

# Lower Mountains Eco-News



Newsletter of the  
Lower Blue Mountains  
Conservation Society

March - May (1989)



## Aims

Education of the public on  
Environmental issues  
Conservation of natural areas  
Research into distribution and population  
of flora and fauna in the Blue Mountains

## Policies

Currently being compiled for printing  
Will be available to members and the  
media

## Memberships

Blue Mountains Environment Council  
Nature Conservation Council of NSW  
Australian Conservation Foundation  
National Parks Association (NSW)  
Australian Museum  
Upper Blue Mountains Conservation Society  
National Parks and Wildlife Foundation  
The Wilderness Society (NSW)  
The Western Sydney Network of Environmental  
Organisations  
The Total Environment Centre

## Other Group Involvement

Society for Growing Australian Plants (Blue  
Mountains Branch)  
Glenbrook Lagoon Society  
Eastern Escarpment "530A" Committee  
Darks Common Trust  
Nepean River Committee  
Escarpment Protection Group  
Echo Point  
The Colong Foundation (Inc)

## Society Contacts

President:	Richard Phillips (39-2568)
Vice-Presidents:	Margaret Eason (51-1826)
	Chris Cleary (39-5154)
Secretary:	George Threlfo (39-5125)
Publicity Officer:	George Threlfo (39-5125)
Treasurer:	Eileen Brammall (39-6420)
Librarian:	Wynne O'Brien (58-6504)
Editor:	Warren Ramage (54-2019)
Walks Organiser:	Peter Mobbs (51-2884)
Talks Organiser:	Peter Kell (39-4875)
General Enquiries:	Aleen Hanley (39-4079)

## Editorial

As the New Year rolls along, we again see just how effective those New Year's Resolutions are, especially emanating from Canberra and Macquarie Street. Its becoming obvious in both places that we have a Government in Shorts. Short-sighted, Short-term, Short-changing.

It is evident that the Conservation lobby is still embroiled in a number of contentious issues, caused by NSW Inc and the Right Wing Laboural Party in Canberra.

Ah !! The good old days when a Labour voter knew that his vote could stop a dam or save a park. No more though. The present Federal legislators are determined to sell off as much of the national estate in the shortest possible time, for the short term economic gains reflected in next quarters balance of payments figures. Psssst... wanna buy a woodchip reeeel cheap????

Having mentioned woodchips, the three card trick pulled by the Tasmanian Government to destroy some of the last vestiges of sub-Antarctic rain-forest, should take the breath away of every thinking Australian. Since when was an Environmental Impact Statement merely, quote, "...goals which we hope can be met..." (emphasis mine - Ed.) some time in the distant future. With the destruction of some millions of tonnes of Eucalypt forest annually, and lethal Dioxins being flushed down Bass Strait, we Conservation Groups MUST very quickly formulate a viable, united policy on all areas of "resource utilisation" (alternatively known as ecological rape). Otherwise, what have we got? A poisoned sullage pit surrounding a dust bowl.

Enough depression for the first issue of the year. The Society itself is gearing up for what promises to be an exciting year. Battles here, walks there and interesting talks at the meetings. Don't forget, the monthly meetings are now being held at the Springwood Neighbourhood Centre. The first for the year is on the 10th of February.



