

**The Lamington National Park:
A contrasts approach to rainforest tourism research**

Noel Scott and Don Getz
The University of Queensland
Steve Noakes
Griffith University
Eric Laws
James Cook University

Abstract: This paper examines aspects of the development of tourism in the hinterland of the Gold Coast, Australia. It examines the contrasts between the commercialized coast and rainforested hinterland as well as between two eco-lodges located in the hinterland. **Keywords:** Binna Burra, ecolodge, hinterland, O'Reilly's, rainforest, Gold Coast

Introduction

This chapter describes and contrasts tourism activity and management approaches on the Gold Coast with those in the World Heritage listed Lamington National Park, a remnant rainforest which is located within easy access to the Gold Coast beach and entertainment tourism strip. The 'green' hillside backdrop to the 'gold' of the Gold Coast 'beach strip' provides significant visual amenity to enhance the tourism attributes of the Gold Coast (Faulkner and Noakes 2002). While it is a destination well known to tourism researchers and only briefly described here, the Lamington National Park is much less visited, and merits more attention than it has so far received from tourism academics.

This paper summarises relevant literature on World Heritage Sites, presents an introduction to the Lamington National Park and discusses two particular ecotourism resorts, both located within this park. This case study highlights that on the Gold Coast, the rainforested hinterland is a problematic resource for tourism. While the 'green behind the gold' hinterland can supplement the perceived primary resources of

beach and developed facilities, it may also be seen as threatening to established businesses on the coastal strip since encouragement of hinterland visits might lead to more visitor dollars being spent in non-coastal businesses. A second issue highlighted by the case is the different fortunes of two very similar rainforest resorts. Differences in the ownership structure and degree of active participation in the tourism industry have been identified as contributors to one resort being a more efficient commercial model than the other. However, the findings indicate that the relationship between tourism and sustainable use of national parks is not automatically one of financial profitability. Instead, there is a benefit and need for rainforest resorts to understand and influence the wider regional positioning and also to actively involve themselves in the business of tourism.

The Gold Coast and its hinterland

Located in southeast Queensland, Australia, just one hour's drive south of Brisbane (Queensland's capital city), the Gold Coast city stretches from the New South Wales border, west to the hinterland of the Lamington Ranges, the Darlington Ranges and Mount Tamborine, north to Logan City and east to the South Pacific Ocean. From a visitor perspective, 'destination Gold Coast' overlaps the official local government authority boundaries to the south and to the west. The region features 70 kilometres of uninterrupted coastline and is fringed by rainforest hinterland, including World Heritage listed National Parks.

The original inhabitants called this area Yugambeh country and in respect of their traditions we use their greeting *Meenyahgu Yugambeh dagun* meaning 'Welcome to Yugambeh country'. Before the arrival of white people, a number of families lived in the area and today these family names are reflected in some place names, for example, the Birinburra family is remembered in the name Binna Burra (Figure 1).



Figure 1: The Gold Coast and hinterland areas showing the location of indigenous families

Source: http://www.yugambeh.com/wp-gallery2.php?g2_itemId=79 (with permission)

The Gold Coast hinterland was included as part of the World Heritage Listed Gondwana Rainforests of Australia in 1994. It was described in the world heritage evaluation document as:

Comprise[ing] many disjunct protected areas, within temperate rainforest or wet sclerophyll forest. The northern reserves lie predominantly along the boundary between Queensland and New South Wales. Main geological features are the Shield Volcano caldera to the east end of the northern reserves, and the Great Escarpment which runs south through the New South Wales reserves. The flora is very diverse:

170 families, 695 genera and 1,625 species of vascular plants have been recorded. About 150 species, representing 100 genera, are essentially restricted to the nominated property (World Conservation Monitoring Centre /The World Conservation Union 1993 p.81).

