



# Reflections

The Journal of the *Lake Pedder* Restoration Committee (LPRC)

## Restoration Research positive for Pedder

### Is it possible for Lake Pedder to be successfully restored?

Groundbreaking research into native vegetation recolonisation of disturbed areas is underway at the University of Tasmania. This research will provide an excellent starting point for predicting how the vegetation of the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment will regenerate when it is drained to restore Lake Pedder. It may also provide insights into the way in which the revegetation process can be best managed and what time frames will be involved.

The work is being undertaken by PhD candidate, Kevin Leeson and commenced in July 2002. Titled 'Gauging Environmental Variation in the

*Rejuvenation Potential of Disturbed Natural Ecosystems'* the project involves analysis of vegetation change at a number of different sites and ecosystems across Tasmania. Mr Leeson has selected sites with a known 'disturbance history'. Disturbance refers to sudden natural and/or human-induced change in an ecosystem. Mr Leeson is using aerial photographs to track the vegetation changes over time. By digitising aerial photographs, he uses a combination of GIS (Geographic Information Systems) computer applications and ecological approaches to analyse and measure the changes. The results are verified with field studies at each site. Of particular interest to the Pedder restoration campaign are sites at the townships of Strathgordon and Adamsfield.

The township of Strathgordon's 'footprint' has diminished to around 20% of what it was in the early 1970s. The footprint in this context is the area which was cleared of native vegetation to make way for the townsite. Although some active revegetation has occurred at Strathgordon, there is still evidence of where native flora is recolonising large tracts of disturbed areas once occupied by the town site at its peak – perhaps a sign of things to come! Adamsfield is an abandoned mining town on the eastern banks of the Gordon Impoundment. Osmiridium (or more correctly known as iridosmine) was discovered there in 1925 and was mined until the early 1960s. The old township is barely recognisable today and is slowly being recolonised by native vegetation. Because of similarities with vegetation,



Kevin Leeson collecting soil samples at Kelly Basin, Macquarie Harbour

soil and climatic conditions, the results from these two sites may be invaluable for assessing how the Huon-Serpentine Impoundment will regenerate.

Mr Leeson hopes to have the results of his work ready by late 2005 or early 2006.

### All we need to do is get a big pipe...

Although I never visited Lake Pedder, the debate and passion, which is continuing some 30 years after its inundation, and subsequent ecological devastation is, for me, quite extraordinary. As a primary school child I remember my teacher announcing one day 'Class, I have something special to show you today, a 'new' map of Tasmania'. The teacher proudly held the 'new' map and drew our attention to the outlines of

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**EASTER 2005—Pedder Pilgrimage 'to the lake'.** Depending on response, there will be a trip with two nights staying at Maydena and one night near the lake. This bushwalk is graded hard and requires all participants to be experienced bushwalkers. Please bring all overnight bushwalking gear. Check the website closer to the date: [www.lakepedder.org](http://www.lakepedder.org)

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'two new lakes [sic] that we would be getting soon'...the dams were still under construction.

Everyone, including the teacher, welcomed the 'new' map, which would replace the time weary one hanging from the wall. Everyone, except one student, accepted the authority of this 'new' map displaying two large bodies of water to replace the small square one that for so long had been a part of the apparently now 'out-of-date' map. I guess this is my earliest recollection of being annoyed with government policies, so-called modifications to national parks and indiscriminate destruction of our natural environment.

Today as a PhD student, I am researching environmental variation with the regeneration potential of disturbed natural ecosystems. From some preliminary data and observations, there is no doubt that the resilience of our native species to re-establish within disturbed areas will occur given enough time. Even the 'lunar landscape' surrounding the hills of Queenstown, familiar to anyone who has visited the west coast of Tasmania, is slowly being recolonised by a particular

group of Tasmanian native plants able to tolerate the heavily contaminated soil conditions. A town established at Kelly Basin in Macquarie Harbour during the late 1800s called Pillinger is almost totally unrecognisable today because of the forest the area now supports. Historical photographs of Pillinger clearly show that both topsoil and plants were absent during its early years.

From the above, the question can be asked, 'Is it possible for Lake Pedder to be successfully restored?' The scientific community has produced a number of refereed articles published in journals such as: *Ecological Management and Restoration*; *Archiv fur Hydrobiologie*; *New Scientist*; and *Australian Environment Review* indicating that restoration is certainly possible. During 1995, proceedings from a symposium, held at the University of Tasmania, also indicated that restoration is a possibility. My own experience within this emerging field of science strongly suggests that restoration is indeed a real possibility. I must conclude that the underlying

factor preventing restoration of Lake Pedder appears to lie with convincing some of our political leaders to think beyond the next election.

Over the years, I have followed the developments and inquiries into draining the Pedder impoundment. I have listened to, and been inspired by, people such as David Bellamy and David Suzuki. More recently however, it is my five-year old son Ben who gives me inspiration and reminds me of the simplicity involved to drain the impoundment. Whenever we look at the picture of Lake Pedder on the wall at home he tells me 'Daddy... all we need to do is get a big pipe and drain the water into the Derwent River'. Ben's innocent perception also reminds me of the 1974 quote by Edward St John, QC 'The day will come when our children will undo what we so foolishly have done'. Not surprisingly, Ben has promised me that he will drain Lake Pedder if I can't do it for him.

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## 30th Anniversary Commemorative Walk

A young band of Pedder 2000 supporters including photographer Stephen Curtain retraced the route taken by those earlier walkers who made the Pilgrimage to Pedder before that Lake was flooded in 1972.

Annabel Richards, a long-serving convenor with the Victorian branch of LPRC begins this report, followed by personal reflections from Adam Beeson, Melanie Smart, Steve Curtain and concludes with Lucy Monie's thoughts. All are fellow Victorian-branch Pedder convenors.

### Annabel Richards

So there they were at last! Sodden, dripping, they and all their gear. Leeches crawled on boots and tents and their bites bled. On their faces and in their eyes: elation and excitement. Hot soup was the order of the day, while clothes lines were cobwebbed across the room, and dripping tents, muddy gaiters, saturated sleeping bags, shapeless sox, and soggy maps were slung and draped. There exuded the damp earthy smell of bog and scrub, while bits of leaf litter and detritus scattered the floor.

Two cold and wet days had preceded the 30th Anniversary Commemorative Walk but undeterred the reconnoitre party of two – Steve and Barnaby – had accomplished their task of locating and marking the original track towards the 'lost' original Lake Pedder.



*Surveying the view. From left, Lucy Monie, cameraman Joe Shemesb, Melanie Smart, Adam Beeson and Barnaby Hume are summoned for a pose on the Coronet Range. Photo: Stephen Curtain*

Preparations had been going on for months in Melbourne where the capsule had been carefully crafted from jarrah floor boards by Brett Beeson. Maps

were poured over, lists made, pennies saved, contacts contacted. Then in Hobart, while the reconnoitre trip proceeded, frantic preparations



continued. Adam, Melanie and Lucy located and negotiated for a boat with diver, secured necessary supplies and drew up final plans. Now at Tyenna Lodge, Maydena things were hotting up. The back-up group of four 'oldies' were speechless with excitement and



A moment to contemplate. Pedder Victorian convenor Adam Beeson surveys the view across to the original Lake Pedder as a moody Frankland Range resides in the background. Photo: Stephen Curtain

admiration at the energy and enthusiasm of the expeditioners! Briefings were held, concise instructions and directions handed out. The next morning, after a moving ceremony to place letters and mementos in the capsule, the expedition was underway.

