

# TNPA NEWS

TASMANIAN NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION INC

Newsletter No 5 Spring 2005

*From the President's Pen:*

## AD HOC CHANGES TO MANAGEMENT PLANS COMPROMISE NATIONAL PARK VALUES

*Tasmania has one of the world's most extensive and spectacularly beautiful national park systems*

Over the past twenty years, the area included within national parks and other reserves within Tasmania has increased to approximately 2.45 million hectares, and represents some 30 percent of the State. Included in this reserve system is the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area (TWWHA), itself comprising an area of around 1.38 million hectares or around 20 percent of Tasmania. This area is one of only two World Heritage Areas in the world which satisfies at least seven of the ten criteria required for WHA listing. In total, this collection of national parks and reserves constitutes one of Tasmania's most important assets.

With a higher proportion of its land in parks than any other Australian state, Tasmania, more than any other State, has a vested interest in properly managing its parks. Given the heightened importance of these reserves for both conservation and recreational purposes (and the potential threats posed by the latter), it is important that there is an ongoing community involvement in the management of this unique system of reserves. It is also important that there exists a strong and independent voice that supports and can play an advocacy role for Tasmania's reserve system. The Tasmanian National Parks Association (TNPA) has positioned itself to play an important role in this process.

Although the TNPA is still a relatively young organisation, formed only in August 2001, it has become a well-known, well-organised and vocal voice for the protection of Tasmania's national parks and other conservation reserves.

### **Threats: Developments in National Parks**

Unfortunately, the threats from proposals to locate large-scale overnight accommodation facilities (generally catering for the top-end of the tourist market) within Tasmania's conservation reserves remain a major focus of TNPA activities. The TNPA successfully opposed the locating of a resort on Maria Island as well as a large accommodation facility at Pump House Point within the Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park, but despite widespread public opposition to such developments the Government continues to back such proposals. However, the role of the TNPA is not just to ensure that the conservation values of our reserves are not compromised, but to make the Government honour the original intentions of its own management plans.

### **Cynthia Bay**

In October 2004 public comment was called for on the proposal by ES Link Pty Ltd for large-scale expansion of accommodation facilities at Cynthia Bay within the Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park. The development was to cater for up to 324 people, including an additional 14 luxury cabins. (continued on page 2)

### **Inside...**

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### **THANK YOU**

The TNPA Committee would like to thank the following people who have recently volunteered their time to assist the TNPA. We are very grateful, as without this help the TNPA would not be able to undertake the range of activities it does.

#### **Cycling in Tibet Slide Show**

Peter Berechree

Judy Sandeman

& the various individuals and organisations that donated raffle ticket prizes.

#### **Other Guest Speakers**

Kevin Doran

Anne Duncan

#### **Advice, administration, representing the TNPA at other events & other help**

Susie Broughton

Andy Cianchi

David Obendorf

Paul Smith

**To identify, protect, conserve, present, and where appropriate, rehabilitate the area and to transmit that heritage to future generations in as good or better condition than at present.**

Overall objectives of the World Heritage Area Management Plan 1999

Upgrading of facilities at Cynthia Bay is consistent with the management objectives for this area as stated in the 1999 TWWHA Management Plan. However, there appears to have been considerable modification and weakening of the management prescriptions in successive Site Plans for Cynthia Bay. As stated in the 1991 Site Plan, the initial planning objective was to keep accommodation facilities at Cynthia Bay “*approximately at present levels and standards*” for around 60 persons. This objective was first weakened in the revised 1993 Site Plan when the limit on accommodation was raised to 72 persons, while in the revised 2003 Site Plan there is no stated limit at all! Furthermore, the original 1991 objective to “*Provide relatively low-cost basic accommodation facilities*” has similarly been weakened in the 2003 Plan to “*Provide a range of accommodation.*”

The 1988 Cradle Mountain-Lake St Clair National Park Management Plan also contained the following management prescriptions:

- *Due to limitations of space at Cynthia Bay, any further camping and accommodation will be established nearer to, or at, Derwent Bridge.*
- *Any further expansion of these services will be considered only in concert with any plans by private enterprise for the provision of camping and accommodation at Derwent Bridge.*

These management prescriptions are generally consistent with the primary objectives relating to accommodation facilities contained in the 1999 TWWHA Management Plan (see below) and should be adhered to, but this is not the case, with the focus of development being at Cynthia Bay.

### **Cockle Creek East**

A development permit was granted to Staged Developments Australia Pty Ltd by the Resource Planning and Development Commission in June 2001 for construction and operation of a resort behind Planters Beach within the Southwest National Park. The original proposal was for a lodge, up to 80 cabins and a 50m jetty.

Although the development site does not occur within the boundaries of the TWWHA (this part of the South West National Park was to be nominated as part of a second, future extension of the TWWHA), a review of the proposal conducted by the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service confirmed that the site does come under the jurisdiction of the 1999 TWWHA Management Plan.

For the development to proceed however the TWWHA Management Plan had to be altered. This alteration, undertaken in 2002, zoned the previously unzoned development site as part of the Cockle Creek East Visitor Services Site. One of the three sentence changes was from “*In the Southwest National Park development of infrastructure, including huts, is not allowed in view of the natural character of the area*” to “*In the Southwest National Park development of infrastructure, including huts, is not allowed, except within Cockle Creek East Visitor Services Site.*”

### **Death by a thousand cuts**

The TNPA believes that these successive modifications to both the TWWHA Management Plan and associated Cynthia Bay Site Plans make a mockery of the overall purpose of these plans. For example, as first stated in the 1991 Cynthia Bay Site Plan and reiterated in the 2003 Site Plan, the rationale of these plans is to “*guide the long-term development of the Cynthia Bay area and so ensure that development proceeds in a coordinated and integrated manner rather than on an ad hoc or facility-by-facility basis*”. The TNPA argues that development of the Cynthia Bay area is still ad hoc with major developments being approved and proceeding on a facility-by-facility basis. Indeed, if there is to be any credibility placed on the ability to focus on a long-term planning process, it is imperative that the original management objectives and limits specified in the TWWHA Management Plans and associated Site Plans be adhered to.

The management prescriptions outlined in the WHA Management Plan for Visitor Service Zones such as Cynthia Bay state that these areas should cater “*principally for the needs, interests and abilities of day visitors.*” Furthermore, in the section of the Management Plan that relates specifically to accommodation, it is an objective “*To encourage the provision of accommodation in nearby townships and areas adjacent to the WHA*”. The rationale provided for this is based on research findings that “*much of the experience sought by visitors ... is based on the area’s wilderness quality. To maintain this it is important that accommodation has minimal impact on wilderness quality and the WHA and the other natural and cultural values of the WHA.*” In relation to Concessions, it is also stated that “*If facilities or services exist or can be developed outside the WHA that meet visitor needs, such facilities and services will not be provided as concessions within the WHA*”.

In light of the arguments outlined here, it is somewhat ironic that Judy Jackson, the then (and again current) Minister for Parks, wrote in the Preface to 1991 Cynthia Bay Site Plan:

*“Visitor surveys and public input have consistently indicated that visitors come to national parks in order to experience and enjoy the natural world and do not wish to see major developments, preferring instead a low level of visitor facilities of a small and unobtrusive nature.”*

While the TNPA supports tourism as an integral part of a vibrant Tasmanian economy, it is not prepared to see the unique values of Tasmania’s national parks sacrificed in order to continually appease the tourism cargo-cult which has captured the agenda of successive State Governments.

### **Other Issues**

As well as focusing on major development issues, the TNPA also keeps a watching brief on many other issues relating to the management of Tasmania’s conservation reserves. In particular, this work is undertaken by the TNPA Program Coordinator who is employed for two days a week under the *Parks Guardian and*

*Monitoring Program* which over the past two years has been funded by the Mullum Trust.

In order to help facilitate this work, the TNPA has focused on developing a dialogue with a number of stakeholder groups in the management of Tasmania's Parks – in particular the Parks and Wildlife Service. It has regular meetings with PWS staff, and as a consequence is regularly called upon to have input into a number of ongoing management issues. The TNPA has also instigated meetings with the Minister for Parks, Judy Jackson. The range of activities undertaken by the TNPA during the past three months is listed later in this report (*see What the TNPA has been Doing*).

**Robert Campbell (President – TNPA)**

## Volunteers Needed for Salamanca on Saturdays

Summer is coming and Salamanca on Saturdays will be a hive of activity. The TNPA needs more members and what better way than by being visible at Salamanca.

We need your help to hand out membership flyers and/or staff a stall at Salamanca on Saturdays.

The work will not be onerous – Salamanca on a Saturday is a pleasant and lively place to be and the work is light and sociable – mainly chatting to passers-by about Tasmania's wonderful National Parks and the role of the TNPA.

