPA ACT 'donated' \$50 to the Kosciusko Committee's fund to keep Kosciusko (*sic*) National Park free from over-development by commercial interests' (NPA *Bulletin*, Vol. 17, No. 3, March 1980). Fifty dollars against Kerry Packer and Transfield Holdings' millions invested in the Perisher-Blue Cow resort. A real David and Goliath contest. (You too can search through the hundreds of *Bulletins* published over the years by accessing our website [www.npaact.org.au](http://www.npaact.org.au))

*(continued on page 16)*



## Into the new millennium: new challenges *(continued from page 15)*

### Two-thousand pounding feet: what environmental impact?

There is a large-scale national orienteering event with 1 000 participants scheduled for Easter 2010 near Gudgenby Homestead. What's wrong with that? Orienteers aren't high tech and are entitled to enjoy the environment in their own way. Sure, but not in such large numbers.

In the NPA *Bulletin* of December 2009 (Vol. 46, No. 4, President Christine Goonrey wrote (p. 3):

*NPA ACT is concerned that the number of participants competing in this off-track event will disturb and possibly endanger wildlife, including birds preparing to migrate; small mammals preparing for winter; and lizards and other reptiles which inhabit the rocky outcrops and rock surfaces of the valley and surrounding hills. Participants will trample and destroy grass, small forbs, lichen and mosses on soils and rocks already stressed by years of drought. Runners will damage considerable areas of vegetation as they traverse the eighteen different courses set up into the granite hills above the homestead.*

*A number of Aboriginal sites in the area are at risk of damage, even if only from competitors who get lost. The European heritage of Gudgenby Homestead, Gudgenby Cottage, associated building and landscape value is also being ignored.*

The damage inflicted by car parking and traffic on the fragile grassland around the homestead, along with the installation of portable catering, event management and toilet facilities is of concern, as is the potential for the spread and dispersal of weeds. Have you ever noticed how seeds and burrs stick to your

socks and clothes after a walk? Hawkweed, a member of the daisy family is highly invasive and already in Namadgi.

### Fire management: long, hard negotiations

The aftermath of the 2003 fires brought controversy, opposing viewpoints about fire management and suppression, and a plethora of draft plans and development applications.

The Association was disappointed that it wasn't asked to provide a representative to present an ecological perspective on fire management to the MacLeod Report.

NPA ACT President Christine Goonrey subsequently became the Conservation Council of the ACT's representative on the Rural Fire Service Board and informed NPA about fire-management developments.

NPA ACT supports rapid response aerial bombardment and light equipment to combat fires in the rugged subalpine areas of the Brindabellas, Stockyard Spur and other areas of Namadgi. Tankers and floats, which are cumbersome and slow in rugged terrain, require turning circles, and roads or fire trails often have to be widened to accommodate them. The Association also supports controlled mosaic burning based on vegetation types, taking into account different plant sensitivities and their individual requirements for the appropriate fire intervals needed to ensure their survival.

Specialists in fire and its management at our general meetings and at the 2006 symposium spoke of the complexities of fire behaviour and the need for control measures to take into account temperature, fire intensity and speed, wind direction and strength. They spoke of the different types of fires, whether grassland or canopy, and how conditions can change rapidly.

All this information was valuable in responding to four new fire-trail proposals:

NPA ACT accepted two, one for the Booth Range, east of the Boboyan Road, and one on the Bullen Range running parallel to the Murrum-

bidgee, with reservations and provisos. The Association opposed the two that would cause substantial damage: along Orroral Ridge, with its magnificent granite boulders, and up steep Stockyard Spur between Corin Dam and the Mt Franklin Road, through subalpine and alpine country.

### A win on Orroral Ridge

The Orroral Ridge proposal was withdrawn after NPA ACT's successful campaign which involved media releases and Christine Goonrey's appearance on ABC TV's *Stateline* program on 4 May 2007 with NPA ACT members shown walking between the Ridge's egg- and mushroom-shaped rocks and tunnels.

The original proposal for the steep Stockyard Spur fire trail from Corin Dam would have been extremely expensive and caused considerable damage and erosion to watercourses and gullies draining into Canberra's water supply.

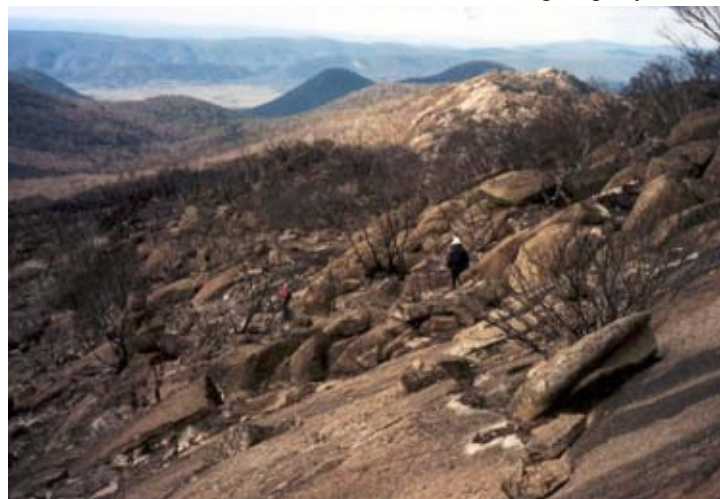
When this proposal was ruled out, concerns still existed about the alternative of widening the existing walking track and fire trail junction to provide a turning circle of 30 metres, and the prospect of frequent prescribed burns of alpine vegetation.

After members had accompanied PCL staff on a walk up Stockyard Spur in July 2009, PCL agreed to modifications— at the top of the spur the fire trail would be re-routed to avoid certain granite outcrops and vegetation stands— but concerns remain, as with the widening of the Mt Franklin Road.

Last in the list of fire topics is the Strategic Bushfire Management Plan (SBMP), which Dr Margaret Kitchin (Senior Forest Ecologist, PCL) and Dylan Kendall (Senior Management Officer, PCL) collaborated on and made a presentation on at the NPA general meeting in October 2009. Beforehand, Martin Chalk and Clive Hurlstone attended public meetings on the SBMP. Several committee members attended a workshop where Margaret and Dylan outlined details of the components and construction of the plan.

By its nature the plan is of dizzying complexity. It comprises three levels: the SBMP sits at the top, the Regional Fire Plans are just below and the annual Bushfire Operational Plans on the third level of the hierarchy. Martin Chalk expanded on the details in his article

*(continued next page)*



*Burnt offerings—the view from Mt Kelly towards Gudgenby, June 2003. Photo Max Lawrence*





# Into the new millennium: new challenges *(continued)*

'Developing regional fire plans for the ACT' in the *NPA Bulletin*, Vol. 46, No. 4 (December 2009).

## NPA ACT: custodian and friend of the environment

NPA ACT is Namadgi's guardian. The Association also keeps a watching brief on Canberra Nature Park and the city's open spaces. The watching brief involves leading walks to nature reserves: Rob Roy, the Molonglo Valley, Gorooyarroo and Mulligans Flat. Col McAlister has led walks to the historic sites that he's researched and described in his NPA ACT monograph, *Twelve historic sites in the Glenburn and Burbong areas of the Kowen Forest, Australian Capital Territory*.

Individual members follow their particular interests in fungi, plants or birds and regularly visit their favourite areas, becoming very familiar with them. They can notice and report damage or vandalism during their forays. Adrienne Nicholson knows many hiding places on Black Mountain where orchids lie low and camouflage themselves. On one occasion, she took action after being told about soil disturbance from a truck driven by electrical sub-contract crew checking powerlines; she informed members at a general meeting and reported the damage to PCL staff who took action.

The Association's links with the Black Mountain Spring Walk that Nancy Burbidge initiated, and George Chippendale took over with Laurie Adams, are fading as NPA ACT leaders retire. The Australian Native Plant Society, and the Friends of the Australian National Botanic Gardens, with Jean Geue, and the University of the Third Age, with which George was also associated, now have greater involvement.

## Impact of the GDE

Construction of the Gungahlin Drive Extension (GDE) in 2004-05 has had massive impacts on Black Mountain Reserve. Environmental legislation was amended to allow the north-western part of the reserve to be excised for construction; the ACT Government authorised contractors to kill native birds or animals caught in the path of the roadworks. Resident Boobook Owls (which Jerry Olsen from the University of Canberra had been studying for 12 years) disappeared when their territory was

fragmented with the uprooting of their three known nesting trees. Their night calls could be heard for months in the neighbouring suburb of Aranda as they battled for new territories.

Jerry gave a very sobering and poignant talk at one of NPA ACT's general meetings about the Boobook Owl's habits, requirements, fate and dismal future.

Syd Comfort alerted members about the Canberra Spatial Plan, 'Shaping our Territory' and impending developments in the Molonglo Valley (*NPA Bulletin*, Vol. 46, No. 1, March 2009), while Esther Gallant led subsequent walks to the Lower Molonglo and Kama woodlands. Esther is keeping a watchful eye on a wedge-tailed eagle family raising two chicks, and reports on developments in this *Bulletin*.

## Concern for Tidbinbilla

From early days, NPA ACT has been involved with Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve: Nancy Burbidge and Robert Story made recommendations when the reserve was being formed. As the reserve recovers from the 2003 fires, the ACT Government is now strongly promoting it as a tourist attraction and has invested significant funding in its new infrastructure, volunteer training, ranger-led walks and promotion. *Where is the investment in protecting Namadgi National Park and having rangers to interpret the natural wonders along the Yerrabi Track or Square Rock Track?*

NPA ACT stated its viewpoints and recommendations in its submission responding to the Tidbinbilla Plan of Management Discussion Paper in February 2009.

## Wetlands: one supported, one threatened

While wetlands are being developed in Tidbinbilla, the Jerrabomberra Wetlands are facing damage from electricity infrastructure development. A substation will be built



*Burnt bog, Sams Creek, June 2003. Photo Max Lawrence*

near the Fyshwick sewage ponds, in an area that is one of Canberra's top bird-watching spots. Two kilometres of overhead power lines will also be installed.

The first page of NPA ACT's submission on Jerrabomberra Wetlands (2 April 2007) states:

*Despite being primarily an artificial creation the Jerrabomberra Wetlands have become a significant habitat for a range of native species and in particular migratory water birds. Its importance is highlighted in the recently released global review entitled 'Waterbirds of the world' a key message of which was that 'waterbirds are being sidelined by economic development. Too few conservation measures are currently being undertaken for globally threatened species'.*

Despite evidence about the value of the Jerrabomberra Wetlands, both the Federal and ACT governments have approved the work.

*(continued on page 18)*



*Early signs of recovery, Bogong Gap, June 2003. Photo Max Lawrence*

# The NPA *Bulletin* of today—forty-seven years in the making

Since the first issue of the *Bulletin* was produced in 1963, the editors have striven to produce an interesting and informative publication for members. It has been an ongoing effort by many people, adapting to meet the needs of the membership and to master new technologies.

In the 1960s, just getting the articles typed was a challenge. Whilst Nancy Burbidge, the powerhouse behind the infant NPA ACT and the Association's first secretary, could type, when Fiona Brand became secretary in 1962 and Nancy became president, Fiona found herself with letters to write and a

newsletter, and later the *Bulletin*, to produce even though she couldn't type. At that stage the *Bulletin* was copied onto A4 paper using a Roneo machine, then stapled and folded. Addresses were handwritten.

Fiona prevailed on a friend to draw the possum which was used on the cover from the fourth issue in October 1963.

One advantage of this simple *Bulletin* was that it was cheap enough to distribute freely to friends and contacts who might be interested in the meetings, outings or the movement for the national park. As Fiona said 'it was a big job in those first few years'.

## A new look

In June 1971 the *Bulletin* took on a 'new look' with a cover incorporating the NPA ACT logo on an outline of the ACT. This design continued until 1974 when Brian Lee became editor and the cover feature was changed to a stylized water, tree and mountain image. The same cover was used when Bruce Ward became editor in late 1974, and Norm and Jenny Morrison continued using this cover when they took over a year later.

Reg Alder took over mid 1978. He attacked the job with gusto and greatly enlarged the content and size of the

*(continued next page)*

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## Into the new millennium: new challenges *(continued from page 17)*

### EPBC review ignores climate change

Perhaps one of the mightiest of all submissions was that of the Conservation Council ACT Region's (ConsACT) to the *Independent Review of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC) 1999*, the centrepiece of federal environmental legislation. Because NPA ACT is a member of ConsACT, this submission (19 December 2008) reflects the Association's stand. Three statements in the introductory summary (pp. 2, 3) are especially significant:

*The referral process needs ... to allow for ... more stringent assessment and greater compliance monitoring ...*

*There is simply too much Ministerial discretion ... , and*

*The glaring omission of climate change as a matter of national environmental significance and the inability of the Act to contribute in the response to climate change remains a serious shortcoming.*

### The kangaroo cull

Despite the heavy commitments of its members, NPA ACT still had time for lively discussion about the official culling of kangaroos. The majority of members supported the cull because of the ecological impact the Eastern Grey Kangaroo was having on the threatened native grassland at Majura.

Talking about kangaroo numbers leads to thoughts of other species' numbers. The committee had debated the possibility of a population policy and its

wording, both of which involved intense discussion. The debate continues.

### 2010: a 'one in fifty year'

As well as working hard, NPA ACT knows how to celebrate. With 2010 marking the Association's 50th anniversary, several events have been planned for the year, starting with the celebration on 1 March, the date of the inaugural meeting of NPA ACT in 1960. This was held in the theatre at the then Institute of Anatomy, now the National Film and Sound Archive. For 50 years members have worked voluntarily in many ways towards having a *national park for the national capital* established, protected and nurtured.

As already related here, members have also volunteered their energy and commitment to Canberra's nature park and to areas outside the ACT. NPA's latest project is a proposal for a northern ACT national park, incorporating Mulligans Flat, Goorooyarroo, Mt Majura and Mt Ainslie, to celebrate Canberra's 100th birthday in 2013 (see *NPA Bulletin*, June 2009, p 4).

Every member is welcome to come to one, some, or all of the events that the Association has planned to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary.

If you want to practise your skills of reasoning, deducing and debating, forget Sudoku and join the committee or a sub-committee. As you wade through Plans of Management, contribute inspirational ideas, plan work parties or walks, or work in the office, you'll learn a great deal about the environment and conservation.

You'll meet people around the committee table who use their culinary skills to maintain committee members' energy most deliciously. You can choose between wine and clean water—is the latter becoming an ever more precious commodity?

As for NPA ACT itself, what do **you**, NPA, want for **your** fiftieth birthday, besides champagne, cake and catching up with friends?

The answer might be:

*A Namadgi Plan of Management that recognises the recommendations that have been repeated constantly in submissions, where the natural and cultural environment is given the top priority and respect it deserves;*

*That the environment portfolio be funded appropriately with resources to research the effects of climate change and make provision for them;*

*A table of events with participant numbers that are limited to protect fragile ecosystems and is strictly adhered to; and*

*The same for the Canberra Nature Park And continuing good health well into the future.*

**Judy Kelly**



# The NPA *Bulletin* of today—forty-seven years in the making *(continued)*

*Bulletin*, but not without some challenges.

## **Bigger issues**

In his oral history interview with Matthew Higgins in 1999 *Bulletin* editor Reg Alder recounted the problems of finding a suitable typist:

*I increased the size of the Bulletin. I think I had trouble with the typists because one couldn't cope with the amount of stuff that needed to be typed so I had to go to another lady but they had different size fonts in their typewriters, it was a 10 and 12, and that created a bit of a problem. I didn't want to have two different sizes of types in the one issue and so I experimented with one issue by reducing type to all one size by having different length lines of text and then reducing it on a photocopier. That created quite a bit of scream from a lot of people because they reckoned the type was too small but actually the type was the same size as a newspaper font but I gave that up. So I then found a lady, quite near, who was doing typesetting and she had a Remington machine which could right justify and gave a nice clear font but she didn't have any range of capitals, apart from the normal range on the machine. She did it quite cheaply and then suddenly she went and upped her price. So I took the pink pages and found another lady down in Macgregor and she had a bigger range on her machine but I didn't go for any fancy heading types because that was going to cost quite a bit more money."*

## **Controlling costs**

Printing was a challenge during the six years Reg edited the *Bulletin*. He was very keen to include photographs on the cover and inside the *Bulletin* but also determined to keep cost to a minimum. By 1984, his task was huge and eventually others rallied to assist him. A team under Babette Scougall took over producing the *Bulletin* for the special 'Namadgi issue' in September 1984 to celebrate the declaration of Namadgi National Park. The team approach continued under Margus Karilaid who took over in September 1985. When he stood down a year later, 'the team' produced more issues of the *Bulletin* before Judith Simondson took over for the March 1986 issue to December 1988.

## **Outsourcing**

Changes became necessary as it was more and more difficult for NPA members to produce the *Bulletin*. The Committee reviewed the situation and produced a substantial 'NPA *Bulletin* Policy' document which was adopted in February 1989. One outcome of the review was the decision to appoint a paid editor. Green Words was awarded the tender to produce the *Bulletin* from 1989, paid for in part by an ACT Community Development grant. Members had only to leave their contributions at the office, or deliver them to the editor Roger Green. From December 1989 it was produced on recycled paper, and from 1992 to the end of 1996 funding came from ACT Heritage Grants.

Effective though this system was, there was a feeling within the membership that they had lost ownership of their own *Bulletin*. The ACT Government's Environment Grants program replaced the Heritage Grants in 1995–96 but that source of funding dried up at the end of 1996 when the ACT Environment Grants were restricted to environmental projects. From then on financing the *Bulletin* became an issue, although occasional assistance was still available through other project grants.

## **Back to in-house – the Bulletin Working Group**

A *Bulletin* Working Group was formed, with Syd Comfort as convener and Graeme Wicks on the editorial committee. With assistance from Green Words, starting with the March 1997 issue, the *Bulletin* Working Group was able to take more and more responsibility for preparation of the *Bulletin* and reduced the cost to the Association.

By the end of the 1998–99 financial year all government funding had ceased. In the circumstance, the quality of the 40th Anniversary Supplement in March 2000 is a tremendous testament to the efforts of the working group who produced it.

Of the membership production, Syd Comfort was able to report in the December 2002 *Bulletin*:

*This current issue of the NPA Bulletin marks the completion of six years during which the Bulletin has been produced by association members through the Bulletin Working Group. The Association is fortunate that so*

*many members have been willing to devote their time and effort to this important element of the association's activities. Their roles cover a wide spectrum ...*

*I would like to single out Len Haskew and Adrienne Nicholson. Len has continued to assemble the PARKWATCH section and to write up the addresses given at meetings. Adrienne has undertaken the layout of this year's issues and in doing this had maintained a very high standard whilst saving the association some \$400 each issue.*

Syd finally retired at the end of 2005 as convener/editor of the *Bulletin* Working Group having successfully guided the transition of the *Bulletin* back to production by members. Adrienne Nicholson continued the layout, and Neville Esau took over as editor until mid 2007. Max Lawrence then became chief editor with Kevin McCue and Sonja Lenz able to stand in when necessary.

## **Continuing progress**

There was great excitement when the first NPA *Bulletin* for 2008 was printed with a full glossy colour cover, not to be confused with the 'coloured' covers of some early editions where coloured paper was used for the cover. Our *Bulletin* in 2010 is a showpiece for the wonderful photographers in the Association. We've come a long way.

Apart from our editors and layout expert, there are many people whose work makes up the *Bulletin*. It is impossible to list their contributions, but now with all issues of the NPA *Bulletin* going up on our website, the results of their work are there for all to see.

**Annette Smith**



*The cover of the NPA's 'other' major anniversary Bulletin—the 40th—featuring Reg Alder's wonderful photo of Mt Namadgi as seen from Gudgenby.*



# NPA ACT publishing—a dynamic program

In support of its commitment to the protection of native flora and fauna and the conservation of the natural and cultural heritage of the ACT and elsewhere, the National Parks Association publishes informative books and reports on those topics as part of its education program.

## NPA ACT publications

*Mountains, slopes and plains: the fauna and flora of the Australian Capital Territory* was NPA ACT's first book. It was published in 1971 with the support of the then Department of the Interior. This was followed by *Rambles around Canberra* in 1977, edited by A Mortlock and G O'Loghlin.

*Field guide to the native trees of the ACT*, first published in 1983, has seen reprints in 1990 and 2004, and a second edition in 2007, the latter including colour photographs to further assist in the identification of local native trees.

*Field guide to the birds of the ACT*, 1993, 1999 and 2007, by M Taylor and N Day, was financially backed by NPA ACT life member Alastair Morrison. He also supported *Reptiles and frogs of the Australian Capital Territory*, by R Bennett, published in 1997. A second edition of this is currently being developed.

Significant reports published before NPA ACT's 40th anniversary highlighted conservation and preservation of *Remnant woodland and native grassland*, and of *The northern Cotter catchment* as well as a review of *Woodchipping in Eden*. NPA ACT also commissioned a report by N Taws on the *Removal and rehabilitation of the Boboyan Pine Plantation*, useful background information for the Gudgenby Bush Regeneration Group

which was set up in 1998 with significant help from the NPA ACT committee and volunteer members.

In 1987, the first brochure and nature notes for the newly built *Yerrabi Track* were put out by NPA ACT and, in 1990, the Association assisted the Australian Conservation Foundation in putting forward a *Proposal for a Jervis Bay Marine Park*.

A Publications Sub-committee of NPA ACT was formed in 2007 under the leadership of Sabine Friedrich. Previously, publications were managed by small groups of willing volunteers, who are to be congratulated for their dedication and perseverance.

To promote and support the protection of cultural heritage, NPA ACT published in 2007 *Twelve historic sites in the Glenburn and Burbong areas of the Kowen Forest*, by C McAlister. This report draws notice to the earliest known European grave site in the ACT, dating from 1837. Demand for this slim volume far exceeded the print run of 100 copies.

*Field guide to the orchids of the Australian Capital Territory*, by D Jones *et al*, published in 2008, is the first complete local guide about these magnificent flowers. It was launched by TV news reader and orchid lover Craig Allen at our 2008 symposium and has proven very popular with orchid enthusiasts, not just of the ACT but elsewhere in Australia and abroad.

The Association has also published the proceedings of three scientific seminars: *Alpine areas* in 1985, *Caring for Namadgi—science and people* in 2006 and *Corridors for survival in a changing world* in 2008. The latter two most recent symposia were leading up to this year's 50th anniversary symposium with the theme *National Parks—can they take the heat?* The papers will

again be published in time for the symposium. One outcome of the 2006 symposium was the publication, in 2008, of a 1:250 000 scale map, *Geology of the ACT* by the Geological Society of Australia to which NPA provided seed funding and expertise.