The physical geography of the Gold Coast consists of two regions, the coastal plain and a mountainous 'hinterland' region. The coastal plain is narrow and until post WW2 urbanisation, largely swampy. This led to the development of the Gold Coast as a series of small coastal villages with housing activity restricted to the north of the region and on the coastal dunes. In the north, Southport and later Surfers Paradise developed as urban areas. Along the beaches to the south, a number of villages grew around surf life-saving clubs during the 1930s. Later the swamps behind these villages were drained and canal housing estates developed. Towards the base of the hinterland mountain range, other villages and semi-rural areas developed such as Oxenford, Nerang, Mudgeeraba, Springbrook and others. Today the Gold Coast is a continuous urban strip about 40 km long and some 10 km wide to the base of the mountainous hinterland area. The area is an internationally known tourism destination that has substantial high-rise accommodation both in hotels and apartments primarily located along the 'beach strip'. It has become the largest, non-capital city tourist destination in Australia.

The mountainous hinterland of the Gold Coast is composed of the Tamborine Plateau to the north, the Darlington and McPherson Ranges to the west, and the Lamington Plateau to the south. Originally characterised by large areas of thickly wooded forest including rainforest remnants, the rainforest areas are today incorporated in a number of small national parks. Early development on the rich soil of the Tamborine Plateau led to small pockets of cattle, dairy and small crop farms. In 1908, Queensland's first national park, Witches Falls on Tamborine Mountain, was declared under the 1906 State Forest and National Parks Bill. The Lamington National Park came into legal existence in 1915 (Lamington National Park, 2012). Nowadays, this hinterland area is characterised by small rural housing estates and rural farming holdings; semi-rural towns and villages with the biggest population centre of about 6,000 at Tamborine Mountain. Population is denser in the eastern foothills with rural housing estates and

‘acreage’ properties.

More recently, some small-scale tourist attractions and shopping villages have been developed in hinterland areas closer to the coast. Some farming land, previously used for dairy cattle, has been turned into vineyards and associated wineries targeting the day-trippers from both the Gold Coast and Brisbane. Other attempts to commercialise the hinterland areas with a high volume cableway, an interpretive centre and more intensive use of national park sites have been unsuccessful due to a lack of support by local residents and prevailing government policies.

Developed tourism infrastructure including theme parks, large shopping centres, night-time entertainment, casinos and conference facilities mixes with the acclaimed beach side location and surfing culture has seen the Gold Coast beach strip develop into a major Australian holiday destination. The dominant brand image for the Gold Coast of sun, sand, entertainment, with perhaps a little sin thrown in, provides a contrasting illustration of product identification and market segmentation with the nearby visitor attractions and experiences of the hinterland. In the year ending December 2011, total domestic and overnight visitors on the Gold Coast reached 3,912,000 (3,194,000 domestic and 718,000 international). This represented a decline of 7% from the previous year when natural disasters in New Zealand and Japan and a financial crisis in Europe dampened numbers. Total visitor spend was A\$3.4 billion, down 10% on the previous year. Important to Gold Coast hinterland tourist and recreation usage, the domestic day trip market to the Gold Coast declined 5% to 6,440,000 (Tourism Queensland, 2012)

The hinterland concept

Although the primary attraction of the Gold Coast coastal strip is arguably based on its beaches, it is also an intensively developed strip of coastal real estate. On the other hand the hinterland areas are attractive more for their undeveloped natural values and the under-developed attraction of open range farming land and small village communities. One recurring theme in examining the mountainous region adjoining the coastal strip is the concept of the hinterland. Weaver and Lawton (2004) describe not one ‘hinterland’, but several ‘hinterlands’. The geographical boundaries are fuzzy

and subject to debate when attempting to arrive at a definition for the 'hinterland' given it is not a formal or uniform geopolitical unit such as 'Queensland' or 'Australia'. The 'hinterland' is a subjective entity in the minds of the tourist or recreation user with as many special identities at any given time as there are people who recognise its existence. To contend with this 'fuzzy boundary' dilemma, Weaver and Lawton (2004) determined a three stage 'graduations of regional identity' for the hinterland as it was perceived by the visitor market. The first, or core of the region, are those areas included by almost all individual visitors familiar with the region. The second, called the 'near periphery', are areas included in the perception of some hinterland users. The third region was described as the 'far periphery', depending on the level of inclusion of even less individuals.