If you can give your time for this on a regular or occasional basis – contact the TNPA ([admin@tnpa.asn.au](mailto:admin@tnpa.asn.au)) or phone Anne McConnell (6239 1494 H&W).



## Tasmanian Platypus at Risk

While Tasmanian Devil populations plunge due to the devastating facial tumour disease, Tasmanian platypus are also threatened. A fungal infection has affected more than a third of the population in some areas of the state.

The fungus known as *Mucor amphibiorum* has been detected throughout much of the Australian mainland in amphibians, including green tree frogs and cane toads. It is believed that the fungus may have been introduced to Tasmania through mainland frogs arriving with banana shipments, and subsequently released in the wild.

Platypus in other states are not susceptible to the disease. In Tasmania however, diseased platypus were first found near Campbell Town in 1982. Since then outbreaks have been identified in many northern waterways, including the Macquarie, South Esk and Meander Rivers and the Pieman River on the West Coast, and also at Devonport, Lilydale, and near Cradle Valley.

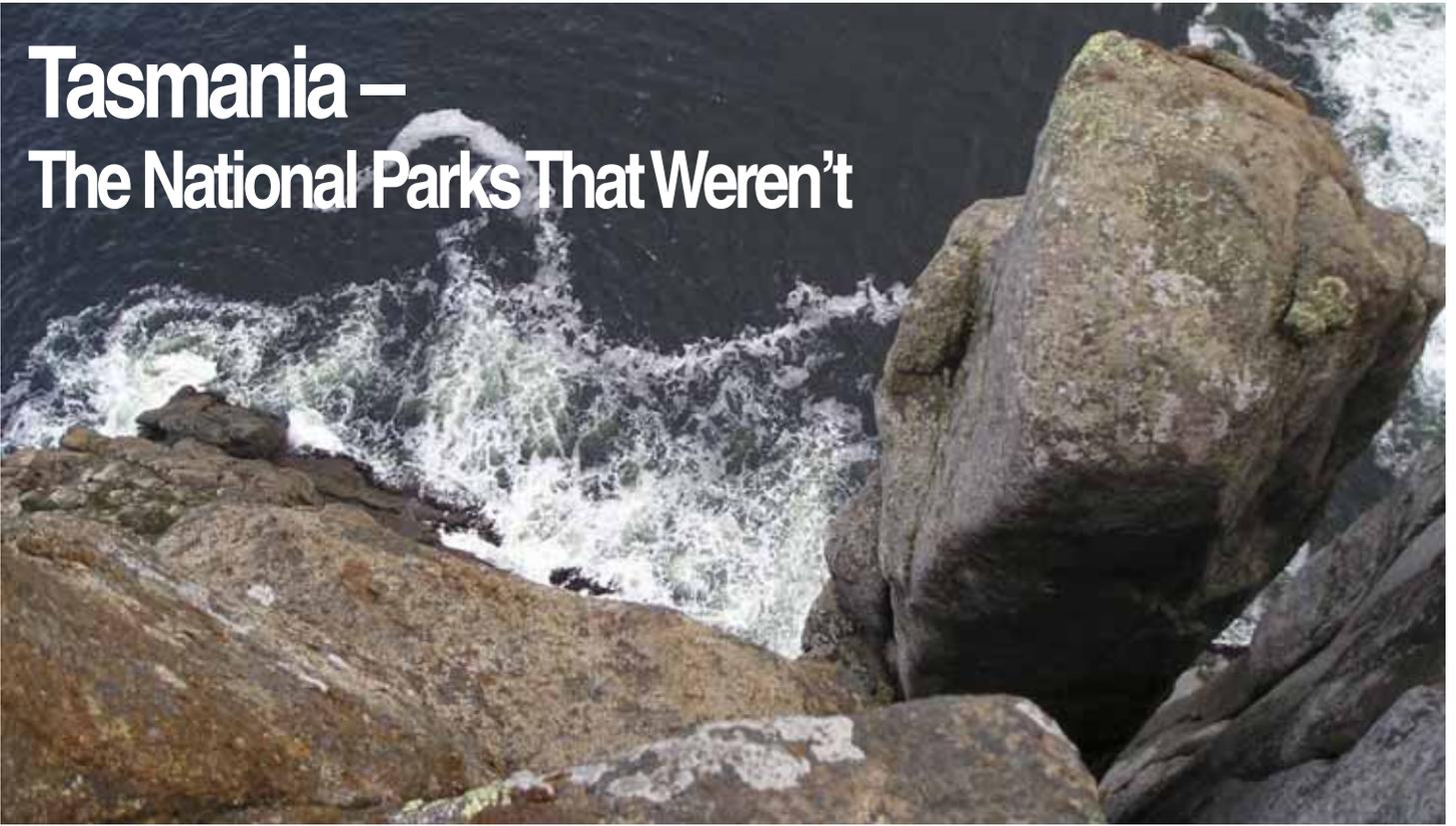
Pathologist Dr Niall Stewart explained on ABC's Stateline that

the disease causes ulcers that can grow to 10cm in diameter and about half a centimetre deep. Often the ulcers extend across the animal's tail where body fat is stored. A lot of body heat is lost through these wounds which also invite bacterial infections. Infected platypus take up to 18 months to die.

Little is known about the disease. Experts are unsure if the deadly fungus is spread through inhaled spores, through contact between platypus or through other mechanisms. No research is currently being done. Dr Stewart says the disease is a forgotten epidemic as Tasmania's platypus are 'out of sight, out of mind.'

This deadly disease illustrates the need for a stronger commitment from the Tasmanian Government regarding the management of biodiversity. Our state's unique wildlife is of monumental ecological and social significance, locally, nationally and internationally. The TNPA calls on the State Government to commit resources to research this deadly disease and to develop a strategy to ensure the protection of this precious species.

# Tasmania – The National Parks That Weren't



The term 'national park' was not clearly defined when it was first used in relation to parks and reserves in the nineteenth century, and it is difficult to say what, in the minds of park proponents, constituted a national park as opposed to a recreation park or nature reserve. The national park idea, which emerged in the USA and in Australia in the 1860s, comprised a range of components which gave the term a broad meaning, but not a very specific one. Nationalism, democracy, an emerging conception of ecology and awareness of species loss, tourism, public health and recreation were all among the elements of the national park idea.

In Australia generally, the reserves that became known as Australia's first national parks were mostly areas adjacent to major urban centres, and intended primarily for recreation. These were reserves such as Royal National Park in NSW, Belair in South Australia, Tower Hill in Victoria, and Kings Park in Perth, Western Australia. Tasmania's first national park, at Mt Field, achieved, in 1917, the status of being first, more because of favourable circumstances and timing than because it met clearly defined criteria better than did any competitors. Nor was it the first area in Tasmania to be proposed for a national park.

In 1860, 634 acres of the Queen's Domain, Hobart, were dedicated a public reserve. A resident of Wellington Bridge named Charles Walch used the term 'national park' to refer to this reserve in his 'Letter to the Editor' of the Mercury, in 1875. Walch wrote:

*It is with no small satisfaction that I now behold the subject of our national park assuming form and substance through the action of the Royal Society ...Additional carriage drives, and lengthened vistas of beauty are all very well, and should doubtless form part of the plan, but they can bide their proper time. First make our national park a fit and attractive place for 'the people', give us a green award, and the welcome shade of leafy trees;*

*dig, and plough, and sow, and plant; and then, when this is all done, when we, 'the people', with our little ones, have a pretty place to which we can continually resort for health and recreation, then provide for the 'carriage folk'. And finally, I hold, and in this I am upheld by the practice of all civilised governments, that a park in connection with the capital city of a country is a national affair, and its maintenance should be provided by national funds.<sup>1</sup>*

The connection made by Walch between the Domain reserve and the national park idea was evidently not championed by any social movement at the time. Had it been, the Queens Domain might have become Tasmania's first national park, consistent with the trend of parks in the Arcadian rather than wilderness tradition that characterised some other States' first national parks.

Freycinet Peninsula was the next area considered for national park status, being proposed as a national park in 1894. The Freycinet proposal had a fledgling national park movement behind it, but not enough support to see the proposal come to fruition. This was in spite of a committee of the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science recommendation in 1894 for the creation of a number of national parks in Australia, including the Freycinet Peninsula<sup>2</sup>. The recommendation was sent to the Premier, who referred it to the Royal Society. The Royal Society delegated the Police Commissioner, Bernard Shaw, to deal with the points raised<sup>3</sup>. Shaw sought advice from Swansea landowner, John Meredith, who said he considered that, 'while the Peninsula was unsuitable for a national park, owing to its geological formation, etc., Schouten Island would be a suitable spot'<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> C. Walch, Mercury, 20 May 1875.