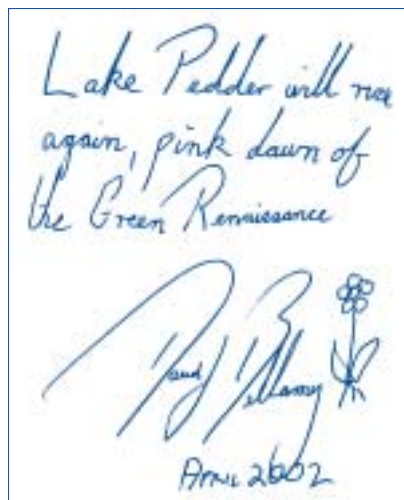
It is the future! A wonderful group of the 'next generation' have been inspired to take up the dream – a dream never to be forgotten, and to be carried on for as long as restoration will take. These young people were not born when Lake Pedder was flooded. They learned of, and were appalled by the tragedy, and have become intensely passionate about the loss. They are determined to 'undo what we so foolishly have done'. (Edward St John QC, National Lake Pedder Commission of Inquiry 1974).



Photo: extracted from [www.mclean.id.au](http://www.mclean.id.au)  
See [www.lakepedder.org](http://www.lakepedder.org)

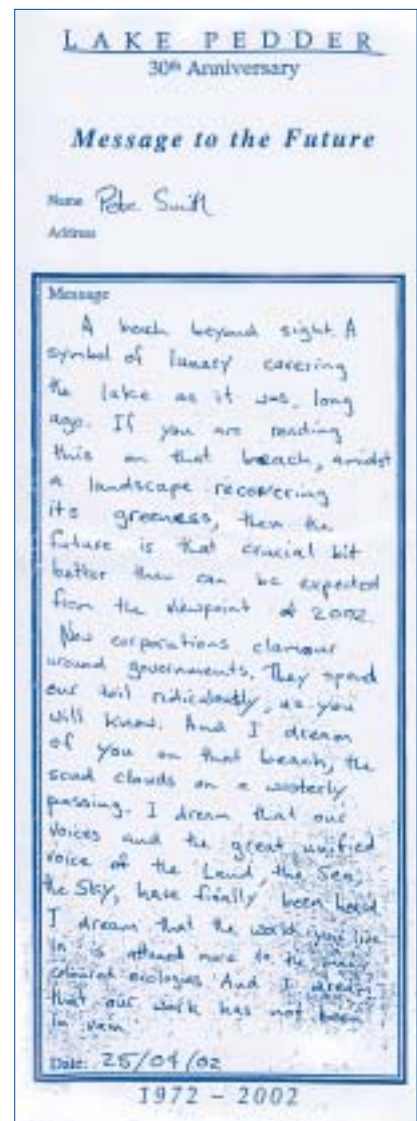
## Adam Beeson

The overgrown track we followed reeked of history. It felt like an old pair of boots that once were worn in lovingly then left to collect dust for 30 years. Every now and then we saw an old marker, a rusty tin can perched on a tea tree branch embedded in the ground. Pilgrims in woollen jumpers, bearing canvas rucksacks once followed these old markers. They were pilgrims



who came in their thousands to see Lake Pedder before it was submerged.

I wasn't even born when Pedder was flooded. Photos and stories have made me appreciate what has been done to this area and the importance of undoing it. I feel very fortunate as a young person, to have been involved in this commemorative walk. Fortunate because the people who tried to prevent the flooding of Pedder were pioneers. They are my heroes and through this walk I have been able to meet many of them. By walking this track I felt myself becoming a part of that history.



Whilst we stood gazing south from the Coronet Range across the Huon-Serpentine impoundment which covers Lake Pedder, the enormity of the challenge was evident.

'We should let all this water out...' I thought to myself, '...that's big, this is big stuff.' It was overwhelming. Overwhelming but exciting when I realised I was just as or more committed to working towards Pedder's restoration

than I had ever been before. I wanted to walk down the hill southwards and straight across the original valley floor, through the Pedder dunes and between Mt Solitary and the Frankland Range. What a trip that would be: camping beside Pedder before heading off deep into the South west, perhaps to the Arthur Ranges or Mt Anne.

The magnitude of this tragedy is fully realised when you gaze down from the Coronet Range at the vast expanse of uneasy water and imagine what it was...and perhaps will be...

## Melanie Smart

It was due to a lot of determination, organisation and the support of some wonderful people that the Lake Pedder 30th Anniversary Commemorative Walk actually came to fruition, and what an amazing experience it was both for me and for us as a group.



*Scrubfest. Roger Richards pauses uphill from Melanie Smart in a rare patch of sunlight on the 30th Anniversary Commemorative Walk on 27-28 April 2002. This photo illustrates some of the thickest regrowth encountered by the walk's participants. Photo: Stephen Curtain*

This was a walk that was filled with emotion from the very beginning to very end. It began with heartfelt words spoken and keep-sakes being shared in the early morning hours of 27 April 2002; these moments were all that I and

the rest of our group required to realise the importance of what we were doing and that it was truly a remarkable and significant gesture in the history of Lake Pedder.

From my own personal view, and as a novice to the South West Tassie wilderness I was both enchanted and amazed at the beauty of the land that

unfortunate point that I realized that previous day's intensive walk had done some damage to my inexperienced legs.

We set a swift pace and before we knew it we had reached the final hilltop looking down onto Lake Pedder. I was totally speechless at the sight, so many emotions boiled to the surface at that point. Mostly I just thought "well

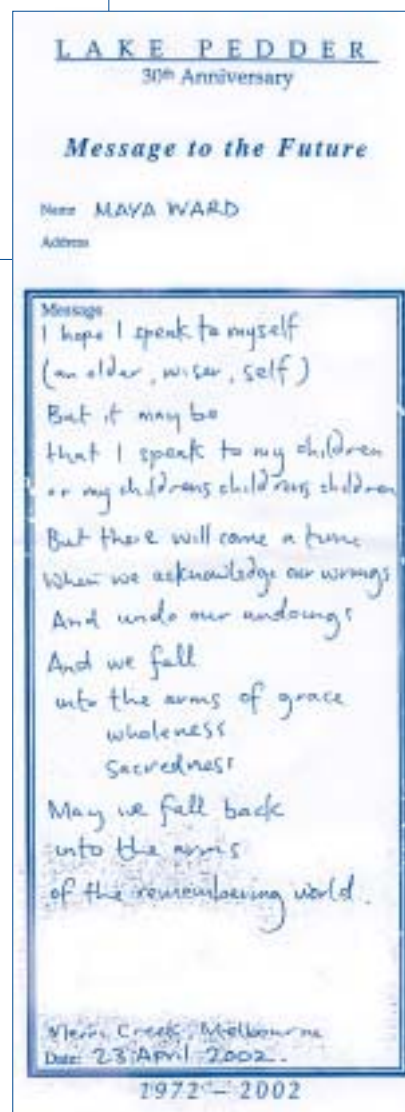
we've done it; we have achieved what we came here to do", and what a truly wonderful feeling that was. I was so proud of every single person standing around me.

