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Lamington National Park and Binna Burra Mountain Lodge, Queensland: Partners in conserving rainforest

Brett J. Stubbs

School of Environmental Science and Management, Southern Cross University, Lismore, New South Wales, Australia

Raymond L. Specht

Botany Department, University of Queensland, St. Lucia, Queensland, Australia

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ABSTRACT: The relationship between national parks and private ecotourism operations is often a contentious one. This paper examines the history of the seventy year partnership between Lamington National Park and Binna Burra Mountain Lodge in Queensland, and explores its wider contributions to natural area conservation. Lamington National Park, situated in the McPherson Range in southern Queensland, was established in 1915. It was the second large national park to be created in that state. Binna Burra Mountain Lodge, a private resort on freehold land adjacent to the national park, began operation in 1933. The subsequent relationship between lodge and national park has been a fruitful one, fostering scientific research into the area's sub-tropical rainforest and other plant communities, and contributing to the conservation of these natural ecosystems and others farther away.

1 INTRODUCTION

There are many examples of holiday resorts operating within or immediately adjacent to Australian national parks. In Queensland these include: Carnarvon Gorge Wilderness Lodge at Carnarvon National Park in central Queensland; Kingfisher Bay Resort near the Great Sandy National Park on Fraser Island; Tangalooma Wild Dolphin Resort in Moreton Island National Park; Lizard Island Resort which shares the island of that name with a national park; Hamilton and Hayman Islands adjacent to Whitsunday Island National Park; and O'Reilly's Rainforest Guesthouse (est. 1926) and Binna Burra Mountain Lodge (est. 1933-34) within Lamington National Park in the far south-eastern corner of the state. The relationship between national parks and such private resorts, including those which can be described as ecotourism operations, is often a contentious one.

Even at Binna Burra, which unarguably fits the ecotourism description, there have been times when the lodge has come into conflict with the managers of the surrounding Lamington National Park (Queensland Forestry Service until 1975, and afterwards Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service). The purpose of this paper is to show, however, that the long relationship between lodge and park has generally been a fruitful one, fostering scientific research into the area's sub-tropical rainforest and other plant communities, and contributing to the conservation of these natural ecosystems and others farther away. The key to the success of the Binna Burra-Lamington National Park partnership has been, we contend, the common origins and sympathetic purposes which are evident in the intertwined histories of the two entities.

2 COMMON ORIGINS AND SYMPATHETIC PURPOSES

It is necessary for the purposes of the present argument to outline the origins of Lamington National Park and the Binna Burra Mountain Lodge. Great detail is not required as that can be found elsewhere (Groom 1949; Throssell 1984; Jarrott 1990; Lahey 2003). A third and connected entity, the National Parks Association of Queensland, is also introduced, and its origins explained insofar as they relate to the Park and the Lodge. O'Reilly's Rainforest Guesthouse, an older resort situated towards the western edge of Lamington National Park, although closely connected historically with both the national park and with Binna Burra, is not dealt with here (O'Reilly 1940, 1963).

2.1 *Lamington National Park*

Public attention was drawn to the scenic beauty and invigorating climate of the country around the McPherson Ranges in the 1890s by the Queensland pastoralist Robert Martin Collins (Collins 1896). Collins (1843-1913) later campaigned for the use of the area as a health resort and national park. His biographer (Perry 1923, p. 323) allots to Collins 'the credit of having brought about the proclamation' of Lamington National Park, but there is doubt about whether Collins's idea of a national park was much like the one that was later created. In 1907, for example, it was said of Collins that he had 'steadily persevered' in his endeavour to 'let Queenslanders know' that the Lamington Plateau existed and could 'with little difficulty be made accessible and opened up for settlement' (Leach 1907).

The proclamation of Lamington National Park in 1915, two years after the death of Collins, was in large measure due to the energy and persistence of another man, Romeo Watkins Lahey (1887-1968), a member of a Canungra saw-milling family (Morgan 1975-76; Comben 1998; Lahey 2003). After Bunya Mountains National Park, which was proclaimed in 1908, Lamington National Park was the second large national park in Queensland. Arguably the greatest advances towards its creation were made after Lahey began to engage himself earnestly in the campaign in 1911. He was aided by Queensland legislation—the *State Forests and National Parks Act*—which had been passed in 1906 to provide for the permanent reservation of areas of crown land as national parks.

