



BLUE MOUNTAINS HERITAGE STATUS - A REALITY DUNPHY'S GREAT VISION

by Andy Macqueen - ex-president
Confederation

You might say that the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area can be traced back to the energy and vision of one man - bushwalker and conservationist Myles Dunphy. In the 1920s Myles and his mates from the Mountain Trails Club spent their holidays exploring and mapping the remoter parts of the Blue Mountains, and came to the conclusion



Probably the best known view in the Blue Mountains - The Three Sisters

that something had to be done to preserve them for future generations.

As early as 1923 Myles was working on a scheme to create a national park over a large part of the mountains. A meticulous researcher and map-maker, (see page 6) he gradually put his ideas on paper. However, he needed more clout before putting the proposal to the Lands Department. Together with other bushwalkers, in 1932 he set up the National Parks and Primitive areas council.

The aim of the Council was to promote the establishment of national parks under central government control. At the head of their agenda was the Blue Mountains National Park, the details of which were submitted to the Surveyor General that same year. The purpose of the proposed park was the (preservation of scenery and areas of

natural bushland, for conservation of wildlife and for the furtherance of all kinds of recreation not destructive to the essentials of the proposal).

Stretching almost from Kandos in the north to Mittagong in the south, the park had at its core the Grose Valley and Blue Gum Forest, which was making headlines at the time as a result of the successful efforts by bushwalkers

(including Dunphy) to preserve it.

Local government representatives, who could see the tourist benefits, supported the park. In 1934 the Katoomba Daily broadsheet advertising the scheme at length. The stage seemed set for the park to become a reality.

But the slow wheels of government,

complicated by the intervention of war, meant that nothing happened till 1959 - 25 years later - when the Blue Mountains National park was declared under the Crown Lands Act.

At first it was only a very small version of Dunphy's vision, but over the years it was greatly extended, and new national parks were added - Kanangra-Boyd in 1969, Wollemi in 1979 and Nattai in 1991. The vision has

Continued on page 5

**SEE ALSO PAGE FOUR FOR
THE HISTORY OF THE
BATTLE FOR HERITAGE
STATUS & PAGE THREE
FOR WHAT IT WAS SAVED
FROM. SEE PAGES SIX
AND SEVEN FOR MAPS**

IS THE
NATIONAL
PARKS
SERVICE
FAILING
THE PUBLIC?



Response to letter from Ronald D. Woodland-Blanch

I refer to the issues of the supply of firewood in national parks as raised by Ronald Woodland-Blanch. This issue was recently raised by the same correspondent in another publication however, I am happy to reiterate the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) policy on this matter.

Campfires are only permitted outside total fire ban restrictions - and the Service asks visitors who wish to light them to bring their own wood with them as unregulated timber foraging clearly impacts upon the ecological balance of the area where it is removed.

Dead and fallen timber not only provides important habitat and protection for small mammals, reptiles and invertebrates, but is also important in providing nutrients for other flora as it decays.

To assist visitors with their cooking arrangements, gas and electric barbecues have been installed in many parks for public use free of charge to ensure visitors can enjoy a hot meal and reduce impacts upon the natural environment. Alternatively, visitors are encouraged to adopt other minimum impact cooking techniques such as fuel stoves.

While it is pleasing that an increasing number of people are enjoying camping and day use facilities within national parks, it is important to ensure a balance is maintained between enjoying these recreational opportunities and protecting the conservation values of the parks.

To help ensure the continued protection of these magnificent areas and to improve the quality of visitor experiences, the NPWS recently reviewed its visitor services and charges. From 1 November 2000 the NPWS is asking visitors to a

Continued on page 9

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Walk Safely - Walk With a Club



THE BUSHWALKER

Contributions, letters to the editor, original cartoons and suggestions are welcome. They should be sent to the address below. Except for short notes or letters, all contributions should be accompanied with text file on three and a half inch floppy disk in IBM format or E-Mail.

Advertising rates are available on request. Ring Judy Hellyer 029604-1101 or hellyer@ihug.net.au

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The Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs NSW Inc represents approximately 70 clubs with a total membership around 10,000 bushwalkers. Formed in 1932, the Confederation provides a united voice on conservation and other issues, runs training courses for members, and provides for the public a free wilderness search and rescue service. People interested in joining a bushwalking club are invited to write to the Secretary Bushwalkers NSW at the above address for information on clubs in their area.

Or web site www.bushwalking.org.au

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THE BUSHWALKER

is the magazine of the Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs NSW Inc. It's published quarterly. The aim of the magazine is to provide articles and information of interest to the members of clubs affiliated with the Confederation and Bushwalkers generally. Any opinions expressed by individual authors do not always represent the official views of the Confederation.

BLUE MOUNTAINS WORLD HONOUR

by Keith Muir - Colong Foundation

Since the Blue Gum Forest campaign of the early 1930s, small groups of dedicated conservationists have fought to protect the Blue Mountains wilderness. Alex Colley, Hon. Secretary of the

and Primitive Areas Council proposed the original scheme in 1934. Subsequent detailed national park proposal by groups like Total Environment Centre, National Parks Association, the Colo Committee and Colong Foundation built on the initial vision.

Through this work the Mountains have been protected from clearing, a gas pipeline through the Wollangambe wilderness, various powerline easements (although a damaging one scars the

World Heritage listing is about recognition of the "outstanding universal values" within the national parks created through eighty years of conservation effort. The genuine community jubilation over listing of the Greater Blue Mountains Area is the best possible recognition of these historic efforts.

Listing elevates the ongoing conservation debate over the Blue Mountains. Development must never compromise the Blue Mountains, turning our world honour into a global shame. It is up to all of us to ensure that wilderness, World Heritage and national parks remain very precious principles relevant to and respected by everyone.

The Blue Mountains should become the benchmark for World Heritage area protection and management. For now, celebrate World Heritage as the fruit of past conservation victories. I hope these past efforts in nature preservation become the inspiration for future generations whose conservation difficulties will be so much greater than those faced in the past.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The park has total area of 245,929 hectares. It is located just west of Sydney in the Great Dividing Range. Just an hours drive from Sydney lies the magnificent Blue Mountains. Huge tracts of this land have been conserved by three major parks, Blue Mountains, Wollemi and Kanangra Boyd. The land is very rugged with spectacular sandstone cliffs predominating throughout. There are literally hundreds of kilometres of walking tracks. Made up of sandstone canyons and hills, and clad in tall forests of bluegum, the Blue Mountains are the elevated remains of what was once a vast plateau. Over the centuries, it has been weathered by rivers and waterfalls, leaving flat-topped ridges on which the white man has built towns. The Blue Mountains in reality is hard country that took the early settlers a generation to cross.

The heart of the park is the Grose and Jamieson Valleys, carpeted with ferns and choked with gums. These lie north and south of the high narrow plateau on which the mountain towns of Blackheath, Katoomba and Wentworth Falls are perched.



A group of children enjoying the fruits of the pioneers work - photo Judy Hellyer



Empress Falls - photo Richard Merry

Jamison and Kedumba Valleys), several coal mines, at least two major dam projects, a power station on Newnes Plateau, urban development at Colo Heights, clay quarries at Culoul Range, native forest logging around all its edges, pine plantations on the Boyd Plateau, serious sewage pollution, the more recent Badgerys Creek Airport, superhighway and countless numbers of smaller madcap schemes.

As Sydney's population grows, be assured that development proposals in the Mountains will come thick and fast. State conservation laws and even the World Heritage Convention are not the best firewalls to preserve our national parks. These social constructs create process and responsibilities but they are not guarantees. It is people of NSW and their representatives on all sides of politics who ultimately must be counted upon to protect the natural environment into the 21st century. It is our job to ensure they are true believers in nature conservation and will be ready, when the time comes, to help save the Mountains again and again.



