



COASTAL CUSTODIANS

Volume 2, Issue 11

February/March 2006



**MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT BOB DEBUS
MINISTER FOR ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS
MILTON ORKOPOULOS**

NEW SOUTH WALES

NEWS RELEASE

2006

3 February

Formal Handback of National Parks to Aboriginal Community

The NSW Government has finalised an agreement with Aboriginal communities on the Far South Coast that will result in the formal handback of Biamanga and Gulaga National Parks, Environment Minister Bob Debus said today.

Mr Debus said decisions about the future management of the parks will now be made by a Board of Management comprising a majority of Aboriginal owners.

The NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS -part of the Department of Conservation and Environment) will continue to be responsible for carrying out on ground works in the two parks.

NSW Minister for Aboriginal Affairs Milton Orkopoulos said he was delighted that a lease agreement had been finalised for these national parks, describing it as an "historic moment".

"The lands now comprising Biamanga and Gulaga National Parks lie within the traditional country of Yuin [Djuwin] people. These are lands, which they have inhabited since time immemorial," Mr Orkopoulos said.

"They hold deep spiritual and cultural significance for Aboriginal people and it is

right and just that they should be in the hands of the Yuin people to manage.

"Mumbulla Mountain is the central place of significance in Biamanga National Park and certain areas are recognised as a ceremonial meeting places, for Aboriginal men and women.

"Gulaga Mountain is described by Aboriginal people as the place of ancestral origin for Yuin people. Gulaga itself symbolises the mother and provides a basis for Aboriginal spiritual identity, for Aboriginal women and men.

"I am proud that the NSW Government has now been able to make the appropriate arrangements that allow Aboriginal people to be recognised under State law as being the legal owners of these lands.

Pictured: Glenis and Jidi Kelly presenting The Minister for the Environment,



Bob Debus with an Abalone shell painted by Jidi using Aboriginal designs. The painted shell was a gift to the Minister to thank him for his support up to and during the negotiation process.

“Lease agreements, were developed through a two year process of negotiation between a Negotiating Panel, representing the Aboriginal Owners, Local Aboriginal Lands Councils and the National parks and Wildlife Service,” Mr Orkopoulos said

Mr Debus said it is important for people to understand that the agreement with the State Government allows for the lands to continue to be managed as part of the NSW National Park system.

“We arrive at this point after considerable effort. Many unpaid hours were invested in this by the Negotiating Panel and I’d like to thank them for their efforts,” he said.

The Negotiating Panel consisted of Violet Parsons and Donna Brennan [Dec] from Batemans Bay; Mary Duroux and Dave Tout from Moruya; Lionel Mongta and John Mumbler from Bodalla; Vivienne Mason and Keith Stewart from Narooma; Pam Flanders and Anne Thomas from Wallaga Lake; Kathy Jones from Bega, B. J. Cruse and Mervyn Penrith from Eden. The Facilitator was Michael Williams, the Project Officer was Patricia Ellis, the Coordinator was Karen Lee, and the Aboriginal Negotiating Panel’s legal advisor was barrister Adam McLean.

Also represented on the Board will be a nominee of the Local Aboriginal Land Councils, a representative of each of the National Parks and Wildlife Service, local government, conservation groups and neighbouring landowners.

In March the general public will be invited to an Open day where the process of handback and future management of the parks will be explained in more detail.

An official handover will be held later in the year.

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DISCLAIMER

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OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR
ABORIGINAL LAND RIGHTS ACT 1983 (NSW)
CENTENNIAL PLAZA, TOWER B
LEVEL 13, 280 ELIZABETH STREET
SURRY HILLS NSW 2010
P. 02 9219 0700 F. 02 9219 0770

Dear Coastal Custodians

Re: Meeting to select Biamanga and Gulaga Board of Management, Murramarang Resort, 22 and 23 April 2006

Because lease negotiations are now complete, both Biamanga and Gulaga National Parks can be jointly managed. Two meetings have already been held at the Tilba Community Hall to discuss the structure and the nomination process for the Boards of Management for the Biamanga and Gulaga National Parks. Each meeting was attended by approximately fifty people.

Copies of the Biamanga and Gulaga report were distributed along with updated copies of the Guide to Aboriginal Ownership.

