UPPER
BLUE MOUNTAINS
CONSERVATION
SOCIETY

Black Cockatoos by G.J. Broinowski

Newsletter

Registered by Australia Post—Publication No. NBHO 925

UPPER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY INC.

Incorporated in New South Wales. Registered Office: The Society's usual Registered Office has been demolished and is being replaced with a new Conservation Hut at the same address, Valley of Waters Reserve, Valley Road, Wentworth Falls. 2782. Please address all Correspondence to P.O. Box 29, Wentworth Falls. 2782

SUBSCRIPTIONS Pensioners and Juniors \$6.00 per year; Single Membership \$10.00 per year; Family Membership \$15.00 per year.

MEETINGS: Held on the last Friday of the month, after January will be held at the Wentworth Falls Public School, Falls Road, until further notice.

For speakers at coming meetings, please see Public notices in the Gazette.

COMMITTEE FOR 1990

President	Robin Corringham Mick Dark	58.6561 58.7061
	Wyn Jones	87.7511
Secretary Treasurer	Terri Hamilton Muriel Healey	82.4554 58.6575
Membership Officer	Bruce James	87.7937
Newsletter Editors	Sara Jones Dianne Johnson	87.7511 84.2197
	Stewart James	87.7937
Walks Convenors	Olive Noble	87.8342
••••••	Bob Jones	58.8361
Librarian	June Blick	88.1051
Hut Duty Organiser	Beverley Thompson	57.2076
Land Preservation Officer	Deirdre Morton	58.8137
Publicity/Information	Dianne Johnson	84.2197
Land Use Officer	Robin Corringham	58.6561
Hut Supplies	Reg Toseland	84.1682

NEWSLETTER: Four issues a year - April, July, October, January Advertising space available.

LIBRARY: The library has been stored away pending the construction of the new Hut.

THE HUT: Temporary premises have been provided by the N.P.W.S. in a caravan at the Wentworth Falls Reserve. It is manned on weekends by voluntary helpers to supply information and refreshments to visitors.

<u>PUBLICATIONS</u>: A limited range of booklets, posters, maps and postcards will be available at the Temporary Premises.

SALE OF NATIVE PLANTS: Opportunities to purchase native plants will be organised from time to time during the year. These sales will be held in the vicinity of the Temporary Hut.

WALKS: Walks are organised for the first Sunday, third Thursday and third Saturday of the month, conducted by experienced leaders.



UPPER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION

Newsletter

No.79

April, 1990

Contents	Page
Coming Walks & Talks	 1
Reports on Walks	 3
Great Western Highway	 5
Redeem the City	 6
History of Darwin's Walk	 8
Red Spots	 10
Society News	 11
Heritage Listing	 12

COMING TALKS		
April Education	_	Joe Bannfy
May "Weeds"	-	Cath. Ireland
June Local History	-	John Lowe

UPPER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY EXCURSIONS APRIL, MAY, JUNE, JULY 1990

> IT IS ESSENTIAL ON ALL EXCURSIONS IN THE HOT WEATHER THAT MEMBERS SHOULD CARRY AT LEAST 1 LITRE OF WATER

CARRY ON ALL WALKS: | First Aid Kit

☐ Torch

☐ Matches

□ Warm Shirt or Sweater

☐ Protective Rainwear

WEAR SAFE FOOTWEAR

ALL PEOPLE ATTENDING EXCURSIONS DO SO AT THEIR OWN RISK

• MEMBERS ARRIVING BY TRAIN SHOULD ADVISE CONTACT PRIOR TO THE EXCURSION

April 1st Sunday - Megalong Falls

Meet at Blackheath Station car park at 9.30 a.m.. We will birdwatch and explore an area near the Six Foot Track . Medium 5-6 hours.

Contact: David Thomas 84 2121 Sydney train arrives 9.24 a.m.

April 19th Thursday - Wall's Lookout

A new walk for our agenda. Meet at Mt Victoria Station 9.30 a.m. The walk starts from Bells' Line of Road at the Pierce's Pass signpost. The track goes through bush, then along an exposed ridge to the edge of the cliff overlooking the Grose River. It is not very steep, some rough patches to negotiate. Marvellous views and a multitude of flowers in season. 1.5 km from sign. 3-4 hours. Easy. Contact: Grace Bayley 59.1955. Sydney train arrives 8.58 a.m.

April 21st Saturday - Waratah Ridge

Meet at Mt Victoria Station at 8.45 a.m. A little known part of the Blue Mountains National Park. Medium 6-7 hours.

Contact: John Noble 87 8342 Sydney train arrives 8.36 a.m.

May 6th Sunday - Victoria Falls

Meet at Mt Victoria Station at 9.30 a.m. Medium 5-6 hours.

Contact: Bob Jones 58 8361 Sydney train arrives 9.31 a.m.

May 17th Thursday - The Wentworth Falls Area

Meet at the corner of Falls Road and the Great Western Highway, Wentworth Falls, 9.45 a.m. The walk includes Den Fenella, Undercliffe Pass, Wentworth Falls and Rocket Point. Easy 4-5 hours

Contact: Beverly Thompson 57 2076 Sydney train arrives 8.47 a.m.

Lithgow train arrives 9.39 a.m.

May 19th Saturday - Hanuka Brook

Meet at Glenbrook Station at 9.30 a.m. Medium 5 hours

Contact: Dick Weston 53 1003

Sydney train arrives

Lithgow train arrives

9.19 a.m.

9.23 a.m.

June 3rd Sunday - Valley Walk, Katoomba

Meet at Katoomba Railway Station (Great Western Highway side) at 9.15 a.m. The walk is Furbers Steps, Dardanelle's Pass, Leura Forest. There will be a car shuttle. Medium 5 hours.

Contact: David Thomas 84 2121 Sydney train arrives 9.11 a.m.

Lithgow train arrives 8.29 a.m.

June 16th Saturday - Aeroplane Hills

Meet at Bullaburra Station car park 9.00 a.m. This is a new area with a not well known history. Medium 5 hours

Contact: Lloyd Jones 57 2270

Sydney train arrives 8.56 a.m.

Lithgow train arrives 8.44 a.m.

June 21st Thursday - Dante's Glen

Meet in front of Lawson Bowling Club (adjacent to Lawson Station, opposite side to Great Western Highway) at 10 a.m. Easy. 4 hours

Contact: Dierdre Morton 58 8137

Sydney train arrives 9.59 a.m.

Lithgow train arrives 9.47 a.m.

July 1st Sunday - Temples of Doom

Meet at Mt Victoria Station 9.00 a.m. This walk is one of John & Olive Noble's walks which are always something new. hard 5-6 hours

Contact: John or Olive Noble 87 8342 Sydney train arrives 9.31 a.m.

Lithgow train arrives 9.30 a.m.

July 19th Thursday - Little Zigzag & Reinitz's Pass

Meet at Mt Victoria Station at 9 a.m. Valley views and maybe time to visit Bushranger's Cave. Wilson's Glen & Ross Cave are on the way out. Medium 4 hours

Contact: Rachel Makinson 87 1302 OR Bob Jones 58 8361

Sydney train arrives 8.57 a.m.

July 21st Saturday - Queen's Road Area

Meet opposite Lawson Bowling Club. 9.00 a.m. (Adjacent to Lawson Station, turn right in Walkway tunnel). Very interesting area with fine views and a short talk on Aboriginal occupation. Medium 4-5 hours

Contact: Grace Bayley 59 1955 Sydney train arrives 8.50 a.m.

Lithgow train arrives 8.47 a.m.

WALK -PIERCE'S PASS - SATURDAY DECEMBER 16 1989

On Saturday 16 December, 18 people turned up at Mt Victoria Station to drive to the start of the walk on Bells Line of Road. The track starts off through fairly dry open forest, with a variety of sandstone vegetation. The track descends through shadowy and damp rain forest with tall Sassafras and Coachwood trees. Here we went down to look at the Fairy Grotto.

