



NPA *Bulletin*

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National Parks Association of the Australian Capital Territory Inc



**Hazard reduction
burns**



**European wasps
surging**



**NPA's centenary gift to
Canberra**

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

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From the President

2013 is a federal election year and one of the things that concerns me as NPA ACT president is the lack of visibility of environmental issues on the agendas of the major political parties. Certainly, in the last federal election, terrestrial biodiversity issues were given scant regard by the politicians of these parties. However, are they simply reflecting the views of the voters? The importance of the environment as an election issue has decreased amongst voters over time as other issues get higher priority.

Now I am not complaining about the expansion of marine national parks or the work done on the health of the Murray-Darling basin; these are important developments. But there seems to be a complacency in the community at large about other biodiversity issues. The installation of conservative governments across Australia has seen the erosion of the support for biodiversity, evidenced by things such as land clearing in Queensland, the threats to West Australia's Kimberley region and the various ridiculous proposals being put forward for activities in NSW national parks.

I believe that the environment will prevail again in the future but there may be a number of hard years ahead of the environmental movement to achieve this. We will all need to be championing the environment in this coming election and the years ahead.

Here, in the ACT, we are blessed with an extensive reserve system and this is expected to increase with the addition of new reserves in North Gungahlin. To many in the ACT the existence of an expansive reserve system is evidence that the ACT's environment is well protected. However, the creation of a reserve is only a first step, for without adequate long term

funding for maintenance there is the strong potential for reserve degradation through the incursion of weeds, pest animals and overuse. In addition, there is the important issue of connectivity between reserves. In our submission on the Strategic Environmental Assessment for Gungahlin, the NPA ACT stressed both these points and will continue to raise them with the ACT Government and its bureaucrats.

Both issues require new approaches. The development of North Gungahlin and other areas provides an opportunity to establish seed funding for long term maintenance of reserves. Such funding needs the establishment of a mechanism, like a trust, that will manage the funds for the benefits of the ACT's reserves. Without a clear purpose for the funding it is likely to be eventually absorbed into consolidated revenue and lost to the reserves system.

Much of the land in North Gungahlin needed to achieve adequate connectivity between reserves will be managed by rural lessees. The NPA ACT has also identified that a significant crescent of land across the top of the ACT should be incorporated into a new national park. Again there is a need to think outside the square to establish a mechanism by which such privately leased land can be recognised as contributing to the national park while still maintaining the conservation benefits

(continued next page)



Update on European wasps

Back in September 2008 I wrote an article for the *NPA Bulletin* on 'Attack of the wasps'. I reported on a workshop on European wasps that NPA ACT co-sponsored with Parks Conservation and Lands (PCL) staff at the Namadgi Visitor Centre on 29 July 2008.

The workshop heard that wasps were already widespread in ACT urban and rural areas and that we had much to learn from the New Zealand experience. Because of the extreme seriousness of the problem there, the precautionary principle was advocated — assume the worst and get in early with a big punch.

... there can be a whole-of-community impact on both vertebrates and invertebrates due to a cascade effect

The problem is serious for us because European wasps can have a significant impact in many areas and there can be a whole-of-community impact on both vertebrates and invertebrates due to a cascade effect. In agriculture there can be significant losses in industries such as honey production and fruit growing. The level of wasp predation has the potential to seriously reduce biodiversity of birds and native insects, which has, in turn, serious implications for pollination of native plants. There are very real dangers for people if stung, particularly if this occurs in remote areas. Tourist areas had



Identification. The crisp yellow and black pattern of the European wasp, Vespula germanica (top), distinguishes it from the Honey bee, Apis mellifera (left) which is more fuzzy and a dull black and orange-brown. The two species are much the same size.

been seriously affected in some parts of New Zealand, with seasonal closures due to high wasp danger in summer. In Australia the impact could be severe; for example, on places like fishing spots where wasps are too dense.

The level of wasp predation has the potential to seriously reduce biodiversity of birds and native insects ...

This summer just past there have been numerous reports from NPA members about the difficulty in going walking in Namadgi without coming across wasps. In my recent visits to Orroral Valley, Legoland on Orroral Ridge, Square Rock and the Gudgenby Valley I have encountered wasps. Gudgenby work parties are more frequently finding nests. An NPA work party clearing briars at the remote Max and Bert's Hut high on the Booth Range found them there too. In suburban Canberra another member was driven inside from his barbecue because of wasps.

NPA ACT has recognised the clear danger that European wasps pose in the Territory. In 2008 NPA called on the ACT Government to allocate \$200,000 immediately to hit wasps hard and fast in the next summer. The feeling then was that there was the opportunity to solve the problem while there was still a chance. It was a small amount of money compared with the damage European wasps can



cause to people and the bush.

... it may be almost our last chance to head off a major ecological disaster

Five years later it may be almost our last chance to head off a major ecological disaster. Climate change has aggravated the situation. Seldom do we as a community get such a clear opportunity to learn from the mistakes of others. We need a major, effective, long-term European wasp control program in place. Existing resources cannot deliver the swift and widespread action that is required. There is a compelling need for additional pest control officers to work in protected areas; baiting programs need to be increased in urban and rural areas; and a coordinated research and training program is needed so that wasp monitoring and tracking are undertaken in an effective and consistent way. For the coming spring there should be a planned campaign to network key areas in Namadgi with traps to at least reduce the establishment of new nests.

Michael Goonrey

From the President *(continued)*

that can arise from the nature of rural leases. Included in the conservation benefits of rural leases is the reduced public access to the land, which can reduce the pressure on the ecosystems found on the leases.

This June *Bulletin* contains many fine articles but I would like to bring your

attention to two that deal with key ACT environment matters. The first is Christine Goonrey's article on bushfire hazard reduction burns. The recent burns on Stockyard Spur and Smoker's Gap have highlighted the importance of close liaison between fire units and science.

The second article, by Michael

Goonrey, is on the increasing problem of European wasps in our natural areas. European wasps are starting to cause significant environmental damage and a well thought out strategy for their management is desperately needed.

Rod Griffiths



The NSW plains to the west from Weddin Mountains National Park. Photo Peter Tedder

Make national parks truly national

The National Parks Australia Council has taken a leading role in this very important campaign. The following is the text of a statement by Matt Ruchel, Executive Director of our sister organisation the Victorian National Parks Association.

'Under existing laws, the Australian Government can only intervene to protect national parks if there is a risk to a federally-listed plant or animal species.

'When the NSW, Queensland and Victorian state governments go ahead with their planned re-introduction of logging or grazing in their national parks to placate political interests, there is little the Federal Government could do to protect our national reserve system.

'Surely we need some checks and balances! Parks after all belong to all Australians, not just state governments.

'Federal environment minister Tony Burke can table an amendment or regulation to overcome this by making all national parks and reserves classified as category 1 and 2 under the IUCN system as a 'matter of national environmental significance' (MNES).

'He then would not have to wait for evidence of a threat to a particular species to take action that protects the environmental values of national parks and reserves.

'He has already promised to do this, and has consulted with all Australian states and territories. All he needs to do now is table the amendment or regulation.

'When the Victorian Government tried to re-introduce cattle grazing into the Alpine National Park, Minister Burke could act because this area is listed as a National Heritage area and because he was provided with evidence of cattle grazing actually impacting on site-specific habitat of the threatened Alpine Tree-frog.

'The amendments would extend this kind of protection to all national parks and high value conservation reserves across Australia.

'Tony Burke said he would do this in 2011 — time is now running out for this parliament and action is required.'

What we can do

Rod Griffiths, president of NPA ACT, Christine Goonrey, immediate past president of NPA ACT and President of

the National Parks Australia Council, and Kevin Evans, CEO of NPA of NSW, met Federal Environment Minister, Tony Burke, and the Shadow Minister for the Environment, Greg Hunt, on Wednesday 29 May to discuss the national parks trigger under the EPBC Act. Within the following two weeks the Federal Government could decide to extend national protection to Australia's national parks. As a follow-up it is vital that as many people as possible now contact their Labor representatives and the two Senators in the ACT —

ask them to urge Tony Burke, as a matter of urgency, to introduce regulations to list national parks as a matter of national environmental significance under the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act and to introduce legislation to remove the power to allow States decision-making powers under the EPBC Act.

Details of how to do this were contained in the special edition of *Burning Issues* emailed to members on 31 May, and are also available on our NPA ACT website www.npaact.org.au.

Judy Kelly

Notice of Annual General Meeting

Thursday 15 August 2013

Business: Minutes of the AGM 2012

President's Report

Financial Report

Appointment of Auditor

Election of Office-bearers and Committee

Any other business

Note: all office-bearer and committee positions become vacant at the AGM.

Nominations for the ensuing year are welcome. Copy nomination form below.

Membership subscriptions for 2013–14.

In the first few weeks of June members will receive a letter in the mail asking for membership renewals and donations. Part of the letter is a printout of the details we store confidentially on our membership database and we are asking members to check that the information we have (name/s, address, phone number/s, membership type, joining date, your interests in supporting the NPA ACT, email address and an indication

whether you want to receive our e-newsletter *Burning Issues* is still correct.

Please take the time to check your details and if necessary send corrections with your membership dues to the office.

See page 22.

Sonja Lenz, Secretary

Nominations for NPA office bearers and committee 2013/14

Nominations are sought for office bearers and committee members to be elected at the AGM on 15 August 2013.

We nominate

for the position of in NPA ACT in 2013/14

Proposed by (signature) Seconded by (signature)

I accept the nomination (signature) Date

[This form can be photocopied and used for nominations.]



2013 hazard-reduction burns in Namadgi National Park: were they successful?



Black Mt hazard reduction burn, from Parkes way, 12 April 2013

In the summer and autumn of 2013, TAMS conducted a number of hazard-reduction burns across Namadgi National Park and ACT nature reserves. These burns were part of a 10–20 year plan for fire management under the ACT’s Strategic Bushfire Management Plan (SBMP). The SBMP aims to preserve environmental assets such as bogs and protected species as well as safeguarding life and property, so these burns are quite important for conservation management as well as bushfire risk reduction. Two of these burns are particularly interesting to NPA ACT members: Stockyard Spur and Smokers Trail.

