

Commemoration of the Club's first visit to Lamington National Park. Qd. Nat. 18:48-50.

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COMMEMORATION OF THE CLUB'S FIRST VISIT TO LAMINGTON NATIONAL PARK

At Mt. Bithongabel, on Saturday, 19th November, 1966, Mr. A. H. Chisholm, O.B.E., F.R.Z.S., a Past-President and Honorary Life Member of the Club, unveiled a plaque bearing the following inscription:—

**NEAR THIS SPOT A PARTY FROM
THE QUEENSLAND NATURALISTS' CLUB
CAMPED IN DECEMBER, 1918, THUS
HELPING TO DRAW PUBLIC ATTENTION
TO THE SCIENTIFIC AND SCENIC
VALUE OF THIS GREAT NATIONAL
PARK**

A. H. Chisholm	O. W. O'Brien
C. D. Gillies	H. Tryon
C. Harrison	C. T. White
R. L. Higgins	J. E. Young
J. T. Dunlop	W. H. Hermann
S. R. L. Shepherd	
Guide: H. O'Reilly	

The Department of Forestry, in giving approval for the placing of this plaque at the site, also generously undertook its erection, and the Club is deeply indebted to members of this Department for their interest and help.



MR. A. H. CHISHOLM UNVEILING THE CAIRN.

Background L. to R.: Mr. H. O'Reilly, —, Mr. B. Harris, Dr. H. E. Young, Dr. M. Murphy, Mr. C. Roff (partly hidden), Miss M. Hawken (President).

The Lamington National Park, an area of approximately 47,000 acres of the McPherson Range, was proclaimed by the Government of Queensland in July, 1915, thanks largely to the determined and untiring efforts of Romeo Lahey, who combined the energies of an explorer with the vision of a prophet and the persistence of, literally, a door-to-door salesman. The selections which the O'Reilly family had taken up in 1911 remained as an enclave of about 1000 acres of freehold within the National Park.

World War I held up any developmental work in Lamington National Park and it was still practically inaccessible to the average tourist when the Naturalists' Club, through the good offices of the O'Reilly family, visited it in the Christmas-New Year period of 1918-19. Some members of the party had special interests. C. D. Gillies, the Club President, was a lecturer in Biology at the University of Queensland. A. H. Chisholm, a journalist on the staff of the "Daily Mail", was Queensland secretary of the Ornithologists' Union. Henry Tryon was Government Entomologist and Plant Pathologist, C. T. White was Government Botanist, and J. T. Dunlop and S. R. L. Shepherd were on the staff of the Geological Survey.

The party left Brisbane on Tuesday, 24th December, and travelled to Beaudesert by train and thence to Kerry by coach. There they were met by the O'Reillys who took them in relays on horses through the valley of Stockyard Creek and up their winding mountain track. They camped on Friday night in a hut on the edge of Roberts' Plateau, and the next day walked about eight miles to Mt. Bithongabel, their packs being transported by horse. They had intended following Buchanan's 1909 track along the border range, which linked with an earlier track to the Lamington Plateau above Running Creek. This proved impracticable so, with a visit to Echo Point, all Sunday and part of Monday were spent in the vicinity of Bithongabel. On Monday they visited Canungra Creek falls and spent the night in one of the O'Reillys' clearings. Making an early start on Tuesday, they lunched at the first hut at the edge of Roberts' Plateau, and then walked approximately ten miles down the mountain and across country to spend the night in the Darlington State School on the bank of the Albert River. On Wednesday, 1st January, they walked four miles across the hills to Hill View, travelled to Beaudesert by the Beaudesert tramway line, and so back to Brisbane by train the same evening. C. T. White and H. Tryon, who were on an official collecting trip, stayed several days longer on the Plateau.

On their return, A. H. Chisholm published two long articles on the Park in the Brisbane "Daily Mail" (3rd, 8th January, 1919), and a double-page one with numerous photographs in the "Sydney Mail" (5th March, 1919). G. Harrison, who was on the "Brisbane Courier" staff, wrote a long article in that paper (6th January, 1919), and R. L. Higgins provided a double page of photographs for the "Queenslander" (18th January, 1919). Thus they undoubtedly made many people aware for the first time of the beauty and interest of the area.

Chisholm headed his article of 8th January, "National Parks. Possibilities Ahead. The Green Mountains of Queensland.", and that of 5th March, "The Green Mountains: Queensland's National Park". From this phrase, which Chisholm says was suggested by Henry Tryon, stems the name for the area popularised by Bernard O'Reilly—"Green Mountains".

The first issue of the Club's journal following this trip (*Qd Nat.* 2 (3):74, July, 1920) recorded "the 1918-19 trip of members to the Macpherson Range was the means of revealing several new plants. . . The visit in question was of further value in that it led to the Government appointing Mr. E. M. O'Reilly as salaried ranger for the great National Park of the Macpherson Range."

The four members of the 1918-19 party who survive, Messrs. R. L. Higgins, S. R. L. Shepherd, A. H. Chisholm, and H. O'Reilly, were invited to the ceremony on 19th November, 1966, and it was a great pleasure to Club members that the latter two were able to attend and to speak at the unveiling of the plaque.

Over the weekend 18th-20th November, 60 members and friends stayed at Green Mountains Guesthouse, 20 camped nearby, and 10 made the day trip. Among those present at the unveiling were Mrs. C. D. Gillies, her daughters Miss A. Gillies and Mrs. H. Pollock, and her grandchildren; Dr. H. E. Young and Mrs. R. G. Stephens, son and daughter of Mr. J. E. Young; and many members of the O'Reilly family. Dr. Young moved the vote of thanks to Mr. Chisholm for performing the unveiling. The Australian Broadcasting Commission filmed the ceremony for subsequent showing on TV, and Mr. E. Kemp, President of the National Parks Association of Queensland, took a tape-recording. After the ceremony the large gathering enjoyed a festive luncheon which the O'Reillys had wheeled out in barrows from the guesthouse to Bithongabel Lookout. Bird-lovers particularly had a rewarding day along the tracks. In the evening members were delighted to have with them at dinner Mr. Romeo Lahey, himself a former Club member. Honorary Life Members present were Mrs. H. C. Curtis, Mrs. E. M. Jackson, Dr. E. O. Marks, and of course Mr. A. H. Chisholm, who showed lantern slides taken about the time of the Club's first visit to the Park.

—E. N. MARKS.