Our journey home proved to be a difficult one for me because it was throughout the next few hours that not only were my trousers falling apart but my legs seemed to be also. I have never felt such pain as I did that day trying to carry my body up through the saddles and



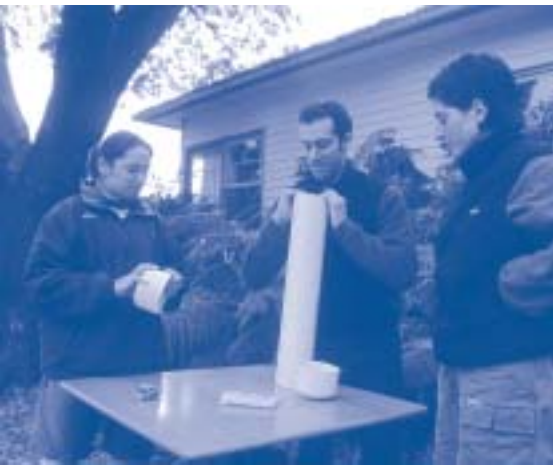
lay before us as we embarked on our expedition. For me this walk turned out to be as much of a physical and mental challenge as it was a significant step in my life. As we walked further and further into the depths of the thick scrub, battling along a path that had not previously been passed over for 30 years it was not my legs that were failing me at first, but my essential over-trousers. The Tasmanian scrub was not at all forgiving and was beginning to tear my clothing to shreds. I was thankful for the support of some well-equipped members of our group (thanks Steve for the duct tape), who managed to patch me up enough to keep ploughing forward. After making it through day one of our walk I was exhausted, but still very excited about what was to come tomorrow.

The new day dawned and we were one very eager group to make it to our final destination—the stunning hilltop overlooking Pedder. After assessing the distance to go to be not more than a few kilometres from our campsite we headed out early. It was at this





out of that bush land. With some tears shed, and enormous amount of help; from patching me up to strapping my legs, to taking the load out of my pack we all as a group finally, and in the early hours of the evening reached our vehicles and headed back to Hobart.



Time capsule. Melanie Smart (left), Barnaby Hume and Lucy Monie give the time capsule's contents a 'practice-run' before it is permanently sealed in this watertight tube. The tube's contents – 'Messages to the Future' – included personal wishes, photos and memorabilia.  
Photo: Stephen Curtain

mid-way through a two-week bush outing. An unruffled ocean surface shimmered a sombre silvery hue. We spied its far horizon. Although I knew the continent of Africa lay many thousands of kilometres distant to the west, I scanned the horizon line multiple times, half-expecting a fantasy

pricked by ears seaward. Underfoot, the ground trembled coupled with a rolling BOOM! I smiled. These great Southern Ocean waves began their life, no doubt, as infant swells perhaps thousands of kilometres away. Shortly after, we moved on back to the tent. This experience was simply sublime.

This wild place was merely ebbing to its own natural rhythm as it had done for aeons.

In the years since, I have been fortunate to discover the rhythm of many other wild landscapes throughout South-west Tasmania. When I am relaxed and I can recall the full majesty of these encounters in my mind's eye, I can only begin to dream what the original sand-between-the-toes Pedder must have been like. For its effect on so many people is clearly evident.

To see the original Lake Pedder restored is an occasionally trying but soul-enriching journey. But I'm glad that I've embarked upon it. I encourage others to do the same. To see this alpine lake and its pink sands glisten on a classic,

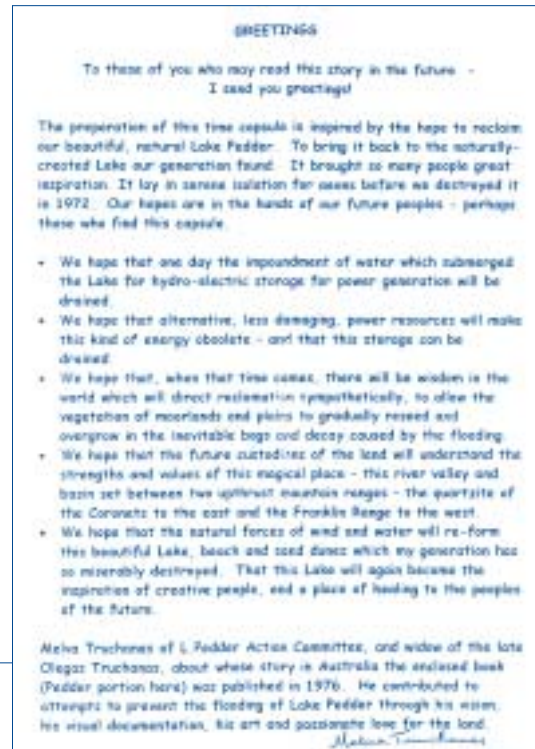
windless South-West summer's day would simply take my breath away.

## Lucy Monie

Walking the old track to Lake Pedder

I'm awake and it's five o'clock and it's cold. I put on all my clothes, dreading the moment when we'll splash into the icy river and then enter the scrub again. I struggle with my longing to get back into my sleeping bag, once I'm outside the tent it's easier. It's completely dark, especially in the forest where we camped for the night. We eat, then prepare to leave. One by one, we splash into the river and head into the trees, headtorches flickering.

We arrived in Hobart on a chilly Wednesday night before the Anzac Day long weekend in 2002. Our aim was to walk the old track to Lake Pedder and sink a time capsule into the impoundment as a commemoration to the lake submerged 30 years before. There were still many details to organise before we could begin the walk and we split into groups. Steve and Barnaby began a two-day



finger of land to miraculously appear. Nothing. My day-dream thoughts were interrupted by a resounding BOOOM! I shuddered with glee as the white-water from yet another monster wave careered into the air. It dissipated slowly to shower us with a fine mist—as if, on cue, a great whale had exhaled its plume. I peered over the cliff edge. At its base some 30 metres below, the remains of this wave morphed back into the sea. It had spent its energy. You could feel it, smell it. The sea boiled momentarily, and then finally subsided again to a calm, even surface, but then again

only for a minute. As we picked our way over the cliff-tops, whipped by the Roaring Forty winds, we awaited the onset of another surging cylinder. With bated breath, I paused mid-stride and

## Steve Curtain

South West Cape 1995

Adam and I were perched precariously above the cliffs of South-West Cape,

reconnaissance mission to make sure it was physically possible to do the walk, Mel, Adam and I hung back in Hobart to finalise arrangements.

my head down and pushed, blindly scrabbling, arms flailing, feet sliding and kicking, scrub-swimming.

