



Lower Blue Mountains Conservation Society

P.O. Box 119, Springwood, 2777

NOVEMBER 1985 NEWSLETTER

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MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Our Annual General Meeting was held in October. This resulted in the following office bearers for 1986:

president - George Threlfo
vice-presidents - Richard Phillipps and Ross Bridle
treasurer - Eunice Holmes
minutes secretary - Aleen Hanley
general business secretary - Besse Bramsen
membership secretary - Sue Threlfo
newsletter editor - Sue Threlfo
publicity - Chris Stickley and Ross Bridle
librarian - Aleen Hanley
general meetings organiser - Aleen Hanley
walks organiser - Richard Phillipps

Thanks to Ross Bridle for his role as treasurer in 1985; and welcome to Eunice Holmes for 1986. All others are "old hands", and may they carry on for ever!

In September, Jill Dark showed her slides of N.S.W. rainforests. Thanks to Jill for her usual enthusiastic effort. Jill has put her talents to print in the co-authorship, with Margaret Baker and Robin Corringham, of two books: NATIVE PLANTS of the Upper Blue Mountains, and NATIVE PLANTS of the Lower Blue Mountains. Both books are essential reading for Blue Mountains residents and visitors.

The August meeting was addressed by representatives of three local interest groups: Ian White for the Anti-airport group; Meredith Brownhill for the Escarpment Protection group; and Judy Smith for the Anti-woolshed group. This proved a valuable session, up-dating information on these issues. Thanks to these speakers for their contributions.

CONGRATULATIONS THISTLE STEAD

In August, Thistle Stead (Harris) received an Honorary Doctorate of Science from Wollongong University for her teaching, research and commitment in the fields of science and conservation.

She was involved in the early days of the Wild Life Preservation Society of Australia, which is still operative today. For over 25 years she has been a leading light at Wirrimbirra Sanctuary at Bargo, as manager and in executive roles. In her career Thistle has taught in schools and lectured at Sydney Teachers College and the University of Sydney. She has also been a councillor with A.C.F. She has published or contributed to a large number of books and publications. Innumerable organisations have benefitted from Thistle's involvement.

Congratulations to Thistle Stead for this achievement; and to Wollongong University for acknowledging the worth of environmental conservation.

A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor

Lately I have been thinking that a 'Letters to the Editor' page in the Newsletter might be an interesting idea, if you consider it a viable one.

Maybe there are members, who while not feeling inclined to write a long article may care to make some comment on any subject of interest they happen to come across, either locally, on trips around the country or even abroad.

We hear of such stirring events as protest rallies to counter vandalistic acts of some of our Governments. The declaration of new National Parks etc. But I also feel it would be of interest to hear of the less spectacular things, as to how the gradual regeneration of the 'die back' on the Northern Tablelands is progressing, (quite well I think). And what country towns may be doing about nature reserves and so on.

Nearer home, I would be pleased if someone could tell me whether the top-knot pigeon (*Ocyphaps lophotes*) is endemic to these parts, or like the galahs, have come from the inland. The little flock here, have grown from one pair to eight individuals in the last four years or so. Considering the flimsy construction of the nests it is wonderful that any eggs stay there long enough to hatch. But then nature is wonderful!

Yours sincerely, Molly Edmonds, Springwood

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is a great idea! BUT it needs your support! READERS send in YOUR news, gossip, questions, comment. Who knows - we could even have our very own conservation Q and A or Trivial Pursuit!

Molly Edmonds has reinforced her suggestion by contributing a poem:

THE DAINTREE FOREST

In this troubled world of greed and sin,
Mid noisy traffic's ceaseless din,
Needs the weary spirit a place of rest,
A quiet place by peace caressed.

Deep in the forest's green embrace
Life moves at a slower pace
Where in the rhythm of nature's cycle,
Birds and beasts and growing things
Have each it's own appointed place.

There life, death and decay, and in decay
The miracle of rebirth.
Amid the timeless wonder of it all
The clang and clamour fade away
And finds the weary soul a benison
Of peace and rest.

by Molly Edmonds

ANNUAL CONFERENCE: N.C.C. OF N.S.W.

George and I spent an interesting weekend at our first NCC conference. We represented the LBMCS.