## Society Activities

1. Garage Sale. Connie and Zoe hosted our latest garage sale before Christmas with assistance from Peter Mobbs. \$ 120 was raised through the day.
2. A Community Aid Fund Camp will be held in early March through the efforts of one of our members - Jean Jones. Further info. please phone 392187.
3. Bessie and Margaret continue their efforts against the dreaded Bitou Bush. They have recently been working on a large outbreak just beyond Kurrajong Heights. A large single plant was also recently found in a garden adjoining Dark's Common.
4. Representatives of the Lower and Upper Blue Mountains Conservation Societies and the local NPA were invited to an inspection of NPWS works to upgrade the Glenbrook-Woodford Trail. A fairly sensitive road upgrading is occurring (if that's possible) and there is no truth in any rumours that it marks the start of the fabled freeway through the southern side of the park.
5. LBMCS reps joined with the Glenbrook Centenary Committee, Springwood Historical Society and the Blue Mountains Branch of the National Trust to formulate a strategy on protecting the old railway building within the Glenbrook Ampol Garage. We are currently attempting to have an on-site meeting with Ampol reps. Incidentally the temporary protection has now been increased to an Interim Conservation Order.  
Of particular concern is the lack of any follow-up action by Blue Mountains City Council to implement a Local Environment Plan across the city with regard to its widely publicised (and expensive) Heritage Study. Chris Stickley contributed largely in its production. The soon to be exhibited Environment Management Plan will cover only the fringe areas of the towns and miss many of the built heritage. Can we wait for years until all towns are covered for items such as the Pilgrim Inn and Ampol Garage?
6. LBMCS reps. joined other mountains environmentalists on Saturday last on a relaxing and very enjoyable walk down Shaw's Creek Gorge at Winmalee with Bob Carr and Bob Debus. Many issues were discussed in an informal manner.
7. George Threlfo represented the Society at a meeting last Monday with Pam Allan, the Shadow Environment Minister to discuss the continuing speedboat issue in National Park waters. She will also be participating in a paddle up the river in a canoe next week.
8. The Inquiry into Agnes Banks has concluded with a recommendation to the Minister that about 85 % of the area should be permanently protected.
9. We were hoping that good news on clearing of cars in Mitchell's Pass and changes in the status of lands near Lapstone Tunnel would be forthcoming from the Local Member, Guy Mathieson. Let's hope that something positive can be reported by next meeting.
10. The Eastern Escarpment Committee expects to print its long awaited walking map of the escarpment before the end of this month (at long last !!)



## **AEROSOL** CONTRACT PACKERS

ALL AEROSOL CANS ARE NOT HARMFUL TO THE OZONE LAYER. ONLY CHLOROFLUORO-CARBONS (CFC'S) ARE CONSIDERED SO! ONLY A FEW PRODUCTS ARE NOW HARMFUL TO OUR ENVIRONMENT, SO CHECK THE BACK OF THE CAN. HYDROCARBON, CO<sub>2</sub>, DIMETHYL ETHER ARE OZONE FRIENDLY. BUY THEM WITH CONFIDENCE.

Australia is a world leader in the banning of chlorofluorocarbons as a propellant in aerosol cans. Our Company has always favoured alternative propellants, not only because of ecological reasons, but also due to the fact that non-CFC propellants are also cost effective.

On the 1st November, 1988, Aerosol Packers ceased totally to use CFC's as a propellant, an action that, in fact, cost this Company several hundred thousand dollars in lost business per annum, but, as we see it, it is a small cost to pay to be able to say that we are probably the first aerosol contract packer to cease totally using chlorofluorocarbons and protect our environment.

In the coming year, we will produce approximately 35 million aerosol cans. This is about 20% of the total production in Australia. These cans may be used with confidence.

### Re: Consumer boycott of unethical exploitative Australian companies

The North Coast Environment Council is currently defending public open space, wetlands and rare rainforests under attack from development at Fingal Head.

As part of this campaign we are attempting to bring some economic pressure to bear on financial institutions and business organisations which are funding these exploitative destructive developments.

We wish to pursue the 'consumer power' ethos of refusing to use, buy, trade, invest or otherwise deal with unethical companies. We propose to use this strategy to target companies involved in the development at Fingal Head in the Tweed Shire, NSW.  
(See list on attached sheet.)

This strategy is simply outlined in The Australian Non-Buyers Guide, a compendium of unethical or exploitative companies trading in Australia, published by the Rainforest Information Centre, P.O. Box 368, Lismore.2480.

Please consider the broad implications of this 'consumer power' campaign in the long term and act now to launch a strategy that can be effective in re-aligning our economic activity to rational sustainable principles.

#### FINGAL TARGET COMPANIES

National Mutual  
Mercantile Credits  
Ocean Blue Resorts P/L  
Travel Scene P/L  
Adco P/L  
Planners North



# Don't buy rainforest timbers



# They cost the earth!

## EARTHWORM

Keen on learning all the recent developments in conservation and the environment? Then don't miss the ABC Radio programme EARTHWORM.

