

LOWER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER, 1981

P.O. Box 119, Springwood, 2777.

President; Christine Stickley Ph. 536380. Secretary; Wendy Godfrey Ph. 391748.

Editor; Margaret Esson Ph. 511826.

Annual General Meeting. This was held on Friday 9th October. Officers for 1981-2 are as follows:

President; Christine Stickley, Vice Presidents; Mick Dark, Ross Stickley, Secretary; Wendy Godfrey, Minutes Secretary; Jill Dark, Treasurer; Colin Powell, Newsletter Editor; Margaret Esson, Publicity; Besse Bramsen, Librarian; Aleen Hanley.

President's Report.

Besse Bramsen commenced the meeting with a resume and comments on the year's activities. Her report is attached. After the election of officers the incoming President, Christine Stickley, proposed a vote of thanks to Besse for her untiring efforts and tremendous achievements during her term of office - in particular the policy of supporting financially larger, more powerful organisations in their fight to conserve our environment.

Treasurer's Report.

See attached sheet.

Other Reports.

The walk to St. Helena in the Blue Mountains National Park had to be postponed due to unfavourable weather and a future date will be arranged and notified.

B.M.C.C. Elections. A meeting with candidates was held on Sunday morning, 25th October. Each candidate was given an opportunity to speak and outline his policy, with particular reference to the environment. This was followed by question time.

Present at the meeting were:-

WARD 3	WARD 2	WARD 4
Dick Jackson-Hope	Will Silk	Peter Quirk
Michael Pyne	Claude Papesch	Bob Clarke
Ern. Lesslie		Bob Treasure
		John Ward
		Ralph Williams
		Garry Costello

The meeting provided everyone with an excellent opportunity to meet these candidates and hear their views. A report of this meeting appeared in the Blue Mountains Gazette on 4th November, 1981.

A working committee has been established as the outcome of this meeting and as a result all Ward 3 and 4 candidates have been circulated with a questionnaire. It is proposed to advertise to the public the names of candidates who are sympathetic to the conservation of the Blue Mountains and to its future development based on sound ecological principles. A copy of the questionnaire is attached.

A press release concerning this was published in the Blue Mountains Gazette, 11/11/81.

Additional proposals include a major publicity and membership drive. We have been granted some time on the 2KA Community Services Programme and also some space in the magazine of the Penrith Community Arts Council.

Lennox Bridge restoration. On Sunday November 15th about seven Society members met Mr. Chris. Wills of the B.M. City Council at Lennox Bridge and were shown plans of the proposed restoration of the area, which will take approximately ten years and 500,000 dollars to complete. The strengthening and restoration of the bridge is the first objective and a supporting 'lining' structure has been constructed to support

two-way traffic. A one-way road is envisaged for the present loop track and the quarry is to be made into a car-park. Walking trails are planned, the brick toilet block is to be removed and a re-seeding and re-planting programme using plant species indigenous to the area is to be undertaken. The problem of pollution of the creek with detergents is no longer a matter for the Council but must be taken up with the M.W.S.&D.B.

Some members had misgivings about the encouragement of tourist traffic, but the majority felt that care was being taken to restore the bridge as much as possible and that appropriately landscaping the area would inhibit dumping and other acts of vandalism. All were most appreciative that Mr. Wills gave his time to explain the various phases of reconstruction to us. Copies of the plans are to be made available to the Society.

'Controlled' burning. Discussion with the Executive Officer of the Blue Mountains Bushfire Prevention Association. We have invited Mr. Koperberg to a meeting in the autumn to discuss fire policy and the evidence supporting the effectiveness of the policy of controlled burning.

Site Inspection - Bell Extractive Industry Proposal. See attached sheet.

Environmental Law Symposium. See attached sheet.

Annual N.C.C. Conference. See attached sheet.

Stall at the "Q" Theatre Fete, Sunday, November 8th. Two of our members manned a stall at the "Q" Theatre Fete, Railway St., Penrith. Several of our members did cooking for the stall and we also sold plants and oddments. This raised approximately \$40.00 and we also made \$20.00 on the raffle.

Eastern Escarpment Threatened. Penrith Council jurisdiction extends to the top of the escarpment below Mt. Riverview. Blue Mountains Friends of the Earth recently discovered and publicised information of a proposed sub-division on the escarpment. Penrith Council was very reluctant to give away any information, even the exact location. F.O.E. organised well attended public meetings at Mt. Riverview. At a further meeting the Escarpment Preservation Group was formed. It was revealed that developers propose a housing estate between the electricity transmission lines and Riverside Rd. They would need to have the land re-zoned from non-urban to residential. The meeting expressed unanimous support to call for a Conservation Order to protect the escarpment.