Stockyard Spur

Members will remember our fierce objections to a proposal for a category 1 fire trail down the Stockyard Spur in 2005. Stockyard Spur is the line that separates the ACT’s two main catchments — Bendora and Corin. The experts initially proposed to build a fire trail starting at Corin Dam and going all the way up Stockyard Spur to join up

with the Mt Franklin Road. We were told that this was necessary to enable burning to be undertaken to reduce fire risk along Stockyard Spur and protect the Cotter catchment. Yet the stands of Alpine Ash, the wetlands and the damp gullies surrounding the spur are critical ecosystems for the healthy functioning of the water catchment. We knew there was a better way to solve the problem than a big, expensive, erosion-prone fire trail. In response to the proposal, members worked closely with both park management and the fire unit within

TAMS on ways to meet the strategic requirements of fire management while protecting the ecological values of the area.

The eventual negotiated outcome involved combining the existing walking track with the largely dormant fire trail to form the required firebreak. The work involved to achieve this outcome was subsequently limited to;

- some widening and access improvements on the existing walking track
- widening of two strategic ‘drop points’ along the walking track (to enable a portable dam to be dropped in when required)
- clearing a helicopter landing site at the junction of the fire trail and the walking track
- widening several sharp corners along the top half of the fire trail while carefully retaining the native grass cover
- information signage for the walking trail.

This outcome would allow ground crews to undertake prescribed burning along the track; it would allow safe exit for crews fighting a fire along the ridge and the Mt Franklin Road; and provide access by helicopter for ground crews as well as portable water drops for remote-area firefighting.

We all had high hopes this would work but a little disquiet remained. Would the ground crews really be able

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Above. A hazard reduction burn in progress – Black Mountain from Parkes Way, 12 April 2013. Photo Marie Lawrence

Right. The Bulletin’s Adrienne Nicholson tackles the climb at the official opening, of the new Stockyard Spur trail, November 2012. Photo Max Lawrence.

2013 hazard-reduction burns in Namadgi National Park *continued from page 5*

to manage prescribed burns so they didn't go off the track and into the gullies and wetlands? Would building a widened and strengthened track cause more damage with heavy equipment going in and out? Would the upgraded track spoil its wild nature? How much, exactly, would be cleared for helicopter access?

We now have the answers to these questions and there is little doubt the whole exercise has been very impressive. The opening of the walking track last November was celebrated in our December *Bulletin*. It was constructed by ACT Parks firefighters as part of the annual Bushfire Operations Plan (BOP) works and their pride and joy in the completed task was obvious at the opening. There was no heavy equipment used to rebuild the track with the team carrying most materials up by hand — a 500m rise over only 2km. They kept to the original nature of the track as closely as they could, using natural materials of wood and stone to reinforce steps and enhance visitor access, while at the same time widening it and making it safer for use by firefighters. The location of the helipad area was identified on a spot that required the least amount of tree removal with debris being chipped on-site and the area resown with snow grass. The two 'drop points' along the walking trail are now hard to spot because they have been placed in naturally open areas. The track has lost none of its special beauty and all



The PCL firefighting team at the opening of the Stockyard Spur track they built, November 2012. Photo Max Lawrence.

of those involved deserve congratulations on the outcome.

But the question still remained: would it work as a fire trail?

In April this year the TAMS Fire Unit undertook its first official hazard-reduction burn along the rebuilt track and they planned some really clever strategies. The burn plan specified a late afternoon ignition in cool autumn weather with no wind, low overnight temperatures and cool damp mornings. The idea was for the fire to run through late into the night, so that the dry, fire-prone areas would be covered but the fires would go out in the cool of the morning before they hit the gullies. After extensive preliminary planning and preparation over several weeks, crews went up late in the day, lit fires off the track and worked all night to keep the

fires to plan. The next morning a helicopter checked where the fires were still active and found that some dry patches were still burning, heading towards the gullies. In response to this, ground crews were deployed to walk in and put them out. Anyone who has strayed from the track up that spur will recognize the skill and effort that is required. Aerial surveillance has since confirmed the minimal impact of the burn while achieving exactly what was planned.

In short, thanks to meticulous planning, a huge effort by staff right across TAMS and the

Parks Fire Unit and strong leadership, the Stockyard Spur Walking Track/Fire Trail plan delivers both good environmental outcomes and reduced fire risk. It does seem that if the goodwill is there, we can have sound fire management practices and good environmental outcomes at the same time.

Smokers Trail

This prescribed burn was one of the biggest fires seen in Namadgi since 2003 and was the largest prescribed burn undertaken in the ACT for at least the past 30–40 years. The fire planners knew they were tackling some of the most difficult country in the national park: the area bounded to the west by Corin Dam,

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The newly constructed helipad at the top of the track as it was in November 2012 (left) ... and as it was in April 2013 (right) after less than six months of regeneration of the ground cover. Photographs by Max Lawrence (left) and Ed Highley (right).

2013 hazard-reduction burns in Namadgi National Park *(continued from page 6)*

to the east by Smokers Trail, to the north by Corin Dam Road and to the south by Cotter Hut Road. The only walking track in the whole area is the popular and well-patronised Square Rock Walking Trail, so the exercise would be open to close public scrutiny. There are no other roads or walking tracks into the wild ridges, valleys and impressive rock tors that lie hidden from most of us, though some intrepid walkers have made it into Mt McKeahnie. The area contains key environmental assets such as stands of



A sample of the wonderful views to be seen from the Stockyard Spur trail. Max Lawrence

regenerating Alpine Ash and Snow Gum, bogs and wetlands, habitat for Smoky Mouse and other listed species as well as rare ground orchids. It is hard to imagine a more difficult place to manage a prescribed burn.

Weather was so critical in the detailed planning for the burn that the whole operation was postponed when the first week of autumn proved drier than expected. The aim was to have a 'moisture differential' that would see the fuels under the regenerating Alpine Ash being too moist to burn while the surrounding fuels would be dry enough to carry a low-intensity ground fire. A temporary weather station was set up on a ridge in the middle of the area to get accurate weather reports and finetune the daily activities while ground crews regularly visited the site to sample and monitor the fuel moisture. Then, after a little rain had fallen and extensive mapping and planning had been carried out, ground crews began lighting up the edges of the burn area. Each day had a specific plan of operations and the impact of fire on each area was assessed before the next part of the plan was put into action. Helicopters were used for aerial ignition in the inaccessible areas and were also on stand-by to waterbomb fire runs that threatened the pre-identified no-go areas.

Fire in specific planned areas was allowed to run through the night and into the next day to ensure that much larger areas were covered. Great care was taken to keep fire out of the stands of regenerating Alpine Ash that cover many of the south-east facing slopes in this area and which were so badly affected in 2003. Because this species needs 30–50

years to reseed, it was critical that no fire destroy the young saplings growing below the stark white trunks of the dead trees. Habitat for species such as Broad Toothed Rat and Smoky Mouse was clearly identified and similarly excised from the planned burn areas. Areas of regenerating Snow Gum were also protected from the burn.

So did it work? The long-term strategy is to create a mosaic of different fuel ages across this entire area to create a firefighting advantage the next time fire comes out of the Brindabella mountains to threaten farms, the city and the important ecological and cultural assets within the ACT. Obviously we won't really know if it has achieved this objective until the next big fire threatens but there are some other objectives against which we can measure the exercise.

For example, did they achieve the planned reduction in fuel loads across the burnt area? Did the reduction meet the goals of the Strategic Bushfire Management Plan Version 2; i.e. a mosaic of fuel ages and areas of fire fighting advantage? Did any key environmental assets get damaged? Did the exercise increase fire management skills and enhance information and processes that would improve future firefighting efforts? And lastly, did it deliver value for money?

Initial aerial surveys show that a few ridges experienced a hotter fire than other areas, with some canopy scorch clearly visible from Square Rock. However, the fire intensity remained mostly low, maybe around 1–2 metres, and ran below the tree canopy for most of the area. Aerial surveys will confirm the results,

but Neil Cooper, manager of TAMS Fire Unit, expects to achieve a measure of fuel reduction across at least 70 per cent of the total burn area.

With this level of control over the burn pattern and fire intensity it is safe to say there are very distinct areas with different fuel levels. The mosaic effect is very marked. A walk to Square Rock takes you through untouched vegetation as well as areas of quite hot burns at ground level. The Alpine Ash stands were not affected, though some small areas of mixed ash and other eucalypts were burnt. The

bogs and wet gullies were not impacted, but the TAMS Fire Unit has nevertheless already planned post-burn monitoring and surveys to be carried out to check the impact on the Broad Toothed Rat, Smoky Mouse and other species normally found in the area.

The experience in careful, controlled and prescriptive burning was irreplaceable and will provide the next best thing to actual firefighting experience. A full incident management team (IMT) ran initial operations and a detailed incident action plan (IAP) was prepared daily. The plan listed all operational staff, their roles and tasks and the conditions that were expected for the day — it also clearly identified the objective, including detailed maps of fire-exclusion zones. It was an invaluable training exercise for a full-scale fire operation. So now we have more experienced fire crews who have managed a complex burn in remote and difficult areas with a keen sensitivity to its ecological values. That has to put the ACT and its ecological values in a much safer position for the next time a big fire threatens from the mountains — and it will come.

Christine Goonrey

Christine is a member of the ACT Bushfire Council, which advises the Minister and the Emergency Services Commissioner on matters related to bushfire management. She is also a member of the NPA Management Committee and is NPA's Immediate Past President. Ed.

NPA's centenary gift to Canberra

It's Canberra's one hundredth birthday and the NPA ACT wanted to help celebrate this milestone. And what better way than to give to the ACT a gift that expanded the opportunity for mobility impaired people to enjoy the ACT's wonderful natural environment.

So, on Sunday 14 April 2013, the NPA ACT donated to the ACT an all-terrain wheelchair. The donation was accepted by the Minister for Territory and Municipal Services, Mr Shane Rattenbury, at Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve. But what was the history behind the donation?

A number of years ago I was walking in Kosciuszko National Park. It was late afternoon and I was heading towards the Snowy River from Blue Lake when I met a large group of 20-year-olds heading the opposite way. In their midst was a severely mobility impaired person being propelled along in a wheelchair. My thoughts quickly envisaged the trek that they had already made: a steep descent from Charlottes's Pass, the fording of the Snowy River and several kilometres of gravel track. And somehow they had been able to guide the wheelchair through all these obstacles. I could only have great respect for their efforts and I am still unsure how they got the wheelchair across that river.