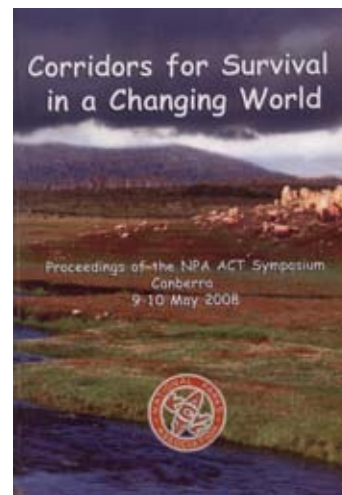
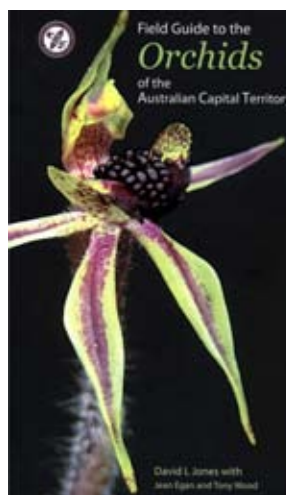
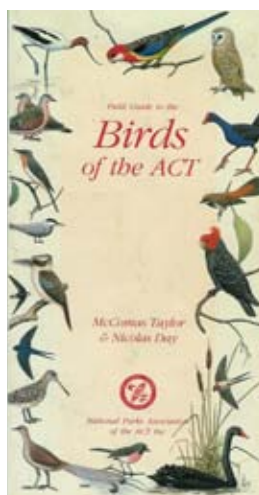
A photo competition for NPA ACT members and park rangers featuring Namadgi National Park was run in 2008. The photos were displayed at Macarthur House, the Australian National Botanic Gardens, the Namadgi Visitor Centre and at the 2008 symposium, which was held at the CSIRO Discovery Centre. Thirteen photos judged to be the best were then included in a *Namadgi calendar* for 2009.

The *2010 calendar* celebrates 50 years of NPA ACT events and achievements with historical photos by our members.

## What of the future?

What does the future hold for NPA publications? In 2010, our anniversary year, we plan to publish another field guide, this time on common insects of the ACT; a 'big book' to showcase the beauty and importance of Namadgi National Park for the ACT and as part of the Australian Alpine National Park; and a very special little book called *Eyes or no eyes* to honour our founding member Nancy Burbidge. This is being produced by NPA members under the able leadership of Sabine Friedrich. And we are sure that there will be many more worthwhile and attractive publications in the years to come.

Beverley Hammond and Sonja Lenz



# NPA outings—a long and rich program

## Introduction

When the NPA was established in 1960, the outings program was the vehicle to help the community to appreciate and enjoy the natural world. It was also seen as a means of educating people about nature, and learning about what was in the ACT.

## Early outings

Nancy Burbidge was instrumental in creating the NPA in 1960 and directed much of her energy to providing outings that would teach people about the richness of the bushland of the ACT and its environs. In the first few years there was only one outing per month. These outings were nature appreciation and learning experiences, rather than the 'bushwalks' that comprise the bulk of our Outings Program today.

Between 1960 and 1964, at least 30 sets of detailed handouts were produced by Nancy and her colleagues for outings participants. The handouts described the birds, plants, mammals, freshwater invertebrates, insects and/or geological features that might be encountered on the outing, and also provided the directions for the day.

One of the first major outings was in November 1960, a few months after the creation of the NPA, from the Naas Bridge to Rendezvous Creek. Part of the handout is reproduced at the end of this article to illustrate the great detail leaders went to for the outings.

## Education

Education in a social atmosphere could best describe many of the trips in the



*A kilted Nancy Burbidge leading an early NPA outing. Photo from the National Library of Australia collection.*

early 1960s. Some examples are:

- at the Big Hole, a talk about the geological and botanical features of the area
- a weekend trip to Mount Franklin Chalet, with optional visits to Ginini Falls, Gingera and Brumby Flats, and an evening campfire discussion on 'Nature Conservation—where do we fit in?'
- day trips to Mt Ginini to view Bogong moths in the rock crevices before driving home in the dust of a convoy of 20 or more cars
- a trip to Flea Creek to watch trout moving up the shallow creek to spawn
- an outing to Burra Creek, with the leader, Dr Weatherly, providing microscopes for children and adults to examine the creatures they found
- a morning visit to the Wildlife Division of CSIRO followed by an afternoon walk up Mt Majura.

## Crowds

Many of the NPA outings in the 1960s attracted large attendances:

- Sixty people attended the March 1963 outing to Mt Coree, and members who didn't want to walk to the summit were taken by Jeep to the top. Members sometimes found Corroboree frogs around Coree.

- About 70 people joined the outing to a cave at Wee Jasper in 1966. People had to wait to enter in smaller groups. They had been instructed to bring candles and torches. Numbers were limited the next year.

- Over 100 people turned up in June 1964, on the NPA's third outing to Ginninderra Falls and Gorge just across the

border in NSW. In 1966 an NPA work party did track work there. This beautiful area is privately owned and now closed to the public.

## Beyond the ACT

Many of NPA's outings, even those in the 1960s, have been to areas outside the ACT, especially to other national parks in NSW and Victoria. Some outings to ACT or NSW coastal areas were to or through private property, usually owned by people known to the leader. Such outings are becoming more difficult to arrange as landholders change and old networks are lost.

## Figuring out rules and advice

Running an outings program was a learning process for organisers. By the mid-1960s some changes were advocated to cope with increasing numbers of participants:

- Advice for the monthly spring outings in 1964 was that dogs should

*(continued on page 22)*



*Left. Mick Kelly and Mike Smith on The Castle, Budawang, 1996. Right. Frank Clements on Byangee Mountain, 1996. Photos Max Lawrence*



## NPA outings—a long and rich program *(continued from page 21)*

be kept on a leash. By 1968 there was a ban on all pets on outings. By 1976 it was an Association rule that there were to be ‘no dogs, no cats, no firearms and no litter’ on walks.

- In 1964 the need to encourage and train leaders was recognised, and that the outings program should cater for the ‘energetic’, the ‘less energetic’ and ‘children’.
- The request that passengers offer monetary contribution to drivers hit a snag in 1984 when the suggested contribution was doubled from two cents to four cents per kilometre per person, and even some drivers rebelled. The suggested contribution was dropped to three cents for a period. In 2010 the suggested rate is forty cents per kilometre per car.

### The 1970s and 80s

A number of new experienced bush walkers, Reg Alder and Neville Esau in particular, joined the NPA in the 1970s. Under their influence, the newly formed Outings Sub-committee began offering more adventurous day walks and exploratory bush-bashing pack walks in addition to the nature- and social-based outings.

The less energetic outings included visits to Lake George to observe birds (a very popular activity) and to Westbourne Woods to inspect the arboretum, followed by lunch on the lake shores. In October 1971, for a mere \$1 per person, there was a 2-hour Lake Burley Griffin cruise to identify water birds. The cruise resulted in a financial loss, footed by the NPA, as 60 participants were needed to cover costs and only 46 people attended.

In the mid 1970s, the legendary Ian Currie weekend car camps commenced. The Curries arranged activities for people of all ages, and many families attended. They remember fondly these very popular outings. Many of the outings in the 1960s and 1970s were definitely ‘child friendly’. On a weekend camp at Burrinjuck in September 1971 there were 24 members and 14 children.

In more recent times, people like Di Thompson and Adrienne Nicholson have filled the gap, Di with a special interest in the management issues in national parks, and Adrienne with an emphasis on nature appreciation. Up to three generations have attended some of these car camps.

Membership increased significantly during the late 1970s and early 1980s

*Top right. NPA party on Mt Gudgenby, 1997.*

*Right. Fun in the snow on Mt Nungar, 1998.*

*Photos Max Lawrence*

and so did the number and variety of outings. From fewer than 12 outings a year in the early 1970s, the 1982–83 program offered 88 outings with 36 different leaders.

### Checking it all out

There were some fact-finding outings to the Gudgenby/Mt Kelly area during the 1960s and 70s, specifically to inspect areas proposed for a national park in the ACT. In February 1962, the Committee was focusing on the southern area of the ACT for a national park, and wanted to obtain information on possible boundaries. They asked Julie Henry, convener of the Mt Kelly sub-committee, to see if a trip to the Mt Kelly area could be arranged through her association with the bushwalking fraternity. This resulted in three of the committee joining a trip organised by the Canberra Alpine Club in September 1962. In the years to follow the NPA organised its own familiarisation outings to the Mt Kelly area.

The outings program has continued to provide a mixture of recreational outings and outings with specific objectives. For example, 1995–96 outings included a history tour of Tidbinbilla, a guided tour of Canberra’s remnant grasslands by ACT Parks and Conservation grassland expert Sarah Sharp, as well as many walks just to enjoy the bush and to explore the Canberra Nature Park.

### Institutions

A number of institutions have continued as part of the outings program; others,



such as the annual president’s picnic which operated during the 1970s and 80s, have vanished. One long-running outing became known as the Burbidge/Chippendale Walk. This spring walk on Black Mountain is covered elsewhere in this special issue of the *Bulletin*.

### Joint outings

There have been many joint outings with other groups, initially with the NSW NPA and its branches, the Field Naturalists and, more recently, with the Family Bushwalkers (FBI) and the Canberra Bushwalking Club (CBC). Some of the joint walks are organised by leaders who belong to both clubs, especially where it is considered that there might not be sufficient interest from NPA members alone.

*(continued next page)*



# NPA outings—a long and rich program *(continued)*

## Some special outings

Perhaps our most rewarding outing was that in August 1983 when, with the campaign for a national park renewed, a group of NPA members took Tom Uren, then the Minister for the Department of Territories and Local Government, and about 12 government officials in a convoy of 4WDs around the areas they wanted included in a new national park. At the end of the day, over a cup of tea and Tom's favourite banana cake, members pointed out exactly what they wanted over maps they had prepared and laid out on a car bonnet. Tom Uren turned to his departmental head and asked him for a submission on what the NPA had requested, and NPA knew they were about to achieve their goal.

Several celebratory and public outings are worth noting:

- To celebrate the declaration of Namadgi National Park in 1984, members carried champagne and food to celebrate on top of Mt Namadgi. Fiona MacDonald Brand admitted to taking meringues because they were the lightest to carry.
- A few years later, at the opening of the Yerrabi Track in 1987, 150–200 people turned up to celebrate. The track has become the focal point for NPA anniversary celebrations, including the track's own 10th anniversary in 1987.
- The 10th anniversary of the declaration of Namadgi National Park was celebrated on 30 October 1994, with a walk along the Yerrabi Track, lunch at the top, then a further party by the Gudgenby River, cutting a large slab cake and singing Happy Birthday Namadgi. The 25th Anniversary in 2009 saw another happy crowd celebrating with cake and champagne in the balmy sunshine on the track.

On a number of occasions, members' birthdays have been celebrated with special outings.

## Heritage Week walks

The NPA commenced providing walks in Heritage Week in 1982. The earlier ones were to Mt Boboyan. Members of the general public were encouraged to come, and on one occasion over 80 people turned up. They were served tea on top on Mt Boboyan, a generous effort by the hearty volunteers who had to carry the water and all the makings.

*Car campers, upper Murray River trip, May 2009. View of the Snowy Mountains from the west. Photo Adrienne Nicholson*

Later in the 1980s and early 90s, NPA held joint walks in Heritage Week with the Kosciuszko Huts Association, visiting places such as Brayshaws Hut and the Grassy and Naas Creeks area. In other years NPA people led walks to Rendezvous Creek, the Yankee Hat paintings and heritage sites in the Brindabellas, including Mount Franklin Chalet. In 1993, Professor Lindsay Pryor explained the history of the Alpine Botanic Garden, in connection with which Pryor's hut was built in 1952.

In 1995, Heritage Week walkers visited Bushfold near Mount Tennent, which had recently been added to the park, and went to selected forestry sites in the northern Brindabellas.

## Mid-week walks

The mid-week walks have become a regular joint activity with other bushwalking clubs. The inimitable Olive Buckman instigated the NPA's monthly mid-week walks in May 1983. Until 1989 they were run separately from the regular outings program. In that first 6 years there were 77 mid-week walks led by 21 leaders.

Once the mid-week walks became part of the outings program they gradually changed, becoming faster, harder walks, instead of the 'time to look, watch and relax' walks that many of the members had enjoyed. As Phyl Goddard put it so eloquently in the *Bulletin* in March 1994: 'During the past few years NPA walks have become increasingly gruelling with distances longer, mountains steeper, pace faster and fellow walkers younger.' Subsequently, there was a call for slower-paced walks for people wanting to use the new NPA field guides, in addition to the mid-week walks in the outings program.

In July 1997, NPA, FBI and CBC commenced a rotating leadership arrangement for mid-week walks so that members of all three clubs could participate in a joint walk on each week. These walks have continued to the present day, although the numbers sometimes reach into the 20s, raising some issues for leaders and the 'walk

softly' ethos of the clubs concerned. Such concerns for the environment are in stark contrast to the ACT Government's approval of large-scale events for up to 1,000 competitors within Namadgi National Park. This erosion of the national park's primary conservation role is of concern for our many walkers, who see Namadgi not as a sporting arena but as a place to find peace and renewal.

## Bushfire Regeneration Walk

NPA members helped supervise the therapeutic Bushfire Regeneration Walk, held in July 2003 after the bushfires. This walk from Chapman to Isaacs followed tracks in Canberra Nature Park. Over 200 people took part, at least 50 doing the whole walk.

## Great Australian Bushwalk

The first of the Great Australian Bushwalks (GAB) was held on Sunday 24 October 2004 in all state capital cities. It began as a concept developed by NPA NSW and was subsequently taken up by all the other NPAs including NPA ACT. The ACT Chief Minister and Environment ACT strongly supported it.

In the ACT that first year, two walks were organised, one of 10km, the other 20km, to show off the northern sections of Canberra Nature Park, particularly the new Goorooyarroo Woodland Reserve and Mulligans Flat. This turned out to be something of an extravaganza. Over 650 people registered for the walks. ACTION buses ferried people from Mulligans Flat to their starting points, the ACT State Emergency Service assisted with traffic control and in staffing checkpoints and rescue of weary walkers. The Ambulance Service was also there for weary walkers and the ACT Government even hired a bush band.

*(continued on page 24)*



## NPA outings—a long and rich program *(continued from page 23)*

The GAB was held again in October 2005, again with the support of the ACT Government but with a little less razzamatazz. The route NPA selected was the recently upgraded walking track along the Murrumbidgee River Corridor, with walks of three different lengths all finishing at Pine Island. Again, around 650 people participated.

By 2006 NPA ACT members were concerned that the GAB wasn't reflecting our bushwalking policies of promoting the environment with dispersed walks for small groups of people who had little experience of the bush. The government wanted to continue it as a large-scale event for people who prefer to experience the bush as part of a crowd. NPA opted to organise small groups only, and with the assistance of park rangers, led 160 people in small groups on a variety of walks in Namadgi.

By 2007, for a variety of reasons, support for organising the event was waning around the country and the NPA ACT ceased participating in it.

### The Australian Alps Walking Track (AAWT) project

Following the launch of the 655km AAWT from Walhalla to Canberra, on 12 April 1995, the Namadgi sub-committee published, for the first time since the 1960s, the equivalents to the outings handouts produced in those early

years. As part of this project, in 1995 and 1996 they published a three-part series in the NPA *Bulletins* describing the walk from Namadgi Visitor Centre to Booroomba Rocks carpark, Booroomba Rocks to the Orroral Valley and Orroral Valley to Murray's Gap. These excellent articles were accompanied by articles on birds, vegetation and cultural history along the ACT section of track, and the outings program was designed to complement this initiative.

### Walks grading system

After consultation with members, a grading system for walks was adopted in June 1989. The description for each walk indicates distance and terrain and any other information deemed useful to potential walkers.

### Insurance

The NPA joined the Confederation of NSW Bushwalking Clubs in 2000. This gave it access to the same support and public liability insurance used by the other major bushwalking clubs in the ACT. This insurance policy gives the NPA, its walks leaders and all associated with its outing program, public liability cover against legal actions that may be brought against them alleging negligence or breach of duty of care arising from injuries sustained or property damaged or destroyed during the course of NPA sanctioned outings.

### Today's walkers

As always, the outings program relies on a solid core of leaders and organisers. Over the last twenty years outings conveners have been Steven Forst, Di Thompson, Mick Kelly, Phil Bubb, Max Lawrence and David Large. Mike Smith has been convener for the last four years.

The NPA outings program continues to offer a variety of easy rambles or harder day walks, pack walks, snowshoe or skiing trips, canoeing trips, work parties and social events such as the annual Christmas party. As well, there are occasional car camps where the emphasis can be on relatively passive activities through to explorations further afield.

Members participating in outings are expected to abide by a low-impact code of conduct whilst on walks, and to carpool to reach the start of walks. Leaders are expected to be competent in the use of compass, map and, where appropriate, a GPS device. All walkers are encouraged to be competent in administering first aid. The NPA has two personal locator beacons for leaders to carry in case of emergencies in locations where there is no mobile phone reception.

For the NPA though, maintaining the outings program is essential to keep people informed and in the field, so they can fulfil their crucial role, once described by Tom Uren, as

*... guardians, protectors and enhancers of Namadgi and our environmental treasures in the ACT.*

**Annette Smith**

-2-

GATE - GLENDALE CROSSING----- -STOP FOR 20 MINUTES

ALONG RIVER: Shrubs include Oxylobium(orange pea-flowers nearly finished) Titree(not in flower), Short-flowered Heath(white flowers, leaves sharp with stem clasping bases), Creek Wattle (in young pod, leaves narrow and sharp pointed), Hairy Grevillea(flowers red with pale tips)

Other plants include Clematis, Prickly Starwort (white flowers with each of the five petals deeply divided and the leaves sharp pointed), Stinging Nettle(stinging hairs, flowers small and green), Oxalis(pale yellow flowers and "shamrock"leaves) Wild Gernaium(flowers small and pink, leaves deeply divided), Buttercups.

IN WATER: Montia (small white flowers above surface) Water Milfoil (stems trailing in water, leaves in whorls and subdivided into narrow segments), Water Buttercup(leaves floating or submerged, flowers small and yellow), Reed (stiff erect pithy green stems)

UP SLOPE ON FAR SIDE OF RIVER:

Pultenaea (low shrubs with orange pea-flowers and sharp pointed leaves which are down curved), Mirbelia (shrubs with orange pea-flowers but the leaves are narrow and often arranged in threes. Hairy Rice Flower (Pimelea) Small shrub with soft hairy leaves and clusters of small greenish yellow

### Botanical Notes — Naas Bridge to Rendezvous Creek

*Copy of notes provided to participants on an NPA outing in November 1960.*

*'Getting there' instructions were invariably given; and directions for points and items of interest along the way. The plant notes are appropriate to the season, and other comments on natural history, cultural heritage, geology, land-use, etc were included.*





# Symposium success story

*NPA ACT has held three scientific symposia over its 50 years—in 1985, 2006 and 2008. A fourth is scheduled for May this year.*

*Symposium Convenor Kevin McCue reported in the September 2006 NPA Bulletin, on NPA ACT's 2006 Symposium Caring for Namadgi: science and people. In the report he also refers to the 1985 symposium. What follows is an edited extract from Kevin's report.*

In late 2004, the management committee of the NPA ACT decided to organise a public conference to explore the scientific research currently being undertaken in Namadgi National Park.

Our goals were:

- to discover what research was being conducted of relevance to Namadgi NP for the education of the committee and all members of the Association
- to evaluate the scope of research available for managers preparing to sign off on the draft plan of management for Namadgi NP
- to determine whether there were any gaps in the research, and finally
- to expose the public to the wealth of knowledge of our local natural world available in the national capital and to the management processes put in place to protect the conservation values of Namadgi NP.

This was to be the second scientific conference hosted by NPA ACT since its inception in 1960. The first was held to coincide with the Association's silver jubilee in 1985, two decades ago, and nearly two years after the gazettal of the southern half of the ACT as a national park for the national capital. In late November–early December of that year, NPA ACT held a conference at the Australian National University on the topic 'Australia's alpine areas: management for conservation'. The proceedings, edited by Kevin Frawley, were published in 1986. That conference aimed at fostering a cooperative

approach to the conservation of alpine areas in Victoria, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory.

This second conference would, we hoped, shine a bright light on the science, and highlight the necessity for its continuation and possible expansion. From the organising committee's viewpoint I think it has been a great success. The scientists have been put on the podium, their faces are known, their research shown to be not only relevant but also interesting and exciting. The great depth of their knowledge has really only been hinted at, a taste for future nourishment.

On behalf of both the organising committee and the management committee of NPA ACT, I would like to thank each and every one of the presenters, to congratulate Rachel Sims who was awarded the inaugural Amanda Carey Award for presenting the best paper by a young researcher, and to thank my fellow committee members without whom this conference would not have occurred.

*Symposium Convenor Kevin McCue reported in the June 2008 NPA Bulletin on NPA ACT's 2008 Symposium Corridors for survival in a changing world. An edited extract from his report follows.*

The quality of the presentations was very high, right from the opening speaker of Session 1 when Professor Jannette Lindesay set the scene with an animated talk on global warming, spelling out predictions of the range of temperature, rainfall and evaporation changes for the ACT region.

Ian Pulsford followed with a description of the Alps to Atherton conservation corridor, A2A (but should be P2P Pole to Pole corridor according to one member of the audience). Phil Zylstra's talk on forest flammability was picked up in the *Sunday Canberra Times* and we hope his research will be widely discussed and adopted in fire-management plans.



The standard of talks continued in the following sessions with memorable contributions from Roger Good, Geoff Hope and Martin Worthy, who expanded on themes from the 2006 symposium, with consideration of impacts of climate change. Core logs shown by Geoff Hope support the contention by Phil Zylstra that Aboriginal use of fire has been incorrectly interpreted and grossly distorted.

Insect and animal papers were popular with the audience: Will Osborne talked about green and golden bell frogs recently rediscovered along the Molonglo River, until then thought to have been extinct in that area. Equally, there was much interest in the papers on fires by CSIRO's Michael Doherty and Malcolm Gill. Post-2003 fire evidence seems to suggest that the bush is very resilient to natural fires (those occurring with natural frequency).

Sarah Sharp and Brett McNamara, representing ACT Government researchers and managers, summarised their activities and the extra workload that would be imposed by a warmer, drying future. Maxine Cooper had the last word, urging us to adopt more sustainable lifestyles to support a population growing without limit.

Former ACT ranger Amanda Carey is remembered with an NPA ACT award in her honour for the best student contribution. The judges were split equally so both student presenters, Martin Worthy and Anett Richter, were declared joint winners.

