



THE COLONG BULLETIN

Bulletin 184

THE COLONG FOUNDATION FOR WILDERNESS LTD
PROTECTING WILDERNESS AND NATIONAL PARKS

January 2001

2/362 KENT STREET SYDNEY 2000 (ABN 84 001 112 143). TELEPHONE 02 9299 7341 FAX: 02 9299 5713 ISSN 1325-3336

EMAIL: foundation@colongwilderness.org.au WEBSITE: www.colongwilderness.org.au

When a group of earnest-minded persons mull over a reform long enough something revolutionary is bound to happen, sooner or later, if the group keeps at it constructively within the law.

**Myles Dunphy O.B.E.,
Some Reminiscences, 1977**

In this issue...

The Cost of Winning 1
Wildlife Sacrificed to Ferals 2
The MOU Menace 2
Blue Mountains Granted World
Heritage Honours 3

Lithgow Smelter Approved 6
Honours for Alex 7
Donations 7
So Long and Thanks for All the
Trees 8
Meeting Dates 8

The Cost of Winning

IN March 1983 we applied to the Dept. of Home Affairs and Environment for a grant for administrative purposes and a national wilderness study. It was refused because we were not "a major national, State and regional conservation body."

When the Foundation decided, in July 1984, to seek World Heritage listing for the Blue Mountains, it mistakenly thought that, since this was a matter of local, state and national significance, we would receive some government assistance. Our application for a NSW Department of Planning Heritage grant for a study of Greater Blue Mountains areas not then included in the national park system, in preparation for a submission on World Heritage listing, was refused.

In 1987 we applied for a National Estates Committee grant and again in

1989 for a grant to prepare a Blue Mountains World Heritage proposal. In 1988 we applied for a Department of Environment and Planning grant for the preparation of a World Heritage submission. Although 239 projects, including buildings, museums, tramcars, a blacksmith's shop and a steam locomotive, were funded from the \$2.2 million allocated for heritage projects, the Blue Mountains didn't qualify. In August 1988 we applied for a Heritage Commission grant for the same purpose. This too was refused because "a number of other applications (75) were considered to have higher priority based on an assessment of the effectiveness of these organisations and the activities they propose to undertake in 1998-99." Colong's application was one of the 55 refused.

In June 1990 we made a funding application under the National

Estates Funding Programme for Dr. Mosley's book "The Battle for the Bush". This too failed, although the Commission advised that "priority will be given to the development of methodologies and cross-state studies aiding the identification, documentation, and raising community awareness of the national estate values of the following high priorities, Wilderness areas (number 1 high priority)".

Applications for a grant for the preparation of the Red Index and for general purposes were also refused. In 1995 The NSW Department of Urban Affairs and Planning turned down our application for funding for the Red Index. Our last application for a NSW Centenary of Federation Community History grant was unsuccessful.

We have also been turned down by

continued on page 2

THE COLONG FOUNDATION FOR WILDERNESS

PATRON: The Hon. Dr. Neville K. Wran, A.C., Q.C.

DIRECTORS: Pat Thompson, L.C.P. (Chairman); Jim Somerville, A.M., A.S.A. (Vice-Chairman); Alex Colley, O.A.M., B.Ec., H.D.A.

(Hon. Secretary); Albert Renshaw (Hon. Treasurer); Tim Cadman B.A. (Hons), M.A. (Cantab.); Guy Dunphy;

Peter Maslen, B.Sc.(Eng), B.Sc.(Botany); Peter Princeas, B.A., LL.B.; Jeff Rigby; John Sinclair, O.A.M.; Henry Gold.

DIRECTOR: Keith Muir, B. Nat. Res. (Hons.) ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: Tom Widdup, B. Com. CAMPAIGN DIRECTOR: Noel Plumb

HON. PHOTOGRAPHER: Henry Gold HON. MAPPING DRAFTSMAN: George Elliott

HON. MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: Shirley Dean

HON. AUDITOR: Arthur Andersen & Co.

BULLETIN DESIGN & TYPESETTING: Bungoona Technologies Pty. Ltd. Ph: (02) 9542 5544

Wild Life Sacrificed to Ferals

The cessation of killing horses in the Guy Fawkes National Park means that their numbers will increase once more, destroying native flora and depriving native fauna of sustenance. The damage to the river flats of the Macleay Gorges, caused by cattle and brumbies, was described in our last bulletin. If the policy of not destroying feral animals is extended to pigs, wild dogs, foxes, rabbits and other pests, few native animals will be seen in national parks. It is of course quite in order for landowners to kill these animals on their own properties.

A reverse policy has been adopted in W.A. In the NPA (ACT) December newsletter, Stephen Johnston reports that, as a result of extensive aerial fox baiting, there has been such a marked recovery of native species that three endangered species - the bettong the quenda and the tammar wallaby - have been removed from the threatened register.

The Cost of Winning

continued from page 1

some non-government organisations, but have received generous support from others - notably the Conservation Alliance, Paddy Pallin Pty. Ltd and Patagonia. We received no government funding for our rainforest campaign, which led to the World Heritage listing of the rainforests, nor, to summarise the above, for our continuous wilderness campaign or the Blue Mountains World Heritage campaign.

Despite the lack of government interest we decided in 1988 to fund Geoff Mosley's books "Blue mountains for World Heritage," which was launched by Bob Carr in 1989, and "The Battle for the Bush." We also published the Red Index data base in 1991, which now runs to over 500 pages and has been twice updated.