The conference covered a wide range of subjects, from Lord Howe Island to logging to the Leura Resort. A few personalities dominated the oratory area, some worthy,

others merely obstructive.

The guest speakers were John Whitehouse, Director of the N.P.&W.S., and Bob Carr, Minister for Environment and Planning, who delivered the opening address.

Some of his main points were:

- the plan for use of urban bushland open spaces should be released by July 1986
- work is progressing on protection of wilderness areas via the Wilderness and Wild Rivers Act
- a list of future actions
 - further consolidation of coastal national parks, eg. enlargement of the newly formed Christmas Bell Plain
 - gazetting by December of powers to control coastal wetlands activities, eg. drainage or canal developments
 - further rainforest acquisitions from private landholders
- the announcement of the offer of new premises for the N.S.W. N.C.C. and the Environment Centre

Enthusiastic acclamation reflected the positive nature of Bob Carr's address.

WET SUNDAY EXCURSION a report by Besse Bramsen

Our outing of Sunday 13th October was rather a dampened affair, though certainly not dull. The folk who braved the elements saw much of beauty and interest.

Areas visited were flat lands around Agnes Banks.

Before white immigration they were an expanse of dunes. The deep base of the soil is a continuation of Sydney's Wianamatta shale. That is overlaid with alluvium which predates the uplift of the monocline. The dunes were of comparatively late geological formation, being formed by sand windblown from the monocline. The dunes were destroyed by interference of early settlement. Being poorly productive, the then flat land was allowed to revert to natural vegetation, and, where not yet destroyed by sand mining, is unique and distinctive.

The first portion visited contained very large banksia trees, a riot of Jacksonia scoparia in full golden glory, carpets of bright Hibbertia diffusa, and eriostemon now in the last stage of flowering. At this spot rain was constant and fairly heavy, so we did not explore in detail.

A little further away we plodded through an expanse of wet bush, thoroughly enjoying the finding of many terrestrial orchids - mainly 'flying duck' and 'sun' orchids and glossodia. The last named had virtually faded off, but later we found a brilliant patch of diuris commonly known as 'donkey' orchids.

There were many beautiful flowering shrubs. One - Philotheca salsolifolia - which is indigenous to the area was particularly showy with bluish-mauve blossom, and always seemed to be in close company with white Ricinocarpos pinifolius ('wedding bush'), and often with the pink Kunzea capitata. Various yellow pea flowers were plentifully scattered amongst the other colourings - dilwynea, pultenaea, davesias.

There was considerable variation in communities of trees and plants from main sandy areas to shale/clay land.

A very rare, small Boronia polygalifolia was also noted.

Areas visited were under threat of extended sand mining. It is understood that there is now a doubtful two year moratorium on this.

As specially unique, these small areas left should be preserved. They are also rich in bird life. In rainy weather not a great number were seen. A few noted were willy wagtail, black duck, grey thrush and striated pardelote.

On other land nearby we looked at the last remaining stand of Eucalyptus tereticornis, with some Eucalyptus amplifolia: noting also a lot of 'die back'

WEEDS WEEDS WEEDS

Is your garden a weed nursery? The spring rain has brought on a flourish of new seedlings - mainly weeds. This list (common and familiar names) may remind you of plants, often found in gardens, which pose great threat to our native bush. If you have any of these, how about removing them, disposing of them responsibly, and substituting hardy Australian (or non-aggressive exotic) species.

BITOU BUSH or BONESEED (dont let Besse catch you with one of these)

PRIVET - small-leaved

PRIVET - large-leaved

COREOPSIS

RHUS

CROFTON WEED

IVY

ASPARAGUS 'FERN'

LANTANA

PURPLE TOP

FIREWEED

CAPE IVY

BLACKBERRY

WANDERING JEW

PLANTAIN

WILD STRAWBERRY

KIKUYU

PADDY LUCERNE

CAMPHOR LAUREL

RADIATA PINE

DANDELION

WILD OLIVE

COTONEASTER

CASSIA

HONEYSUCKLE VINE

TRUMPET LILY

PAMPAS GRASS

GINGER LILY

POTATO VINE

BABY SMILAX

CREeping BUTTERCUP

RIBBON PLANT

CAPEWEED

WATSONIAS

JACARANDA

MOTHER OF MILLIONS and other cacti

MADEIRA VINE (lambs' tails)