The impression this group had made on me suddenly resurfaced when I saw an article in one of Australia's outdoor magazines about an all-terrain wheelchair. Parks Victoria had installed the wheelchairs in two of their national parks and they seemed to be quite popular.



Minister Rattenbury and President Rod take Rod's very able bodied daughter Caitlin on a test run at Tidbinbilla. Photo supplied by Rod.

Parks Victoria were using a Canadian wheelchair called the Trailblazer. It's an innovative design which has been described as a cross between a sedan chair and a wheelbarrow. The chair sits above a single wheel and 2, 3 or 4 helpers or sherpas provide the motive power. It's a beautifully balanced design and although it is long it is surprisingly manoeuvrable. Also having only one wheel means that it is relatively easy to move over trails that would stop a normal wheelchair. How much easier would it have been for that earlier group if only they had had an all-terrain wheelchair.

It was obvious that such a device would be a boon for any nature loving

mobility impaired person and both the NPA ACT's committee and the ACT's Parks and Conservation Service embraced the idea. The all-terrain wheelchair is available from Tidbinbilla and bookings can be made by contacting the visitor centre there on 6205 1233. Use of the wheelchair is free and users should provide their own bike helmet. Its use is not restricted to Tidbinbilla as it can be folded for transporting.

A great blog site devoted to the use of the wheelchair can be found at <http://trailridertales.blogspot.com.au/p/introducing-trailrider.html>

Rod Griffiths

Shooting in NSW national parks

This issue is still very much a live one. The battle continues pending the outcome of court actions involving members of the recreational shooting fraternity and the Games Council itself.

Rangers, walkers, conservationists, and other users of national parks do not look forward to more such cases involving themselves when (and if?) the NSW legislation comes into effect.

See the lead item in PARKWATCH for NPA NSW's assessment of the key issues (page 19).



Mike Smith and Kevin McCue with Barbara Comfort at the Comforts open house day with Canberra memorabilia on show. Photo Max Lawrence

Call for a professional culling program

MEDIA RELEASE by NPA NSW

Call for Professional culling program for feral horses

28 May 2013

The National Parks Association of NSW (NPA) is calling on the NSW Government to introduce a professional culling program to address the environmental crisis being caused in Kosciuszko National Park by feral horses.

“A report released yesterday states clearly that feral horse numbers in Kosciuszko National Park are ‘out-of-control’ and will only get worse if we don’t act. Current horse removal methods are completely failing to keep up with the breeding rate,” says Kevin Evans, CEO of the National Parks Association of NSW.

‘Observations of Pest Horse Impacts in the Australian Alps’, March 2013 by Graeme L. Worboys and Ian Pulsford, reports unprecedented levels of environmental damage in Kosciuszko

National Park due to dramatically increased feral horse populations.

“We are calling on the NSW Government to reintroduce a professional aerial culling program that follows stringent animal welfare protocols approved by the RSPCA. Such a program would be an effective and humane way to reduce feral horse numbers over large areas.

“If the government chooses to ignore the evidence, it will be failing its responsibilities to protect our unique sub-alpine ecosystems and native species.

Worboys and Pulsford have carried out extensive research in the Australian Alps over the last 40 years.

Photographs in their current report show high levels of destruction from horses trampling and grazing. In particular, sensitive streamside and wetland environments are being decimated. Over 43 kms of stream banks have collapsed or been degraded as a result of feral horses.

In 2010, an aerial survey of feral horses showed around 7,700 feral horses

present in the Australian Alps. Three years later populations were estimated at 14,000 horses.

“These observations confirm the increasingly frequent reports we have received in recent years from bushwalkers regarding their concerns about the damage horses are doing in our precious alpine areas.

“If we don’t take action, there will be more concentrated impacts for birds, mammals, reptiles and frogs that rely on these sub-alpine environments being healthy. Endangered species such as the She-oak Skink, found only in the Australian Alps, are threatened with extinction by damage caused by feral horses,” says Mr Evans.

NPA of NSW Media contact:
Kevin Evans 0457 797 977.

The Bundian Way

The Bundian Way is an ancient trail which links the NSW south coast to the mountains.

Eden local Land Council chairman B J Cruise says: “It’s an ancient track that links Bilgalara [Fishermans Beach in Twofold Bay] with Targangal [Mt Kosciuszko]. It connects the whaling ceremonies in spring with the gathering of Bogong moths in summer in the High Country”.

The Bundian Way is 265 km long. It is heritage-listed, crossing public land at Twofold Bay, then following the Towamba River, and on through Delegate to the Snowy Mountains. The old track has often been used as a stock route over the past 150 years.

Yuin elder Rev. Ossie Cruise says it is named after the Bundi people who once lived along the route. It was one of a network of routes used by Aboriginal people over thousands of years, for practical, ceremonial and trade reasons.

The Bundian Way Management Advisory Committee involves representatives from the National Parks and Wildlife Service, State Forests, the Catchment Management Authority, Lands Department and local Shire



Eden Land Council and Forestry workers at the opening of the Balawan (Mount Imlay) campsite on the Bundian Way, April 2013 (Eden Magnet).

Councils. Two campsites are being established along the route. The Bundian Way Indigenous Art Gallery at Delegate will act as Information Centre for the Bundian Way.

I hope NPA ACT walkers will venture along the track and share their experiences with all of us.

Fiona MacDonald Brand with help from an article in the February 2013 issue of the *Koori Mail* (the indigenous national newspaper printed in Lismore NSW).

Gudgenby Hut reconstruction

A sunny autumn Tuesday in April witnessed the official opening by Simon Corbell, Minister for the Environment and Sustainable Development, of a reconstruction of part of the original Gudgenby slab hut, now located within a woodland area a short distance from the Namadgi Visitor Centre. The large crowd attending included members of a number of the families associated with Gudgenby over the years, and many others who had played important roles in the preservation of the hut remains, in researching or recording the history of the hut and the people related to it, or in the now completed reconstruction.

It was appropriate that the proceedings were conducted by Brett McNamara, strongly committed to the concept and who also led an enthusiastic parks staff in support of the project. Also attending were the project architect, Phillip Leeson, and many involved in the various stages of the construction, all there to witness the successful completion of the enterprise. The support of the ACT Government through the ACT Heritage Grants Program also deserves particular mention.

It had been recognised that full reconstruction of the hut, attractive though the concept was, was not feasible, but we now have a well thought through and equally well achieved solution meeting the calls of heritage preservation, accessibility and practicality. Under the cover of a stout pitched roof is a reconstruction of the front wall of the old hut made from the original Gudgenby slabs and, set a short distance behind it, a pisé wall. The two inner facing walls carry panels that portray, in intriguing detail, the story of Gudgenby and the hut. A further outstanding feature is the facility to hear, while walking through, recordings of stories as told by local personalities to Matthew Higgins some years ago.

NPA member Graham Scully who has had a long association with the saga of this Gudgenby building spoke at the opening. An edited version of his address accompanies this article. More information on the history and lifetime of the old Gudgenby homestead and its occupants, including a photograph of it as it existed in the 1950s, is contained in an excellent article by Babette Scougall in the December 2012 issue of the NPA *Bulletin*.

Syd Comfort



Graham Scully addressing the assemblage. Photo supplied by Graham Scully

Launch of the Gudgenby in a Box Project

Address by Graham Scully

Good morning everyone! This is an exciting day for me. I've been waiting for it for 23 years!

Connection to country ... I like that concept.

One of the many special aspects of this gathering is that all of us have a connection to Namadgi and to this building. Some are from families that lived in it or worked on the property, such as Tom Brayshaw and the children of Bill and Joan Bootes. The rest of us have other connections: Park and Heritage Unit employees, bushwalkers, photographers, historians, NPA people who lobbied for the creation of the Park, and the generally interested.

As far as I'm aware, we have here the remains of the oldest wooden dwelling in the ACT; the original Gudgenby homestead. It can tell many stories. I'd like you to hear just a few of them today.

It began its life 168 years ago, in 1845, its timbers coming from several tall straight trees growing on a nearby hillside. When we look closely we can see the skills of the craftsmen who split the logs into slabs and posts, and pit-sawed the flooring and other timbers.

Bill Bootes, the last of more than 20 owners, told us in the 1990s that he was proud of the old homestead, 'it was better built than Orroral'. The slabs are very substantial; longer, wider and thicker than any in the huts and homesteads of Kosciuszko National Park. A feature you all should look closely at later is the dowelling joints of the window frames. These dowelling joints are made by drilling matching holes in two pieces of timber and joining them with a round wooden peg.

In its lifetime, this building and its people have seen much of the history of the ACT passing by and taking place within it. Charles and Elizabeth McKeachnie were its first residents. One of Elizabeth's early memories was a gathering of 500 Aboriginal people in the valley for a ceremony. Another, is being warned of a possible Aboriginal attack and fleeing with her children during the night to the home of a neighbour.

Later they witnessed, and profited from, hopeful miners moving to the Kiandra gold rush of the 1860s. Gudgenby was on the route from Sydney and Goulburn to the goldfields, the track crossing the Gudgenby River only 40 or so metres away. The miners would resupply there. One account records the purchase of 'milk, bread and tainted meat'.

Many families have associations with the property, some rabbiting, fencing or
(continued next page)

Gudgenby Hut reconstruction *(continued)*



doing stock work; some of the names are Oldfield, Kellaheer, Gregor, Crawford, Tong, Reid, Jeffrey and Brayshaw. Others were managers. One notable manager was Tom Oldfield who, with his wife, 10 children and their teacher, moved from Orroral in 1926 and later became the largest landholder in the area.

Loneliness was common, especially for the women, but a telephone party line from Naas installed in 1927 reduced this isolation somewhat.

Death was a fact of their life.

An early owner, Edward Severn, died returning from London in 1854 when the *Dunbar* was wrecked at Sydney Heads. In 1907, James Davin, the then manager of Gudgenby station, became lost in a blizzard below Tantangara and was found later in a snowdrift. His beard was for some time nailed to the mantelpiece of Circuitts Hut. Another was Marmaduke Watson Lee who died in 1924. It took several attempts to get his body through the snow for his funeral. Doubtless, those driven back on the first day needed a warming rum or two to prepare themselves for the second attempt. Dick Ward, a Gudgenby worker, became lost on his way home from

buying rabbit traps and died of exposure at Glendale Crossing. His ghost hung around for a while and was occasionally seen by others.

