

MAR 84

NEWSLETTER FITZGERALD RIVER NATIONAL PARK ASSOCIATION (INC) MARCH 1984

The Annual General Meeting was held as planned at Bill Lullfitz's on March 10th. Ninteen mebers and two visitors being present.

The election of office bearers was not quite as painless as last year but nevertheless quite smooth.

OFFICE BEARERS

- PRESIDENT Bill Lullfitz Box 82 Jerramungup 6337 Phone 098 35 5011
- SECRETARY Amelia Moir Box 21 Borden 6338 " 098 28 9044
- TREASURER Kaye Vaux Ongerup 6336 " 098 28 2037
- COMMITTEE Andrew Chapman, Keith Bradby, Ken Newbey.
- TWERTUP COMMITTEE Bill Moir, Bob Bathgate, Andrew Chapman, George Duxbury (ex-officio)

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

The usual inflation race was on. However as the credit balance at the bank was \$709 the meeting decided that subs should remain the same.

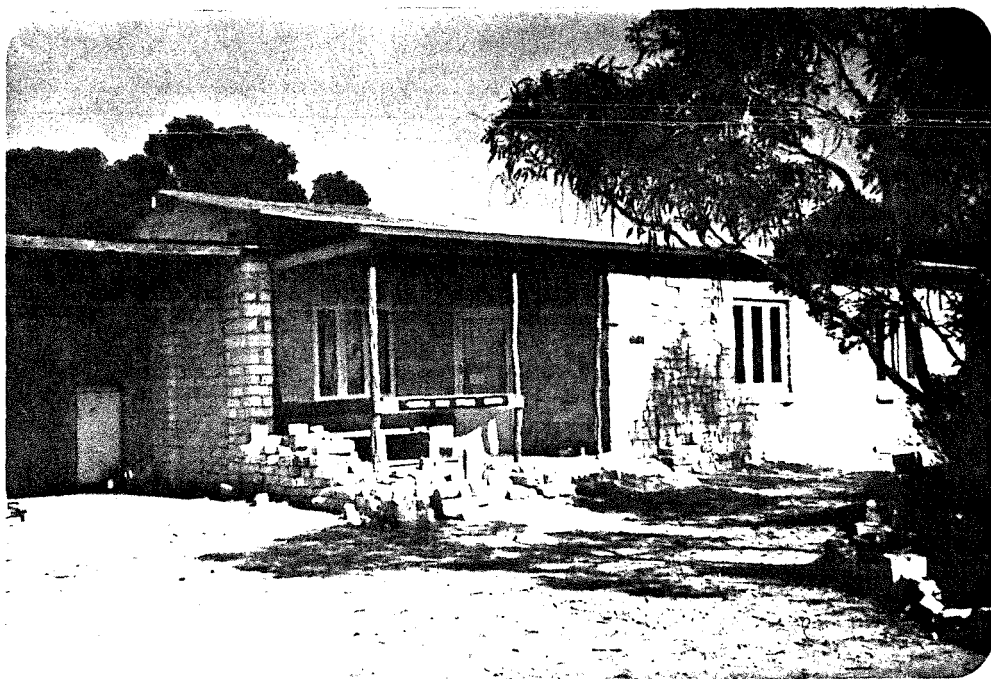
- \$3.00 single
- \$5.00 family

Subs are now due. please send these direct to the treasurer. New members please note that if you paid your sub after 1st Jan you are financial. The presidents report revealed that another very successful year has passed. Team work being evident in all types of activity whether it be in organising courses or assisting the Rangers. The visit from Colin lendon to the meeting held at Twin Bays had sparked further interest in International Biosphere Reserves. Plans are being looked at for a major seminar. Bill thanked Brenda for her stirling work done as secretary and the outgoing committee.

Keith is putting a lot of hard work into the possibility of the I.B.R. workshop . More news soon we hope.