<sup>2</sup> Archives Office of Tasmania, 'Report of the Committee Appointed to make Recommendations for the Protection of Native Fauna', PD1/225, 1892-1896.

<sup>3</sup> Abstract of Proceedings, Papers and Proceedings of the Royal Society of Tasmania, 1894, p.xvi.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*

This advice was curious, since Freycinet's large granite rock formations are scenically very impressive and the area was known to provide habitat for large, and varied, fauna populations, making it an ideal site for a park to serve both as a scenic reserve and fauna sanctuary. It is possible that national park status for Freycinet might have been perceived as a threat to shooting, grazing leases, potential mining or granite quarrying operations, and this may have influenced Meredith's opinion. Whatever the underlying reasons for Meredith's advice, his opinion encouraged the Royal Society not to endorse the Freycinet proposal. In the course of making that decision, the Society's Chairman was recorded as having said that, in his view, Tasmania's birds were well protected, '...and, as regarded the animals, he did not see how they could be preserved in a park unless a very large area, as some of them preyed on others'<sup>5</sup>.

The proposal to make Freycinet Tasmania's first national park lapsed, though the Chairman did suggest that '...it would be as well to keep the matter before them, and, if an opportunity occurred, they might obtain land for a national park'<sup>6</sup>.

Ten years later, in 1904, Francis Mather, with the support of the Royal Society and the Tasmanian Field Naturalists Club, succeeded in having the Government withdraw the Freycinet Peninsula and Schouten Island from sale or selection so that it could be declared a fauna reserve, though, not at that stage, a national park. Reservation of the Freycinet Peninsula under the Crown Lands Act and the *Game Protection Act 1905* afforded little protection to wildlife however while the area lacked the presence of rangers to enforce hunting restrictions and government failed to provide funds to remedy the situation.

At the time Freycinet was declared a fauna reserve, members of the Tourist Association were also pushing for a national park on Mount Wellington. Mt. Wellington was one of Tasmania's major tourist attractions. In the first season after a road was opened from Pillinger Drive to The Springs, the Tasmanian Tourist Association conveyed 2,406 passengers to The Springs in horse-drawn vehicles, and seven years later that number had grown to 10,320<sup>7</sup>. During those years, members of the Tourist Association lobbied for a national park.

In 1871, 3,750 acres of the mountain fronting North-West Bay River were reserved and management vested in the Hobart Corporation for the purpose of the city's water supply. An Act of Parliament passed in 1906 foreshadowed transferring some of

this land on the mountain's eastern slope to national park status, conferring management to a board of trustees. To accommodate visitors, a group of men that included Henry Dobson, past Premier and Chair of the Tourist Association, planned to build a hotel at The Springs;

*The late Sir James Agnew M.D. and other medical men have declared that the health giving characteristics of the mountain air on the slopes of Mt. Wellington are unequalled in any part of the Commonwealth and it is certain that scores of tourists coming from the hot climate of the mainland and who are run down and out of health will avail themselves ...*<sup>8</sup>

But the proposed national park and the hotel became the subject of an acrimonious debate between the Hobart Corporation, which objected due to concerns about potential contamination of Hobart's water supply, and the Tourist Association, notably Henry Dobson, who was 'amazed and disgusted at the action of the Corporation'<sup>9</sup> which, he believed, employed false arguments to oppose the initiative. The 1906 Act failed to proclaim the land as 'national park', and had not defined reserve boundaries. It simply designated an area in the vicinity of The Springs for a potential national park. When the Hobart Corporation won the Mountain Park debate it retained control of the reserve and, though Dobson and his colleagues were granted a small site at The Springs on which they built a hotel, the national park proposal was defeated.

Although the Mountain Park proposal was defeated, the national park idea was not, and neither were its chief proponents. They turned their attention to Mt. Field as a candidate for Tasmania's first national park, and this time they were successful. The Gazette of 29 August 1916 proclaimed 27,000 acres (10,927 hectares) in the Mt. Field/Russell Falls area 'National Park Reserve'. The park's opening had to await finalization of governing legislation as well as the establishment of a management structure the Scenery Preservation Board and its subsidiary, the National Park Board. The opening ceremony, which *The Mercury* described as 'a ceremony worthy to rank with the epoch-making events in the history of Tasmania', took place at the park in October 1917<sup>10</sup>. Tasmania officially had its own national park at last.

<sup>5</sup> Abstract of Proceedings, Papers & Proceedings of the Royal Society of Tasmania, 1894, p.xvi.

<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> Archives Office of Tasmania, PD1/28, 1907-1907.

<sup>8</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> *The Mercury*, 15 October 1917.

## Memberships & Donations On-line

Did you know – you can now join the TNPA, renew your TNPA membership or make a donation to the TNPA through our on-line facility?

This facility is provided through Our Community, Australia's gateway to 700,000 community groups and schools. It is Australia's leading online supporter of community groups with assistance from community, political and business leaders, investors and a large number of individuals.

Our Community currently provides the TNPA with a free secure facility to accept regular or one-off secure tax deductible donations on-line - an on-line service that is so important to the ongoing running of the TNPA.

For more information about this service or to donate on-line visit our website [www.tnpa.com.au](http://www.tnpa.com.au) or visit [www.ourcommunity.com.au](http://www.ourcommunity.com.au).

Please note that following support to raise membership fees at the last AGM, from July 2006 membership fees will be - Individual Members \$20, Individual Member Concession/Unwaged \$10; Family \$40; Family Concession/Unwaged \$20.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank those people who have used, and are using, the secure on-line donation service. Your support is really appreciated!

# National Park Associations – Some of Australia's earliest Conservation Advocates

By Doug Humann

*To provide our more recent members with some idea of the origin and philosophy of Australian National Park Associations we have reproduced Doug Humann's speech from the launch of the TNPA in September 2001.*

Our world has been shaken by the events of the last fortnight. Tonight's launch offers a perspective on where the good fight can be waged to protect natural places forever and to secure these places for all people (and for the plants and animals) for all time... that they remain as places of refuge.

National parks in Australia are amongst the oldest in the world, being formed in NSW and Victoria at a similar time to those first parks in the USA 125 years ago.

National Park Associations (NPAs) in Australia and their forebears (field naturalists' clubs) represent some of the longest standing lobby groups in the country – with a focus on parks and the protection of their flora and fauna values.

They pre-date political parties and the trade union movement and certainly pre-date expressions of activism represented by groups such as Greenpeace and The Wilderness Society. They have a noble history in every state, with the interests of national parks being carried by the Tasmanian Conservation Trust at the national forum for NPAs for many years.

NPAs have a level of recognition which includes them being named individually in the tax act as organisations able to receive tax deductibility for donations – no doubt a path the Tasmanian National Parks Association (TNPA) is going down.\*

My experience is as a volunteer, councillor and then executive director with the Victorian National Parks Association (VNPA) and as a representative of the VNPA on the national body of NPAs. In describing and explaining some of the history and success of the VNPA, I will suggest the role which TNPA may play and for what it may strive. I notice that the aims of the TNPA and its mission statement go to the core of a number of the matters which I'll address.

VNPA was formed in 1952. It was established in order to create a national parks service and national parks act. It achieved this by 1954 and the first director of the National Parks Service (NPS) was a representative of the VNPA. Right now Tasmanians have the chance to influence the rewriting of the national parks act in Tasmania and to ensure conservation objectives are paramount.

VNPA has developed and maintained a close link with employees of the parks service, providing succour and support to their worthy endeavours inside the system which often go unnoticed. In the early 1990s VNPA was part of a major and successful campaign to prevent the breakup of the service – a battle subsequently lost

during the Kennett years. However, it has remained a strong and supportive voice for public servants often unable to speak publicly. In Tasmania retaining the credibility, strength and resourcefulness of the service and supporting its staff in the achievement of its legitimate goals is a major requirement.

VNPA remains staunchly bipartisan, but a political. It hasn't flinched to battle to retain and promote the legitimacy of parks behind closed doors, through public processes or in the media and, in doing so, has won and retained the respect of all political parties, the fourth estate and the public. The TNPA will need to earn this respect.

VNPA has always provided informed and objective comment and, if you like, successfully taken the high moral ground that national parks are sacrosanct and in the public good and should appropriately be defended. In the face of rampant commercialism and prostitution of our natural and nationally significant assets (as our national parks are) it is vital that the status of parks is protected. Nowhere else is this more necessary than in Tasmania where the tourist market is so dependant on the assets that exist in the national park estate.

VNPA has always contributed to national park management plans in order that its values are heard in the planning for each park. This is quite apart from its contributions at a strategic and policy level both in the government department in which the NPS rests, and at the decision making levels of government. It has maintained a high level of advocacy both direct to the relevant decision-makers and through the media. As the management plans for national parks roll out in Tasmania, and with a suite of strategies hitting the ground for comment this role for the TNPA will be imperative.

