



Upper Blue Mountains Conservation Society Inc Newsletter

No. 86 January 1992

CALENDAR

The Conservation Hut is not yet open to the public but the Society has access for meetings. Please bring a cushion or chair as the room is unfurnished.

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| January 25 Friday | <u>General Meeting.</u> Speaker is Mr. Tony Curry on "Mt. Tomah Botanic Gardens". The inside story from the Superintendent. |
| February 22 Friday | <u>General Meeting.</u> "The Italian Dolomites" presented by Judy and Joseph Ferfoggia. A fabulous region, hard and magnificent. |
| March 8 Sunday | <u>Autumn Plant Sale</u> at the Conservation Hut. 10am. |
| March 3rd week | Clean Up Australia week. Be prepared. |
| March 29 Friday
29 | <u>Annual General Meeting.</u> Election of Office Bearers.
Members' slides - 20 maximum.
Members' talks - personal choice topic. |
| April 10 Friday ✓ | <u>Heritage Week.</u> Annual Seed Gathering.
Meet 10am, Golden Stairs, Narrow Neck, Katoomba. |

The Management Committee wishes everyone a Happy New Year.

NOTICE BOARD

Annual Subscription is due before the end of March. Renewal form is in this newsletter.

Committee Reports. Would committee members please have reports ready for March A.G.M.

Election of Management Committee

This is a significant occasion. All positions are open. The executive will not be seeking re-election. The record of these long-standing committee members is remarkable. They have provided sustained direction for the Society for years. We request your serious consideration for filling the positions. Simply, without an active committee the Society will not perform to standard. Vice-president Dulcie Toseland has a list of positions and duties (841682) Please consider!

Help!

Jan Ardill needs people to mind information displays occasionally. (586385)

Bush Regeneration Course

If you are already working on one of the several sites in the Mountains such as Darwin's Walk or Mine ha-ha, this will interest you. Contact Cath Ireland, Nat.Park 878877.

Bush Rock If you see what you consider to be illegal taking or carriage of bush rock, phone Nat.Park with all detail such as vehicle rego, etc., immediately.

Judy's Shop

Judy and friends are doing very well with sales at meetings and events. Please support the shop with quality crafts and specialities and please give in to temptation and buy.

PLANT NURSERY. **S.O.S.** FOR SEEDS OF LOCAL BUSH PLANTS, PARTICULARLY PEA FLOWERS AND WATTLES. Contact 586561 for delivery info. Return of pots would be appreciated.

David Coleby is your rep. on the District Weeds Committee, (841395)

Shirley Brown is our liason person with Coalition of Residents, replacing Joan Crawley.

Christmas raffle drawn 1.12.91

Winners : 1. David Thomas
2. Betty Campbell
3. David Coleby

Environment Forum. The Society attended this important gathering. It is a worthwhile enterprise for special interest groups. We await the next step which presumably will come from council.

Blue Mountains World Heritage

We have contributed cash towards brochure printing. Reg Toseland is the Society rep. on the committee.

Kanangra-Boyd Wilderness

Assessment by Nat.Parks and Wildlife Service is nearing completion.

UPDATE

- * Prospect County Council about increased electricity supply for the Katoomba district. We suggested that a policy of energy conservation be adopted. Second choice in options was a new substation on the quarry site Eleventh Avenue, Katoomba, with many conditions. Included in letter was request to rationalise power line easements by sharing with other bulk users.
- * District Fire Control Committee-Fire Management Policy. The law requires protection of life & property. The question is how. This policy covers this and protection for fire fighting personnel by adequate access and provision of ground rules for hazard reduction. The natural environment is described but not in detail. What is still required is an educated consideration of the ecology of each prescribed burn. It is a compromise policy with not quite enough accent on the natural environment.
- * Blue Mountains City Council - Landcom subdivision, Genevieve Street, Bullaburra. The application is an old fashioned design in a leafy street. Society is not opposed to provision of allotments but there must be a redesign for minimum impact on Red Gum Reserve by using cluster housing and retention of bush, and other conditions.
- * BMCC Woodbury St., Woodford. After two years correspondence a fairly important rehabilitation program has been set up. Also there will be an in-house training program for road gangs & supervisors. First session is planned for early 1992 - subject is drains. Past-president Graham Alcorn tells me that twelve years ago the same request for in-house training was made!
- * BMCC - Shell Corner, Katoomba. A request was made to preserve stand of Blue Mountains Ash.