The cost of the Blue Mountains World Heritage campaign is inseparable from our overall expenditure, but it would amount to several hundred thousand dollars. If the cost of the campaigns which saved the Mountains from damaging developments was added, the total would probably be over \$1 million. If these campaigns had been unsuccessful the Mountains would not have qualified for listing.

The main contribution to the Foundation is provided free of charge. This is the unpaid work of honorary workers and the underpaid contribution of our dedicated staff of three, who would earn sev-

The clearance of native vegetation is the greatest threat to terrestrial biodiversity.

State of the Environment Report 4-49

eral times their salaries if paid for their office hours and overtime at public service rates. Our workers could not operate effectively without expenditure on office rent, equipment, telephone calls, postage, stationery, printing etc.

The Foundation's costs have been met entirely from voluntary contributions. Until recently these have been in the form of subscriptions and donations, but recently two generous bequests - from Milo Dunphy and Leslie Wheeldon, have enabled us to rent more space and employ two part time staff. We decided that in the final stages of the World Heritage campaign we would seriously deplete our assets so as to bring it to a successful conclusion. A considerable outlay was necessary to fund equipment, printing, long distance and local phone calls, stationery, postage, attendance at the IUCN World Heritage Committee meeting in Cairns and many other costs.

Now we face another daunting challenge - making submissions on \$1 wilderness areas soon to be exhibited, covering a million and a half hectares and inspiring many others to do the same. These areas constitute most of the last undeclared wilderness in the State.

So once again we appeal to our generous members to renew their subscriptions in 2001 and add a donation if they have anything to spare.

The Memorandum of Understanding Menace

The MOU sets a precedent in that it will enable any group or individual to demand a similar "agreement" satisfying their interests. In fact we understand that similar MOUs are already being produced with other high impact groups such as horseriders. On equity grounds, the NPWS will find it very difficult to turn down requests from any group for similar arrangements. The end result will be a multitude of MOUs, many countering each other, continuous demand for extra agreements from new and existing groups, and the ensuing creation of a multitude of problems caused by the MOUs.

The MOU directly impedes one of the highest management priorities for both conservation and economical use of limited park maintenance funds - the closure of unnecessary vehicle tracks. These tracks are often inherited from previous land uses such as logging, mining, poorly designed and located fire trails, or excessive informal vehicle access over previously neglected Crown Land, and contribute significantly to a feral predator access, weed spread, creek and stream pollution, arson and rubbish dumping. Maintenance of such tracks for unnecessary vehicle access and to avoid possible liability for negligence damages in the event of accidents is a heavy cost to the NPWS which will increase as a consequence of the MOU.

The MOU will not stop illegal activity in national parks such as the blowing up of gates, ploughing up roads, pig dogging, hunting or arson as the RFWDC (a four-wheel drive association) cannot control the behaviour of individuals who carry out such activities regardless of whether they are members or not.

From a letter to Brian Gilligan, Director General NPWS from NPA, NCC, TEC, TWS and Colong

Blue Mountains Granted World Heritage Honours

By Keith Muir (with editorial comments by Environment Australia)

THE World Heritage list is an exclusive list of places with outstanding universal value. They are irreplaceable and priceless heritage that the global community must keep regardless of war, famine or global warming. The Greater Blue Mountains Area was inscribed on this list at 6.30 pm E.S.T. on Wednesday the 29th of November for its diversity of eucalypt forests (criterion ii) and as a living laboratory of natural biodiversity, including its ancient plants as exemplified by the Wollemi Pine (criterion iv). In the flurry that surrounded the decision, its superlative scenery was unfortunately overlooked. What follows is the story of what happened in the lead up to that momentous decision.

Arriving in sultry Cairns where the World Heritage Conference was to be held, Tom Widdup and I became entangled in a political jungle of bewildering complexity. At this Conference unimaginably difficult issues were dealt with concurrently, at various levels of understanding and these interacted in unexpected ways. As initiates, we were happy to follow advice given by the incredibly helpful and committed staff of Environment Australia, particularly its World Heritage Branch. Our orders were simple - be nice, smile a lot, introduce yourself but avoid unsolicited lobbying.

The first thing to grasp about World Heritage politics is that cultural issues dominate it. Two thirds of the areas on the World Heritage list are cultural sites, such as churches, temples and ancient villages. Most of the World Heritage Conference delegates and bureaucrats are culturally focussed. So for most at the Conference, the Colong Foundation for Wilderness and the Blue Mountains nomination were a novelty.

Several World Heritage experts felt we had no chance of success. Being the under dog, however, helped. Ini-

tially delegates tolerated us with compassion and were then astounded by the Greater Blue Mountains Area being next to Sydney. All delegates knew only too well the pressures on heritage sites next to major cities.

Our difficulties as advocates for the Blue Mountains were stupendous. Australia, as the host nation to the Conference and in possession of the chair of the World Heritage Committee, could not speak to its Blue Mountains nomination. Two World Heritage Bureau meetings and the 1999 World Heritage Committee meeting had recommended deferral of the nomination, largely at the insistence of Dr Jim Thorsell, the chief World Heritage advisor for natural areas. Dr Thorsell would sum up the case against the nomination and then, if we were lucky, the Committee would consider the nomination.

