



THE COLONG BULLETIN

In Government, we will review all National Park designations which have been implemented since May 1976, to ensure optimum use of the resources they contain.

Joint statement by Messrs Greiner and Punch
12th March 1984

| | |
|---|--------|
| Annual General Meeting | Page 1 |
| Milo Kanangra Dunphy | 2 |
| Coalition Party's Policy on Rainforest and National Parks | 5 |
| Mount Werong | 7 |
| News From the Blue Mountains Sand Mining at Bell; Leura Resort Centre; Alderman Quirk | 9 |
| Gudgenby Nature Reserve | 11 |
| U.S. Wilderness Bills | 12 |
| Two of a Kind | 12 |
| Daintree Write In | 12 |

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The A.G.M. of the Colong Committee was held on April 5th and all officers were re-elected.

Chairman: Peter G. Maslen, B.S., M.I.E. (Aust.), Manager, Environment Protection Dept., Comeng Gregory Pty. Ltd.

Vice-Chairmen: Rodney A. Falconer, B.Sc., Teacher.
John F.C. Dillon, H.D.A., Editor, Department of Agriculture.

Hon. Secretary: Alexander G. Colley, B. Ec., H.D.A., Economist (retired).

Hon. Treasurer: Charles A. Culberg, J.P., C.I.A., Accountant (retired).

Arthur Andersen & Co. were appointed auditors in place of Graham Paton, one of the partners in the company, though Graham will continue to look after our auditing.

Narelle Lovell continues as Minutes Secretary and Photographic Librarian. Three new directors, Narelle Lovell, science teacher, Margaret Black,

draughtsman and Frances Cook, student, were appointed.

The Committee is pleased to report that its financial position is still good, as revealed by the 1983 annual accounts. These have been audited by Arthur Andersen & Co. and a summary is shown here.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR YEAR TO 31.12.83

| <u>INCOME</u> | \$ |
|--------------------------|---------------|
| Donations for Investment | 5 025 |
| Donations - General | 3 311 |
| Subscriptions | 913 |
| Sales | 464 |
| Interest | 1 902 |
| | <u>11 615</u> |

| <u>EXPENDITURE</u> | |
|--------------------|--------------|
| Bulletin | 879 |
| Rent | 1 300 |
| Campaigns | 1 600 |
| General | 1 134 |
| Depreciation | 68 |
| | <u>4 981</u> |

SURPLUS FOR YEAR \$6 634

BALANCE SHEET AT 31.12.83

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------------|
| <u>Members' Funds:</u> | |
| Accumulated Surplus | 6 635 |
| Investment Fund Reserve | 12 050 |
| | <u>\$18 685</u> |

Money donated for investment is in Government Loans.

THE COLONG COMMITTEE LTD A NATIONAL WILDERNESS SOCIETY

18 ARGYLE ST. SYDNEY, NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA 2000
TELEPHONE: (02) 27 4714

PATRON: Myles J. Dunphy, O.B.E.

CHAIRMAN: Peter Maslen

VICE-CHAIRMEN: Rodney Falconer
John Dillon

HON. SECRETARY: Alex Colley

HON. TREASURER: Charles Culberg

HON. PHOTOGRAPHER: Henry Gold

HON. AUDITOR: Arthur Andersen & Co.

Our improved financial position has enabled us to apply for a grant for the employment of a C.E.P. assistant. We hope to have an assistant sufficiently qualified to assist in the preparation of a submission to the Australian Heritage Commission for the nomination of the Greater Blue Mountains for World Heritage listing. This would entail reports and delineation of several areas not yet included in the National Estate. (One such area, Mount Werong, has already been prepared by the Canopy Committee with some assistance from the Colong Committee).

It is usual for applicants to be required to fund 30% of the salary of C.E.P. workers and we now have the finance to do so. Our office space, consisting of room for a 4' x 2'8" table with shelving above, a filing cabinet below and a chair, has been doubled at a cost of an extra \$50 a month (payable to T.E.C.).

Our long-term hope is that income from our investment fund, plus donations to the fighting fund, and bequests will eventually enable us to employ a director and, perhaps, a project officer too. Readers are reminded that there is no more effective means of making an enduring contribution to the conservation of natural areas than a donation or bequest to the Committee's investment fund. As a company its affairs must be conducted to the satisfaction of the Corporate Affairs Commission; its accounting and auditing are done by competent professionals; several of the directors have financial or legal qualifications, and the ratio of voluntary work to funds is very high.