By 1964 the old building had deteriorated and was demolished and a new Gudgenby homestead was erected on the footprint of the 1845 building.

How then, did the old building get here?

Neville Locker, historian and collector extraordinaire, salvaged what he could and stored it at his Adaminaby property. In 1990, funded by an ACT Heritage Grant, the Kosciuszko Huts Association was able to purchase the remains. Soon after, we were successful in getting another heritage grant, this time to engage Matthew Higgins for the Namadgi Oral History project. Matthew did a wonderful job, the voice extracts you will hear later come from interviews by Matthew from that project. Sadly, all the people whose voices we hear have now passed away.

At the time we had hoped that total reconstruction was a possibility but there simply were not enough remains to justify this. For the next 23 years the remains slumbered in a rusty

shipping container at my home until the enthusiasm of Jon Stanhope led to the funding for this partial reconstruction. Nearly two years of planning has led to what we have here today.

My final point is to express gratitude from the Kosciuszko Huts Association for the support over many years from the ACT Government, the Heritage Unit and Brett McNamara and his staff for the conservation of the huts and oral histories of people living and working in what is now Namadgi National Park.

So ... connection to country ... we non-indigenous people can also be connected to country: ceremonies such as today help build that connection.

Graham Scully

Photos this page

Top left. Graham Scully delivers his address

Top right. Pioneers Norman and Elsie Curtis remembering old times

Lower left. Matthew Higgins and Brett McNamara at the opening

Lower right. Minister Corbell with Architect Philip Leeson

Photos by Syd Comfort



Glenburn/Burbong: an update

The ACT Heritage Council considered the nominations of the Coppins Homestead Ruins at Yarrolumla (now within Molonglo Stage 2) and Burbong in February 2013. Both have been entered into the ACT Heritage Register as 'nominated' places. The nominations will now be assessed by the Council, but there is a big backlog.

In March 2013, rammed earth specialist contractors repaired the south-west corner of the pisé Glenburn Homestead. It was in danger of collapse. Thanks to the Parks Service for finding the necessary funds from its tight budget.

Also in March 2013, The Friends of Glenburn painted the new post and rail fences at Glenburn Homestead and the Colverwell graves with decking oil to preserve them. The new timber soaked up the oil thirstily — we used just under 40 litres!



On 30 April, I met with members of the Parks Service to discuss possible tasks for The Friends and the Parks Service over the next 12 months or so. The tasks for The Friends' June 2013 work party were settled and there was a good discussion of what The Friends and the Parks Service may be able to achieve in the next year or so, subject to the expected tight budgetary situation.

It was also agreed that The Friends work parties would move to the first Tuesday in August, November, February and May. Several participants expressed a preference for work parties to be on a weekday rather than at weekends.

Col McAlister

Photos. The repairs to the south-west corner of the pisé home in progress (above) and finished (left), March 2013)

Yellow Box

Whenever I pass a eucalypt, I tear off a leaf or two and have a sniff. That's almost every day of my life. When I retired I thought I would like to spend the rest of my days learning the 900 or so species. I carried a guidebook on a few walks but didn't keep it up. I suppose I know a dozen or so species. Like the beautiful yellow box *Eucalyptus melliodora* that I visit when walking the Red Hill ridge.

centuries
curve the whorled bark
of Yellow Box —
I stand and stare
and share one minute

crimson flashes
in a yellow box
on the ridge
standing alone
heart a dull ache now

Gerry Jacobson

NPA ACT Art Week at Gudgenby Cottage ...

NPA ACT will again hold *Art Week at Gudgenby Cottage* close to the spring equinox, 21–29 September. This is a chance for members of NPA ACT to explore their more creative selves through painting, drawing, writing, photography, or other artistic endeavours inspired by Namadgi; explore the area from a base in the Gudgenby Valley; share warm, comfortable and convivial evenings. You can join in for a day, overnight, or several days and nights. (Note that overnight numbers will be limited — six people per night).

For information and to express your interest in participating, contact:

Adrienne Nicholson on 6281 6381 or

Christine Goonrey at cgoonrey@grapevine.com.au or on 6231 8395

... and an exhibition in Canberra's Centenary

NPA ACT has been asked to mount an exhibition at the Namadgi Visitor Centre to show what Namadgi meanst to us. NPA Art Week now has five years behind it and quite a number of people have visited during this time. Please now consider what you have that can show in our exhibition. It will be at the Namadgi Visitor Centre from 26 October to 16 November.

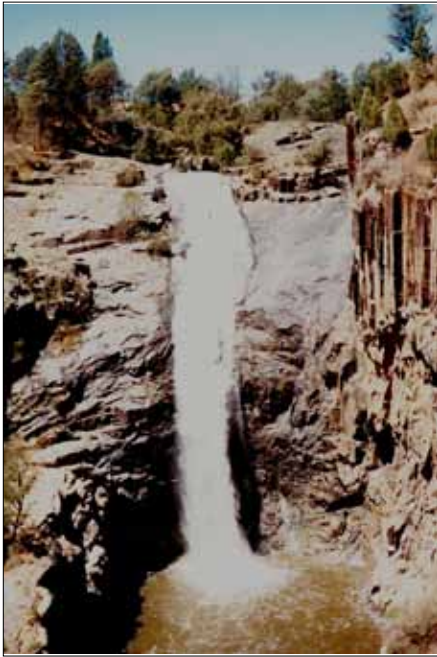
Thanks to those who have already identified work for this exhibition.

Again, for information and to discuss your interest in paticipating, contact:

Adrienne Nicholson on 6281 6381 or

Christine Goonrey at cgoonrey@grapevine.com.au or on 6231 8395

The falls of Ginninderra



In 1965 my government surveyor's work had me out in West Belconnen. At that time, West Belconnen was still grazing land. I was having lunch under some pine trees beside what we called then the Charnwood Road, close to where the road crossed the Ginninderra Creek. A grazier's vehicle pulled off the road and a young man walked over to me. Understandably, the locals were wary of any vehicle bearing number plates of the Commonwealth Government. I explained why I was there. The young man was not impressed. To distract him I showed him a 1959 tourist map of the area. He was interested. We fixed our position on the map. Nearby, the map showed the Ginninderra Creek crossing the border into New South Wales. Before it reached the Murrumbidgee, the word 'Falls' was written beside the creek.

'What's this?' I asked. 'Waterfalls? How big?'

'Big', he replied, 'but they are on private property. You won't be seeing them.'

Seven years later I bought a house in Holt, West Belconnen. I made a tentative attempt — on foot — to follow the Ginninderra Creek down to the 'Falls'. However, there were unfriendly 'Private Property' signs and I was climbing over locked gates. I did not persevere.

Several years later I read a local history book: *Canberra: history and legends relating to the Federal Capital Territory of the Commonwealth of Australia* by John Gale. This book was originally published in 1927. On page 58, I read:

Ginninderra Falls: Near the confluence of the minor stream [Ginninderra Creek] with the Murrumbidgee River, are the magnificent waterfalls bearing the above name. They must be seen to be appreciated. They are not difficult of access, and are the admiration of all who have visited the locality. I cannot give the measurement in feet of the water's descent. Even in its summer flow the volume of water running over the rugged rocks is considerable; but in flood-time it presents a thrilling spectacle, as may be gathered from photographic views that have been taken of the locality.

I had some argument with the 'not difficult of access' but John Gale was referring to physical — rather than administrative — difficulties. My old map set the height of the falls as 75 feet.

Then, in 1979, when I had resigned myself to never seeing them, Ginninderra Falls were opened to the public. Viewing points. Tracks and steps down to pools of water in the creek. Over the next few years I included the Falls in places I showed to visitors to Canberra — even though they were in New South Wales. By this time I had two young sons. The Falls became one of our popular outings — and a sure way to tire them out. Then, just as I began to take the site for granted, it closed to the public.

I consoled myself with the thought that I could now say that I had seen the Falls. I have a photograph to prove it. But now I have grandsons. There are times I would like to 'tire them out'. However, again, the 'administrative' access difficulties prevent me visiting Ginninderra Falls.

I am reminded of a line from a frustrated Shakespearean character.

Wherefore are these things hid?
Wherefore have these gifts a
curtain before 'em?

But I live in hope. There is a community group, the Ginninderra Falls Association. They have a website www.ginninderra.org.au and their primary aim is to 'restore access' to Ginninderra Falls.

Russell Wenholtz

The NPA Management Committee is nothing like this!!

Please consider joining our happy mob at the AGM on 15 August!

I'm on a Committee

Oh, give me your pity, I'm on a Committee
Which means that from morning to night
We attend, and amend, and contend and defend

Without a conclusion in sight.

We confer and concur, we defer and demur,
And reiterate all of our thoughts,
We revise the agenda with frequent addenda

And consider a load of reports.

We compose and propose, we suppose and oppose

And the points of procedure are fun!

But though various notions are brought up as motions

There's terribly little gets done.

We resolve and absolve, but never dissolve,

Since it's out of the question for us,

What a shattering pity to end our Committee

Where else could we make such a fuss?

*(from a morning session on
2WS FM 101.7)*



David Kelly, Judy Kelly, Mike Smith, Esther Gallant and Sue Williams at Eualdtie Trig, Weddin Mountains National Park. Photo Peter Tedder

Of stars and satellites: a tale of two trigs

Russell Wenholz, the author of this article, is a retired surveyor and a long-term member of NPA. During his working days, Russell's job often took him to interesting places in the bush around Canberra that bushwalkers spend whole weekends and holidays getting to. This article was written at the time — amazingly nearly 20 years ago — when satellites and GPS technology were transforming the whole basis of surveying and, for that matter, bush navigation too. It was originally published in the March 1994 issue of The Australian Surveyor.

I went up into the Australian Capital Territory ranges last autumn. The Brindabellas, the Booth Range, the Boboyan Range, the Clear Range, the rivers Cotter, Gudgenby and Naas, and the peaks Coree, Tidbinbilla, Franklin, Gingera, Bimberi and Clear.

Rough, rugged mountains sending out rocky, heavily timbered spurs and ridges down to the watercourses along the valley floors, with only occasional pockets of cleared land — all deserted for the most part.

Working in the city traffic with city dwellers I have no trouble subscribing to agnostic and even atheistic points of view. But when I go up into the mountains I begin to have doubts. Maybe there is something to it after all.