An inspection of the site area will take place on Sunday 15/11/81 and a further meeting will be held before Penrith Council considers the proposal on Thursday, 19/11/81. Many people are expected to attend the council meeting at which a petition will be presented. Ring Brian Mills 536566 for further information.

REMINDERS!

Please bring your raffle ticket books to the Christmas Party (see below) as the raffle is to be drawn then.

SAVE THE FRANKLIN. At the meeting on Friday 13th November a motion was passed to donate the sum of \$50.00 from the L.B.M. Conservation Society to the Tasmanian Wilderness Society. Members are urged to give personal financial support to this cause. The address is Tasmanian Wilderness Society, 102 Bathurst St., HOBART.

A DECISION HAS BEEN MADE TO START FUTURE MEETINGS AT 7.30 P.M.

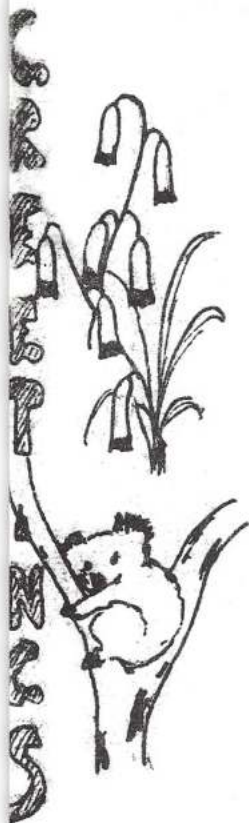
October is the start of the new financial year, so if you have not paid your subscription we would be glad to have it at the earliest possible date!

FUTURE EVENTS

Next meeting. Friday, 8th January, 1982 at 7.30 p.m. at the Teacher's Resource Centre, Glenbrook. Programme to be arranged.

Christmas Party. At the home of Christine Stickley, 20 Gwen Crescent Warrimoo, 6.00 p.m., 12th December. Details were in the October Newsletter and we look forward to seeing as many members and friends as possible.

AND FINALLY — WE WISH EVERYONE A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND BEST WISHES FOR THE
COMING YEAR.



A Voice from the Wilderness.

The folly of man is never so clear
Than in this season of the year.
It is at this time that a scourge is wrought
Upon the bushland by those who are taught
That reduction of leaf litter by burnoffs will without doubt
Prevent fires from raging in times of high wind and drought.
The volunteer boys with glee set alight
The litter, the shrubs, what ever's in sight.
Protecting the public is the catch cry of course,
But to wild life and flora they show no remorse
The soil is scorched bare, plants wither and die,
Spring flowers destroyed before seed setting time.
Mosses and soft shrubs, boronia and bossinea,
With regular burning will be lost from the area.
Ground nesting birds, lyres and pardelopes,
Echidnas, bush mice, reptiles and possums
Suffer great loss of habitat and food,
And into alien areas are forced to move.
If spring rains come now, with the soil stripped bare,
The runoff on hillsides will gouge and tear.
With litter removed, soil moisture is freed,
And the drought will take toll of more shrubs and trees.
Fuel for fires which to burnoffs pay no heed.

When wild fires strike our mountains,
And the volunteers rally forth,
No one questions their bravery, or their worth.
But the soul-less destruction of bushland
To maintain morale and enthuse a few men,
Is a practice that defies understanding
And is something that all should condemn.

"Mere Mortal"

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

LOWER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY

9th October, 1981.

In this, my final report, it is best to begin with an expression of gratitude to the folk who have worked so well in raising funds. Our Treasurer's Report will show the amount we have given to other larger organisations to aid in the fight for better surroundings for people of the future. Country-wide and world-wide conservation will affect all in future living.

Although the word 'conservation' is not the 'dirty word' that it was a few years ago, general trends are still heavily weighted against the movement.

Also I must thank the members who have worked hard on local efforts and issues. And I am sure we are all very happy to know that Dark's Common is saved for something better than housing development. Our belief is that no further Crown Land nor Council owned land should be released for development, the ecology of the Blue Mountains being already under stress.

It has been gratifying to learn (from attendance at an information day) that we have free communication with Penrith Lakes Development Corporation. Assurance is that queries, suggestions and discussion are welcomed by the Corporation.

This year we have still indulged in a few walks and outings, and there have been some very happy days on these.

Our association with the "Renewing of the Dreaming" exercise is a welcome improvement in our activities.

Guest speakers at our meetings over the past 12 months have been; Peggy Clark, Thistle Stead, Milo Dunphy, Rod Squire, Beverley Fiedler, Wieslaw Lichasz and Beatrice Palmer.