Faulkner and Noakes (2002) note that the 'hinterland region' of tourism experiences for the Gold Coast is not as broadly defined nor as well utilised as, for example, Cairns or Port Douglas, where day trip operators will visit attractions up to two hours or more away from the accommodation nodes on the coastal corridor. They suggested there may be opportunities to extend the 'hinterland' concept of Gold Coast tourism in the future. Kearsley et al (1997, p.71) consider that "at present, the bulk of demand is less likely to be for the 'back country' of wilderness and remote places than it is to be for the 'front' country of relatively easily accessible natural settings with a good but unobtrusive infrastructure of basic facilities."

World Heritage Listing

The hinterland of the Gold Coast consists of a number of smaller protected areas close to the coast and some larger national parks further inland along the border of NSW and Queensland. These parks are administered by the respective State Government Parks Authority. These protected areas along the border between New South Wales and Queensland are part of the World Heritage Listed area. Countries that have signed the World Heritage Convention are committed to the six major principles of identifying, protecting, conserving, presenting, transmitting to future generations, and, if necessary, rehabilitating the values of World Heritage Areas within their jurisdiction. Since 1995, signatory countries are required to systematically monitor and report on their World Heritage Areas based on the framework identified in the

Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention.

The status of most reserves comprising Australia's World Heritage Areas is that of National Park (Category 2) which is defined by the IUCN as a: "natural area of land and/or sea, designated to (a) protect the ecological integrity of one or more ecosystems for present and future generations, (b) exclude exploitation or occupation inimical to the purposes of designation of the area and (c) provide a foundation for spiritual, scientific, educational, recreational and visitor opportunities, all of which must be environmentally and culturally compatible" (IUCN 1994, p.19).

Ryan and Silvano (2009) and Buckley (2002b) consider that the World Heritage Site (WHS) designation has many of the characteristics of a place brand. The WHS designation has been bestowed on sites that "are powerfully evocative symbols" and places of "outstanding universal value" (Shackley, 1998, p.11). Indeed, the criteria for selecting WHS (see Table 1) are intended to guarantee that sites are unique and extraordinary. The research and effort invested in the selection process is of particular value to serious heritage tourists who are seeking not only visual, but intellectual satisfaction deriving from the integrity and authenticity of the site being visited. These factors also guarantee the maintenance of a long-term competitive advantage for sites which contain not only vestiges of the past or exceptional natural sites, but also bear witness to creative human endeavours and serve as milestones in the emergence of art and culture.

Table 1: Selection criteria for World Heritage Sites (WHS)

- i. to represent a masterpiece of human creative genius;
- ii. to exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design;
- iii. to bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared;
- iv. to be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history;
- v. to be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change;
- vi. to be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance. (The Committee considers that this criterion should preferably be used in conjunction with other criteria);
- vii. to contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance;
- viii. to be outstanding examples representing major stages of earth's history, including the record of life, significant on-going geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features;
- ix. to be outstanding examples representing significant on-going ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals;
- x. to contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation.

UNESCO (2009)

The primary objective governments and communities want from protected areas is the conservation of natural landscape. Well managed tourism can, and should, bring net benefits, but visitor use of heritage sites can be one of the greatest threats to their survival (Hill and Pickering, 2008). Eagles et al (2002) discussing the governance of such areas note that their regulatory agencies have the conflicted policies of minimising the negative impacts of visitor use while ensuring the quality of visitor experiences and the economic benefits of protected areas. See Buckley (2002a) for a discussion of managing tourism in parks.

Gold Coast hinterland rainforest tourism

The terrain of the hinterland contributes to the fragmented nature of the Gold Coast hinterlands and to the difficulty of access to many peripheral areas. A series of rivers (Logan, Albert, Pimpama, Nerang, Tallebudgera and Tweed) drain the hinterland areas flowing northeast and east, creating a series of narrow valleys which make transportation problematic for centuries of indigenous populations and for the non-indigenous populations that followed the government surveyors who charted the region in the 1840s.

The use of the hinterland areas for tourism takes two main forms; day tripping and overnight stays in a number of 'ecotourism' resorts, notably Binna Burra Mountain Lodge and O'Reilly's Guesthouse. These two establishments are situated in the Lamington National Park on privately owned land. O'Reilly's was established in 1926 as a farm and later a guesthouse, and Binna Burra was founded in 1933 as a series of huts for local nature and walking enthusiasts. Weaver and Lawton (2002a p. 271) write that 'both are well recognized in the ecotourism sector, as reflected in their advanced ecotourism accreditation status within Australia's National Ecotourism Accreditation Program and in the Queensland state awards for environmental tourism that they have won.'