VNPA has been a doer as well as an advocate. It founded the friends of parks group program and uses its bushwalking program (the largest in the state) as eyes and ears for monitoring of parks. Maybe the TNPA can create alliances with similar groups in Tasmania.

Finally, VNPA has remained a successful advocate for new national parks and extensions for parks. It has pushed the borders and created new agendas. It has done this on its own and in partnerships with other groups. In the 1990s alone there was almost a doubling of the national park estate in Victoria. This may not be possible in Tasmania! But certainly there are vegetation types and landscapes poorly reserved in Tasmania that should be added to the estate and there are groups with whom the TNPA can partner to have success in this area.

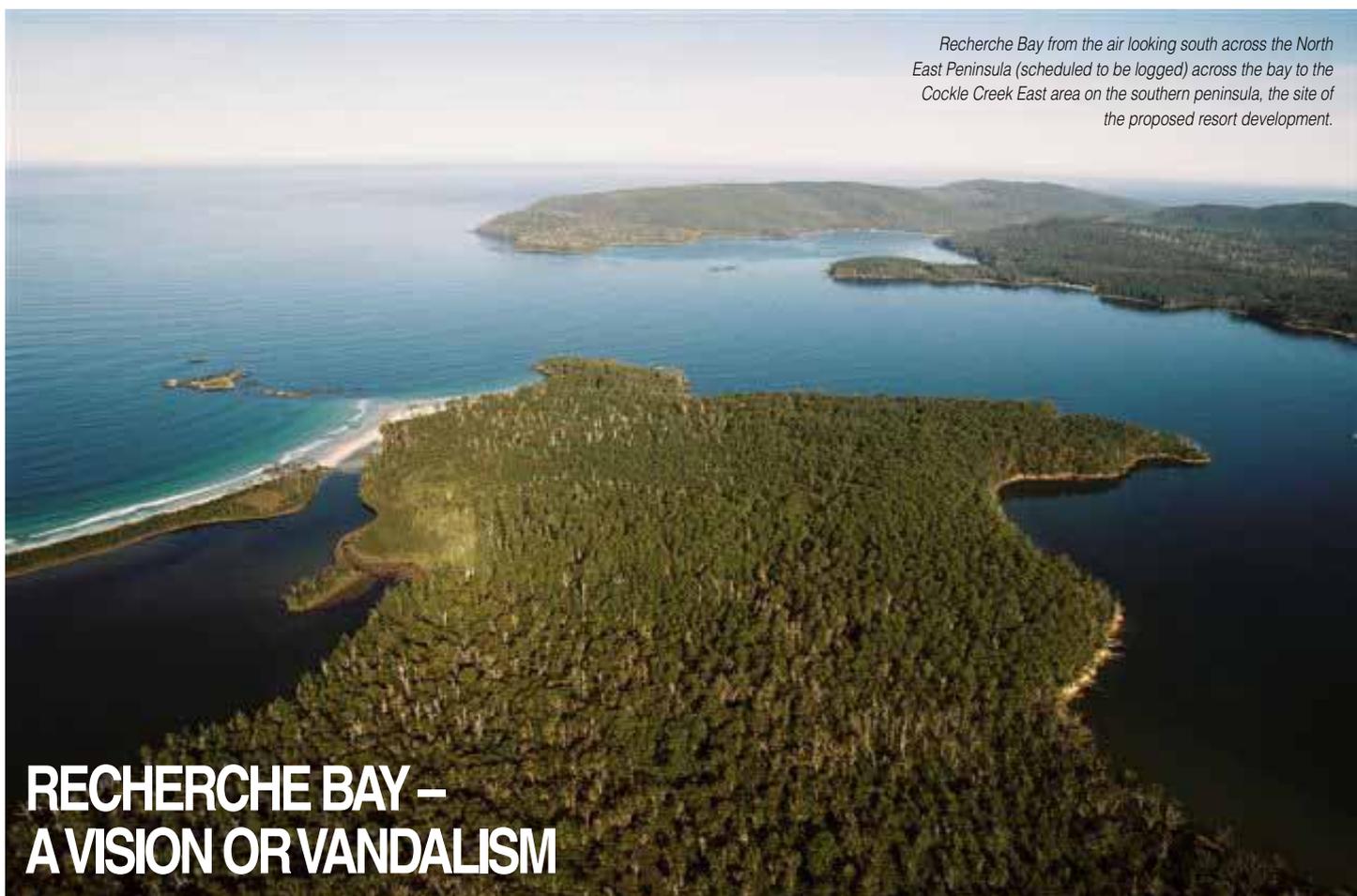
My involvement with the VNPA is one of my most cherished associations.

The TNPA is a great idea. It deserves the support of the public, the Parks & Wildlife Service, the Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment, and political parties. It should operate without fear or favour to protect the interests of parks, for people, for all time. I wish it well.

**Doug Humann** (25 September 2001)

\* Yes – the TNPA now has tax deductibility status (Ed) - see page 5.

*Recherche Bay from the air looking south across the North East Peninsula (scheduled to be logged) across the bay to the Cockle Creek East area on the southern peninsula, the site of the proposed resort development.*



## RECHERCHE BAY – A VISION OR VANDALISM

*Photo: Bob Brown, reproduced with permission of Bob Brown & the Green Institute.*

**By Russell Warman**

### **History of Proposal**

In the late 1990s David Marriner, a Melbourne-based developer with personal links to Tasmania, made a proposal to the State Government to develop a resort in the South West National Park. For the development to proceed the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area Management Plan and the Huon Valley Planning Scheme had to be altered.

The alteration to the planning scheme was finalised in June 2001 when a development permit was granted to Staged Developments Australia Pty Ltd by the Resource Planning and Development Commission for construction and operation of a resort behind Planters Beach within the South West National Park. The development also required an amendment to the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area Management Plan (TWWHAMP). This amendment, finalised in 2002, essentially was to zone the previously unzoned development site as part of the Cockle Creek East Visitor Services Site.

Although the development site does not presently occur within the boundaries of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area, as an outcome of the Regional Forest Agreement the area was to be included in the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area. Whether this will happen once a resort has been constructed on the site will be interesting to watch.

The original Staged Developments Australia Pty Ltd proposal was for a lodge, up to 80 cabins and a 50m jetty with all buildings linked to each other by boardwalks. The development was also to include an access road, an 800 metre extension to the existing road which ends near Cockle Creek.

The initial two year Development Permit expired on 4th July 2003. The developer requested an extension and this was granted by the Huon Valley Council. Ironically, this turned out to be unlawful and the state government amended Tasmania's principal planning Act, including a retrospective amendment to validate the extension. The extended permit expired on Monday 4th July 2005. No further extensions could be granted after this date unless the developer had demonstrated 'substantial commencement'.

Until mid June it remained somewhat uncertain as to whether the development was to proceed. However, the TNPA was notified in early June that work associated with the construction of the road to the development site had commenced. We then spent several weeks closely following developments and checking and challenging the legality of the works and the existence of 'substantial commencement'. Frustratingly, in spite of the minimal amount of development (completion of the Environmental Impact Assessment process and partial construction of the main access road) the Huon Valley Council decreed that the development had substantially commenced.

The roadworks were completed in July, and work was then halted. It appears that building the road in the wettest part of the year was driven by the need to validate the permit. No work is currently occurring on the site.

### **Heritage Values**

In July the TNPA became aware that the Environmental Impact Assessment for the development did not take into account cultural

heritage values associated with the French expeditions (eg, physical evidence, social values and cultural landscape values). We understand from the historic research that has been done that the 1793 expedition under Admiral Bruni D'Entrecasteaux anchored off the southern side of Recherche Bay, and the expedition established an observatory and two (possibly three) gardens in the area of the resort development, and the first European known to be buried in Tasmania is also likely to be located in this area. The general location of most of the sites is known from the expedition maps, but the location of some important sites, such as the burial, is unknown.

Greg Hogg, a member of the Recherche Bay Protection Group, nominated the southern side of Recherche Bay for heritage listing under both Federal and State Acts in 2004 (following up on Prof. John Mulvaney's nomination of the northeast peninsula). The TNPA raised this matter when it met in late June with Judy Jackson, the Minister for Parks & Heritage, and requested that the status of this nomination be clarified. In early July, the TNPA made a formal request to declare the north side of the Cockle Creek East area a 'Heritage Area' under the Historic Cultural Heritage Act 1995, to provide interim protection until the area can be properly assessed. Since then staff of Heritage Tasmania have inspected the site and a small number of French archaeologists have visited the general Recherche Bay area. Despite recent heritage listing, the site is tipped to be logged next year.