The years ahead will be fraught with harder work on local and wider issues; and I wish success to the incoming president and officers of the Society.

I will continue any possible help in a non-executive capacity. These past three years have been a worthwhile experience.

B. Irvine Bramsen.

LOWER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED

30th SEPTEMBER, 1981

<u>1980</u>		
263.77	Balance 1.7.80	258.87
	<u>Add Receipts for Year</u>	
182.00	Subscriptions	157.00
455.19	Springwood Ivy Market and Penrith Field Day	453.36
17.00	Donations - General	-
	- Specific - South West Tasmania Committee	-
54.00	Sundry Sales	-
10.20	Bank Interest	9.13
8.71	Raffle Proceeds	56.05
-		
<u>727.10</u>		<u>675.54</u>
990.87		934.41
	<u>Less Payments for Year</u>	
106.00	Newsletter	90.75
16.00	Post Office Box Rental	16.00
-	Darks Common Submission	124.92
-	Glenbrook Primary School Annual Prize	12.95
	<u>Donations</u>	
200.00	South West Tasmania Committee	-
100.00	Tasmanian Wilderness Society	120.00
100.00	Cuboo Ted Thomas	-
20.00	World Wildlife Fund	-
50.00	National Parks Foundation	-
50.00	Total Environment Centre	150.00
-	Australian Conservation Foundation	100.00
-	Wirrimbirra	100.00
	Australian Conservation Foundation	
	- Class Action Contribution	50.00
<u>520.00</u>		<u>520.00</u>
	<u>Subscriptions & Affiliations</u>	
	Nature Conservation Council	
20.00	of N.S.W.	10.00
	Katoomba & District Wildlife	
20.00	Conservation Society	-
15.00	National Parks Association	15.00
35.00	Australian Conservation Foundation	37.00
<u>90.00</u>		<u>62.00</u>
732.00		826.62
258.87	Balance at Commonwealth Saving Bank	
	Parramatta at 30th September, 1981.	107.79

Application Forms.

This is the beginning of the society's financial year, and we are enclosing Renewal forms for this year's subscriptions. Over the past few weeks, we have found that it would be very helpful to know the occupations and skills that our members have, in order to help the society. It would be appreciated if you could list any skills that you think may help, eg. typing, writing press releases, members of other societies, eg S.G.A.P., Bushwalking groups; an interest in gardening to help with tree planting for the year of the tree, photography, etc. etc. You might like to list areas of academic qualifications too, eg Geology.

THE LOWER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY.

SUBSCRIPTIONS / RENEWAL.

Single \$4.00 Family \$5.00 Life Membership \$40.00

From 1st October 198 to 30th September, 198 .

Name: -----

Address: -----

Phone:-----

Occupation/s: -----

Skills: -----

please send your cheque or money order to P.O. Box 119, Springwood, 2777.



Lower Blue Mountains Conservation Society

P.O. Box 119,
Springwood, 2777.
5th November, 1981.

We are conducting a survey of candidates' opinions and policies on the crucial issue of development of the Blue Mountains, and would appreciate your replies to the following questions. Unfortunately, time is limited, so could you please send your replies to the above address by 20th November for publication the following week.

1. Are you in favour of the "Statement of Objectives, Policies and Priorities for Action" adopted by Resolution of Blue Mountains City Council on 21st June, 1976. Vide Minute No. 709/3.?
2. What do you consider should be the optimum population of the Mountains and how would you attempt to achieve this level?
3. When subdivision plans are submitted to Council, what steps would you take to ascertain the effect of such a subdivision on the environment and how would you ensure opportunity for public involvement and comment?
4. How would you eliminate creek and stream pollution caused
 - a) by inadequate sewerage treatment?
 - b) by excessive clearing of bushland?
5. How do you consider the Tree Preservation Order should be made more effective?
6. What is your opinion on the creation of a Total Conservation Order over swamplands, creek head-waters, escarpments and special sites?
7. Do you favour the acquisition of land of special significance, by Council?
8. Will you move to appoint an environmental officer to protect the natural character of the Mountains?



Lower Blue Mountains Conservation Society

9. How do you reconcile the demand for local employment and the preservation of the environment?
10. Have you or your family any business or other interests that could be enhanced by your election to Council?
11. What are your reasons for standing for Council?

Thank you for your time in answering these questions, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,

Secretary, LBMCS.

SITE INSPECTION - BELL EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRY PROPOSAL

B.M.C.C. offered to provide us with a site inspection of the above proposal in recognition of our objection. N.P. & W.S. have also objected, citing the threat of water pollution to the Wollongambe and evidence of aboriginal occupation on the site. Our submission also quoted the likelihood of water pollution as the most undesirable impact of this industry.