This fine programme features interviews and specials from respected people in the scientific and environment conscious community, and often puts the not so conscious sections of politics and business in the hot seat.

You can catch it every Wednesday on 2FC (576 khz) at 5.30 pm, or hear it repeated on 2BL (702 khz) and all regionals at 7.03 pm, after the 7.00 news in brief. Well worth a half-hour listen.

## COMING EVENTS

March Monthly Meeting will be addressed by Mr Stuart James from the Friends of the Blue Mountains Group. This promises to be an interesting and informative talk on our local area and issues.

February 22nd has Milo Dunphy addressing the meeting to re-form the Wilderness Society Branch in the Mountains. Milo is an extremely interesting speaker and should provide an entertaining and informative talk. Contact George Threlfo for further details on (047) 39 5125.

February 24th at the Katoomba Council Chambers, 8.00 pm, will see the leading light of the "Green Ban" wars of the sixties and seventies, Jack Mundey, giving a talk. The topic of his talk will be "Natural and built environment - equal values". The Katoomba Branch of the ACF have invited Jack to address their Annual General Meeting, and will be providing refreshments. Should be an exciting night.



## Feature Article

Reprinted from Sydney Morning Herald  
27/12/88

In the future, when the Big Inquisition is on to find out who strangled the Earth's atmosphere with greenhouse gases, how will you plead?

The charge is serious. Australians are well represented amongst the accused. Per Capita, we produce **FOUR TIMES** the world average of greenhouse gases.

The charges are: that you, the Citizen Family, did willingly and knowingly drive a six cylinder car in a poor state of tune with a leaky air-conditioner, did not use solar hot water heating, were known to have used a variety of aerosol sprays, ate red meat regularly, and ignored your local council's recycling programme.

"But, Your Honour," you say in unison, "We never realised that....". Comes the reply, "Guilty as charged. Ignorance is no defense."

In 1988, concern for the growing Greenhouse Effect has come in from the fringes of scientific debate. The lifestyles of the bulk of the population is now being held partly responsible for the thick blanket of these gases now enveloping the Earth.

What can be done? The average family sedan produces three tonnes of carbon dioxide per year. If it has an air-conditioner, add fluorocarbons leaked out of rubber hoses.

Electricity. Most of Sydney's power is produced in coal fired power stations. These spew out tonnes of carbon dioxide daily. One single bar radiator left on for only one hour dumps two kilograms of CO<sub>2</sub> into our fragile atmosphere.

We all know about red meat and cholesterol, but consider this. Grazing animals are inefficient protein producers. Cereal and vegetable crops make much better use of available land, and pro-

duce more protein for the same area. Some conservationists argue that if a fraction of grazing was returned to tree cultivation, the greenhouse effect would be eliminated within 50 years.

80% of council's have recycling programmes of some type. Only 20-25% of us use them. Separate your garbage (glass and paper in the mountains -ed.) and reduce the energy required for new products.



### IN SHORT

- \* USE PUBLIC TRANSPORT OR GET A SMALLER CAR
- \* TURN OFF THE LIGHT AND USE SOLAR HEATING
- \* AVOID AEROSOL CANS. USE PUMP ACTION TYPES
- \* CUT BACK ON PRE-PACKAGED GOODS AND RED MEAT

( Condensed by Sue Hutchins )



SMH

Thursday, December 29, 1988 9

# Violent death may not have been in vain

**TOM WICKER**  
NEW YORK

**T**HE shot that killed Francisco Mendes Filho last week in Brazil may not have been heard round the world, but his violent death may at least further alert global authorities to the dangers of deforestation. He fought this environmental abuse so effectively that he was probably murdered by the land exploiters he opposed.

Mendes was a founder of the union of rubber tappers, whose traditional — and environmentally sound — way of life in the Amazon jungle was threatened by indiscriminate land clearance.