After six or seven hours we had gone only a few kilometres.

We were tired and sweaty, and pointed tea-tree leaves had worked their way into our clothes. We dropped our packs next to a river in the forest and pitched our tents for the night. As we prepared dinner, Adam got out some photos of the lake and we gathered round to look. The sheer beauty of it struck me again; our proximity to the pink-tinged sand of the lake—submerged beneath the waters of the impoundment and our concurrent distance from it—seemed at once poignant and profoundly frustrating.

Eventually my tiredness and the cold forced me into my sleeping bag, where I fell asleep almost at once.

There is a shout as the first person emerges from the trees. The track ahead of us, illuminated by the edges of dawn, is more distinct than it has yet been and stretches between the button-grass, milky white in the dimness. We pound along the track, light and fast without the burden of our packs, shedding layer after layer of clothes as the sun rises. Finally we reach the foot of the hill and – ‘Cut!’ yells Joe Shemesh, who is along to film the walk. ‘Can you just do that again?’

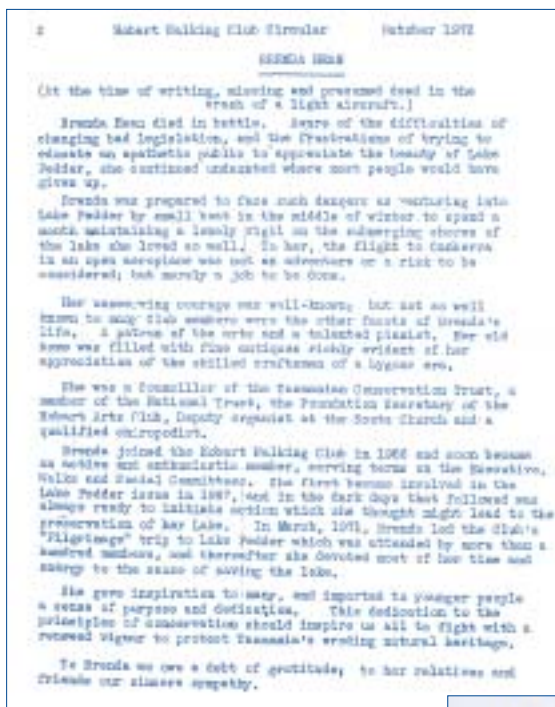


Footsteps in time. From left, Melanie Smart, Lucy Monie, Barnaby Hume and Adam Beeson. The impoundment waters can be seen in the background. 27 April 2002. Photo: Stephen Curtain

Reluctantly, we turn round and walk back 50 metres. We reach the foot of the hill for the second time and begin to climb. For the next half an hour, we stop before every knoll in case it's the top, Joe sprinting ahead with his camera, making us walk and rewalk each section of the track. I become frustrated; I can understand why it is being filmed but I just want to keep going.

We round another corner and the waters of the impoundment appear, shimmering and sparkling in the sunlight. Suddenly I'm no longer frustrated or sorry – the satisfaction of making it has overwhelmed me. I forget the camera and begin to run.

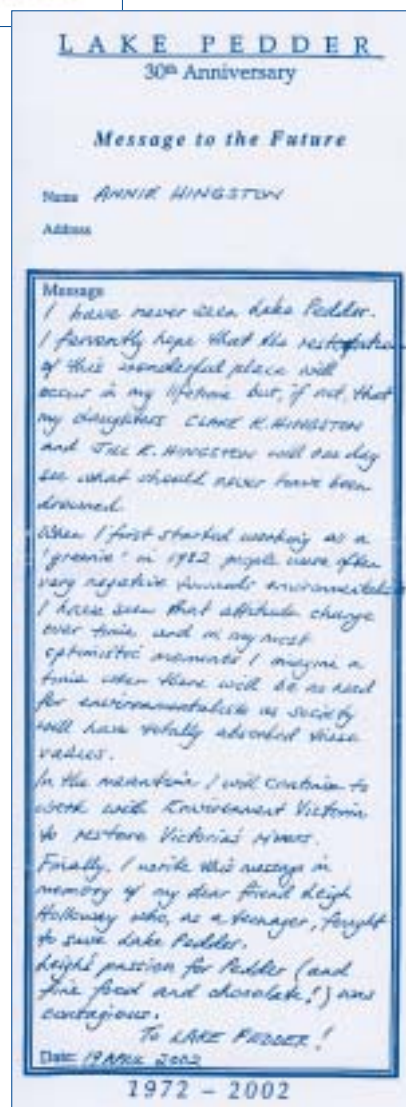
Aside from the walkers, special thanks go to: Melva and Jeanette, Stu, Jai, Liz Dombrovskis, Andrew the scuba diver, Gabi Mocatta for writing the Australian Geographic article, filmmaker Joe Shemesh, Rob Sitch for partly funding this event, Brett and Alan Beeson, Tim Morris of Tyenna Lodge and numerous others.



On Friday night we met up in Maydena. I was keen to hear what the track was like, but concerned to observe the saturated, dirty, exhausted and sore appearance of the two who had been in there. As they removed their packs, and shed their sodden clothes, we noticed a swarm of small creatures making for the pot-bellied stove in the corner. Every surface was swimming with a cocktail of tiny pointed tea-tree leaves, mud and leeches. The small blind probing heads appeared from every fold of fabric and seemed to be sniffing the air for warmth. Neither Steve nor Barnaby were slightly concerned – or even surprised – apparently they had spent the last night camped in a swamp, unable to find a way through the scrub in the gathering dark.

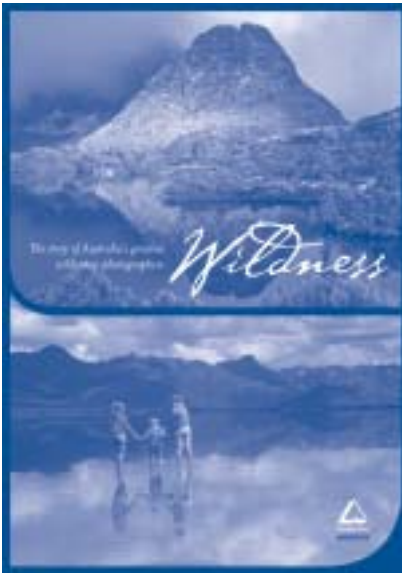
We assembled the next morning for a ceremony to pack the time capsule and for people to say a few words about the lake. We made our way to the start of the track, hoisted our packs and began to walk. The track most closely resembled a tunnel; we took turns on the sharp (front) end, returning to the back of the pack when exhaustion set in.

It was when we reached the top of the first hill that I began to settle into the pace of the walk. Walking in scrub has a strange rhythm of its own, slow and methodical. Most of the time I had a hand up to protect my face; at other times the scrub was so thick that I put





# Wildness – award-winning film of tribute and celebration



Wildness is an epic story of two men, Olegas Truchanas and Peter Dombrovskis, whose passion for nature became a crusade to save an environment under threat. There are many classic photographs of Lake Pedder in the film.