A Commonwealth grant would be welcome. Its main effect would be to enable us to do more in a shorter time. But our effectiveness will, as before, depend mainly upon the capability and enthusiasm of the directors. In the absence of a grant we now have the funds to employ expert consultants for tasks such as the preparation of draft bills and submissions to inquiries. We may also be printing an illustrated and expanded version of the rainforest book and possibly other publications.

MILO KANANGRA DUNPHY

Milo Dunphy is a foundation member of

the Colong Committee. The following article, written by Alex Colley for the Bulletin of the National Parks Association of the A.C.T. is reproduced with the kind permission of the Association.



Milo Dunphy
Photo by Narelle Lovell

Nature conservation in Australia started with the creation of parks and reserves in the last century, but it was not until the late nineteen sixties that it attracted widespread popular support and again impinged upon the consciousness of our legislators. Within the rapidly growing conservation movement, three individuals are outstanding in providing leadership and inspiring the prolonged persistence necessary for success. Each of the three abandoned or jeopardised a professional career to become conservation leaders. They are Milo Dunphy, architect; Dr. Bob Brown; and John Sinclair, adult educationist. For each, environmental leadership has entailed heavy financial sacrifice. Such selfless dedication to public interest rates no mention in the honours lists.

Milo Dunphy was, literally, born to be a conservationist. As a child he absorbed conservation awareness from his parent, Myles J. Dunphy, O.B.E., acknowledged as the "father" of

Post World War 2 economic expansion there was little possibility of reserving any area unless it was economically useless. The only effective avenue of influence available to the puny conservation movement lay in personally influencing land use authorities, a method followed by Myles Dunphy, Tom Moppett and Alan Strom. Myles Dunphy's Kosciuszko National Park proposal was adopted in 1945, but subjected to intense economic exploitation in the form of a vast hydro-electric scheme, extensive resort development and, later, the excision of 80,000 acres of commercial timber. The 50 million tons of limestone at Mount Armour was a valuable resource by reason of its proximity to the Maldon cement works. So too was the readily accessible high rainfall Boyd Plateau, in the northern portion of the Kanangra-Boyd wilderness, where the Forestry Commission planned a pine plantation. Milo Dunphy and Father Jim Tierney were the leaders of the Colong campaign and, in 1970, the Committee unanimously accepted Milo's motion for the inclusion of the Boyd Plateau in its objectives. The Colong issue marked the beginning of widespread opposition to mining in wilderness areas and the Boyd issue was the forerunner of the opposition to clearing of native forests for pine plantations.

For the first time in NSW nature conservation hit the headlines, as have many subsequent conservation issues. The Colong and Boyd campaigns commanded hundreds of column-inches of press publicity, often appeared on TV screens, and occupied many hours of Parliamentary debating time. Virtually the whole NSW conservation movement, consisting of some 200 societies, was mobilised in support of the Kanangra/Boyd issues. As secretary of the National Parks Association and principal spokesman for the Colong Committee, Milo soon became the best known conservationist in the State, the hero of the nature lovers and the ogre of development interests.

When a group of concerned environmentalists, possibly inspired by the activists of the Colong Committee, decided, in 1972 to form the Total Environment Centre, they invited Milo to become Director. Since the total environment is, if not the universe, at least the whole world, this appointment entailed considerable diversification of his

activities into fields such as coal loaders, urban parks, foreshore reservation, plant variety rights, atmospheric and water pollution and uranium mining. In most of these fields, however, Milo acted mainly as a consultant, advising interested organisations and special committees of methods of presenting their case and attracting publicity. His interest in nature conservation was as strong as ever. He became a foundation member of the Myall Lakes Committee, which led the campaign to save Lake Pedder, and in 1973 was appointed by Prime Minister Whitlam to the National Estate Inquiry. In 1971 he found time to contest the State electorate of Miranda as an Australia Party Candidate and in 1973 contested the Federal electorate of Cook. Ten years later he contested Bennelong as an Independent, campaigning on the single issue of the Franklin Dam. He received 12.7% of the votes cast, possibly sufficient, had the Labor Party fielded a stronger candidate and preferences been distributed, to unseat the then Federal Treasurer.

He became a Councillor of the National Parks Association of NSW, and of the Australian Conservation Foundation, of which he became Vice President in 1976. Last year he was elected Vice Chairman of the Nature Conservation Council of NSW.