Not only was Dr Thorsell opposed to the Blue Mountains but he also considered that there were too many World Heritage sites. He said that sites, including two in Australia, were being listed against the recommendations of the IUCN and there was too much lobbying and politics in the World Heritage listing process. There was no room for negotiation with Dr Thorsell, which was a great pity as there is no doubt he is a solid conservationist. So here was another key problem - to overcome Dr Thorsell's opposition to the Blue Mountains without damaging his standing.

Several major political problems threatened to dash the listing chances for the Blue Mountains:

- The reaction of the World Heritage Committee to the proposed Jabiluka mine that would require a second uranium milling factory at the proposed mine site;

- Australia's resistance to the Mirrar peoples' cultural concerns with the proposed uranium mine (as capably presented by Jacqui Katona, repre-

sentative of the Gundjehmi Aboriginal Corporation);

- More worrying still was Australia's controversial proposal to prevent World Heritage sites being considered for in-danger listing without the approval of the relevant national government (Environment Australia explained Australia's position, i.e. the Howard Government's position, is that an in-danger listing without consent of the affected country is contrary to the Convention);

- Australia was also proposing to downgrade the status of the Committee's scientific, cultural and environmental advisory bodies (IUCN and ICOMOS), and restrict monitoring and scrutiny of the care of World Heritage sites to government agencies alone (The non-government organisations would not have a role, including those pesky Aboriginal and conservation groups).

Solutions to Impossible Dilemmas

The Australian Government rubbing the World Heritage Committee up the wrong way on any of these issues, in some cases without prior notice, looked like it would spell certain disaster for the Blue Mountains. In particular, Senator Hill was opposed to international scrutiny of Australia's World Heritage site management and said that the World Heritage Committee was not set up as a watchdog. Australia wanted to eviscerate what Dr Jim Thorsell called the "bible" (the operational guidelines to the World Heritage Convention) apparently to justify mining uranium in the World Heritage listed Kakadu National Park and avoid further scrutiny. (Environment Australia expresses this as wanting to ensure that the operational guidelines conform with the Convention').

The Colong Foundation was

continued on page 4

Blue Mountains Granted World Heritage Honours

continued from page 3

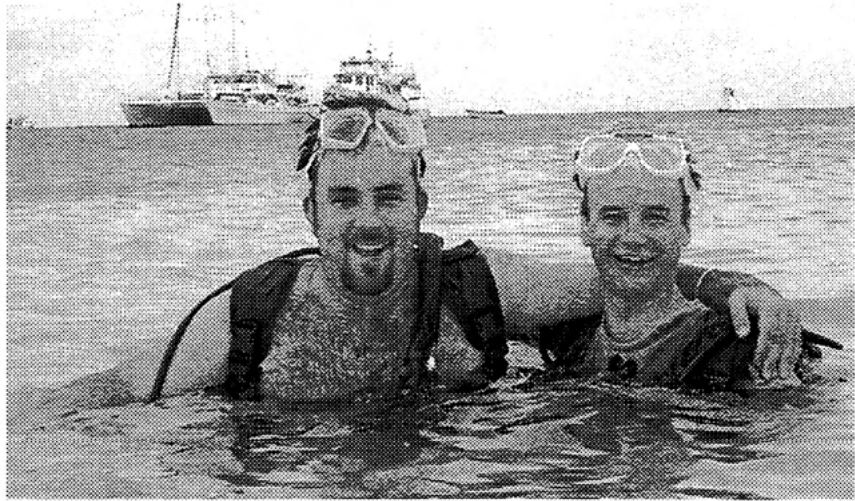
undaunted by these seemingly impossible odds, and although we did not know it at the time, we were set to be champions. If Bob Debus had known our difficult circumstances, he, Mark Aarons his most experienced assistant, Brian Gilligan and Bob Conroy of the NPWS would surely not have bothered coming to Cairns. Environment Australia's efforts of sending the Wollemi Pine to Cairns under tight security (with its capable ambassador Botanic Gardens' Patrica Meagher) appeared in vain.

The NSW Government delegation proved absolutely crucial. It ensured that the support for Blue Mountains nomination was distinguished from the controversial views of the Australian Government as outlined above. There is also no doubt that Environment Australia, by having a broad range of people and talents, were able to utilise all the strategic opportunities as they arose. We were very lucky to have such a very solid support team.

Unlike the complexities of the Australian Government's objectives, the Colong Foundation and the NSW delegation had but one objective, to convert the entire Conference into Blue Mountains supporters. Unless this was achieved, the position of the IUCN represented by Jim Thorsell twice confirmed by the World Heritage Bureau would carry the day.

We had posters (NPWS and Colong versions), a French translation of our main case (something others had not thought of), illustrated lobby books and three Colong Directors in Cairns (John Sinclair, Tom Widdup and myself). Our lobby book was a campaigners' dream. It consisted of quotes from the supporting experts and outstanding Henry Gold pictures. Over 40 books were circulated amongst delegates, and many considered them a collectors item. Colong had become the koala that roared.

Colong had prepared the wicket with several media releases that were run, funnily enough, once we left Sydney. This led to a key IUCN delegate remarking that not only did everyone in Australia support this nomination, but even the media were lobbying for



Tom Widdup and Keith Muir celebrate World Heritage listing with a scuba dive on the Barrier Reef.

it. After all the conflict over previous Australian World Heritage nominations, the World Heritage Committee could not help but be impressed by such a show of unity.