Returning to the track we passed the coal seam and down through the paperbark trees to the banks of the Grose River; the track is badly eroded in places. We lingered by the river for quite a time, paddling our feet in its cool waters, but then we had to return up the track. We found a few different berries to taste, some quite delicious. Blueberry ash and a Leucopogon was identified, the latter being a tiny red berry, very sweet, juicy and somewhat acid (providing no more than a taste). When we reached the rain forest section, we were all glad to rest in the shade and have a refreshing drink from the waterfall before climbing the open section in the sun. The temperature was 19° and everyone seemed to enjoy their walk. Thanks for coming.

Olive Noble

"It is no good having idealistic solutions that just will not work. It is no use proposing to governments things that governments just cannot do. We have to think practical things and you may take it for granted that it is very often very difficult to find and put forward that worthwhile solution — a solution that is practical and one which we could work and press for. We need innovation, and innovation is seldom a strength of government."

OLEGAS TRUCHANAS

Champion of the preservation of the wilderness of Western Tasmania.

WALK - GRAND CANYON - SUNDAY JANUARY 7TH

Weather was kind and gentle but somewhat overcast with light rain at times during the morning, on this our first walk of a new decade (or is it?) Twenty three undeterrable people turned up and after a short democratic discussion the walk was rearranged to start from Evans Lookout and finish at Neats Glen. It is always a thrill to leave the dry sclerophyll forest below Evans and enter the rainforest with it's coachwoods, ferns and mysterious mosses until the canyon is reached.

Here we had another democratic discussion and decided to enter the gorge itself where there is a sign that says 'dead end track', because the water was low. It was a complete new experience to most of us. There was a chill breeze and it is not a place to be caught out in a rainstorm. Returning to the track and climbing to higher ground we had a very pleasant lunch break shared with a water dragon - physignathus lesuerii - and many birds. Thornbills, Honey eaters, golden whistler, rufus fantail, blackface monarch, whip bird and many s.b.bs. After the break a pleasant stroll when we could enjoy the superb display of flowering ti tree, which is magnificent this year. In mid stroll we came across some unsavoury characters who, complete with baby dog, fishing rod and radio were obviously doing things that they ought not to do within a National Park - there were some good looking yabbies at this point!

There was some discussion, not so democratic this time, between both parties. Happily they gave up their pursuits soon afterwards and passed us obviously going homewards. Although the return upward trek was a little arduous owing to the weather becoming rather muggy, everyone arrived in good time and agreed that it had been a good day.

David Thomas

WALK - MEGALONG FORD, COX'S RIVER VIA SIX FOOT TRACK - SATURDAY FEBRUARY 17TH

We expected a very hot day this time of the year so we intended to return from the river in the late afternoon but the weather was mild on this Saturday and as the clouds started to build up at lunch time we left the Cox's River for the return journey about 1.15 p.m. It was a good time to see the river, as it was well up with white water after the rains. We were lucky with the rain which didn't start until we reached Blackheath. here were 13 walkers and all walked the full distance. At the start one or two were not sure if they could make the full walk or that they might slow the party. I would like to make a comment on this.

The walks are for everyone. There is something about enjoying a bushwalk which makes it more enjoyable when it is in the company of other walkers - so the experienced walkers (we have quite a few in the Society) are only too happy to give the less experienced walkers, young or old, fast or slow, an opportunity to see areas they would not go into by themselves.

To get into some areas might require a bit of effort but it is well worth it. Don't be frightened of slowing the party, just poke along at your own pace, we all do, someone will be near you at all times, if you can't make the distance don't worry, you won't be left alone.

In the walks we usually have some well-informed walkers on flora and fauna, geology, local history, ornithology, zoology etc, so you can be educated as well as exercised and still have a good time.

So come along, all welcome.

Bob Jones

DARWIN'S WALK - THURSDAY MARCH 15TH.

Fifteen attended on a warm sunny day; and started by reading the history of Blue Mountains Journey by Charles Darwin on the plaque at the entrance to the Walk.

Very weed infested by the entrance - honeysuckle, broom, privet, holly and black-berries, to name some - and although some native plants have been planted by Water Board property, lack of maintenance means that weeds are again taking control. This walk is worth more care and control by Council; and 'special' spots are a delight - such as our morning-tea stop. This was a fern laden grotto, which was a perfect setting for a Welsh and an 'Aussie' song from two of our male walkers.

Lunch by a waterfall, where we were joined by friendly lizards, and viewed migrating (?) insects or beetles flying across Wentworth Falls. On to Rocket Point which gives a wonderful view of the Falls and the valley.

Short cut taken to return to Wentworth Falls Reserve to view the new setting for the Society's trading from our caravan/hut.

Spotted on the walk - black cockatoos, pardalote, blue-tongue lizards, butterflies and colourful fungi.

Dulcie Toseland.

ROADS AND TRAFFIC AUTHORITY WORKSHOPS -

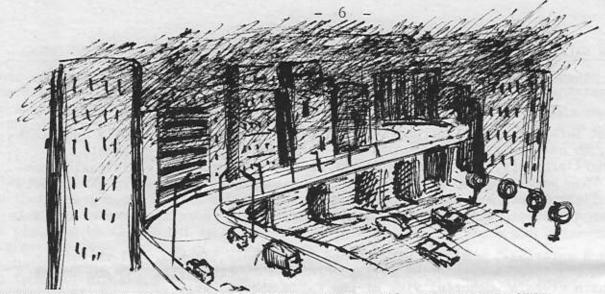
THE GREAT WESTERN HIGHWAY IN THE BLUE MOUNTAINS 1990

You would have heard the the Roads and Traffic Authority has invited community participation for the assembly of a Management Plan for the Highway in the Blue Mountains. A representative from this Conservation Society is attending the several day-long workshops being conducted by consultants for the R.T.A.

The Society views this representation seriously as it is almost the only way to ensure a voice for the natural environment. That was the basis on which such preparation as was made was built. However, at the first meeting, it was realised that the natural landscape can't be separated from the built-up landscape, a philosophy previously held by the R.T.A. The primary factor, the people of the Blue Mountains being both the active users and passive receivers, through their representatives at the workshop, quite clearly emphasised the importance of the bush about the highway and the towns. The consensus is that we regard our situation as unique and needing special strategies to at least maintain the present standards and to aim for improvements which will employ imaginative techniques. There was also a call for a co-ordinated approach towards the movement of people and freight by public transport.

Necessarily, while keeping a watchful eye on the nuts and bolts of bushland protection such as urban run-off and tree destruction and replacement with endemic species, your representative is now trying to learn to examine the Highway holistically. Shirley Brown brought along a book called "Traffic Calming" which was put together by a Brisbane residents' group after combatting a particularly evil road route plan. This book has been invaluable.

Your representative will report as the programme progresses. A mini-lunch is provided but I hope the sandwiches are better next time!



CONFRONTING THE FUTURE by CHARLES BIRCH - CHAPTER 10 - REDEEM THE CITY

Birch in his last chapter pondered on the problems of creating a happy or at least a meaningful life through one's work.

In this chapter he investigates the shortcomings of the cities where we labour and offers solutions to these problems.

He points out that Australia has the most urbanised population in the world, that the "things that happen to people happen in cities," that "the city is the crucible in which the ingredients of life, work, play, joy, tragedy, education and adventure are brewed."

If I read between his lines correctly the repair of all the shortcomings of city life is essential if humankind is to lead a life worth living.

Birch quotes a Government prediction of 5 million population for Sydney by 2001. Decisive planning is essential, he writes, if we are to avert the horror already being experienced in rapidly growing overseas countries. Housing shortages (four fifths of the families in Calcutta live in one room and thousands sleep in the streets) traffic congestion, air pollution, sewerage disposal problems, water supply, health problems (mental and physical) and so on and so on must inevitably worsen if we do not plan for city future.

He then examines these problems and offers solutions. For reasons of space economy I quote only the most revolutionary of his suggestions. "Land developers must be prevented from buying up available land at relatively low prices and then selling at inflated prices." A Land Commission he suggests could control availability of land and ensure that price and environmental policies are in keeping with public wishes and needs.

How quickly his work has become dated is illustrated by his suggestion that urban sprawl and growth should be "curbed and absorbed into new growth centres." Already the areas he nominates as suitable, Campbelltown and Gosford Wyong, are past the million inhabitants which he feels should be the limit for a city's population.

Our present cities are built around our need for cars. Birch writes that future cities should not fall for this trap. Traffic jams, air pollution, parking problems all indicate a need for the rapid transit train. "Public transport is a service (like education) and should not have to pay for itself."