Every year or so there's some work for surveyors in the ACT ranges. But it's usually confined to the roads or clearings.

The high-profile survey work comes up only when there's a need to use the trig points that are maintained on the peaks of the ranges.

This occurred in the ACT in 1971 and 1972, when survey teams came sweeping down through southern New South Wales incorporating trig points in a national geodetic survey.

I had two sessions — each of several days — on Bimberi during that survey.

Bimberi is the highest point in the ACT at 1913 metres and is only 317 metres below Kosciuszko (AGD66 values rounded to the nearest metre). It overlooks the valley of the upper Cotter River — providing an excellent view of the waters formed by Corin Dam. While Bimberi's slopes are heavily timbered, the summit is above the snowline and so any vegetation at the peak is stunted and windblown. There are massive granite outcrops.

It is cold. Even in November (1971) and March (1972) — when we were there — it was cold.

The cold encouraged us to work fast.

However, when doing Laplace fixes there is no time to feel cold. With the timetable of predictions one is literally 'a slave of the stars' or, strictly speaking, a slave to their apparent motions.

By comparison, observing vertical reciprocals at midday was a joy. Then, in the afternoon, when the wind came up and blew the cumbersome Model 8 Geodimeter around we occasionally cursed. But we were too busy to curse as we rushed to finish our horizontal angles during the twilight hours. And we were too tired to curse as we chased Sigma Octantis into the night.

But we didn't think it was so tough at the time. Around us was the evidence of the old surveyors who had surveyed the ACT border just as the First World War was starting. Looking around the summit between observations, we could see the lines the old parties had cut through the bush. We found piles of stones and the pegs they used to mark their survey.

These men had set out on horses from the old homesteads, way down in the valleys, carrying supplies and equipment to last them for months at a time. Surveying with chains, awkward-to-use theodolites — and axes, not chain saws.

In 1971 and 1972 we used helicopters. Although we did reconnaissance on foot — walking to each trig point and planning what we called 'escape routes out' — when it came to taking the bulky survey instruments and our supplies to the summit, we used the services of the RAAF helicopters. A 20-minute flight in a big *Iroquois* replaced a 2-hour *Land Rover* drive plus an hour-and-a-half uphill walk. Even the most nervous of air travellers among us appreciated the choppers.

But nothing lasts forever. Now GPS has arrived and we need to go geocentric. So it was back to the trigs in the ACT ranges.

But not before some pomp and ceremony.

During a recent Heritage Week in Canberra our boss organised a handover ceremony at Surveyors Park near Parliament House. The Minister and a couple of department 'heavies' came along to formally present three GPS units to us. Young Mike had set the units up. He explained how the system worked

to the official guests who were duly impressed (I served coffee). However, the guests soon drifted off. Some wandered over to the parking area and showed more interest in a private surveyor's red *Jaguar* than in the ACT Government's new GPS units.

The following Friday we went south to use them. I went to Mt Clear with Nick. Young Mike and Kevin went to Bimberi, and Darryl and Greg were at Coree.

Darryl and Greg could drive to Coree. The Namadgi rangers were using a helicopter to lay baits for feral pigs. It was based at Glendale Crossing. We could use it — for a day. The pilot would fly Nick and myself to Mt Clear, return to Glendale and take Mike and Kevin to Bimberi, stay with them until the survey was finished, return them to Glendale and then come up to Clear and collect us.

It was still dark when Nick and I reached Glendale Crossing. The helicopter pilot looked very young but he told me he had been flying choppers for 8 years. He answered my questions patiently. He'd never 'put one down' but he had 'got into strife a couple of times'. I did not ask for details.

This helicopter, a Hughes 500, only a four seater, was much smaller than the RAAF *Iroquois* of the 1970s. My attitude to helicopters is the same as my attitude to roller-coasters. I don't actually enjoy the ride while it's occurring — I often close my eyes — but when it's over I'm always pleased with myself for doing it. More for having overcome my fear than for any enjoyment or exhilaration from the ride.

On the flight to Mt Clear I sat in the back seat. I had a very good view of the back of the pilot's head and even when I dared look out the side window the half-light of dawn prevented my seeing enough to suffer any giddiness.

We circled Mt Clear and the pilot selected a spot to put us down. He put the skids on the ground. Nick and I grabbed all the gear from the seat beside mine and rushed to a point forward and clear of the helicopter. The rotors created a temporary gale that combined with the noise of the engines to obliterate any conversation.

We signalled for the pilot to take off. All was OK with us. But the helicopter stayed. The pilot gesticulated. I ran back to him.

'You've taken my lunch and pullover', he yelled into my ear.

(continued on next page)

Of stars and satellites: a tale of two trigs *(continued)*

He shouldn't have put it with our stuff.

When the pilot had lifted off — with his lunch and pullover — Mt Clear was quiet and peaceful. In less than 10 minutes Nick and I had the GPS set up and ready to record. At 7.30 am we switched it on and the message came up on the unit's screen that it was receiving signals from six satellites.

To a large extent our work was over. All we had to do now was simply stand by while the unit recorded.

Mt Clear is badly named. It's not clear at all. It's not as high as Bimberi and there is no visible snowline. There are plenty of trees around the summit. Through the trees, to the south, I could see the line of the Australian Alps. Looking to the west and north-west are the peaks of the ACT ranges: Gudgenby, Sentry Box, Kelly, Booth and, of course, Bimberi: where we could only imagine Mike and Kevin peering into the distance — at us.

East of Mt Clear the view is more interesting. The valley, formed by the Murrumbidgee, between us and the Tinderry Range, is traversed by the Canberra–Cooma road. From our vantage point we could see from Michelago as far south as Bredbo.

On our arrival at Mt Clear the valley was covered with fog for most of its length. In the course of the morning the fog drifted north, rose slowly and dissipated into wisps that moved across between ourselves and the rising sun.

Sitting under the trig beacon — with the satellite signals storing up in our GPS unit — I told Nick about the 1971–72 survey. He told me that it's only very well coordinated people who are nervous about travelling in helicopters or on roller-coasters. Because their faculties are so finely tuned their senses object more strongly to unnatural circumstances than do the senses of poorly coordinated people. I like talking to Nick.

Of course, I knew I would have time to spare on Clear when I left the office so I had brought some office work with me. I had several letters that I planned to write answers to. I also had draft copies of our Department's Strategic Plans and Annual Report. ('Management wants all staff to be involved in the preparation of these documents.')



Surveyors enjoying their work on a snowy Tinderry Peak (Russell Wenholtz)

I have trouble getting this kind of office work done in the office. The chances of getting it done on Mt Clear were not good.

I identified as many of the surrounding peaks as I could. Nick established radio contact with Mike on Bimberi and had a long but largely unnecessary conversation with him. And all the while we admired the view. We ate our lunches mid-morning and then took it in turns to leave the trig point and explore the vicinity of the peak.

We followed the line cut through the bush by the old timers who had done this section of the ACT border back when the ACT was so very new. Hidden away in the scrub, a pile of neatly matched stones bore witness to their work. I found the remains of an old fence line crossing the range.

We came across many wombat holes and wombat diggings. Some diggings were so destructive that we suspected pigs. Nick identified a couple of Gang-gangs and a Wedge-tailed Eagle inspected us from on high. The Strategic Plans and the Annual Report never had a chance.

Early in the afternoon we changed the battery on the GPS unit. Nick and I competed to become involved in something associated with the actual survey work.

By three o'clock Mike and Kevin decided the units had collected enough information. The helicopter took them back to Glendale Crossing. Nick extracted the small disc that contained the satellite information from our GPS unit. We packed the equipment and moved down to wait for the chopper.

It duly arrived and, in the mid-afternoon light, we travelled back to

Glendale. I risked a few more glances out the side window. I recognised a now silver Gudgenby River winding its way through the ranges to its junction with the Naas River. On landing I kissed the ground — for the benefit of the waiting, watching, Mike and Kevin.

We transferred the gear to our vehicle and drove back to Canberra. I was there in time to join my regular Friday-night drinking group at the Labor Club. I caught my bus from the club at the usual time and watched the Rugby League game on TV.

When I came back from Bimberi in 1972, after 3 days and 2 nights observing, I slept for 12 hours straight. I had upwards of 50 pages of observation booking sheets and the prospect of a week in the office to reduce and check them all.

On the Monday after our Friday trip to Mt Clear we downloaded the disc of information gathered by the GPS unit and, after less than an hour in front of a computer, my part in this survey was over.

New technology doesn't frighten me. I enjoy using it. I like to think I'm ready to try out any new instrument. These days everyone uses instruments of which their knowledge is limited to the operating instructions. (I mean who can explain how television works?)

It's how we spend the time we save by using the new technology that worries me. I saw more of Mt Clear in a single day than I saw of Bimberi in six days in 1971–72. At Mt Clear I even had time to jot down enough notes to write this article.

And the following week, in the office, I found time to devote to those Strategic Plans and that Annual Report.

Russell Wenholtz

Acknowledgments

Frank McCoy, who introduced me to Miss Sigma Octantis and Madam La Place.

Kevin Freund, whose technical expertise is matched only by his sardonic sense of humour.

Attribution: This article was originally published in the March 1994 issue of *The AUSTRALIAN Surveyor*.

Book review

A labour of love: celebrating Landcare in the ACT

Edited by W Rainbird, K Eyles, J Widdowson and S Welch

100 pages, \$25 rrp

This newly released book, although not setting out to provide a comprehensive history of the Park Care and Landcare groups in the ACT, provides a most satisfying overview of their extent and development, as well as fascinating insights into individual groups. From a base of 13 Park Care groups in the Canberra Nature Park in 1991, nearly 40 groups now operate in a wide range of locations with most of them being featured in this book.

The entries for individual groups are organised under the headings of the three Catchment Groups: Ginninderra, Molonglo and Southern ACT, with further sections on Aboriginal Landcare, rural Landcare and other related groups. Prepared by individual groups, each entry provides a description of the place or area cared for, some background to the group, current projects and further information of interest, which may include profiles of individual members. In the Gudgenby Bush Regeneration Group section, for instance, Martin Chalk explains that, on being invited to



join the group: 'I was happy to be involved and stated at the time that I had been "using" Namadgi for a period and was happy to give something back'. Fifteen years later he is still 'giving something back'! The text in each entry is complemented by a number of photos, all of interest and relevance, many taken by group members, with Jennie Widdowson making a substantial contribution.