Colong's first coup was Sunday, on the day before the Conference at a World Heritage Management Symposium held at James Cook University. Instead of attacking the IUCN, we explained we had used the World Heritage Convention to advantage. Nobody had realised that our proposal for a new World Heritage area had lead to enhanced protection. It was explained that since the Foundation's Blue Mountains World Heritage proposal two new national parks and three new wilderness areas had been created. The raising of Warragamba Dam wall had been rejected and the 65 kilometre sewage tunnel costing hundreds of millions was constructed to stop sewage pollution. The proposed Badgerys Creek Airport and the superhighway were recent examples where the World Heritage Convention had lent a hand. This news impressed and obviously stroked the IUCN the right way. This much could be achieved through using a World Heritage proposal to influence public opinion. These remarks lead to the whole Colong story coming out over the following week.

Incredible expert support

Colong had something to spruik about. The 13 internationally respected plant scientists who supported the Blue Mountains listing and the quotation of their expert advice

was the corner stone of our argument. Surely if the IUCN had accepted expert advice regarding the World Heritage values of eucalypt forests then it was reasonable to expect the advice from the same experts on the Blue Mountains to be accepted. It was also obvious to UNESCO and IUCN that Colong Foundation and the Australian Government were not going to give up and the media were following the story very closely. Who knows what the respected plant scientists may have said in reply if the Blue Mountains World Heritage nomination was rejected?

Over cocktails on Sunday night a key UNESCO official irritably informed me that anyone could get experts to support a World Heritage nomination. My reaction was as predictable as it was regrettable. I thoroughly defended the academic independence of a number of botanists. I added that having "fought off mines, airports, pipelines, powerlines, dams, sewage and developers you will appreciate that Colong has very firm opinions and we pursue them as remorselessly as the IUCN pursued theirs." Oh dear, not the best choice of words by any means.

Next morning, Charles Darwin came to the rescue. A story angle from James Woodford of the *Sydney Morning Herald* was used. Darwin's romantic description of Wentworth Falls lent a light-hearted approach to the question of expert integrity that

continued on page 5

Blue Mountains Granted World Heritage Honours

continued from page 4

would make the point, hopefully without offence. Sure Colong can get experts to support the nomination, even dead ones. It was worth a go, although many found the point obscure. The circulated quotation perhaps was an amusing but effective novelty.

Winning hearts and minds

The World Heritage Committee is composed of twenty one voting nations and many other signatory countries attended the Conference as observers. A vital task that lay before us in Cairns was to meet every one of the voting countries and explain to them the unquestionable worth of the Blue Mountains nomination. The Sunday night welcoming drinks afforded us an excellent opportunity to meet many of the delegates and introduce ourselves. The Conference wicket had also been well prepared by the Environment Australia and NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service who had taken representatives from Mexico and Hungary, as well as Mr Mounir Bouchenaki, Assistant Director General of UNESCO, over the area by helicopter.

By Monday it was obvious to both of us that there were certain countries that would be very supportive, others that were open to new information and then a small number that for reasons, including language and cultural barriers and other factors invisible to us, appeared to be very hard nuts to crack. South Africa, China and Canada (Dr Jim Thorsell's home country) initially appeared less interested in our approaches. At a dinner on Monday night Tom positioned himself at a table with the Chinese delegation and after a long night of stilted conversations, baffled gesticulations and occasional breakthroughs managed to endear himself to them enough to get on a first name basis with many of them.

All in all our approaches directly to the delegates were extremely fruitful and resulted in some very interesting interactions and even the occasional offer to visit distant countries (around ten offers in total).

The turning point

By Monday afternoon it turned out Senator Hill would not have to battle for the Jabiluka uranium mine as the World Heritage Committee's scientific panel accepted the Government's contention that the mine posed no risk to the World Heritage values in the adjacent national park(!). The issue of protecting cultural values in Kakadu National Park remained unresolved but was put off till next year.

Given these outcomes, Senator Hill's on-going efforts on Tuesday and Wednesday, including dinning with key delegations, were interpreted as representations for the Blue Mountains nomination.

World Heritage diplomacy is like a chess game where taking advantage in one part of the board can create disadvantages elsewhere. The World Heritage Committee's position on Kakadu, unfortunately favourable to the proposed Jabiluka mine, was an advantage to the Blue Mountains as conflict on the floor of the Conference was avoided.

Australia's voluntary downgrading of its proposed guidelines to the World Heritage Convention to an information paper also pushed that issue aside. Australia allowed subsequent legal advice to determine whether or not the World Heritage Committee could decide to endanger list World Heritage areas independent of the concerns of the affected government. This advice will almost certainly be affirmative and help kill off this terribly damaging initiative.

By Monday lunchtime the Australian and NSW delegations felt a great sense of ownership regarding the fate of the Blue Mountains nomination. This personal commitment and team spirit is what makes for excellence. From about midnight on Monday, little more than 48 hours after Colong's arrival, we felt we would win, and incredibly, the sympathy of the conference swung toward us.

There were at least three main prerequisites for the Blue Mountains being listed as World Heritage. The case for listing was sound and so a "revolution" against the World Heritage Bureau's negative finding and the IUCN's recommendation was

appropriate. The IUCN had to treat independent expert advice consistently. Thorsell's "bible", the Convention's operational guidelines, would not be violated by Australia's reform proposals². The proposal for a consultation process on Kakadu's cultural sites also appeared to be a concession by Australia. By Monday night Australia was in a position to discuss the Blue Mountains with the IUCN.

