



Upper Blue Mountains Conservation Society Inc Newsletter

Number 90
January 1993

The meetings are held in the new Conservation Hut at the end of Fletcher Street, Wentworth Falls, on the last Friday of each month.



GUEST SPEAKERS

Friday, January 29 ... Alan Lobb ... Native orchids

Friday, February 26 ... Graham Blackwell
'Going, going, gone! - Memories of Africa'

Friday, March 26 ... Annual meeting and social get-together

The Autumn plant sale is on Saturday 13 March 1993 at the Conservation Hut

AGM - 1992

No Quorum.

No New
Committee.

No Minutes.

No Action.

No Anything

DON'T LET THIS HAPPEN TO US!

This is what happened to one of the best Conservation groups in the State. Not in our society, though! We have a concerned, energetic, generous-spirited membership that will see the Society brilliantly led. The AGM is in March. The Management Committee is elected at that meeting. All positions are open and require just a nomination that is supported. Several of the present committee have made it quite clear that they are retiring, being simply tired after many years of work for the society. To be blunt, it is time for your stint. Your opportunity. A short paper inside this newsletter offers an agenda for the remainder of the century. Please study it and make your suggestion and/or join a vigorous committee that sets the pace for conservation in the Blue Mountains.

Hotlines to discuss your role in the committee are:

Dulcie on 84 1682 Robin on 58 6561

Your skills can be lodged with Beverly 57 2076 and she will contact you in time of need.

Farewell, Frank Vanry! He died on January 6. It was his wish to see 1993 but not his 100th birthday, and this wish was granted. Many members of the Conservation Society attended his funeral. A tribute to Frank will appear in the next newsletter, meanwhile we all send our love to his widow, our beloved Grete.

THE CONSERVATION SOCIETY IN THE 1990s

PHILOSOPHY

To meet challenges with style. To be positive in outlook and actions.
To be confident and take a high profile stance.
To meet decision makers on their level.

TARGETS

1. For 'Middle Australia'

Street trees

Photo competition

Talks to service and community clubs

Make contributions to 'Green Pages'

Make personal contact - door knock

Advertise

Information street stalls

2. For Youth

Poster competition

3. Politicians and government, agencies and BMMC

Bimonthly letter

Programmed subjects

4. Members

Provide practical living advice

Examples: Friends of the Earth

1 paragraph per newsletter

3 minutes talk at general meeting

WHAT IS OFFERED TO MEMBERS?

WALKS - Can the value of walks be improved? Leaders' Course?
Plan a Field Study course?

MEETINGS - Invite one 'name' speaker per year, as well as local speakers?
For example - Robin Williams.

OTHER ACTIVITIES - Members to suggest areas of interest.

INFORMATION SHARING AND SOCIAL CONTACT - at the Hut and on walks.

What else could be done? Please share ideas for social occasions for relaxation and getting to know each other.

Members have many opportunities to experience field work through
Walks leadership

Growing plants with an expert

Visiting parks and gardens

Attending special presentations

Making notes for the presentation of reports

Locating areas on maps

Keeping nature or conservation diaries

Land use assessment

Bush regeneration

Thanks to Robin Corringham for all the thought put into
this paper.

REPORTS

LAND USE COMMITTEE

Submissions made to Blue Mountains City Council on exhibited development applications:

Kedumba Emporium redevelopment at Echo Point- new development application
Wentworth Falls Lake master plan,

Flora and Fauna Park, Bodington Hill - new development application,

Escarpment protection zoning - we support the restriction in building height,

Representation made to BMCC and Water Board about land clearing without appropriate erosion control measures on several blocks. These were reported to the Society by members. This is a continuous problem which will be followed up.

ENVIRONMENTAL LAW WORKSHOP

The Environmental Defenders Office is a non-profit community legal centre that specialises in public interest environmental law. The Society is negotiating for a one day workshop to be held at the Conservation Hut, probably on Saturday 27 March 1993. Subjects may be Planning and Development Law, Nature Conservation Law, eg Endangered Species legislation. Cost to those attending will be kept as low as possible. Please watch the Gazette for details, it is vital that as many people as possible come to learn about environmental law and how to find and use it. These are litigious times!

R.C.

WINNER OF THE \$2,000 GRANT

This Society was pleased to make the award of \$2,000 for programmes intended for the care of the Upper Blue Mountains natural environment to the Minnehaha Falls Land Care Group.

Their application showed an appreciation of what is achievable in the difficult arena of bush regeneration without losing sight of user needs. Yosemite Creek catchment is an important one but shows long-standing degeneration and pollution which impinges on the National Park streams.

The cheque was handed over to the group at the Christmas lunch, by acting President Reg Toseland. Representatives from National Parks, Conservation and Lands Management, Council and National Parks Association were invited to the function.

Plant sales have funded this grant. We would like suggestions for a project for 1993. Thanks to all who contributed to the sales on the day and through the year at the nurseries. Our last big project for 1992 was the supply of 1000 plants for the restoration of Nellies Glen.

Don't forget the Autumn Plant Sale on 13 March, 9.30 am. at The Hut.

R.C.