Despite these multifarious activities, Milo continued to participate in, and inspire, the work of the Colong Committee. By 1974 Colong was saved and early in 1975, when Milton Morris, Minister for Lands, announced there would be no pines on the Boyd, the Committee, stunned by its sudden success in accomplishing both its objectives after a seven-year battle, considered winding up. Milo would have none of it. There was plenty more to do, and the Committee had learned how to do it. Three new objectives were adopted - saving the Border Ranges rainforests, achieving Myles Dunphy's Greater Blue Mountains National Park proposal, and establishment of Kakadu National Park. As previously, the strong support of other conservation bodies was soon obtained, while Milo and his assistant director, Jeff Angel, threw the resources of the now influential Total Environment Centre into the campaign. Within a few months the Border Ranges issue hit the headlines.

conservation and recently presented by the I.U.C.N. with the Packard Award for "Long Service with Merit in Advocacy of National Parks". In naming his son, Myles revealed the same visionary genius which he exhibited in proposing most of our present major national parks decades before they came into being. The legendary Milo was a Greek athlete of prodigious strength who won the wrestling event in the original Olympic Games 12 times. Milo Dunphy is a frequent winner in the political wrestling essential to environmental protection. Even more prophetic was the unique christian name "Kanangra"; Milo took a leading part in saving this magnificent wilderness, the Mecca of bushwalkers, from becoming the site of a roaring limestone quarry and a pine plantation.

In January 1931, at the age of 20 months, Milo played a leading role in the first and last perambulator journey from Oberon to Kanangra Walls and back. The motive power was provided by his father and mother. "No parents ever slaved for their offspring as we did", wrote Myles in "The Sydney Bushwalker" of October 1962, describing their exertions in the hot sun on the hill beyond the Fish River. Beyond this was half a mile of loose ballast that "rattled Milo's teeth," and later they had to stop to "give him a rest from the constant shaking. At times he must have felt like a blancmange in an earth tremor". Not that Milo didn't do quite a lot of walking - in fact he wanted to walk, but liked to stop and play with the countless stones, an activity which held up the expedition. Milo appears to have thoroughly enjoyed the trip and "took to camp life with avidity." On the last night of the trip an enormous meteor fell close at hand, there was an earth tremor, and the Dog Face Rock near Katoomba collapsed with a sharp detonation, heard near Oberon by the Dunphy family. Were these phenomena portents of Milo's later impact on the establishment?

Bushwalking, interspersed with some cycling and canoeing trips, has occupied most of Milo's leisure time (if leisure is the word) ever since that epic perambulator trip. He continued to accompany his parents on their camping trips, and when he grew up joined the Mountain Trails Club, to which most of the early conservation-

ists belonged. The range of his trips broadened to include, in recent years, most of the remote wildernesses in Australia. In the last five years he has also led several Himalayan tours.

In professional life, too, he followed in the footsteps of his father, who was in charge of the architectural school at the Sydney Technical College. Milo graduated from the S.T.C. with an honours diploma and the Byers Hadley Travelling scholarship. He then completed a year's post graduate study in town planning at the University of Sydney, followed by a year spent working in northern Europe, and a three months' cycling tour of Scotland, Scandinavia, Denmark, Holland and Belgium. Back in Australia he formed a partnership with Bruce Loder which later developed into an inter-disciplinary group, Dunphy, Bell and Partners, Architects/Planners, involved in planning, landscape and surveying, as well as architecture. This highly qualified group planned some major developments, including the Sutherland town hall and numerous government and municipal offices, and a number of churches. Reports were prepared for the National Capital Development Commission on street furniture and advertising in Canberra, and designs provided for park installations. In November 1971 architectural work in progress aggregated over \$5 million (\$15 m. in today's money). Milo has now virtually abandoned his successful architectural career to work for the conservation movement.

Parental guidance, architectural and town planning study and extensive experience in the field of environmental planning were an ideal preparation for Milo's subsequent career, which he entered via his profession. In 1962 he was Councillor of the NSW Chapter, Royal Australian Institute of Architects where he served terms as Treasurer and Chairman of the Environment Board. His transition to full time environmentalist commenced with his election to the Colong Committee when it was formed in 1968. He became its Press Secretary and later Secretary.

The appointment in 1968 of the Colong Committee - formed to stop the mining of Colong Caves near Mount Armour in the Kanangra-Boyd wilderness - was the start of a new conservation era. In the

Before the end of the decade the campaign had the support of the entire conservation movement and had been translated into a demand for the preservation of all rainforests, an objective now largely achieved. So, too, were the other objectives realised, though credit for the saving of the Northern Blue Mountains lies principally with the T.E.C.- sponsored Colo Committee, and the A.C.F., strongly influenced by Milo, took the lead in saving Kakadu.