Wildness has now added the Australian Film Industry (AFI) award & Discovery Channel's IF Award for Best Documentary in November 2003 to a list of other achievements. 'Film Australia congratulates Scott Millwood, Michael McMahon and their team for creating a documentary which has the power to move audiences and, in doing so, is a most fitting tribute to the great artists whose work it celebrates,' said Sharon Connolly, Film Australia Chief Executive.

Film Australia is a Federal Government-owned company which supports production and distribution of documentaries in the national interest.

In an interview with Alexandra de Blas on the ABC, Millwood commented: 'I grew up in Tasmania, where both Olegas' and Peter's story is really part of local Tasmanian folklore. Olegas actually had drowned the year before I was born in Tasmania, and so by the time I was growing up, his story had already become a mystical, mythical story in Tassie: this man who went out into the wilderness, who brought back images to tell people why it was

important, and then who ultimately died in the wilderness. So it was always a local tragedy in Tasmania in that way. And in '96, Peter Dombrovskis, who by that stage had become a really celebrated Tasmanian wilderness photographer after the Franklin campaign, he died out in the wilderness as well. And when that happened, then I realised that a really epic environmental and artistic story had just come to an end. And that both men's lives and their stories, represented a 50 year period of the emergence of wilderness photography, with really close links to conservation.

...For me, [wilderness photography is] more important than ever, for stakes just as high as ever. It's just that now we're in it, and it's always easy to see campaigns like Pedder and Franklin as being in the past. I guess now we have our own issues with land clearing, water, logging of old growth forest, the Tarkine in Tasmania about to be logged as well, and images are going to remain crucial to explaining to audiences and to the public who have to save those places, why they're still important.

In terms of being bombarded by images, I guess that's the challenge for our generation. We're surrounded by media now, we're all highly sophisticated about how it works and what messages are thrown around. I see that as being a similar challenge to what the Pedder people faced when they had no colour television. Of how do we communicate with an audience? We need to find a way to show them. So I think at any point in time you have to work with the challenges of that time, and that's our challenge now.'

For a full transcript of this interview and details about the film, see [www.abc.net.au/wildness](http://www.abc.net.au/wildness)  
Wildness is a Film Australia National Interest Program, produced in association with Big and Little Films, developed with the assistance of the Australian Film Commission, and produced with the assistance of Film Victoria, Screen Tasmania and the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. It was written and directed by Scott Millwood and produced by Michael McMahon.

## Pedder Pennies

- New patron. Melva Truchanas joins Max Angus, Bob Brown, David Bellamy, the David Suzuki Foundation and Peter Tyler as Pedder 2000's other patrons.

Melva Truchanas, Tasmanian born, a bushwalker and conservationist, she has worked tirelessly in a range of campaigns in Tasmania for half a century. Chairman of the South-West Committee during the original Pedder campaign, her influence on a generation of activists has been profound. Together with her husband Olegas, she mentored the young and inspired them to take up the challenge. She is a member of the Executive Committee of the Tasmanian Branch of the Lake Pedder Restoration Committee and recently her work has included preparing archival records.

- The Lake Pedder Restoration Committee (LPRC) is an inaugural member of Environment Tasmania Incorporated (Conservation Council of Tasmania).
- The LPRC files are now available in the Tasmanian Environment Centre that was formed during the Lake Pedder campaign in 1972 and has been a resource centre ever since. It's fitting that the files are now held there. The files are readily accessible for members seeking historical information. The centre is open every day of the week at 102 Bathurst St, Hobart.
- On 28 July 2004 the Victorian and South Australian Governments agreed to drain Lake Mokoan in an effort to restore original wetlands. Check the website for details: [www.lakepedder.org](http://www.lakepedder.org)
- Since the Living Rivers Festival, Pedder 2000 has sponsored a Tibetan Gyuto Monk in India. Wonderful feedback was received from this monk. However, in an effort to conserve funds for the Pedder 2000 campaign, this sponsorship has been discontinued. However, *individual* contributions can still be made. Please contact Gyuto House in Adelaide.
- Our thanks go to graphic designer Bruce Godden who has generously donated his time and effort for this and the previous edition of *Reflections*.

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# The inspiration of Lake Pedder

The Most Rev Geoffrey Jarrett is Bishop of Lismore, NSW, and was formerly a priest in Tasmania for 30 years. The following is an extract from the address Bishop Jarrett gave at the opening of a walking track at Marion Grove, Toormina, NSW on 6th December 2002 to mark the local launching of Catholic Earthcare Australia:

"My own interest in ecology and the environment goes back to my early days as a priest in Hobart. A group of young people at St Mary's Cathedral introduced me to bushwalking in Tasmania by talking me into joining them on a trip to Lake Pedder in February, 1972. This was the last summer before the Hydro-Electric Commission began the massive impoundment of water that was soon to drown the original, the ancient Lake, and its magnificent beach of the purest white sand. Climbing over the Coronets we had our first glimpse of Lake Pedder

stretched out below. Like pilgrims to a holy place we stood in silent awe before hastening down to set foot on the famous beach – then more than three kilometres long and almost a kilometre wide. We camped there for two nights, and early on the Sunday morning I said Mass for a big congregation that emerged from the dozens of campsites around Maria Creek. It was a tragedy that the great effort to save Lake Pedder failed, and such peerless natural beauty sacrificed. It did not have to happen, but it did. Within the decade the fight was on to save the Franklin. This time the more experienced conservation movement aided by the popular rise of environmental consciousness following the Pedder defeat brought about a happier outcome. The Franklin campaign produced a stunning film. One sequence shows a mist drifting over the mountains above the river. On the soundtrack of this ethereal scene

was a motet by William Byrd, his *Ave Verum Corpus*, composed to honour the mystery of Christ's presence in the Eucharist. What better, I thought, could they have found than the sublime music of the Catholic polyphonic tradition, itself in danger of being lost, to accompany a statement of such extraordinary natural beauty. The divine presence in the natural and the supernatural is the common link. As Christian believers reminded by the Pope that 'an ecological conversion' is part of our response to divine revelation, we take up the tasks proposed in this year's Social Justice Statement "A New Earth: the Environmental Challenge". We don't take up the cause of the natural environment as a cause in itself or merely because of its political or sociological overtones, but because it is through the natural order that we find the first evidences not only of the existence of God, but also of His divine beauty."

## Lake Pedder a national travelling exhibition

I am intending to develop a travelling exhibition about Lake Pedder which could be shown at a number of venues around Australia. In fact there may be potential for it to go further afield.

To help gauge interest I am asking for feedback to see if there is sufficient material to produce the high quality exhibition I think it could be.