### Part of the Bigger Assault

At the same time as the resort development is going ahead at the East Cockle Creek site, the natural and cultural heritage values of the north-east peninsula of Recherche Bay are currently threatened by approved logging on private property; recreational vehicles continue to degrade wetlands in the nearby Southport Lagoon Wildlife Sanctuary; and a logging road on the north-east peninsula threatens one of Tasmania's rarest plants, the swamp eyebright, with extinction. Separate reports suggest that noise from forestry operations also threatens the wilderness values along parts of the famous South Coast track.

Tasmania is on the cusp of wrecking one of its most outstanding natural and cultural heritage areas. Not only the local region, but all Tasmanians will be the losers in this short-sighted vandalism.

### An Alternative Approach – the Recherche Region Wilderness Experience

#### *A special place*

Driving south of Hobart there is only so far you can go before you run into ocean and wilderness. This is the far south corner of settled Tasmania. It is a region rich in natural and cultural heritage. The region extends south from the fishing village of Southport and is centred around Recherche Bay and Southport Lagoon and watched over by the wild peaks of the Southern Ranges in the South West National Park.

Along a coastline appearing much as it did 200 years ago are protected waters right on the edge of the greatest and wildest expanse of ocean on the planet – the Southern Ocean. To the west, snow capped peaks of Tasmania's Wilderness World Heritage Area give shelter from the worst of the roaring forties and forests come right down to the sea.

In the bays are landscapes very little altered since some of the greatest scientific findings of the age of discovery took place and where many of our best known native plants were first discovered and named by non-Aboriginal people. The Recherche Bay coastline was the site of some of the most remarkable and insightful contact between the original Tasmanians and the Europeans, and definitely the friendliest.

Cockle Creek too is the site of a rare reversal where once a 2,000 people strong booming whaling port existed and now less than a handful of residents cling to the coast on the remains of a settlement reclaimed by nature.

This far corner of Tasmania, Australia and the peopled world offers a unique experience of the ageless interface between civilization and wilderness, between humanity and wild nature on a grand scale.

#### **The Vision**

This region offers Tasmania a great opportunity to protect, boast about, and prosper from yet another truly beautiful and amazing place. But this needs to be done wisely and sustainably.

The TNPA believes that this can be done. Our vision to achieve this is to -

- Develop an interpretation and visitor centre on North East Peninsular or at the existing Cockle Creek area.
- Utilise a smart mix of government funds and possible private development money focused on the heritage values to provide the owners of the private land on the north east Peninsula with a return that would compensate for the protection of the vast majority of the site.
- Relocate the proposed Cockle Creek East development to a more suitable site that is (1) outside of existing public reserves and the South West National Park in particular and (2) more logically located in terms of existing infrastructure and resources.
- To protect the bulk of the private land in the region with conservation covenants or similar and allow for small areas of development.
- Extend the South West National Park and Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area north along the coast incorporating current Crown land, State Reserve, Nature Recreation Areas and the Southport Lagoon Conservation Area.
- Southport village, located on the edge of the new larger South West National Park, would make an ideal centre for further tourism investment and infrastructure.

In broad terms the goal is to recognise the values and protect them by bringing the area of national park to the appropriate places for tourism development rather than the tourism development eating into the existing parks. Several problems could be addressed in this way.

In addition, the development and promotional focus resulting from the above offers the opportunity for an iconic visitor node to be developed, that could complement Strahan, Cradle Mountain and Freycinet. This would present the following benefits -

- remove pressure or absorb increased pressure from these other areas,
- bring more visitors and tourists to the Huon Valley region, and for a longer period of time, and
- potentially bring more visitors to Tasmania as more great places are added to the visitor itinerary.

#### **How to Achieve a Better Vision and Outcome for the Recherche Region**

The TNPA has been promoting the above vision for Recherche Bay by talking with government and tourism interests in Tasmania, arguing that the present proposals are short sighted and undesirable. While there is some interest in this alternative vision for the region, more voices advocating such an approach are needed to achieve change.

The TNPA asks you to also speak up for a better long term future for the Recherche region by contacting the government, the media and those involved in the present undesirable developments, and supporting our alternative sustainable vision.

Please write to the following people now:

#### **Rodney King**

Project Manager  
Stage Designs, 66 Hampden Road,  
Battery Point, Hobart, 7004  
rodk@stagedesigns.com.au

#### **David Marriner**

reception@marrinertheatres.com.au

#### **Judy Jackson**

Minister for Parks & Heritage  
C/- Parliament House, Hobart, Tas, 7001;  
or Judy.Jackson@parliament.tas.gov.au

#### **Paul Lennon**

Premier  
C/- Parliament House, Hobart, Tas, 7001;  
or Paul.Lennon@parliament.tas.gov.au

#### **Russell Warman (TNPA Program Coordinator)**

## ***Tasmania's Recherche Bay, by Senator Bob Brown - A Review***

**By Sharon Moore**

"It is difficult to express the sensations we felt, at finding ourselves at length sheltered in this solitary harbour at the extremity of the globe, after having been so long driven to and fro in the ocean by the violence of the storms."

This is how naturalist Jacques-Julien Labillardiere described the bay later named Recherche, where Bruni d'Entrecasteaux's expedition found shelter after sixty four tortuous days at sea in 1792.

Senator Bob Brown's new book *Tasmania's Recherche Bay* brings to life the visit of Bruni d'Entrecasteaux's expedition to this part of the island. Labillardiere's voice comes to us from more than two hundred years ago, through excerpts from his journal, revealing a spirit of true delight in the natural world and with the Lyluequonny, the Aboriginal people of the area.

The main focus of the book is the meetings between the Lyluequonny and the French, full of "joy" and "wonderment". Given the violence the Tasmanian Aborigines were later to face at the hands of the British, the story of this contact alone marks the French expedition as a high point in Tasmania's history. It also hosted the first European woman to land in Tasmania albeit disguised as a man.

D'Entrecasteaux's expedition, with its ships the Recherche and Esperance, anchored in Recherche Bay in Autumn 1792 and summer 1793. Senator Brown's commentary helps us to follow the progress of the French as they explore the peninsula, its nearby forests and lagoons. His stunning aerial photographs add a visual dimension to the words; and along with maps they help us to place the events and journeys described in the journal excerpts. Some of the drawings by Piron, the expedition's artist, are also reproduced in the book, showing how these European visitors saw the land and its people.

The story of this expedition, with its aims of finding the lost explorer La Perouse and making scientific observations, is one of the most remarkable in Tasmanian, and Australian, history. Yet it was only in 2003, with the discovery of stones thought to mark the boundary of one of its gardens, that the history of this corner of Tasmania sparked widespread public interest. Since then it has been assessed by Emeritus Professor John Mulvaney as worthy of world heritage nomination.