On 22 and 23 April 2006, a further meeting is scheduled to be held at the Murramarang Resort to select the membership of the Boards of Management for both Biamanga and Gulaga National Parks.

Each Board of Management will include 7 Registered Aboriginal Owners and a further 7 back-up nominees.

Although the Register of Aboriginal Owners remains open indefinitely, to vote at the Murramarang meeting or to be selected to sit on the Board of Management for either Biamanga or Gulaga, you must already be on the register of Aboriginal owners for that park.

If you are not already a Registered Aboriginal Owner and you wish to be on a Board of Management or vote at the meeting to select the Boards Aboriginal Owner members, you must complete and return it to the Office of the Registrar by 7 April 2006.

Further invitations to the Murramarang meeting will be distributed to Aboriginal Owners shortly.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Wright
Registrar
Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983

Biamanga and Gulaga Handback - Independent Facilitator's view



**Gulaga Mountain to
be returned to
Aboriginal Owners**

**Gulaga National Park
lease negotiation
completed**

BIAMANGA NATIONAL PARK LEASE NEGOTIATION COMPLETED

Since the last Coastal Custodian (November/December Volume 2 Issue 10), the wonderful news is that the Biamanga lease negotiations are now complete.

At an extraordinary meeting in early February 2006 Bega Local Aboriginal Land Council signed the Biamanga lease. With the signing in early December 2005 of the Gulaga lease by Wagonga and Merrimans Local Aboriginal Land Councils and the signing of the Biamanga lease by Merrimans Aboriginal Land Council, this means the Gulaga and Biamanga lease negotiations are now complete.

All that remains to be completed for the Gulaga and Biamanga leases is for the NSW Minister for the Environment to sign the Gulaga and Biamanga leases, the freehold title to Gulaga National Park to be vested with the Wagonga and Merrimans Local Aboriginal Land Councils (who hold on behalf of Aboriginal Owners) and the freehold title to Biamanga National Park to be vested with the Merrimans and Bega Local Aboriginal Land Councils (who hold on behalf of Aboriginal Owners), and proclamation of the Gulaga and Biamanga National Parks to reflect these new arrangements.

Planning is well underway for the ceremony for the handback which is proposed to take place on weekend of 6-7 May 2006 at Tilba Tilba. I'm sure it will be a great community celebration and one of immense cultural and political significance.

NSW MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT SAYS A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL INVOLVED IN THE LEASE NEGOTIATIONS

In a generous gesture, the NSW Minister for the Environment Bob Debus hosted a special lunch in Narooma on 19 January 2006 to say a big thank you to all the Aboriginal Negotiating Panel and Wagonga, Merrimans and Bega Local Aboriginal Land Councils' representatives. Bob Debus was accompanied by Dr Tony Fleming head of NSW National Parks and Wildlife.

Bob Debus was warmly welcomed to Yuin country and after a great lunch the Minister thanked all those that had been involved in the lease negotiations. He particularly thanked the Aboriginal Negotiating Panel for their tireless voluntary contributions over the two year negotiation process and undertook to look carefully at the Aboriginal Negotiating Panel's request for there to be continuity of Aboriginal Owner Panel representation onto the Gulaga and Biamanga Boards of Management.



Pictured: Karen Lee and Bob Debus enjoying lunch

The Minister then took questions on the hand back as well as a range of issues relevant to south coast Aboriginal community. This included the recent decision by the NSW Government to establish the Batemans Marine Park, incorporating State waters from the northern end of Murramarang Beach to Wallaga Lake and including the coastal lakes and estuaries.

This was the third visit by the Minister during the two-year negotiation process and his support for the handback process was very much appreciated by all present.

WHAT'S NEXT?

I look forward to my final report to all those who have been vitally interested in this great journey of

handing back Gulaga and Biamanga National Parks to their rightful owners when I report on the handback ceremony proposed to be held on weekend of 6-7 May 2006 at Tilba Tilba. I look forward to that day – a day to celebrate indeed.

Mike Williams
Independent facilitator for the Biamanga and Gulaga Negotiating Parties

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Pictured: Janette & her Mum Violet Parsons at the Ministers luncheon.

Regional Managers Report

So much has happened since the last Coastal Custodians.