Very topical is his discussion of city sewerage problems (Birch's book was published 1976) Ocean outfall he feels is only a short term solution at the best. We should emulate the sewerage systems of some large inland centres of the U.S.A. which extract water and vitamins also nitrates and other fertilising compounds.

Our health is Birch's next concern. He writes "It is apparently healthier to live in England, Wales or Sweden than in Australia". He claims that living in our cities is a health hazard. The price we pay for our style of urbanised life is the high rate of death and injury from accidents, suicide, coronory heart disease and lung cancer..... To reduce the hazards we have to change the environment.

Summing up his views Birch writes "Redeeming the city involves redeeming the total environment - physical, social, economic and psychological. It has to do with houses, transport, recreation, sewerage and other services and a community approach to public health and preventive medicine. It could happen if we stabilize the Australian population and the size of our cities. If both continue there is much less chance of any success.

For sober reflection: Since World War II, the population has more than doubled, increasing from 7.6 million in 1946 to 16.6 million in 1988. Almost 40% of this growth is directly due to migration.... In the last five years the number of migrants has almost tripled, reaching 143,200 in 1987-88; of these 40% were from Asia. Net migration now accounts for 57.1% of the total population increase.

* * * * * * * * *

Lloyd Jones

BLUE MOUNTAINS DISTRICT WEED COMMITTEE

A Society member now represents us on the District Weed Committee. This group has been formed by the Council Weeds Officer, Mr Terry Boyd. Members include the National Parks and Wildlife Service, Water Board, Roads and Traffic Authority, Prospect County Council, State Rail Authority and us.

Soon, public authorities will be liable to prosecution for failing to remove noxious weeds. Funds are limited so to begin with, blackberry, broom and gorse are being targetted throughout the city. Other weeds will follow. Stage 1 of the eradication programme is locating and mapping the plants and that is where we are at just now.

The Water Board has jumped the gun and started on its patches before the warm weather packed up. Fortunately gorse can be treated in winter so that spreads the time over which the available machinery and person power can operate in this cooperative job. Glenbrook Lagoon is choking under Salvinia, so the Water Board is lending the Council a boat (not the Titanic, we hope) and the Nepean Canoe Club has been asked to join in the clean-up.

And what is the Society going to do? Broom Day will be announced, maybe not till later in the year. Shall we adopt one area, say Mini-Ha-Ha, and have one good day out there pulling up the wretched weed? And in the meantime what about up and down the street or the vacant block around the corner? Could you yank out those couple of broom seedlings there? If you know of a patch or a plant of any of the three weeds we are talking about please tell Robin Corringham, 58 6561, its precise location.

There is an excellent book out now which has the latest common sense and practical information on recovering Australian landscapes. Called "Bush Regeneration", by Robin A. Buchanan, sponsored by TAFE and Greening Australia, 257 pages, it costs \$24,95 (post paid) and can be bought from Bowerbird Books P.O. Box 104, Winmalee, 2777. 10% of this purchase will go to the Society if you tell Bowerbird Books to do so.

* * * * * * * *

Sometime in the early 1830's one of the innkeepers at the Weatherboard Inn at Wentworth Falls made a rough track beside the Jamison Creek to the top of Wentworth Falls waterfall. He probably did little more than remove some undergrowth and fallen branches and arrange a few rocks for crossing of the creek. Early travellers may have initially required a guide to do the walk. However, a steady stream of people with a few hours to spare, having heard of the remarkable view of "Prince Regent's Glen" (our Jamison Valley) at the end of the track soon beat in an obvious pathway beside the creek. Thus the first tourist walking track in the Blue Mountains came into existence.

In 1836, the 27 year old scientist Charles Darwin, while riding on horseback to Bathurst, made the 5km round trip on foot to see the famous view at the "Weatherboard". His journal makes little mention of the walk itself, but Darwin was very impressed with the view terming it "quite novel and extremely magnificent". Six days later, when returning from Bathurst, Darwin did the walk again. Fatigued by his midsummer journey, Darwin spent three nights recuperating at the Weatherboard Inn.

Three years later, the artist and amateur naturalist Louisa Anne Meredith was also travelling to Bathurst and on her return stayed at the Weatherboard Inn. Her description of the walk beside Jamison Creek as it was in 1839 is quite detailed. She drank the water from the creek and was most delighted by the "moist greenness" of the vegetation. She saw the great green frogs calling and was enraptured by the flower of the "fringed violet" (Thysanotus tuberosus). She described it as a "gem worthy to grace Titania's rarest crown". She described a group of waratahs in a circular bower of slender young gum trees as "a sisterhood of queens"! Like Darwin she was overwhelmed by "one of the most stupendous scenes ever beheld" at the end of the walk.

In 1839 Charles Darwin's journal of his voyage around the world on the "Beagle" with its description of the Blue Mountains, was published in England. Five years later Meredith's account of her travels in NSW was published. These two books contain the only known descriptions of the old pathway beside Jamison Creek.

In 1859 Charles Darwin created a revolution in thinking throughout the world with the appearance of his book "On the Origin of Species". His reputation grew steadily from that year and this has ensured that Darwin is the most famous person to have ever visited the Blue Mountains.

Queen Victoria's son, Prince Alfred became the first member of the British Royal family to visit Australia, in 1868. Australian Colonial Society decided that a trip to the famous Weatherboard Falls would be a suitable excursion for the prince. However, the thought of royalty walking along the rough narrow pathway beside Jamsion Creek was too much. A special carriage road was constructed just for him. This was the first side road off the highway at Wentworth Falls. Part of its windings can still be traced in Cascade Street, Wentworth Falls. It became known as "Prince Alfred's Track" and later tourists preferred to drive along it rather than walk the old pathway. As a consequence the old creek side walk became quickly overgrown and forgotten after having been in use for about 35 years.

From the 1890's tourists would have wandered up and down stream from Wentworth Falls swimming pool on Jamison Creek. The growth of the township would have seen the local children wandering beside the creek, perhaps catching yabbies on the way home from school. These activities would have created rough "pads" beside sections of the creek.

(Continued in Next Newsletter)

WHEN THE HUT STARTED UP

My husband, Sidney and I, were among the very early members of the Blue Mountains Conservation Society, and we remained active until I left Leura in 1971. I was treasurer for a year or so.

I remember that the City of the Blue mountains Council granted full rights of the Hut to the Society for nominal sum of one shilling. I do hope correspondence of this transaction and also minutes of the early meetings have been kept.

The old hut was in a very dilapidated condition, but men members (always helped by the women) all worked very hard renovating it.

The nest of a rock warbler was found between the ceiling and roof. I can't remember the names of the original members, but of course Isobel Bowden was always involved. Another lady, Mrs. Moira Pearce, undertook to list all the native plants growing in the top area. She was a botanist. I accompanied her writing the list as she identified. I wonder where that list is now?

The men rebuilt the fire place and chimney and fires in the winter were a joy to members gathered round at meetings.

Mr Buki, a local school teacher and Mrs B. who lived near the hut were very active members helping with the renovation etc. We were a very friendly group and enjoyed picnics, bush walks and much discussion of interesting topics relative to the new society and its activities.

Setting up the display in the hut, arranging the catering and rosters for manning it were all busy activities.

There was much joy and satisfaction when all was ready and weekends and holiday rosters arranged.

There will surely still be local members who remember much more than I. Graham Alcorn for example, and what about the Toselands - were they there when we started?

I don't remember who opened the hut but it was a very successful day. I worked frantically that morning planting some native shrubs along the front of the hut and I was pleased when I last visited to note that one or two had survived.

The Society through the years must be congratulated on the great progress it has made both in conservation matters and the continued activities in this old hut despite vandalism over the years. I am too old now (87) to attend the last Xmas at the hut, but I look forward to hearing about the new building and club activities in future.

Reta Vellenga

THE OLD DAYS AND TODAY

The destruction of The Hut provided a great opportunity to sift the Society's files and chattels. Over the twenty five odd years a great deal of correspondence and literature has accumulated. On perusal much has been found to be not worth keeping. There was a lot of duplication and a lot of out of date information on issues remote from the Blue Mountains.