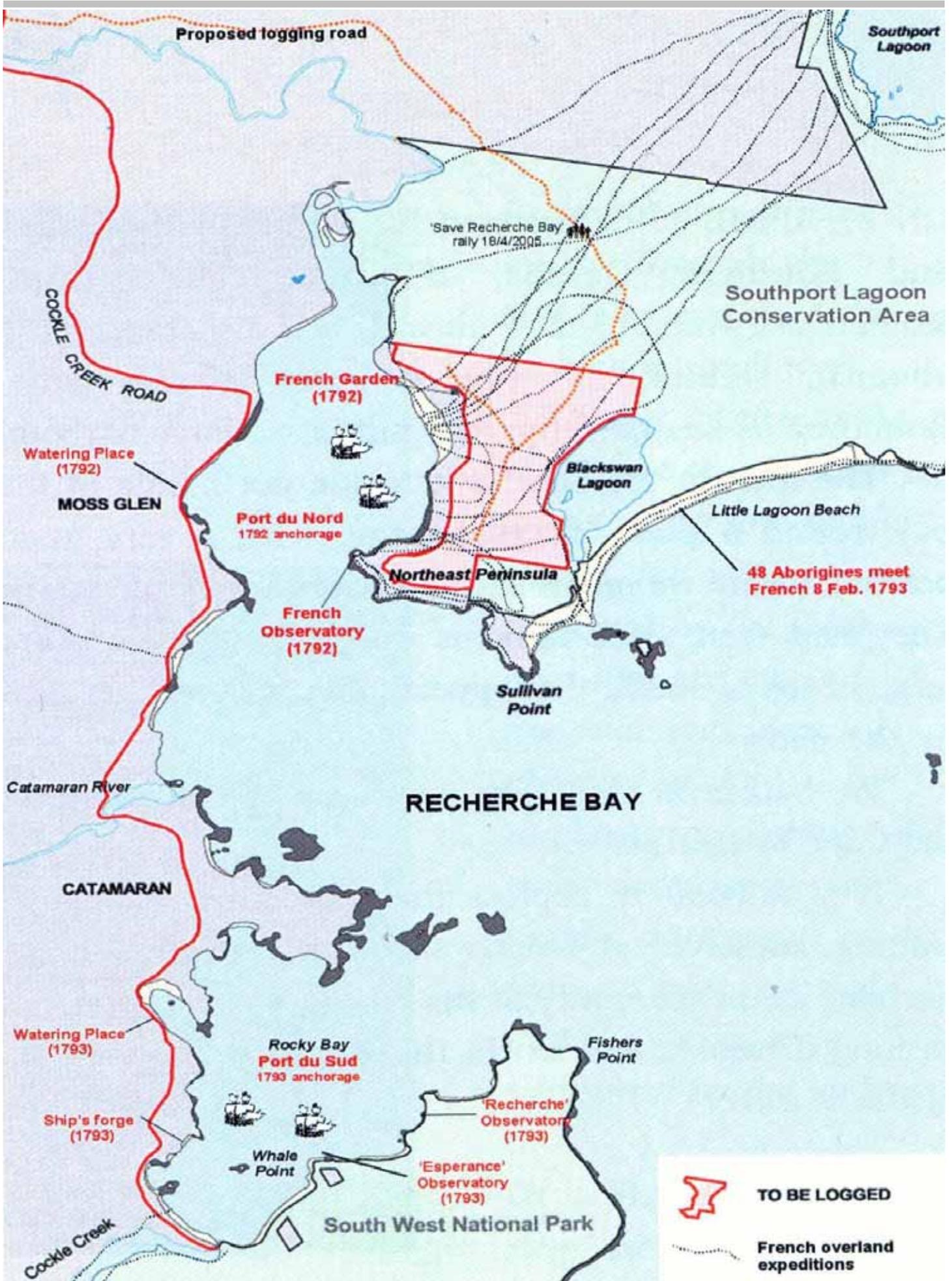
Unfortunately, as Senator Brown tells us, there is no happy ending in sight for Recherche Bay, with the north-east peninsula planned for logging later this year, and a resort approved at Planters Beach (East Cockle Creek), inside the Southwest National Park. This beautiful and timely book ends with Senator Brown's plea for the area to be protected - that the Tasmanian, Australian and French governments co-operate in a plan to "*celebrate Recherche Bay as a monument to mutual trust, global co-operation and our debt to nature ....*"

## **Tasmania's Recherche Bay by Bob Brown (2005)**

Lavishly illustrated in full colour, (56 pages) retails at \$17.50.

Proceeds go to the campaign to protect Recherche Bay and to the Green Institute.

Available from book shops around Tasmania, the Green Shop in Hobart, Green Room in Launceston, and the Wilderness Shop or by mail order from the Green Institute (email [margaret.blakers@bigpond.com](mailto:margaret.blakers@bigpond.com)). Add \$2.50 for packing and post.



Map of Recherche Bay showing localities known to have been visited by the French Expeditions of 1792 and 1793. Reproduced courtesy of Bob Brown & The Green Institute

# Introducing the Tasmanian Parks & Wildlife Service General Manager

Peter Mooney is the present General Manager of the Tasmanian Parks & Wildlife Service. In this position Peter has responsibility for the strategic direction of the Parks & Wildlife Service (PWS), its day to day running and the overall management of Tasmania's National Parks and other conservation reserves.

We thought that TNPA members might be interested to know what sort of person heads the PWS. With Peter's kind permission we have therefore included the following shortened version of an article about Peter from Keeping Track, the internal PWS staff newsletter.

TNPA are heartened to see that Peter places considerable importance on community advocacy and involvement, and acknowledges the importance of the PWS working with the community. The TNPA, as a community group with a focus on Tasmania's national parks, looks forward to a productive interaction with Peter.

## Profile - Peter Mooney

Growing up at Georgetown at the mouth of the Tamar River, and being part of family camping trips to Australia's outback country contributed to Peter's affinity with the outdoors and his appreciation of natural environments.

"It was 1977 and I'd been studying surveying at the University of Tasmania and saw an ad for the trainee program and thought I needed a break – maybe from all that maths," Peter said. During those first four years of the traineeship, Peter's most enjoyable period was 12 months working with a marine ecologist, Dr Graham Edgar, conducting a survey of potential marine parks around the State. "It really sparked my interest in marine reserves" he said.

External studies with Charles Sturt University in environmental management gave Peter a solid foundation in protected area management. Postings to other locations followed, including time as a cave guide at both Mole Creek and Hastings, stints at Freycinet and Maria Island, and three years as senior ranger in the South West National Park. Peter gained further experience in wildlife management from one year on the Wild Deer Capture Program and more recently, as manager of the Fox Taskforce in its first year of operation.

One of Peter's stand-out experiences in the field involved muttonbirds in their countless thousands. "We were off Babel Island, an island off the east coast of Flinders Island, doing survey work at a mutton bird rookery. We entered a raft of birds on the water, and many of them took off – so many that for about 15 minutes the sky went black and you couldn't see your hand in

front of your face because of the number of birds in the sky – it was amazing!"

It was also Peter's three year period as the only Parks officer on Flinders Island that was most influential in his view of how Parks staff relate to their local communities. "That time made me understand that you have to work with a local community – not around them or beside them," Peter said. "By working with the local community, I was able to achieve a lot of conservation outcomes without a heap of resources."

So what attracts a field-based person to the top job in an organisation? "I realised I had moved on from being a field operator and, from my involvement with senior management, I believed I had a better capacity to influence positive outcomes for the Parks and Wildlife Service," Peter said.

Peter believes the biggest challenge for the organisation is to have the PWS recognised and accepted as part of the Tasmanian community. "We're recognised as very good land managers, but we need better recognition of our ties to the community."

How will he know when there is better advocacy in the community? "When an issue is discussed in a public forum and it's not just a PWS issue, it's a community issue and the community is prepared to discuss and find solutions with us, instead of against us," Peter said.

**(From article by Liz Wren, PWS)**

## The TNPA Committee 05-06

A new TNPA committee was recently elected at the 2005 AGM. The new committee comprises –

President	Robert Campbell
Vice President 1	Margie Jenkin
Vice President 2	Anne McConnell
Treasurer	Jo Carswell
Secretary	no appointee
Public Officer	Tom Baxter
Committee member	Greg Buckman

The new committee would like to thank outgoing committee member Lisa Kavanagh for her hard work, and to welcome new committee members Jo Carswell and Greg Buckman.

We urgently need someone to fill the position of Secretary. If this is something you feel you could do for a year then please contact one of the committee members.

*(contact details on page 16).*



## What the TNPA has been doing Winter 2005

The TNPA has continued to be very active over winter 2005, not only with events and regular committee meetings, but with behind the scenes meetings with the Minister, government and the tourism industry, trying to achieve a better outcomes, in particular for the South West National Park and Cradle Mountain - Lake St Clair National Park; as well as writing submissions and establishing two working groups. The following summarises some of the main TNPA activities and happenings since TNPA News No. 4.

### March

- New Program Coordinator, Russell Warman, commenced in the 2-day a week position.

### April / May

- 'Presidents BBQ' social occasion for TNPA members held at Blackmans Bay.
- Meetings/discussion with various PWS staff and Chair of the National Parks & Wildlife Advisory Council, Rowena Bell.
- TNPA participated in a phone hook-up of environment groups following the announcement of the Howard-Lennon Forest Agreement. We put out a press release and had a letter published in the Mercury calling for greater protection of the Tarkine and Styx.
- Research undertaken regarding the Cockle Creek East proposed resort development, including discussions with Tony Ferrier of the Huon Valley Council.
- Developed a Far South Wilderness proposal for the Recherche Bay region (see article this issue).
- TNPA initiated dialogues with State and Federal government tourism representatives.
- TNPA put out two media releases, including one on development in national parks.
- TNPA made a submission to the West Coast Crown Land Classification project following discussions with a number of people on the west coast.
- TNPA had input into the proposal for new energy sources for Maatsuyker Island.

- Wrote grant applications to the Tasmanian Community Fund for a computer and for a Grants for Voluntary Environmental and Heritage Organisations (GVEHO) grant to assist with running our Parks Guardianship & Monitoring Program.
- Wonderful work done by Susie Broughton in organising the TNPA office in the Environment Centre.