Lahey's prominent role in the creation of Lamington National Park has been acknowledged by many. Among them was Francis Ratcliffe (1904-1970), the first head of the Wildlife Survey Section of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, and later founder of the Australian Conservation Foundation. Ratcliffe had stayed at the Lahey family's guest-house at Canungra and had been guided through the surrounding rainforest country by Romeo during his first stint in Australia with the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIRO's predecessor) in 1929-31. He thought 'that a part explanation of Romeo Lahey's undeniable restlessness was to be found in the fact that although no-one had a greater love for trees and wild mountain jungles, he was fated to earn his living by destroying them. He had certainly done his best, however, to make amends.' 'It [was] a matter of simple record', Ratcliffe believed, 'that the man who has worked hardest to further the cause of the preservation of Queensland's most beautiful forests is a partner in a timber firm' (Ratcliffe 1937). In 1971, Alec Chisholm (1890-1977) delivered the second Romeo Lahey Memorial Lecture to the National Parks Association of Queensland, and in it he described Lahey as 'the man chiefly stimulating the achievement' of Lamington National Park.

2.2 *The National Parks Association of Queensland*

In the years after the creation of Lamington National Park, Romeo Lahey took every opportunity to advance the ideals of national parks and nature preservation. He convened a discussion group of like-minded people in Brisbane with the aim of awakening the idea of, and the need for national parks, and this led directly to the formation in 1930 of the National Parks Association of Queensland (hereinafter NPAQ) of which Lahey was elected first president. Among the original committee was Cyril T. White (1890-1950), the Queensland Government Botanist. The association's first secretary was freelance journalist and photographer Arthur Groom who shared Lahey's passion for the wild forested country of the Lamington National Park. Groom had explored the park and

photographed its scenery, and in 1929 and 1930 published several illustrated articles in Brisbane newspapers about his exploits.

The NPAQ was the first such organisation in Australia, although it did embrace some of the ideas of existing groups such as the Queensland Naturalists' Club (founded in 1906), the Queensland Branch of the Royal Geographical Society (of which R. M. Collins had briefly been president in the 1890s), and the Royal Society of Queensland (whose president, Professor H. C. Richards, chaired the public meeting which formed the association). It preceded the establishment in 1932 in New South Wales of the similarly-intentioned National Parks and Primitive Areas Council (Thompson 1986).

The aims adopted by the NPAQ included: to 'preserve intact in their natural condition the existing National Parks of Queensland and to secure the reservation of [further] suitable areas'; and to 'educate public opinion to a fuller appreciation of the necessity for and value of National Parks'. This educational function included organising field outings to existing or proposed national park areas. The first such camp-out was to Cunningham's Gap National Park in 1930, attended by a party of six, including Lahey, Groom, White, and E. H. F. Swain (Director of Forests in Queensland).

2.3 *Binna Burra Mountain Lodge*

Out of the NPAQ and its increasingly popular camp-outs soon emerged the idea of establishing a chain of low-cost but comfortable accommodation centres which would allow a greater number of people to gain access to the peace, freedom and beauty of Queensland's national parks. The site chosen for the first of these was a 178 acre property at Mt Roberts, adjacent to the north-eastern edge of Lamington National Park, of which Lahey had obtained an option to purchase in 1932. A company, Queensland Holiday Resorts Limited, was formed to buy the property, and Romeo Lahey and Arthur Groom were among its first directors. Its objects included 'to provide tourist facilities and accommodation in beauty spots throughout the state of Queensland, and as far as possible to assist in preserving such in their natural state for future generations in accordance with the ideals of the National Parks Association of Queensland'.