Several generations separate the knowledge of Lake Pedder before its inundation and the present. A

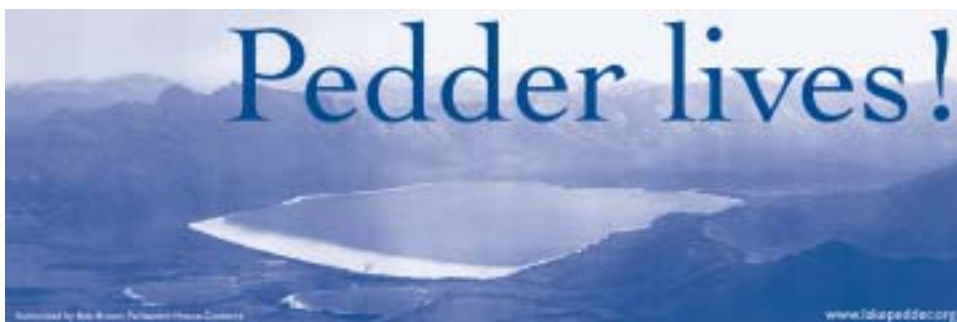
travelling exhibition presents an opportunity to remind those who will remember the sublime beauty of what was lost in 1972 and to raise the awareness of those who have no direct knowledge of the South-West gem.

Some of the categories the exhibition could cover are: Geology; Historical Knowledge; Scientific Knowledge: Flora; Fauna; People; Memorabilia; Works of art; Publications; Media reports; Stories; Photographs; Political background;

Industry; Films; Interviews and Government reports.

Extensive research and sufficient funding will be necessary so it will take some time for it to become a reality.

If you are interested in contributing in any way, would you please send your name, address, phone and email details (and an indication of what you could contribute) to me: **Christopher Cowles, c/- Post Office, Dunalley, Tasmania 7177** or alternatively send me an email at: [cowles@tassie.net.au](mailto:cowles@tassie.net.au)



This fabulous sticker is available at \$2 each. Contact the Victorian branch of Pedder 2000. Phone: 9836 2670 or email: [asrwinmalee@yahoo.com](mailto:asrwinmalee@yahoo.com)



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# Restore the Earth

Helen Gee, Convenor, Lake Pedder Restoration Committee, Tasmania

The Restore the Earth conference at Findhorn in Scotland over Easter 2002 was jointly presented by the Findhorn Foundation and Trees for Life, with the support and endorsement of both UNESCO and UNEP. It attracted 160 participants from almost 40 countries.

The conference, convened to outline a positive vision for the future and to promote the restoration of the degraded ecosystems of the world, sent a powerful message to the Johannesburg World Summit. The Concluding Declaration, a Call to Action, and specifically a call to declare the 21st Century, 'the Century for Restoring the Earth', was heard and reiterated by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, who on 14 May urged world leaders to use the World Summit to rehabilitate the Earth, introducing the acronym, WEHAB coined at the conference) Water Energy, Health and Biodiversity.

Alan Watson Featherstone, founder and director of the Scottish conservation charity 'Trees for Life', explained in his opening address the power of the Earth's healing ability and the vision of hope for the future in all of us becoming 'Givers' as opposed to 'Takers'. And the personal challenge that provoked the question 'But who am I?'. Then the defining moment for Alan 'Who am I not to?'

Alan is truly inspirational, aiming to restore 500 square miles of Caledonian forest radiating from key remnants of Scots Pine. 'Through this work I have found my place, my home...it's a life nurturing process'.

The Forest Restoration Information Service was launched by Adrian Newton of UNEP's World Conservation Monitoring Centre in Cambridge, England. For me, coming from a land still endowed with ancient forests, being in Findhorn's Universal Hall was a little like being in a time machine, as speaker after speaker announced major forest restoration initiatives for barren and desertified landscapes in Iran, in India, in Colombia, in Viet Nam. Professor Vo Quy is architect of the Vietnamese National Conservation Strategy developed to reforest his homeland after the cataclysmic Vietnam

War. Peasants and school children have, for years, been replanting areas of mangrove swamps along the Mekong delta and nurturing seedlings inland to bring back the old pre-war forests. When asked how he could tackle such an enormous task, he said simply, with potent humility 'We try'. This was the inspirational level of the conference and it was sustained for a wonderful week that has taken me months to process and distil.

Vandana Shiva (India) and North American Ojibway Indian Winona La Duke both pointed to the importance of the traditional wisdom of ancestors and elders in maintaining a respectful relationship with land. Both spoke passionately against the rapid move to patent seeds and the power of corporations to bond labourers to an integrated agribusiness industry across the third world for Western profits. The seriousness of the message was underlined when Vandana had to leave early to fly home to try and prevent the Indian Government allowing the import of genetically modified rice. She was unsuccessful.

Journalist Alan Weisman introduced Gaviotas, the Colombian village 'to reinvent the world'. As a model community it has established forests on the barren and treeless plains and developed appropriate technologies, incredibly, all within the hell of the Colombian war. Equally inspirational was the presentation by Tasmanian born Joss Brooks of Auroville in India. This 'city the earth needs' is over 30 years old, reforestation being on a massive scale.

Aubrey Meyer, co-founder of the Global Commons Institute, presented 'Contraction and Convergence' which is rapidly becoming the most widely supported framework for averting serious climate change. Briefly, we should contract global emissions and converge on a per capita basis to share them.

We heard about numerous eco-villages employing sustainable technologies, notably from ecologist and film-maker Herbie Giradet, but many young people spoke out of practical experience. Helena Norberg-Hodge, director of the International

Society for Ecology and Culture, called for a reorientation towards localisation of our economies, world-wide, and Hanne Strong described the work of the Earth Restoration Corps for youth.

Brendan Mackey from the Wilderness Society ran a workshop on the Wildlands Project in Australia, which, like the American model presented by David Johns, will create corridors to link up protected areas, providing larger, viable and sustainable ecosystems. I attended the conference on behalf of the Lake Pedder Restoration Committee and presented the Pedder Restoration project. Flooded in 1972, Lake Pedder has become a great symbol of hope 'We can undo the mistakes of the past'. There is still research to undertake if we are to convince the Australian people of the worthiness of this project. Post graduate students are encouraged to consider the following areas revegetation, de-watering (engineering factors), de-watering (physical factors), the effect of draining the impoundment, tourism, employment and the economy, the environmental effects, power generation, legal considerations, heritage values and risk reduction strategies.

Findhorn's founder, Dorothy MacLean, reminded us that the essence of Earth Restoration is seeing everything as sacred. Attending the conference filled me with hope and affirmation that we can together make a powerful difference, that our positive transnational links transcend governments and carry with them the power to transform social and political structures. In short, a world consciousness for earth restoration and sustainability is flowering.

For more information about the conference  
[www.restore-earth.org](http://www.restore-earth.org)  
[www.positivenews.org.uk](http://www.positivenews.org.uk)  
[trees@findhorn.org](mailto:trees@findhorn.org)  
About Lake Pedder  
Lake Pedder Values and Restoration Occasional Paper  
No 27, Centre for Environmental Studies, University of Tasmania, 2001  
[www.lakepedder.org](http://www.lakepedder.org)  
[helenmgee@yahoo.com.au](mailto:helenmgee@yahoo.com.au)

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## Peregrine supports campaign

The Lake Pedder Restoration Committee recently welcomed Australian tourism company Peregrine and its offer of support for the campaign to restore the original Lake Pedder. Discussions are currently under way. Please check [www.lakepedder.org](http://www.lakepedder.org) for an update soon.