Behind the scenes, the all important technical work on the Blue Mountains was achieved by Environment Australia. They negotiated a face saving solution for the IUCN to overcome Dr Thorsell's opposition. These negotiations would have been a hopeless initiative if the Australian and NSW support teams had not won the sympathy of most of the delegates during the first day of the Conference.

Over Monday's dinner, Professor Adrian Phillips of the IUCN agreed he would speak on the Blue Mountains after Dr Jim Thorsell. He would note that the nomination was a "finely balanced case" and that Australia had moved to create a national list of potential World Heritage areas. Professor Phillips on his own initiative mentioned the south west of Western Australia and the Australian Alps are two eucalypt forest areas that should be considered for World Heritage listing.

Another aspect further strengthened our hand. Bing Lucas, the outgoing Vice Chair of the IUCN, was a strong supporter of the Blue Mountains nomination and carried a remarkable degree of respect for someone who said that he had little influence. At his farewell party on Tuesday night, the incoming Vice Chair Professor Phillips said jokingly that in regard to the Blue Mountains and Kakadu he was acting on the behalf of Bing Lucas. This was a pretty clear hint on how these issues were proceeding.

The moment of decision

On Wednesday morning the day of the decision, one last upset almost derailed the nomination. Senator Hill put out a media release that could be interpreted as an incredibly arrogant statement.

continued on page 6

Blue Mountains Granted World Heritage Honours

continued from page 5

He announced \$10.8 million in funding for World Heritage (but it was understood that the National Heritage Trust funding was over \$18 million last year). Also the media release bragged that Australia had more World Heritage areas listed for their natural values than any other nation. The reform agenda of that day, discussed just before the proposed World Heritage nominations were considered, covered the need for equity between countries regarding World Heritage properties. Saying that Australia had more natural areas than anyone else, and that we just cut the funding in half, but just give us another anyway could have become a monumental PR blunder. Fortunately, those in the know correctly concluded that the news release would be ignored as the Minister blowing his own trumpet.

The delegates from Canada and South Africa were initially unsure but were convinced by the body of scientific support and in South Africa's case by the broad reform agenda of the Carr Government, including improved public transport and the first Green Olympics.

On presenting the nomination to the conference, Dr Jim Thorsell spent at least 20 minutes "carpet bombing" the Blue Mountains nomination into dust with every imaginable criticism (but acknowledging that some of the integrity issues, such as the proposed Badgerys Creek airport, had been addressed). The serial eucalypt monster raised its head one last time before Professor Phillips put an end to it and with a deft form of words opened the way for the 21 voting members of the World Heritage Committee to consider the fate of the Blue Mountains.

Thailand, Malta, Korea, Morocco, Hungary and Mexico spoke in favour before the 21 voting nations made their decision. Three nations highlighted the Wollemi Pine and the Thailand, who lead the debate, ensured that the biodiversity of the area was recognised, as well as its eucalypt forest. In an amusing speech, Thailand argued that if the habitat of the Komodo Dragon can be listed, why

not the habitat of the Platypus? For five minutes at least nobody knew if Thailand supported or opposed the nomination but we were just being strung along. It turned out that Thailand questioned Dr Thorsell's assessment, disagreed with it and supported the nomination on criteria (ii) and (iv). IUCN had reluctantly indicated that it could accept an inscription on criterion (ii) only. In the end none of the delegates opposed the listing on the grounds of criteria (ii) and (iv), although Finland asked how many types eucalypt were in the nomination area and how many were needed to qualify for listing. (Unfortunately, the Blue Mountains inscription statement in the Committee minutes is contaminated by Thorsell's criticisms and those looking for justifications for listing should read the nomination report.)

Colong departs

The day after the Blue Mountains were listed, Tom Widdup suggested a media conference with Don Henry of the Australian Conservation Foundation to put the Blue Mountains and Kakadu issues in context. The media conference went for an hour as Colong and ACF expressed gratitude for the Federal Government's efforts on the Blue Mountains, attacked its actions on seeking to weaken the World Heritage Convention and mine uranium within a World Heritage listed park¹. The Colong Foundation's three day honeymoon with the Australian Government came to an abrupt end but our statements mended strained relationships with ACF and The Wilderness Society.

The Australian Government is obsessed with the proposed Jabiluka uranium mine, it has developed policy on the operational guidelines that could cripple the World Heritage Convention and put every vulnerable World Heritage area at much greater risk. Outsiders will never know if the subtlety of voluntarily downgrading Australia's proposals on the Convention guidelines to an information paper were a tradeoff for the Blue Mountains and/or Jabiluka.

At the December meeting of the Foundation I was presented with a large framed classic Henry Gold photograph of the Blue Mountains in

appreciation of my efforts. The 21 members of the World Heritage Committee would not have supported the listing, if the Foundation had not sent Tom and I to Cairns. At the end of the day the community support won though in the end.