### June

- Farewelled TNPA Treasurer, Lisa Kavanagh, who left for West Australia, and welcomed Jo Carswell as Acting Treasurer.
- Meeting with Judy Jackson, and an adviser Sally Shepherd, on a range of issues related to management of Tasmania's conservation reserves.
- In relation to the Cockle Creek East resort development within the Southwest National Park and the commencement of associated road works, the TNPA undertook an extensive round of meetings, correspondence and consultations with the developers David Marriner and Rod King of Staged Designs, Tony Ferrier (Huon Valley Council), the Environmental Defenders Office (EDO) and the Recherche Bay Protection Group. The TNPA wrote to the Huon Valley Council and Staged Designs requesting a halt to works due to perceived breaches of permit conditions and failure to have "substantially commenced" the project by end of the permit period. Work on the road was halted for half a week, however the Huon Valley Council decided the developer had met permit conditions and allowed work to continue.
- Meetings with various PWS staff including Peter Mooney.
- Joint Media Release with Recherche Bay Protection Group on threats to heritage and conservation values of this region.
- Media coverage included a letter published in Mercury on the Three Sisters controversy, ABC Burnie in relation to Pump House Point, a Cockle Creek East press release, and an interview with The Advocate in relation to a walking track promotional article in the Australian Geographic.
- Review of State budget papers and input into questions for the Estimates Hearings.
- TNPA received \$1,800 from the Grants for Voluntary Environmental and Heritage Organisations (GVEHO).

- TNPA made a submission in relation to proposals for visitor risk management at Sphinx Rock, Wellington Park.
- TNPA nominated Russell Warman as representative to National Parks and Wildlife Advisory Council.

## July

- Anne Duncan, the new PWS Southern Region Manager, was the invited speaker at the July TNPA Members Meeting. Anne talked about the new regional structure and what is/will be happening in the Southern Region
- Actions in relation to the Cockle Creek East resort development continued, including following up permit conditions and legal considerations in consultation with the EDO.
- TNPA wrote to Parks & Heritage Minister, Judy Jackson, requesting urgent declaration of the southern coast of Recherche Bay as a 'Heritage Area' under Part 5 of the Historical Cultural Heritage Act 1995, this was followed up by a Media Release and TV interviews.
- TNPA had meetings with several PWS staff on a range of issues.
- TNPA nominated Robert Campbell as representative to fill 'Conservation Member' position on Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area Consultative Committee.
- TNPA issued a Media Release on the development proposal for Pump House Point.
- A submission was made to the draft tourism strategy for the Tasman Peninsula.
- Further work was undertaken on the Crown land project that is reviewing additional municipalities and their recommendations for land status.
- TNPA wrote to the Federal Environment Minister, Senator Campbell, in relation to shark fishing in the Kent Marine Protected Area (which currently can occur within the no take area) advocating a no-take policy for sharks.
- Other media involvement included a piece on Cockle Creek for Wild magazine; and a letter published on Cockle Creek, as well as two press releases which generated TV and radio coverage and interviews.

## August

- Initial meeting of TNPA Management and Planning Working Group & Boundaries Working Group.
- Weekly meetings with Recherche Bay Action Group.
- Letter published in the Mercury concerning privatization of part of South West National Park.
- Meeting at Sphinx Rock with the Wellington Park Management Trust, HCC and other interested people to review possible actions to address safety concerns at Sphinx Rock.
- TNPA received funding from the Tasmanian Community Fund to purchase a computer.

- TNPA fundraiser slide show "Tibetan Journeys, Cycling in Eastern Tibet, 2003 and 2005" presented by Peter Berechree with assistance from Judy Sandeman was attended by 140 people and raised over \$1000.
- Discussion with Rodney King of Staged Designs regarding the resort development at Cockle Creek East.
- Meetings and discussions with several WS staff.
- Calls and ideas for possible participation in Great Australian Bushwalk.
- Media Release on Pump House Point generated a response from PWS and announcement of Simon Currant's intentions.
- Followed up on Crown land project for Midlands municipalities.
- TNPA provided feedback to PWS on the Licensed Camp draft policy.
- TNPA provided comment to the Development of a Strategy for the Historic Cultural Heritage of the TWWHA project.
- TNPA met with Janet Mackay, the consultant reviewing the provision of infrastructure along the Overland Track.
- TNPA met with Mark Bryce, PWS Manager Operations and Performance, regarding the restructure of the PWS into three regions.
- Letter to Federal Environment Minister, Senator Campbell, requesting that he ensure that the impact of wood supply on the native forests of Tasmania is assessed as part of the EPBC Act pulp mill assessment process.
- Funding grant submitted to Australian Ethical Investments.
- Letter written to Judy Jackson asking on the progress of making a decision on the TNPA request to declare the south side of Recherche Bay (Cockle Creek East) a 'Heritage Area' under the HCHA 1995.

## September

- The TNPA 2005 AGM and dinner held together with slide show on Federation Peak from Kevin Doran.
- TNPA made a formal submission to the consultant undertaking the review of infrastructure on the Overland Track.
- The Program Coordinator attended a weekend workshop in Launceston on campaigning.
- The TNPA continued to meet with Recherche Bay Action Group.
- A TNPA representative attended the National Parks Australian Council 2005 AGM in Canberra.



## Introducing the TNPA Program Coordinator – Russell Warman

Since April this year I have been working two days a week as the Program Coordinator for the TNPA. What this means is a mix of campaigning, media, liaising with Parks and giving feedback and input into their activities, and helping out in the administration of the TNPA.

As a way for you to get to know me I have outlined a little of my background, my observations about Tasmania's reserve system and its management, and what inspires me for the future of Tasmania's national parks system and the TNPA.

I grew up in rural South East Queensland where I was an amateur naturalist, a member of the Queensland Parks service 'Junior Ranger' program, a keen bushwalker and I managed the back two acres of bush on my family's acreage as a 'national park' (complete with management challenges such as walking track maintenance (with a mower!), weed control, and constant pressure from the neighbours horses wanting to munch at the healthy native kangaroo grass swaying under the eucalypt canopy).

My professional background is in landscape architecture and natural resource management and in these fields I have experience in design, planning, extension, community engagement and facilitation, and project management. I have worked in much of Tasmania and visited a lot of the state since I arrived here in 1991.

Since I've been in the Program Coordinator position, the major questions I can see for our parks system are:

- how to resource the management of them, and
- how to ensure that conservation remains the primary objective for managing them.

I am committed to seeing that our parks are well resourced (without privatising them!) and that conservation remains the central reason we look after them.

While the TNPA has been putting a lot of our effort into fighting commercial pressure to privatise and develop accommodation in our reserves, I also think that there are other threats that are at least as serious that we should not lose sight of. For example, environmental weeds are constantly making degrading inroads into our reserves; recreational vehicles and 4WD's are causing unsustainable impacts, especially on our coastal reserves; and the fast growing tourism numbers are putting a lot of pressure on our iconic park locations. It seems to me that underpinning many of these problems is an inadequately resourced and supported Parks and Wildlife Service, and this is a key issue that I would like to tackle.

I see my role as a representative and advocate. When I speak and work for the TNPA there are three groups I keep in the back of my mind as being who I am standing for:

- Firstly, the TNPA membership and by extension everyone in the Tasmanian community that shares the aims of the TNPA and cares for our reserves.
- Secondly, I see that we have a role to say publicly what the good staff in the Parks and Wildlife Service cannot always publicly communicate.
- Thirdly, I recognise that we are a vital voice for the wild and beautiful nature of our state.

As well as furthering our campaign work, I support the TNPA Management Committee in their commitment to the TNPA being a professional, efficient and vibrant organisation, and work with them to achieve this. Ultimately we will only be as effective 'out there' as we are internally – our vital work needs the foundation of a strong, efficient organisation.

On a practical note, I generally work Wednesdays and Thursdays, clear the mail once a week, also clear emails on those days, and can be contacted on the TNPA phone – 0427 854 684. Feel free to contact me on any TNPA matters that interest or worry you and I will see how I can help. Equally I love to receive offers of help. Again feel free to contact me.

**Russell Warman (TNPA Program Coordinator)**

## A Comparison of Reserved Land Areas in Australia

The Tasmanian Government (and the forest industry, bless 'em) often like to boast of Tasmania's levels of protection in reserves - how good is it compared to other states.

Here are some statistics from the ABS website (<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/0/3a2963826d138186ca256dea00053a0c?OpenDocument> – 28/04/05).

Combining all IUCN categories of reserve in 2003 the line up was:

State /Territory	Area of land Ha	% of total land area
ACT	128,000	54.4
<b>TAS</b>	<b>2,550,000</b>	<b>37.3</b>
SA	25,244,000	25.7
VIC	3,424,000	15.0
WA	27,169,000	10.8
NSW	5,336,000	6.7
NT	6,490,000	4.8
QLD	7,120,000	4.1
<b>National</b>	<b>77,462,000</b>	<b>10.1</b>



## Greetings From Ningaloo Reef, WA

Originally I had planned to describe the beauty of Ningaloo Reef, and the magical colourful world that lies beneath the clear aqua sea just metres from the beach, however there is another aspect of Ningaloo that managed to fascinate the Tasmanians on my trip to Ningaloo Reef (as well as the one western Australian and a handful of other tourists) – and that was their “Bush Loos”.