Not everybody agrees with Milo's methods. Many, particularly in development circles, consider him too radical and uncompromising. But it is unlikely that, in the milieu of the seventies, gentle persuasion would have succeeded. After nearly two centuries of exploitation, described by the NSW Minister for Agriculture as having "no precedent in man's history for such widespread destruction in so short a time" (an observation previously made by Milo), little remained of the natural environment. The remnants, hitherto protected mainly by difficulty of access, were exposed to the ravages of bulldozers, off-road vehicles and other developmental machinery. Conservation had to be accomplished quickly or it would be too late. Future generations will have cause to thank Milo Dunphy, John Sinclair, Bob Brown and their helpers for preserving some of Australia as nature intended it to be.

COALITION PARTY'S POLICY ON RAINFORESTS AND NATIONAL PARKS

On October 29th last year, Mr. Greiner addressed the Annual Conference of the Nature Conservation Council of NSW on the subject of Liberal Party Conservation Policy, and asked the delegates to let the Party know "just what conservationists think" about this policy. The Colong Committee did so in the November Bulletin.

On January 4th the Executive of the N.C.C. invited the Shadow Minister, Mr. Peter Collins, to address its March meeting. It submitted a list of 15 questions which it hoped Mr. Collins would cover. Several of these questions were suggested by the Colong Committee. These were:

Does the Liberal Party accept the

I.U.C.N. definition of a National Park and, if so, will it prevent activities such as forestry, mining and other developments not essential to park management from occurring within national parks?

Will the Party continue the present expansion of the national parks system in New South Wales?

Will your Party introduce measures which will make forestry operations more accountable to the general public, by, for instance, allowing public comment on the preparation and review of management plans for state forests?

What steps will your Party take to ensure that the Forestry Commission conforms fully to standard erosion mitigation controls?

Would the Party cease the clearing of native forests for pine plantations?

Though rainforest is not specifically mentioned, its protection is fully covered in the first question.

Because of the State election, Mr. Collins was unable to address the Executive of the N.C.C. and the questions remained unanswered by the Liberal Party until an advertisement covering rainforests only was published late in the campaign.

Rainforest and park protection became a controversial issue during the Election. A debate in the Legislative Council on corruption resulted in the Second Rainforest Bill being deferred when it was within an hour of being brought on.

The election was called for 24th March and it was thought that corruption would be the only issue. However, in his Policy speech at Grafton on 7th March, Leon Punch (Leader of the National Party) promised to release forested areas in National Parks for logging. This set the alarm bells ringing in the voluntary conservation movement and Jeff Angel and Milo Dunphy of the Total Environment Centre secured financial and moral support, initiated by a \$200 donation from the Colong Committee, for a half-page advertisement in the "Sydney Morning Herald" at a total cost of \$5,000. A substantial part of the cost of this advertisement was covered

by the donations it requested. The advertisement quoted Mr Punch's undertakings to stop further land acquisition by the National Parks and Wildlife Service of forested land, to re-open Washpool to the timber industry and release areas from national parks for logging. It stated that Mr Greiner had declined urgent requests to support the Rainforest National Parks Bill and the Barrington and Hastings Parks, and drew attention to combined National and Country Parties' vote to disallow the Goulburn River National Park. A second quarter-page advertisement a week later financed by donations from individuals, quoted a joint statement by Messrs Greiner and Punch that they would "Review all national park designations which have been implemented since 1976 to ensure optimum use of resources" so that "logging can take place".

During the election a spate of letters from sawmillers and conservationists appeared in the "S.M.H." and the subject was frequently discussed on radio. Premier Neville Wran asked Dr Bob Brown, of Franklin River fame, to give public support to the Government's policy.

As a result of the media attention, the Coalition parties realised that to advocate logging National Parks was counter productive, so began an exercise in semantics claiming repeatedly that only eucalypts and not rainforest would be logged. Unfortunately the photograph used to illustrate their advertisement in the "S.M.H." that "Rainforests are here to stay" was of a stand of Victorian eucalypts with no rainforest in sight! There was no denial of the intention to log the parks. Mr Punch's commitment to permit the logging of 1 million cubic metres of hardwoods within the parks would entail the removal of most of the magnificent centuries-old trees growing near or within the rainforests, together with extensive destruction of rainforest through forestry operations such as roading, snagging, felling, etc, - as at Terania Creek.

In the event the Labor Government retained office on 24th March 1984 but with a substantially reduced majority and the Second Rainforest Bill will be passed later in the year.