Subscribers to the new company were hard to attract during the depression, so a promotional weekend camp at the proposed guest-house site on Mt Roberts was held on 3-5 June 1933. A much longer 'canvas holiday camp' was conducted from 16 December 1933 until 5 February 1934 during which visitors were taken on daily guided picnics into the Lamington National Park. A re-enactment of this tent camp was held at Binna Burra in December 2003 on the occasion of the celebration of the seventieth anniversary of the establishment of the resort. Queensland Holiday Resorts Limited was incorporated in March 1934, with about 90 subscribers holding about 1,700 shares (Throssell 1984, p. 66; Lahey 2003, p. 407). By this time the name of the lodge site had been changed to Binna Burra to avoid confusion with another Mt Roberts.

The Easter holiday weekend in 1934 was Binna Burra's next big occasion. Although guests were still accommodated in tents, by this time Lahey had relocated a house from Canungra to serve as a dining and recreation room and a kitchen. The first 'log cabin', with its tallow-wood drop-slab walls and stringybark shingle roof, was under construction. By the end of 1938, cabin accommodation for forty-four guests had been completed (Throssell 1984, pp. 67-68). During the early years of Binna Burra, Lahey also marked out and began construction of walking tracks within Lamington National Park, laying the foundation of the extensive network of tracks in the park today. From 1936 some of this work was subsidised by the Department of Forestry. In 1937, Gus Kouskos, a Binna Burra employee who had worked on the construction of the first cabins, and before that an employee of Lahey's company, Brisbane Timber Limited, was appointed as the first sub-foreman of track construction in Lamington National Park. He and other National Park employees were accommodated and fed at Binna Burra until a ranger's house was built within the park in 1972.

These early operational connections between Binna Burra and the Lamington National Park are significant, but more important are the resort's connections with the park through its common membership with the NPAQ. The first tent-camp at Binna Burra on King's Birthday weekend in

1933 was organised by the NPAQ, and many of the foundation members of the association were closely associated with the establishment of Binna Burra in 1933-34; some became shareholders of Queensland Holiday Resorts Limited (renamed Binna Burra Mountain Lodge Limited in 1975). Among the early Binna Burra shareholders were Romeo Lahey, Arthur Groom, J. Keith Jarrott (NPAQ secretary, 1946-1988) and the remarkable Dr Edward Oswald Marks (1882-1971), geologist and ophthalmologist, who was a founding councillor of the association and a director of Binna Burra from 1934 until 1957 (Hill 1972). The connection is also reflected in the objects of Queensland Holiday Resorts Limited which include reference to 'the ideals of the National Parks Association of Queensland'.

The common origins and sympathetic purposes of Lamington National Park and Binna Burra Mountain Lodge have made the relationship between them a fruitful one in terms of fostering scientific research, and contributing to the conservation of the natural ecosystems within the park and others farther away. Following are some of the ways in which this positive relationship has manifested itself over the past seventy years.

3 UNDERSTANDING

3.1 *Botanical studies*

Cyril T. White, the Government Botanist from 1917 until his death in 1950, was one of the original committee members of the NPAQ. Although probably not the first botanist to visit Lamington National Park (that honour may belong to John Shirley who collected in 1916-17 with Queensland Government Entomologist Henry Tryon), he nevertheless had a long association with the park, being one of a party from the Queensland Naturalists' Club that visited in 1918. Romeo Lahey described an unspecified camp-out trip with White through Lamington National Park as 'one of [his] most rewarding experiences'. 'Everything was made subservient to [White's] fundamental purpose of observing and collecting, and the physical effort so willingly put into carrying his enormous bundle of specimens through that trackless wilderness was an inspiration' (Lahey 1960).

White was a descendant of the first Colonial Botanist in South Australia, John Bailey (1800-1864). His maternal grandfather was Frederick Manson Bailey (1827-1915), Queensland Colonial Botanist from 1881 until his death. White, who had started as pupil-assistant to his grandfather in 1905, succeeded his uncle, John Frederick Bailey, as Government Botanist in 1917 (White 1944). During the 1930s and 1940s, members of White's staff at the Queensland Herbarium studied the flora of Lamington National Park, using Binna Burra lodge as their base. W. T. (Bill) Francis and Lindsay Smith, both rainforest specialists, and Stan T. Blake, a specialist in grasses and sedges (and many other plant groups) made frequent collecting trips. During the 1960s, W. F. J. (Bill) McDonald collated all this material in his comprehensive botanical survey of Lamington National Park (McDonald and Thomas 1989).