Steve Welch, now retired, conceived a vision of a publication such as this when he was Coordinator of the Southern ACT Catchment Group and has seen this become reality with the production of *A labour of love*. He is joined as co-editors by Wendy Rainbird, Kathryn Eyles and Jennifer Widdowson,

all of whom are to be congratulated on their success in bringing the reader into a very close contact with the people and ethos of Landcare in the ACT. Wendy and Jennifer, it may be noted, previously collaborated in the very successful *The world of Tidbinbilla*.

A labour of love achieves its high standard of presentation through care in the selection of format, skill and taste in layout and in being discriminating in the choice and presentation of photos. Careful overprinting of short quotations on many of the more prominent photos adds poignancy without detriment to the images. Comprehensive listings of the photographers and other contributors are provided.

Publication of this book was assisted by the ACT Government under the ACT Heritage Grants Program. The book may be purchased by contacting the Southern ACT Catchment Group, PO Box 2056, Kambah Village ACT 2902 or via email info@sactcg.org.au. The current price is \$25.

Syd Comfort



Dananbilla Nature Reserve

Martin Chalk coordinates NPA work parties in national parks and reserves in and around the ACT. He currently has a series removing barbed-wire fencing from a block in NSW newly acquired for inclusion in Dananbilla Nature Reserve north west of Boorowa.

NPA volunteers (left to right), Sonja Lenz, Kevin McCue, Peter McCue, Martin Chalk, Brian Slee and Clive Hurlstone, at lunch on 6 May in front of the considerable pile of fencing so far removed from Barelli paddocks.

Photo Max Lawrence

Up Gang Gang Mountain

Walk: Gang Gang Mountain,
21 April 2013

Participants: (5) Brian Slee (Leader),
Bernard Morvell, Peter Anderson-
Smith, Steve Hill, Margaret Power.

Weather: Mostly clear sky, cool —
always with a slight chill in the air.

Leader's Comments: Mike Bremers
and I reced the walk in January.
But I hesitated leading it for the
NPA because of the 3 km scrubby
descent from Gang Gang.
However, all turned out okay.
Moreover, the group found what
the Wares Yards horse riders must
always have known: the extension
north on Monaro Range (Great
Divide) is spectacular.

Five, with backpacks, is a difficult
number if you do not have a large 4WD,
so when we gathered at Kambah Village
at 7 am, we ended up departing in two
cars. After a bumpy drive down Boboyan
Road, we continued along Snowy
Mountains Highway and parked at the
locked gate on Boundary Trail. We set
off soon after 9 am for the routine walk
to Goorudee Rivulet before climbing
steeply on Gavels Hut Trail to the hut
itself. Appropriately, a flock of Gang-
gangs creaked at us on the way.

The hut's new logbook detailed
activities of the KHA March workparty,
including new weatherboards on the
eastern wall and a cute awning for the
window. A tree on the north side has
been ringbarked, presumably to prevent
it getting tall enough to fall on the hut.
After a peaceful interlude we were off
about 11 am, climbing approx.
200 metres gently west to Monaro Range
through open forest, picking up a track
on the way.

On the broad, grassy ridge we headed
north for a kilometre, rising slightly to



The view northwards to the ACT mountains

1 600 metres and at 12:15 found a rocky
prominence for lunch, overlooking
Nungar Plain. A juvenile wedgetail
hovered. It had been an exhilarating
walk, initially with views to Mt Nungar
then across the plain to the ACT
mountains and in other directions to Mt
Tantangara, Tabletop and Jagungal.
Brilliant.

We returned to where we climbed
onto the ridge before following the horse
track south for a while, then climbed
Gang Gang (1 553 m) through forest. We
sat there among the rarely visited ruins
of Goorudee trig for afternoon tea with
good views of Lake Eucumbene and
Adaminaby. Harking back to the rece
walk, Mike and I descended from Gang
Gang on the first ridge running east. On
the outing, we ended up further south, on

the second ridge, closer to the highway,
which was scrubbiier and frustrating at
times. At the cars 3:50 pm.

After hot drinks in front of a wood
fire at Snowy Cafe, Adaminaby, we were
on our way and arrived at Kambah at
6:20 pm. Excellent day out.

A future walk could descend to the
plain from Monaro Range and return via
Gavels Hut (late spring, for the orchids).
Or a car could be parked at Nungar
Creek on Tantangara Road for a walk
through.

Great to see Steve back in the high
country after 2½ years.

Brian Slee

Talk the walk, says Mark Twain

*Now the true charm of pedestrianism
does not lie in the walking, or in the
scenery, but in the talking. The
walking is good to time the movement
of the tongue by, and to keep the
blood and the brain stirred up and
active; the scenery and the woodsy
smells are good to bear in upon a man
an unconscious and unobtrusive
charm and solace to eye and soul and
sense; but the supreme pleasure
comes from the talk. It is no matter*

*whether one talks wisdom or nonsense,
the case is the same, the bulk of the
enjoyment lies in the wagging of the
gladsome jaw and the flapping of the
sympathetic ear.*

*And what a motley variety of
subjects a couple of people will
casually rake over in the course of a
day's tramp! There being no
constraint, a change of subject is
always in order, and so a body will not
keep pegging at a single topic until it*

*grows tiresome. We discussed
everything we knew, during the first
fifteen or twenty minutes, that
morning, and then branched out into
the glad, free, boundless realm of
things we were not certain about.*

Quote from *A tramp abroad*, by
Mark Twain, 1880

Thanks to Russell Wenzholz for
offering this gem.

Stillwater unzipping on the south coast

The lakes, lagoons, rivers and creeks of the South Coast have the potential for numerous kayaking and canoeing experiences. Some take a few hours, others most of a day and one or two could be stretched into overnight trips. I've explored Narrawallee Inlet, Termeil Lake, Meroo Lake, Durras Lake, Congo Creek, the Tuross Delta, Whittakers Creek and Lake Brou, an arm of Wallaga Lake, Bournda Lagoon and Saltwater Creek in Ben Boyd National Park. Most of them are enveloped by state forests or national parks.

At Narrawallee Inlet, north of Mollymook, the tide was rising, an excellent time to paddle up the creek. In contrast to many other inlets, which are often closed for many months and have murky water, this one is replenished by fresh seas every day. I could see glinting fish, submerged logs and weed beds a couple of metres down. I also saw a clearing suitable for a nights camp but changed my mind when, after stopping, I found a big tick under my watchband. I grabbed and squeezed his poisonous head in the nick of time.

A grandfather and grandson were out fishing, he in a kayak with footpedal propulsion and the boy with a normal kayak like mine.

'I see you've got one of those new fangled kayaks?'

'Yes, I like the footpedals, it keeps my hands free for fishing.'

'Does the boat leak at all?'

'No, haven't had any trouble so far.'

'It looks like a good place to fish.'

'Oh, yes, I caught a big flathead just back there, one of the biggest I've caught'.

I paddled on and stopped at a farmer's fishing hut to make a fire and boil the billy. I felt invited. Someone had scratched USE BUT DON'T ABUSE and PUT FIRE OUT on the red walls. I could have been in a mountain hut. Through a crack I spied a double bunk, a fridge, some deck chairs and tables. Outside was a solid steel container used as a boiler. A farmhouse, 'Wickham Hill', was just visible in the distance.

On the way home I found a shortcut through a large area of mangroves that would have been high and dry at low tide. Further along, a group of energetic teenagers had tied up at a large overhanging tree and climbed onto a high branch. With screeches and squeals

they dared each other to jump, and with further screams did. I felt an urge to join them but paddled on to beat the low tide.

To get to a water body without road access, I make the journey easier with an old, but prized, two-wheel cradle. Beautifully engineered and with its own suspension, I inherited it from my parents who used it to move a Klepper folding kayak down to rivers and lakes in northern Germany in the 1930s and 40s. It migrated with us in 1955.

At Termeil Lake in Meroo National Park, the haul to water was about 300 metres. There was no wind and the reflections of tall Spotted Gums were almost too perfect. A dip of the paddle disturbed the surface enough to reveal animated bodies with long slender legs and arms and wild headgear. One of them looked like the full-breasted lady of the lake, another was a skinny young nymph, and a third the fierce minotaur-headed monster from the deep. I just had time to compose, set and shoot before the wind chopped my canvas into hundreds of little pieces. It stayed that way for the rest of the day.

Time to paddle over to a large, overhanging gum tree and hide in the reeds. The tree is a popular roost for herons and cormorants, a great place from which to spy the next feed as well as socialising, preening and drying. That day there were three stilt-legged herons with long grey overcoats draped over their hunched, world-weary shoulders. They craned their necks in all directions except mine, restlessly walked up and down branches as though they were learned judges deciding an important case and, finally, after much beak nodding and no fishing, spread their large wings and wafted off to other feeding grounds.

I paddled on and met a lone paddler going the other way.

'I left my car at the highway bridge and am paddling through



Klaus's gear at rest. Photo by the author

to the beach. I hope to get through the surf, paddle around Meroo Head and finish at Bawley Point'.

'Wow', I replied, 'that's quite a journey'.

'I've done it before', he shouted, and paddled on with gusto.

He was on a surf ski with no food, water or backup. I was awe struck, in fear of his life, impressed by his confidence, but sceptical given the large waves I had seen earlier that morning.

I hugged the shoreline and paddled through a dense, dead thicket of bleached paperbark stems. I wondered what created them. Were they the remains of a long ago village built on stilts? Highly unlikely — the Aborigines didn't do that. As I threaded through, the keel of the kayak unzipped a film of detritus which closed up behind me as quickly as it opened. The dead end lagoon was full of black swans with teenage offspring. They squealed, shrieked and cried like children fleeing from a disaster but calmed down when they saw me slow down and turn around.

Where the lake narrowed I greeted a kingfisher and waved to a sea eagle. They seem to be on guard at the entrance to every coastal waterway. The kingfisher dived, disappeared under water for a flash, surfaced and took off upstream. The sea eagle stayed regal and unperturbed. Numerous fish broke the

(continued next page)

PARKWATCH

Edited extracts from recent journals and newsletters

No sign of an end to the hunting games

We take a moment to chat with our NSW campaign coordinator, Justin McKee.

What is the NPA's position on this issue?