Colong Foundation for Wilderness perhaps was speaking for all of us when he said, "if we hadn't fought like tigers, they wouldn't be worth listing" as World Heritage (SMH 30/11/2000).

World Heritage listing celebrates the vision of the Greater Blue Mountains National Park and the early bushwalking conservationists who supported it. Myles Dunphy and the National Parks



THE MAZE - RECOUNTING OVER A DECADE OF WORK TOWARDS WORLD HERITAGE LISTING OF THE BLUE MOUNTAINS

The term maze features occasionally among place names in Dunphy's bushwalking sketch maps of the Blue Mountains, along with equivalent terms like labyrinth. In this brief review of the moves toward the recent listing of the mountains as a World Heritage property, the maze is a metaphor for the frequent frustrations to progressing this aim since the late 1980s.

One of the recurring themes is the difficulty in having a commitment carried through at both State and Federal levels simultaneously - something required for submitting a World Heritage proposal to the international committee.

At all times over this period, the Colong Foundation for Wilderness filled the role of spearhead group for the campaign. Relying solely on donations from their members, the foundation commissioned a report entitled 'Blue Mountains for World Heritage' by Dr Geoff Mosely, which was submitted to State and Federal Governments in 1989.

This document was well received by the NSW Government and opposition of the day, however the culture of demarcation between the work of government versus non-government bodies, meant that further assessment was called for by the main environment agencies.

Hence a four year hiatus followed while NSW waited for commitment of Federal money towards further studies. With a very minimal Federal contribution, an assessment finally proceeded in 1994, with the National Herbarium briefed to examine and report on the World Heritage values of the Blue Mountains and further areas of dissected sandstone bushland in the Sydney Basin.

This comprehensive report supported the case for World Heritage values under criteria including cultural heritage and landscape evolution, but most particularly for the area's representation of eucalypt forest diversity. The report also favoured the inclusion of several surrounding plateau areas such as Morton, Budawang, Yengo and Goulburn River National Parks and the Metropolitan water catchments.

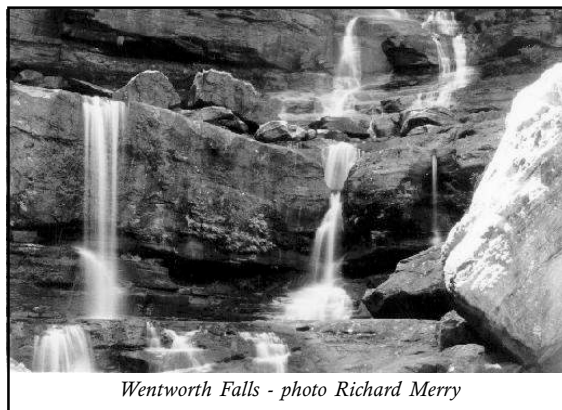
At around the same time as this work was carried out, the significant discovery of the rare and distinct conifer the Wollemi Pine was made in a moist sheltered gorge of Wollemi National Park. This find gave a further boost to

By John Macris
Conservation Officer



the area's credentials as an example of stages of biological evolution, as the pine represents a relic of the dominant flora prior to the succession by sclerophyll (drought adapted, hard leaf) species.

The Fahey State Government chose to order more assessments rather than act on the report, perhaps due to elements of



Wentworth Falls - photo Richard Merry

anti-conservation within the Coalition parties. After a change of Government in 1995, the incoming Environment Minister Pam Allan committed to seek a nomination to be submitted to the World Heritage bureau by mid 1996.

Once again, delays at the Federal level were encountered. Having put little resources into the earlier assessments, the Federal Minister decided to appoint an expert panel to give further advice. This provided little if any new information and some of its equivocal output regarding the degree of geomorphological significance led to the June 1996 nomination being missed.

At the more grass roots level, a community reference group was established by the member for Blue Mountains the Hon Bob Debus. Although yet another process, this forum allowed community groups a significant input into the ultimate development of a nomination document.

In 1998 the opportunity to submit a nomination very nearly passed by again.

State and Federal agencies had decided to undertake further review work, in part because the predominant theme being pursued of eucalypt diversity was something being worked on for other forest areas of the Australian mainland and Tasmania.

The community groups however declared that 'enough was enough' (it had been ten years in the maze of assessment and reassessment by this time). A commitment was gained from minister Pam Allan, who instructed the NPWS to ensure a nomination was prepared for the June deadline. The one drawback of this was that the nomination area was rationalised to exclude most of the surrounding plateau areas identified in the Herbarium report.

Finally a nomination was submitted by Senator Robert Hill as Australia's Environment Minister. And out of the domestic maze into the international one. Among the complicating factors facing the Blue Mountains nomination was the dispute over Australia's management of the Kakadu World Heritage area due to creating excisions for uranium mining.

The international body also queried whether Australia could conceivably present an expanded nomination covering the most significant eucalypt forest areas of all of the eastern States and Western Australia. A casual look at our constitution and the various levels and shades of government that would need to cooperate for this to occur, shows that such a nomination will only work in incremental stages if at all - ie following on from a Blue Mountains listing with other suitable areas like the Alps and South-East Forests over time.

It appears this practicality was ultimately appreciated, as was Australia's case that our diverse and unique eucalypt forests are World Heritage material, because the nomination was finally accepted in November last year.

Making up Australia's twelfth World Heritage property are Wollemi, Yengo, Gardens of Stone, Blue Mountains, Kanangra Boyd, Nattai and Thirlmere Lakes National Parks and the Jenolan Caves Karst Conservation Area.

Special thanks must go to the Colong Foundation for their 14 years of work on this proposal.



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Continued from page 1

become reality, though under the banner of four national parks, not one. Of course, there has been the great bonus that the Wollemi National park extends far to the north of the original proposal.

The World Heritage Area includes that extra part, as well as other adjacent national parks.

The fact that large portions of the World Heritage Area are declared wilderness can also be attributed partly to Dunphy. It was his view that undeveloped parts of the proposed park should be designated as 'primitive areas' - a term which he preferred to 'Wilderness area', the term being promoted at the time in the USA. One of these primitive areas was to be in the Grose Valley. Today, we await the government's decision on the declaration of Grose Wilderness, proposed by Confederation in 1996.

It is thanks to Myles Dunphy and the many conservationists who have followed that so much of the new World Heritage Area is today in a wild state. Without their vision, today we would have less public land; more roads, powerlines, pipelines and pine forests; a dam on the Colo; a coal mine in the Wolgan; a limestone mine at Church Creek... the list goes on.

What we would not have is such a magnificent expanse of undisturbed eucalypt forest.

References:

Dunphy, M., et al, Blue Mountains National Park Special Supplement, Katoomba Daily, 24-8-1934.

Macqueen, Andy, Back from the Brink Blue Gum Forest and the Grose Wilderness, Andy Macqueen 1997.

Mosley, Geoff, Battle for the Bush the Blue Mountains, the Australian Alps and the Origins of the Wilderness Movement, Colong Foundation/Envirobook, 1999.