## Haven art exhibition

*Haven: The Art and Craft of Refuge in Tasmania* at Long Gallery, Salamanca Arts Centre.

The exhibition was opened by Moss Cass, Australia's first Minister for the Environment (1972 – 1975) and currently chairman of the Australian National Biocentre. It included a sculptural piece by Geoff Parr "Forest of Stumps", one of the stumps being attributed to the flooded Lake Pedder.

The Hon. Moss Cass visited Tasmania in 1972 and met with the Premier Eric Reece and members of the Lake Pedder Action Committee to see what could be done to save Lake Pedder, at that late stage. In February 1973 he appointed the Lake Pedder Committee of Enquiry to provide information concerning the circumstances that led to the flooding and to advise on this and future development projects. Essentially Moss Cass wanted to determine what action or compensation could be taken to alleviate any adverse consequences of the flooding of the lake. His Enquiry recommended a moratorium.

At the exhibition opening he elaborated on the visit to Premier Eric Reece, Reece's determination, seemingly beyond all reason, to proceed with the flooding of the lake, and his efforts to combat this in his capacity as Minister for Environment and Conservation. It was moving to see that after so many years our first Environment Minister believes Pedder flooding was a mistake and that the wrongs of the past should be made good. I spoke with him about our campaign and he wished us well. I am reminded of Prince Philip's words: 'The Lake Pedder case marks the end of Australia's pioneering days and ushers in a new phase of conscious concern for the long-term future of the natural environment.'

The first National Environment portfolio, the flooding of the lake, the formation of the first Green Party...all in 1972.

## Peddertorial

*We will not say the day is done...*

### The way forward

Helen Gee, Convenor, LPRC (Tasmania)

The destruction of Lake Pedder awoke modern Australia to its natural heritage. Remorse is not only for the lost lake.

The destruction exposes a flaw in our value system that measures progress in cold statistical terms. To dream of a Pedder restored is therefore connected with the chances of our very survival on this planet. The Pedder people will never give up, can never give up.

In the interests of maintaining the future of the Lake Pedder Restoration Committee/Pedder 2000 for as long as it takes to restore the lake, we must simplify our organisational structures. The network is vital and best kept alive by streamlined, minimal inputs. Membership fees to our treasurer and membership secretary Rod Broadby ('Benbullen', 530 Pelverata Rd, Kaoota, Tas 7150) from every member will ensure a minimum one-page annual update. A centralised file will be held in the Tasmanian Environment Centre, in perpetuity, until it is politically

opportune to crank the campaign in to gear once again. Simply by meeting annually and keeping contact with the band of Pedder folk who remember, we will keep the possibility of restoration there before the Australian people.

The Lake Pedder Restoration Committee is a member of the newly formed peak conservation body, Environment Tasmania Inc and will continue to have a significant role in establishing the very highest conservation ethics for this new conservation council. A new generation already have restoration in their sights because of our ten-year campaign. Pedder is a powerful, insistent symbol we will preserve and simplicity is the key!

*Above the shadows rides the sun,  
And stars forever dwell,  
We will not say the day is done,  
Nor bid the stars farewell.*

JRR TOLKIEN

FROM *LORD OF THE RINGS*, ALLEN & UNWIN.

### Pedder 2000 member Peter Dombrovskis (1945 – 1996) honoured in the Photographic Hall of Fame, New York, 2002.

Late last year news came that our foremost nature photographer was the first Australian to be inscribed in the Hall of Fame, alongside such greats as Ansel Adams and Elliott Porter.

Peter's much celebrated work contributed greatly to the establishment of the World Heritage Area in Tasmania. The conservation movement would not be where it is today without his stunning images of the fragile beauty of threatened rivers and forests. Dombrovskis' commitment was inspired by a close friendship with Olegas Truchanas, and he lives on in the photographs still published by West Wind Press as a

new generation rises in defence of threatened wildlands.

The Lake Pedder Restoration Committee was honoured to be asked to act as a referee for Peter's nomination and included salutations to two of our finest 'Friends of Pedder':

'Peter and his wife Liz contributed to the campaign to restore the lake at every opportunity, by generously providing images for slide shows, special gifts for fundraising and hosting events. Peter Dombrovskis, the man and his work, continue to inspire the young, to hone their skills and strive for the highest quality—quietly and powerfully.'

HELEN GEE

### Some friends have departed

Ida West, our former patron, together with Edward Carl Clayton and Pat Wessing have all passed on recently. We extend our sympathy to the families and we pay tribute to their tremendous efforts for the campaign over the years.



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# Gordon River Splits again under threat

Future Perfect was a fringe festival held protesting Tasmania's controversial Ten Days on the Island Festival 2003. Sponsorship of the Arts Festival by Forestry Tasmania outraged artists who forged their own festival. This essay was one contribution.

Thousands stopped a string of dams  
in Tassie's western wildlands.  
A standing wave of people power,  
an ancient cave eleventh hour!

You millions now who march for peace  
know eco-war has got to cease.  
Relieve from Basslink's in our power,  
come, rally at this final hour!

Let's neutralise debate in style,  
clean energy *within* our isle!  
Don't sink our Brand beneath the flood,  
the Gordon is our spirit-blood!

Post-war migrant, Olegas Truchanas, inspired by the Huon piners' story of "The Show Place of Tasmania", designed a demountable canvas kayak, and, in 1958, paddled from the original Lake Pedder to Strahan, an epic journey of three weeks.

A decade later desperate efforts were made to save the original Lake Pedder from inundation by the Middle Gordon hydro-power scheme. There was an intense national and international focus on the unique alpine lake with its vast

Today the entire catchment of the Gordon, downstream of the Gordon Power Scheme, is within the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area. And yet a new and larger threat to the Splits has emerged:

BASSLINK is a \$500 million energy project to link the Tasmanian and the Australian mainland via a high voltage cable under Bass Strait. A giant power cord designed to plug Tasmania into the rest of Australia. The island identity and its unique brand will be severely compromised.

The rationale is for Tasmania to exchange clean wind and water powered energy credits for dirty brown coal-fired energy debits. "Scientific" research has been used to overwhelm earnest, informed criticisms of most aspects of the project, not least the economics. The Gordon Splits, among Australia's most spectacular river chasms, will be scoured twice daily by massive unnatural flows in order to generate power for Melbourne's peak demand.

Tasmania has a gift for the world, its natural capital, which could just be worth more than we ever dreamed. Energy efficiency and more intelligent use of our natural resources—wouldn't that be a better way to go?

HELEN GEE



Gordon Dam. Photo: Chris Clifton.

Around the globe the story's plain;  
Large hydro-dams are on the wane.  
Olegas set a vision free –  
Lake Pedder to the open sea!