Mr Wran's commitment to the expansion of

the parks system and the preservation of existing parks and rainforests was unequivocal. At the launch of the New South Wales Plants campaign on March 22nd he said:

"Today, I have particular pleasure in announcing that we will nominate the New South Wales Rainforest National Parks to the Commonwealth for inclusion in the World Heritage List under the U.N.E.S.C.O. Convention."

Our rainforests are absolutely unique in this world. It is my belief that when future generations look back and judge the activities not only of this Government but of this generation, our preservation of the rainforest will be regarded as possibly our greatest single achievement.

New South Wales already has two localities on the World Heritage List - Lord Howe Island and Willandra Lakes region.

The Coalition on the other hand has launched an attack on rainforests and national parks. Their policies are the most aggressive and destructive land-use policies announced in New South Wales for 50 years.

They have talked of resuming logging in the rainforests, and of their intention to review all national parks which have been dedicated since 1976 to ensure the optimum use of the resources they contain.

We are determined to maintain our long-standing commitment to building up the national parks of the people of New South Wales.

Among several areas under consideration, Mr Wran mentioned "additions to the Blue Mountains National Park, involving Crown and State-owned land".

The Colong Committee has written to Mr Wran, expressing its appreciation of his Government's commitment to environmental protection and expressing complete agreement with his statement that preservation of the rainforest will be regarded as possibly its greatest achievement.

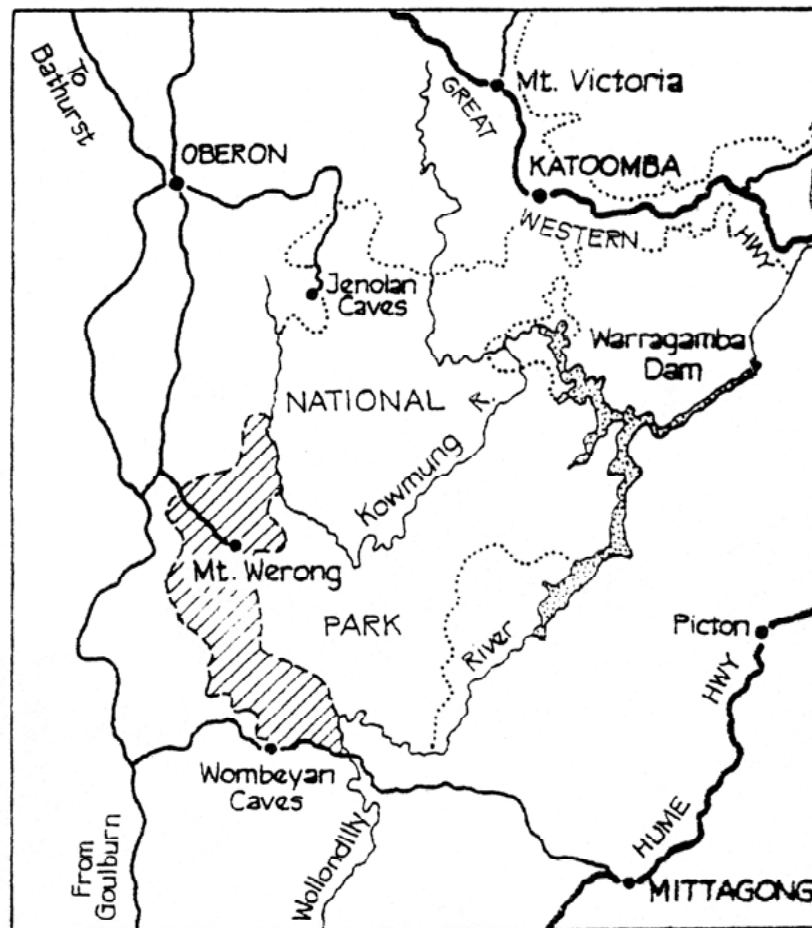
MOUNT WERONG

The proposal for inclusion of the Great Dividing Range north and south of Mount Werong in the Blue Mountains Park system dates back to Myles Dunphy's plan for a Greater Blue Mountains National Park. The project has always been on the periphery of the Colong

Committee's activities, and remained there because of the Committee's pre-occupation with saving the Kanangra and Colo wildernesses and the rainforests, though we did show Mr Wran, during his tour with us through the Southern Blue Mountains in 1977, some of the mess of knocked down trees, saplings, straggly old trees etc., resulting from



Upper Abercrombie River
Photograph by Henry Gold



MT. WERONG LOCALITY MAP

..... Present National Park Boundaries

Forestry Commission "management". Following this tour Mr Wran announced the major additions to the Southern Blue Mountains National Park and ordered an investigation by the National Parks and Wildlife Service of further additions in the Mount Werong area. The investigation has been completed but not made public. In the meantime the Forestry Commission gazetted substantial additions to the Mount Werong State Forest. It has recently been learned that the Forestry Commission ignored the recommendation of the National Parks and Wildlife Service made prior to gazettal that the Mount Werong area be added to the Blue Mountains National Parks system.