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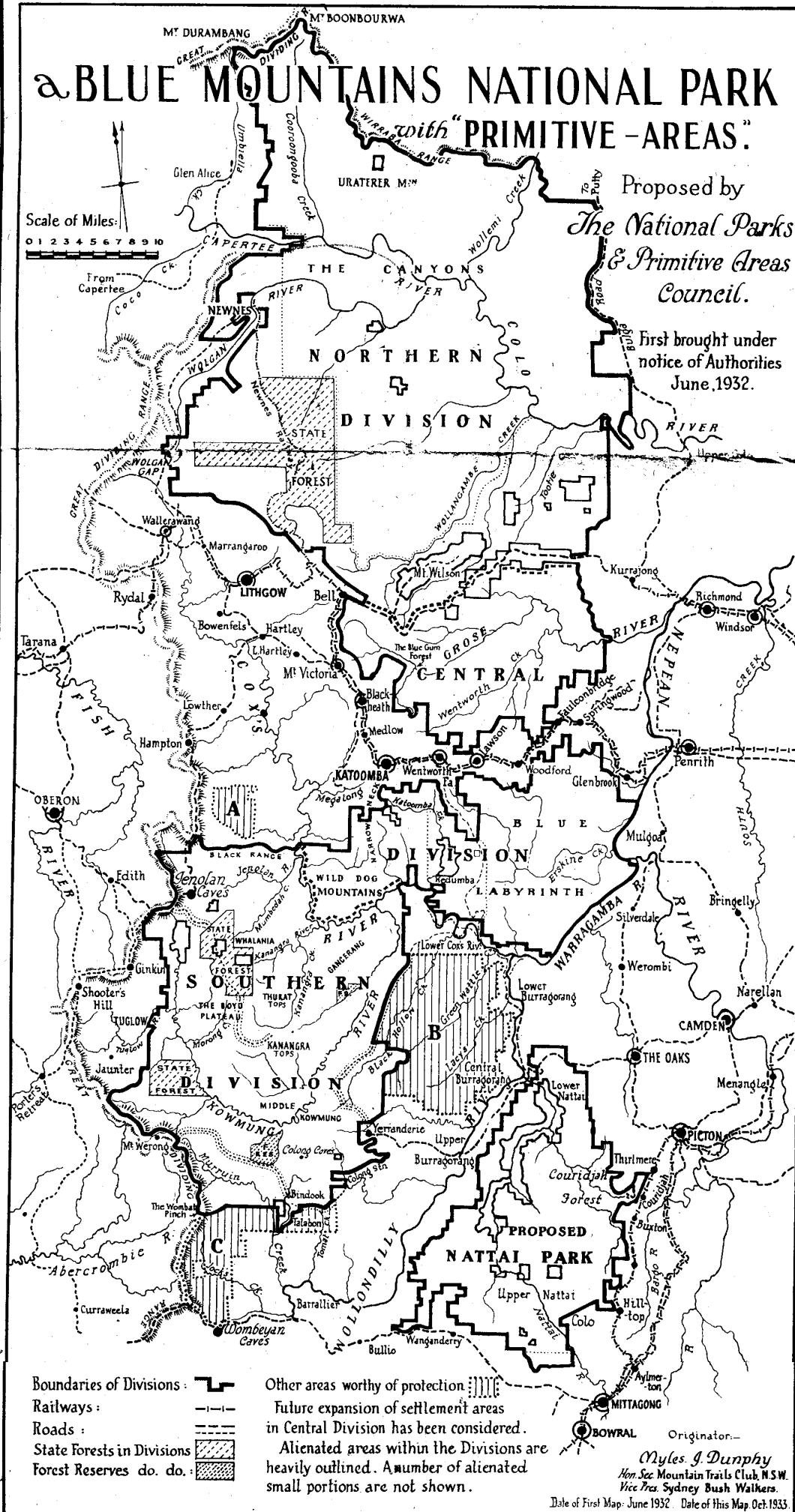
a BLUE MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK with "PRIMITIVE - AREAS."

Proposed by
*The National Parks
& Primitive Areas
Council.*

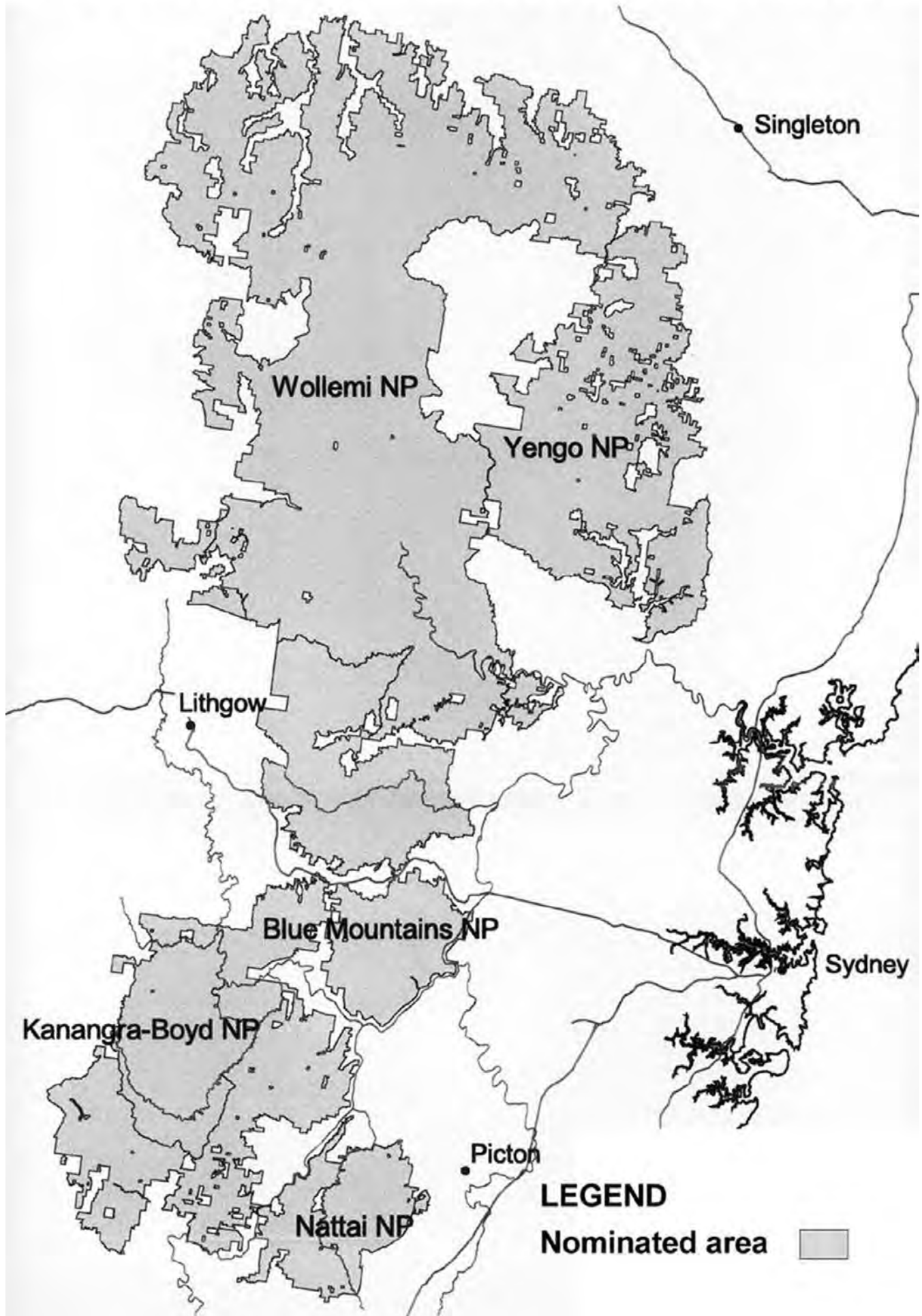
First brought under
notice of Authorities
June, 1932.