- 1 Environment Australia considers that Australia's standards of statutory protection, disclosure and scrutiny, are unprecedented amongst World Heritage state parties (in fact, except for South Africa, Australia is the only nation to have purpose built World Heritage protection legislation) and, given the report of the status of degrading World Heritage properties around the globe reviewed by the Cairns meeting, Australia's environmental record and commitment to management is astoundingly good, particularly by comparison with a with range of world wide degrading properties about which international criticism is strangely totally silent (including catastrophic damage caused by adjacent mining).
- 2 Environment Australia considers its proposed revisions to the operational guidelines are consistent with World Heritage Convention.
- 3 Environment Australia claims that Jabiluka, Ranger and Koongarra uranium mining leases are not in the park but excluded from it. These are the hottest exclusive park enclaves on the planet!

Lithgow Smelter Approved

The Blue Mountains Conservation Society's "Hut News" reports that the silicon smelter has received conditional approval. The operator must use rail transport through the Blue Mountains and establish an 8,100 ha hardwood plantation to offset some of the greenhouse gases (but it will only offset 10% or less of the emissions). The majority of the charcoal must come from other states - apparently their forests don't count. All of the 645 submissions from the public and community organisations opposed the smelter.

Honours for Alex Our Living Heritage

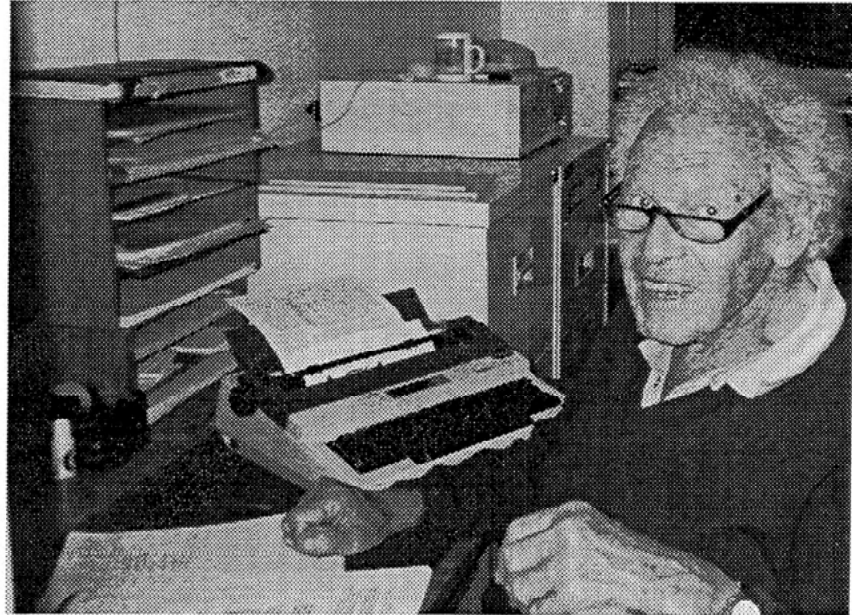
The Colong Foundation congratulates Alex Colley O.A.M. our Honorary (as in voluntary) Secretary. Alex was awarded a Senior Australian Achiever Award on October 18, 2000.

The citation reads:

"Alex Colley has spent a lifetime saving the Australian wilderness from environmental destruction. His love of the Australian bush started very early in his life and has continued right through until today at the age of 91 he is one of the last of a pioneering generation of bushwalkers."

In his professional career, Mr Colley was at retirement, an economist with the NSW State Planning Authority. His life's work has been concerned with conservation matters and public service.

For 33 years prior to 1997 he was Hon. Conservation Secretary for the Sydney Bushwalkers and after his retirement in 1974 became Honorary Secretary of the Colong Foundation for Wilderness (originally the Colong Committee). Since the committee was formed in 1968 one and a half million



Alex Colley, our Senior Achiever, at his ever-efficient desk, still keeping on keeping on.

hectares of wilderness have been declared. He works every day in the office of the foundation, and walks, swims and gardens."

Following World Heritage listing of the Blue Mountains, Premier Bob Carr wrote to Alex:

"The World Heritage decision caps

your work of a lifetime.

Few people get to deliver anything as grand as the vast protected areas of the Blue Mountains to future generations."

Without Alex there would be little wilderness protected in this State. We owe Alex a lot.

Thanks from Bob Carr

Bob Carr has written as follows to Keith Muir and Alex Colley:

Dear Keith,

I am writing to give you and Mr. Alex Colley due recognition for initiating the idea that the Blue Mountains be placed on the World Heritage List. I would also like to thank you, and the Colong Foundation, for your tireless campaigning towards this end, both nationally and internationally, with the resulting agreement of the World Heritage Committee to the listing of the Blue Mountains on the World Heritage list.

The World Heritage listing is a

great honour for New South Wales and gives recognition to the vast sandstone tableland of hard-leaved, fire-adapted eucalypt forests of the Blue Mountains. In addition, it ensures international recognition of the unique Wollemi pine.

I am particularly pleased with the decision of the Committee, as it fulfils both my personal desire to enhance the long-term protection of the area, and a 1995 election commitment of my Government.

*Yours sincerely
(signed) Bob Carr
Premier*

Donations

We gratefully acknowledge donations from the following during the half year to Dec. 31st.