BLACK-EYED SUSAN (thunbergia)

TREE OF HEAVEN

FALSE ACACIA

OCHNA (bird's eye bush, mickey mouse)

JASMINE

BLOWFLY GRASS (larger shivery grass)

STICKTIGHTS (farmers friend, cobblers pegs)

MORNING GLORY

MOTH PLANT

VETCH (narrow-leaf)

FISHBONE FERN

JAPANESE KNOTWEED

CATSEAR (flatweed, dandelion)

OXALIS (sorrels)

FLEABANE (cobblers pegs)

This list is by no means complete, but a lot of the more aggressive and invasive plants are mentioned.

NEWSLETTER PRINTING

Special thanks are overdue for our printer, Bill. He has been sympathetic to our cause, efficient, accommodating, and expert.

CHRISTMAS SHOPPING?

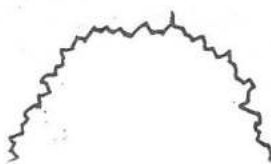
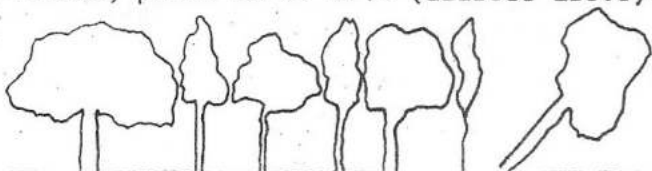
There are some absolutely wonderful gift ideas available at A.C.F. and T.E.C., both in the Argyle Centre, 18 Argyle Street, The Rocks - books, calendars, diaries, T-shirts, puppets, sweatshirts, T-towels, bags, notepaper, cards. Atlast there is a range of quality products which carry the message, help the cause and still manage to look GOOD.

Other Christmas shopping stops are The Wilderness Centre, 362 Pitt Street (near Central), and The Environment Centre, 57 Wentworth Avenue, Surry Hills.

PROTECT OUR NATIVE FORESTS

Canopy, the T.E.C. native forests committee, is stepping up its woodchip campaign. Their intention is to bring an end to the woodchip industry, except those using genuine sawmill wastes or timber from plantation forests grown on lands other than those occupied by Australia's remaining native forests.

If you wish to join in the fight against the woodchip travesty, contact Canopy at T.E.C., phone 02-27 4714 (address above).



LBMCS ACTIVITIES

We have been very busy lately. Here are some of our recent involvements:

- mapping environmentally fragile zones for the Blue Mountains Environment Plan,
- informing many State Members of our support for Kevin Rozzoli's Private Member's Bill on the Hawkesbury-Nepean River Authority,
- further support of the Jenolan Caves Protection Committee actions,
- monitoring and submission re the zoning change proposal by BMCC,
- requesting and achieving removal of a disused RAAF sewerage plant,
- planning of walks for the Glenbrook Spring Festival,
- proposal for a 530A committee for the eastern escarpment,
- continuing work on the Florabella Pass and Faulconbridge Mallee park/reserve proposals,
- initiating of action on preserving the boronia fields at Linden,
- involvement in the black cockatoo survey,
- collaborating on the initiating of the Blue Mountains Environment Centre,
- planning of our 1986 activities (walks, speakers, excursions),
- assistance to the Blue Mountains community radio station,
- support for the Anti-woolshed action group, by donation,
- assistance to the MWS&DB of native seeds supplies,
- letter of support for TEC's Tantanawangalo National Park proposal,
- discussions with BMCC concerning refuse disposal,
- various walks in areas of concern, Florabella Pass, Agnes Banks, Linden boronia fields, eastern escarpment (the community were invited to this),
- numerous letters (suggestions and requests for information) on issues like the weeding of the banks of the Nepean at Penrith (as a Bi-centennial project for Penrith City Council), landscaping of the F4 extension up the eastern escarpment, rainforest remnants on the Liverpool Range, inquiry into the mining and tourism potential of Kakadu National Park.

HOME SWEET HOME

As I mentioned earlier, the Environment Centre of N.S.W. has found a new home.