These two properties are now discussed as case studies below.

Binna Burra

Binna Burra is the site of a long-established overnight ecolodge accommodation,

Binna Burra Mountain Lodge, which accounts for approximately 20,000 annual visitor-nights in the main lodge accommodation. It is a public, non-listed private company operated with a culture of a cooperative business by conservation minded shareholders for eight decades. It is on private land within the World Heritage-listed Lamington National Park and is one just two primary gateways into the National Park with vehicle parking, limited camping and food and beverage services available at a main trailhead.

Picnic, restaurant and other on-site services cater to a large number of day visitors within the private property of Binna Burra Mountain Lodge. In total, approximately 250,000 visitors participate in recreational activities in and around Binna Burra each year. A notable feature of Binna Burra is the narrow, winding dead-end road that connects the site to the Gold Coast, and the presence of Upper and Lower Beechmont as 'staging' settlements that must be passed through en route by conventional on-road vehicles.

Binna Burra Mountain Lodge was one of the first nature-based resorts in Australia, established in 1933. Its significance is further enhanced by its commitment to environmentally sustainable practices prior to the evolution of 'ecotourism'. In 2000, it was the first commercial accommodation provider in Australia to be certified for its environmental performances by a recognised eco-label. The Lodge accommodates up to 115 guests in rustic style timber log cabins. It provides modern amenities, but its policy of not providing radio, television, phones and clocks confirms this as an ideal getaway from everyday life and provides encouragement of its guests to indulge in and learn an appreciation of the natural landscape that surrounds the ecolodge. In 2012, Binna Burra opened its 20 new studio, 1, 2 and 3 bedroom 'Sky Lodge' apartments. The A\$20 million project was financed through private investors who were attracted by the company's claim: 'Your opportunity to purchase freehold title within World Heritage listed Lamington National Park' (Binna Burra, 2012).

In 2004, the shareholders of Binna Burra Mountain Lodge endorsed the following company philosophies which have continued to reflect the values of the enterprise:

Our vision: Preservation of the spirit of Binna Burra through continuous business renewal.

The Mission of the Board, Management and Staff: We are custodians of Binna Burra's heritage, we nurture and improve it today, and we will pass it on in good health to future generations. To achieve this we must have a sustainable business which has sufficient economic strength to ensure its environmental and social performance recognizes and complements the world heritage natural environment in which the business is located.

Binna Burra Mountain Lodge has created and implemented its own environmental management plan to enhance and preserve its surroundings including: sustainable visitor numbers, recycling and re-using policies concerning waste, pollution and energy, and upholding principles of sustainable management and development through guests' educational experiences and staff training.

O'Reilly's

Also a long established private business adjacent to the Lamington National Park, O'Reilly's Rainforest Retreat is similar to Binna Burra Mountain Lodge in many respects but accommodates more visitors annually. Regionally unique aspects of O'Reilly's include the Tree Top Walk (a rainforest canopy boardwalk constructed in 1985) and the wild bird feeding area next to the lodge. O'Reilly's is also located within the municipality of the new Scenic Rim Regional Council (formerly within the Beaudesert Shire). It is connected to the Gold Coast by a narrow, winding dead-end road, but requires a considerably longer drive (about 90 minutes compared with 45-60 minutes for Binna Burra), although 4WD access can also be achieved by way of the Duck Creek Road from rural township of Beaudesert. The national park service has a campsite and information centre very close to the guesthouse. Day visitors use a large car park next to the Guesthouse and attracted around a quarter of their visitors from overseas.

The modern, tourism-award-winning enterprise bears little resemblance to the original bark-clad guesthouse that provided the original shelter for visitors to Lamington National Park. It has been kept under family ownership through four generations while many family

members have worked in the business.

Pioneering origins and development of the Guesthouse have been documented by the O'Reilly family in a publication entitled *The O'Reilly Story*. It is the story of four generations beginning in 1911 with no less than eight O'Reilly boys from two related families based in the Blue Mountains west of Sydney who selected land on the McPherson Range to establish their dairy farming activity. Tom, Norb, Herb, Mick and Pete O'Reilly built their first hut on top of the cliff at Moran's Falls while their cousins Pat, Luke and Joe O'Reilly built their hut at Pat's Bluff.