The Committee was therefore pleased to learn that the Canopy Native Forest

Committee, an affiliate of the Total Environment Centre, had adopted the project. Considerable research has been carried out by Phil Droulers, and for the preparation of a report the Canopy Committee asked the Colong Committee for photographs of the area and nearby pine plantations. A three-day photographic trip was organised. Henry Gold and three other photographers took a wide range of photographs depicting the scenic beauty of unlogged forest remnants, the destruction caused by previous logging and clearing and the area's future as a pine forest, as seen in the vast clearings of native forest in the nearby Gurnang and Vulcan forests. The Colong Committee was also able to assist in the preparation of a submission, which, backed by Phil Drouler's research,

and illustrated by photographs from both Committees, formed an attractive and informative presentation of the case for Mount Werong's preservation. It was given to Mr Wran, just prior to the election.

The location of the area is shown in the accompanying map. It is readily accessible from the coastal and central western cities and Canberra. It extends from the existing pine plantations of the Banshea State Forest to Wombeyan in the south, includes the upper reaches of the Abercrombie River and its Werong Branch to the west, and on the east extends to the Kanangra-Boyd National Park. Much of the area is similar to the Boyd Plateau - sub-alpine open forest country, now rare because most such areas have been cleared for pine plantations. The Abercrombie is a western-flowing river, a type of catchment unprotected except in the far south. East of the Divide are the Kowmung and Wollondilly catchments of the Warragamba Dam, the waters of which would be purer without any of the pesticides used in pine plantations. It is steep and rugged country, which would form a scenic extension of the Kanangra wilderness.

The total area of the proposal is 36,989 ha, of which 80.4% is Crown land, including 24.8% of state forests. The Forestry Commission plans the planting of 1 900 ha of pines in the vicinity of Mount Werong. The plantation entails the clearing of native forests, which is contrary to Government policy and has been banned in the A.C.T.

The economic resources of the area are small. The area has been prospected, and mined for over a century, but there is now no active mining interest in it. The millable timber has been cut out, except for some fine stands remaining in inaccessible locations. The small area cleared for grazing would remain with the owners unless there was a sale by negotiation. The projected pine plantation is like the Boyd Plateau, probably uneconomic if realistically costed. Future subdivision and clearing for hobby farms is a strong possibility.

The Canopy report describes the immediate threat to the area as follows:

There is a great deal of indiscriminate

shooting of wildlife, in particular wombats and wallabies. High-powered rifles can be heard firing day and night. Obstacle courses for trail bike riding are cut out of the bushland causing erosion and disturbance to vegetation and wildlife. Car bodies are dumped over the waterfall in Ruby Creek. Four-wheel drive vehicles are used to push saplings across the roads to create hazards for other drivers. Unused huts are repositories for broken glass and other litter. This vandalism proceeds undeterred.

Mount Werong is one of several areas which the Colong Committee hopes to have added to the lands in the Blue Mountains already listed in the register of the National Estate, and later submitted for World Heritage listing. The Committee believes that the Canopy report, and perhaps the memory of his 1977 visit to the area, inspired the Premier's announcement (see above) of his Government's intention to make additions to the Blue Mountains National Parks system.

NEWS FROM THE BLUE MOUNTAINS

Sand Mining at Bell: Just two weeks before the EPA Act became effective in September 1980, Borham Ready Mixed Concrete Pty. Ltd. sought development consent from the Blue Mountains City Council to mine sand on 20 ha just north of Bell.

Because it has a policy prohibiting extractive industries in its scenic area, the Council has been fighting the Company in and out of court for the last four years. In so doing it sought the support of the voluntary conservation movement and as a result one of our members has been looking closely at the pollution criteria used by the State Pollution Control Commission.

In order to prevent pollution of streams classified as 'protected' under the Clean Waters Act, the S.P.C.C. routinely requires the construction of dams on ponds of sufficient capacity to contain the contaminated run-off from mining sites except for a 1 in 20, or 1 in 50, or 1 in 100 return storm event.