A REGIONAL
MAP OF THE
BLUE
MOUNTAINS NATIONAL
PARK
SCHEME,
PROPOSED
BY THE
NATIONAL
PARKS AND
PRIMITIVE
AREAS
COUNCIL
(FORMALLY
BLUE MTS,
NATIONAL
PARK
COMMITTEE)
AND
SUPPORTERS
IN JUNE
1932.
THIS MAP IS
DATED
OCTOBER
1933

COMPARE
THIS WITH
THE MAP ON
PAGE SEVEN,
WHICH
SHOWS THE
AREA NOW
PROCLAIMED
AS A WORLD
HERITAGE



THE GREATER BLUE MOUNTAINS NOMINATED AREA





A WORLD HERITAGE WALK KATOOMBA TO MITTAGONG

Alex Tucker



This is a six day walk half as long again as the more famous classic Cradle Mountain - Lake St Clair in the Tasmanian World Heritage Area .. The challenges of terrain and weather are different. You wont find a Tasmanian board walk or a wide track and there are no shelter hut at the end of each days walk. You wont find the crowds of walkers that ensure that only the early arrivals find room for their sleeping bag on the

spring or autumn. Summer is too hot and there arent enough daylight hours in winter .A 7.00 am start is recommended for each day and if all goes well you will have completed your 20 plus kilometres

by about 6 p.m.

"Bushwalks in the Sydney Region " Volume 2 . published by the National Parks Association of NSW Inc provides three pages of detailed instructions and three

sketch maps for the south bound walker. If you think that such details make the trip too easy, try starting from Mittagong.

Southbound travellers have the advantage on the first day of heading towards the views from Narrow Neck over the Megalong and Jamieson Valleys

In springtime there are large fields on wildflowers on Scotts Main Range and often hundreds of kangaroos grazing the common on the east side of the Tonalli River, It is worth continuing up the hill to an excellent grassy camping ground behind the old Court House in Yerranderie. This is an old mining town' At its peak in 1903. 350 men mined silver, lead and gold then worth about 100 000 pounds

The deposit was worked out by 1950 and later the whole village was sold off.. The old Post Office is now a Guest Lodge and the village is a low

key tourist destination . The NPWS organises tag along vehicle tours one weekend per month along fire trails normally closed to the motorised public There is road access from Oberon 105 km away and a small airstrip allows for emergency evacuations.

As you are now half way to Mittagong you may fancy a lazy day walk to . Yerranderie Peak (about 4km return) or Colong Gap (about 7 km return)

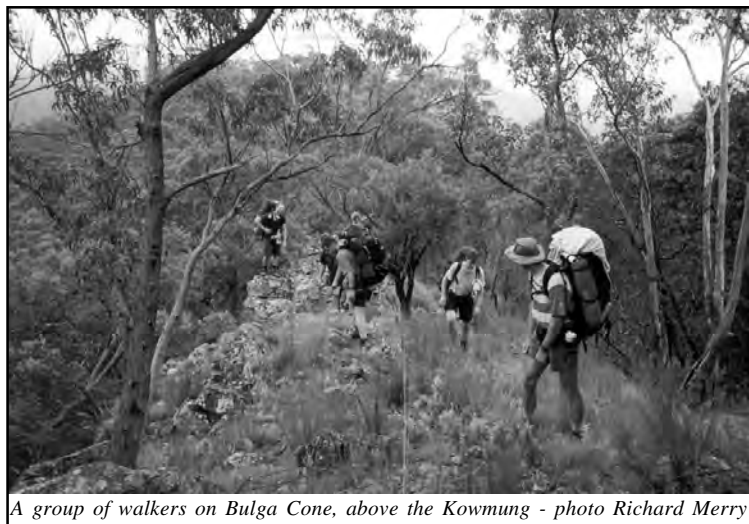
Some details are in Volume 1 Of the or you could take a day trip to include a nshort excursion to the Colong Caves, You will need a permit and some special gear to enter the caves beyond the daylight. (Details of these side walks are in Volumes 1 and 2 of Bushwalks of the Sydney Region) .

Back on the main track, there are spectacular view of the upper Burragorang Valley and to the east a gap in the cliffs of the Wanganderry Tableland This is Beloon Pass .the second big climb.. There is a log book at the crest in which to record your visit whilst you enjoy the vita of the upper Wollondilly

On the last two days you are in the Nattai wilderness lose count of the number of times you cross that river. Features of the final day are a side trips to the Forty Feet Falls and the Box Vale track This follows an old railway line to the top of an incline from the Box Vale coal mine. If you struggle up to this well made track you pay the price later in having to walk along the old Hume Highway into Mittagong

It may be preferable to stick to the valley of Gibbergunyah Creek and the Lake Alexandra picnic area.

Walk Safely Walk with a Club



A group of walkers on Bulga Cone, above the Kowmung - photo Richard Merry

hut floor. Enough of odorous comparisons Both are among the greatest



Near the Nattai - K to M - photo Richard merry

Australian bushwalks

On the K to M you will have two gruelling climbs, each more than 400 metres and two major rivers (Cox's & Wollondilly) to cross This is a walk for experienced bushwalkers proficient in navigation to be attempted only in

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SEE PAGE 9

We Want the Good Ones

Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue is after your Club's good bushwalkers to join our volunteers for bush search & rescue. Most of the important skills we need they will already have such as navigation, bush fitness, self equipped and self reliant for overnight walking in all weathers. I describe good bushwalkers as those who have done a variety of trips throughout the years in a diverse range of terrains such as (but not exclusively) Budawangs, Wollemi, Blue Mountains, Barrington Tops, Northern Rivers etc. So you could put them anywhere with a map and they'd not only survive but enjoy the trip!

Your club needs them!

All successful clubs have a core of good walkers who make trips happen with a minimum of fuss. They naturally work together and don't merely follow the leader but use good observation to be actively involved. Confederation is only as good as its member clubs and their walkers. Our active media willingly report all bushwalking incidents. All manner of "ideas" suddenly appear for 'our' safety from self appointed experts. From 1934 the Confederation has worked to maintain the good name of bushwalking by co-ordinating its good bushwalkers via its self help rescue section, Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue, to assist both fellow bushwalkers and others in trouble in the bush.

But

Since 1934 rescue has become increasingly dependent on organisation and technology. Cars have made it far easier for more people than ever to go bush. Unimagined resources are now available such as four wheel drive vehicles, helicopters, compact radios, medical drugs and skills etc. While many groups perform valuable roles in bush rescue there is still a role for bushwalkers skilled in remote area travel - Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue (BWR). However being keen and responding promptly to BWR midnight phone calls for help is no longer professional enough. BWR has had to formalise its training / procedures and has produced an Operations Manual (now version 2.02). BWR needs your good bushwalkers to be trained in rescue skills, organisation and procedures.

We want the good ones to train at Cataract

BWR would like to have you as a good bushwalker to join our ranks of Operational Personnel as a "Bushwalking Club Member" or "Team Member" by training at Cataract Scout Park on 31st March / 1st April. In the past years the training at Cataract has been both intensive and very enjoyable. The lowest level of commitment is "Bushwalking Club Member". You would only be required for difficult large scale incidents where weather and terrain have made searching difficult, eg the May 2000 Budawangs search for four Scouts. "Team Members" are expected to be our first response personnel and will be trained in a wider range of skills (competencies). Bushwalking Club Members can advance to Team Member or Team Leader. Cataract will continue the process started in October 2000 (on Newnes Plateau) of training / documentation of skills / review bush fitness for appropriate member levels for BWR.

Where

CATARACT SCOUT PARK - campsite no. 3 starting 8.30am both days

Get there from southern SYDNEY by driving drive via Campbelltown to Appin. Take the Appin to Bulli (Wollongong) Road. Watch for turnoff to RIGHT (south) to Scout Camp and Cataract Dam.