The McPherson Range was at that time wilderness, with loggers not far away, and the state government had the foresight to establish a national park. This new park was designed to surround the O'Reilly lands. In 1914 the challenging and rugged Stockyard Creek Track was carved up the mountains to provide access to the new park (proclaimed in 1915), leading to twenty years of daily horse-trains carrying cream and wool 15 km to the valley below and increasing tourist traffic up the mountain to experience the remaining rugged wilderness through activities such as bushwalks and horse-back journeys to the Border Lookouts and Elabana Falls.

The government had required each settler to construct a hut on their specific acreage, but the boys preferred to share one house and that made two others available for visitors. A hospitality business started to develop, and it looked rather attractive compared to the alternatives. In 1925, Tom O'Reilly led the development of a dedicated Guesthouse, opening to welcome its first guests in time for Easter, 1926. Three O'Reilly sisters moved in to help run the business, although it was seen as a temporary measure to boost cash flow until improved road access made the farm more profitable. While a road from Canungra was constructed in the mid 1930s mainly for the purpose of accessing timber, it ended some 6 km from O'Reillys, with a horse track along a mountain ridge linking up the Guesthouse. The winding horse track was widened in 1947 to become the first road built to the guesthouse, finally allowing motor vehicles to bring in tourists and supplies. By 1960 bus tours were snaking their way up the oft-muddy road, but the greater connection with the outside world came in 1967 when the electricity line was extended to the guesthouse, replacing the old generator and wood fired hot water. A year later Land Rovers were purchased to cater to the needs of older guests who could not do vigorous

backcountry hiking and in 1975 these were replaced when O'Reilly's acquired its own four-wheel-drive bus.

A major building project occurred in 1977 to expand the guesthouse, and its first bar was constructed in 1984. The popular Tree Top Walk was constructed in the rainforest near the Guesthouse in 1987. Major physical improvements occurred in 1991, the same year in which the approach road was finally sealed over its entire length. In 1997 the kiosk (called 'Gran's') was expanded to handle the growing volume of day-trip visitors, providing both a retail shop and restaurant.

A major expansion was brought to fruition in 1999 with the opening of Canungra Valley Vineyards. This tourist-oriented facility lies along the approach road to the national park in an attractive valley-floor setting. It is 90% owned by the O'Reilly's, although the venture originally had another partner who has been bought out. The biggest expansion ever to the guesthouse was completed in 2000, adding 21 guest rooms, a relaxation centre and new staff accommodation. In 2008, O'Reilly's Mountain Villas opened consisting of 48 luxuries two and three bedroom, self contained, rainforest and mountain villas.

O'Reilly's sought and was awarded advanced ecotourism accreditation from the Ecotourism Association of Australia. Although they do not use the term 'ecolodge', it does fit their operation in a number of ways. Perhaps the biggest difference is that the Guesthouse has continued to move up-market into the luxury accommodation category.

Capitalization of the family brand is ongoing. Gran O'Reilly's Store, at the Guesthouse, includes a bistro, gift shop and other provisions. It is very popular with day-visitors to the park. There is now an O'Reilly's line of clothing, gifts, nature videos, and wine from the Canungra Valley Vineyards. The O'Reilly family name is so legendary in Australian ecotourism that it has become a valuable brand.

Similarities and differences

Statistically, based on 2000 data (ABS) day and overnight visitors to Binna Burra and O'Reilly's have very similar profiles. Approximately two-thirds were born in Australia, and one-third born overseas. Of those born overseas, some three quarters actually reside in Australia resulting in less than 8% who can be classified as

international visitors. Research by Weaver and Lawton (2002a) revealed many similarities between the sites

- Over 90% of the respondents were residents of Australia while over 57% were residents of Brisbane or the Gold Coast.
- Females accounted for 55% of the sample.
- Full-time workers accounted for less than one-half of the sample, almost 40% of who possess a university degree.
- About 22% of respondents who indicated an income range earned \$50,000 or more per year.
- Being in peaceful and tranquil surroundings, appreciating nature, and escaping the urban environment were the main motivations for their visits, 42% of which were the first visit by the respondent to that location.
- Almost one-half of the day-only visitors spent between three and five hours at the site, which was usually accessed by a private car accommodating a group of from two to six persons.
- Two-thirds of the respondents were accompanied by a spouse or de facto.
- An estimated 12% of the respondents were visiting with young children.
- About three-quarters of the sample used toilet facilities at the site while short trails were also heavily utilised.