There were also some very interesting items. In 1968 we sported a flag pole and in the early days we sent and received Christmas cards. In 1975 \$2 was spent on the sign 'The Conservation Hut' to go on the roof. In 1982 Jim Smith's class examined The Hut and its function and found both wanting. The students submitted

voluminous reports and talked about extending "the colonial theme". They critised the dusty exhibits, the poor displays and the fact that some exhibits were not relevant to the Mountains. All thought the displays should relate to the district.

In past years the issues that the Society argued were identical to those of today, - a motel on the Silver Mist site in 1972; a quarry on Wynne's Lookout Road in 1974; water pollution and tree preservation in 1976, what about wrapping up Orphan Rock in 1976!!! Was that in the Christo era?

The guest speaker list for the first full year of the Society in 1963 is a Who's Who of important and sometimes famous people.

Miss Isobel Bowden

Miss Thistle Stead (Harris)

Mr Mel Ward

Dr E.Dark

Mr Robert Christmas

Mr Hurditch

Mr W. Constable

Mr Percy Willock

Mr Pearson & Mr. Vellenga

Mrs Davis

Mr John Waterhouse

Flora of the Sandstone Country

Native Flowers for the Home Garden

Fauna of the Mountains

The Scope of Conservation

Film Evening

Forestry Commission Work in Conservation

Seed Dispersal in Nature

A conservation Project in South Australia

Members' Night with Pictures

Conservation Problems

Birds of the Blue Mountains

The Society should be concerned about some things that the old files have high-lighted. Membership in 1964 was 407 with five junior branches in the local schools. Our membership today is considerably less and we have no school affiliations. Do you think that the Society is doing its job? In twenty five years have we made any general impact or are our energies going on single issues as rearguard actions? How can the Society take the initiative and run in front with the baton instead of the everlasting mopping-up operation? Tell us please.

occossoso RED SPOTS occossos

If you see a red spot on page 1 of your Newsletter, it means your membership is in arrears. Please renew promptly or this could be your last Newsletter.

The Society's year ends on February 28th each year. Therefore all fees for 1990 start on March 1st. Owing to rising costs, it has become necessary to increase the membership fees. The new subscription rates for 1990 are shown below.

All Office Bearers were elected at the Annual General Meeting on the last Friday in March, and are listed on the inside of the front cover.



1990 SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE NOW DUE PENSIONERS & JUNIORS \$6.00 SINGLE MEMBERSHIP \$10.00 FAMILY MEMBERSHIP \$15.00

RENEWAL/SUBSCRIPTION FORM ON BACK COVER.

- 11 - Society News

TEMPORARY PREMISES. Most members will be aware by now that great changes have taken place since the last newsletter was published. The old Hut has gone, the site has been bulldozed, earth and rocks moved and foundations for the new Hut started. Old records, files and chattels have been stored and temporary premises set up in a caravan at the Wentworth Falls Reserve. This "Hut" is very small and crowded but well stocked and seems to be catering well supplying comfort and cheer to visitors. Electricity and water has been connected and Parks & Wildlife have been most helpful. Sales on the whole have been quite good.

<u>PLANT SALE</u>. Our Autumn Plant sale was held at the Falls Reserve and was very successful and raised nearly \$1,800. Jill Dark as usual had a very attentive audience (over 40 people) all keen to learn how to propogate their own plants.

<u>P.S.</u> For those wanting a souvenir picture of the old Hut there are black and white cards by Grace Bayley @ \$2.50 and Lloyd Jones has some nice small pictures in colour at about \$8.00. At the caravan Wentworth Falls Reserve.

<u>PLEA FOR HELP</u>. Has any member access to a photo-copying machine at a reasonable price for society copying? Please let us know.

SIERRA NEVADA. At the January general meeting Ian Brown gave a very interesting talk about walking through the Sierra Nevada Mountains in America. These form part of the main Rocky Mountain chain that runs parallel to the west coast. Some areas are within touring range of San Francisco, but Ian and his companion traversed some very wild and rugged country with magnificent views. As usual he has recorded these with excellent photographs. The trek had to be timed carefully as there was a danger of being snowed in. Another hazard was grizzly bears.

MARKET DAY. Later in the year the Society intends to organise a market day. This will be an opportunity for members to rid themselves of those old books, clothes, knick-knacks, tools, garden produce, pictures, pots, native plants, records and tapes - a kind of glorified "garage cum jumble sale" with perhaps a sausage sizzle. This event which will take place in the Wentworth Falls School of Arts will include an auction conducted by "Royalty".

* * * * * * *

TO SEE THE BIRDS OF SOUTH EASTERN AUSTRALIA

Stay at

GIPSY POINT LODGE

... from where guided birding and nature outings are conducted by launch and 4WD into remote areas of the CROAJINGALONG NATIONAL PARK

Over 280 bird species have been sighted here. Accommodation at the Lodge is First Class and all inclusive; with all meals home-cooked traditional Australian fare. 6 or 3 night 'Package Tours' are offered or, if preferred, tours can be arranged to suit.

can be arranged to suit.

For further particulars contact — MARG OR JOHN MULLIGAN, Gipsy Point, Vic. 3891. Phone (051) 58 8205

ESSENTIAL READING FOR EVERYBODY. "Blue Mountains for World Heritage" is a comprehensive, well researched book forming the basis of International recognition of the Blue Mountains through placement on the World Heritage List. It is well written by Geoff Mosely in a concise, simple, yet thorough style, and illustrated by the now familiar black and white photographs of Henry Gold (the Harry Phillips of the Modern day).

The main purpose of this book is to justify the Blue Mountains for World Heritage Listing, perhaps to us that seems obvious but it is a daunting task requiring extensive and careful research followed by assessment of the areas conservation values. Geoff Mosely does this logically presenting historical and natural area values in detail with no serious error. The reader will find information on explorers, conservationists, rare plants and ecosystem function equally new and interesting, yet avoiding scientific cliches.

The Quest. Appropriately the Introduction is subtitled "The Beginning of the Quest." I found the quotes of people like Dunphy alongside Charles Darwin, and Gregory Blaxland fascinating as they present the 19th Century impressions and wonderment, to our 20th Century minds in a new yet poetic way. The early explorer/scientist theorised extensively about the forces of nature that formed the Blue Mountains, so stunned were they by the scenery. "The great depth, extent, and number of valleys... are calculated to excite wonder and perplex us much in the study of their origin." Dana, 1839.

Mosely continuously draws our attention to the vast wilderness that remains, the scenery that caused such wonderment to the early settlers and continues to do the same to residents and present day tourists alike. Indeed no wonder Dunphy said "The bush teaches you to be humble in spirit yet big in ideas."

The Resource. The book is really a journey of ideas borne out of solid information. The most extensive data is available on geology/geomorphology and includes odd little items. For example did you know that our upland swamps or headwater valleys have been referred to as "dells" by a recent researcher who found that the soils in these dells were between 200 and 17,000 years old. All the main landforms and geological processes are well described. Even the lyrebird gets a mention as a cause of erosion, alongside fire as a major factor in slope development. This chapter should be read together with that on "Natural Scenery and Wilderness Values."

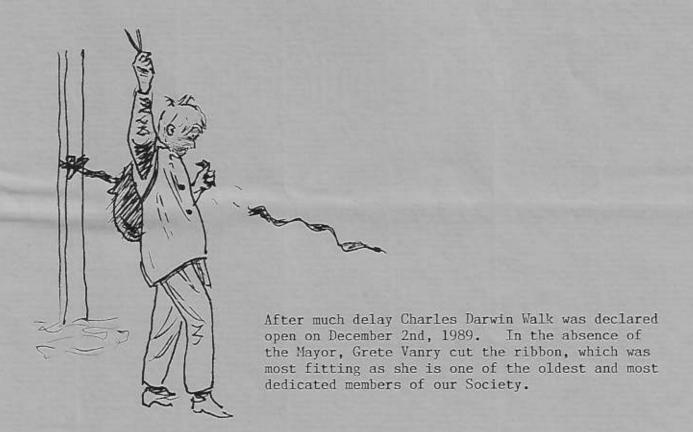
This is a short overview of the variety of the landscapes in the Blue Mountains, from the wide river valleys of the Wollondilly, deep gorges of Kanangra and the Grose, to the rocky pagodas of the Wollomi. Note that variety and size of an area are important measures of heritage value. As a scenic and geological entity the Blue Mountains clearly measures up, "If we could travel back six million years we would have no difficulty recognising the main landmarks of the Blue Mountains", is indeed a humbling statement.