If driving from Wollongong face the other way - drive up either Mt. Ousley or Bulli Pass. Take the road to Appin and turn LEFT (south) at the sign for Scout Camp / Cataract Dam.

Gear - what to bring

Enthusiasm. APPIN 1:25,000 (9029-I-S) map. Overnight camping gear so as to have realistic gear for improvisations. Spare clothes for the refurbished Challenge Valley course (you will get dirty). Camping will be close to cars. Your compass (naturally) is essential as some sessions will be at remote parts of the Scout Camp.

Questions:

For additional information contact Steve Irwin 4626 8404 (home) Keith Maxwell 9622 0049 (home)

So

Join the 'good bushwalkers' at Cataract. Stir some others up in your club to make a great group. Meet other 'good bushwalkers' from Confederation Clubs you may have never heard of! Be part of your Confederation and its all weather, all terrain self help search & rescue section - Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue.



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Continued from page 1

number of national parks across the State to make a small contribution to the ongoing maintenance and improvement of visitor facilities through the introduction of park entry fees.

Funds raised through the collection of day entry fees will stay in the local area and be used to improve visitor facilities and services such as toilets, picnic grounds and better management of camping areas. This will help free up more NPWS funds for pest, fire and weed management and for other programs to protect threatened and endangered species.

Charging for entry into national parks is not new. Indeed, fees have been charged for entry into some parks in NSW since the early 1960s when community-based trusts sought to raise funds to provide for conservation and visitor facilities within the parks.

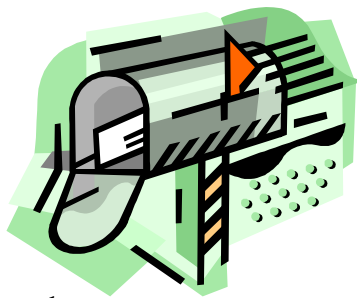
The NPWS regularly undertakes maintenance work on NPWS estate throughout the State both to improve visitor facilities to ensure all visitors gain the most from their visit, and to reduce environmental impacts.

Media Enquiries: Warwick Brennan (02) 9585 6500 or pager 9214 9832

The Editor The Bushwalker
Mr Ronald D Woodland - Blanch asks "Is the National Parks Service Failing the Public ? " (The Bushwalker November) I

believe that the question all bushwalkers should ask themselves is "Am I contributing to the degradation of the National Park Estate ? " The honest answer is yes because every park user has some impact on the park environment and the only differences are the magnitude of the impacts, What you and I can do is to practice Minimal Impact Bushwalking and to volunteer for maintenance work in the parks.

I guess that I am about 15 years younger than Mr Woodland- Blanch. I too regret that it is no longer possible to camp wherever I choose, to enjoy yarning and singing around a campfire or to drink water from creeks in National Parks



The problem for NPWS Managers is whether it is better to concentrate the impacts of camping, for example, at two locations in Royal NP and four in Heathcote NP where toilets can be installed and maintained, or to spread the devastation more thinly but more extensively I don't know the answer but I believe the cause of the problem is associated with the population growth in Sydney over the past 50 years. . During WWII my suburb of French's Forest was a few scattered houses, a large army camp, a

opened bush camp site on Oxford Creek near the end of Dawes Rd Belrose. Who would drink from those creeks today ? Camping practices that were acceptable in our youth are not necessarily acceptable now.

I find that I disagree with many, but not all, of Mr Woodland- Blanch's other comments but I support his right (and duty) to criticise the NPWS when he considers it necessary. If he cares to contact me through the Editor I can send him my written reasons. Name supplied

The Editor The Bushwalker

Regarding the vitriolic and negative letter by Woodland-Blanch in the November issue criticising the National Parks and Wildlife service.

We should keep in mind that National parks were founded by far-sighted people to protect out unique flora and fauna. If we can get an extra bonus by walking through these magnificent areas, then that is great.

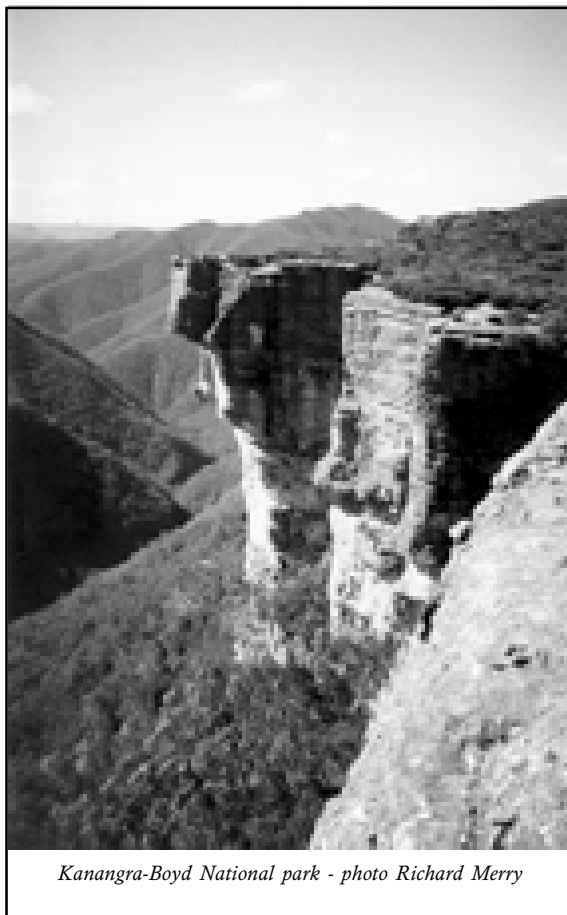
Let us keep our eye on the main game and be positive. It is later than we realise, the many things we took for granted as "our inalienable right" in the old days are no longer acceptable. Few people now will chop down the nearest sapling for tent props, and many people, like myself, who enjoyed the log fire, now realise that it is necessary for our wildlife to have forest litter. Some parks that are well patronised are in danger of being 'loved' to death.

To consider the NPWS as merely a supplier of firewood and a cleaner up of other peoples rubbish is a very sad view. And as for 'everybody' wanting to see the staff wielding the brushcutter and chainsaw, it makes me think the author does not appreciate the Australian bush.

The NPWS needs our support in protecting our dwindling stock of native animals and their habitat, they may have a bigger budget, but they have a much greater area to service

Len Outram.

Copies were also sent to the NPWS and Minister for the Environment.



Kanangra-Boyd National park - photo Richard Merry

primary school and a post office. Since then five completely new suburbs have been carved out of the bushland surrounding Middle Harbour The Scouts of Northern Suburbs District (Milsons Point to Waitara) used to hold their annual competition camp at the Cascades at the end of Douglas St St Ives, Mosman District had a similar undevel-

**ED - IT'S GOOD TO SEE
THE CONCERN FOR THE
BUSH AND SUPPORT FOR
THE NPWS**

FORESTS FOREVER - 4 DAY ECOLOGY CAMP IN EAST GIPPSLAND

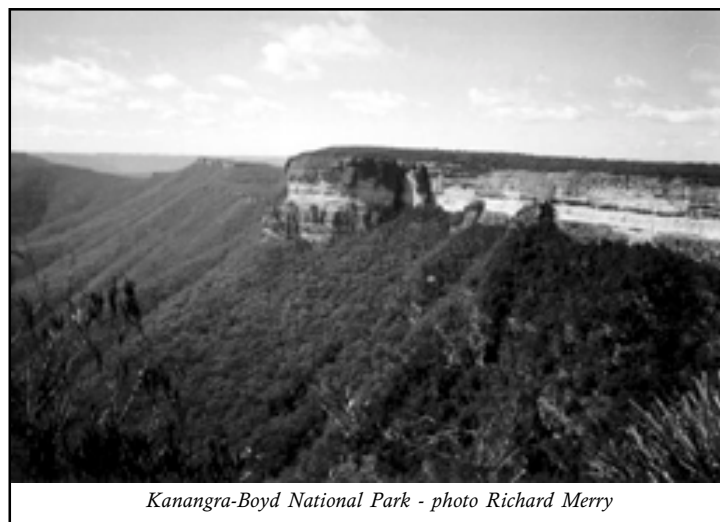
The East Gippsland forests will again be the venue for the 21st annual Forests Forever Camp this Easter. Expert botanists and ecologists will lead walks and tours around some of the best old growth and rainforests that the Errinundra Plateau and surrounds has to offer.