University of Queensland botanist Des Herbert (1898-1976) also had a long and productive association with Lamington National Park which he and his family first visited in 1926 (Joan Cribb, pers. comm.), soon after his appointment as a lecturer in 1924. Herbert became a foundation member of the NPAQ, and was present at the first Binna Burra camp in June 1933 where he gave an evening lecture. He wrote accounts of the rainforest of the Border Ranges for the Royal Society of Queensland, ANZAAS, and *Victorian Naturalist* (Herbert 1935a, 1935b, 1950, 1951, 1960). Herbert was particularly interested in the suckering stems found around the ancient specimens of the Antarctic beech, *Nothofagus moorei* (Herbert 1936). The growth of strangler figs and lianes that choked host rainforest trees was also one of his interests (Herbert 1928, 1954).

Towards the end of 1942, as the war in the Pacific was advancing toward Australia's northern coast, a jungle-training camp was established by the Australian Army at Canungra. Camp Cable, a United States Army base, had been established nearby earlier in 1942. During the war some 50,000 Australian and Allied troops, in small groups, visited Binna Burra (where they were accommodated) and Lamington National Park (for training). Arthur Groom, who was then resident manager of Binna Burra, lectured troops on the flora and fauna of the Australian rainforest. To assist Binna

Burra to shelter and feed army personnel, and to facilitate Groom's time-consuming lectures, two army catering staff were seconded to the lodge (Throssell 1984, pp. 86-88; Jarrott 1990, pp. 117-123).

Also during the war, Des Herbert and C. T. White were co-opted to prepare a booklet on 'bush tucker'—a survival guide for soldiers engaged in jungle warfare—based on the work of the anthropologist Walter Roth and much knowledge that had accumulated subsequently (Roth 1897, 1901; Commander Allied Land Forces 1943). Herbert was mainly familiar with the sub-tropical forests of Lamington National Park, but White was better acquainted with tropical flora. He had helped his grandfather, F. M. Bailey, to compile *The Comprehensive Catalogue of Queensland Plants* (Bailey 1909), and as Government Botanist had worked with W. D. (Bill) Francis (who succeeded him to the position of Government Botanist in 1950) to produce *Australian Rain-Forest Trees* (Francis 1929). White had also been involved with Lindsay Smith in the identification of rainforest plants collected during the Archbold Expeditions to New Guinea. Professor Herbert, in his retirement, encouraged his daughter Joan and her husband Alan Cribb to compile information on 'wild food' for the whole of Australia (Cribb and Cribb 1974).

Herbert, who became foundation professor of botany in 1948, took University of Queensland forestry and science students on occasional visits to Binna Burra prior to the Second World War, and more regularly after the war. His daughter Joan Cribb (pers. comm.) can recall annual excursions in the 1940s, staying in the Binna Burra log cabins. She later made frequent trips to Binna Burra during her M.Sc. studies of the Gasteromycetes (the 'Stomach Fungi') of Queensland (Cribb J. 1955-58). Later, when Joan's husband, Alan Cribb, became a lecturer in algology in the University of Queensland, he accompanied the students on their annual Binna Burra excursions. He collected and described species of *Trentepohlia*, a freshwater algal genus, from rainforest trunks and rocks in Lamington National Park (Cribb A. 1958). During this study, Alan found a specimen of *Thismia rodwayi* F. Muell. (Family Burmanniaceae), a highly unusual underground saprophytic monocotyledon that grows in very humid areas from south-east Queensland to Tasmania and New Zealand.