The engineer designs the dam and the S.P.C.C. officers check the calculations using formulae in a text book entitled

"Australian Rainfall and Runoff" together with a 1974 paper "Flood Estimation in Eastern NSW - A Design Method" by Messrs Cordery and Webb. Neither formula provides for the input of site specific data; however users are asked to check with the Bureau of Meteorology if their data requirements fall outside those published and a warning is given that the formula is only representative if the full conditions are met.

Regrettably the engineering consultants to Borham Ready Mixed Concrete Pty. Ltd. did not use site-specific data in designing the dam on Portion 162 at Newnes for a proposed 20 ha sand quarry adjacent to Wollemi National Park and upstream of the Wollangambe Wilderness. In proposing a dam of 10 000m³ capacity, they maintain, in the data supplied to Blue Mountains City Council, that this will meet S.P.C.C. requirements of storage capacity "sufficient for a peak run-off from a 1 in 20 year return storm event with a maximum clearing time of 4 days". The dam was sized to overflow once every 20 years as the result of a storm yielding 156mm of rain in 24 hours.

Analysis of the actual rainfall data for the closest Bureau of Meteorology recording point to the site for which long-term data is available (Mt. Wilson, 8 kilometres to the east), shows that the 156mm design criteria has been exceeded 61 times in the past 82 years. In other words, the dam designed by the Consultants to overflow once every 20 years is likely to do so every 16 months.

Apart from the grossly inaccurate rainfall element of the formula, there is the continuing soakage element. This factor was derived from a range of several hundred catchments in eastern NSW, which varied from 1mm to 4mm per hour, the mean of which was 2½mm per hour. According to the consultants, the Borham site at Newnes is sparsely timbered, with thin, infertile soils overlying sandstone. In these circumstances the minimum soakage factor of 1mm per hour should have been used to determine the storm of greatest intensity likely to be experienced once every 20 years. Instead the 2½mm per hour in the formula effectively eliminated all storm events of more than 24 hours duration. As the actual

statistics indicate that storm events here average four days, it is quite unrealistic to claim that the first 60mm in each 24 hours would continue to soak into the thin soils and not flow into the dam.

It is pertinent to observe that a dam constructed before S.P.C.C. approvals were required on a nearby sand quarry in the adjoining Blaxland Shire Council collapsed in March 1978 as a result of what can now be described as a 1 in 20 year return storm event - 450mm in 72 hours at the nearest recording point. As a result the fine dry particles which escaped from the site killed all aquatic life for many miles of Wollangambe Creek in Wollemi National Park.

The present state of play is that, confronted with opposition from the Department of Environment and Planning, the revealing research of the Colong Committee and strong local feeling, the Company sought in court an indefinite deferral; hoping, no doubt, for a change in the composition of Blue Mountains City Council!



Leura Resort Centre: The Blue Mountains City Council decision to prepare a new local environment plan, which will involve the proposed resort and retirement centre as a concurrent,

instead of two separate developments, throws new light on the Blue Mountains conservation societies' new plan for court action to prevent the construction of the retirement village. A new L.E.P. plan will open the way for further public comment, and there is a possibility of a new hearing on the projects.

Judith Jarvin, in a letter published in the Blue Mountains Gazette of March 7th, describes Fairmont Pty. Ltd.'s third and latest submission to Council on the resort proposal as follows:

In it, the architects proudly claim that the design is the result of careful research into the existing architecture of the Blue Mountains region.

What an insult!

No one can deny that there are some architectural horrors on the Mountains, but I don't know of any that combine as many and varied styles into one such conglomerate.

Modern glass frontages topped by Federation-style fascias and roof structures incorporating garret-style windows, the whole bounded by turrets reminiscent of Grimms fairy tales.

All it lacks is a locally renowned "onion" dome to complete it.

All this is in a seven to eight, and at one point, seemingly 10, level building, which would not seem incompatible in height with any other Mountains structure.

Far from blending in and complementing its surroundings, such a huge and ugly development will be a blight forever on this very visible and hitherto serenely beautiful site.

Alderman Quirk: Alderman Quirk, Mayor of the Blue Mountains City Council, and a long time supporter of the Colong Committee, except on the question of the site of the resort centre, has been appointed Federal Director of "Greening Australia". We wish him well, and hope that he can preserve the green of the Valley of the Waters by diverting Fairmont Pty. Ltd. to an environmentally acceptable site.