Incredible as that may sound, but at the end of the day, round the camp not only did the topic of conversation revolve around what every one saw under the clear aqua sea, but it also included how impressed every one was with the ‘Bush Loos’.

Why you might ask? Well, picture a traditional Tassie long drop bush loo. I don’t know about you, but for me there is an entry ritual which goes something like this – breathe deeply several times, ensure the last breath is a giant one, enter the loo, and pray my lung capacity has allowed me to gulp enough oxygen to enable me to leave the loo before taking my next breath (mainly for fear of being asphyxiated if I didn’t). Not pleasant really is it? Thankfully this does not happen at Ningaloo, there you can walk right in and take deep breathes inside (mind you no one in their right mind would really do that, but you could) as they do not smell.

The secret is not handfuls of lime, but instead a bucket of sapphire blue water and a toilet brush. What the magic ingredient is we

didn’t find out, but whatever it is it appears environmentally friendly as the sign above asks you not to put chemicals in the loo.

This fascination for the good oxygen smelling loos got me thinking about how we could transport this magic sapphire coloured liquid to some of the more remote long drops in Tassie’s National Parks, so we too could have loos that smelt as fresh as the natural surroundings and really, with a vivid imagination, there is no limit to the transport methods one can conjure up. For example Park Rangers or perhaps volunteers could use a camel back to regularly carry the stuff (obviously taking care it doesn’t get mixed up with good old drinking H<sub>2</sub>O) or make it compulsory that tourists carry a litre in with them or.....or maybe I should let this fascination for the Ningaloo loos go and simply state that Ningaloo Reef hosts an absolutely unbelievable magic colourful world clearly visible literally centimetres from the ocean surface and just a few metres from shore that will simply mesmerise and captivate one for hours and days on end.

It is a place well worth adding to your list of must see Aussie destinations, but one word of advice – in order to maximise your snorkelling time I suggest you wear a long wetsuit not a short one despite the reef’s northerly location!!

**Lisa Kavanagh (Past TNPA Treasurer)**

## More from the President

### Organisational Changes

During the past year TNPA membership grew to around 180 people. This expanding membership underlies the growing strength of the TNPA as a strong voice for the protection of Tasmania’s national parks and other conservation reserves.

The past year also saw some changes on the Executive Committee. Lisa Kavanagh moved to WA in May after filling the dual roles of both Secretary and Treasurer for around two years. I personally extend my thanks to Lisa for all her fabulous work, and also to Jo Carswell for stepping forward to fill the role of Treasurer at short notice. Last November we also said goodbye to Helen Gee, who had been an extremely active TNPA Program Coordinator for around two years. Greg Wood filled this position for a few months last summer before moving to WA, and since May it has been filled by Russell Warman.

The TNPA is also in the process of expanding the Executive Committee to eight, with the addition of two General Member positions, and is also establishing a number of Working Groups to help advise the Committee and make use of many of the specialist skills held by members. Two members of the Executive have also been nominated to membership vacancies of both the

**By Robert Campbell**

National Parks and Wildlife Advisory Committee and the TWWHA Consultative Committee.

### Thanks

As mentioned previously, the Mullum Trust, a private charitable Trust, has provided a grant of \$7500 per annum to the TNPA over the past two years, and I extend a huge thank you to the Trust for their support over this period. In June this year, the TNPA also received a grant of \$1800 from the Federal Government under the Grants to Environmental and Heritage Organisations scheme.

I also thank my fellow members on the Executive Committee – they are a wonderful hard-working team, and a pleasure to work with.

And finally, a big thank you to all our members and supporters. I look forward to your continuing support and if you would like to assist the Committee by joining a Working Group or helping with fundraising ideas (either suggesting ideas or volunteering) your input would be most welcome. The TNPA is an important voice which is still evolving and I thank you all for your support.

(This is an edited version of the President’s report given at the recent AGM)

# TNPA Working Groups Report

The first meeting of the two newly formed TNPA Working Groups – the Boundaries Working Group and the Management & Planning Working Group – was held in early August. The meeting was essentially to discuss how the two working groups should operate and to establish their key focus in the next year.

**Boundaries Working Group:** The W/Group was briefed on the recently established World Heritage Boundaries Working Group which has grown out of the Tarkine campaign. It was felt that a TNPA Boundaries Working Group had an important and separate role as it is concerned with Tasmanian reserves more generally, not only World Heritage. The general view of the meeting was that a useful initial direction is to assess current reserve areas and areas that are outside reserves but which have conservation and other natural/cultural values that are still at risk. The inadequacies of the boundary of Mt Field National Park was also raised as needing consideration and action.

**Management & Planning Working Group:** Discussion of this area resulted in the identification of some key areas for the Working Group to deal with. These are –

- providing comment on draft national park management plans and plan reviews;
- reviewing the format and usability of current management plans;
- reviewing the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area Management Plan 1999 preparatory to the next major review;
- examining the conflicting management needs that routinely occur in national parks;
- looking at how 'values-based zoning' might be developed and used in preference to the current 'use-based zoning' as a way of refocusing management on values conservation rather than the human use of our conservation reserves, which appears to be the primary interest at present and is reflected in the suite of developments being proposed inside our Parks; and
- as an extension to the TNPA Parks Guardianship & Monitoring Program reviewing how well management plan policies and objectives are being met, and to what extent recommendations are being implemented.

Any TNPA members interested in joining one of these two working groups are most welcome. TNPA sees these groups as a way of using members' expertise to develop long-term policy and strategic advice on the management of Tasmania's National Parks which can be communicated to and discussed with government, and which will hopefully improve the management of our National Parks and other conservation reserves.

Get involved in proactive advocacy now! You can contact the Working Groups through [admin@tnpa.asn.au](mailto:admin@tnpa.asn.au).

## Tasmanian National Parks Association Inc

Patron: Peter Cundall

Sponsor: The Mullum Trust

### Executive Committee

Management Committee President: Robert Campbell

Vice Presidents: Margie Jenkin, Anne McConnell

Treasurer: Jo Carswell

Secretary: to be appointed

Other committee members: Greg Buckman

### Contact Details

Postal Address: GPO Box 2188, Hobart Tasmania 7001

Email: [admin@tnpa.asn.au](mailto:admin@tnpa.asn.au) Website: [www.tnpa.asn.au](http://www.tnpa.asn.au)

phone: 0427 854 684

### Meetings

General meeting: First Monday of the month at the Tasmanian Environment Centre - 102 Bathurst Street, Hobart, 6pm.

All are welcome.

## Have your say...

### ABC National - Tim Cox

[tasmornings@your.abc.net.au](mailto:tasmornings@your.abc.net.au) or 1300 36 1700

### Letters to the Editor at The Mercury

[mercuryledletters@dbl.newsltd.com.au](mailto:mercuryledletters@dbl.newsltd.com.au) or

GPO Box 334 Hobart 7001

### Letters to the Editor at The Examiner

[mail@examiner.com.au](mailto:mail@examiner.com.au) or PO Box 99A Launceston 7250

### Letters to the Editor at Herald Sun

[hsletters@hwt.newsltd.com.au](mailto:hsletters@hwt.newsltd.com.au)

### Letters to the Editor at The Age

[letters@theage.fairfax.com.au](mailto:letters@theage.fairfax.com.au)

### Minister for Tourism, Parks, Heritage and the Arts

[Ken.Bacon@parliament.tas.gov.au](mailto:Ken.Bacon@parliament.tas.gov.au)

### Minister for Environment

[Judy.Jackson@parliament.tas.gov.au](mailto:Judy.Jackson@parliament.tas.gov.au)

### Minister for Infrastructure, Energy and Resources

[Bryan.Green@parliament.tas.gov.au](mailto:Bryan.Green@parliament.tas.gov.au)

## TNPA News

TNPA News is published twice a year. It is intended to provide informative articles on issues related to National Parks and other protected areas, as well as articles and other items that relate to the TNPA and the fulfilment of its objectives.

In this issue we welcome a range of outside contributions on various matters relating to the conservation of natural and cultural values in Tasmania and the history of Tasmania's national parks. We thank Debbie Quarmby, Doug Humann, Peter Mooney, Sharon Moore, Lisa Kavanagh, Andy Cianchi, Margie Jenkin, Robert Campbell, Russell Warman and Anne McConnell for their articles or other contributions to TNPA News No. 5.

Contributions for TNPA News No.6 (deadline – mid March 2006) are welcomed. Please send contributions to: [admin@tnpa.asn.au](mailto:admin@tnpa.asn.au) (attention- TNPA News Editor).

The views expressed in TNPA News are not necessarily those of the TNPA Inc.

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