To see that the changes to legislation are repealed by the March 2015 election. The NSW ALP has promised to do this if they are elected.

What are the alternatives for dealing with feral animal populations in NSW?

Professional programs are scientifically proven to impact pest animal populations. Their only limitations are their resources. The government must invest in existing regional pest management strategies.

What are the major concerns coming from people on the ground?

Public safety, the environment and animal welfare.

Are the risks to public safety credible?

Yes! There were four shooting-related deaths in NSW between 2000 and 2010 according to a report commissioned for the Game Council. The chance of an accident occurring are 'major' according to the government's own risk assessment. The risk of serious injury or death to park visitors and staff from accidental shooting is real.

Are the risks to environment credible?

The Invasive Species Council of Australia reports that there is strong evidence that using 'volunteer hunters' is very rarely an effective strategy for controlling feral animals, and can actually do environmental harm. From its report *'Is recreational hunting effective for feral animal control?'*

Genuine reduction in population can only be achieved by sustained and carefully planned programs that meet specific targets for numbers of animals killed. These need to exceed that rate at which populations can replace themselves. Recreational hunters

are not achieving anything like those numbers at the moment.

Of the 14,161 animals shot in State Forests in 2010–2011, 78% were species (rabbits, foxes, pigs, cats and dogs) for which ground shooting had been identified as being ineffective or having very limited effectiveness in controlling populations.

Are the risks to animal welfare credible?

The government's assessment revealed that the wounding of animals due to low hunter accuracy and the welfare risk associated with bows are possible. WIRES has already reported an increase in injuries since the legislation was passed.

When does it start?

The program was due to commence in March 2013, but this has been delayed. Unfortunately, some people have only seen the words 'hunting is allowed in national parks' and illegal hunting has taken place, some alleged to have involved Game Council Staff.

What are your biggest worries?

What's next from the Shooters and Fishers party!!! The party has a very small range of agendas. We are facing at least another two years, if not six, of them holding the balance of power. That's two more years towards changing legislation so that the activity of recreational hunting, the sport of hunting, becomes easier and can be done in more places. We expect a push for dogs to be allowed into national parks next, under the banner of 'conservation hunting'. As well as the push for access to more national parks where they have unrestricted and unsupervised access.

What can people do?

Stay in touch with all the info on our dedicated website: www.nohunting.com.au. This includes the latest news, information on how to get involved, events coming up etc. Seeing innovative, creative ways of this message continuing in the community from now until the March 2015 election are vital.

Nature NSW, Vol. 57, No. 1 (autumn 2013)

Horse riding in national parks and wilderness areas

Every Australian has the right to enjoy the 'outdoor experience' but perhaps not at the expense of destroying our very fragile ecosystem. Balancing increasing recreation demands with nature conservation is a major issue for land managers. One such activity, horse riding, is a significant concern as it forms part of the spectrum of recreational activities that occur in conservation reserves and national parks in Australia. Not a lot of people realise that horse riding has a greater impact on the environment than many other recreational activities (e.g. mountain biking, hiking) in two important ways: nitrification of soils and waterways from horse droppings and the spread of pathogens and weeds. These less well known aspects of horse riding carry a greater threat to our ecosystems than you might at first imagine.

Horse excreta (faeces and urine) contain nitrogen, phosphorus and various heavy metals. The amount of dung produced by an adult horse (400–600 kg body weight) per day is of the order of 17–26 kg, while for urine it is around 5–7 litres per day. The addition of these nutrients to Australian soils, which are naturally low in nutrients, leads to changes in vegetation structure. Horse manure can introduce around 1 g of phosphorus and 2.5 g of nitrogen per horse into the environment each day. This can lead to local nutrient hot spots along tracks and trails resulting in altered habitat composition. In areas where horse densities are particularly high, the amount of nutrients added can start to affect local vegetation, favouring species adapted to higher nutrients.

Apart from minor excavations by small mammals (e.g. bandicoots), the soil surface of heath, banksia woodland and all types of vegetation dominated by eucalypts have evolved largely undisturbed by mammals. Consequently, soil disturbance by hoofed animals creates conditions suitable for pathogen

(continued on page 20)

Stillwater unzipping on the south coast *(continued)*

glass ceiling and plopped back through it again. Around the next bend a light oil slick and the noise of traffic signalled the highway.

On the way back I met the intrepid ocean traveller. He had made several

attempts to get through the surf but been repelled each time. 'It was too big', he exclaimed. I was thankful he had returned by the safe route. Alone again, I dreamt up yet another book title: *'Stillwater Unzipping — Lakes and*

Rivers of the South Coast'. Dream on Klaus, you never know how long you might live. It's when you stop dreaming that you're near the end.

Klaus Hueneke

invasion. Soil movement promotes the possibility of transferring *Phytophthora cinnamomi* and associated root pathogens from infected to non-infected areas. Trampling by hooved animals causes a loss of surface litter, lichens and mosses, and can compact the soil. These changes to the natural soil condition can reduce the infiltration of water and result in soil erosion. This, in combination with the nutrient imbalance and pathogen spread, causes a serious problem to a very unique ecosystem.

Although horse riding in NSW is currently limited mostly to formed tracks and roads, even low-intensity horse use over undisturbed vegetation results in compelling damage. In Kosciuszko National Park researchers found a significant reduction in vegetation height and fewer plant species on trampled sites. Due to this disturbance and low resilience of the ecosystem, the invasion of exotic vegetation is more prominent where native vegetation has been trampled, resulting in a change of ecosystem structure.

The majority of research has shown that horse riding has a high potential to cause environmental degradation at relatively low-use intensities. Although managers can set various conditions and rules for horse riding, the management capacity is generally not available to properly monitor or enforce these conditions. Even if most people observe the codes of conduct put in place, a small number will choose to ignore them. It takes only low levels of inappropriate activity to cause significant detriment to our fragile ecosystem.

Nature NSW, Vol. 57, No. 1
(autumn 2013)

Less snow, more fire

In December 2012, Professor Kate Auty, Victorian Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability, released a 'Climate change foundation paper'. The commissioner is an independent statutory office reporting on Victoria's environment. The report makes for sobering reading.

CSIRO and Bureau of Meteorology analysis shows that:

- each decade since the 1950s has been warmer than the previous one
- Australian annual average daily maximum temperatures have increased by 0.75°C, average daily mean temperatures by 0.9°C and average overnight minimum temperatures by more than 1.1°C since 1910.

- More frightening are the projections:
- Australian average temperature to rise by 1.0–5.0°C by 2070, when compared with the climate of recent decades
 - an increase in the number of droughts in southern Australia, although with a likely increase in intense rainfall events.

The report states that 'the projected warming for 2030 represents the upper coping limit for most ecosystems. As temperatures rise, so will environmental vulnerabilities and exposure to hazards'. Rainfall is likely to decrease, although it is expected that the intensity of the highest 1% of rainfall events will increase. In other words, we'll have more of the extreme rain events we experienced in February and March 2011.

Bushfires and storms will also increase, further affecting Victoria's natural ecosystems and primary production industries. The indications are that climate change is affecting biodiversity faster than expected. Some species are already moving to higher elevations in alpine regions; others are moving southward to cooler climates. Migratory birds are arriving earlier and departing later, mating is occurring earlier and coral bleaching is accelerating.

Marine ecosystems will also be affected through ocean warming, acidification and sea level rises. In 2010 the sea surface temperatures in the Australian region were the highest on record: since 1925 the surface temperature off the south-east coast has risen by 2°C.

It's not all doom and gloom. The report stresses the wonderful diversity of plant and animal species in Victoria, and the important role that monitoring programs such as the VNPA's Reef Watch and NatureWatch play in gathering data for effective and informed management. It says that community-based land management and restoration organisations can help build the resilience of natural ecosystems through improving land health and biodiversity conservation, and increasing the area and connectivity of natural habitat — all with an associated increase in carbon capture.

Park Watch (VNPA), No. 252
(March 2013)

Conservation Ecologist Report

The National Parks Australia Council (NPAC) is an organisation formed to bring together the organisations with

similar interests to the NCSSA [Nature Conservation Society of South Australia] in other states and territories and to provide coordinated advocacy at the national level. The other members are the national parks associations of Qld, NSW, ACT, Vic and Tas. Over the past few years it has been very useful to network and share information with the other members, and our society has been represented through NPAC in a number of key national forums that it wouldn't otherwise have access to. NPAC meets once a year in person for the AGM and every two months by phone.

The latest meeting voted to change the organisation's name to *National Parks Association Australia* (NPA Australia). The rationale for the change was to make the name more consistent with the names of the member national parks associations and to begin to build the name into a stronger brand.

Priorities for this year and the federal election are:

- getting national parks listed as 'Matters of national environmental significance' under the EPBC Act

This will offer greater protection for biodiversity within parks and raise the profile of parks as a significant conservation mechanism.

- maintain or increase funding for the National Reserve System.

This is important because NPA Qld was successful in getting the new conservative government to commit substantial funding to reserve acquisition, which will be more effective if matched by federal funding. This represents a great opportunity for Qld, which has only 5% of the state in public protected areas. NPA Qld will take the lead on this.

- EPBC Act reforms and COAG decision to accredit state assessment and approval processes. Christine Goonrey (President) has been representing the organisation in working group of NGOs and will continue to take the lead on this issue.

The plan is to develop a short document (2 pages) with some background and some clear and simple 'election asks' relating to the above priorities, and to commission an opinion poll to provide some statistics on how many people think national parks are important and how many people think it's OK to have developments in national parks etc. Previous polling has shown that a high percentage of people value national parks. Members who can afford

(continued next page)

PARKWATCH (continued)

to will contribute funding to pay for the poll.

The new executive committee is:

President: Christine Goonrey (ACT)

Treasurer: Fred Geradson (VIC)

Secretary: Annie Bond (SA)

Immediate-past president: Anne Reeves (NSW)

Xanthopus (NCSSA),
Vol. 30, Part 3 (2012)

The world's greatest sand island

Funding is very critical to the management of Fraser Island. The cost of managing Queensland's sand island national park is significantly higher than almost all other Queensland parks. Based on calculation of QPWS expenditure, the current \$56 per hectare is inadequate to properly manage the island's unique natural resources. Fraser Island has a unique problem in the management of dingoes. This takes up a huge proportion of the limited resources and staff time.