It rained most of the morning but as Besse, Chris and myself stepped out onto the site, strangely enough and to the amazement of the Council officer, it stopped and the sun came out for a short time! This aside, the inspection was most useful and, in our opinion, it would take an engineering genius to prevent polluted wastes from escaping into the Wollongambe River off the 1 in 6 slopes on the site. The river is only 800 metres away.

The Society is pursuing the matter further.

(Signed.) Wendy Godfrey

ENVIRONMENTAL LAW SYMPOSIUM

The symposium was held on 26.9.81 and was co-sponsored by the Department of Environment and Planning and the Environmental Law Association. The association was formed in November 1980 shortly after the new environment and planning legislation was brought into force in September 1980. Members of the association include practitioners, legal and other academics, town planners, architects and local government officials. The president is Murray Wilcox, Q.C. (also president A.C.F.). The association publishes the Environmental Law Reporter.

The new legislation establishes a comprehensive system of environmental assessment subject to review by the Land and Environment Court. The symposium was held for the exchange of views on legal and administrative aspects of environmental assessment. There were many speakers including Murray Wilcox, representatives of the D.E.P., lecturers, planning consultants and local government councillors. Case studies were provided by Milo Dunphy in his inimitable style and Jim Roberts, past president of the Friends of the Hunter Valley (Lower).

There are many faults and weaknesses in the new legislation but it is a step in the right direction for community action groups such as ours. We now have significant powers that could help us in halting undesirable development and forcing companies or individuals to assess the environmental impact of their proposals. Murray Wilcox stressed that community groups must learn how to use this legislation - it is there for our purpose as well as others. For the first time we have the right to appeal against a development decision by Council or the D.E.P. The Land and Environment Court states that any person can do so, even, as one barrister has put it, a demented Norwegian. As a result of the symposium the Society has prepared a letter to the Premier outlining the faults in the legislation as we see it, urging that these be remedied so that the aims of the legislation can be fulfilled. They are;

1. need for a fund within the D.E.P. to provide assistance for groups in need of legal representation at inquiries, etc.
2. the legislation only sets minimum requirements - you do not find developers setting the example in environment protection unless they are forced to.
3. the legislation does not provide for the cumulative impact of a single development proposal to be taken into account, e.g. Hunter Valley, Grose River, Wollongambe River.
4. the legislation pertains to 'designated development' - high rise buildings are not classed as such. (i.e. you don't get applications for piggeries or abattoirs in the Sydney city area). Parramatta Park was not considered 'significant' enough despite the fact that it was the largest application for development that Parramatta Council had ever received.
5. information on how this legislation works and can be used by groups is not readily available.
6. predictions made in an environmental impact statement must be assessed for their accuracy after the development has progressed.
7. development approvals must be accompanied by bonds as insurance for re-vegetation works or as an anti-pollution measure.

All in all the symposium was most useful and informative. The Association was overwhelmed by the attendance - over 300 people. A sign of the times?

Wendy Godfrey.

ANNUAL N.C.C. CONFERENCE

Chris Pratten held the chair for this year's two day affair. Besse and I occupied 'back bench' positions along with the two delegates from Katoomba and District W.C.S. Over 70 motions were on the agenda for consideration. Amongst the issues discussed were;

- plant variety rights legislation
- Kakadu N.P.
- N.P.W.S. staffing and management plans
- fire management
- reforms to the Forestry Act
- semi-arid land management
- coal production, conservation and limitation in N.S.W.
- a world wide nature conservation classification system as outlined by the N.P. & W.S.

Of local interest was the motion submitted by the Katoomba and District W.C.S., seconded by our group that,

"there should be no further alienation of Crown Lands in the Blue Mountains city boundaries and further, that all suitable Crown Lands be added to the National Park or reserves". (words to that effect.)
- carried.

The Federation of Bushwalking clubs is calling for the preservation of a regional environmental plan for Newnes Plateau under Section 40(2) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. This society will support this move in line with our concern over the cumulative environmental impacts of collieries, extractive industries, forestry operations. The Wollongambe is fast becoming another Grose.

Murray Wilcox opened the conference and spoke on the legislative powers now available for our use and urged all groups to do so. On the Sunday morning we were given a talk by P.J. Walker from the Soil Conservation Service. This was followed by slides. The area embraced was the Western Division of N.S.W. and soil conservation matters pertaining to farm management in that area. Besse and I found it very informative. The slides were sabotaged, we suspect by a sturdy, bearded greeny with a lust for rainforest! It did break up the solemnity of the occasion somewhat. The conference was a well organised and disciplined event.

(Signed.) Wendy Godfrey.