*When you're on a good thing ...*

*Kevin McCue is convening his third symposium in this series as part of the NPA ACT's fiftieth anniversary celebrations. Its theme is National parks—can they take the heat? It will be held at CSIRO's Discovery Centre on 7–8 May 2010. Be there.*



*Left. The symposium at Tuggeranong, 2006  
Top. Convenor Kevin McCue addresses the symposium at CSIRO Discovery Centre, 2008  
Photos Max Lawrence*

# Volunteer workers—the heart of NPA ACT

From its inception, the NPA ACT has been comprised of passionate people who give freely of their time. Consider for a moment the era when the NPA was formed, a time before broad-based community volunteering was fashionable, and this dedication is all the more remarkable.

NPA volunteers are active in a range of pursuits. They make up the committees that provide guidance to the NPA. The administration of its activities is undertaken by a small staff of volunteers. Outings are organised and conducted by volunteers. The contribution to, and publication of this *Bulletin*, is managed by volunteers. However, it is the long-running conduct of volunteer work parties that I wish to relate in some detail.

With the declaration of Namadgi National Park in the mid 1980s, the NPA shifted its focus from one of lobbying for the declaration of the park to one of working for the park. As opportunities arose, the focus of work parties also moved into the NPWS reserves in surrounding NSW.

The nature of work parties has been dictated and shaped by the needs of the time. Although any set of individuals might perceive the activities in their era as solely exercises in weeding, or track maintenance, the following list will show differently.

## Building reconstruction and stabilisation

Perhaps the most significant building/reconstruction task was that of Orroral Homestead. This building is one of the oldest standing structures in the Australian Alps and its stabilisation and reconstruction were undertaken by the NPA with assistance from the ACT park service. As an icon of the grazing era it has no parallel in the ACT. Unlike most high-country huts, this was a homestead, and as such its preservation is highly significant.

Tennent Homestead underwent similar stabilisation works to Orroral, but its pisé construction presented a set of problems that was never quite overcome. It was all but destroyed in the 2003 fires.

More recently the NPA undertook the stewardship of Demanding Hut in the Clear Range. As a more recent (60 years old) construction comprising a wooden frame and corrugated iron exterior, its maintenance demands are less severe than those of a slab building such as Orroral. Nevertheless, the ever-present

threat of fire does call the tune.

Protection from ember attack is also a theme of work-party activity at Frank and Jack's Hut in the Gudgenby Valley.

## Track and other maintenance

Walking tracks are key to allowing public access to many areas of national parks. The most significant of these from the NPA perspective is the Yerrabi Track which goes from the Boboyan Road to Boboyan Trig. This track was conceived and constructed by the NPA in the mid 1980s and its maintenance continues to be a feature of NPA work-party activities.

From time to time, other facilities receive NPA attention. These have included:

- the Orroral Track from the Orroral Campground to the Orroral tracking station site
- the rehabilitation of the Nursery Swamp track after the 1983 fires
- the Australian Alps Walking Track from the Namadgi Visitor Centre to Mt Tennent and sections below the Cotter Gap
- the Budawangs walking track from the Wog Wog access
- the Square Rock Track above Smokers Gap
- the rehabilitation of the road construction depot site at Glendale.

## Bushfire recovery

The devastation wrought in January 2003 by bushfires resulted in a fundamental shift in NPA work-party activity.

As we all recovered from the shock of the event, it became clear to both the ACT park service and the NPA leadership that the mountains might need some help to recover. This may sound like predictable human hubris but those aspects of Namadgi that had previously been affected by human activity needed assistance in their recovery to ensure that they, in turn, did not become part of an ongoing problem.

The NPA appointed a permanent work-party coordinator to work with the park service to develop an ongoing work-party program. In the immediate post-fire period this involved a variety of tasks around Namadgi, including:

- contributing to the Nursery Swamp walking track reconstruction
- stream bank stabilisation in the Cotter Valley,
- removal of wilding pines in Lower

Cotter Catchment and burnt-out arboreta in the Brindabella Ranges

- removal of fencing in Bushfold Flats
- survey for rabbit burrows in the Orroral Valley.

## Recent activities

As we move away from the 2003 fires and towards a new set of problems in a drier and warmer climate, work parties contribute towards increasing the sustainability of our natural environment. As species move to find a more acceptable niche, competition will become evident. In this regard, native species don't need their competitive environment to be confounded by pest species. Although it's fair to say that pest species are here to stay we humans can assist by providing situations that tip the balance away from the pests. For work-party volunteers, this translates into the humble, sometimes hot, but always rewarding tasks of planting and weeding.

'Weed treatment' has been dispensed at a variety of locations in recent years:

- briar and blackberry removal at Naas Creek
- broom removal at Grassy Creek
- removal of exotic species from the former Stockyard Arboretum
- survey for and clearing of briars and blackberry from Kangaroo Creek
- clearing rubbish from the Honeysuckle Creek tracking station site
- conduct of transects to detect pig activity in the Tinderry Mountains
- weeding around native grassland plots along the railway easement near Royalla
- removal of willow saplings along the banks of the Naas, Gudgenby and Orroral rivers.

The NPA ACT had a seminal role in the declaration of Namadgi National Park. Down the years it has sought an active role in contributing to its maintenance. This contribution has varied as needs and personalities have changed. At present, we enjoy an active and robust relationship with park management that allows work-party volunteers to continue their contribution to the care of the mountains in this time of great need.

**Martin Chalk**  
Work Party Coordinator

*(photos on facing page)*





1.

## *A sample of NPA work party activities*

1. Laying planks across swamp, walking track in the Budawangs.

*Photo Dianne Thompson*

2. Martin Chalk, Clive Hurlstone and Brian Slee, a break from weeding near Kangaroo Creek. *Photo Adrienne Nicholson*

3. Weeding grassland study plots beside the railway line near Royalla.

*Photo Adrienne Nicholson*

4. Mike Smith and Steve Hill building steps on the Yerrabi Track, Namadgi.

5. Mike Smith and Adrienne Nicholson setting anti-erosion logs on the AAWT.

6. Orroral boardwalk construction, 1994.

*Photo Max Lawrence*

7. Briar and willow control, Orroral Valley, 2009. *Photo Adrienne Nicholson*

8. Ember-proofing around Frank and Jacks Hut, 2009. *Photo Adrienne Nicholson*



5.



2.



6.



3.



7.



4.



8.

# Running 'the office'

The job of the office staff is to attend to correspondence, maintain membership and other association records, and support the work of the committee and sub-committees.

When the NPA ACT was formed in 1960, with the aim of securing a national park for the National Capital, 'the office' for the grand dream was a box in a corner of someone's spare room—specifically Fiona MacDonald Brand's. Association business was stored in more and more boxes as time went on, and there was a lot of handwriting of letters and of individual addresses on *Bulletins* or correspondence to members. It's sometimes hard to remember that even until the 1980s we relied on typists using typewriters. Typing was a skill generally restricted to professional typists and secretaries.

## Finding a typist—an early day challenge

It is hardly surprising that Nancy Burbidge became secretary in the NPA's first year. As well as being an eminent scientist, she was proficient at typing. This skill supported her confidence in driving the association in its first years to type the letters, submissions, outings handouts and meeting minutes just as she wanted.

For others, including *Bulletin* editors, finding a typist could be a challenge, as is reported in the article on *Bulletin* history. Options were several.

**Family.** Women like Sybil Story, wife of Bob Story who was president from 1963 to 1965, were unsung heroes for the amount of support they provided year in year out, without ever holding official positions in the organisation. Sybil, apart from years of typing for the organisation, is remembered with admiration for the mentoring and support she provided new members. Audrey Hill was another who quietly typed for, couriered and supported members over many years.

**The typing pool 'girls' at the office.** These treasures might be coerced into a bit of typing on the side, for which they could be rewarded with a box of chocolates at Christmas, and a blind eye was turned when it was 'hair setting' morning in the typing pool, or a travelling manchester salesman was in town.

**However,** often the typing had to be



*'The office'. Formerly a construction site office, in 2010 the building is occupied by NPA and ConsACT. Photo Max Lawrence*

farmed out to a commercial typist. With membership of around 700 by the late 1980s, the bimonthly, then quarterly *Bulletins* were sent to 400 or more addresses. Whether typed or handwritten, that addressing alone was a massive job.

## From Childers Street to Chifley

This all changed in early 1984. With the assistance of a grant (\$10 000 for staff and a further \$2150 for equipment) from the Community Development Fund, the Association was able to open an office at 'the ROCKS' in Childers Street near Civic and employ a part-time office secretary. Although it took the better part of a year to have the phone connected, gradually the office took shape, with a computer and photocopier. The collocation with other environmental organisations was a plus. Committee meetings were now transferred from Fiona's home to the new office, together with the swag of boxes. The new office was also used for *Bulletin* preparation and other sub-committee meetings. One challenge here was to avoid tripping over the low wooden fence around the carpark, especially at night.

Over the years, the environs of Childers Street office deteriorated, with squatters in a room adjacent to the office. Maintenance and vandalism were major concerns as NPA records were still kept there. Sheila Kruse began sorting them so they could eventually be archived. When plans to demolish the building were announced in late 1992 it was time to move on.

The new office, in the former baby health clinic at MacLaurin Crescent, Chifley, was officially opened in April 1993. It was larger and brighter, with space for the yet-to-be archived material, the library and even small meetings. The down side was that the Association had

to pay rent and bear the cost of putting security grilles on the windows.

## Grants dry up

The generous administration grants from the Commonwealth, then the ACT Government, to community organisations including the NPA, continued until 1999. When they ceased the NPA could no longer afford to pay for an office secretary. Neville Esau bravely took over co-ordinating the office, and advertised in the *Bulletin* for volunteer helpers. There was a welcome response. One of the volunteers, Kaye Campbell, deserves special mention for her tireless, often single-handed work from September 2001 until September 2004, keeping the office running efficiently. Jacqui Cole set about working on a membership database. Others have continued this initiative, particularly Neville and now Chris Emery, so we now have a highly efficient computerised system.

Before she left in 2004 for an all-too-short retirement, Kaye documented the procedures for the office tasks, greatly smoothing the way for her successors. During 2004 three volunteers took over from Kaye and established a roster system. The work of Kaye, Jackie, Neville and now Chris Emery to streamline and computerise the office tasks has cut these tasks to a few hours a week, down from the 14 hours we once paid for. For example, producing the address sheets for the *Bulletin* now takes just a few keystrokes.

## Back to the future—from Chifley to Childers Street

After the initial shock at the notice in mid-April 2007 that we had to quit the Chifley site, the sentiment was that a move would be a good thing. In truth our 'larger and brighter' office had become overcrowded and dingy. Even the once proud curtains bearing the NPA logo were faded and dirty. Parking was easy, but the building was quite isolated and lonely for solo workers.

The move was the much-needed catalyst to 'downsize' the files, books, journals and other material in the office and the archived ones held at Syd Comfort's home. Diana Heins had

*(continued next page)*



# Our treasured mountain wilderness

To the west of Canberra lies a beguiling line of blue mountains, ridge upon ridge, fading from deep blue to light grey with distance, the tones and shades changing with the changing light. Living in Canberra, one is always aware of these mountains and their changing lights and shadows. Who has not admired them catching the first light of dawn, seen them standing clear and sharp with an icing of white in winter, seen the delicate beauty of the last of the sun gently highlighting high shoulders and ridges while the gullies and slopes have begun to sleep in shades of deeper blue-grey?

*... wild mountains, hidden valleys and countless secret places*

But they are more than just a painted backdrop to a lovely city. Hidden within these blue lines and soft, distant shadows is a wonderful wilderness of wild mountains, hidden valleys and countless secret places. A magical land. The palaces of nature and, as the renowned mountaineer and poet Geoffrey Winthrop Young said in his poem *The Wind*, '... The beauties challenging our eyes, as ordered line and colour, but conceal a symbol for the spirit ...'

*... mosses, lichens, wildflowers, and mountain swamps and pools*

Broad valleys are delineated by steep ridges often capped with huge, spectacular granite outcrops and tors which may contain caves and tunnels and

ding the ACT border with NSW, you will find the highest peaks of them all—the Brindabella Range, which rises to nearly 2000 metres.

*... a land vital to the wellbeing of the planet*



*Evening view to Namadgi from Coleman Ridge.*

*Photo Barrie Ridgway*

which give spectacular views over the surrounding landscape. Here you will find tall forests, shy gullies of the Antarctic tree fern beside mountain creeks, open, subalpine forests and, finally, along the summits, the alpine zone above the treeline. Here, too, you will find mosses, lichens, wildflowers, and mountain swamps and pools that are so vital to the perennial flow of streams, as well as a rich diversity of insects, animals and birds. And finally, strad-

This is a beautiful and rugged mountain landscape, a land vital to the wellbeing of the planet, part of the fragile biosphere that keeps us alive. A land which has a right to exist for its own sake and not for mere economic benefit of human kind. A land which should be kept as wilderness. Namadgi National Park lies within this mountain wilderness and, together with the Cotter Catchment and Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve, preserves most of it. Let it beguile you with its magic.

Explore it, but tread lightly. Treasure it, for it is wilderness such as this that affords more than beauty or economic benefit. It nurtures our souls and keeps our planet alive.

**Barrie Ridgway**

## Running 'the office' *(continued)*

become the new 'Kaye' and, with Sonja Lenz our NPA Secretary and other volunteers, worked away listing all the library holdings on the office computer. Judy Kelly and Beverley Hammond helped cull unneeded items. They deposited the pre-2000 files with the ACT Heritage Library, for safe-keeping and public access.

Since May 2007, our third office has been in the Conservation Council South Eastern Region and Canberra's premises,

in a temporary building at Childers Street, Civic. After completing the audit of our extensive library holding, and inducting a new team of volunteers, Diana resigned at the end of 2008.

A dozen or more people have volunteered for 'the O Team' since 1984, for periods of one to five years. We've consistently had two or three people to share the work on an alternating, flexible roster enabling them to take a month or two 'leave' at will. Chris Emery

continues to back up as our computer guru. The ever-present Sonja Lenz keeps the correspondence in order. Through all these years, Clive Hurlstone has attended to the phone and email messages, and arranged stationery supplies.

**Annette Smith  
Office Coordinator**



# A labour of love: maintaining the Budawangs track

This program, which ran between about 1989 and 1993, probably arose from the high frequency of walking along and through the boggy track in the Corang Peak area of the Budawangs (Morton National Park), on route to popular destinations in that region. There was also a seemingly never-ending dialogue between, and concern expressed by, NPA walkers of the even then increasing pressures on favourite camp sites and routes.

Our NPWS (NSW) contact was Senior Ranger Alan Norman, who was eager to establish working relationships with bushwalking club members. He was already working with the Coast and Mountain Walkers and Canberra Bushwalkers, and had delineated sections of interest and 'ownership' to each. NPA ACT got the Wog Wog–Corang side of the park.

Because of the terrain we almost always had to carry in our gear and tools. Generally there were 16–26 participants, including the then young Ben Thompson, Andrew Paine and Michelle Puniard, and sometimes other young people seeking to gain work experience. Clive Hurlstone, who became an NPA stalwart and sometime president, and his brother, made a Budawangs work party their first NPA outing (and almost got lost in their car getting there). My printouts of who attended read like a 'Who's who' and bring back many memories of special times with special people. The program went on to obtain a \$1 000 grant from the National Estates Program, and to receive written thanks and commendation from Graham Worboys of the NPWS SE Directorate.

Some things never change as the following extract from my records shows:

*The NPWS, as we all know at the macro level, are strapped for funds and manpower resources. We have been told at the micro level how dispiriting it can be for one person to labour all day on a hill and to see how little effect their efforts have made to a large-scale problem, but put 20 people there and the scene is transformed before one's eyes.*

Many will remember the 'popular with NPWS people' double-sided rake-cum-hoe, and also how Clive saved us on later work parties by building stretchers to carry the more than a metre long ironbark logs used for retaining purposes. Good thing we were all younger and stronger, and that OH&S requirements were lower then.

## Of memories

The commemorative song *Working at Wog Wog*, by the NPA 'poet laureate' Judy Webster, was just one expression of our feelings at that time. Sometimes this author and leader had other feelings. One



group of 24 had to carry 70 ironbark logs some distance across the escarpment because high winds had prevented the helicopter from dropping them at the workplace. But as I recorded:

*The logistics consisted of transporting 23 ruck sacks, 24 day packs, ranger equipment and radios, 'dozens' of picks, mattocks, shovels and other digging paraphernalia, a large quantity of steel pegs, plus Les Pyke's car camping equipment complete with gas stove and FOLDING CHAIR. This latter workperson pleaded no knowledge of instructions that the workers were to come 'as for a back pack' ... Some time later (having packed a Land Cruiser troop carrier to the ceiling with camping gear, sandwiched in five NPA members, fitted further working gear, and the said Mr Pyke's chair,*

*(continued next page)*



## A labour of love: maintaining the Budawangs track *(continued)*

into the rear section of said vehicle) we were about to depart only to discover that Les himself had been overlooked in the packing! As there was scarcely breathing space in the back, (well that was the excuse) he quickly opted to sit in the front with Alan Norman (the Ranger) and the female occupants. This entailed Les nursing one, with Doreen Wilson left to perform some fancy leg work to the tune of the engine revs as Alan manoeuvred each gear change.

On another occasion Reg Alder and Fiona MacDonald Brand went ahead of the main party to camp at Wog Wog to

mind the wooden blocks ('cheeses') for NPWS to ensure that they were not used for bonfires or trucked off by passing motorists for firewood.

Another weekend we spent two days working in mud; using local timbers we constructed a substantial corduroy across a well-known bog. The finished product was most impressive, so we sat near the track to admire our work and to wait for the first bushwalkers and the compliments we thought were so deserved. Can you believe it? The group that came through were disappointed that we had taken the 'adventure' out of the bog!

These days, many of us do not go into the Budawangs as regularly as we used to, if at all. However, we did make a difference both on the ground, and in pioneering the now common practice of working and collaborating with NPWS and Namadgi park managers. While there is now a lot more politics and paperwork, NPA members still maintain the strong hands-on traditions of work parties.

**Dianne Thompson**



### **Budawang track work party photographs**

Above. Sonja Lenz, Les Pyke, Sue Thompson, Graham Guttridge and Dianne Thompson. September 1991.

Facing page, top. When the helicopter drops the logs somewhere up the slope, someone has to carry them down. Budawangs work party, May 1992.

Facing page, far left. Jane O'Donohue selecting stones for track stabilisation, 1989. Photo Judy Webster

Facing page, near left. Tim Walsh and Les Pyke bridging a ditch, rerouting a low-lying section of the track, September 1991.

Photos from Dianne Thompson unless otherwise attributed

## *Working at Wog Wog*

*(To the tune of a traditional Aussie song ...)*

Once some jolly workers sat around their lunchtime fire  
Under the shade of some eucalypt trees;  
And they sang as they watched and waited till their billy boiled  
'Who'll come a-working alongside of me?'

*Working at Wog Wog, working at Wog Wog  
Who'll come a-working alongside of me.  
And they sang as they watched and waited till their billy boiled  
Who'll come a-working alongside of me.*

Up drove a ranger, impressive in his uniform  
Up jumped the workers—one, two, three  
'What's that jolly load that you've got in your service truck?'  
'A hundred more "cheeses"' he shouted with glee.

*Working at Wog Wog, working at Wog Wog  
etc.*

Then those weary workers, told him of their labours  
Slaving all morning—and all of it for free!  
Shifting stones and rocks, and 'cheeses' by the dozen  
'Who'll come a-working at Wog Wog alongside of me?'

*Working at Wog Wog, working at Wog Wog  
etc*

They took the ranger down the track, to see the progress they had made  
'It's great work you're doing here, for sure!' said he  
And they thought they heard him chuckle, as he left them all hard at it still  
'That'll keep them busy, till its time for tea'.

*(Final refrain)*

*Working at Wog Wog, working at Wog Wog  
Who'll come a-working alongside of me."  
And they thought they heard him chuckle, as he left them all hard at it still  
'That'll keep them busy, till its time for tea'.*

**Judith Webster**

# Recollections of Black Mountain spring walks

*Nancy Burbidge initiated the Black Mountain walks in the early 1960s, and George Chippendale took over their leadership from Nancy.*

*George Chippendale, the author of the first part of this article, was a botanist specialising in eucalypts. George was NPA ACT President from 1971 to 1972. His wife Thelma co-authored Wildflowers of the Australian Capital Territory (Jacaranda Press, 1972) with her husband. Sadly, we have heard of the passing of George as this Bulletin goes to press.*

We arrived in Canberra in August 1966, and it was not long before I had discussions with Nancy Burbidge who was a botanical colleague. I had met her and also worked in her herbarium previously. Very soon she told me about NPA, and invited us to join her walk on Black Mountain. I was busy at the time with a botanical project in WA, and we were settling into a new house in Lyons.

We did join NPA when we were adjusted. I remember Nancy stressing to me that her walks were a mixture of talking of the plants and, just as importantly, talking to one another. She painted it as a friendly social ramble on Saturday afternoons. Perhaps a year or so later, Nancy asked me if I would consider taking over the walk. I felt I might not know enough about the plants concerned, so I asked Laurie Adams to give me some clues. He willingly spent lunchtime with me on the walk area, and I took over soon afterwards. I certainly tried to keep it as Nancy had it, and I enjoyed the company and the social contact.

There was one plant, a vine *Comesperma volubile*, that I always looked for at a particular point on the track. It was the only place I found it. It wound around other low shrubs and I tried to make it a feature, as it was different from the other plants.

Because I wanted to watch Rugby League on Saturday afternoons (it was live on ABC TV in those days), I decided



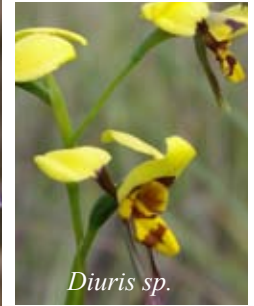
*Grevillea sp.*



*Bracteantha sp.*



*Glossodia major*



*Diuris sp.*

to change the time of the walk to Saturday mornings, and this became the pattern for the next many years. I recall one Saturday before this change when rain was falling lightly. I wondered whether anybody would turn up, and hoped the rain would get heavier and I could watch the game. However, I arrived on time, the rain continued and members turned up in good numbers, with raincoats, brollies and all! It was all good fun, even with small streams beginning to flow.

I have many memories of those walks. They were always a total enjoyment, and I was most glad to have my wife Thelma, our daughter Joy and, on at least one occasion, our granddaughter Faith with me. Only some infirmities of age have caused me to stop leading the walk, but it is most pleasing that it continues under capable hands.