GREENWAYS

On Friday 31 October 1992, fifty or sixty people gathered in The Hut to hear Jim Smith speak on 'Greenways'. Jim is a well-known person in our mountains and is active wherever there are conservation and exploration projects to be pursued. He has written nine books, 'How to See the Blue Mountains' being probably the most well-known. Favourites of mine are those about the Six-foot Track and Lindeman Pass.

Jim visited N. America for three months in 1992, having gained a Churchill Fellowship. His aim was to see and enquire into the Greenways of America, hoping to make the same scheme work in Australia.

With the aid of slides Jim told what he had seen. He explained that a Greenway is a long thin park which makes nature accessible to people, a green corridor coming from the heart of cities, linking city parks to each other and to the country and the National Parks.

The American ideal is to give access to a green trail within 15 minutes of every home. Their main technique has been to turn old railway lines and canal corridors into greenways. For this many Americans are happy to pay extra rates!!! Australians, take note.

Jim showed maps of N.America criss-crossed with lines representing, not roads but greenways travelling continuously east-west and north-south and in-between. On these paths were joggers, 'power walkers', cyclists, roller-bladers pulled by dogs, mothers with strollers, and even a jogger pulling a specially-built carriage for a baby.

Jim showed his pictures of some of the long-distance walking tracks which already exist in Australia - the National Trail most of the way down our east coast, the Heysen Trail in S.A., the Alpine Trail, etc. They need to be linked and maintained. Australia has the oldest walking Trail in the world, up near Broome in WA. It is an ancient Aboriginal track now available as a walkers' trail. We have an opportunity in the Blue Mountains to join our main walks and extend the trails to Parramatta, using old railway tracks, canals, pipelines and powerlines. Due to the colouring of our land we would have to think of a different name to 'Greenways'.

It's a grand idea. Many thanks, Jim!

GB

FOREST EXPLOITATION - WOODCHIPPING

There is confusion about the true state of affairs in the timber industry. The following common sense facts have been culled from various sources including The Wilderness Soc., Aust. Cons. Foundation and Uni.of NSW.

Facts

- * Eucalypt plantations in countries such as Brazil and Spain will be harvested within the decade.
- * Australia's woodchip is of low quality.
- * World prices are falling. Timber industry wants to take up the slack by increasing quotas.
- * Private forestry reports state that remaining private old growth pulpwood must be marketed in next 15 years while prices are comparatively high, that is, before better quality overseas plantations are harvested.
- * Between 1965 and 1985 wood production increased by 40% and jobs declined by 40%
- * 5% of Australia is covered by native forest.
- * of this 13% is reserved, e.g., national parks.
- * less than 1% is covered by protected forests.

Australia can be self-sufficient in paper and pulp by using:
* eucalypt plantations * existing softwood (pine) plantations
* recycled fibres.
* Jobs can be taken up by plantation softwood chipping.

With cable logging for woodchipping all vegetation is torn away. Research from Uni. of NSW (Oct 1992) indicates that logging old forests is not in the interests of the industry and that timber is used extravagantly and carelessly. The conservative viewpoint is that this degree of exploitation is not acceptable and that there are alternatives.

Woodchip export facilities are at Bunbury, Geelong, Eden, Newcastle, Brisbane, Bell bay (Tas) and Triabunna (Tas).

You can write to the Prime Minister at Parliament House, Canberra, ACT 2100
== Please stop the woodchipping of the forests
== Plantations can supply our paper needs
== Save the old-growth forests

EXCURSION PROGRAMME

February

Sunday 7: Old saw mill site. Meet at Mt Victoria station at 8.30 am
Contact June Baxter 877 312
Thurs. 18: Murphy's Glen area. Meet at Woodford Station carpark at 9am.
Contact Bob Jones 588 361
Sat. 20: Rainbow Ravine. Meet Mt Vic station at 8.30 am.
Contact Olive Noble 878 342
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March

Sun 7: Leura Forest. Meet at Leura carpark (off Megalong St behind shops) at 9am. Contact David Thomas 842 121
Thurs 18: Blue Gum Swamp. Meet at end of White Cross Rd, Wirmalee at 10am. Contact Bob Jones 588 361.
Sat. 20: Fortress Ridge. Meet at Leura Public School, cnr Mt Hay Rd and Highway, at 8.30am. Contact John Noble 878 342
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April

Sun. 4 Glow worm Tunnel. Meet at Mt Vic Station at 8.30am.
Contact Len Baxter 877 312. Torches essential.
Thurs 15 Golf Links IO to Sublime Point. Meet cnr Gladstone Rd and Fitzroy St, Leura, at 10am. Contact Dulcie Toseland 841 682
Sat. 17: Asgard Swamp to Valhalla Head. Meet at Mt Vic Station at 9am. Contact Bob Jones 588 361.
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It is essential that on all excursions in hot weather we carry at least 1 litre of water, as well as First Aid kit, torch, matches, warm shirt or jacket, rainwear, hat. Wear safe footwear. All people attend excursions at own risk. If arriving by train please advise the contact person in good time.

FINALLY

A PLEA TO ALL WHO LOVE OUR CREATURES.

Dulcie Toseland noticed a bowerbird whose throat was encircled by a blue ring from a milk bottle. This can be avoided if we all simply CUT those plastic rings before disposing of them.

Apologies to any new members whose names have not been included in this news letter, due to circumstances beyond my control. They'll be in next time.
Editor.