Key differences between the sites that have been identified by Weaver and Lawton (2002b) and the authors include:

- More National Park trail heads at Binna Burra than O'Reilly's
- Binna Burra stood out for the high rating on exercise, which reflects the reputation of this site as a venue for challenging and long distance walking.
- Binna Burra closer drive time to major accommodation nodes on the Gold Coast – approximately one hour drive versus 2 hour drive to O'Reilly's
- Binna Burra is closer to a resident community (Beechmont) than O'Reilly's (Canungra) enabling higher levels of local community employment and direct local community engagement.
- Unique facilities at O'Reilly's include the botanical gardens, Tree Top Walk

and bird feeding area, especially used by first-time visitors.

- Higher rating of wildlife at O'Reilly's most likely associated with its bird feeding area and bird watching opportunities.
- O'Reilly's business seeks and attracts more coach based day visitor traffic resulting in crowding at peak times.
- O'Reilly's has more of a sense of being operated as the commercial entity, whereas Binna Burra retains a more traditional, nostalgic cooperative business culture. A shareholder survey undertaken in 2004 indicated that the vast majority of the owners of Binna Burra Lodge Ltd are not seeking to improve their wealth from the investment, rather to preserve and enhance the lodge, its access to the National Park and the services it provides to visitors to this natural area.

Discussion

The visual amenity of the Hinterland Mountains when observed from the coastal resort accommodation strip has 'tourism value'. It provides the 'green backdrop' to the 'gold' of the 'beach/coastal strip', and facilities provided by both Binna Burra and O'Reilly's are important as 'end-of-the-road' visitor services, attractions and access to national park activities. Continued population and visitor growth in South East Queensland and the far north of New South Wales inevitably increases the frequency of recreational and tourist activities in the Gold Coast Hinterland areas. It also heightens urban development pressure on the area.

The cases and information above illustrates a number of contrasts and comparisons between different parts of the Gold Coast rainforest areas and the tourism use of it. The rainforested areas of the Lamington National Park provide one of several 'hinterlands' behind the Gold Coast. The Gold Coast 'hinterland' is not a formal or uniform geopolitical unit but rather a subjective entity in the minds of the tourist or recreation user with many special identities at any given time as there are people who recognise its existence (Weaver and Lawton 2002a, Faulkner and Noakes 2002). The biological diversity and natural wonders of mountainous plateaus, steep escarpments and diversity of naturally occurring flora and fauna on the Hinterland provides the opportunity to develop another contrasting dimension to the dominant coastal strip

sun, surf, entertainment image of the Gold Coast.

A second contrast is in the way organisational philosophies and approaches have developed over some eight decades due to the types of business models employed. The Binna Burra Mountain Lodge business model retains and reflects characteristics of the not-for-profit sector and older style cooperatives that were evident in the dairy and agricultural sectors of early European settlement of the hinterland areas. No individual shareholder of Binna Burra Mountain Lodge shareholders can own more than 2.5% of the issued shares resulting in the situation where (a) no shareholder has excessive exposure of their other personal assets based on their investment in the lodge company and (b) it is difficult to raise additional capital to continuously improve and update the product. A survey of shareholders (Noakes 2004) indicated that, similar to a not-for-profit organisation, the shareholders are there because they want to be – they believe in the organisations cause and its values. Increasing personal wealth is not the priority (or any) motivation for becoming apart-owner of the company. Those who share the values and beliefs of the organisational culture can absorb the stories and folklore from the past and see their affinity and network survival as more important than business survival.

The family business model at O'Reilly's indicates that the commitment to raising the funds for continuous renewal has been embedded in the organisations's DNA over successive generations. The business has successfully transformed from a family operation with a more corporate style with independent representatives on the Board of Directors, and clear separation of the roles and responsibilities of the owners, the Board and the Management and staff. Key leaders of the business from within the founding family and from professional management appointments have valued innovation and creativity to expand the product range offered by its controlled entities.