R. and M. Anderson, C Benjamin, The Budawang Committee, Canberra Bushwalking Club, C.A. Chapman Wade, The Conservation Alliance, B. Dodd, M. Esson, A. Ewald, J. Fleming, J.W. Fretwell, J. Georgiou, G. Giles, Dr. J. Holt, R. Hume, A.J. Kay, Dr. A.K. Lethlean, P. Maslen, W.H. Midson, B.G. Miller, G.E. Nolder, J. Minifie, D. Mossop, K. Muir, Prof. R. O'Neill, J.J. O'Ryan, K.L.J. Parkhouse, R. Plumb, Span Outdoors, Rover Speleological Society, A.M. Raymond, A. J. Rigby, Dr. J.H. Stephenson, B.V. Vidya, J.D. Wrigley.

So long and thanks for all the trees

by Tom Widdup –
departing Assistant Director

OVER the last year and a half I have been the Assistant Director of the Colong Foundation for Wilderness. This period seems to have passed at an almost dizzying pace. I started unaware of the Foundation and its functions. But now looking back I can see that the Colong Foundation has had many notable achievements in this time.

The bread and butter of my time with Colong has undoubtedly been the efforts spent on public awareness and attracting volunteers, both for the Wilderness 2000 campaign. As a result of these efforts the Colong Foundation now has three dedicated stalls coordinators and a increased volunteer base. We are running information stalls every weekend on which we collect donations, memberships and signed submissions to the government on wilderness protection. As a result we have collected many thousands of submissions. I must take this opportunity to thank Jenny Ellis, Margaret Richardson, Sarah Moreton, Tom Jackson and Marco Learmont for their hard work and dedication. I have presented the Wilderness 2000 slide show to over thirty groups in areas ranging from Canberra

to Orange, Wollongong to Newcastle and many places in between. These efforts have played a big part in getting the Wilderness 2000 campaign up and running and will no doubt yield a very positive outcome for wilderness in the future.

The silicon plant proposed for Lithgow was a major threat to vast areas of precious inland woodlands and their dependant bird and animal species. The proposal was put on ice not long after surfacing, due largely to a vigorous publicity campaign mounted by the Colong Foundation and the NPA. My part in this campaign was to design a very striking and provocative brochure which was distributed through the region. This red alert flyer shocked many people into action.

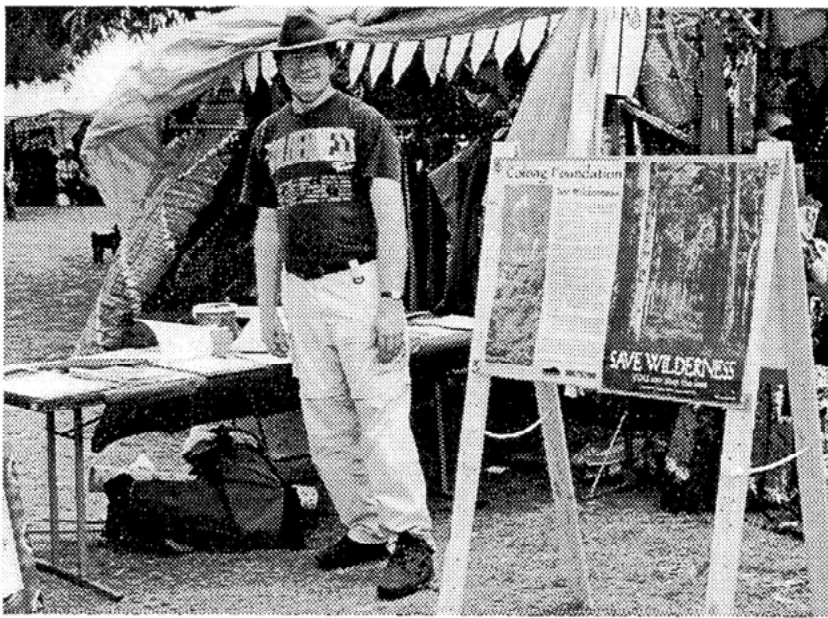
The distressing moves toward using forests to generate electricity began to surface in 1999/2000. Initial proposals were for coking of coal and wood in existing power stations. The federal government's 2% renewable legislation passed recently allowing forest biomass to be burn under the label of renewable power. In addition the forestry industry in NSW is arguably at a point where it must move into logging large volumes of low quality timber to replace the fading woodchip

markets and disappearing sawlogs if it is to have a viable economic future. In combination these factors have lead to a number of very worrying biomass proposals in NSW. The Forest Products Association has proposed to build three wood-fired power stations in NSW. The Colong Foundation has been campaigning on this issue for some time and will no doubt continue to into the future.

A highlight of my time with Colong was traveling to Cairns to lobby at an international level for the inscription of the Greater Blue Mountains on the World Heritage List. The campaign to achieve this listing spanned many years and my timing in arriving towards the end of this couldn't have been better. The challenge of convincing the Chinese delegation of the merits of the Blue Mountains nomination despite the language and cultural barriers is one I will not quickly forget.

My involvement with Colong has been extremely rewarding. Working with some of the 'elder statesman' of the environmental movement has been both an honor and an education. I feel that my contribution has been very valuable to the organisation. I wish my successor the best of luck in their work with the Foundation.

Graham Daly, chairperson of Total Environment Centre's Canopy Native Forest Committee, helping promote Wilderness 2000 and collecting letters of support. (Stall materials funded by the Conservation Alliance and Paddy Pallin.)



Meeting Dates

Meetings will be held on February 8th. and 22nd and March 8th. and 22nd.

We need to be ever vigilant that we don't destroy the unique natural assets which attract people to the coast. The danger of burying the coast in a landscape of bricks, tiles and bitumen is a very real one.