*Jean Geue wrote the second part of this article. Jean belongs to several plant and conservation organisations in Canberra and met George and Thelma Chippendale in the 1960s when she was working as a librarian in the Alice Springs public library. George was a botanist with CSIRO in Alice Springs. Although Jean isn't a member of NPA ACT, she took over the organisation and promotion of the annual Black Mountain walk from George. Here she gives an account of the Black Mountain spring ramble of 11 October 2008.*

It was great to be able to continue the Burbidge/Chippendale tradition of the spring ramble on Black Mountain, in 2008, its 37th year. Thanks are due to the

Friends of the Australian Botanic Gardens, the Australian Native Plant Society (ANPS) and NPA ACT for continuing to promote the walk. It is proving a valuable outreach activity and I trust we will be able to continue the tradition.

We were delighted with the response, because we attracted our target audience— people who love the bush but who didn't really know how to look for wildflowers or see the subtle differences and the diversity. Because of the drought, the flowers were smaller and less abundant, but it was fascinating to find so many persisting.

There were 31 people, including 3 children, on the walk, drawn from members of the organisations promoting the walk and the Ginninderra Catchment Group, and in response to a 'Community Contacts' notice in the local newspaper *The Chronicle*. Peter Ormay, Laurie Adams and I led the walk.

We started our walk via the Belconnen Way entry to Black Mountain, which leads to easier grades for walking. We attempted to divide the group into three, but mostly walked together or in smaller groups in the same direction. All the notices had said it was a 'ramble' with easy grades and this may have worked as we attracted people who were happy to do just that. Some turned back after an hour, but they seemed to have enjoyed themselves and it was an easy return for them along fire trails until they could see the road.

We had a late morning tea at about 11.30 and about eight people kept on rambling until 1 pm.

We found flowers of a couple of *Diuris spp.* (Donkey orchids), also *Craspedia sp.* (Billy Buttons), *Arachnorchis sp.* (a Spider orchid), *Thysanotus patersonii* (Twining Fringe Lily), *Stackhousia monogyna* (Creamy Candles), *Comesperma volubile* (Love Creeper) in its usual place, and many *Hibbertia sp.* (Guinea Flowers). We came across *Lyperanthus suaveolens* (Brown Beaks), an orchid rare in the ACT, which is just recovering from a

*(continued next page)*



*Calochilus sp.*



*Hibbertia sp.*



*Thelymitra sp.*





# Interim Namadgi Advisory Board

The Interim Namadgi Advisory Board first met in August 2001, with Matilda House and Ian Fraser as co-chairs. Agnes Shea, Valda Connors, Rosalyn Brown, Sue Briggs, Fred Monaghan, Michael Pearson, Geoff Wells and Dianne Thompson made up the 10 members (5 Aboriginal and 5 non-Aboriginal). Ian Fraser resigned for personal reasons not long after and Geoff Butler took on the role of co-chair.

The agreement for the establishment of the board was undertaken during Chief Minister Kate Carnell's administration, in a spirit of reconciliation following the withdrawal of one of two undetermined Native Title claims over the Australian Capital Territory then before the Federal Court. The Stanhope Government was happy to honour that agreement. Members of the board agreed to:

*... participate in the management of Namadgi National Park; to be consulted on specific regional Aboriginal cultural issues; and to be consulted on the development of amendments to legislation that will impact on Namadgi National Park.*

The board's last meeting was in August 2006. The government has never advised members of its dissolution, nor offered any thanks for the considerable amount of work carried out and goodwill engendered between board members, the park service and interested sectors of the community.

## Drafting a management plan

During that period there were three overlapping and interrelated events which dominated, and will continue to dominate, Namadgi management. The first was the drafting of a new Namadgi Plan of Management (NPoM). The second was the 2003 fire event. The third was the simultaneous development of the draft Kosciuszko Plan of Management. Kosciuszko National Park and Brindabella National Park share a common border along Namadgi's long western and northern boundaries.

Secretariat and other support was



*The Interim Namadgi Advisory Board at the Namadgi Visitor Centre, 2003.*

*Photo Di Thompson*

provided by the very able Terence Uren and Sharon Lane. Their contribution to the smooth operation of the board and to drafting many versions of the NPoM cannot be understated. Nevertheless, at the end of 2009, the NPoM remains, unfortunately, a draft.

## Indigenous engagement

One of the high points of the board's activities was the employment of three trainee Aboriginal rangers and another Aboriginal officer. While recognising that nothing runs completely smoothly, the program of training and employment became a very useful and successful model. The period immediately after the fires was one in which these young, new starters had to learn 'hands on'. Ten employees' houses in the park were lost, 95 per cent of the park was burnt, breeding programs and their animals destroyed and, in general, everyone, including the people of Canberra itself, was reeling. However, this provided the opportunity for the board, TAFE educationalists, the community, and staff from the then Urban Services Department to pull together and demonstrate strength and initiative with respect to the trainees and Namadgi management. The National Parks Association of the ACT was one community group that stepped in and developed a long-term program of assistance.

## The 2003 fires: assessing the damage

Board members undertook several visits to Namadgi and to the Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve after the fires. The first involved a full-day trip (9 hours) in which we saw only one small patch that wasn't burned. Yet the highlight, at a time less than three weeks after the fires, was to see the amount of regrowth already visible, and to be with park officers when they heard the first bird-song as we got out of our cars on the Leura Gap Road.

Amazingly, the newly installed signage that the board and the Aboriginal community had had input to had been left untouched by the fires.

I too believe that bringing people back to country (and that involves white people too) does have a spirituality about it and this was what we were seeing. I still look with pride at the Namadgi signage—which was, at that time, advanced in its design, interpretation and presentation—moulded to reflect the Canberra and Namadgi skyline. It still brings back to me some very positive memories of my time on the board.

I am proud to have been a member, and especially the environmental representative, on the Interim Namadgi Advisory Board.

**Dianne Thompson**

## Recollections of Black Mountain spring walks

control burn some years ago, *Cyrtostylis reniformis* (Gnat Orchid), scattered *Glossodia major* (Waxlip Orchid), a *Thelymitra* sp. (a Sun Orchid), *Calochilus* sp. (a Beard Orchid), possibly *Stellaria pungens* (Prickly Starwort), *Pultenaea procumbens* (Eggs and Bacon) and others that I didn't photograph.

Peter Ormay and Laurie Adams did a great job identifying our Black Mountain wildflowers and showing people how and where to look for them. We are privileged to be able to call on their expertise.

*Flower photos taken on Black Mountain, October 2009, Adrienne Nicholson*

*(continued)*

*It is with sadness that we have heard of the passing of George Chippendale as this article was being prepared for the Bulletin.*



# The Gudgenby Bush Regeneration Project: activities and achievements

Although many of the founding members were affiliated with NPA ACT, the GBRG is a separate incorporated organisation and is now part of the Southern ACT Catchment Group. It remains very closely associated with NPA ACT in terms of common goals and objectives, and there continues to be a high degree of overlapping membership. Syd Comfort will be presenting a more detailed description of the progress made by the Group at Gudgenby in the June 2010 NPA Bulletin.

The Gudgenby Bush Regeneration Group was formed in 1998 to assist in the rehabilitation of the 380ha Boboyan Pine Plantation back to native vegetation. The pine plantation at the southern end of the Gudgenby Valley had been planted with *Pinus radiata* as a commercial venture in 1966. The area was incorporated into Namadgi National Park in 1984 and lobbying by the NPA ACT, led mainly by President Eleanor Stodart, to have the pines removed finally resulted in commencement of a planned, progressive program of harvesting usable timber, burning the trash and seeding into ash beds. Felling of compartments began in 1996 and continued until completion in 2004.

## Reversing past changes

For 11 years the group has worked hard to achieve the aims of removing all pines, retaining the existing natural vegetation and advancing the recovery of native shrub and tree cover. This work has included direct seeding, growing and planting of tube stock, 'exclosure' construction, watering, weed control and fence removal. This would not have been achieved without working in close cooperation with Park staff who have helped with the development of work programs, brought out the equipment trailer for each monthly work party, organised the broadacre seeding and

contractors to perform tasks such as track maintenance and spraying of large weedy areas.

## Signs of progress

The group has retained a membership of 15–20 over the years, with an average of about 10 people at each work party. New members have joined and replaced those who are no longer able to make the monthly commitment and they have been welcomed to provide new incentives and energy to continue the rehabilitation work. Although the area is now all seeded or planted out to native vegetation, there are still the continuing tasks of weeding, fence removal and looking for pine wildlings, as well as monitoring of growth through transect data. A sign of real progress is the flowering of some of the gum trees in the earlier plantings. Birds are abundant now that the native trees are regenerating and it is quite common to spot eagles, wood swallows and others. Understorey species are also beginning to re-grow and spring is the time to see the *Chrysocephalum* and *Vittadinia* daisies and the occasional orchid.

## Recognising major contributions

Parts of the revegetation area have been given names by group members that recognise the work of rangers and members who have assisted in the program. The most notable is Eleanor Grove beside Hospital Creek where over 150 *Eucalyptus stellulata* have been planted in memory of Eleanor Stodart. For former rangers, Amanda Slope is named in memory of Amanda Carey, and Welch's Way for Steve Welch who was the first ranger to assist the program in 1998. Ranger Darren Roso has a ridge named after him and Project Manager Ann Connelly has a crossing named after



Substantial feral pines are still located from time to time, but these Gudgenby Bushies (Chesley Engram and Michael Goonrey) won't be beaten! Photo Adrienne Nicholson

her. Car Key Corner recalls the time Eleanor lost her car keys and had to catch a lift home before returning with the spares, while Syd Comfort is remembered for his Blackberry Patch. However, we should not forget the efforts of the early members who have made such a great contribution. Eleanor Stodart, Frank Clements, Fiona MacDonald Brand, David Hall, Len Haskew, Simon Buckpitt and Clive Hurlstone have all contributed to the success of the program through their hard work both in the field and on committees. Martin Chalk has also collected and monitored water data for many years which has assisted in tracking trends in and quality of the creeks.

Without the enormous amount of work that went on behind the scenes for those on committees and in liaison roles, and in the physical hard labour of seeding in the regeneration area, this project would never have succeeded. Thanks and appreciation should be accorded to all those regular members whose tireless efforts have made a very great difference to this landscape.

**Hazel Rath**

## Yankee Hat name shifted

Following the article *Solving the puzzle of Yankee Hat* in the December 2009 NPA Bulletin, the authorities have accepted that the name Yankee Hat on a peak in Namadgi National Park was bestowed on the wrong mountain, as shown on the Yaouk 1:25 000 topographic and orthophoto map, 8626-2N, second edition.

According to the NSW Land and Property Information Authority, the name has now been moved to the smaller peak of 1447m (latitude 35° 44' 47"S, longitude 148° 56' 32"E) seen on the Rendezvous Creek 8626-1S map, second edition. This peak overlooks the Aboriginal rock art site of the same name.

ACT Place Names, part of the ACT Planning and Land Authority, advised me

on 7 January 2010 that its database would be changed to reflect the correction and the change would be forwarded to Geoscience Australia for inclusion in the National Gazetteer in the next update.

This leaves the prominent adjoining higher peak, wrongly called Yankee Hat on the Yaouk map, without a name. Maybe a competition is called for.

**Graeme Barrow**



# The NPA ACT website

About the middle of 2004 an NPA ACT working group, comprising Chris Emery, David Large, Sonja Lenz and Kevin McCue, met to discuss a long-vaunted, much-needed update of the existing website. A first-cut draft had been set up on an ANU Sun site by David's daughter Annabelle, working part-time on a voluntary basis while she completed her studies. We agreed that to speed up the process and incorporate a content management system (database driven) we would seek input from a professional web designer and go through a tender process. Chris agreed to take on the job of webmaster.

In July Christine Goonrey sent us a draft design brief for an NPA ACT website. Members of the working group edited the draft and shortly afterwards sent copies to five potential tenderers. Quotes were received by late November and Encode were chosen as the successful tenderer in late December 2004. Their solution's strength was its core, a content management system.

Martin Chalk provided 18 excellent photographs for a style banner across the top of each page, the photo chosen at random at each page change. Content was provided by the working group members and Encode's Rohan

Whitmore provided the first mockups in February 2005. The Encode office was flooded during heavy rain in February which was a minor setback—that and an access problem for Mac users. On 26 May 2005 all the bugs were sorted out and the NPA ACT website went live!

The content management system dynamically updates the 'News' and the 'Events' program which is probably the most frequently accessed page on the website. A 'Sitemap' and 'Gallery' of photos including work parties, walks, outings and ACT birds have since been added. Back issues of the *Bulletin* are being progressively uploaded (thanks to Mike Bremers, many compilers and Chris Emery) and podcasting has been implemented. We have added a form so that people can leave a bequest in their will to the NPA ACT.

The website is constantly being updated by our webmaster with news, issues and events such as this year's 50th anniversary celebrations.

Sabine Friederich is also acknowledged for her encouragement, many suggestions and technical advice for improving the website.

**Kevin McCue**

## *Different perceptions in the bush*

Artistic flourishes aren't always appreciated, even if they're from the hand of a master.

On a walk to Gibraltar Falls in February 1966, new member Betty Campbell wondered what sort of group she'd joined when walk leader Nancy Burbidge and committee member Julie Henry reacted strongly to paint marks on the rock next to Gibraltar Falls.

The rock had been used as a palette when artist John Perceval, an ANU Fellow, was painting a scene near Gibraltar Falls.

'I was a fan of John Perceval', Betty told me, but Nancy and Julie were 'so upset and distressed ... I didn't know anything about the desecration of the environment then'. She had thought the incident worth a quiet chuckle and one to share with a friend afterwards.

Committee meeting minutes archived in the Heritage Library at Woden and dated 3 May 1966 have an entry about 'vandalism' in the form of 'paint smears' at Gibraltar Falls. If

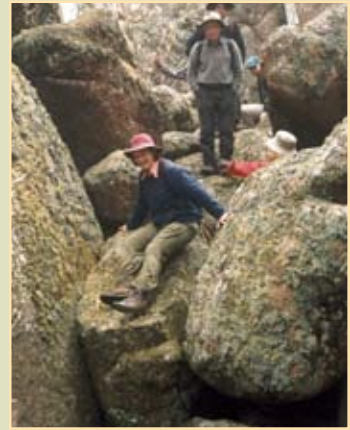


*John Percival's unsigned art work left at Gibraltar Falls.*

one assumes the incident and minutes entry were connected, Nancy or Julie must have followed the matter through because the 'culprit apologised by phone and the Department of the Interior cleaned away the paint marks'.

Betty still has the photograph (above) which she took of the offending 'mess', but— without a signature.

**Judy Kelly**



## *Ridge of stone*

*climbing  
out of the cave  
up granite slabs  
emerging  
into snow covered mountains*

*touching  
the boulder and moving  
around it  
delicately ... feeling  
relief and gratitude*

*above the valley  
from north to south  
the snowcapped peaks ...  
Ginini ... Gingera ...  
Bimberi ... Mount Murray*

*grateful this day  
for roughness  
of granite  
friction of boots ...  
the sense of freedom*

*dropping  
down off a tor  
into forest  
sunlight slants across  
glowing white tree trunks*

*after five hours  
on the Orroral ridge  
I feel tired —  
even another  
rocky peak can't tempt me*

**Gerry Jacobson**



# Molonglo Valley development—will the eagles keep their home?

If you start from the end of Stockdill Drive and walk along the ridge paralleling the Molonglo River, you will enjoy expansive views over the Molonglo Valley, including the Lower Molonglo Nature Reserve and Spring Hill Farm. But dramatic change is about to begin. ACT Government plans for growth over the next 30 years are focused on this region. On 19 August 2008 the ACT Legislative Assembly divided the Molonglo District into three regions (Variation No. 281 to the Territory Plan): East Molonglo (north of Weston Creek to William Hovell Drive) to be developed for housing starting in early 2010; Central Molonglo (from Kama Woodland Reserve to Stockdill Drive) is under a development moratorium in perpetuity; and West Molonglo (west of Holt) is reserved for the present for broadacre development (i.e. peri-urban agriculture, education, research). The matter of a lake for the suburb (dam site 2km west of Coppins Crossing) is still to be resolved, subject to an ACT Planning and Land Authority (ACTPLA) review of options. (This area has been the subject of two previous NPA *Bulletin* articles: Syd Comfort, March 2009 and Esther Gallant, December 2009).

## Plans for East Molonglo

The first East Molonglo suburbs of Coombs and Wright are to be located

north of Weston Creek, stretching from the Tuggeranong Parkway to Uriarra Road. The northern boundary is about 0.5km north of the intersection of Uriarra and Coppins Crossing roads and stretches from there directly east to the Molonglo River (see map). These two suburbs are projected to accommodate 5000 dwellings in a 'sustainable' development. According to the ACTPLA planning document:

*Molonglo is being planned from the outset to establish a transit-oriented structure for future urban development. Urban development in Molonglo Valley will set new standards for sustainability in the context of safe and walkable neighbourhoods, environmental protection, water management, energy and waste, with good access to services and facilities, including fast and frequent public transport, community facilities and recreational opportunities.*

This all sounds admirable; however, there is no mechanism currently in place to guarantee that the developers will adhere to this concept.

## Draft Strategic Assessment of Environmental Impacts due

In September 2008 the ACT and Commonwealth governments signed an agreement that a Strategic Assessment of

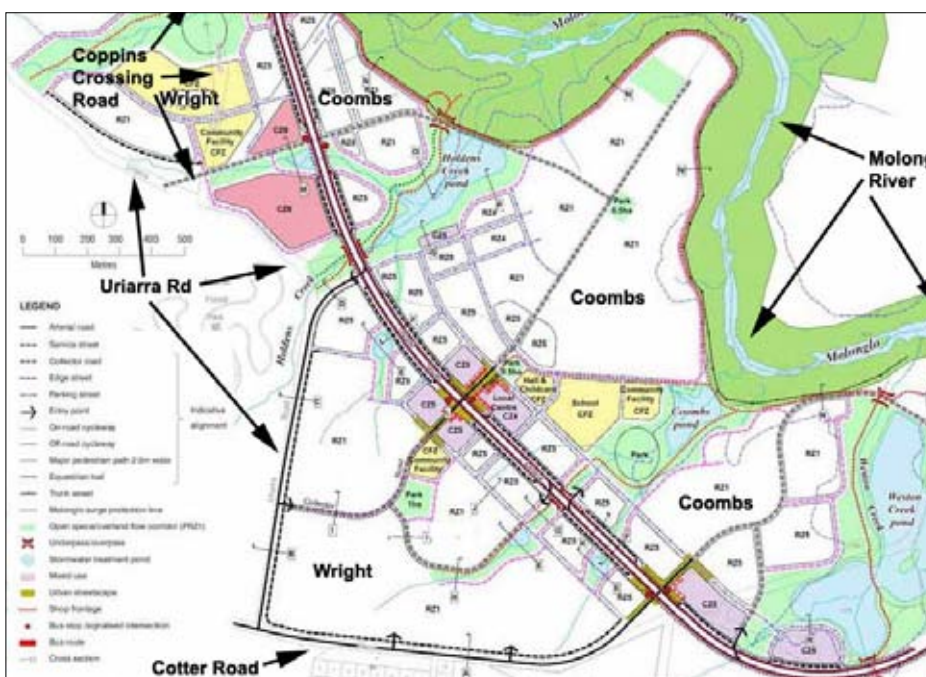
Environmental Impacts (SAEI) of the development of the Molonglo District is required under Commonwealth law. The agreement includes the following:

*Environmental investigations in the Molonglo and North Weston area have identified several matters of national environmental significance, including the pink-tailed worm lizard, the White Box–Yellow Box–Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland and the Natural Temperate Grasslands of the Southern Tablelands of NSW and the ACT. Given the presence of these, development in Molonglo and North Weston must be referred to the Commonwealth Environment Minister for assessment under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.*

According to ACTPLA a draft version of this document should be available for public comment some time in February 2010 (but we suspected it may well be March before it sees the light of day).

In a December 2009 presentation to the Conservation Council ACT Region, Kelvin Walsh, Director of Planning Services for ACTPLA, gave the following schedule for the Coombs/Wright suburb development: north–south arterial road construction to start in February 2010, subdivision construction in January 2011 and housing construction in October 2011. At the time of writing this article, ACTPLA confirmed the February 2010 date for the start of road construction. Thus, work on the arterial road is likely to be underway *before* the draft SAEI has been made available for public comment, not to mention approved by the Commonwealth Environment Minister. However, in order to speed up development of Coombs and Wright, the Commonwealth has excluded these areas from the strategic assessment process. Advice is that the ACT Land Development Agency and the ACT Department of Territory and Municipal Services are developing a riparian strategy for Coombs and Wright, and that this will include community consultation.

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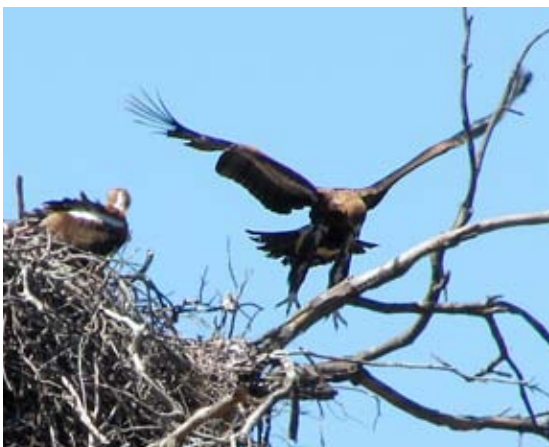
# Molonglo Valley development—will the eagles keep their home? *(continued)*

## Agreed conservation objectives

Variation No. 281 includes many of the recommendations made to the ACT Standing Committee on Planning and Environment by the ACT Conservation Council (website at <<http://www.consact.org.au>>). In addition to removing Central Molonglo from urban development these included: an enlarged Kama Nature Reserve to provide a more significant wildlife corridor; retention of yellow box–red gum woodland within urban development areas; mandatory cat containment; conservation leases in Central Molonglo; and a recognition of the importance of maintaining habitat for iconic large raptors (e.g. wedge-tailed eagles) in the Molonglo Valley. Issues yet to be resolved include the plan of management for the Kama Woodlands and Molonglo River Corridor, the extent of development in the northern part of East Molonglo (how close to Kama Woodland) and stormwater management (i.e. with or without a dam). Furthermore, the nature of the proposed conservation leases has not yet been considered. The *big picture* question—How much growth does Canberra need?—is outside the scope of this article. As usual we need to be ever vigilant. If you have information on the flora and fauna of any part of the Molonglo area, details would be gratefully received by the Conservation Council which will be working hard to ensure minimum impacts from the construction and existence of the new suburbs.