This camp has been held in East Gippsland since the local environment group was formed in 1982. The Con-Gippsland (CREOG) now has and this camp is their annual them continue their work to the region.

The camps are held in a called Goongerah, which is activities. Goongerah is about sits between the Errinundra and This little valley hugs the Brodribb among the peppermints and manna gums is set up to cater for the 120 or more people who attend. Solar power, a large marquee, information tent, firewood and bush toilets are provided by the group.

The tour leaders comprise of people with many years experience in the forests of this region. A regular well-known personality is David Cameron. He has boundless enthusiasm and knowledge of the plants and history of East Gippsland with his specialty being rainforests. If you chose to take a walk with David, be ready for brain overload - and take a torch.

His love of these parts seems to envelope him in a world where time is irrelevant. David also brings his famous rainforest slide show to



Kanangra-Boyd National Park - photo Richard Merry

explain every fascinating aspect of a rainforest's workings. This solar powered show is presented under the marquee with Yellow-bellied gliders calling from the trees above.

Dr Kevin Thiele is our other regular botanist and walks leader. He has lived and worked in East Gippsland for many years and has discovered plants unknown to the region. His scope of knowledge spans far wider than merely flora; he can identify a Gahnia sedge butterfly at 100 paces and tell you of the fascinating mating habits of the arboreal mammals as he takes night time prowls in the forest with a spotlight. He often finds possums and gliders but the Powerful and Sooty owls are a little more difficult to spot.

Jill Redwood is the coordinator of CROEG and the other raconteur of the walks. She will explain the environmental and European history of the region. As these forests have also provided the logging industry with wood for many decades, the results of forest management on the ecology and biodiversity of these areas is also explained.

If this sounds like a holiday for plant fanatics you're right! The four days will cost \$40 (\$30 conc.) per person, or \$15 a day, children 15 and under, no charge.

For more information or to make a booking, call Ian on 5154 0146

Jill on 5154 0145,

or email croeg@bigpond.com. Details and map can be posted out.

WEBSNIFFER - YOUR BUSHWALKING GUIDE TO THE INTERNET



Surely what was to be the biggest disappointment for the new year was the shutting down of one of the most comprehensive sites on the web for bushwalking. It is so non-commercial, with scope for the inexperienced and adventurous and inexperienced adventurers. They are NOT closing down! Send in your appreciation after finding detailed descriptions of walks, photos, advice on all things relative to bushwalking, and great links at : www.galactic.net.au/bushwalking/

Bushwalking barefoot would surely be for the under fives and other socially challenged people, but no, this site begs to differ. For a laugh and podiatry persuasion try: www.lisp.com.au/~daven/barefoot.html For something more touristy but with historic tidbits: www.info.mountains.net.au/activity/walk.htm Follow the links for a nice tour of the mountains.

Another well researched site belongs to John Chapman at www.ozemail.com.au/~johnchapman/index.html John writes for WILD magazine and has a lot of experience to pass on through this site.

For a well linked and interesting set of features and current issues try: www.bigvolcano.com.au/stories/feature3.htm So what is a Caldera? And do you agree with the politician's views? Of course all these sites and more can be accessed at www.bushwalking.org.au



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Victoria Cascades - photo Richard Merry

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THE WOLLEMI PINE - AN UPDATE

AGREEMENT FOR COMMERCIAL PROPAGATION AND RELEASE OF THE THE WOLLEMI PINE (WOLLEMIA NOBILIS)

In March 1999 a consortium of Queensland Forestry Research Institute and Birkdale Nursery were selected as the successful partners for the future commercialisation of the Wollemi Pine on behalf of the Royal Botanic Gardens



Adult Pines in the Wollemi national park

Sydney and the New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service.

The consortium and the Royal Botanic Gardens are currently undertaking a major propagation program to increase the numbers of the Pine to firstly ensure their long term survival and secondly to produce viable quantities for commercial release.

Due to the small in-situ population of the Wollemi Pine it is expected that commercially viable quantities will not be reached until 2005.

Further information on the venture can be obtained from the consortium partners or from The Business Services Manager, Royal Botanic Gardens, Mrs Macquaries Road, Sydney 2000 Australia <http://www.birkdaleinternational.com/cdromframe.htm>

Some background information about the pine. lindyl@ip.net.au

WHAT'S IT LOOK LIKE?

The Wollemi Pine (*Wollemia nobilis*) is a conifer that grows to a height of 35 metres with a trunk diameter of over one metre. The leaves vary from bright lime green when young to yellow-green as they mature. Its bark is particularly unusual, looking very much like bubbling chocolate and is quite different from the bark of other related species.

RELATIVES

The Wollemi Pine's closest living relatives are the Norfolk Island Pine, Bunya Bunya Pine, Hoop Pine, Monkey Puzzle Pine and Kauri Pine, all members of the family Araucariaceae.

SEX

Like its closest living relatives, the Wollemi Pine is bisexual with both female and male reproductive cones on the same tree. The male and female cones are borne on separate branches at the very tips. The male cones are lower down the tree on older branches. The seeds are winged.

HOW WAS IT FOUND?

Like many notable finds, the Pines were discovered by chance. In August 1994, David Noble, a NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service officer, was bushwalking in

the Wollemi National Park when he saw a grove of trees that he did not recognise immediately.

HOW OLD ARE THE PINES?



A pine seedling at Birkdale Nurseries.

Nobody really knows, but some of the Pines may have been around before the Roman Empire. The older Wollemi Pines have multiple trunks of different ages and, in many cases, the original trunk is long gone. Scientists estimate that some of the trees may be between

500 and 1000 years old.

WHERE DOES IT GROW?

Two small groves of seedlings and mature trees occur about 150 kilometres north-west of Sydney, within the boundaries of the Wollemi National Park. The Park contains the largest wilderness in New South Wales. It is a very rugged mountainous region of gorges, cliffs and undisturbed forest. The Pines are growing on wet ledges in a deep, sheltered rainforest gorge.

WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT?

The Wollemi Pine is a 'living fossil'. Its discovery is particularly significant since it belongs to a new genus of plants previously known only as fossils that date back to the age of dinosaurs, some 150 million years ago. It is one of the world's rarest species with only 38 adult trees known in two small stands. The discovery of the Wollemi Pine emphasises that conservation areas are extremely valuable in the preservation of all plants and animals, especially endangered species. The Pine has already yielded the known anti-cancer chemical taxol, previously associated mainly with Yew trees from the Northern Hemisphere. Who knows what other extraordinary plants and animals – and cures – are still waiting to be discovered?