A further contrast is the scale of rainforest sites accessible from Binna Burra and O'Reilly's. This illustrates a number of subtle differences in visitor mix due to the distance from the intensity of the coastal tourism and residential communities, differences in the physical infrastructure available on the eastern and western sides of the National Park and the contrasting organisational and management approaches

noted above. This contrast provides an interesting context for further studies on tourism behaviour in natural settings and acceptance of ecotourism. While a number of general visitor studies have been conducted it would be opportune to use this useful context for specialised analyses focusing on the behaviours of visitor groups such as families with young children, older adults, solitary visitors and females.

Other contrasts include the developed coastal strip and the hinterland providing an opportunity for research into the value of hinterland hill-side preservation so future generations of residents and visitors can also enjoy that visual amenity and the importance of protecting fragile natural environments as well as rare and endangered species.

References

- Binna Burra Lodge (2012) <http://www.binnaburrallodge.com.au/Binna-Burra/Staying-at-Binna-Burra/Copy-of-Binna-Burra-Sky-Lodges> accessed 8 May 2012
- Buckley, R. (2002a) 'Managing Tourism in Parks', *Journal of Ecotourism*, vol 1, pp162–171
- Buckley, R. (2002b) *World Heritage Icon Value: Contribution of World Heritage Branding to Nature Tourism*, Australian Heritage Commission, Canberra
- Eagles, P., McCool, S.F. and Haynes, C. (2002) *Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas: Guidelines for Planning and Management*, WCPA, Gland, Switzerland
- Faulkner B. and Noakes S. (2002) *Our Gold Coast: The Preferred Tourism Future. Gold Coast Visioning Project Final report*, CRC for Sustainable Tourism, Gold Coast
- Hill, W. and Pickering, C. (2008) *Ecologically Sustainable Visitor Use of Australia's World Heritage areas*, CRC for Sustainable Tourism, Gold Coast
- IUCN. 1994. Guidelines for protected area management categories. IUCN
- Kearsley, G., Hall, C. M., and Jenkins, J. (1997) 'Tourism planning in natural areas: Introductory comments', in C.M. Hall, J. Jenkins and G. Kearsley (eds.) *Tourism Planning and Policy in Australia and New Zealand: Cases, issues and practice* (pp.66-74), Irwin Publishers, Sydney
- Lamington National Park, Queensland Government (2012) <http://www.derm.qld.gov.au/parks/lamington/culture.html>, accessed 20 February 2012
- Noakes, S. (2004) *Survey of shareholders attitudes*, Binna Burra Mountain Lodge,

Lamington National Park.

O'Reilys (2012) www.oreilys.com.au accessed 8 May 2012

Ryan, J. and Silvano, S. (2009). 'The World Heritage List: The making and management of a brand', *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*, vol 5, no 4, pp 290-300

Tourism Queensland (2012) Gold Coast regional Snapshot, year ended December 2011. http://www.tq.com.au/destinations/gold-coast-and-hinterland-zone/gold-coast/research/research_home.cfm accessed 8 May 2012

Tourism Research Australia (2012) <http://www.ret.gov.au/tourism/research/tra/Pages/default.aspx>, accessed 20 February 2012

UNESCO (2009) UNESCO World Heritage Centre – Official Site, United Nations, <http://whc.unesco.org/en/about/> . accessed 8 May 2012

Weaver, D. B., and Lawton, L. J. (2002a) 'Overnight ecotourist market segmentation in the Gold Coast hinterland of Australia', *Journal of Travel Research*, vol 40, no 3, pp 270-280

Weaver, D. B. and Lawton, L. J. (2002b) *Hinterland Sustainable Tourism Development Study*, Common Ground Publishing, Altona, Victoria

Weaver, D. B. and Lawton, L. J. (2004) 'Visitor Attitudes towards Tourism Development and Product Integration in an Australian Urban-Rural Fringe', *Journal of Travel Research*, vol 24, pp 286-296.

World Conservation Monitoring Centre /The World Conservation Union (1993) *World Heritage Nomination - IUCN Summary: Central Eastern Rainforests Of Australia (Extension)*, The World Conservation Union