

# NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION OF THE ACT INC.

## MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Thursday, 17 August 2017

Uniting Church Hall, Scrivener Street, O'Connor

### 1. Welcome

The Immediate Past President, Rod Griffiths, welcomed about 25 members, life members and guests to the meeting. Rod acknowledged the traditional owners of the land we meet on and paid respects to their elders past and present.

### 2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Esther Gallant, Cynthia Burton, Quentin Moran, Martin Chalk, Barrie Ridgway, Rupert Barnett, Judy and David Kelly, Bruce and Maria Boreham, Graham Scully, Tim Walsh and Janet Thompson, Mike and Annette Smith, Deidre Shaw, Colin McAlister, Di and Gary Thompson, and Ross Kingsland.

### 3. Confirmation of the minutes of the 2016 AGM

The minutes of the Annual General Meeting of 18 August 2016 were projected on the screen and accepted as a true record of the meeting.

4. **Matters arising from the minutes:** There were no matters arising from last year's minutes.

### 5. Committee's annual report for 2016-17

Rod read the text of the Committee's report to the meeting. This will be presented in full in the September *NPA Bulletin*, but the main points are as follows:

- Key members of the ACT Legislative Assembly were taken on NPA guided walks: Environment Minister Mick Gentleman to Goorooyaroo, and Elizabeth Lee MLA to Yankee Hat.
- A successful campaign during the 2016 ACT elections saw a feasibility study into the ACT's Lowland Grassy Woodlands commence early in 2017.
- Hard work by the Publications Subcommittee led to the publication and very successful launch of Suzi Bond's butterfly field guide just in time for the Christmas shopping rush.
- Supply and distribution of a set of environmentally themed children's books, *The Bilby Trilogy*, to all primary schools in the ACT.
- Installation of new signage and paths at the Glenburn Precinct coupled with a well-publicised opening by the Minister for the Environment.
- Two more very successful Art Weeks were held at Gudgenby Cottage. The resulting artworks were exhibited at Namadgi Visitor Centre during summer.
- Planning began in 2016 for the recently held and very successful bushfire symposium. The symposium was well attended by researchers, community representatives, emergency services, and parks and conservation staff. It is hoped that the discussions will influence fire management across the ACT, and in particular the development of the next Strategic Bushfire Management Plan. Many thanks to Christine Goonrey who conceived and managed the event (much applause!).
- Expansion of the NPA's scholarship program which helps support local environmental research, boosted by a substantial donation.
- A small action group is undertaking a project to promote recycling of the coconut fibre in old mattresses to make coir logs to prevent soil erosion in nature reserves.

Rod also expressed the Committee's appreciation of the efforts during the year put in by the NPA's office bearers, the subcommittee convenors, the *Bulletin* team, the office workers, the team organising our monthly general meetings, the guest speakers at those meetings, and the many others who kept our ship afloat. Rod especially thanked departing Committee member Isobel Crawford for her efforts during the year. There was spontaneous applause for all of the expressions of appreciation, full details of which will be reported in the *NPA Bulletin*.

### 6. Financial statements and appointment of auditor

Treasurer Chris Emery distributed some hard copies of the financial statements, and also projected them onto the screen. He stated that unfortunately they were yet to be audited, as our appointed auditor was in China, and the accounts await her return. He was unable to confirm that she would be available to audit next year's accounts; the new committee will need to appoint an auditor for FY 2017-18.

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Chris explained that NPA had made a net loss of \$39,000 during the year, as against a loss of \$6,000 last year. The difference is explained by the increase in NPA's project work this year, including production and printing of the butterfly book and the conduct of the bushfire symposium. However, our balance sheet remains healthy, with equity of \$117,000.

Chris noted that it was becoming increasingly expensive to be involved with the public liability bushwalking insurance cover obtained via the NSW Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs. The premium rose by 43 per cent during the year. The new Committee will need to examine alternatives. Chris, in his role as NPA's Public Officer, explained that NPA is registered with the Charities Commission as a non-profit organisation, and will not be required to pay fees associated with being an incorporated body anymore. NPA will, however, still be required to submit audited financial statements to the Commission each year.

The meeting accepted Chris's report, and warmly thanked him for his work.