Early in the 1960s, Prof. Herbert directed post-graduate student Richard Jones in an ecological study of the 'Mountain Mallee' (*Eucalyptus codonocarpa*) and associated heathland at Dave's Creek Country in Lamington National Park (Jones 1964). Jones continued his post-graduate studies on the nutrition and water relations of heathland at Frankston, Victoria. After a short time in CSIRO at Deniliquin, NSW, he joined the University of Tasmania, where he became involved in the environmental protest against the flooding of Lake Pedder as chairman of the Lake Pedder Action Committee (LPAC). Jones was instrumental in setting up the United Tasmania Group (UTG), the political wing of the LPAC, which fielded twelve candidates in the April 1972 Tasmanian election. UTG has been described as the world's first green political party (Mulligan and Hill 2001).

3.2 Zoological studies

The diversity of birds in Lamington National Park has attracted many visitors over many years. The Brisbane journalist and keen bird observer, Alec Chisholm, visited Lamington National Park prior to the foundation of Binna Burra. He was part of the Queensland Naturalists' Club visit in 1918, which was facilitated by the O'Reilly family, and he returned in the summer of 1920. In between, Chisholm had arranged for Sydney W. Jackson to visit the park to search for the elusive rufous scrub bird (*Atrichornis rufescens*) resulting in the discovery of the first female of that species (Anon. 1919; Chisholm 1919, 1921). Francis Ratcliffe, who was studying flying fox in eastern Australia in 1929-31, particularly wished to see the Albert's lyre-bird, *Menura alberti*, and was guided in his searches by Romeo Lahey (Ratcliffe 1937).

Since its establishment in 1933-34, Binna Burra has provided a base for further zoological studies of Lamington National Park. Jiro Kikkawa, an animal behaviourist in the Zoology Department of the University of Queensland, conducted excursions to Lamington National Park to study 'the habitats of bird and mammal fauna by field observation, trapping, scat analysis and sound re-

cordings' (Kikkawa and Thorne 1971). Binna Burra was used as a base in 1966, but later excursions were conducted outside the boundaries of the National Park at O'Reilly's.

Entomology students in the Faculties of Agriculture and Science of the University of Queensland were also taken on annual excursions to Binna Burra by the head of the department, Athol Perkins. These entomology excursions continued through the 1950s into the 1960s. Geoff Monteith was one of the entomology students in 1960, and he has since made regular research visits to Binna Burra in his role as entomologist in the Queensland Museum (Dahms *et al.* 1979). Ian Common, a specialist in butterflies and moths, has also made frequent visits. During 1957-58, Prof. Phil Darlington of Harvard University collected in Lamington National Park during his studies on carabid beetles in rainforests from New Guinea to Tasmania (Darlington 1961).

3.3 *Geological studies*

During the first Binna Burra camp in June 1933, Henry C. Richards (1884-1947), professor of geology in the University of Queensland, presented a camp-fire talk, beginning a long association between Binna Burra and the Queensland geological fraternity. Throssell (1984) says that Richards explained the company's plans. It seems probable, however, that he also spoke about the geological history of the area, using the theme 'Whence Came this Grandeur', the title of his article in the 1938 *Lamington National Park Souvenir Book* (Queensland Government 1938).

Detailed studies in the Binna Burra area were made by the B.Sc. Hons. student, Graham Tweedale (1950). A field guide to the geology of south-eastern Queensland, including Binna Burra, has been prepared by Neville Stevens (1973). Warwick Wilmott contributed to the study of the Canungra-Beechmont-Numinbah area (Wilmott 1983), while Neville Stevens and associates investigated the shield volcanoes of the McPherson Range (Ewart *et al.* 1987).

3.4 *National and international symposia*

Binna Burra is an ideal place for national and international scientists to discuss the ecology and long-term conservation of rainforests and associated ecosystems. In Lamington National Park, three main types of rainforest (cool-temperate, warm-temperate, and sub-tropical), tall open-forests, open-forests, mallee scrub, and heathlands can all be studied. Of the many symposia that have taken place, the following are most notable.

During August 1961, the Botany Section of the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science (ANZAAS) held a week-long post-conference excursion under the guidance of Stan Blake of the Queensland Herbarium. Blake arranged accommodation at Binna Burra from where many long walks into Lamington National Park took place.

The Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland held three summer schools at Binna Burra, 1967-1969, under the guidance of poet and author, Judith Wright, and CSIRO rainforest ecologist Len Webb. Among others, geologist Neville Stevens and ornithologist Jiro Kikkawa presented lectures and led stimulating field trips into the national park (L.J. Webb and Jiro Kikkawa, pers. comm.)

In June 1976, the Royal Society of Queensland held a three-day symposium at Binna Burra to enable scientists from both Queensland and New South Wales to discuss the problems of conservation and management in the Border Ranges (Monroe and Stevens 1977).

A symposium in November 1978 was organised by the Australian Academy of Science on behalf of the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Program to investigate the use of LANDSAT imagery to define biosphere reserves throughout Oceania; delegates from Korea to Samoa attended (UNESCO 1978). The delegates spent several days in Adelaide at a conference on 'the interpretation of satellite imagery', then three days in the Murray Mallee examining the results of the CSIRO LANDSAT survey of South Australia (Laut *et al.* 1977). As great difficulty had been found in the interpretation of the denser vegetation—where foliage obscured wavelengths emitted from the soil surface—the MAB excursion extended to Binna Burra with the purpose of recognising rainforest and open-forest communities in LANDSAT imagery. Accommodation was provided by Binna Burra, with excursions to rainforest and other communities within Lamington National Park.

During August 1981, Bill McDonald of the Queensland Herbarium organised a symposium at Binna Burra for the delegates of the *XIII International Botanical Congress* (held in Sydney) who were especially interested in rainforest ecology and conservation (McDonald 1981). The newly-established Queensland chapter of the international society, Men of The Trees, held a conference at Binna Burra in 1981, attended by their founder, Richard St Barbe Baker. Ngairretta Brennan, president (and later a director of Binna Burra) was an organiser (N. Brennan, pers. comm).

3.5 Lamington Natural History Association

In 1975 the Lamington Natural History Association was formed, a joint venture of Binna Burra Mountain Lodge, O'Reilly's Rainforest Guesthouse, and the Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service. The Association's aims include helping to run the park's interpretive programme, manning a visitor information centre, publishing park literature, and preparing displays for the visitor centre. It was based on a concept which was common in the USA in the early 1970s, but was the first of its type in Australia. One of the Association's early major projects was the establishment of an environmental study centre and headquarters on the Binna Burra property by renovating the timber cabin which Arthur Groom had built for himself and his wife in 1935. Opened in 1976, the centre contained an office, class-room, and dormitory accommodation for thirty-six children taking part in educational camps. The project was funded by a Schools Commission grant applied for by Tony Groom (Arthur's son, who was then a Binna Burra Lodge manager), and otherwise supported by the Lodge and QNPWS.

The centre was originally designed to operate without permanent staff, but visiting school groups did not find this mode of operation attractive. A decision was therefore taken in 1980 to employ a full-time teacher whose income would be generated by the centre's activities. Binna Burra Lodge offered to guarantee the teacher's wages for the first six-months, but such was the success of the centre that the offer was not taken up. Soon after its foundation the association split into two chapters—one at Binna Burra, which retains the original name, and one at O'Reilly's, which is known as the Green Mountains Natural History Association.

4 CONSERVING

The identification of over 1,300 specimens of vascular plants that had been collected on the 1948 National Geographic Expedition to Arnhem Land (Specht and Mountford 1958) was made by Ray Specht in the Queensland Herbarium, then located in the City Botanic Gardens, Brisbane. Cyril White, then Government Botanist and a foundation member of the NPAQ, encouraged Specht to accompany the association on two of its long-weekend excursions, to Wyberba and to Yarraman. The aim of the association—'To educate public opinion to a fuller appreciation of the necessity for and value of National Parks'—struck a chord in the young lecturer in plant ecology from the University of Adelaide.