At the Nature Conservation Council annual conference Bob Carr announced the offer of a free-standing Victorian building at 176 Cumberland Street, The Rocks. This offer was accepted by acclamation. The future address is only a few hundred metres from TEC and the National Trust, which seems appropriate.

In the meantime I remind you that NCC and the Environment Centre of NSW are residing at 57 Wentworth Avenue, Surry Hills. Their phone number is 02-211 5366.

POSTCARD

Aleen has received news of the Godfreys. They have settled in and are happy but homesick. Wendy said the work presents great challenge and interest. They send thoughts to the LBMCS.

BOOK BROWSING OR BUYING?

The TEC Book Fair will run for a month from Saturday 23 November to Tuesday 24 December. During this time the Centre will be open 10.30 am to 5 pm weekdays and 1 pm to 5 pm weekends. Don't miss it.

AUSTRALIA'S ALPINE AREAS: MANAGEMENT FOR CONSERVATION

This is the title for a conference being organised for 30 November, 1 December. Details are available from NPA of ACT, G.P.O. Box 457, Canberra, 2601.

CONSERVATION SNIPPETS - not many this issue (the editor's been busy!)

* The Mount Werong and Narrow Neck areas were welcome additions to the Blue Mountains National Park. The Mount Werong area is thus saved from clear-felling by the Forestry Commission, atleast until there is a change of government. Leura was not saved from the Resort though as the new Park boundary took a sudden deviation around this area.

* A.C.F. has issued the goal of establishing an Antarctic World Wilderness Park. The area would provide zones for scientific investigation, tourism, bases, fisheries, but with preservation of wilderness values the highest priority.

* Tasmania continues its vandalistic record with the announcement that atleast \$2M of dam compensation money will be spent on mineral exploration. They already have the highest expenditure on mineral exploration per area of any state. Gray's future plans include exploiting the World Heritage Area for mineral resource development.

Also, Cradle Mountain - Lake St Clair National Park will be further taxed by the construction of private huts. They are probably underway already.

* The Hunter Wetlands Trust is proposing to establish a visitors centre on the Hunter estuary at Shortland. This centre would aid the promotion of study, conservation, education of wetlands and their fauna and flora. They need help by donation of course, and you could send this to the Treasurer, Hunter Wetlands Trust, P.O. Box 130, Wallsend, 2287.

A.T.C.V.

The Australian Trust for Conservation Volunteers have been active in our area lately. Their voluntary muscle has been at work on 'Darks Common', Skarratt Park and the Valley of the Waters. They have been weeding mainly, as well as reconstructing and clearing tracks. We thank them, and hope to see more of these masochists in the near future.

A.C.F. MEETING Tuesday 19 November at 7 pm

AUSTRALIAN WORLD HERITAGE AREAS films and discussion at the Hallstrom Theatre, Australian Museum, corner William and College Streets (enter from William Street)

LBMCS GATHERINGS - note gatherings, not meetings!

Friday 13 December 7.30 pm at the Springwood Pre-school, Macquarie Road (Sydney end), Springwood. Check the Gazette for topic.

As usual, there will not be a January gathering, but there will be a workshop.

Friday 14 February 7.30 pm at Glenbrook Teachers Centre, Infants School, opposite the tennis courts near Glenbrook shops: Margaret Esson will show slides, and talk about the geological history of the eastern escarpment. This will probably be followed by a forum on the threats to this area.

NOTE all members and non-members are always welcome at these gatherings.

LBMCS WORKSHOPS

Monday 25 November 7.30 pm

Monday 30 December 7.30 pm check with the contacts for meeting places or changes

Monday 27 January 7.30 pm



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P.O. Box 119
Springwood 2777.

Dear Aileen

It's membership renewal time again.

The fees are still \$5 for individuals and \$7 for families.
Or, if you would like to become a Life Member, this costs \$40.

We do depend on your subscriptions to continue the growing conservation struggle. So, please rejoin - it's so cheap, too.

If you'd like to be a little more involved, additional help is always welcome - like letter writing, meeting attendance (they're entertaining and informative, you know).

We look forward to your continuing support.

Sincerely
Sue Threlfo
L.B.M.C.S. Membership Secretary.

Name(s): _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____ Code: _____
Amount enclosed: \$ _____

Aleen