### **7. Other business: *Change to constitution***

At the April 2017 NPA General Meeting a motion was passed asking the Committee to review the NPA Constitution to take into account changes in electronic communications, technology, and developments in business procedures generally. As a result, a proposal was developed and put to members at the July 2017 General Meeting for changes to Rules 27 and 41 of the Constitution. The Committee did not agree that Rule 40 (access to the Association's records) should be changed. The proposed changes to Rules 27 and 41 were approved by the General Meeting, and referred to this Annual General Meeting for resolution as per the formal procedures set out for changing the Constitution. The proposed wording, as amended, for Rules 27 and 41 is as follows:

#### Rule 27. Notice

- (1) Except where the nature of the business proposed to be dealt with at a general meeting requires a special resolution of the association, the secretary shall, at least 14 days before the date fixed for holding of the general meeting, cause to be sent to each member a notice in writing in a manner provided in subrule 41(1) which specifies the place, date and time of the meeting. This will normally be published in the association's quarterly Bulletin.
- (2) Where the nature of the business proposed to be dealt with at a general meeting requires a special resolution of the association, the secretary shall, at least 21 days before the date fixed for holding of the general meeting, cause to be sent to each member a notice in writing in a manner provided in subrule 41(1) which specifies, in addition to the matter required under subrule (1), the intention to propose the resolution as a special resolution.
- (3) A member desiring to bring any business before a general meeting may give notice in writing in a manner provided in subrule 41(1) of that business to the secretary who shall add that item to the agenda.

#### Rule 41. Service of notices

- (1) For the purpose of these rules, a notice may be served by or on behalf of the association on any member by:
  - (a) post to the member's address shown in the register of members; or
  - (b) email to the member's email address shown in the register of members.
- (2) Unless the contrary is proved:
  - (a) a notice sent by post is taken to be given 3 business days after it is posted; and
  - (b) a notice sent by electronic means is taken to be given on the next business day after it is sent.

When put to the vote the motion was carried without dissent.

### ***Life Membership for Martin Chalk***

Rod announced that Martin Chalk had been nominated for life membership of the association. Martin has been an active member of the NPAs of the ACT and NSW for over 20 years. He has spent the past 18 years walking and working in Namadgi and our southern national parks and making a huge contribution to the conservation of these areas. He has been the NPA ACT's Work Party Co-ordinator since 2003. This is a major role, entailing preparation of a detailed work plan in consultation with the national park rangers, ensuring publication of the work party program and arrangements in the *Bulletin*, and organising and making certain that all the equipment and materials needed are available, on location, on the day.

Martin is a highly respected and well liked member of the association, and his selection for life membership was warmly applauded. A more detailed coverage of Martin's involvement with NPA

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will appear in the September *NPA Bulletin*. Unfortunately he was unwell and unable to attend the AGM in person. We wish him a swift recovery.

### ***Book on the Murray-Darling***

NPA member and former Committee member Mike Bremers introduced the new book he has jointly authored with his daughter Angela. The book describes the detailed history of man-powered journeys on the Murray and Darling Rivers and their tributaries from the earliest European explorers right up to modern paddling adventures (including a couple of Mike's own). This beautifully presented volume will be formally launched at the Goolwa historical museum in September, and will be reviewed in the December *NPA Bulletin*.

### **8. Election**

Rod vacated the chair and handed over proceedings to the Returning Officer, David Large. David took the meeting through the election process. There were no additional nominations from the floor and David announced the following office bearers and committee members for 2017/18:

<b>Office</b>	<b>Nomination</b>	<b>Nominator</b>
President	Esther Gallant	Chris Emery, Steven Forst
Vice-President	Quentin Moran	Chris Emery, Steven Forst
Secretary	Sonja Lenz	Steven Forst, Isobel Crawford
Treasurer	Chris Emery	Isobel Crawford, Kevin McCue
Immediate Past President	Rod Griffiths	(Ex-officio committee member)
Committee member	Christine Goonrey	Sonja Lenz, Chris Emery
Committee member	George Heinsohn	Sonja Lenz, Kevin McCue
Committee member	Steven Forst	Kevin McCue, Isobel Crawford
Committee member	Cynthia Burton	Sonja Lenz, Max Lawrence
Committee member	Kevin McCue	Chris Emery, Isobel Crawford
Committee member	Julie May	Sonja Lenz, Isobel Crawford

David welcomed the new committee and handed back the chair to Rod, who thanked him for being a very efficient Returning Officer, having successfully returned a full set of office bearers to NPA. But there is still scope for the Committee to recruit new members to its ranks. Rod is very relieved that NPA now has a President.

Clive Hurlstone moved a vote of thanks to the outgoing committee and drew attention to the fact that the vacant role of President had, over the year, been successfully shared between the members, especially the Immediate Past President and the Vice President. But he also emphasised that the outgoing committee had achieved some remarkable outcomes, despite some gaps in its ranks. Clive's motion of appreciation was carried with strong acclamation.

### **9. Presentation**

Rod introduced guest speaker Christine Goonrey, the convenor and manager of NPA'S very successful **Bushfire Management Symposium**. Christine gave a detailed description of the symposium, which was widely applauded by the 120 participants who attended, and which can be expected to have very positive impact on how the ACT manages its fire/nature conservation issues in the future. A full report will appear in the September *NPA Bulletin*. The meeting thanked her with warm applause.

At the conclusion of her presentation Christine received a bouquet of flowers with thanks from the symposium organising group for her foresight and stewardship throughout the planning and execution of the symposium.

Chair..... Date.....