- * BMCC Cemetary and Cremator, Kitchener Street, Leura. Society does not object in principle but a more comprehensive plan is required.
- * National Estate. Proposals for additions of appropriate land in our district have been sent for consideration - includes important natural features and communities.
- * Spring Plant Sale
A great success held on a beautiful day at the Conservation Hut. Plant propagation demonstration given by Jill Dark and Robin Corringham with some competition from channel-billed cuckoos. Appreciation is expressed on every side for the consistent work done by the nursery volunteers. Next plant sale is 10am Sunday, March 8. Conservation Hut.
- * From President Reg and Vice-President Dulcie Toseland - "May we wish a most happy and successful year for the Society itself and all of the members and supporters."
- * Education Displays were mounted at the Mid-Mountains Festival and Carnivale (Kingsford Smith Park) in October. Review finds that these are profitable outlets for the conservation point of view. See Help Wanted in Notice Board. Muriel Healey has developed a 'touch and see' kit which fascinates the small ones and intrigues the tall ones. In November National Parks offered us space for a similar theme display at the Heritage Centre.
- * Christmas Event 1/12/91
The Society centred the Christmas walk and lunch on the traditional home. A focus for conservation in the Blue Mountains for nearly thirty years, the Valley of the Waters has been a destination for 100 years when a tea room was established at the walks' head. Though not officially open, President Reg Toseland cut the green ribbon. Six trees were planted in the new gardens to both commemorate founding and long-time members and to establish hope for a bright future. There was an unusually generous attendance of friends and members and the harmonious atmosphere was enhanced by Graham Alcorn's poetry reading and David Thomas' 'recitation'.

TALKS RESUME

October. The Rev. Bob Evans posed the eternal question, What is science? What is religion? Members were led through the principal philosophical divisions of modern thought and the relations between social pressures/culture vis a vis a traditional belief. Some questioned the ugliness of the world and were not entirely convinced it was by human choice.

November. The discussion night, led by Robin Corringham in the absence of Wyn Jones, roved through local issues of the natural and human environment with refernce to regional and global effects. Issues and problems of resource exploitation, population and social equity were touched on. Catchment protection was the base line. Where possible responsibility was focused.

Follow-up - A letter to District Fire Committee suggesting precinct responsibility for bushfire hazard reduction and fire emergency behaviour. The preliminary answer is that the suggestion is favourably received. Which member will follow this through? Contact Robin 586561.

Here is a note from some committee members for many years:- " With the almost certain changes of styles in both the Society and the new accommodation in the Conservation Hut, we hope that a younger group of members will accept nomination in March. This should ensure a fresh approach to activities and problems, and let them take part in local, state and federal issues which will affect both their families and their future ! "

THREATS

R.C.

The Society Newsletter focuses on our own local activities but in the wider world there is on-going debate about the values of wilderness, resource security and endangered species legislation versus social justice and economics. All are inter-related and the broad picture is kaleidoscopic in movement and confusion. Our problem is compounded by the difficulty in weighing the incommensurables which are implicit in these emotive issues.

Here are a few statements.

* "Wilderness is a place in which ecological processes continue mainly unaltered and where natural selection and evolution still have a prospect of continuing." (Prineas & Gold, Wild Places, 1983)

* The concept of core wilderness in a preserve (sometimes in a National Park) has not been fully taken up and the current legal definition allows access and management.

* State forests in NSW provide some wilderness qualities but are liable, by definition, to be required to supply timber.

So there are 'old growth' forests which are relatively untouched and provide habitat for communities which may include rare species. They are precious regions which protect the gene pool and keep the forest intact. Resource legislation seeks to provide forests for the future use of the timber industry. Sure, it is a prime renewable resource but better industry practice would ensure that a good percentage of 'old growth' forest remains to continue its cycle of growth. The Wilderness Society states that woodchipping is the main reason for the massive destruction of forests. It returns short term profits because it is less labour intensive than saw logging and it receives subsidies which both contribute to a decrease in jobs. This market is decreasing because of competition with higher quality hardwood woodchip from eucalypt plantations in Brazil, South Africa, Spain and Portugal. A summary of the industry attitude is in the Private Forestry Council's "Private Forestry Beyond 2000" (Hobart, 1990). "It is imperative that as much of the remaining private old growth pulpwood resource as is available for sale is marketed over the next fifteen years whilst market acceptance of this comparatively low quality wood is relatively high."

Against this set the Australian working-class ethic and the traditions of timber workers. Job loss has been 40% between the years 1965-1985. Balance this fact with the quote from "Private Forestry". Rationalisation of forest-based industry over the next couple of decades is going to be painful for those closely involved. A leaner, well-managed industry providing secure employment by correct conservation-oriented practice is worth encouraging.