(Continued in the next Newsletter)

UPPER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Objects of the Society as set out in the Constitution are:

- (a) To disseminate and foster an understanding of the ideals of Conservation among members of the Society and the public generally, particularly in relation to the unique resources of the Blue Mountains.
- (b) To conduct meetings, excursions and research, and such other activities as may be determined by the Society in relation to Wildlife Conservation, and especially through the Conservation Hut at the Valley of the Waters, Wentworth Falls, to provide information on Conservation matters.
- (c) To maintain friendly relations with other Conservation Societies especially local bodies.





Bankcard, Visa, American Express Cards accepted

FOR ALL YOUR CAMPING GEAR . . . Maps, Repairs to Rucksacks and Friendly Service . . . and Much More

Call in at

Katoomba Outdoor Centre Pty. Ltd.

UNIT 2, 88 KATOOMBA STREET, KATOOMBA 2780 Monday to Friday - 9.00 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. Saturday - 9.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m. (047) 82 3467

* * * * * * * * * *

UPPER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY

P.O. Box 29, Wentworth Falls.

MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL FORM

MR/MRS/MISS/MS/DR	PLEAS	E PRINT CLEARLY
SURNAME	FIRST NAMES	
ADDRESS	PHONE NO	
	POST CODE	
Please post to Membership Officer U.B.M.C.S. Inc. P.O. Box 29 Wentworth Falls N.S.W. 2782	Single Membership	\$10.00
	Family Membership Cheque/Money Order	\$15.00 enclosed
	Stamped addressed e enclosed for receip	

PLEASE DELETE WHERE NECESSARY AND TICK ALL APPROPRIATE BOXES

This version of the Newsletter was re-typed from the original by Phoebe Coster in March 2024 to enable search engines to 'see' the text. Minor changes have been made to correct typographical errors and to add clarity.

April 1990 No. 79

UPPER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER.

Registered by Australia Post – Publication No. NBHO 925

UPPER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Incorporated in New South Wales. Registered Office: The Conservation Hut, Valley of Waters Reserve, Valley Road Wentworth Falls 2782.

Address for Correspondence: P.O. Box 29, Wentworth Falls 2782.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: Pensioners & Juniors \$6.00 per year; Single Membership \$10.00 per year; Family Membership \$15.00 per year.

MEETINGS: Held on last Friday in the month, after January will be held at the Wentworth Falls Public School until further notice.

For speakers at coming meetings, please see Public Notices in the Gazette.

COMMITTEE FOR 1990

President	Robin Corringham	58.6561
Vice-Presidents	Mick Dark	58.7061
	Wyn Jones	87.7511
Secretary	Terri Hamilton	82.4554
Treasurer	Muriel Healey	58.6575
Membership Officer	Bruce James	87.7937
Newsletter Editors	Sara Jones	87.7511
	Dianne Johnson	84.2197
	Stewart James	87-7937
Walks Conveners	Olive Noble	87.8342
	Bob Jones	58.8316
Librarian	June Blick	88.1051
Hut Duty Organiser	Beverly Thompson	57.2076
Land Preservation Officer	Deidre Morton	58.8137
Publicity/Information	Dianne Johnson	84.2197
Land Use Officer	Robin Corringham	58.6561
Hut Supplies	Reg Toseland	84.1682

<u>NEWSLETTER:</u> Four issues a year – April, July, October, January. Advertising space available.

LIBRARY: The library has been stored away pending the construction of the new Hut.

<u>THE HUT:</u> Temporary premises have been provided by NPWS in a caravan at the Wentworth Falls Reserve. It is manned on weekends by voluntary helpers to supply information and refreshments to visitors.

<u>PUBLICATIONS:</u> A limited range of booklets, posters, maps and postcards will be available at the temporary premises.

<u>SALE OF NATIVE PLANTS:</u> Opportunities to purchase native plants will be organised from time to time during the year. These sales will be held in the vicinity of the Temporary Hut.

<u>WALKS</u>: Walks are organised on the first Sunday, third Thursday and third Saturday of the month, conducted by experienced leaders.

Contents

Coming Walks & Talks
Reports on Walks
Great Western Highway
Redeem the City
History of Darwin's Walk
Red Spots
Society News
Heritage Listing

COMING TALKS

April

Earth Education – Joe Bannfy

May

"Weeds" - Cath Ireland

<u>June</u>

Local History - John Lowe

UPPER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY EXCURSIONS

APRIL, MAY, JUNE, JULY 1990

IT IS ESSENTIAL ON ALL WALKS IN THE HOT WEATHER THAT MEMBERS SHOULD CARRY AT LEAST 1 LITRE OF WATER

CARRY ON ALL WALKS:	☐ First Aid Kit
	☐ Torch
	☐ Matches
	\square Warm Shirt or Sweater
	☐ Protective Rainwear
	☐ Hat

WEAR SAFE FOOTWEAR

ALL PEOPLE ATTENDING EXCURSIONS DO SO AT THEIR OWN RISK

*MEMBERS ARRIVING BY TRAIN SHOULD ADVISE CONTACT PRIOR TO THE EXCURSIONS

April 1st Sunday – Megalong Falls

Meet at Blackheath Station car park at 9.30 am. We will birdwatch and explore an area near the Six Foot Track. Medium 5-6 hours.

Contact: David Thomas 84 2121 Sydney train arrives 9.24 am.

April 19th Thursday – Wall's Lookout

A new walk for our agenda. Meet at Mt Victoria Station 9.30 am. The walk starts from Bell's Line of Road at the Pierce's Pass signpost. The track goes through bush, then along an exposed ridge to the edge of the cliff overlooking the Grose River. It is not very steep, some rough patches to negotiate. Marvellous views and a multitude of flowers in season. 1.5 km from sign. 3-4 hours. Easy.

<u>Contact</u>: Grace Bayley 59.1955. Sydney train arrives <u>8.58 am.</u>

April 21st Saturday – Waratah Ridge

Meet at Mt Victoria Station at 8.45 am. A little known part of the Blue Mountains National Park. Medium 6-7 hours.

<u>Contact</u>: John Noble 87 8342 Sydney train arrives <u>8.36 am.</u>

May 6th Sunday – Victoria Falls

Meet at Mt Victoria Station at 9.30 am. Medium 5-6 hours.

<u>Contact</u>: Bob Jones 58 8361 Sydney train arrives <u>9.31 am</u>

May 17th Thursday – The Wentworth Falls Area

Meet at the corner of Falls Road and the Great Western Highway, Wentworth Falls, 9.45 am. The walk includes Den Fenella, Undercliff Pass, Wentworth Falls and Rocket Point. Easy 4-5 hours

Contact: Beverly Thompson 57 2076 Sydney train arrives 8.47 am

Lithgow train arrives 9.39 am.

May 19th Saturday – Hanuka Brook

Meet at Glenbrook Station at 9.30 am. Medium 5 hours

<u>Contact</u>: Dick Weston 53 1003 Sydney train arrives <u>9.19 am</u>

Lithgow train arrives 9.23 am.

June 3rd Sunday – Valley Walk, Katoomba

Meet at Katoomba Railway Station (Great Western Highway side) at 9.15 am. The walk is Furbers Steps, Dardanelle's Pass, Leura Forest. There will be a car shuttle. Medium 5 hours.

<u>Contact</u>: David Thomas 84 2121 Sydney train arrives <u>9.11 am</u>

Lithgow train arrives 8.29 am

June 16th Saturday – Aeroplane Hills

Meet at Bullaburra Station car park 9.00 am. This is a new area with a not well known history.

Medium 5 hours.

<u>Contact</u>: Lloyd Jones 57 2270 Sydney train arrives <u>8.56 am.</u>

Lithgow train arrives 8.44 am.

June 21st Thursday – Dante's Glen

Meet in front of Lawson Bowling Club (adjacent to Lawson Station opposite side to Great Western

Highway) at 10.00 am. Easy. 4 hours

<u>Contact</u>: Dierdre Morton 58 8137 Sydney train arrives <u>9.59 am.</u>

Lithgow train arrives 9.47 am.