A display board is being made and will be used in various public locations to advertise the beauty and uniqueness of the park. Photos of rare plants will make up the first display. Coinciding with the Year of The Plant. Earlier in the day members had travelled to the area north of the park under consideration for release for farming. On a glorious sunny morning what could have been more beautiful to behold than the mountains and valleys that lay before us. It was difficult to imagine the unique plants that surrounded us surrendering to the bulldozer, to fire, then the final indignation of the soil structure being destroyed by the plow. The believed habitat of the ground parrot was the next place visited. Brenda gave us some very interesting facts on the rarity of this bird. Lunch was partaken of in the vicinity of the Macrandra Water Hole . What a magnificent spot on the map this is ..... some of Keiths delightful Money Dew melon, seeds ... stuck with us all the way home.

Considering the aforementioned facts the meeting passed the following motion. THAT THIS ASSOCIATION AFFIRMS IT'S VIEW THAT THE CROWN LANDS TO THE NORTH OF THE F.R.N.P. ARE VALUABLE NATURAL AREAS AND SHOULD BE RETAINED AS SUCH. Camps at Twertup were discussed and while it is our desire that as many people as possible use the Field Studies Centre please no more than 30 at any one time. Reason.. areas further and further from the building are being used by campers .. which must be avoided.



TWERTUP FIELD  
STUDIES CENTRE  
1983.

Thirty adult size windcheaters to be printed with the new design have been ordered and will hopefully be available at the May meeting. Further orders for X large adult size or childrens can be ordered then. Lets start saving the cents. Undoubtedly we'll need lots!

With careful planning and lots of assistance from FRNPA members the National Parks Authority are looking towards conducting a 3 year Biological Survey of the park. This could reveal a lot of information pertaining to the agricultural land.

Another good attendance was recorded at "The Owl & Pussycat " weekend course, It is believed that some 14 species of mammal fossils were found. Seven not previously recorded and 3 presumed extinct in W.A.

Kaye making her discovery while everyone else was in the cave had to sit and PATIENTLY wait for their return clutching those precious jaw bones. Next meeting will be held at Macrandra Water Hole on Saturday 5th May at 11 a.m.

The track in could be a little doubtful for conventional vehicles.

Everyone meet junction Drummond track and Old Ongerup Road 10.30 a.m.

If anyone is desirous of leaving vehicles at this junction may then do so. The weather! Well if its raining we will find a dry shearing shed after meeting at Drummond Track junction.

SEE YOU THERE.

## DIEBACK

On Sunday morning at the recent Twertup Course, ecologist Ray Hart presented an informative and sobering talk on the voracious fungal disease known as "Dieback" (*Phytophthora cinnamomi*). Mr Hart has been involved with Dieback survey work which has included the Ravensthorpe district and some areas within the FRNP.

Dieback is native to South-East Asia but occurs there in small areas only. By contrast, since it was first identified in Australia the disease has spread with alarming ease and rapaciousness. However, as Dieback requires both a relatively high soil temperature and moist soil in order to be activated, its rate of spread varies from region to region. The fungus can be killed with prolonged drying of the soil.

Because this plant disease has come to be associated with our Jarrah Forests, many people do not realise that Dieback is very catholic in its appetite for our native plant species. In one of Mr Hart's study areas at Two Peoples Bay, 90% of species were wiped out. Unlike Jarrah which dies relatively slowly from infestation, many species suffer a sudden death. In a badly infected area this species loss has serious implications for the fauna and indeed the whole ecosystem. Dieback does not respect fencelines and therefore if the right conditions exist for the pathogen to become established, farm trees, orchards, plantations etc are just as vulnerable as our native species. The tourist industry might also be affected if wildflower sandplains are impoverished.

Dieback has been identified within the FRNP and at nearby Jacup. Climatic and environmental conditions have been the main inhibitors to its spread. Because the rate of spread within the FRNP is presumed to

be relatively slow, Mr Hart believes that the Park presents an excellent opportunity to monitor the rate of spread and control, if not eradicate the disease. Control options might include:

(i) quarantine

(ii) spraying with fungicide

(iii) a zone of "scorched earth" around isolated outbreaks

Of course the last two options would have to be carefully considered in the light of National Park Authority principles and management criteria.

Members might take the opportunity to consider the "Dieback" problem as it relates to the FRNP so that it can be dealt with at our next meeting. In the meantime, remember that Bell Track is quarantined to all vehicles.

Heather Pearce