The views of many people reflect the modern environmentalism. Simply, it is a philosophy of ecocentrism tempered by technocentrism. But the challenge to the affluent modes of living and policy making this society has been accustomed to will require deep modification if present population growth is to be accommodated. The natural resource base which is used to supply all needs has to be sustained by minimal exploitation. In short, thoughtful people see that society should be cultivating a pattern of sympathetic relationship between man and the bio-physical surroundings as well as between man and his fellows jointly in relation to bio-physical surroundings. A selfish attitude in one way, because by attributing intrinsic rights to nature, the preservation of the human species is prolonged.

From Aldo Leopold (1949), 'Examine each question in terms of what is ethically and aesthetically right, as well as economically expedient. A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise.'

Excursion Programme FEBRUARY TO APRIL 1992

It is essential on all excursions in the hot weather that members carry at least 1 litre of water.
Please carry on all walks: First Aid Kit, Torch, Matches, 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 excursion. Train timetable on week-days might be altered. Walks starting times and meeting places will remain as stated.

February 2nd Sunday - Castle Head

Meet Great Western H'way side Katoomba Station at 9.30am. 5-6 hours.
Contact : 878342. Sydney trains arrives 9.11am.

February 15th Saturday - Kings Tableland Exploration

Meet Corner Falls Road, and Highway, Wentworth Falls at 9am. 5 hours.
Contact : Lloyd Jones 572270. Sydney train arrives 9.02. Lithgow tr. 8.30am

February 20th Thursday - Giant Stairway, Furbers Steps

Meet Great Western H'way side of Katoomba Station. 9am. 4 hours.
Contact : Bert Davies 588586. Optional return via Scenic Railway

March 1st Sunday - Devil's Hole

Meet Great Western H'way side Katoomba Station at 9.30am. 6-7 hours.
Contact : Olive Noble 878342. Sydney train arrives 9.11am.

March 19th Thursday - Darwin's Walk, Rocket Point

Meet end of Falls Road, Wentworth Falls. 10am 4 hours.
Contact : Bob Jones 588361

March 21st Saturday - Duck Hole, Kanuka Brook

Meet Glenbrook Station at 9.30am 5 hours.
Contact : Alan Macauley 392767. Sydney train arrives 9.24am Lithgow 9.23am

April 5th Sunday - Ford Crossing to Cox's River

Meet at Blackheath Station car park at 8.30am 6-7 hours.
Contact : David Thomas 842121.

April 16th Thursday - Echo point, Lawson, Round Walk

Meet in front of Lawson Bowling Club, round building north side station.
3-4 hours. at 10am

Contact : Grace Bayley 591955

April 18th Saturday - Sassafras Gully Circular Walk

Meet behind Springwood Library at 9am
Contact : Alan Macauley 392767. Sydney train arrives 8.34am
Lithgow train arrives 8.07am

UPPER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY. P.O.Box 29, Wentworth Falls. 2782

Membership / Renewal Form

Name.....	Family	\$15	per year
Address.....	Single	\$10	" "
.....	Pensioner Family	\$10	" "
.....	Single Pensioner	\$6	" "

Membership corresponds to the year April 1991 to 31 March 1992. Please enclose stamped addressed envelope if a receipt is required.

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1992 Environmental Courses

1. At Katoomba Day and Evening College

Two 11 week courses with Margaret Baker

The Blue Mountains - An Introduction

Landscape development, plant life, Aborigines, European exploration, early road, rail and mining history, and summer houses etc

Environmental Issues

From local issues to global problems including Nepean/Hawkesbury River, algal blooms, Greenhouse Effect, Ozone layer etc

2. At Katoomba College of TAFE

Environmental Studies

Part of the TPC Course. Study ecosystems, catchment management, global issues, government decisions etc with Margaret Baker

Outdoor Guide Certificate

An exciting course covering all aspects of the Blue Mountains environment, co-ordinated by Jim Smith. Heaps of walking.

Watch the Gazette or contact the colleges for details

New titles from Bower Bird Books

PO Box 104 Winmalee 2777; 10% of purchase goes to UBMCS - tell us you're a member; prices cover postage.

Atlas of the Environment *Lean et al* \$29.95 Easy to read articles on many global issues, great maps, graphs etc; very up-to-date; from World Wildlife Fund

Australian Rainforest Plants Part 3 *Nicholson's* \$12.95 A continuation of this fabulously illustrated series; 106 trees, ferns, vines, orchids etc; Qld-Tas; rainforest types

Blue Mountains A Guide for Bicyclists *Jim Smith* \$12.95 Revised edition, 48 rides on fire trails etc

Flora of New South Wales Vol 2 *Harden et al* \$68 660pp on eucalypts, acacias, grevilleas, banksias etc; an easy to read guide on all species; clear b/w sketches

Key Guide to Australian Mammals *Cronin* \$19.95 From whales to bats, wallabies to possums; detailed notes on size, food, habitat etc; colour paintings