Negotiations for the handback of Biamanga and Gulaga have finished. Bega, Merrimans and Wagonga Lands Councils and the Minister for the Environment have signed the leases and there's only one small step to be taken and the parks will be legally handed back.

By the time Coastal Custodians is printed the parks will have been formally handed back.



Pictured: Uncle Keith Stewart enjoying the food.

Until the Boards of Management are formed, National Parks will keep on managing the parks, but we certainly won't be making any big decisions. That's the job of the Board.

As most people would know the Department of Aboriginal Affairs is running a series of meetings to help the community work out which of the Aboriginal Owners should be on the Boards.

While the owners will always have the majority, Land Councils, National Parks, a neighbour, local councils and a neighbour and a conservation group will also be on the Board. Over the next few weeks we'll be writing to these organisations asking for their nominations. For the neighbour representative we'll put an advertisement in the local paper asking for nominations.

Hopefully the boards will be up and running pretty soon.

In the meantime the Government will start paying rent for the two parks. The money goes into a special account and can only be spent if the Boards of Management for the two parks agree.



Pictured: Preston Cope, Bob Debus, Trisha Ellis, Mike Williams, Tony Flemming and Tim Shepherd at the luncheon.

The 6th May will be a huge day. The formal handback celebration will be held at the Tilba Sports Ground with people invited

from all over New South Wales and maybe beyond. A committee made up of Aboriginal Owners, Lands Councils and National Parks is organising the event. It's a big job in itself.



Pictured:
Kathy Jones of Bega enjoying luncheon

The Governments decision to declare a Marine Park stretching from Brush Island to Wallaga, is the other big news. The Marine Parks Authority who is made up of Fisheries, National Parks and the Premiers Department will manage the Marine Park.

The Marine Parks Authority is about to appoint an Aboriginal Liaison Officer to work with Aboriginal Communities about the park.

In particular the Marine Parks Authority needs to know where Aboriginal people fish or collect pipi's and other things to make sure that that the park has little impact on Aboriginal people's use of the area. If you want to know more give the Manager of Batemans Bay marine Park, Cameron Westaway a call on 042 8413 309

That's it for me, see you on the 6th May.

Tim Shepherd
Regional Manager

Southern Aboriginal Heritage Region Update

Well all things must come to an end. With sad news I must inform everyone that I will be leaving the lovely South East to take up a new position as the Manager, Far West Aboriginal Heritage Region within the Cultural Heritage Division of the Department of Environment & Conservation, in Griffith NSW, on the 10 April 2006. My area of responsibility will cover a line from Corowa

on the Victorian boarder, to Griffith, Hillston, Cobar, Bourke and onto the Queensland boarder, and everything west to the South Australian boarder.

It has been a fantastic experience working with you, and for you, in protecting and managing Aboriginal heritage, from the South West Slopes of Tumut, to the Snowy Mountains, and up and down the coast from Nowra to Eden.

I have met a number of wonderful people over the past 5 ½ years, who have given me a tremendous amount of support and made my job down here a whole lot easier than what it otherwise would have been. I wish you all the very best for the future and hopefully we may meet again. I certainly do plan to return for the Biamanga/Gulaga National Parks Handback in May 06.

Looking back I think the things that stand out for me have been the commencement of the 3 Regional Aboriginal Heritage Studies across the Bega Valley, Eurobodalla and Shoalhaven Shire Councils. I believe that through this process that Aboriginal people have a better opportunity to identify the really important sites/places that exist within those environments. It is important that impacts are minimised to those places through appropriate planning protocols and triggers by the relevant Councils.

Other important achievements have been gained under the Aboriginal heritage study and formation of the Kosciuszko Aboriginal Working Group as part of developing the new Plan of Management for Kosciuszko; support for the Djuwin Women's Lore Council; involvement and improved Aboriginal Heritage outcomes to a range of development proposals; and some important reburials and repatriation of Aboriginal remains back to country.

No doubt though, there are still challenges in getting appropriate Aboriginal representation and mapping of Aboriginal cultural values within the new Batemans Marine Park, Natural Resource

Management and Government Departments working together for improved outcomes in communities.