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HELPFUL ADVICE OFFERED BY THESE
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POINT PILCHER BLUE MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK

Richard Merry

This is a nice, comfortable, out of the way walk that my uncle showed me a couple of years ago. It's not widely known but shows the walker a marvelous view of the southern arm of the Grose Valley where it joins the Grand Canyon and Govett Gorge. **The track is not clearly defined** so take

Some years ago this used to be a four wheel drive track, but it was closed (as is the barriers) allowed to regrow. As no defined the four wheel drive trail peaters out. Take a topo if you



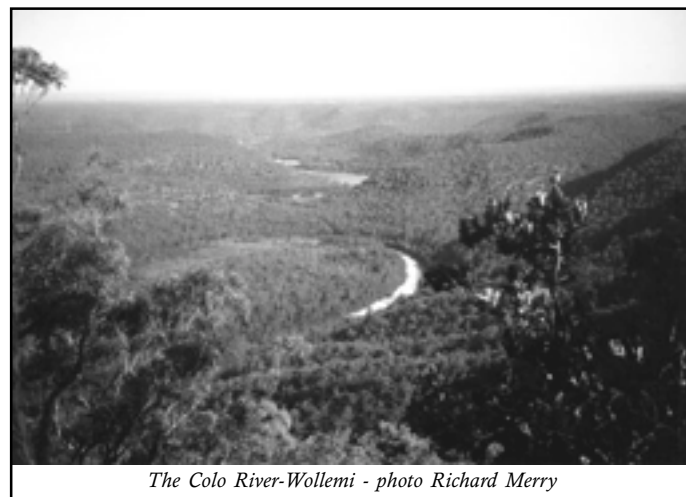
need it - I believe the track is on the Katoomba map - but don't fret if you don't have one. I would never normally advise a trip on a non-marked track without a topo, but its not far and your return course is always in sight. A sheltered picnic area and water tank is provided at the start. Fill up - there is no drinking water on

basically ends and turns into a water course meandering down the side of the hill. Now's a good time to fill you out on where your headed. You'll notice that to the right the land curves round in front forming a bit of a gully down below. Beyond the gully the land climbs again to the trees. The water course wind its way down the hill and then veers left behind the foliage just in front to your left following the gully. For now just follow the water course down.

As the track enters the gully it leads into a marshy swamp. Lots of tall grass and probably a fair bit of water. The more defined track suddenly ends but you can make your own way to the cliff edge without a lot of bother. Lots of long grass and thick foliage. As with most gullies the wind near the cliff can be rather strong at times and can blow the inattentive traveller off the edge. Just a thought.

When you get to the edge you'll discover a rarely seen view of the Grose Valley. The waterfall you hear to your left is Beauchamp Falls. Occasionally, if the wind is right, spray from the falls is remarkably refreshing in summer and I've seen a rainbow of colours in the mist. Further around is Evan's Lookout, Bridal Veil Falls (the highest in the mountains) and Govett's Leap. On a clear day you might just see Pulpit Rock directly ahead.

Just head back the way you came to get to the car. You might want to stay a while however. Certainly a more interesting picnic site.



The Colo River-Wollemi - photo Richard Merry

somebody with some experience!

The track begins at the end Grand Canyon Rd. Travelling from Sydney follow the highway past Katoomba. Just after the Hydro Majestic the road dog-legs right and then left over the railway at Meadow Bath. Follow the road to the right over the bridge but turn off to the right immediately into Railway Pde. Take the fourth left into Rutland Rd, which turns into Grand Canyon Rd. Continue past Katoomba airport until you reach the end.

the track.

Initially the route is level and follows the old four wheel drive track for about half a click along the cliff. The best views are a little off track closer to the cliff and if your adventurous feel free to scramble down a bit. It's rough, steep and slippery but you don't need to venture too far. For those that feel safer up top you'll get a good view soon.

The trail becomes narrower, veering to the left through the scrub and leads to an open grassland. Here the track



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TAFFY'S ROCK - KU-RING-GAI CHASE NATIONAL PARK

I have been to many places in the Ku-Ring-Gai Chase National Park but none compare to the serene location that is Taffy's Rock. It is in the middle of the park east of Cowan and offers some of the best views around.

The walk begins at Cowan station where you join the Great North Walk on the eastern side of the railway station. The track descends into the valley. 2.5 km along the track is Jerusalem Bay. The ridge to the north of the bay is Govett's ridge, the ridge with Taffy's Rock on it. The track heads up the side of this ridge. Once at the top of the hill you will see a sign running parallel to the track with points to Brooklyn, in the north, and Cowan in the south. Behind this sign there are two tracks, both very well hidden. The one that goes to the left tapers off fairly quickly but the one to the right will take you all the way along the ridge and to Taffy's Rock. The track stays level for the first 500 metres where it opens out,



by James Armstrong

from here you can see all around. The track then heads down into a saddle. From then on the track becomes a little harder to follow as the vegetation thickens but there are plenty of pink ribbon markers to keep you on the right track. On the other side of the first



Taffy's Rock - Ku-Ring-Gai Chase National Park

saddle is a large rock cairn which was once used as a trigonometric station in the 1800's and was named 'Cole' Trig. From here the track heads into another saddle. On the other side of this saddle there is again a rock cairn which is the

remains of 'Edwards' Trig. The track then heads towards a peculiar rock which was named Mackerel Rock by one of the members of our party. This rock can be climbed and from it Taffy's Rock can be seen. It stretches along the top of the ridge for a fair distance. After Mackerel Rock the track goes past a small campsite and to the rock. On the eastern side of the rock there are views of Cowan Creek, Broken Bay, The Sea and Lion Island. The only signs of civilisation are the occasional boats on the water below. Also on the eastern side of the rock is a plaque which is dedicated to the memory of a young woman named Dorothy 'Taffy' Townson. She was bitten by a tiger snake near 'Frog Flats' (on the Overland Track in Tasmania) and later died at the Old Pelion Hut, also on the Overland Track. This was in 1948 and the rock was later named "Taffy's Rock" by the Rucksack club, of which she belonged. The rock which was once her favourite spot has now been officially named 'Taffy's Rock'.

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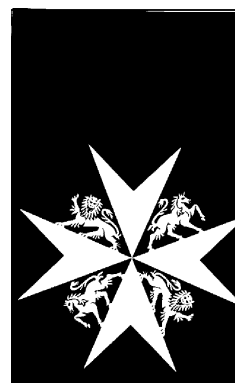
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NEWS FROM THE FIENDS OF BLUE GUM FOREST

The first of the biannual Annual Great Gorse Gorse Walks for 2001 is on February 3rd to March 23rd

They need **YOU** to help on selected week days and at weekends

For the past seven years volunteers have battled Gorse and other nasties including Scotch Broom .for 50 km of the river's course. There are more than 10,000 Gorse stored in each square metre of soil. Each Scotch Broom plant can produce 6 000 seeds per year

Land Care groups supported by Bushcare Officers of the Blue Mountains City Council, members of the Blue Mountains Conservation Society and individual bushwalkers have achieved primary knock down of all the known mature Gorse infestations in Popes Glen, Braeside , Days Crescent and Upper Bedford Creek

Agencies such as NPWS ,

the city Council , the Sydney Catchment Authority SRA and RTA have weed control programs for the lands in their

management and most participate in the Walk

Projects for 2001 include

Containment of the known Gorse infestations in remote areas of the Upper Gorse.