GUDGENBY NATURE RESERVE

Supporters of the Colong Committee have lately enjoyed several trips to the Gudgenby Nature Reserve, led by the Editor of the N.P.A. Journal of the A.C.T., Reg Alder. The reserve is in the southern portion of the A.C.T., and occupies 25% of the total area of the Territory. With topography ranging from some 2 000 to over 6 000 feet, and numerous peaks, it is very scenic, perhaps more so than the Kosciusko Park to the north. The streams are clear, pure and unscoured. Together with the northern portion of the Kosciusko Park adjoining it probably constitutes the largest area of unpolluted catchments in south eastern Australia. It is possible that some of the Cotter Catchment to the west will be added when management plans for this area are complete.

Nearly all the properties within it have been resumed, with little or no opposition. Only a small proportion is cleared, and saplings are already spreading from the timbered surroundings. Some 450 eucalypts have been planted by the N.P.A. of the A.C.T. Buildings, except those of historical interest have been removed. A small pine plantation has been burnt and will be abandoned.

The Colong Committee advocates the closing and revegetation of fire trails in wilderness areas. This has been accomplished in one locality.

During the disastrous January 1983 fire in the Gudgenby Nature Reserve, several new fire trails were created and older ones re-activated. The decision was made immediately after the fire to close the accesses to these fire trails and to take measures to arrest potential erosion. The restoration of the previous contours was considered impractical as more scars would be created in the process. Drainage channels were dug across steep sections and logs pulled across to help prevent excessive run-off.

On one section the N.P.A. of the A.C.T. assisted in accelerating natural revegetation by digging trenches across the fire trail and planting a hybrid rye grass. This grass will not re-seed, it is a quick grower and assists in holding the soil while native plants re-

NUMBER 84.

MAY, 1984.

establish. Logs, branches, twigs, bark and leaves were also placed on the fire trail. The work and the breaking of the drought brought accelerated growth and the rye grass and native plants were quick to establish. In some sections after 5 months it is now difficult in some sections to see where the fire trail was.

It is to the credit of the Reserve management and the A.C.T. Bushfire Council that the decision to close off the newly established fire trails was made, even though in the event of another major fire, they could be re-activated.

ALL-OUT PUSH TO ENACT U.S. WILDERNESS BILLS

National wilderness organisations and wilderness activists across the country are launching an all-out campaign to secure congressional protection for millions of acres of forest wilderness in 1984.

This joint campaign - Wilderness '84 - has been organised by the Sierra Club, Friends of the Earth, and the Wilderness Society, together with state and local wilderness advocacy groups nationwide. Special funding, allowing the effort to be much more ambitious, has been provided by REI, the outdoor equipment co-operative headquartered in Seattle. "With REI's help, this will be the largest grassroots wilderness campaign since the effort for the Alaska Lands Act," said Sierra Club Deputy Conservation Director Douglas Scott, one of the campaign co-ordinators.

The focus of the Wilderness '84 campaign is a year-long grassroots push for enactment of national forest wilderness bills currently languishing in Congress.

- *Sierra Club National News Report*,
March, 1984.

TWO OF A KIND

A recent article in the parent body's Wildlife Newsletter has hypothesised that the loss of face suffered by Mr Gray and his staunch ally, Mr Bjelke-Petersen, has led to an environmental back-lash where anti-conservation decisions are made almost as a matter of

policy.

The repercussions though, amongst the 'anti-greenie' groups, included a brutal assault on the Cape Tribulation lowland rainforest, to push a road through our only coastal lowland rainforest wilderness. That such childish responses should even be contemplated as an explanation of government policy reflects the depths to which we know the State Government is capable of descending. It also makes one's job so much more difficult, as rational argument holds little weight when faced with immature tantrums. Yet, how often has it been apparent that rational thought is the last concern of so many of the people who desecrate our heritage?

- Roger Beaumont, President, Wild Life Preservation Society of Queensland, Gold Coast and Hinterland Branch, Annual Report, March, 1984.

The Queensland Government has revoked an extra 135 hectares of the Cape Tribulation National Park for a road project through the area. The National Parks Minister, Mr McKechnie, said less than 1 per cent of the park's area would be affected by the project which would make the park accessible to a wide range of people.

- S.M.H. report 27.4.84

DAINTREE WRITE-IN

Enclosed is an A.C.F. pamphlet on the Daintree rainforest wilderness and three post cards. Readers are asked to send one card to Mr Hawke, one to the Hon Barry Cohen, Minister for Home Affairs and Environment and one to their local member, or, alternatively, send one and pass on two cards for other supporters to send in.

JULY, 1984.

J. Stephenson

[illegible]

The caption beneath the photography on page 10 was omitted. It should have read "Sand Mining on Newnes Plateau - photography by Henry Gold."