Although I am leaving, work must go on. I remind everyone that we are commencing preparation for the coming financial year. There will be a number of Aboriginal heritage projects that will need to be done and I encourage you to contact your local Aboriginal Heritage Conservation Officer to discuss opportunities in your local area. These officers include: Rod Wellington (Nowra) on 44222340; Vanessa Mason (acting at Narooma) on 44760841; Graham Moore (Merimbula) on 0264955043; Jindabyne is currently vacant and we will be recruiting to this position very shortly; Dean Freeman (Tumut) on 69477066.

I am not aware at present of who will be acting in my position until permanent recruitment action has taken place, however you will be able to contact the acting Manager on (02) 62989736.

See you all later!

Gary Currey
Manager
Southern Aboriginal Heritage Region
Cultural Heritage Division
Department of Environment & Conservation

Can you help

“Find Our Mob”

Dear Patricia,

I recently came across a copy of the above magazine and was surprised and delighted to find a reference to my long lost great grandmother in the interview with Vic Carriage. I also noted that you are related to Vic.

I am looking for information on my grandfathers parents, Constance Page and Malcolm Francis Fuller. Constance b 1891, was the daughter of

Julia Moore and Charles Page. I believe Constance's brother Charles, William and Thomas Page made their homes on the South Coast, as did her sisters Ethel, Florence and Dorothy Page. My grandfather was raised by his fathers family, and despite his efforts to learn more, had only a single photo of his mother. If anyone knew Constance or her family I would love to hear from you, and I can be reached on 0419 483432

Thanks for you help
Regards

Carolyn Tweedie

Dear Trisha
Hello. My name is Elisa Robinson. For the past 3 years I have been tracing my Nan's family.

Nan was stolen generation. Nan's family was from Roseby Park/ Wallaga Lake areas. Nan was taken under the age of two and "adopted" out to a white family. Due to the Aborigines Protection Board receiving 'maintenance' from her father, a white man by the name of Lonesborough. Nan's adoptive family could not change her surname, this has been a God-send in tracing her family. Nan's surname was Carpenter. Her adoptive family named her Phyllis May. Nan was one of three children to Lonesborough who were taken by the APB. Their names may have been Jack and Helen Carpenter.

My Nan's mother's name was Mary Carpenter born 1893-1895, what happened after her children were taken is unknown. I know of one brother named

*David Charles Carpenter who married Minnie Timbery, daughter of Joe and Elizabeth Timbery. Mary and David's parents were:

*Jack (Johnnie) Carpenter born 1856-1859 at Greenwell Point & Rebekah Mumbra Penrith born 04 December 1869 who were married in 1890 at Wallaga Lake. Jack (Johnnie) Carpenter had 5 siblings that I know of who are:

*Harry (Henry) Carpenter who married in 1896 to Susannah Judson, he passed in 1901 at Roseby Park. Possibly had two daughters Harriet Carpenter born 1897 and Lena Carpenter born 1899.

*Mary Carpenter born 1862 who married Thomas Dixon who was born 1862 Coolangatta, son of William Dixon and Mary Anne Irving. Thomas Dixon died 1940 and was buried Jerringa Tribal Burial Grounds, Roseby Park. Children unknown. **Pictured:** Elisa Robinson



*Ellen Carpenter born 1865 Jervis Bay, married in 1882 to William Arthur/ William Alfred Dixon. William Dixon was born in 1860, died 1889. Ellen could possibly of been married a second time in 1890 at Broughton Creek to Thomas Amatto who was born 1854 at Broughton Creek, son of John Amatto and Susanna Mitcham Mitcham, died 1910 Nowra. The third marriage to Enoch (John) Amatto, brother of Thomas. The Amatto name may have been changed to Cook. Ellen Carpenter died sometime after 1903.

*Rose Gunaal Carpenter born 1880, married 1900 at Wallaga Lake to John Biamanga Mumbler. John Biamanga Mumbler was born 1862 Wallaga Lake, son of Aboriginal Mumbler and Elizabeth Mumbla Turner. Rose died February 1971 Nowra. I know of 5 children they had Harry Mumbler, Percy Mumbler, Frank Mumbler, Christopher Mumbler and Kate Mumbler.