July 1st Sunday – Temple of Doom

Meet at Mt Victoria Station 9.00 am. This walk is one of John & Olive Noble's walks which are always something new. Hard. 5-6 hours.

<u>Contact</u>: John or Olive Noble 87 8342 Sydney train arrives <u>9.31 am.</u>

Lithgow train arrives 9.30 am.

July 19th Thursday – Little Zigzag & Reinitz's Pass

Meet at Mt Victoria Station at 9 am. Valley views and maybe time to visit Bushranger's Cave.

Wilson's Glen & Ross Cave are on the way out. Medium 4 hours.

Contact: Rachel Makinson 87 1302 OR Bob Jones 58 8361

Sydney train arrives 8.57 am.

July 21st Saturday – Queen's Road Area

Meet opposite Lawson Bowling Club 9.00 am. (Adjacent to Lawson Station, turn right in Walkway tunnel). Very interesting area with fine views and a short talk on Aboriginal occupation. <u>Medium</u> 4-5 hours.

<u>Contact</u>: Grace Bayley 59 1955 Sydney train arrives <u>8.50 am.</u>

Lithgow train arrives 8.47 am.

WALK - PIERCE'S PASS - SATURDAY DECEMBER 16 1989

On Saturday 16 December, 18 people turned up at Mt Victoria Station to drive to the start of the walk on Bells Line of Road. The track starts off through fairly dry open forest, with a variety of sandstone vegetation. The track descends through shadowy and damp rain forest with tall Sassafras and Coachwood trees. Here we went down to look at the Fairy Grotto.

Returning to the track we passed the coal seam and down through the paperbark trees to the banks of the Grose River; the track is badly eroded in places. We lingered by the river for quite a time, paddling our feet in its cool waters, but then we had to return up the track. We found a few different berries to taste, some quite delicious. Blueberry ash and a Leucopogon was identified, the latter being a tiny red berry, very sweet, juicy and somewhat acid (providing no more than a taste). When we reached the rain forest section, we were all glad to rest in the shade and have a refreshing drink from the waterfall before climbing the open section in the sun. The temperature was 19 degree and everyone seemed to enjoy their walk. Thanks for coming.

Olive Noble

"It is no good having idealistic solutions that just will not work. It is no use proposing to governments things that governments just cannot do. We have to think practical things and you may take it for granted that it is very often very difficult to find and put forward that worthwhile solution – a solution that is practical and one which we could work and press for. We need innovation, and innovation is seldom a strength of government."

OLEGAS TRUCHANAS

Champion of the preservation of the wilderness of Western Tasmania.

WALK - GRAND CANYON - SUNDAY JANUARY 7TH

Weather was kind and gentle but somewhat overcast with light rain at times during the morning, on this our first walk of a new decade (or is it?). Twenty three undeterrable people turned up and after a short democratic discussion the walk was rearranged to start from Evans Lookout and finish at Neats Glen. It is always a thrill to leave the dry sclerophyll forest below Evans and enter the rainforest with it's coachwoods, ferns and mysterious mosses until the canyon is reached.

Here we had another democratic discussion and decided to enter the gorge itself where there is a sign that says 'dead end track', because the water was low. It was a complete new experience to most of us. There was a chill breeze and it is not a place to be caught out in a rainstorm. Returning to the track and climbing to higher ground we had a very pleasant lunch break shared with a water dragon – physignathus lesuerii – and many birds. Thornbills, Honey eaters, golden whistler, rufus fantail, blackface monarch, whip bird and many s.b.bs. After the break a pleasant stroll when we could enjoy the superb display of flowering ti tree, which is magnificent this year. In mid stroll we came across some unsavoury characters who, complete with baby dog, fishing and radio were obviously doing things that they ought not to do within a National Park – there were some good looking yabbies at this point!

There was some discussion, not so democratic this time, between both parties. Happily they gave up their pursuits soon afterwards and passed us obviously going homewards. Although the return upward trek was a little arduous owing to the weather becoming rather muggy, everyone arrived in good time and agreed that it had been a good day.

David Thomas

WALK - MEGALONG FORD, COX'S RIVER VIA SIX FOOT TRACK - SATURDAY FEBRUARY 17th

We expected a very hit day this time of the year so we intended to return from the river in the late afternoon but the weather was mild on this Saturday and as the clouds started to build up at lunch time we left the Cox's River for the return journey about 1.15 pm. It was a good time to see the river, as it was well up with white water after the rains. We were lucky with the rain which didn't start until we reached Blackheath. There were 13 walkers and all walked the full distance. At the start one or two were not sure if they could make the full walk or that they might slow the party. I would like to make a comment on this.

The walks are for everyone. There is something about enjoying a bushwalk which makes it more enjoyable when it is in the company of other walkers – so the experienced walkers (we have quite a few in the Society) are only too happy to give the less experienced walkers, young or old, fast or slow, an opportunity to see areas they would not go into by themselves.

To get into some areas might require a bit of effort but it is well worth it. Don't be frightened of slowing the party, just poke along at your pace, we all do, someone will be near you at all times, if you can't make the distance don't worry, you won't be left alone.

In the walks we usually have some well-informed walkers on flora and fauna, geology, local history, ornithology, zoology, etc, so you can be educated as well as exercised and still have a good time.

So come along, all welcome.

Bob Jones

DARWIN'S WALK - THURSDAY MARCH 15th

Fifteen attended on a warm sunny day; and started by reading the history of Blue Mountains Journey by Charles Darwin on the plaque at the entrance to the Walk.

Very weed infested by the entrance – honeysuckle, broom, privet, holly and blackberries, to name some – and although some native plants have been planted by Water Board property, lack of maintenance means that weeds are again taking control. This walk is worth more care and control by Council; and 'special' spots are a delight – such as our morning tea stop. This was a fern laden grotto, which was a perfect setting for a Welsh and an 'Aussie' song from two of our male walkers.

Lunch by a waterfall, where we were joined by friendly lizards, and viewed migrating(?) insects or beetles flying across Wentworth Falls. On the Rocket Point which gives a wonderful view of the Falls and the Valley.

Short cut taken to return to Wentworth Falls Reserve to view the new setting for the Society's trading from our caravan/hut.

Spotted on the walk – black cockatoos, pardalote, blue-tongue lizards, butterflies and colourful fungi.

ROADS AND TRAFFIC AUTHORITY WORKSHOPS – THE GREAT WESTERN HIGHWAY IN THE BLUE MOUNTAINS 1990

You would have heard the Roads and Traffic Authority has invited community participation for the assembly of a Management Plan for the Highway in the Blue Mountains.

A representative from this Conservation Society is attending the several day-long workshops being conducted by consultants for the RTA.

The Society views this representation seriously as it is almost the only way to ensure a voice for the natural environment. That was the basis on which such preparation as was made was built. However, at the first meeting, it was realised that the natural landscape can't be separated from the built-up landscape, a philosophy previously held by the RTA. The primary factor, the people of the Blue Mountains being both the active users and passive receivers, through their representatives at the workshop, quite clearly emphasised the importance of the bush about the highway and the towns. The consensus is that we regard our situation as unique and needing special strategies to at least maintain the present standards and to aim for improvements which will employ imaginative techniques. There was also a call for a co-ordinated approach towards the movement of people and freight by public transport.

Necessarily, while keeping a watchful eye on the nuts and bolts of bushland protection such as urban run-off and tree destruction and replacement with endemic species, your representative is now trying to learn to examine the Highway holistically. Shirley Brown brought along a book called "Traffic Calming" which was put together by a Brisbane resident's group after combatting a particularly evil road route plan. This book has been invaluable.

Your representative will report as the programme progresses. A mini-lunch is provided but I hope the sandwiches are better next time!

CONFRONTING THE FUTURE by CHARLES BIRCH – CHAPTER 10 – REDEEM THE CITY

Birch in last chapter pondered on the problems of creating a happy or at least a meaningful life through one's work.

In this chapter he investigates the shortcomings of the cities where we labour and offers solutions to these problems.

He points out that Australia has the most urbanised population in the world, that the "things that happen to people happen in cities," that "the city is the crucible in which the ingredients of life, work, play, joy, tragedy, education and adventure are brewed."