Before 1970 the mighty Gordon River in South-West Tasmania was truly wild, "the King of Tasmanian rivers". The ancient river ran across the grain of the landscape through a series of deep cracks or "splits" through the quartzite spine of the present Nicholls Range.

Few have visited the Gordon Splits. In an absence of the experiential, rivers become ditches for our energy-at-any-cost society. This spirit-river is the tiger, is the whale, the emu, the eagle and the tall tree, emblems so ironically displaying our acts of desecration/extermination to the world.

beach of quartzitic sand. When its flooding seemed all but inevitable, one man at least felt the urgency of the threat to the Gordon River. Truchanas set out on the exhausting journey that cost him his life.

The relentless determination that was his hallmark was his legacy to those who were rallying on the Pedder sand, and the inspiration of this man was a fire in the hearts of those who took on governments and the Hydro-Electric Commission in the years ahead. The tale of the Franklin River, largest tributary of the Gordon, is legendary. It is a David and Goliath story of the people succeeding, seemingly against all odds, preventing the series of dams which would have drowned the wild gorges of the Gordon, Denison and Franklin as well as the Jane and Olga Rivers.

## Olegas Truchanas (1923 – 1972)

Photographer, canoeist and adventurer, he speaks again, in a visually powerful sense through this evocative collaboration between Melva Truchanas, Martin Walch and Helen Gee. Olegas applied himself to an unceasing campaign against the ignorance and the gradual alienation of one of the world's last primeval regions. His photographic work is represented in the Australian National Museum, Canberra, the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston and in many publications including *The World of Olegas Truchanas* (1975), *Lithuanian Artists in Australia* (1997), *The Europeans: Emigre Artists in Australia* (1997), and two films: *Spirit of Olegas* (A Big Country Series) and *Wildness* (Film Australia documentary 2003).

## How to contact PEDDER 2000 INC (Lake Pedder Restoration Committee)

### Victorian Branch

Peter Stapleton, phone 9416 3391,  
peters@enet.org.au

### Tasmanian Branch

Helen Gee, helengee@yahoo.com.au

## Membership

\$40 institutions

\$20 individuals

\$10 concession

\$500 life

Please send cheques to

Rod Broadby, 'Benbullen',  
530 Pelverata Rd, Kaoota Tas 7150.  
Phone 6239 6447.

## Submissions for Reflections 11

We invite anecdotes and images,  
preferably in Mac format.

## www.lakepedder.org

Check out our new website. Its loaded with many features including colour photos, a visitor's page and excellent background information. Readers of Reflections are encouraged to contribute anecdotes, stories, quotes and old photos/slides that can be readily scanned and added to this website. Visit the website and email its administrator for details. A rich and valuable resource.

# Hands off our Tas Parks

Currently Tasmanian National Parks are being targeted as areas for exclusive tourism developments. A proposal for **Planters Beach in the South West National Park** has been given approval. The development includes eighty cabins, a tavern, and spa baths in the sand dunes, as well as extension of the road which currently finishes at Cockle Creek a further 800 metres into the Park. Despite strong opposition from both the Aboriginal Community and the conservation movement the Planning Tribunal gave it the go ahead and the WHA Management Plan was specifically altered to allow this. This summer we must campaign to stop the construction of the resort.

**Pumphouse Point is once again threatened.** On the southern shores of Lake St Clair, *within* both the Cradle Mountain Lake St Clair National Park and World Heritage Area boundaries, the Tasmanian Government would site a luxury tourism resort. Developer Simon Currant and others have put in expressions of interest. This approval contradicts the World Heritage Area Management Plan objectives.

**You as a supporter of the values of wilderness can make a difference.** Please encourage Tasmania's premier to say *no* to Planters and *no* to a Pumhouse point development, and certainly *no* to a tripling of accommodation at Cynthia Bay, Lake St Clair! (Say *yes* to siting of all these OUTSIDE the boundaries!)

**ACTION:** Please email the Planters Beach developer David Marriner today! [reception@marrinertheatres.com.au](mailto:reception@marrinertheatres.com.au) and tell him no way can he build inside the Southwest National Park! Write letters to papers, MPs and the Tasmanian Minister for Parks, Ken Bacon, Parliament House, Hobart Tas 7000.

## Pedder 2000 Victorian Branch Studies and books available (December 2004)

### Lake Pedder Study Group Publications

*Why Lake Pedder Should be Restored* — Mosley (1994) \$5.00 (postage \$2.50)

*How Lake Pedder Can be Restored* — Mosley (1994) \$5.00 (postage \$2.50)

*Lake Pedder: A World Heritage Place to Cherish and Enjoy, Future management* — Mosley (1995) \$20.00 (postage included)\*

*Lake Pedder: A Geophysical Survey* — Tyler (1993) \$5.00 (postage \$2.50)

*Some Biological Consequences of the Flooding of Lake Pedder* — Tyler (1993) \$5.00 (postage included)\*

*The Geomorphology of Lake Pedder* — Kiernan

*The Geoconservation Significance of Lake Pedder and its Contribution to Geodiversity* — Kiernan

*Restoring Lake Pedder: a Geomorphological Perspective on Recovery Prospects and Likely Time Scales* — Kiernan set of three \$20.00 (postage included)\*

*Lake Pedder Economic Study (Volumes I and II)* — Kohl (1994) \$20.00 for the set (postage included)

*Energy Summary* — Blakers (1994) \$5.00 (postage included)\*

### Wilderness Society Publications

*Still Overpowering Tasmania, a research report on the HEC's power forecasts from 1967 to 1993* — Burton (1994) \$20.00 (including postage)\*

### Books

*Lake Pedder, Why a National Park must be saved* — Dick Johnson (1972) \$5.00 soft cover (postage \$2.50)

*The World of Olegas Truchanas* — now out of print \$80.00 hardcover (postage and packing \$10.00)

*Reflections* — issue 8 March 2000 (also some back issues available on request) \$2.00 (postage \$1)

### Stickers

Pull the plug — 50c

\* All photocopies are printed on 100% plantation eucalyptus/pine paper fibre

Send requests for studies/books/memberships to:

Pedder 2000 Victorian Branch  
PO Box 1041, SURREY HILLS VIC 3127  
Enq 03 9836 2670

You can pay by cheque, money order or credit card.



### Pre-publication Offer for Pedder People.

*River of Verse, A Tasmanian Journey 1800 – 2004* — Edited by Helen Gee, published by Back River Press, Buckland Nov 2004. \$25 or \$20 for multiple copies, (including postage). THIS HISTORIC ANTHOLOGY 288pps, IS A MUST FOR CHRISTMAS.

Post your cheque today to Back River Press, Stonehurst, Buckland Tas 7190'

## UTG Request

Dick Friend has a request: UTG launch Hobart Town Hall, March 1972. There is no record. Please contact him with first-hand reminiscences and memorabilia. Phone Dick 03 6225 0757, 22 Norfolk Cres, Sandy Bay TAS 7005.