## Eagle watching— a personal account

Approximately midway along the stretch of the Molonglo River below Coppins Crossing is the nesting territory of a pair of wedge-tailed eagles. The enormous



nest is located high in a dead casuarina tree on the bank of the river. At the time of writing this, the clearly distinguishable parents (smaller darker male and larger, partly blond female) are tending two fledglings. This is apparently unusual as eagles are said to rarely raise more than one chick per year, although they commonly lay 2–3 eggs. The progress of this pair of youngsters from fluffy chicks to handsome fledglings has fascinated me for over 2 months. Each time I headed out to visit I wondered if the clearly smaller chick would have survived another week. I have watched them exercise their wings, tear apart meals (sometimes a cockatoo), and finally glide through the gorge on enormous wings. The smaller chick **did** take 2 weeks longer to fly but seemed to grow rapidly once the bigger, (presumably older) chick left the nest. The parents continued to feed both chicks—one on the ground and the other in the nest. The young birds are intermediate in colour to the adults and identified themselves as juveniles by continuing to make their feeding cry after leaving the nest. The eagles have not been concerned by my presence, sometimes accompanied by a friend or two, or several as on the 1 November 2009 NPA walk. We watch mostly from a distance just within range of telephoto lenses. On one early visit one of the adults circled behind us and flew low over our heads. Since then we have been ignored, and the eagles have carried on with eagle business. For the adults this seems to mean mostly sitting in trees along the cliff top above the nest site or soaring high overhead. They must be very efficient hunters to have so much leisure time! Watching the young eagles learn to fly has been a special treat—especially seeing one extricate itself, with difficulty, from a swaying brushy treetop perch, and later apparently giving up and walking the rest of the way to the top of the cliff.

## A rich fauna and flora

A pair of kestrels appears to have a nest on the cliff just upstream of the eagles. Amazingly they all seem to be on good terms, as I have seen a kestrel perched in the same cliff-top tree as the male



eagle, on a branch only about a metre or two away and even in the top of the nest tree. Common birds of the region abound: several raptor species (including black-shouldered kites and goshawks), rainbow bee eaters, mistletoe birds and several species of parrots. On one slow walk, we counted 2 dozen species. There are swamp wallabies, wallaroos, eastern grey kangaroos, echidnas, jacky lizards (tree dragons) and, judging by the number of active burrows, a number of wombats. These are just the animals and birds that I have seen— only a small sample I'm sure. There is also a variety of native plants which produced an impressive wildflower display in early November, especially the bulbine lilies. One of my botanically knowledgeable companions identified a cluster of westringias considered to be rare in the ACT. Unfortunately, very few Canberrans know what this area contains, or even that the place exists. In all my trips there I have not seen a walker other than those who have accompanied me.

What will happen as development proceeds to the south of the river? Certainly the hunting territory of the eagles will be diminished. Since they need such large territories they probably will be the first affected of the valley residents. It would be sad to think that the northern ACT might no longer have these magnificent birds soaring in the skies. Most certainly, I will be visiting the nest next spring in the hope that the eagles will stay for another year or two.

*I thank John Hibberd for his assistance in the preparation of this article.*

**Esther Gallant**

*Photos of the eagle chicks growing up, including flying practice, by Esther Gallant*

# The Glendale trees—pioneering native revegetation

*Steve Hill is a long-time member of NPA ACT who leads day walks to interesting spots in Tidbinbilla and the Snowies. His father Charles Hill, who was a life member of NPA ACT, initiated the Glendale tree revegetation project. Steve's mother Audrey supported the venture and was also an active member of the organisation.*

A dominating memory from 25 years ago for some of us is of washing, flattening and storing empty milk cartons for tree seedlings and filling used orange juice containers with water. Certainly our children were always reminding us to keep each empty milk carton so they could give them to 'Nanny and Grandpa' Hill. We would ask our kids why. 'So Nanny and Grandpa can grow baby trees for Gudgenby', they would answer.

## The Year of the Tree and beyond

1983 had been designated as the *Year of the Tree*. This was all new stuff then, but not included in the planners' minds was that 1982–83 was to become the year of the drought—the most severe for 20 years. We are still looking forward to the year of the rain.

Like now, the National Parks Association of the ACT comprised a vibrant, enthusiastic group of people and the prospect of the Gudgenby Nature Reserve being declared a national park was looking good. So the keenness to participate visibly in celebrating the *Year of the Tree* was strong in the Association. The idea was developed in the committees during 1981 and early 1982 and was all new, the science of native-tree planting in the 'high country' being at an embryonic stage then. The project had to be both practical and inclusive for volunteers to manage.

Some degraded land near the newly completed Gudgenby Nature Reserve Information Centre, at that time located between the Boboyan Road and Gudgenby River just downstream from Glendale Crossing, had been used as a storage depot for road-making equipment and supplies. It

did not present a good image at the entry to the Gudgenby Nature Reserve. The NPA ACT wanted to meld it into the rest of this beautiful valley.

The idea was to collect seeds from local eucalypts in the region, mainly Snow Gum, Black Sallee, Candlebark and Apple Box. The site was relatively weed free apart from briar roses that could be easily cleared. And there was money around. Up to \$1000 was offered—way more than was expected for such a project. Planning and surveying was conducted throughout 1982 and seed collecting was done adjacent to the proposed site during June 1982. The seed was expertly prepared by John Banks.

## The 'year of the milk carton'

1982 became the year of the milk carton as the ever-ingenious lateral thinkers of the committee quickly realised that the recently introduced milk carton would be a brilliant vessel to pot seedlings for transfer to the new site. The plantings took place in late 1982–83 in ploughed furrows, and hand-made tree guards were installed to keep the animals at bay. The first were too small and unstable, but more effective designs were developed at no cost. But 1983 was also the year of the orange-juice container. Because the drought was in full swing by January, many a trip to what our kids called



*Steve Hill on Mt Nungar, 1998  
Photo Max Lawrence*

'Nanny and Grandpa's Trees', included as many 5-litre containers of water as could be collected.

## Resilience rewarded

It worked because despite all that could be thrown at them—by kangaroos, insects, misdirected mowers, continuing drought and frost—just over half of the of the plants survived beyond 5 years. The last formally recorded review was conducted in 1988, noting that there had also been some useful natural regeneration.

So, over 25 years later, what does it look like? Well ... despite fire and more drought, the degraded patch of land has blended in rather nicely. Moreover, the Glendale project sowed the seeds for the major revegetation projects of the new millennium in the old Gudgenby Nature Reserve.

**Steve Hill**



*Teddy's Hut, Kosciuszko National Park, January 2010. Ink wash by Gary Thompson*



# Looking over my shoulder: fond memories of NPA ACT people

Organisations may be directed towards pursuing objectives and realising ideals, but it is people and relationships that make things happen. Fortunately the ACT National Parks Association has never been without members who have done just that and have also provided the substance of some rich memories.

## Bob Story

Bob was one of the architects of the proposal for the establishment of a national park in the ACT who, as well as contributing his dedication and professional knowledge, brought a delightful, puckish humour. On one ramble in the Canberra Nature Park, I led the group across the busy Hindmarsh Drive at a fast-moving and rather blind spot. Bob, knowing that I had spent some time in the navy, casually remarked that I must have been in the Kamikaze squad. I got the message.

On another occasion, during an overnight work party clearing pines in the Boboyan Pine Plantation (now the Gudgenby Bush Regeneration Area) after the 1983 bushfires, we were sitting round after the evening meal when someone remarked that they had not seen Bob for some time: nor had anyone else. But a little later he was again with us. Subsequently the explanation surfaced: Bob had come without his victuals but rather than be a burden on the less-forgetful members he had made himself scarce at dinnertime hoping his absence would not be noticed.

I remember too the time on a coastal bushwalk Bob was the target of a vigorous night attack by a host of small ticks and sought relief in various medications offered by other walkers, but to little avail. His scientific interest overcame his irritation and he carefully collected tick specimens on the adhesive side of sticking plaster for later identification. But I gather from recent visitors to the area his studies had done little to curb the enthusiasm of the tick population.

## Charles Hill

Charles Hill brought to the association his extensive experience on the Victorian snowfields and of walking with the, then all-male, Melbourne Walking Club, experience he willingly shared with other members. Charles and I were like-minded in that on retirement we both

took up campervanning, and Barbara and I were fortunate enough to enjoy a number of national park trips with Audrey and Charles.

Charles was a tower of strength in the association, contributing over a wide spectrum from committee membership to leading walks and camps. He will be particularly remembered for the thoroughness of his management of the Glendale tree planting project in the mid 1980s, but that is a saga that warrants a telling in its own right. On one occasion Charles led a car camp in the Tom Groggin area and he took us on a longish day walk the return path bringing us along an old vehicle track. A small truck came along the track behind us, stopped and offered a lift towards the camp, which some accepted. It became clear that our leader was not at all sure that a wheeled vehicle had any right to be on the track, nor that to accept a ride was the right way to conclude the walk. Not that he said a word!

## Reg Alder

Whereas Charles brought a Victorian flavour to the association, Reg brought a distinctly Sydney background with years of walking and association with early bushwalkers such as Paddy Pallin. Many of our members cut their bushwalking teeth on Reg's walks. But Reg had many other interests which made him a natural fit into many of the association's activities, and a warmth that engendered close friendships.

Reg had a long-standing interest in photography which he applied to capturing many aspects of the association over a number of years. During this time there was rarely an NPA *Bulletin* that did not feature one or more of his photos. Although he had used colour slide film from the time that it had first become available, Reg's NPA photographs were all black and white, giving scope to his skills in developing and printing as well as behind the camera. He was unobtrusive when photographing, usually skirting on the edge of a situation or group taking a small number of carefully composed shots. The National Library holds many of his photographs.

Reg was in his element working on the restoration of Orroral Homestead and managed substantial components of the work. During the 1980s he edited the



*Bulletin*, some of his issues being a tribute to experimentation in the use of print size and a challenge to the eyesight and determination of members.

## Ian Currie

In the mid 1970s Ian instigated the now legendary weekend car camps. His whimsical sense of fun and capacity to work along with people overlaid a keen recognition of the significance of important issues. Ian also managed to debunk any ideas of the stuffiness of the dental profession. One of his stories concerned his time in the dental hospital towards the end of his training. Faced with the extraction of a particularly stubborn molar he and his male fellows exerted their not inconsiderable strength to no avail. When they retreated a slightly built colleague of the fairer sex quietly grasped the forceps and with a deft twist and pull secured the prize to the stunned abashment of her fellows.

## Ken Johnson

Although Ken was perhaps not so widely known as some of the others recalled here, he made many a contribution to the association often through his artistic and drafting skills, his cover design to Kevin Frawley's valuable report on ACT grasslands and woodlands being a good example of his ability. But Ken was also a keen bushwalker, the Budawangs being his favoured area. He sometimes drove us into the Budawangs on the Newhaven Gap track which involved a steep, and at times, slippery pinch on the return trip. On one occasion as we approached this spot Ken, noting the wet and soft appearance, stopped and fitted chains. These were no ordinary chains but a Johnson-designed and built set. Once launched on the slope a disturbingly

(continued on page 40)



# Why I painted this picture



Life slips inexorably along, individual days and even years pass unnoted and, with the youthful assurance of immortality coursing through the veins, we assume it will always be thus. But circumstances and attitudes change, sometimes slowly and sometimes with a jolt and we realise, unwillingly, that the way we conduct our lives has to change too.

When I joined the National Parks Association in March 1979, I found a new love in my life—the beautiful, unspoiled Australian bush and the sheer joy and peace of walking in it. As Bob Brown says, ‘it repairs the soul’. I walked and climbed and bush-bashed

with those earlier NPA members at every opportunity and, more importantly, learned from them that the bush was often under threat and there was a need to work towards its conservation. My first job was instructive—to type for the NPA *Bulletin* under the editorship of Reg Alder and, ever since those days, conservation of Australia’s beautiful and unique flora and fauna has been my major goal.

But after a few years of bushwalking, I began lagging behind the group. One day, by the time I staggered to the top of Mt Gingera, the group had finished lunch and was ready to make the return trek. So it was obviously time

for another, less strenuous activity, and birdwatching filled the bill, becoming quite a passion for the next few years. It was high time to see more of Australia anyway and so there were birding tours to be enjoyed, often camping in deserts and ranges, as well as the conservation work of atlasing, until eyesight problems gradually intervened and it was time to find new pastures again.

Like many people I had always wanted to paint so, although knowing there was no detectable latent talent to tap, I gave oil painting a go, partly because a U3A course for beginners was about to start. By now I had scarcely any way of getting out and about but here would be a chance to sublimate my passion for the bush by painting it. That was about seven years ago and now, in my mid-eighties, landscape painting has filled and continues to fill a big gap. I like to paint what is there: I wanted the *Eucalyptus mannifera* in my painting of Black Mountain to be identifiable as such, whereas to art teachers the tree species might be irrelevant.

My need to be out in the native bush may finally, and permanently, be assuaged if our ACT Government will implement the plan for setting some land aside for the purpose of allowing shallow burials without clutter to provide fertiliser for a eucalypt, and maybe native grasses planted on top. But not quite yet; there are too many conservation issues to be tackled and I can still write letters.

**Phyl Goddard**

## Looking over my shoulder: fond memories of NPA ACT people *(continued from page 39)*

loud, metallic clanging developed in the rear end of the car but as stopping to investigate was not an option we hung on and hoped. Near the top of the slope a sudden silence took over from the noisy clanging and we just made firm ground, relieved but chainless. We walked back and forth over the soft track, along the edges and in the gutter and looked and looked ... Those chains are still there somewhere as silent evidence of a not-so-silent passage up the slope.

### Frank Clements

Frank, a long-time member, brought a lot of bush experience and good humour to his walks. For one of his weekend walks

we parked cars at the locked gate on the Old Boboyan Road a short distance from the Boboyan Road junction. We were quite a large group so arrived back at the cars rather late on Sunday keen to be on our way in daylight. A new factor was introduced when one walker, a newcomer to the association reported, rather sheepishly, that he could not find his car keys. After the predictable but probably unhelpful questions had been asked and answered, and had not improved the situation, we realised that we had not so much a problem as an inconvenience. With no mobile phones available, a long drive to Canberra and return in the dark was in prospect. Frank, convinced that the walker **had** taken the

keys with him, then set about a truly thorough search of the clothes, and the pack, and its contents— not a pretty sight revealing, as it did, inexperience, the effects of a wet night and earlier furtive searches. Frank’s persistence and systematic approach paid off—the keys had found their way into an out-of-the-way fold in the pack. Although never admitted, perhaps Frank had seen service in Customs.

The great thing is that the association still has people who are the makings of stories like these.

**Syd Comfort**



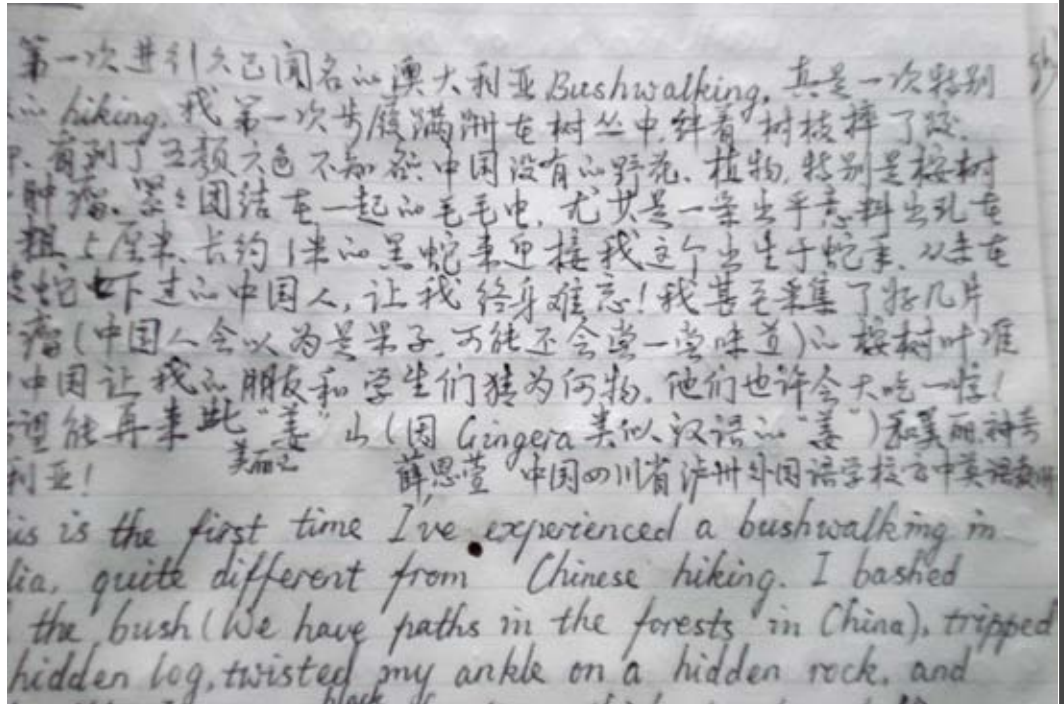


# Namadgi: 'Australia is wonderful and mysterious'

In February 2008 we were enjoying a day walk to the top of Mt Gingera when we stopped en route at Pryor's Hut and I took the chance to glance through the logbook.

One entry, dated 23 January 2008, stood out for its beautiful writing, in both Roman and Chinese script. On the side of the page were the words: 'Snow Luzhou Sichuan, China'. The writer's entry expresses a refreshing appreciation of what she had experienced in the Mt Gingera area, despite several 'misadventures'. She wrote:

*This is the first time I've experienced a bushwalk in Australia, quite different from Chinese hiking. I bashed through the bush (we have paths through the forest in China), tripped over a hidden log, twisted my ankle on a hidden rock, and most horribly I saw a black snake 5cm thick, 1m long! His frightening and unexpected greeting scared me, a Chinese lady who was born in the year of the snake and has never been shocked by a snake in China! However I greatly enjoyed the extensive forest full of gum trees,*



*beautiful but unknown flowers and plants, especially the spittfires together on the leaves. I even saw some tree galls which most Chinese and I don't think are cancer but fruit. This is really a fantastic place for adventurers and botanists. I'll never forget this adventurous bushwalking and I look forward to more places like this. Australia is wonderful and mysterious!*

These are observations full of wonder and amazement. Perhaps tourism promoters could take a few cues from our traveller.

Judy Kelly



Raffle tickets:  
\$2 each or  
\$5 for three



## NPA ACT Raffle Orroral Homestead painting

NPA raffle: a painting of Orroral Homestead by Phyl Goddard (see Phyl's article opposite).

There are two pictures: one is a view of the front of the homestead with the mountain ridge as backdrop; the other depicts the back of the homestead nestled in its valley setting. The winner can **choose one** of these paintings (*the other will be returned to Phyl*).

Tickets are available at general meetings and at NPA ACT events early in 2010.

The raffle will be drawn at the Family Day at the Namadgi Visitor Centre in **May**. The exact date will be announced when it is known.

NPA ACT thanks Phyl for her generous donation.



# The magic of Monga: an NPA ACT appreciation

Monga National Park is a green gem that lies between Braidwood and Batemans Bay, off the Kings Highway where many motorists drive at breakneck speed in their anxiety to reach their destination, oblivious to the sights in Monga's rich rainforest.

Many local residents who live near Monga State Forest joined the 'Friends of Mongarlowe River' and campaigned and lobbied to have a national park created before further logging could prevent the concept from materialising. Two of the campaigners were Robyn Steller, who edited and published the book *Monga intacta*, which NPA ACT helped fund, and Val Plumwood, an environmental philosopher and writer.

Sadly for us, both campaigners suffered premature deaths: Robyn in May 2005 and Val in February 2008. Val had adopted the name Plumwood, from one of the common names for *Eucryphia moorei*, the white-flowered tree of the leatherwood family that grows in Monga National Park.

Erica Steller, Robyn's daughter, used to work at the Conservation Council of the South East Region and Canberra (now ConsACT) and helped distribute *Monga intacta* after her mother's death.

## 'A little-known Eden'

We have Len Haskew to thank for creating the link that enabled NPA ACT to visit and experience Monga's wonders through day visits he organised there. Len also wrote informative articles for the NPA *Bulletin* about the Monga/Buckenbowra area: 'A little-known Eden' (June 2000, Vol. 37, no. 2, p. 10), and 'A driver reviver to help save the Monga Forest' (December 2001, Vol. 38, no. 4, p. 11).

In the second of his articles Len reveals how, despite the declaration that the former Monga State Forest would be protected as a national park, details in the Regional Forest Assessment revealed that 'about 20 per cent of the area was to



*Monga waratah. Photo Max Lawrence.*

be retained by State Forests for logging'. He also describes the concerns of the Friends about the proposed Mogo charcoal plant on the south coast and how it would affect the south-east forests. Many NPA ACT members wrote private submissions opposing the proposal, which was finally abandoned.

In 2004 came the good news that Monga National Park would be extended and logging halted.

## An indelible memory of a walk in the park

In about 2000, Dave and I joined an NPA ACT day outing to Monga that Len had organised before it had become a national park. Heavy rain had recently fallen in the area but not enough to make the roads impassable. We joined the Friends and broke into two groups.

What we experienced and saw has left an indelible memory. The overall impression was one of moisture, shade and greenery, an experience that will rapidly be reduced if droughts in Australia intensify. The tree-fern fronds formed a fretwork of nature's umbrellas, a contrast to the Monga waratahs, *Telopea mongaensis*, with their spindly red flowers rather like fire wheels. They reminded me of the Tasmanian Waratah *Telopea truncata*, which we saw in Tasmania's Central Plateau. They are unique to the Monga forest and occur in close association with the Gippsland Waratah *Telopea oreades*. Monga 'is one of only two places in Australia where two species of waratah grow so closely together', writes Dr Brendan Mackey, Reader at The Australian National University, School of Resources, Environment and Society in *Monga intacta*, p. 55.

## Remnants from Gondwanaland

Both the Pinkwood, the other common name for *Eucryphia moorei*, and the Monga Waratah are remnant species from when Australia was part of Gondwanaland. Mackey (*Monga intacta*, p. 55) emphasises their uniqueness when he notes: 'From a global, continental and regional perspective, Pinkwood and the Monga Waratah are rare plants with very restricted distributions'.

Reaching above the tree ferns and waratahs were the Pinkwoods with large white flowers just like the distinctive Leatherwood tree in Tasmania. Their



*Monga wonderland. Photo Judy Kelly*

white petals formed a careless scattering on the ground or else transformed themselves into dainty shell shaped boats on the streams.