If I read between his lines correctly the repair of all the shortcomings of city life is essential if humankind is to lead a life worth living.

Birch quotes a Government prediction of 5 million population for Sydney by 2001. Decisive planning is essential, he writes, if we are to avert the horror already being experienced in rapidly growing overseas countries. Housing shortages (four fifths of the families in Calcutta live in one room and thousands sleep in the streets) traffic congestion, air pollution, sewerage disposal problems, water supply, health problems (mental and physical) and so on and so on must inevitably worsen if we do not plan for city future.

He then examines these problems and offers solutions. For reasons of space economy I quote only the most revolutionary of his suggestions. "Land developers must be prevented from buying up available land at relatively low prices and then selling at inflated prices."

A Land Commission he suggests could control availability of land and ensure that price and environmental policies are in keeping with public wishes and needs.

How quickly his work has become dated is illustrated by his suggestion that urban sprawl and growth should be "curbed and absorbed into new growth centres." Already the areas he nominates as suitable. Campbelltown and Gosford Wyong, are past the million inhabitants which he feels should be the limit for a city's population.

Our present cities are built around our need for cars. Birch writes that future cities should not fall for this trap. Traffic jams, air pollution, parking problems all indicate a need for the rapid transit train. "Public transport is a service (like education) and should not have to pay for itself."

Very topical is his discussion of city sewerage problems (Birch's book was published 1976). Ocean outfall he feels is only a short term solution at the best. We should emulate the sewerage systems of some large inland centres of the USA, which extract water and vitamins also nitrates and other fertilising compounds.

Our health is Birch's next concern. He writes "It is apparently healthier to live in England, Wales or Sweden than in Australia". He claims that living in our cities is a health hazard. The price we pay for our style of urbanised life is the high rate of death and injury from accidents, suicide, coronary heart disease and lung cancer...To reduce the hazards we have to change the environment.

Summing up his views Birch writes "Redeeming the city involves redeeming the total environment – physical, social, economic and psychological. It has to do with houses, transport, recreation, sewerage and other services and a community approach to public health and preventive medicine. It could happen if we stablize the Australian population and the size of our cities. If both continue there is much less chance of any success.

<u>For sober reflection</u>: Since World War II, the population has more than doubled, increasing from 7.6 million in 1946 to 16.6 million in 1988. Almost 40% of this growth is directly due to migration...In the last five years the number of migrants has almost tripled, reaching 143,200 in 1987-88; of these 40% were from Asia. Net migration now accounts for 57.1% of the total population increase.

Lloy	/d Jones			
	*****	******	*******	******

BLUE MOUNTAINS DISTRICT WEED COMMITTEE

A society member now represents us on the District Weed Committee. This group has been formed by the Council Weeds Officer, Mr Terry Boyd. Members include the National Parks and Wildlife Service, Water Board, Roads and Traffic Authority, Prospect County Council, State Rail Authority and us.

Soon, public authorities will be liable to prosecution for failing to remove noxious weeds. Funds are limited so to begin with, blackberry, broom and gorse are being targetted throughout the city.

Other weeds will follow. Stage 1 of the eradication programme is locating and mapping the plants and that is where we are at just now.

The Water Board has jumped the gun and started on its patches before the warm weather packed up. Fortunately gorse can be treated in winter so that spreads the time over which the available machinery and person power can operate in this co-operative job. Glenbrook Lagoon is choking under Salvinia, so the Water Board is lending the council a boat (not the Titanic, we hope) and the Nepean Canoe Club has been asked to join in the clean-up.

And what is the Society going to do? Broom Day will be announced, maybe not till later in the year. Shall we adopt one area, say Mini-Ha-Ha, and have one good day out there pulling up the wretched weed? And in the meantime what about up and down the street or the vacant block around the corner? Could you yank out those couple of broom seedlings there? If you know of a patch or a plant of any of the three weeds we are talking about please tell Robin Corringham, 58 6561, its precise location.

There is an excellent book out now which has the latest common sense and practical information on recovering Australian landscapes. Called "Bush Regeneration", by Robin A Buchanan, sponsored by TAFE and Greening Australia, 257 pages, it costs \$24.95 (post paid) and can be bought from Bowerbird Books P.O. Box 104, Winmalee, 2777. 10% of this purchase will go to the Society if you tell Bowerbird Books to do so.

HISTORY OF DARWIN'S WALK - PART 1

by JIM SMITH

Sometime in the early 1830's one of the innkeepers at the Weatherboard Inn at Wentworth Falls made a rough track beside the Jamison Creek to the top of Wentworth Falls waterfall. He probably did little more than remove some undergrowth and fallen branches and arrange a few rocks for crossing of the creek. Early travellers may have initially required a guide to do the walk. However, a steady stream of people with a few hours to spare, having heard of the remarkable view of "Prince Regent's Glen" (our Jamison Valley) at the end of the track soon beat in an obvious pathway beside the creek. Thus the first tourist walking track in the Blue Mountains came into existence.

In 1836, the 27 year old scientist Charles Darwin, while riding on horseback to Bathurst, made the 5 km round trip on foot to see the famous view at the "Weatherboard". His journal makes little mention of the walk itself, but Darwin was very impressed with the view terming it "quite novel and extremely magnificent". Six days later, when returning from Bathurst, Darwin did the walk again. Fatigued by his midsummer journey, Darwin spent three nights recuperating at the Weatherboard Inn.

Three years later, the artist and amateur naturalist Louisa Ann Meredith was also travelling to Bathurst and on her return stayed at the Weatherboard Inn. Her description of the walk beside Jamison Creek as it was in 1839 is quite detailed. She drank the water from the creek and was most delighted by the "moist greenness" of vegetation. She saw the great green frogs calling and was enraptured by the flower of the "fringed violet" (Thysanotus tuberosus). She described it as a "gem worthy to grace Titania's rarest crown".

She described a group of waratahs in a circular bower of slender young gum trees as "a sisterhood of queens"! Like Darwin she was overwhelmed by "one of the most stupendous scenes ever beheld" at the end of the walk.

In 1839 Charles Darwin's journal of his voyage around the world on the "Beagle" with its description of the Blue Mountains, was published in England. Five years later Meredith's account of her travel in NSW was published. These two books contain the only known descriptions of the old pathway beside Jamison Creek.

In 1859 Charles Darwin created a revolution in thinking throughout the world with the appearance of his book "On the Origin of Species". His reputation grew steadily from that year and this has ensured that Darwin is the most famous person to have ever visited the Blue Mountains.

Queen Victoria's son, Prince Alfred became the first member of the British Royal family to visit Australia, in 1868. Australian Colonial Society decided that a trip to the famous Weatherboard Falls would be a suitable excursion for the prince. However, the thought of royalty walking along the rough narrow pathway beside Jamison Creek was too much. A special carriage road was constructed just for him. This was the first side road off the highway at Wentworth Falls. Part of its windings can still be traced in Cascade Street, Wentworth Falls. It became known as "Prince Alfred's Track" and later tourists preferred to drive along it rather than walk the old pathway. As a consequence the old creek side walk became quickly overgrown and forgotten after having been in use for about 35 years.

From the 1890's tourists would have wandered up and down stream from Wentworth Falls swimming pool on Jamison Creek. The growth of the township would have seen the local children wandering beside the creek, perhaps catching yabbies on the way home from school. The activities would have created rough "pads" beside sections of the creek.

(Continued in Next Newsletter)

WHEN THE HUT STARTED UP

My husband, Sidney and I, were among the very early members of the Blue Mountains Conservation Society, and we remained active until I left Leura in 1971. I was treasurer for a year or so.

I remember that the City of the Blue Mountains Council granted full rights of the Hut to the Society for nominal sum of one shilling. I do hope correspondence of this transaction and also minutes of the early meetings have been kept.

The old hut was in a very dilapidated condition, but men members (always helped by the women) all worked very hard renovating it.

The nest of a rock warbler was found between the ceiling and roof. I can't remember the names of the original members, but of course Isobel Bowden was always involved. Another lady, Mrs Moira Pearce, undertook to list all the native plants growing in the top area. She was a botanist. I accompanied her writing the list as she identified. I wonder where that list is now?