Specht moved to Melbourne University in 1961, and there was encouraged by the professor of botany and plant physiology, John S. Turner (1908-1991), to become involved in the Victorian National Parks Association (VNPA). The VNPA had been established in 1952 with the journalist and naturalist Philip Crosbie Morrison (1900-1958) as its first president, and Turner among its foundation members (Pizzey 1992; Robin 1994a). Morrison had spent time in Queensland in 1925 doing post-graduate work with the Great Barrier Reef Committee, and then met its chairman, and later a NPAQ founder, Prof. H. C. Richards. Morrison was later a colleague of Alec Chisholm, whose nature column he took over upon Chisholm's promotion to editorship of the *Argus* in 1937. It is not known to what extent Crosbie Morrison was influenced by these men or by the NPAQ in his formation of the similarly-named VNPA. Nevertheless, the spirit of the NPAQ certainly spread to Victoria through Specht, who became the association's third president, and David Lahey, Romeo's son, who was its fourth. During their terms, 1963-67, the first Conservation Survey of Victoria was initiated, under the sponsorship of the VNPA.

In 1958 the Australian Academy of Science had embarked on a Conservation Survey of Australia (Day 1968; Fenner 1975, 1995; Robin 1994b). Most states prepared lists of their national parks and conservation reserves. South Australia was the only state that had made comprehensive surveys of the distribution and floristics of its plant communities, so there the ecologist Ray Specht, together with the elderly naturalist Professor Sir John Burton Cleland, were able to assess the conservation status of these categories throughout the whole state (Specht and Cleland 1961). This conservation survey of major plant communities became the model for the Conservation Survey of Victoria (Frankenberg 1971) which formed the basis of recommendations for conservation made by the Land Conservation Council of Victoria.

When Specht became president of the VNPA in 1963, conservation scientists in his home state inaugurated the Nature Conservation Society of South Australia (NCSSA), modelled on the VNPA, (and therefore indirectly, perhaps, on the NPAQ). The NCSSA embarked on further detailed surveys of the vegetation (and associated fauna) of major areas within the state, resulting in a revision of *The Conservation of Major Plant Associations in South Australia* (Davies 1982, 1983).

The conservation surveys of major plant communities in South Australia and Victoria became the models for the Conservation Survey of Australia (Specht *et al.* 1974). When the Convener of the Conservation Section (E. M. Nicholson) of the International Biological Program (I.B.P.) visited Australia in 1964, he invited Ray Specht to join the planning committee in Monk's Wood, England, to assist in the development of a conservation survey throughout the world (Peterken 1967). A conservation survey of major plant communities in Australia and Papua New Guinea was initiated under the auspices of the Australian Academy of Science (Fenner 1975, 1995; Robin 1994b). J. Keith Jarrott, secretary of the National Parks Association of Queensland, and members of the Queensland Herbarium (Stan Blake, Selwyn Everist, Les Pedley, Lindsay Smith), among others, participated actively in the Queensland section of the *Conservation Survey of Major Plant Communities in Australia and Papua New Guinea* (Specht *et al.* 1974), organised by Ray Specht, then of the Botany Department of the University of Queensland (he had succeeded Herbert to the Chair of Botany in 1966).

5 CONCLUSIONS

Since its establishment seventy years ago, Binna Burra Mountain Lodge has provided a comfortable base from which 'nature lovers' can reach scenic locations within Lamington National Park, and enjoy the park's prolific biodiversity. The lodge has also provided a platform for scientists and students investigating the structure, composition and ecology of the range of ecosystems within the park. International and national conventions have given Lamington National Park in particular, and the eastern-Australian rainforests in general, a greater prominence than they otherwise would have attained. Far from being a profit-making commercial venture opportunistically located at the edge of a popular pleasure ground, Binna Burra has actively fostered the understanding and the conservation of the rainforest throughout its history. The key to the fruitful relationship between Binna Burra and the Lamington National Park has been the sympathetic purposes which are evident in their histories, and especially the interconnections between Binna Burra and the National Parks Association of Queensland through their common membership and ideals. Moreover, the spirit of conservation of which the park, the association, and the resort are all the products has spread from Queensland to influence the conservation movement in other Australian states.

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