My Nan married a Welshman named John (Jack) Henry Robinson, he was an engineer. They lived in Stanmore, Sydney. Nan passed in 1993. Nan told me to be proud of who I am and where I come from, which was her. Unfortunately Nan never found out who her family were before she died. Nan missed them her entire life, I don't want to miss out on knowing them, too.

If anyone who is reading this knows any further information on any of the names mentioned or you are one of the descendants of these people I would love to hear from you.

**Elisa Robinson
0422681038**

Aboriginal Owners Meetings

On Monday 20th and Tuesday 28th of February Aboriginal Owners meetings were held at the Tilba Community Hall to discuss the structure and the nomination process for the Boards of Management for the Biamanga and Gulaga National Parks. Each meeting was well attended. Here are some Familiar faces.



Pictured: Linda Cruse, Mary Duroux & Margaret Dixon.

Carol Larritt

Dianna Campbell



Harriet Walker



Richard Snashall



Richard Snashall (pictured) of "Spinning Reel Audio Visual" is fast becoming a familiar site at meetings. He is documenting the process for future reference.



Gulaga Biamanga

HANDBACK OPEN DAY

- COME AND CHAT WITH ABORIGINAL OWNERS AND MEMBERS OF THE HANDBACK NEGOTIATION PANEL.
- VIEW MAPS AND A CREATIVE PICTORIAL TIME LINE.
- SEE PRESENTATION OF HANDBACK NEGOTIATION PROCESS.
- TEA, COFFEE AND LIGHT REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED.

**Bega RSL Club
SATURDAY 8 APRIL**

**Call in anytime between
10:00A.M. TO 3:00P.M.**

ENQUIRIES: TRISHA ELLIS 0428 660432



NPWS is part of the Department of
Environment and Conservation (NSW)

Join in all artists!

Gulaga Celebration Art Exhibition and Competition

Easter Sat 15 and Sun 16 April 2006

At the Tilba Festival

An opportunity for all local artists to show their art, inspired by Guluga. Works can include painting, sculpture, fabrics, poetry, writing or songs.

Bring new or existing pieces that show your response to the beloved sacred mountain which overlooks Tilba, for the Festival crowd to view in the Big Hall.

Peoples' Choice Competition

\$200 first prize adult \$50 first prize children to age 18

Entry fee \$8/\$2

Entry forms at Gulaga Gallery

Drop art works Thursday 13 April to Central Tilba Big Hall

Further Information: call Virginia Sada. Ph 0419 200 737

Kerrianne Cox at Umbarra at Wallaga Lake

On Saturday 12 November Umbarra launched the “Friends of Umbarra” Society with a concert headlined by Kerrianne Cox. Over 150 people attended the day while Kerrianne enchanted the audience with her contagious enthusiasm and magnificent voice. There have been over 50 members who have joined the Society.

Wallaga Lake community members also showed their talents – Warren Foster, Harold Harrison, Maria Walker, Kathy Harrison & many young girls sang as well. The day was MC’d by Haiden Briggs. Mervyn Penrith told about how Umbarra started 10 years ago. In honour of 10 years of dedicated service to Umbarra, Noeline Leha presented Eric and Lorraine Naylor with a native plant and certificate.

Kerrianne regularly conducts song writing workshops which heal, inspire and uplift diverse audiences and such a workshop for the people of Wallaga Lake resulted in a beautiful original song urging this and future generations to be proud of and preserve their culture. The workshop enabled the kids to participate in the creation of a song and its lyrics and their smiles said it all.

The day was co-sponsored by NSW Regional ARTS and Eurobodalla Nature Coast Tourism. Umbarra plans to do more cultural events through the year.



Pictured: Kerrianne Cox and the Wallaga Lake community members showing their talents

Calendar of Events

March

Saturday 25th Biamanga/Gulaga
Open Day Tilba Hall
Tilba

April

Saturday 8th Biamanga/Gulaga Open
Day Bega RSL Club

May

Saturday 6th Biamanga/Gulaga
Handback Ceremony
Tilba Sports Ground
Tilba

Sunday 7th Biamanga/Gulaga
Guided Tours



Subscription details

Please fill in the following details to receive your copy of future quarterly newsletters and forward them to:

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Note: Photocopies of back issues available on request or visit the website on:

www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/npws.nsf/content/coastal_custodian_newsletter