For lunch we sat near a creek and heard about Val's experience in the Northern Territory when she had finally escaped from a crocodile's death roll after the reptile had capsized her boat. Val was totally on the side of the crocodile which she said was simply defending its territory from an interloper. She also told us about interlopers who remove tree ferns from Monga forest. Unfortunately, the tree ferns don't have any defence mechanisms.

## Drought effects evident

In February 2009, we visited a Monga forest that was much drier than in 2000. It still retained its charm and magic, particularly on the banks of the Mongarlowe where the Monga Waratahs bent over the river, their spent flowers disintegrating into the water. A kingfisher darted across the river, adding an iridescent flash to the scene.

In a forest clearing, we met a Victorian birdwatcher and photographer who was sitting patiently at a table waiting and watching for the birds. A treecreeper was carrying out its inspection of a tree trunk with staccato hops and New Holland honeyeaters were probing nectar-yielding plants. Our birdwatcher said he hadn't seen Monga  
*(continued next page)*



# Rewards from botanical sleuthing in the family Gentianaceae

My first experience of the genus *Gentiana* in Australia was back in 1967, on a NSW Southern Tablelands survey with CSIRO (incidentally, the leader of that survey was Bob Story, Judy Kelly's father, and one time NPA president). At a query site at Jerangle, northeast of Bredbo, I found a seedling bearing characteristic foliage I immediately recognised as strikingly similar to the gentians I knew back home in England.

Searching in literature, all I could find was an 80-year-old record by Ferdinand Mueller (the 19th century director of Melbourne Botanic Gardens), mentioning a blue-flowered plant sent to him by the amateur collector Wilhelm Baeuerlen in 1887 from a swamp near Bombala, NSW. Mueller equated it with a species he knew from New Guinea, but on reading the description of *that* gentian, he saw that the Bombala plant was clearly different.

## Converging discoveries

My aroused curiosity led me to investigate what was going on, taxonomically speaking. Later I went back to the Jerangle site and found the gentian again, now plentiful— but white-flowered. I reported my find to the NSW Herbarium in Sydney, and discovered one of their members had, by amazing coincidence in the same year, unearthed another (blue-flowered) gentian in Wingecarribee Swamp, near Moss Vale. Six years after this, I heard from John Williams, New England University, Armidale, that yet another gentian had been found, this time near Ebor on the Northern Tablelands of NSW. Thus there now appeared to be possibly at least *four different species* in NSW.

## Revising the genus

Soon after this I was persuaded by

colleagues to attempt a revision of the genus; and to cut a long story short, the revision of the four species appeared in 1988 in the NSW journal *Telopea*, with John Williams and I as joint authors. John called the Ebor species *Gentiana wissmannii*, honouring H. Wissmann, the original finder. The Jerangle species I called *G. bredboensis*, and the Moss Vale one *G. wingecarribeensis*. The Bombala species I named in honour of Wilhelm Baeuerlen (for those unfamiliar with latinised German vowels, pronounced 'boyerlen'), he being its sole collector (and thus his being the type specimen). Bear in mind that, by that stage, *Gentiana baeuerlenii* had not been seen growing for over 100 years. Details of all four species, and of the Gentianeaceae as a whole, can be found in Volume 28 of the *Flora of Australia* (1996)).

## Serendipity in the Orroral Valley

It was a calm and sunny autumn day in May 1992 that I was on a long bushwalk with NPA, up and back along the Orroral River valley. On the return journey, we still had about 2km to walk back to the footbridge over the river to get to the cars. Getting weary and trailing well behind the party and off the track, I happened to traverse a small, swampy patch of grassland situated on an alluvial 'fan'. Mostly with my eyes (as usual, being a field botanist!) 'glued to the ground', I spied a cluster of tiny, sky-blue flowers. A couple of seconds was all it took to recognise that it was a gentian, and then it took just a few more *mind-blowing seconds* to guess that this was Wilhelm Baeuerlen's long-lost gentian.

I cannot help but speculate, given the sizable area that we had covered that day, that it was some sort of 'sixth-sense' that made me deviate through that tiny patch of unknown swamp, a habitat we had not



seen anywhere else in the valley all day. However, there is a sad postscript to this story. Of the original total of about 20 plants we later counted in the Orroral site, the colony has gradually shrunk and, probably from the long-drawn-out drought, none at all have been recorded for nearly 10 years.

## A new genus for the snow-gentians

At the same time as we were revising the genus (with me now having become unavoidably steeped in the gentian family) I was aware that a separate group of our native gentians— but at that time lumped under one name, *Gentianella diemensis*— desperately needed sorting out. These are the species bearing somewhat larger flowers (all looking rather like white buttercups) and no doubt familiar to many NPA members bush-walking in summer in montane and alpine areas. Thus, after much local, Victorian and Tasmanian fieldwork, descriptions of 14 species of a new genus called *Chionogentias* (snow-gentians) were published in 1995 in the journal *Australian Systematic Botany*. We have four of these species in the ACT.

**Laurence G. Adams**

**Survey Botanist and Plant Taxonomist since 1962, Australian National Herbarium, CSIRO, Canberra and long-time NPA member**

## The magic of Monga: an NPA ACT appreciation

forest so dry before and the number and variety of birds was down.

### Precious coastal rainforest under threat

Monga National Park's value lies in its intrinsic beauty and the diversity of its plants, birds and animals, and as an intermediate zone between the coast and inland. There is precious coastal rainforest on its eastern slopes, an

ecosystem that is becoming increasingly endangered and threatened because of clearing and the effects of global warming.

Monga National Park is testament to the dedication and determination of volunteers who worked very hard to have most of Monga State Forest preserved as a national park and to prevent further logging. It will need its advocates to continue their watching and protection despite its status.

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It also shows the value of having NPA ACT members like Len who are awake to areas of conservation interest outside their immediate locale and who make contacts that are rich and rewarding. NPA ACT must maintain its interest in areas across its borders and keep lending its support to fellow conservationists.

**Judy Kelly**



# Promoting conservation, the environment and a national park for the national capital



Glyn Lewis, Honeysuckle Creek, 1986

Glyn and I joined NPA ACT in 1968. Glyn served on the committee from early days and part of his role was the establishment of the publicity sub-committee—a role which he carried for many years.

In those days, NPA ACT's main aim was to inform the public of its aims and to spread the conservation message. Then, Conservation and the environment were not the big issues they are now.

As well as organising talks, slide shows and bushwalks (often with instructive commentaries), the Association set out to stimulate an awareness and appreciation of the bush and of the need for its conservation among primary school pupils. To that end, we decided to run a poster competition with a conservation theme for various age groups of primary school children. It sounded like a great idea and Glyn and I were asked to do it. We accepted eagerly.

## The school poster competition

We gathered a small group of helpers and sent information to all the primary schools in Canberra and Queanbeyan. Canberra didn't extend far in 1969–70: Woden Valley was very new and Belconnen didn't exist beyond Aranda and Macquarie. We visited many of the schools in Canberra and Queanbeyan and talked to the teachers in an effort to find some kindred spirits. We didn't know whether the teachers themselves would feel motivated to encourage the children

to do posters. There was a deadline, at which time the same little group would go around and collect the posters from the schools—if there were any!

## An overwhelming response

We waited anxiously and appointed a main judge, Ed Slater from CSIRO, and organised a judging evening at our house. Collection day came and we were thrilled to find some schools **did** have bundles of posters. But what started as a thrill, slowly became alarm, because the response was overwhelming. Every helper arrived at our house with huge bundles of posters—we had them stacked everywhere, sorted by age groups. We couldn't move for posters.

## Judging night

Judging night came and we packed the family off after an early evening meal. We didn't have a big living space, but we optimistically thought we could manage easily! The assistants arrived (I remember Margaret Aston, Gay Watt, Merle Bailey, Mary Barnard, artist Ken Johnston and others) as did Ed Slater, who was full of enthusiasm for the task ahead, and took it very seriously. He insisted that every poster be studied intently, from an artistic point of view, and also to see whether the child had grasped the conservation message. We had set topics for the posters, according to age.

Fortunately, we started early. Ed studied every poster very slowly and carefully, discussing the various points about each one with Ken Johnston. Gradually, the best were selected for prizes and put aside. It had been decided beforehand that every child's poster must go into the exhibition in the Griffin Centre. Ed was very fair-minded and believed that every child should be encouraged and needed to see his or her art work displayed. The process was slow, the evening was wearing on, and all the assistants were working people with a job to go to the next morning.

## A 3:00am finish

I remember making endless cups of tea and coffee to keep everyone alert. It was beginning to get late, so we decided to start screening the posters in another room to reduce the vast pile.

To speed up the process, we showed

Ed only what we considered the better ones, while he meticulously continued his detailed and thorough viewing. I can

still see Mary Barnard sitting back in her chair, with her eyes closed, looking like a faded flower. Eleven o'clock, midnight, 1:00am, 2:00am ... We became more ruthless. We had to finish that night but could not hurry Ed.

We finally finished at 3:00am. We were all so tired that we could scarcely talk, but at least we did have a pile of prize winners.

The next task was to mount this huge exhibition of posters and present the prizes at the Griffin Centre, which was another mammoth job.

## Lessons learnt

It was all very well accepted and had been a popular activity for schools so I suppose we had achieved our objective. But whether to ever have another one was the question! We did.

However, we felt we had learnt a great deal from the first experience: in future years we got the schools to select the best to send in to the competition, so the actual quantity of posters was more manageable. We also improved on our own management skills!

## Essay competition

We also decided to run an essay competition for high schools in alternate years to the poster competition. These events, for which the entries were fewer than for the poster competition, were managed mainly by Glyn, who selected judges from the scientific community. *[For one of the early winners, see page 9 of this Bulletin.]*

## Photo exhibition and competition

Following on from those two schools-based competitions, Glyn started the popular photographic competition and exhibition, which was open to all ages. This ran for many years, during which our house became the repository for boxes and boxes of photographs and slides. It was extremely well supported

*(continued next page)*



# Promoting conservation, the environment and a national park *(continued)*

and generated a lot of enthusiasm amongst NPA ACT members.

## Audiovisual promotion

The push to establish a national park for the national capital was still on, but this aim needed more publicity. To this end, Glyn was asked to make an audiovisual about NPA ACT's aims and objectives. This project dominated our family life for quite a time. There was then no high tech equipment available, every aspect being made separately on very basic equipment and then assembled. Glyn wrote the script after much research and tested several possible narrators until he found the best [the late Brian Lee, also a former *Bulletin* editor, and Gabrielle Watt]. He put out requests for the loan of slides appropriate to the script and chose the accompanying music. Our household got used to evenings and weekends filled with recording the narrators and recordings of the music. At that time, Glyn was still working full time, so evenings and weekends provided his only spare hours.

Editing entailed many stops and starts in recording the narration and in the playing of Richard Strauss's *Alpine symphony*, which Glyn had selected as a grand finale to emphasise NPA ACT's aspirations. To this day, I appreciate hearing the whole symphony without interruptions!

It was a labour-intensive exercise. The Governor General, Sir Zelman Cowan, attended its first screening in the

Griffin Centre. This caused Glyn much anxiety because he felt that as an amateur in the line of audiovisual productions, the presentation wouldn't be up to scratch. He gave a short introductory talk and the evening went smoothly. The Governor General personally thanked Glyn and expressed much interest in the content of the audiovisual. Glyn went home feeling great relief and satisfaction.

For a number of years our phone number was listed in the phone book as the first contact for NPA ACT; we received many and varied calls, indicating that a vast number of people had no idea what a National Parks Association would do.

Along with many other members of NPA ACT, both Glyn and I led many walks. Neither of us were pack walkers, so it was day walks on Sundays and, later, mid-week walks. They were well patronised and we enjoyed them a lot.

Our participation faded over the years and Glyn died in 2000. But for a quarter of a century our involvement with the National Parks Association of the ACT was a highlight of our recreational lives. All our family participated to varying degrees, and the values of conservation and appreciation of the outdoors have carried over into the next generation.

*The audiovisual will be shown at NPA ACT's 50th anniversary picnic on Sunday 21 March at the theatre in Namadgi Visitor Centre. Two audiovisuals were*

*produced and were finally completed in 1979.*

## A Christmas memory

I remember attending an NPA ACT Christmas party on the banks of the Murrumbidgee at Tharwa and enjoying the drive into the country, feeling very fortunate to be going to a Christmas celebration in the bush. After eating, NPA members went to the Tharwa Hall for bush dancing and games. One game, similar to pass the parcel, involved passing a balloon around a sitting circle. When the music stopped, the balloon stayed where it had landed and one of the children had to sit on it, trying to burst it. During one round, the balloon ended up with Nancy Burbidge who was laughing heartily as a child repeatedly sat on her lap, trying to deal the balloon a final blow. This was probably in the 1960s when Tuggeranong was open land and the road to Tharwa was unsealed.

Times change and we now have auctions instead of games at the Christmas party. Children? Members' children attending are a rarity and grandchildren are often too busy with their own Christmas entertainment or functions.

**Shirley Lewis [with editing help from her son Trevor, also a member]**

## NPA PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITIONS: VENUES 2010



The NPA is presenting a series of photographic exhibitions in 2010 to showcase members' work and, through it, the places that we love. The images range from flora and fauna to landscapes and people enjoying their environment in typical NPA fashion.

Please visit one or more of the displays and support your fellow members who have put their work forward.

The exhibitions will move across seven venues, but will not be directly duplicated at each location. Each venue is open to the public.

<b>4 May to 14 May</b>	Foyer of Macarthur House, Wattle St, Lyneham.	<b>7 June to 25 June</b>	National Botanical Gardens in the main exhibition area—this display will have a flora theme.
<b>6 May to 8 May</b>	CSIRO Discovery Centre in conjunction with the NPA symposium.	<b>2 July to 9 July</b>	Tuggeranong public library (may be changed to Gungahlin public library depending on availability).
<b>14 May to 18 June</b>	Namadgi Visitor Centre, Tharwa.	<b>6 August to 20 August</b>	Civic public library, mezzanine display area.
<b>4 June to 11 June</b>	Woden public library.		

**Any changes will be advised through *Burning Issues*.**



# Western nostalgia

*Stephen Johnston, the author of this article, was a former president of our sister association the Victorian NPA before he came to Canberra. During his all-too-short period here he was a very active member of our committee, chaired the Environment Sub-committee and was a keen participant in our outings program. He moved to Perth in 2000 for what was to be a temporary stay, but to our loss put down roots there too.*

*Last year a CD of Max Lawrence's photos of NPA ACT events and people found its way to Stephen via Len Haskew. What follows is Stephen's response to Max on seeing those photos.*

As the photos came up on the computer screen I felt a mixture of surprise, nostalgia, a fair bit of sadness and a few regrets. The surprise was for photos of trips that I'd almost forgotten about, particularly Tuross Falls. Then I vaguely recalled you taking those photos of me on top of the rock in what I think was a slightly less perilous position than it appears.

**Nostalgia**—not just the places I'd been to but the people; the ever-cheery face and wry humour of Len Haskew, the warmth and sincerity of Fiona MacDonald Brand and the distinctive voices, from the Mick Kelly Australian drawl to the other end of the spectrum, Joan Goodrum's very precise pronunciation. The photos of Roaring Camp and Mt Tingaringy reminded me of the first overnight walk I ever led—for the Victorian NPA in January 1986. We went down to Tingaringy Creek which looked to have great potential for a wilderness walk up into the Byadbo area. I had it twice on the VNPA program but we never got there because it was too dry. But it is an ill wind that blows no good—the first time I cancelled it I rang

Phil Gatenby for some alternative ideas for south-eastern NSW wilderness walks and he responded with just one word: Brogo. That was to be the first of three 5–6 day walks I led into that wonderful wilderness area.

**Sadness**—very much when I looked at the photos of Reg Alder in particular, but also Frank Clements, Eleanor Stodart, Olive Buckman and Bob Story. Reg was an old mate in both senses of the word—his late 1978 car camp to the Weddin Mountains was the first NPA ACT activity I ever registered for (although I didn't actually attend), and I went on a lot of his walks both during my first 12-month stint in Canberra in 1978–79 and in the early 80s when I'd come up from Melbourne each Easter for the NPA activity. Your photo inside Reg's green campervan reminded me of the cup of tea and a biscuit that was always on offer from the back of the van at the end of a walk.

Our paths—in a sense—had crossed some 20 years earlier. In 1959 as a youngster I came back from three years in England with my family on the P&O ship *Himalaya*. It collided with the side of the Suez Canal, fractured a propeller and after several days stuck in Aden for repairs limped across to Melbourne. Reg perchance heard me telling someone that story as we were walking one Easter down near Pretty Plain and he told me he was in charge of the Garden Island dock crew which repaired or replaced the propeller after the *Himalaya* got to Sydney.

It was also saddening to see the photos of Nil Desperandum, Mt Franklin Chalet and the huts on Bushfold Flat, which were also destroyed in the fires. I am so glad I was able to see all of those, plus the brumby yards down from the Smokers trail, before their destruction. The

Christmas party at Nil was my last NPA function and I fluked a visit to Franklin Chalet a couple of years earlier when Brett McNamara, then the ranger based at Bendora, was in there recording the memories of Canberrans who had used it as a ski chalet in the 1950s. A friend and I wandered in and were entertained for about 20 minutes with their stories. Then one of the group got up and started playing the old, barely-in-tune piano and singing, soon to be accompanied by his friends. It was quite a magical moment, recalling the era before iPods and portable stereos when you entertained yourselves with a singalong.

Your photos of the walk up to the Bog at Mt Booth rekindled my memories of that walk on that cloudy day—bringing up the rear behind a panting Jack Smart, his gloved hands reaching out for trees to pull himself up and his complete lack of sense of direction which he demonstrated so well on our return by walking straight down into the creek bed rather than turning north towards the cars. I drove him home that night little knowing that in another remarkable crossing of paths, he and his wife Elizabeth would soon move to Melbourne, into a unit only a drop kick away from my parents in an eastern suburbs retirement village. They got to know the Smarts well and Mum was at dinner with them only a few weeks ago. Jack doesn't say much—but he's always got that distinctive smile and laugh. He certainly would not be up to climbing Mt Booth or leading such walks these days.

The photos of your walk to Mt Nungar—what a glorious day—stunning weather, a nice layer of

*(continued next page)*



*Top. The snowy view from Mt Nungar, 1998.*

*Left. Stephen Johnston tests the water, Tuross Falls 1997.*

*Photos Max Lawrence*



# Fond memories of earlier-day NPA walks



## A fiery start

My first NPA walk, in mid 1965, was to Billy Billy Rocks, led by president Jim Webb on an overcast day. The temperature quickly dropped when heavy rain began to fall as we neared the top. Several in the party did not have appropriate raingear, but sheltering as best we could, laughter broke out when one of the men squeezed himself full length under a slightly raised fallen tree trunk.

As the rain eased, Jim started bounding through the bush, yelling: 'I'll get a fire going amongst the rocks at the top!' And indeed, by the time the stragglers arrived, Jim's large fire was a welcome sight. Our 'log man' (none other than the Canadian High Commissioner to Australia) was soaked and, stripping off his shirt, he placed it across a forked stick and presented it to his wife to hold over the fire. This his wife dutifully did, but animated conversation distracted her until someone exclaimed 'The shirt is burning!' So for the return walk, our 'log man' wore a dry shirt but with holes and black marks, and his usually sunny disposition was nowhere to be seen.

## Western nostalgia *(continued)*

snow, easy walk and superb views. Couldn't have been better. Much like those views you took from Mt Scabby on Phil Gatenby's quite demanding weekend walk. While some of us struggle along under the weight of our packs, Phil seemed to always move at a half trot and I can't ever recall seeing him looking puffed. A bit like Eric Pickering—no matter how demanding the terrain, nothing ever seemed to faze Eric, nor his wife Pat.

A few final **regrets** as I looked at the photos of places I would have loved to have got to: like Byangee Walls that I

## Family affairs

During these early years, NPA walks were held only once a month and were rather more like family outings than the walks of today. Quite a few children were amongst the participants and they would be up with the leader for most of the day. The pace was usually leisurely to accommodate old and young since there were no walk gradings then. The lunch break was long, often very long if there was dry, green grass to lie on to 'chew the cud' after our thermos soup, egg and bacon pie and chocolate cake with lemon-butter filling. Not too many healthy salad sandwiches on wholemeal bread were carried in those 1960s rucksacks.

In the 1970s, several of the monthly walks were theme based, the most notable being ones led by Nancy Burbidge, who generously gave of her botanical knowledge; by an ANU Professor of Geology who showed us the impressive geological formations near Wee Jasper; and by Ian Currie who shared his love of birds.

## Getting to the kids

Merle Bailey and I, in a late 1960s committee-supported effort to publicise the NPA and to encourage primary school children to enjoy and learn about our natural environment, arranged film viewings for several winter Saturday afternoons. The venues included the Dickson Library and the Hughes Community Centre. Our audiences also included lots of mothers but, sadly, few fathers. The short films, from the then National Library Association film collection, featured Australian bush and coastal scenery and included plenty of wildlife. Merle, a mother of three,

especially did not wish to project anything at all controversial and confided to me on one occasion that a documentary she had selected included a shot of koalas mating and asked 'do you think it should be withdrawn from the program?'

## Laughs along the way

Amongst the many humorous incidents that enlivened those wonderful NPA outings was the day a Tidbinbilla emu, arriving from nowhere, put its long neck across the shoulder of a seated, unsuspecting Kathleen Moriarty and proceeded to pick at her lunch bowl of rice salad. Surprised reaction and shouts sent the rice flying. After running the reluctant bird away, we all donated sandwich fillings to provide Kathleen with her coeliac meal.

Then at a summer car camp at Thredbo diggings, four of us—Betty Campbell, Hansine Hansen, Kathleen Moriarty and Margaret Aston—were seated at dusk at our table and chairs to sedately partake of our evening meal, only to be amazed as a huge wombat wobbled—also sedately—between table and chairs, brushing the leg of one of the diners. We had inadvertently set up our dining room, complete with serviettes, on the animal's track to its nearby burrow!

**Margaret Aston**



first saw from Pigeon House Mountain in 1979; and the Six foot Track. But all in all I count myself very fortunate that I got to see so much of that wonderful country in the seven short years I was living in Canberra before a move to Perth and family life brought bushwalking activity to a halt.