The QPWS has lost the ability to keep count of the number of visitors to Fraser Island, but estimated visitor numbers are between 300,000 and 350,000 per year. Managing recreation and visitor impacts consumes more than 80% of the budget, with little left for natural resource management. Greater environmental monitoring needs to be undertaken to ensure that the values are not being compromised or degraded by visitation.

Using 4WD transport is resulting in erosion of the road surfaces and sediment spilling into some of the island's unique lakes. The Fraser Island Defenders Organization (FIDO) is concerned about the many impacts, and has recently begun to formally monitor the volume of sediment being relocated at particular sites. In the 20 years since Fraser Island's World Heritage listing, the number of weed species recorded had increased from 43 to almost 200. FIDO is just one of the collaborating government and non-government groups working through the Fraser Island Natural Integrity Alliance to help control some of the weed infestation.

Fraser Island has lacked a statutory management plan over the past two decades. This has resulted in too much flexibility and elasticity, to the detriment of the Outstanding Universal Value [WHO recognition] of Fraser Island. While it isn't yet a candidate for the 'World Heritage in Danger List' because of poor management of its natural resources, if the current rate of

degradation isn't arrested and reversed soon, it may become a candidate for the ignominious classification.

NPA News (Qld), Vol. 83, Issue 2
(March 2013)

Bears rescued and poachers arrested

Four young sloth bears were successfully seized from poachers following an all-night anti-poaching rescue operation by Wildlife SOS. The poachers were members of the Kalandar tribe attempting to smuggle the bears from Nepal into India, but their vehicles were raided on the border in a joint operation by the Jharkhand Police, the Forest Department, and Wildlife SOS, resulting in six arrests. The four bears, aged between 15 months and 3 years, have been carefully transferred to the Wildlife SOS Agra Bear Rehabilitation Centre in Uttar Pradesh, the largest of its kind in the world. They were dehydrated and debilitated with serious mutilations, but are now receiving much-needed veterinary care and attention. Once their health improves, they will be rehabilitated and enjoy a life free of abuse in large forested enclosures.

Humane Society International
Newsletter, Vol. 19, Issue 1
(March 2013)

Marine sanctuaries: a step closer

HSI has for some time been working within a confederacy of environmental organisations, in an effort to secure a large network of marine sanctuaries around our coasts. In June 2012, the Commonwealth Government announced its plans for the largest network of marine protected areas in the world — a comprehensive marine reserve system of 60 reserves covering a huge 3.1 million square kilometres, or more than a third of Commonwealth waters. These reserves were officially proclaimed on 16 November 2012 and, since that time, consultation has been underway on the management plans for the reserves. The final public consultation has now closed and, following the tabling of the management plans in parliament later this year, the marine reserve network will take effect from 1 July 2014. HSI has been involved at every stage of the process, and we look forward to the reserves taking effect in 2014.

Humane Society International
Newsletter, Vol. 19, Issue 1
(March 2013)

Of tigers, elephants and rhinos ...

Australia is a biodiversity-rich developed country surrounded by biodiversity-rich developing countries. Being a developed nation with strong biodiversity conservation credentials, Australia has a special responsibility to assist developing country neighbours with fewer resources and less capacity to protect their biodiversity.

Our near neighbours in Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand and the other wildlife rich countries in South-East Asia and the Pacific island states, find themselves in a pitched battle against those that wantonly destroy wildlife and habitats for purely economic gain. So serious is the global loss of biodiversity that the Earth may have entered the sixth great animal and plant extinction wave. The Asia-Pacific region is one of the most biodiverse regions in the world but poorly managed resource extraction and ecologically unsustainable livelihoods are dramatically reducing its biodiversity. To help turn this around, countries need assistance with funding for programs that deliver sustainable livelihoods and effectively protect wildlife and their habitats under threat. Australia has a long history of engagement in environmental management initiatives through the region. However, at present Australia has no programs specifically directed at protecting biodiversity in developing countries. We need to take this opportunity with a federal election looming, to tell all political parties that they must help our neighbours protect their diminishing wildlife heritage.

Humane Society International
Newsletter, Vol. 19, Issue 1
(March 2013)

Compiled by Hazel Rath

NPA notices

National Parks Association Calendar				
	June	July	August	September
Public holidays	Mon 10	—	—	—
General meetings	Thur 20	Thur 18	Thur 15 ¹	Thur 19
Committee meetings	Tues 4	Tues 2	Tues 6	Tues 3
NPA Art Week at Gudgenby Cottage			Sat 21 to Sun 29	
Gudgenby Bush Regeneration ²	Sat 8	Sat 6	Sat 10	Sat 14

Further details: 1. Annual General Meeting
2. GBRG Meet at 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 Burton &
Chris Roper

We look forward to seeing everyone at NPA activities.

This *Bulletin* was prepared by:
Editor, Max Lawrence;
Sub-editor, Ed Highley;
Presentation, Adrienne Nicholson

Membership fees are now due

In the first weeks of June you will receive a letter in the mail asking for membership renewals and donations. Part of the letter is a printout of the details we store confidentially on our membership database and we are asking members to check that the information we have (name/s, address, phone number/s, membership type, joining date, your interests in supporting the NPA ACT, email address/s and an indication whether you want to receive our e-newsletter *Burning Issues*) is still correct.

Note: Please also confirm whether you prefer to receive future *Bulletins* in printed form (as usual), as a digital document through your email address, or as both printed **and** digital copy?

The committee is running a trial digital distribution of this edition of the *Bulletin* and everyone who has given us an email address will receive an email with a link to download the *Bulletin* from the NPA website. We need your feedback on how it is working. With this new method of distribution it is especially necessary for you to tell us of any changes to your email address.

Please take the time to check your details, and correct if necessary, confirm your preference for receiving the *Bulletin* and send the whole form with your membership dues (and donation) back to the office.

Thank you to members who have already renewed their membership but we still ask you for your feedback on the *Bulletin* distribution.

Thank you all for your cooperation.

Sonja Lenz, Secretary



Office move

The Conservation Council of the ACT (ConsACT) is preparing to move to the new accommodation in Lena Karmel Lodge on Barry Drive and hope to be working in the new office by the first week of July. That means that NPA will also be moving by end-June or early July. We are trying to keep disruption of our normal work to a minimum, and apologise for any inconvenience to our members caused by the move.

Cover photographs

Front cover

Main photo. Relaxing at lunchtime on Mt Nangar; Mike Smith's Weddin Mts/Nangar National Parks car camp, April/May.

Photo Adrienne Nicholson

Insets. Left. Hazard reduction burn on Black Mountain in April (article page 5).

Photo Marie Lawrence

Centre. European wasp, *Vespula germanica* (article page 3).

Picture from TAMS website

Right. The Trail Rider all-terrain wheelchair now available at Tidbinbilla, Caitlin transported by Shane and Rod (article page 8).

Photo from Rod Griffiths

Back cover

Main photo. Early morning on Mt Taylor

Photo Max Lawrence

General Meetings

Third Thursday of the month, (not December or January)
8:00pm, Uniting Church hall, 56 Scrivener Street, O'Connor



Thursday 20 June

Dananbilla Nature Reserve — from isolated back country nature reserve to Protected Area Network
Rainer Rehwinkel

Senior Threatened Species Officer, NSW
Office of Environment and Heritage

Dananbilla NR protects the stony Dananbilla Range 50 km north-west of Boorowa. With great imagination and foresight, Queanbeyan NPWS rangers Susan Jackson and Andrew Moore have transformed this small isolated nature reserve into a world-class system of on- and off-park reserves that protect a significant area of the endangered Box Gum woodland communities and their associated flora and fauna — the Dananbilla–Illunie Protected Area Network. Rainer has had the privilege of working with Susie and Andrew over 15 years and will describe what has been achieved and what the Network now protects.

Thursday 18 July

The Orange Hawkweed Control Program — a continuing story

Jo Caldwell

Hawkweed Control
Project Officer, Riverina
Highlands Area, Southern
Ranges Region, NSW
Office of Environment
and Heritage

Jo will update us on current progress of the Orange Hawkweed Control Program and on what more has been found out about this invasive weed since the program began.

Thursday 15 August Annual General Meeting

to be followed by

Chamonix–Mont Blanc

Mike and Annette Smith

NPA ACT Life Members

The Chamonix Valley in south-east France, bordered by the towering Mont Blanc range, is the site of some of the most spectacular scenery and walking anyone would want. Mike and Annette travelled there in 2010 and spent some two weeks doing day walks in the valley.

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 landuse to achieve conservation.

Office-bearers

<i>President</i>	Rod Griffiths	6288 6988 (h)
	rod.blackdog@gmail.com	
<i>Vice-President</i>	Vacant	
<i>Secretary</i>	Sonja Lenz	6251 1291 (h)
	sonjalenz67@gmail.com	
<i>Treasurer</i>	Chris Emery	6249 7604 (h)
	chris.emery@optusnet.com.au	

Committee members

Christine Goonrey (Immediate Past President)	6231 8395 (h)
	cgoonrey@grapevine.com.au
George Heinsohn	6278 6655 (h)
	george.heinsohn@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	6251 1291 (h)
	mccue.kevin@gmail.com
Bernard Morvell	0401 679 254 (mob)
	bernard.morvell@daff.gov.au
Mike Smith	6286 2984 (h)
	msmith@netspeed.com.au

Conveners

<i>Outings Sub-committee</i>	Mike Smith	6286 2984 (h)
	msmith@netspeed.com.au	
<i>Environment Sub-committee</i>	Rod Griffiths	6288 6988 (h)
	rod.blackdog@gmail.com	
<i>Publications Sub-committee</i>	Kevin McCue	6251 1291 (h)
	mccue.kevin@gmail.com	
<i>Bulletin Working Group</i>	Max Lawrence	6288 1370 (h)
	mlawrence@netspeed.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.

* the office move to new premises in Barry Drive is imminent.

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	<i>Bulletin</i> 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.

NPA Bulletin

Contributions of articles, letters, drawings and photographs are always welcome. Items accepted for publication may also be published on the NPA website. Items accepted for publication will be subject to editing. Send all items to The *Bulletin* Team, admin@npaact.org.au, or the postal address above.

Deadline for the September 2013 issue: 31 July 2013.

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For information on NPA ACT activities, please visit our website <http://www.npaact.org.au>

The great range of NPA field guides or a beautiful book about Namadgi National Park are available from the office and some bookstores.