Dr. Andrew Refshauge, Urban Affairs and Planning Minister,
Daily Telegraph 23.11.2000

SUPPORT THE COLONG FOUNDATION!

To: The Treasurer, Colong Foundation for Wilderness Ltd.
Level 2, 362 Kent Street, Sydney NSW 2000

The enclosed remittance or advice covers the item(s) indicated by a tick. (One cheque is sufficient to cover subscription and donation.)

- ☐ Membership application (\$25) to 31 December 2001
(NB Membership application covers Bulletin subscription)
- ☐ Colong Bulletin Subscription (\$11) to 31 December 2001
- ☐ Membership renewal to 31 December 2001 (\$25) ☐ Life Membership (\$550)
- ☐ Tax deductible donation of \$____ to the Colong Wilderness Fund (*cheques to be made payable to the Fund*)
- ☐ PLUS \$____ being for publications as indicated on the reverse side of this form.

NAME (Mr, Ms, Mrs, Miss)

ADDRESS

.....P/CODEDATE

SIGNEDAMOUNT

Payment by credit card. Mastercard ☐ Visa ☐ Bankcard ☐ Expiry date ____ / ____

Card # ____ / ____ / ____ / ____

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION Why not join or invite a friend to join?

- ☐ Yes, I wish to become a member of the Colong Foundation for Wilderness Ltd. I subscribe to the Foundation's aim of preserving Australia's wilderness remnants. I accept the liability provided in the Colong Foundation's Articles of Association to guarantee \$20 should it be needed in the event of the winding up of the Foundation. Signed

A BEQUEST

*Please remember us
in your Will.*

The Law Society of NSW recommends the following wording... "I bequeath the sum of \$... to the Colong Foundation for Wilderness Ltd. for its general purposes and declare that the receipt of the treasurer for the time being of the Colong Foundation of Wilderness Ltd.

shall be complete discharge to my executors in respect of any sum paid to the Colong Foundation for Wilderness Ltd."



PROGRESS OF THE FOUNDATION

The Colong Foundation is the longest-serving community advocate for wilderness in Australia. It has initiated or been part of Campaigns that have secured over a million hectares of national parkland, most of which is wilderness. But a further million hectares of wilderness in eastern NSW is still not reserved under the Wilderness Act, although much of the area is now in national parks.

Now more than ever the Colong Foundation needs your support. Well financed anti-conservation lobbies, representing resource development, 4WD enthusiasts, equestrian and commercial tourism interests, have greatly increased development pressures on wild places.

The Foundation originated as the Colong Committee which was appointed in 1968 by a meeting of conservation societies to prevent quarrying of Colong Caves. Shortly afterwards the committee extended its objective to cover the saving of the Boyd Plateau from becoming the site of a 15,000 acre pine plantation. Both objectives had been achieved by 1975 when three new objectives were adopted. The first of these was the creation of a Border Ranges National Park, an objective which escalated to become the rainforest campaign. The other objectives were the creation of a Greater Blue Mountains National Park and a Kakadu National Park. The rainforest parts and Kakadu are now World Heritage Areas. The Greater Blue Mountains Park is in being in fact, though not in name.

Recent campaigns for the Gardens of Stone and Nattai National Park have been successful. The Foundation's proposal for a Wilderness Act was accepted in 1987. It has been supplemented by the Red Index of Wilderness now being up-dated and extended to other states. It has successfully campaigned for the nomination of the Blue Mountains for World Heritage listing.

It is at present working for the protection of threatened wilderness in NSW, for the preservation of national parks from commercial development and damaging use, and for the preservation of old growth forests.

THE COLONG FOUNDATION

SENDER: THE COLONG FOUNDATION FOR WILDERNESS
Level 2, 362 Kent Street, Sydney NSW 2000



PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE FROM THE COLONG FOUNDATION

WILD PLACES

The meticulously researched, beautifully written book on wilderness by Peter Prineas with photographs by Henry Gold (285pp)

Price Posted
27.50 ☐

BLUE MOUNTAINS FOR WORLD HERITAGE 17.60 ☐

Geoff Mosley provides a comprehensive explanation of the wealth of heritage values in the Blue Mountains (135pp)

THE COLONG STORY (42pp) 9.00 ☐

HOW THE RAINFOREST WAS SAVED (59pp) 9.00 ☐

PARK OR PINES - The Battle for the Boyd (42pp) 9.00 ☐

THE BATTLE FOR THE BUSH 27.50 ☐

Geoff Mosley's account of the genesis of the nature conservation movement and saving of the Blue Mountains environment (174pp)

MYLES AND MILO 27.50 ☐

A biography, written by Peter Meredith, of The Colong Committee's Patron, Myles Dunphy OBE, and its founder, Milo Dunphy AM D.Sc. (376pp)

THE BAREFOOT BUSHWALKER 27.50 ☐

by Dorothy Butler, Australian Geographic award winner. A story of a lifetime of adventure in wilderness and high mountains (292pp)

CLASSIC BUSHWALKING MAPS by Myles Dunphy (Gangerang and Kowmung Maps) 6.00ea ☐

WILDERNESS RED INDEX - complete \$110 ☐

The Index describes the land ownership, values, history and threats to NSW wild places

- Summary brochures \$2.20 ☐
- Listing of individual areas \$5.50 ☐