Weed Control at Govetts Leap

Revegetation of bare areas to supplement natural regeneration in area such as Braeside at Blackheath

Surveys to locate remaining infestations in Hat Hill Creek, Wentworth Creek and the Mt Victoria area

Identifying and encouraging rare plants as in Katoomba Creek

Cooperative work with private organisations and individuals

Success in these project s depends on the efforts of existing and new volunteers Activities vary from half a day to overnight camping

The next Walks this Year will be in the third and fourth weeks of August



*An artists impression of The Blue Gum Forest in 1934
by Joanne wells*

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February		20th Confederation general metting Ashfield RSL	25th 6hour Metrogaine Northern Beaches	
March	10-11th 12hr Upside-Down Qld	20th Confederation general metting Ashfield RSL		31st March- 1st April S&R Training
April	1st 6hr Rogaine ACT 0262- 475334	7/8th 12/24hr Rogaine west of Blue Mountains	17th Confederation general metting Ashfield RSL	
May	5/6th 24hr Rogaine ACT Championships	15th Confederation general metting Ashfield RSL		26th/27th May St John First-aid training
June	17th 6hr Rogaine Paddy pallin	19th Confederation general metting Ashfield RSL		
July	7th & 8th BWR* Emergency Services NavShield	17th Confederation general metting Ashfield RSL		
August	11th Confederation Annual General Meeting	21st Confederation general metting Ashfield RSL		
September		18th Confederation general metting Ashfield RSL	21st Annual Bushwalkers Bushdance Petersham Town hall	
October		16th Confederation general metting Ashfield RSL	20/21st Advanced S & R Training	27/28th St. John First Aid Training
november		20th Confederation general metting Ashfield RSL		
December		18th Confederation general metting Ashfield RSL		

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The Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs represents over 67 clubs and 10,500 walkers in NSW. Visit our website at www.bushwalking.org.au - email turton@smartchat.net.com.au. Phone (02) 9294-6797

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Overpants, Pack towels,
Tents, Water Filters,
Whistles, Ropes, Climbing
Gear, Ascenders,
Descenders, Cords, Friends,
Chocks, Karabiners,
Harnesses, Slings, Tapes,
First Aid Kits, Cords,
Backpacks, Daypacks, Mats,
Boots, Travel Packs, Books,
Compasses, GP's, Sleeping
Bags, Stuff Bags, Inner
Sheets, Sleeping Mats,
Torches, Headlamps,
Batteries, Billies, Bivvy
Bags, Fuel Bottles, Drink
Bottles, Fleece Jackets,
Candle Lanterns, Canyoning
Equipment, Thermal
Underwear, Cookware, Down
Jackets, Food, Stoves,
Gaiters, Gore-tex Rainwear,
Gloves, Mitts, Maps, Mugs,
Overpants, Pack towels,
Tents, Water Filters,
Whistles, Ropes, Climbing
Gear, Ascenders,

The Best Brands

Macpac, Wilderness
Equipment, Mont, Summit,
Salewa, Outdoor Research,
La Sportiva, Sterling,
Garmont, MSR, Canyon,
Therma-rest, Silva, Petzl,
Nalgene, Northern Lights,
Intertrek, Peter Storm,
Trangia, Tatonka, Manzella,
Aladdin, Pur, Sweetwater,
Rivory, Vertical, Wild
Country, Edelrid, Sunnto,
Morroto, Tua, Arc'teryx,
SRT, Sea to Summit, Thorlo,
Fox River, Wilderness Wear,
Ultimax, SR Mats, Macpac,
Wilderness Equipment,
Mont, Summit, Salewa,
Outdoor Research, La
Sportiva, Sterling, Garmont,
MSR, Canyon, Therma-rest,
Silva, Petzl, Nalgene,
Northern Lights, Intertrek,
Peter Storm, Trangia,
Tatonka, Manzella, Aladdin,
Pur, Sweetwater, Rivory,
Vertical, Wild Country,
Edelrid, Sunnto, Morroto,
Tua, Arc'teryx, SRT, Sea to
Summit, Thorlo, Fox River,
Wilderness Wear, Ultimax,
SR Mats, Macpac, Wilderness
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Summit, Thorlo, Fox River,
Wilderness Wear, Ultimax,
SR Mats, Macpac,
Wilderness Equipment,
Mont, Summit, Salewa,

The Best Advice

GET OUT THERE



TODAY!

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72 Archer Street

Phone: 9419 6955

chatswood@mountainequipment.com

HORNSBY

106 George Street

Phone: 9477 5467

hornsby@mountainequipment.com

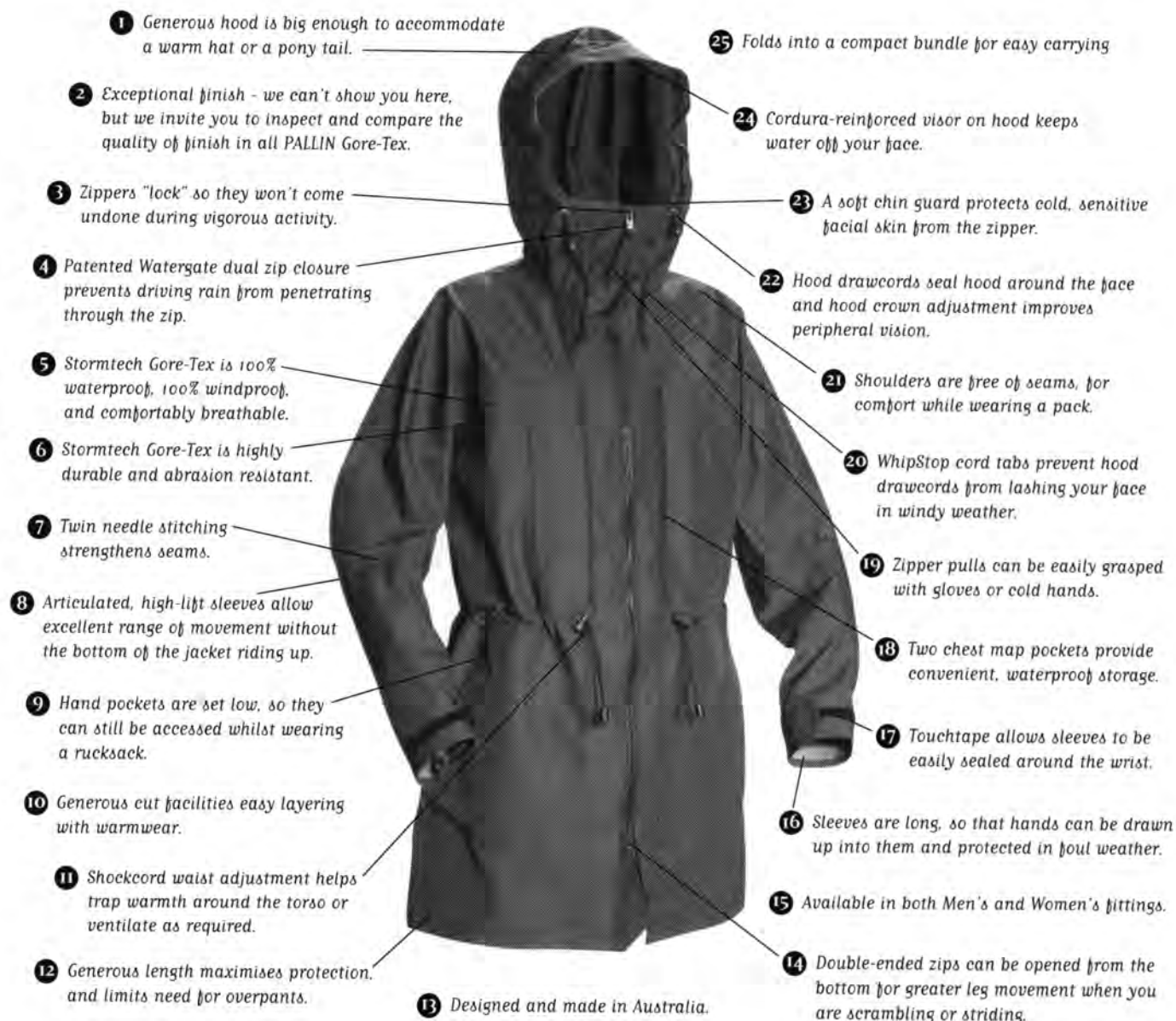
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