The men rebuilt the fire place and chimney and fires in the winter were a joy to members gathered round at meetings.

Mr Buki, a local school teacher and Mrs B. who lived near the hut were very active members helping the renovation etc. We were a very friendly group and enjoyed picnics, bush walks and much discussion of interesting topics relative to the new society and its activities.

Setting up the displays in the hut, arranging the catering and rosters for manning it were all busy activities.

There was much joy and satisfaction when all was ready and weekends and holiday rosters arranged.

There will surely still be local members who remember much more than I. Graham Alcorn for example, and what about the Toselands – were they there when we started?

I don't remember who opened the hut but it was a very successful day. I worked frantically that morning planting some native shrubs along the front of the hut and I was pleased when I last visited to note that one or two had survived.

The Society through the years must be congratulated on the great progress it has made both in conservation matters and the continued activities in this old hut despite vandalism over the years. I am too old now (87) to attend the last Xmas at the hut, but I look forward to hearing about the new building and club activities in future.

Reta Vellenga

THE OLD DAYS AND TODAY

The destruction of The Hut provided a great opportunity to sift the Society's files and chattels. Over the twenty five odd years a great deal of correspondence and literature has accumulated. On perusal much has been found to be not worth keeping. There was a lot of duplication and a lot of out of date information on issues remote from the Blue Mountains.

There were also some very interesting items. In 1968 we sported a flag pole and in the early days we sent and received Christmas cards. In 1975 \$2 was spent on the sign 'The Conservation Hut' to go on the roof. In 1982 Jim Smith's class examined The Hut and its function and found both wanting. The students submitted voluminous reports and talked about extending "the colonial theme". They criticised the dusty exhibits, the poor displays and the fact that some exhibits were not relevant to the Mountains. All thought the displays should relate to the district.

In past years the issues that the Society argued were identical to those of today, - a motel on the Silver Mist site in 1972; a quarry on Wynne's Lookout Road in 1974; water pollution and tree preservation in 1976, what about wrapping up Orphan Rock in 1976!!! Was that in the Christo era?

The guest speaker list for the first full year of the Society in 1963 is a Who's Who of important and sometimes famous people.

Miss Isobel Bowden Flora of the Sandstone Country
Miss Thistle Stead (Harris) Native Flowers for the Home Garden

Mr Mel Ward Fauna of the Mountains
Dr E. Dark The Scope of Conservation

Mr Robert Christmas Film Evening

Mr Hurditch Forestry Commission Work in Conservation

Mr W. Constable Seed Dispersal in Nature

Mr Persy Willock A conservation Project in South Australia

Mr Pearson & Mr Vellenga Member's Night with Pictures

Mrs Davis Conservation Problems
Mr John Waterhouse Birds of the Blue Mountains

The Society should be concerned about some things that the old files have highlighted. Membership in 1964 was 407 with five junior branches in the local schools. Our membership today is considerably less and we have no school affiliations. Do you think that the Society is doing it's job? In twenty five years have we made any general impact or are our energies going on single issues as rearguard actions? How can the Society take the initiative and run in front with the baton instead of everlasting mopping-up operation? Tell us please.

If you see a red spot on page 1 of your Newsletter, it means your membership is in arrears. Please renew promptly or this could be your last Newsletter.

The Society's year ends on February 28th each year. Therefore all fees for 1990 start on March 1st. Owing to rising costs, it has become necessary to increase the membership fees. The new subscription rates for 1990 are shown below.

All Office Bearers were elected at the Annual General Meeting on the last Friday in March, and are listed on the inside of the front cover.

1990 SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE NOW DUE
PENSIONERS & JUNIORS \$6.00
SINGLE MEMBERSHIP \$10.00
FAMILY MEMBERSHIP \$15.00

RENEWAL/SUBSCRIPTION FORM ON BACK COVER.

TEMPORARY PREMISES

Most members will be aware by now that great changes have taken place since the last newsletter was published. The old Hut has gone, the site has been bulldozed, earth and rocks moved and foundations for the new Hut started. Old records, files and chattels have been stored and temporary premises set up in a caravan at the Wentworth Falls Reserve. This "Hut" is very small and crowded but well stocked and seems to be catering well, supplying comfort and cheer to visitors. Electricity and water has been connected and Parks & Wildlife have been most helpful. Sales on the whole have been quite good.

PLANT SALE.

Our Autumn Plant sale was held at the Falls Reserve and was very successful and raised nearly \$1,800. Jill Dark as usual had a very attentive audience (over 40 people) all keen to learn how to propagate their own plants.

<u>P.S.</u> For those wanting a souvenir picture of the old Hut there are black and white cards by Grace Bayley @ \$2.50 and Lloyd Jones has some nice small pictures in colour at about \$8.00. At the caravan Wentworth Falls Reserve.

PLEA FOR HELP.

Has any member access to a photo-copying machine at a reasonable price for society copying? Please let us know.

SIERRA NEVADA.

At the January general meeting Ian Brown gave a very interesting talk about walking through the Sierra Nevada Mountains in America. These form part of the main Rocky Mountain chain that runs parallel to the west coast. Some areas are within touring range of San Francisco, but Ian and his companion traversed some very wild and rugged country with magnificent views. As usual he has recorded these with excellent photographs. The trek had to be timed carefully as there was a danger of being snowed in. Another hazard was grizzly bears.

MARKET DAY.

Later in the year the Society intends to organise a market day. This will be an opportunity for members to rid themselves of those old books, cloths, knick-knacks, toold, garden produce, pictures, pots, native plants, records and tapes – a kind of glorified "garage cum jumble sale" with perhaps a sausage sizzle. This event which will take place in the Wentworth Falls School of Arts will include an auction conducted by "Royalty".

Advertising message not copied.

BLUE MOUNTAINS FOR WORLD HERITAGE

Reviewed by WYN JONES

<u>ESSENTIAL READING FOR EVERYBODY</u>. "Blue Mountains for World Heritage" is a comprehensive, well researched book forming the basis of International recognition of the Blue Mountains through placement on the World Heritage List. It is well written by Geoff Mosely in a concise, simple, yet thorough style, and illustrated by the now familiar black and white photographs of Henry Gold (the Harry Phillips of the Modern day).

The main purpose of this book is to justify the Blue Mountains for World Heritage Listing, perhaps to us that seems obvious but it is a daunting task requiring extensive and careful research followed by assessment of the areas conservation values. Geoff Mosely does this logically presenting historical and natural area values in detail with no serious error. The reader will find information on explorers, conservationists, rare plants and ecosystem function equally new and interesting, yet avoiding scientific cliches.

THE QUEST.

Appropriately the Introduction is subtitled "The Beginning of the Quest". I found the quotes of people like Dunphy alongside Charles Darwin, and Gregory Blaxland fascinating as they present the 19th Century impressions and wonderment, to our 20th Century minds in a new yet poetic way. The early explorer/scientist theorised extensively about the forces of nature that formed the Blue Mountains, so stunned were they by the scenery. "The great depth, extent, and number of valleys...are calculated to excite wonder and perplex us much in the study of their origin." Dana, 1839.

Mosely continuously draws our attention to the vast wilderness that remains, the scenery that caused such wonderment to the early settlers and continues to do the same to residents and present day tourists alike. Indeed no wonder Dunphy said "The bush teaches you to be humble in spirit yet big in ideas."

<u>The Resource</u>. The book is really a journey of ideas borne out of solid information. The most extensive data is available on geology/geomorphology and includes odd little items. For example did you know that our upland swamps or headwater valleys have been referred to as "dells" by a recent researcher who found that the soils in these dells were between 200 and 17,000 years old. All the main landforms and geological processes are well described. Even the lyrebird gets a mention as a cause of erosion, alongside fire as a major factor in slope development. This chapter should be read together with that on "Natural Scenery and Wilderness Values."

This is a short overview of the variety of the landscapes in the Blue Mountains from the wide river valleys of the Wollondilly, deep gorges of Kanangra and the Grose, to the rocky pagodas of the Wollomi. Note that variety and size of an area are important measures of heritage value. As a scenic and geological entity the Blue Mountains clearly measures up, "If we coul travel back six million years we would have no difficulty recognising the main landmarks of the Blue Mountains", is indeed a humbling statement. (Continued in the next Newletter)