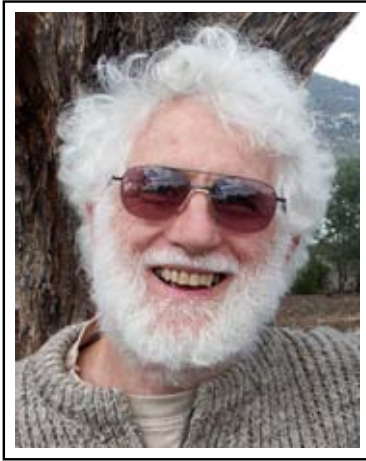
Last year was the 30th anniversary of my joining the NPA ACT— I got the membership form from the then secretary, the late Sheila Kruse in her inner city flat. I must be the longest serving member who has spent the least time in Canberra— only a total of

7 years (1978–79 and 1993–2000) in the 30. The fact I've remained a member, will always remain a member, and am still in touch with people there is indicative of my love of the place and the centrality of the NPA ACT to my connection with the area.

**Stephen Johnston**



# President Kevin (McCue, that is)



**August 2002.** At election time during the AGM I volunteered for the vice-President's position, having recently retired though I had no qualifications for the position. Stephen Forst was Treasurer and newcomers Chris Emery, Rod Griffiths and Lyndall Young, along with old faces Clive Hurlstone and David Large, made up a new committee. Alas there was no secretary until 2004. The editor of the *Bulletin* was not a committee member then but Syd Comfort kept the *Bulletin* going without missing a beat, continually improving the publication.

*Caring for Namadgi* was published in August/September 2002, just in time to make a contribution to 'assist with the production of the new management plan for Namadgi National Park' (Eleanor Stodart, *NPA Bulletin*, September 2002, p3). The Interim Namadgi Advisory Board was in full swing at this time—whatever happened to it and the lofty ideal of joint management by the traditional and new owners?

The December 2002 *Bulletin* recorded stark details of the 1983 bushfire in Gudgenby Nature Reserve (the following year gazetted as part of Namadgi National Park) by Reg Alder, Neville Esau and Chris Watson. Their article was headed by a dramatic Reg Alder photograph across pages 8 and 9 of the destruction caused by the 1983 fire. Reg concluded his contribution to the article with the sentence 'Weather conditions this year are the same as in 1983, with drought, little moisture and high winds, so that more than normal care will need to be taken if the 1983 holocaust is not to be repeated'.

**January 2003.** The bushfire! The February general meeting had standing room only, people were very concerned about the future for Namadgi National Park. There was a lot of energy in the

room; NPA ACT membership grew dramatically as there was lots to do.

After acting in the role of President for six months I agreed to assume the position formally. In that time I had heard members debate different issues—horse riding in National Parks was one, and I realised we didn't have clear written policies on important issues, which made it difficult for anyone to speak on behalf of NPA ACT. That was our first major task and it took a lot of time and effort but it was interesting getting the members' consensus at monthly meetings with lots of writing on butcher's paper (my first memory of Christine Goonrey who wielded the felt pen with such flair). It did surprise me that members kept coming to the general meetings even when they knew it was policy work (I found out later they came for Adrienne's supper). Another goal was to reestablish a user-friendly up-to-date website which (with sage advice from David Large) Chris Emery and I tackled.

Judy Kelly rejoined the committee mid-year 2003 by which time NPA ACT had made a number of submissions to government relating to the bushfire: *The Operational Response to the January Bushfire* (McLeod Inquiry) jointly with the Conservation Council; *The Recreation Strategy*; and the study into the *Future Uses of non-Urban Bushfire Affected Areas*. Clive Hurlstone led this work.

All the while, the Outings Committee, convened by David Large and then Steven Forst, continued putting on walks, despite the bushfire and with much of Namadgi National Park closed. This was a most successful way of attracting new members. The monthly meetings, with exciting speakers and occasional policy fora, continued under the direction of Clive Hurlstone with the inestimable Adrienne Nicholson providing supper.

Sonja Lenz joined the committee in late 2003.

**August 2004.** Christine Goonrey joined the committee as Secretary at the AGM of August 2004. Work commenced on updating the NPA's field guides on ACT birds and ACT trees (revisions published in 2006 and 2007). In 2004 we established a Publications sub-committee to facilitate this work and *Burning Issues* was instigated under Judy Kelly's fair hand.

We participated in the Great Australian Bushwalk in 2004 and 2005. This ended up being a huge job with little or no reward in terms of new

members.

In 2004 we celebrated the 20th anniversary of the Declaration of Namadgi National Park with a meeting at the Namadgi Visitor Centre organised by Environment ACT. Tom Uren was flown to Canberra for the occasion and featured with NPA life member Fiona MacDonald Brand for the front page of the September 2004 *Bulletin*. The year was also the 125th anniversary of the establishment of the Royal National Park outside Sydney, Australia's first National Park.

NPA ACT drafted a submission on the draft Plan of Management for Kosciuszko National Park and an overview was presented in the September 2004 *Bulletin* by our new Secretary, Christine Goonrey (prior to her appointment, Lyndall Young and Judy Kelly alternatively took minutes at committee meetings). Christine also drafted a submission into the draft Alpine Resorts Plan.

NPA ACT contributed financially to a new book *Monga Intacta*, on our nearby Monga National Park. We facilitated the presentation by VNPA's Phil Ingamells of a magnificent book on the Alpine National Parks to the head of the then ACT Department of the Environment, Dr Maxine Cooper, on behalf of the Minister, and another to Parliamentary Secretary to the Federal Minister for the Environment Greg Hunt in May 2005.

We hosted a memorable meeting of NPAC at Manning Clark House in Canberra.

Each Committee, sub-committee and working group member made an enormous personal contribution; all in all we were a steady-as-you-go committee, writing policy, preparing submissions, publishing *Bulletins* and the new e-newsletter, organising walks and other outings, updating field guides and the website, holding monthly meetings and work parties in Namadgi National Park. We maintained the many roles of NPA ACT, and sought new members to prepare the next committee for the work ahead.

Sadly we lost several members, including life members Reg Alder and Eleanor Stodart, while I was President.

My contribution was actually a joint contribution with Sonja Lenz who kept me sane, and provided wise counsel. Sonja went on to become Secretary at the August 2005 AGM when I stepped down as President.

**Kevin McCue**





# A day at Grassy Creek

The black of night is slowly seen off by the flat light of a new day. Points of light merge into the blue-grey of an ever-changing sky as wispy high clouds gradually assume the colours of a rose garden.

With the improving light comes better visibility. Crunchy white grass and foggy breath confirm what other senses have suspected for some time.

No other creature is abroad at this hour. Perhaps the residents of the wild take such experiences as this for granted. Then again, maybe we humans are the ones who have been deprived for too long.

The business of dawn must eventually end. Then I turn my mind and senses to my surroundings on Grassy Creek.

## The people of the valley

In times gone, this valley supported rural families, and before them Aboriginal clans. Abundant grass for stock and kangaroos, plentiful clear water and space to expand must have proved tempting indeed for those free-spirited individuals who lived before the ordered and invasive days of the early 21st Century. Thomas and Mary Jane Westerman's humble homestead with its ornate barge boards and flowering garden beds tells of people who considered this valley very much their home.

## Natural life

Clear and calm days are a particular delight. Besides the occasional, celebrating magpie, the only sound is that faint murmur made by the primal

forces that exist all around. The gradual march of shadows and scurrying of ants combine to make the only discernible motion. Meanwhile, the ever-warming sun brings life and relaxes tired souls. In such a threat-free environment it can be difficult to conceive of life in any other way.

## A change in the weather

Gently the leaves stir giving me pause to focus on things of a larger scale. The sky is now laced with cirrus and a distinct chill enters the valley. The weather is about to change and so is my attitude for, above all else, these high valleys demand respect. Within a few hours my peaceful escape could be transformed into an ordeal—leaden skies atop truncated hills, spawning deafening winds that threaten to uproot every tree in sight. Just as quickly, horizontal rain can turn to snow. To watch such changes and wonder at the forces which generate them is one of life's great privileges.



One can only speculate at the activity that such changes would generate in people such as the Westermans. Torn between the preservation of personal wellbeing and tending to stock, many a cold night must have been spent in the upper reaches of this valley, away from a comforting fire and a warm meal.

\* \* \* \* \*

Many cycles of sun and moon have passed in the valley of Grassy Creek. Each witnesses some change, small though it may be. Despite these changes, the enduring features of the valley are reliably present each time I visit. This guaranteed 'escape experience' makes this Grassy Creek one of my favourite places.

**Martin Chalk**



# Name 'Old Joe' explained

The evocative name Old Joe Hill fascinated me when I was researching a bushwalking guide several years ago. The hill of 813m is within the Gorooyarroo Nature Reserve in Gungahlin and a trig station, also called Old Joe, crowns its summit.

Who **was** Old Joe, I wondered.

Unfortunately I was unable to discover its origins before the book was published. Then last Christmas I had a call from Kevin Wellspring, of Melba, one-time surveyor and holder of various senior positions in Commonwealth survey organisations—a friend.

Kevin was able to tell me that, in fact, **he** had named the trig station/hill

Old Joe in honour of Joe Gallagher, who in the 1950s and 1960s supervised chainmen when they and the surveyors had premises at Acton.

'Everyone knew him as Old Joe,' Kevin says. 'He was of lowly education, but nevertheless was a fine supervisor who ensured all the chainmen were kept occupied and that anything that needed to be done was carried out promptly and efficiently.'

'He was a character in the office and a gentleman with it.'

Quite a number of trig stations were erected in those days when the National Capital Development Commission was hitting its straps in its mission to develop

Canberra as Australia's national capital after decades of neglect. Suitable names were not easy to come by and it seems the surveyors had a free hand in this respect. One stipulation however was that a person giving his name to a trig station must have passed on. So Old Joe never knew that he had been honoured in this fashion.

Kevin said he also named Rogers trig station in the suburb of Fraser after a former chainman, John Rogers. The hill, Mt Rogers, 704m, was subsequently named after the trig station.

**Graeme Barrow**



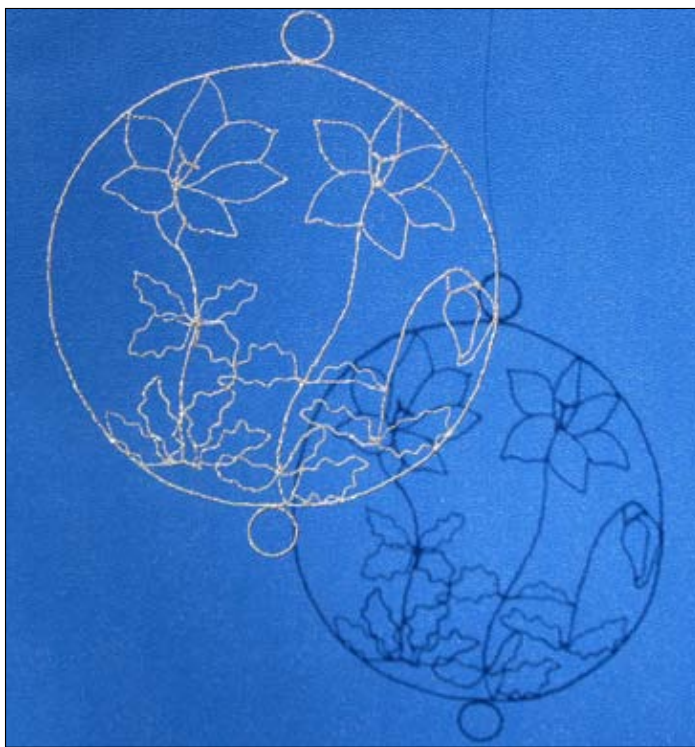
## NPA artwork

Artwork from a number of NPA members is presented here. Other works are scattered through this *Bulletin*.

The wonderful watercolour panorama is the work of Muriel Story Edwards, depicting the western skyline from the Gudgenby Valley. The ink and wash field sketch of paper daisies is also Muriel's work.

Christine Goonrey has completed several pieces of her intricate dyed and machine-





stitched landscape quilts, inspired by her time at the Gudgenby Cottage. The texture and detail she achieves is remarkable.

Judy Kelly's beautiful botanical art is represented by her Monga waratah. (See Judy's article on page 42).

Adrienne Nicholson continues to manipulate impossibly fine, 'reclaimed computer wire' into discs, either as abstract patterns or simple pictures, about 10cm in diameter. These are suspended in various combinations as ornamental mobiles or hangings which sparkle with light.



# The lure of Gudgenby

*This little essay was written when Namadgi was still Gudgenby Nature Reserve, and recalls even earlier days. But some things remain true even today.*

A pragmatic mate of mine, who has no time for superstition, recently completed his 13th ascent of Mt Gudgenby, that spectacular rocky landmark in the southern ACT.

He challenged credulity head-on by climbing Gudgenby in dreadful conditions of wind and rain, followed by snow in the access valley.

All the members of his party got up and down without incident, taking with them a five-year-old boy and a baby carried papoose-like on her father's back.

Familiarity over 15 years has not dulled my friend's regard for Gudgenby. And he says he wants to climb it again and again. Ask him why this peak attracts him so much and he will give you numerous reasons without singling out one above all the others.

Certainly the approach to Gudgenby down the wide and grassy Boboyan Valley reminds him vividly of valleys in New Zealand's Southern Alps, where he has climbed in each of the past 11 years. Then there's the animal life of the valley—wild pigs, 'roos, foxes, wedge-tailed eagles, dingoes even—making the long trek one of continuing interest to those whose eyes are quick.

Yet another reason is the thick bush on Gudgenby's flanks, bush that makes the forest floor a maze of variety. Young eucalypts, decades from reaching their prime, look down on past giants rotting where they have fallen. Mounds of frond-like stringybark drift over knee-deep piles of leaves. Bursting out of the side of the mountain are immense moss-covered boulders (regrettably, I think of them as monstrous boils, green with the solidified pus of centuries), enticing those who get their kicks from scrambling up seemingly inaccessible places.

Gudgenby's main rockface, a steeply sloping horror that makes some quail but that fills my friend with excitement whenever he ventures upon it, provides the thrills of the ascent. It is a challenge to his quickness of mind, his strength and agility, especially when it is covered with ice and snow. Another attraction is the mountain's changing moods—sunny one moment, bleak the next, fine, wet, hot, cold.

All these are good and valid reasons supporting his high regard for Gudgenby. I must admit that I do admire it as a masterpiece of tree and stone. I respect it and would never approach it casually. I am too conscious of its strength to do that. It is prone to give the unwary and the contemptuous a swift kick for being so disrespectful as to treat it with unthinking disdain. But as for climbing it 13 times—that's not for me.

I have been on the summit in tranquil times when the sky is the softest of light blues, the winds stilled, and the countryside all about a patchwork of mountains and valleys, the peaks rock-strewn, the valleys the emerald green of Mother Ireland herself.

At these times it seems that the mountains must roll on for ever, so bulky and numerous are they, filling the landscape with the grey-green-blue of their eucalypt-clothed flanks and thrusting their granite summits ever skywards.

At other times Gudgenby goes out of its way to be unpleasant, malevolent even. On these days the clouds stream up from deep in the wilderness, low and a vivid puce, scudding across the sky at the behest of powerful moaning forces that clearly resent your intrusion into their normally private domains. Winds thrust and pluck at you, threatening to hurl you from your perch should you be silly enough, or unlucky enough, to be caught on that enormous sloping rockface which is such a stomach-churning feature of Gudgenby.

Frequently the clouds drop rain that whips and stings. Sometimes it turns to hail and snow. When this happens the Gudgenby granite is more than usually treacherous. Feet slip and cracks and crevices sought by groping fingers fill with hail and snow, adding to the misery or, as some assert, the adventure.

The snow often drifts low on Gudgenby's flanks, so that the downhill trek to the sanctuary of the Boboyan Valley can be dangerous if made in haste. Deep holes appear where you thought there was solid ground, and saturated rotting debris causes boot-shod feet to skid wildly.



*The tors of Mt Gudgenby, 2007. Photo Max Lawrence*

At one time, before the Gudgenby Nature Reserve came into being, it was a comparatively simple matter to climb Gudgenby in a single day. Then you would drive out from Canberra, travel along the farm track running almost the length of the valley, park near the tree-line marking its head, and walk in to the base of Gudgenby. From there the climb takes about two hours.

These days, however, you have to watch the clock. The reserve controllers have closed off the valley track to vehicles at a point which adds about 90 minutes' walking time to reach the tree-line. Another 30 or 45 minutes must be expended in getting to the base of the mountain, so you are looking at about eight hours of walking, climbing and descending time, plus the three hours or so spent driving from and back to Canberra.

None of this deters my mate. One of his feats since the access track was closed off was to walk in to Mt Kelly, further on from Gudgenby, by torchlight. His idea, which came to him one night while he was drowsing in front of the television set, was to climb to the summit of Kelly to watch the sun rise.

The immortals who watch over the wilderness from their eyrie at the Sentry Box, that huge oblong block of granite visible on the opposite side of the valley from Gudgenby, must have bellowed with laughter at such a ludicrous notion. They covered Kelly's summit with cloud so dense that no sunrise was seen that day. Then, on his long trudge back, they caused the clouds to fade away and the sun to come out, strong and hot, sapping energy.

**Graeme Barrow**



# Presidents of the National Parks Association

Dr Robert Carrick; inaugural, elected provisional President at NPA's formation in March 1960

Dr A.J. Nicholson; elected at the first AGM in June 1960; served for 2 years

Dr Nancy Burbidge	1962	
Dr Robert Story	1963	2 years
Mr Ian Grant	1965	
Mr Jim Webb	1966	
Mr A. (Sandy) Brand	1967	2 years
Dr Nancy Burbidge	1969	
Miss Julie Henry	1970	
Mr George Chippendale	1971	
Mr W. (Bill) Watson	1972	2 years
Mr Ian Currie	1974	4 years
Mr Darryl Hawke	1978	

Mr John Banks	1979	
Mr Neville Esau	1980	3 years
Mr Ian Currie	1983	
Mr Ross Carlton	1984	2 years
Dr Kevin Frawley	1986	3 years
Mr Syd Comfort	1989	
Mr Les Pyke	1990	
Ms Beverley Hammond	1991	3 years
Ms Eleanor Stodart and	1994	
Mr Clive Hurlstone		
Ms Eleanor Stodart	1995	2 years
Mr Clive Hurlstone	1997	3 years
Mr Kevin McCue	2002	3 years
Ms Christine Goonrey	2005	5 years

## Office bearers and conveners

The following record of NPA office bearers and conveners was mainly extracted from the lists published in successive August/September editions of the NPA *Bulletin*. The *Bulletin* was not born until the Association was in its third year, so entries for the early years have been taken from the first three Annual Reports of the Association.

The record does not purport to be comprehensive; the very many 'ordinary' committee members have been excluded despite their often great contributions; and some vacant positions may have been filled later in the respective years. Some editions are known to have had incomplete lists, especially of conveners, and there have been some amendments in the entries for more recent years to counter such shortcomings.

The record is presented largely in chronological order, each person's entry appearing in sequence according to when they first became office bearers. Where a person's name is known to have changed, the most recent monicker is applied throughout.

Dr Robert Carrick	Inaugural President.
Dr A J Nicholson	President 1960–1961.
Prof L D Pryor	Vice President 1960–1961.
Dr Nancy Burbidge	Secretary 1960–1961; President 1962, 1969; Vice President 1967.
Roy Tait	Treasurer 1960–1961.
S Wilson	Outings Convener 1961.
Prof Brown	Vice President 1962.
Fiona MacDonald Brand	Secretary 1962–1963; Publicity Officer 1966; Editor 1971–1973; Assistant Secretary 1975–1978, 1980–1982; Membership Secretary 1979–1983; Vice President 1984–1985.
Dr Robert Story	President 1963–1964.

Julie Henry	Vice President 1963, 1969; President 1970.
Margaret Hamilton	Assistant Secretary 1963; Secretary 1964.
Ian Baird	Treasurer 1963–1965.
A L G MacDonald	Vice President 1964.
Miss Marie Sexton	Assistant Secretary 1964; Secretary 1965–1967.
Mr Alex Brand	Publicity Officer 1964; President 1967–1968.
D MacLean	Outings Convener 1963.
Ian Grant	President 1965.
Mrs Pat Hammond	Assistant Secretary 1965–1967.
Dick Schodde	Publicity Officer 1965.
Murray Upton	Outings Convener 1965.
Jim Webb	President 1966.
John Schunke	Treasurer 1966–1969.
I Dahl	Secretary 1968–1969.
Margaret Aston	Assistant Secretary 1968–1969.
Laurie Adams	Publicity Officer 1968–1969.
Celia Westwood	Secretary 1970.
Wendy Haines	Assistant Secretary 1970–1971.
Norma Price	Treasurer 1970.
Keith Green	Publicity Officer 1970.
George Chippendale	President 1971.
Bill Watson	Vice President 1971; President 1972–1973.
Sheila Kruse	Secretary 1971–1973, 1975–1980; Publicity Officer 1981–1982.

(continued on page 54)



## Office bearers and conveners *(continued from page 53)*

Bruce Mitchell	Treasurer 1971–1972.	Babette Scougall	Editor 1984.
Glyn Lewis	Publicity Officer 1971–1973, 1987–1989	Syd Comfort	Treasurer 1985; President 1989; Editor 1999–2005.
Ian Currie	Vice President 1972–1973, 1980–1981; President 1974–1977, 1983; Membership Secretary 1964.	Ian Haynes	Outings Convener 1985–1987.
Thea Exley	Assistant Secretary 1972.	Margus Karilaid	Editor 1985.
Jenny Cusbert	Assistant Secretary 1973.	Kevin Frawley	President 1986–1988.
Rod Panter	Treasurer 1973.	Judith Simondson	Editor 1987–1988.
John Banks	Vice Pres 1974, 1978; President 1979.	Steven Forst	Outings Convener 1988–1989, 2004–2005; Treasurer 2002–2003; Namadgi sub-committee Convener 1994.
Esther Hardware	Secretary 1974; Publicity Officer 1975.	Judith Webster	Secretary 1989–1990.
Jane Skinner	Assistant Secretary 1974.	Les Pyke	Treasurer 1989; President 1990.
Pat Jeffress	Treasurer 1974.	Mike Smith	Treasurer 1990–2001; Outings Convener 2006–2009.
Allan Mortlock	Publicity Officer 1974.	Dianne Thompson	Vice President 1991–1993; Outings Convener 1991.
Brian Lee	Editor 1974; Vice President 1975.	Len Haskew	Secretary 1991–1994, 2000.
Mike Hardware	Treasurer 1975.	Tim Walsh and Len Crossfield	Co-conveners, Environment. Sub-committee 1991
Andrew Fordham	Outings Convener 1975.	Dugald Monro	Convener Namadgi Sub-committee 1991.
Bruce Ward	Editor 1975.	Michael Kelly	Outings Convener 1992–1993.
Norm and Jenny Morrison	Assistant Editors 1975; Editors 1976–1977.	Eleanor Stodart	Vice President 1994; President 1995–1996.
Darryl Hawke	Vice President 1976–1977; President 1978.	Phil Bubb	Outings Convener 1994.
Neville Esau	Treasurer 1976–1978, 1984; Vice President 1979, 2001; President 1980–1982; Editor 2006–2007.	Stephen Johnston	Convener Environment Sub- Committee 1994.
Cynthia Hook	Publicity Officer 1976–1978.	Clive Hurlstone	Vice President 1995–1996; President 1997–2001; Convener Environment sub-committee 2002–2006.
Jan Kiek	Outings Convener 1976.	Max Lawrence	Secretary 1995–1999; Outings Convener 1996–2001; Editor 2008–2009.
Reg Alder	Editor 1978–1983.	David Large	Vice President 2000, 2003, 2005; Convener Environment sub-committee 2000; Outings Convener 2002–2003.
Sybil Story	Assistant Secretary 1979.	Judy Kelly	Secretary 2001.
Lyle Mark	Treasurer 1979–1982.	Kevin McCue	Vice President 2002; President 2003–2004.
Bernice Anderson	Publicity Officer 1979.	Lyndal Young	Secretary 2003.
Harriet Mitchell	Publicity Officer 1980	Martin Chalk	Work party co-ordinator 2003–2009
John Webster	Outings Convener 1980.	Christine Goonrey	Secretary 2004; President 2005–2009.
Judy Payne	Secretary 1981–1982.	Rod Griffiths	Treasurer 2004–2009.
Beverley Hammond	Outings Convener 1981–1984; Vice President 1989–1990; President 1991–1993.	Sonja Lenz	Secretary 2005–2009.
Denise Robin	Vice President 1982–1983.	Chris Emery	Vice President 2006–2007, 2009.
Diana Pickering	Secretary 1983.	Sabine Friedrich	Convener Publications sub-committee 2006–2009.
Lala Reeves	Assistant Secretary 1983.		
Joan Hegarty	Treasurer 1983.		
Ann Robertson	Publicity Officer 1983–1984; Secretary 1985.		
Ross Carlton	President 1984–1985.		
Hazel Bancroft	Secretary 1984.		



# Honorary Life Members of the NPA ACT

*Honorary Life Membership: any person who has rendered meritorious service to or on behalf of the Association may, on the recommendation of the Committee, be elected a Life Member by a General Meeting, and for all purposes shall be considered a financial member of the Association.*  
[NPA ACT Constitution]

## Dr Nancy Burbidge AM, 20 July 1972 (died 4 March 1977)



NPA ACT's first Honorary Life Member, Nancy was a mainstay of the Association — from 1959, i.e. before its official beginning. She held the offices of President, Secretary and committee member for many years and was always available for advice and help in conservation matters. An *outline* of her services to NPA includes: prime mover in its founding; its first Secretary; Secretary for three years; President for two years; 12 years committee membership; leadership in numerous outings; many important contributions to the *Bulletin*. One of her greatest enjoyments was to introduce people to the bush by leading outings and by patiently pointing out features which to the untrained eye would go unnoticed. Her *Eyes or no eyes* series (41 in all), drawings and text on native plants from our area, appeared in early issues of the *Bulletin*; individual pieces have been repeated from time to time.

## Ms Julie Henry, July 1973



Julie's long involvement in conservation and with environmental groups is based on a great love of the bush and a determination to inspire others to 'cherish it and protect it fiercely'. She joined the NPA ACT committee in 1961, soon after arriving in Canberra, and served for nine years, including a term as President. Julie worked hard on the proposal for an ACT national park, convening the sub-committee which explored for, and compiled the initial submission for, a national park in the ACT (Gudgenby/Mount

Kelly area). She also represented the NPA, speaking to the Senate Committee inquiry into the Black Mountain Tower.

## Ms Sheila Kruse OAM, June 1979 (died 3 May 2007)

The success of the NPA depends on the dedicated and consistent efforts of members like Sheila. Sheila joined NPA in 1971 becoming Secretary later that year, a position she sustained for some 10 years. She continued as an active committee member, notably overseeing production of the 'tree guide' and documenting NPA material for archiving. Six presidents valued Sheila's assistance and support; she was described as having a 'quiet strength and stability in her gracious, composed behaviour ... is systematic, and her reliability sets impossible standards for lesser mortals'.



## Ms Fiona MacDonald Brand OAM, July 1982

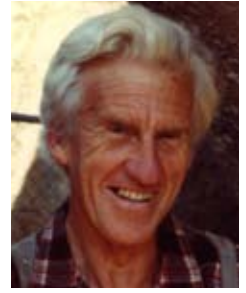


Fiona was a foundation member of the NPA ACT. She was one of those responsible for defining the area proposed for a national park for the ACT. She was Secretary, *Bulletin* editor and/or committee, sub-committee and working group member for most of the Association's first 25 years (and since) except for short periods while overseas. She keeps a close eye on environment and conservation issues in our region and willingly undertakes a stand-in role to represent NPA. Fiona has led numerous outings, provides cheerful and willing help in many NPA activities, and makes new members welcome.

## Mr Reg Alder, August 1984 (died 6 October 2003)

Reg was associated with walking and environment issues from 1938, in both Sydney and Canberra. He served the NPA ACT on the committee and sub-committees, as the Australian National Parks Council (ANPC) national co-

ordinator, and as editor of the *Bulletin* for six years. It blossomed under his administration, raising issues and bringing the objectives of the Association more fully to the notice of members. His superb photographs often illustrated *Bulletin* articles and graced its covers, and they are still used from time to time; he was a frequent contributor of articles and letters. Reg led many outings, often 'over the hills and far away'. He was a keen work party participant, memorably on the Orroral Homestead restoration and the Yerrabi Track construction with its associated Heritage Week walks.



## Dr Robert Story OAM, August 1984 (died 19 February 1999)

Bob was a foundation member of NPA, served as President for two years, as Vice-President, and as a committee and sub-committee member for many years. His enthusiasm and his expertise in the plant world made him a valuable member of the NPA team which in the early 1960s surveyed the future Namadgi area and made the ultimately successful recommendation for its preservation as a national park. For several years Bob was the NPA's delegate to the ANPC and became its President in 1979. A regular and frequent walks leader, he was always an energetic, kind, helpful, generous and friendly presence; he and Sybil often opened their home to NPA ACT meetings and gatherings.



## Mr Ian Currie, August 1985 (died 26 June 2006)

Ian's election as a Life Member acknowledged members' appreciation of his [to then] 14 years of official and unofficial services in his first 15 years of membership of



(continued on page 56)

## Honorary Life Members of the NPA ACT *(continued from page 55)*

the Association. He joined in 1970, was elected to the committee in 1971, Vice-President in 1972, then President in 1974 (four years). He continued on the committee and sub-committees, and became President again in 1983. At one stage Ian's re-election was said to have been by a committee and membership '... not willing to [be deprived] of those sensible and irreverent comments we had come to value when committee discussion threatened to become bogged down or flighty'. He was a frequent leader of walks and a great 'camp father'. This '... pipe-smoking, chocolate-eating, bird-watching, person-baiting Life Member' was also renowned for having instigated, and passed on, the warm tradition of having gluhwein at annual general meetings.

### Mr Charles Hill, September 1988 (died 5 October 2000)

Charles was interested in the natural environment since childhood and was always a keen walker and skier. He joined NPA in 1971 and was elected to the committee in 1976. His attention to detail and conscientious dedication were invaluable in leading the Glendale tree-planting project. Charles and his helpers did a sterling job encouraging the trees to grow. He efficiently supervised sales of the *Field guide to the native trees of the ACT*. Charles was committed to caring for the natural environment; a cheerful leader of day walks, ski trips, car camps and (on retiring) of mid-week walks; an enthusiastic Yerrabi Track constructor; an energetic bush regenerator (describing as 'fun' the work of deleting temporary fire trails in Namadgi after the 1983 bushfires); and a regular meeting attendee.



### Mr Neville Esau, August 1989

Neville joined NPA ACT in 1974 and has been a very active member, both physically on outings, and administratively as President (three years), Vice-President, Treas-



urer (two stints), sub-committee convenor and energetic member of many working groups. Neville presided over NPA during an innovative and busy time for the association and he involved many members in its activities. He (and his family) enjoy the bush and he has led day walks and pack walks over many years, and been convenor for the outings committee. He has been NPA's delegate to ANPC annual conferences.

### Dr Kevin Frawley, July 1991

Kevin has given great support over the years to NPA ACT activities and objectives, as President (three years), and serving on the committee, sub-committees (notably the Environment and Namadgi Sub-committees) and working groups. He played a leading role in the development of major reports for the NPA — the *Eden woodchip report*, the *Alpine conference papers* and the *Northern Cotter catchment report*. He authored the highly strategic *Report on the conservation of the remnant woodland and native grassland* in the ACT. Kevin represented the NPA on the Conservation Council of the SE Region and Canberra and on the ANPC. He became Chair of the ANPC in 1989.



### Mr Alastair Morrison, March 1995 (died 4 August 2009)

Alastair and his wife Hedda joined NPA in 1969. Alastair provided unceasing support for conservation groups with a broad community base and maintained the aims and objectives of the NPA over many years. Alastair's commitment was exemplified by his donations, his *Bulletin* articles, his indefatigable letter writing to newspaper editors, and his participation in NPA work parties and outings. Alastair's most significant contribution to the NPA was the development, from an idea to a successfully completed project, of the *Field guide to the birds of the ACT* (Taylor and Day, 1993). His generous funding of this guide, and of *Reptiles*



and frogs of the Australian Capital Territory (Bennett, 1997), made these excellent NPA publications possible.

### Ms Olive Buckman, August 1999 (died 11 May 2006)

Olive arrived in Canberra in October 1963 to take up the position of Director of the YWCA. In this position she did much to encourage



Canberra youth to take up bushwalking, camping and orienteering, and to appreciate and care for the environment. Olive joined the NPA ACT in 1970 and was soon asked by Secretary Sheila Kruse to respond to requests to the Association for public speakers and for supervisors of guides' and scouts' first-aid and conservation awards. As well, Olive organised and led hundreds of day walks (she instigated mid-week walks) and longer camping tours to national parks all over Australia. Olive also contributed significantly to NPA activities by writing numerous articles for the *Bulletin* (including many pioneering ones on first-aid in the bush) and in many other ways.

### Mr Jack Smart AC, August 1999

Jack joined NPA ACT in 1977 and has been an active member through the years, involved



in developing the walks program and participating in and leading walks. Before leaving Canberra to settle in Melbourne near his family, Jack wrote ... *the NPA has meant so much to me, so many good walks and good friends, memories of wonderful talk on the track and round campfires ... I cherish the friendships that I have made in NPA.*

### Eleanor Stodart, August 2003 (died 2 December 2004)

Eleanor joined the NPA ACT in 1994 because, as she said, her family had been enriched by holidays walking, skiing and being in contact with nature in national parks, and she wanted to do something for the parks in return. She fulfilled this desire by immediately joining the committee and, soon after, accepting the

*(continued next page)*





## Honorary Life Members of the NPA ACT *(continued)*

position of President, a post she held for three years until 1996. Eleanor continued on the committee until 2001 to complete eight years of attentive involvement with the affairs of the Association. She was a driving force behind many reports and submissions made by the Association, including the report on protecting native remnants in pine forests and the major document *Caring for Namadgi together*. Eleanor also brought her scientific background and writing skills together in many articles published in the *Bulletin*. Eleanor joined the Gudgenby Bush Regeneration Group, became its President and worked as its Secretary until her untimely death.



### Syd Comfort, August 2003

Syd Comfort joined the NPA ACT in 1980, was elected to the committee in 1984 and became Treasurer the following year. In 1989 he became President, at a time when the committee was dealing with such issues as the logging of the south-east forests and, nearer to home, the Canberra Nature Park and the push for the removal of the Boboyan pine plantation, which he continued to pursue through the Gudgenby Bush Regeneration Project. Syd has been involved in a number of facets of the Association's work including the Namadgi Sub-committee, organising work parties and leading walks. As editor for 10 years, he oversaw 40 editions of the NPA ACT *Bulletin*. Through his tact and experience, Syd has



contributed widely to the Association over many years.

### Clive Hurlstone, August 2007

Clive Hurlstone has served NPA ACT as President and committee member for longer than any other previous member of the Association. He is joint author of several important NPA documents and submissions including *Caring for Namadgi* and *Conservation of land under ACT Forests*. Clive represented NPA ACT before the Senate Standing Committee and on the Conservation Council of the ACT. He organised the NPA office for years, and directed re-publication of NPA ACT guidebooks such as *Birds of the ACT* and *Native trees of the ACT*. He has also arranged the selection and invitation of guest speakers for monthly general meetings and provided technical support for the conduct of the meetings for many years. Clive is a founding member and former President of the Gudgenby Bush Regeneration Group.



### Adrienne Nicholson, August 2007

Adrienne Nicholson is well known and appreciated for her management of general meeting suppers and Christmas parties for many years. She has organised and led some very interesting day walks and car camps, and has been active on the Outings sub-committee. She has been the public face of NPA ACT at numerous fairs and ACT functions, designing, erecting and



manning the NPA display. Adrienne has contributed extensively to the *Bulletin* with articles and photographs, and by organising the layout for printing and helping with the mail-out over a long time. She worked behind the scenes on the 2006 NPA symposium and has been an active member of the Gudgenby Bush Regeneration Group, again for many years.

### Len Haskew, August 2008

Len has made significant contributions to NPA ACT over many years. He served on the committee for 10 years, five of them as Secretary (on two separate occasions). He was an effective Secretary who carried out the duties with quiet efficiency. He was always willing to act in the position if the then Secretary was unavailable. In addition he was convener of the Marketing, Publicity and Education Sub-committee. Over many years he has been a prolific contributor of articles, book reviews and photographs to the NPA *Bulletin*. In the mid 1990s Len offered to compile the 'PARKWATCH' column in the *Bulletin* and continued to do this in every issue until early 2008. Throughout the 1990s he was an active participant in walks and other outings. He led walks, car camps and work parties, including some extended walks such as to the West MacDonnell Ranges. His companionable personality added greatly to the value of any outing in which he participated. Over the years Len has given a great deal of his cheerful and positive personality to the Association and made a great contribution to the spirit of fellowship within NPA ACT.



# NPA notices

<b>National Parks Association Calendar</b>				
	<b>March</b>	<b>April</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>June</b>
<i>Public holidays</i>	<i>Mon 8</i>	<i>Fri 2, Sun 4 Mon 5</i>	—	<i>Mon 14</i>
NPA inaugural meeting celebration <sup>1</sup>	Mon 1			
General meetings	Thur 18	Thur 15	Thur 20	Thur 17
Committee meetings	Tues 2	Tues 6	Tues 4	Tues 1
50 <sup>th</sup> anniversary picnic <sup>2</sup>	Sun 21			
NPA ACT symposium <sup>3</sup>			Fri 7, Sat 8	
Gudgeny Bush Regeneration <sup>4</sup>	Sat 13	Sat 10	See notice	Sat 12

Further details: **1** Celebrating the 50th anniversary of NPA's formation  
**2** Namadgi Visitor Centre, 11:30am onwards.  
**3** Discovery Centre at CSIRO.  
**4** Meet Namadgi Visitor Centre 9:15am or Yankee Hat car park 10:00am.

## New members of the association



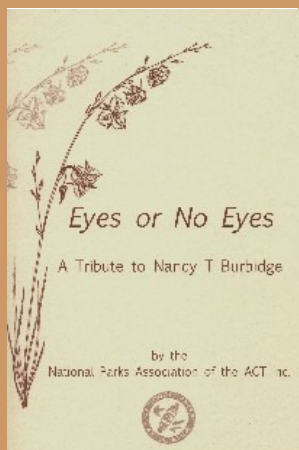
The NPA ACT welcomes the following new members:

Cynthia Breheny  
 Noureen Rainsford  
 Lucinda Lang  
 Deanna Buffier  
 Karen Cody  
 Kerri Tomkins  
 David Burgess and Penny Grahame.

These people have joined at a great time; we look forward to seeing everyone at NPA activities.

## Eyes or No Eyes

NPA's tribute to our founding member Nancy Burbidge. Nancy's nature notes and drawings of native plants of the ACT, were originally published in *Bulletins* from 1963 to 1971. Gathered together for the first time as a book, this limited edition is available at general meetings for \$30 to NPA members (RRP \$35) or ring Sonja on 62511291



## Special 2010 anniversary calendar

To members who would still like a 2010 NPA ACT anniversary calendar, we have a few copies left, at \$10. Contact Sonja on 6251 1291



## GBRG May work party

Because the NPA symposium clashes with the usual Gudgenby Bush Regeneration Group work party in May, the latter will be changed. GBRG members: keep an eye out for email advice, else contact Michael Goonrey (6231 8395) or Clive Hurlstone (6288 7592 or mobile 0407 783 422)

## Wines to celebrate our 50th Anniversary



Imagine: **Namadgi Red**  
**Gudgenby White**  
**Bimberi Port.**



These three desirable drops are on offer to toast NPA ACT's 50th Anniversary this year. The labels are as attractive as the contents, featuring images from Namadgi National Park, taken by our own members Brian Slee and Adrienne Nicholson.

Bottles are \$12 each, and our supplier 'Plonk' will deliver mixed or straight 6-packs free of charge to Canberra and Queanbeyan addresses.

**NPA ACT receives \$3 from each bottle sold.**

The Order Form can be downloaded from the NPA website at [www.npaact.org.au](http://www.npaact.org.au) Post or deliver your order with payment to Plonk at Shop 36, Fyshwick Markets ACT 2609 or, if paying by credit card, you may wish to fax your order to (02) 6260 6337.

**Tent for sale.** We have a Tornado Extended T 10TX canvas tent for sale (no centre pole) in excellent condition. It includes a large awning and heavy-duty plastic bags for the poles. \$500 ono. Please contact Barb or Chris de Bruine on (02) 6258 3531 or email [barbdebruine@hotmail.com](mailto:barbdebruine@hotmail.com)

This *Bulletin* had a myriad contributors, from then and now, and was prepared by

Editors: Max Lawrence and Judy Kelly  
 Sub-editor: Ed Highley  
 Presentation: Adrienne Nicholson

A special acknowledgement to Annette Smith and Judy Kelly for their huge inputs to this golden anniversary edition of the *Bulletin*.

## Cover photograph

**Rock outcrops and woodland patches are characteristic of the Gudgenby Valley** *Photo Adrienne Nicholson*



# General Meetings

Third Thursday of the month, (not December or January)  
8:00pm, Uniting Church hall, 56 Scrivener Street, O'Connor

## Thursday 18 March

*Japan: Nature and Culture.*

David Large, NPA member.

In October 2009, David and Robin Large with Janet Thompson and Tim Walsh spent two weeks in Tokyo and other cities, with sojourns to the Japanese alps, staying in country inns and onsens\*, together with visits to shrines, temples and gardens. Come and be regaled with their experiences.

\* *onsen* is a term for hot springs in the Japanese language, though the term is often used to describe the bathing facilities and inns around such hot springs.

**Note.** This presentation was held over from the February meeting.

## Thursday 15 April

*A mountain evening.*

Matthew Higgins.

Matthew has worked as a Senior Curator at the National Museum of Australia since 2004, and he has been researching, writing about, talking about, walking and skiing the mountains of the ACT's high country for two decades.

Matthew will talk about his new book, *Rugged beyond imagination*, a history of the northern Australian Alps. He will also screen his latest short film, *High Stakes*, an intimate look at the Snowies in winter—cross-country skiing, huts, animals and the threat of climate change.

## Thursday 20 May

*Kayaking the Murray and Murrumbidgee Rivers.*

Mike Bremers, NPA Committee member.

Mike went on his first overnight canoe outing with the NPA in 1994. This was the start of many kayaking trips (including NPA outings) which have included paddling the Murray and Murrumbidgee Rivers in stages between 1995 and 2008.

Mike will talk about his experiences, the varying conditions including flood and drought and the changing nature of the rivers themselves.

## National Parks Association of the 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 land use to achieve conservation.

### Office-bearers

<i>President</i>	Christine Goonrey	6231 8395 (h)
	cgoonrey@grapevine.com.au	
<i>Vice-President</i>	Chris Emery	6249 7604 (h)
	chris.emery@optusnet.com.au	
<i>Secretary</i>	Sonja Lenz	6251 1291 (h)
	sllenz@grapevine.com.au	
<i>Treasurer</i>	Rod Griffiths	6288 6988 (h)
	Rod.Griffiths@actewagl.com.au	

### Committee members

Mike Bremers	6292 3408 (h)
	mcbremers@optusnet.com.au
Sabine Friedrich	6249 7604 (h)
	sabine.canberra@gmail.com
Clive Hurlstone	6288 7592 (h) 0407 783 422 (mob)
	cjhurls@bigpond.net.au
Judy Kelly	6253 1859 (h)
	judy.kelly@tpg.com.au
Max Lawrence	6288 1370 (h)
	mlawrence@netspeed.com.au
Kevin McCue (Immediate Past President)	6251 1291 (h)
	kmccue@grapevine.com.au
Annette Smith	6286 2984 (h)
	annette.smith@netspeed.com.au

### Conveners

<i>Outings Sub-committee</i>	Mike Smith	6286 2984 (h)
	msmith@netspeed.com.au	
<i>Publications Sub-committee</i>	Sabine Friedrich	6249 7604 (h)
	sabine.canberra@gmail.com	
<i>Bulletin Working Group</i>	Max Lawrence	6288 1370 (h)
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<i>Work Party Co-ordinator</i>	Martin Chalk	6292 3502 (h)
	mchalk@grapevine.com.au	

The NPA ACT office is in the Conservation Council building, Childers Street, City. It is staffed by volunteers but not on a regular basis. Callers may leave phone or email messages at any time and they will be attended to. The post office mail box is cleared daily.

**Phone:** (02) 6229 3201 0412 071 382  
**Website:** www.npaact.org.au  
**Email:** admin@npaact.org.au  
**Address:** GPO Box 544, Canberra ACT 2601

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

Household membership	\$44	Single members	\$38.50
Corporate membership	\$33	Bulletin only	\$33
Full-time student/Pensioner	\$22		

All the above subscription categories reduce to \$11 if a donation of \$100 or more is made.

### Advertising

The *Bulletin* accepts advertisements and inserts. Contact the Editor for information and rates.

The NPA ACT website is hosted by our generous sponsor, Encode.



### NPA Bulletin

Contributions of articles, letters, drawings and photographs are always welcome. Items accepted for publication may also be published on the NPA website. Send all items to The *Bulletin* Team, admin@npaact.org.au, or the postal address above.

**Deadline for the June 2010 issue: 30 April 2010.**

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