At his death, he was the most prominent leader of the rubber tappers, the recognised national spokesman for their interests and the recipient of a United Nations award for his work in forest protection.

His life had been threatened, he said recently, by local landowners, and on Monday, the son of one of them claimed to have hired the killer.

Such violence is not unusual in the remote regions of the Amazon, and Mendes had made enemies through his determined battle against further destruction of the tropical forest. He and his followers were credited with saving thousands of hectares from the bulldozer.

But far more of Brazil's rich tropical forest is gone forever — lost not just to the rubber tappers who "harvested" it without damaging or exploiting it, but to the wildlife whose habitat and ecosystems have been destroyed, to the food and timber uses it might have served and to populations all over the world who depend on the chlorophyllous action of plants and trees to keep the earth's atmosphere from excessive pollution.

That dependence is rapidly becoming precarious. In the first half of the 21st century, carbon dioxide concentration in the air will be about double that of pre-industrial times; that will contribute heavily to the "greenhouse effect", which is expected to raise the earth's temperatures.



George Bush... conservation must be a priority.

Francisco Mendes thus fought not only the rubber tappers' battle, but the whole planet's. Moreover, the assault to which he responded in the far-off jungles of the Amazon was not merely the product of shortsighted Brazilian development policies. It resulted also from the rising demand in the United States for cheap beef. Pasture-fed cattle from Latin America were an economical alternative to local grain-fed beef.

So Brazil embarked on a self-destructive course: tax credits, exemptions and deductions, as well as subsidised loans, for private entrepreneurs to invest in cattle ranching. Inevitably, these economic seductions led to the large-scale conversion of forest land to pasture — though the forest was far more valuable, inherently and perhaps even economically.

Between 1965 and 1983, 469 large cattle ranches, averaging 23,000 hectares each, were established in the Amazon region. Twenty-five per cent of this land was cleared by 1983.

Brazil is by no means the only offender.

Every year, throughout the world, about 11 million acres of tropical forests and woodlands are destroyed — mostly to clear land for agriculture to feed growing populations, or to supply exchange-earning exports. At present rates of loss, by the year 2017, several countries will have destroyed all their forests: Nigeria, the Ivory Coast, Sri Lanka, Costa Rica, El Salvador.

Thus the kind of fight that Mendes waged literally to his death was of concern far beyond the Amazon — as are ozone depletion, acid rain, toxic wastes, desertification, ocean spoilage, diminishing resources, rising population and other impending crises.

No more serious problems face George Bush as he prepares to become President of the United States, with all the influence that office can exert on world development and conservation practices.

He has made a good start with his nomination of William Reilly to head the Environmental Protection Agency. But even so experienced an environmentalist can have real impact on these global problems only if they are given the highest priority by a President as determined. In his way, as Francisco Mendes Filho was, in his,

*The New York Times*

## NEW MEETING PLACE

From the 10th February, the Society's regular monthly meeting will be held in the Neighbourhood Centre Macquarie Rd Springwood



THE SOUTH-EAST WOODCHIP ISSUE - SOME PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS.

We visited Eden over Christmas. It was our first exposure, close up, to the logging industry and you cant ignore it. Trucks thunder past with alarming regularity, loaded with logs or wood chips, posters adorn shop windows pushing the logging cause, bushfire reports on the radio are "proudly sponsored by Harriss-Daishowa", paintings in the Fisherman's Club donated by the same company, a logging display at the Whaling Museum and, across the bay, the furnace of the chip mill dominating the horizon.

To get to the mill you drive through forest sign-posted to indicate when it was logged. The grounds of the mill's Visitor's Centre are landscaped with Australian native plants and the promotional video running inside features close-ups of birds and animals all enjoying their logged habitat. The whole emphasis of the Centre is on the "benefits" of logging and the "environmentally sound" methods used. The arguments are the same. They're shallow but probably sound quite reasonable to a lot of the public: improved access to forests, fewer bushfires, increases in some native animals and the usual focus on "gum trees" without any consideration of ecosystems or the interdependence and complexity of nature. In fact, if you believe their PR blurb, you have to wonder how Mother Nature ever managed before the advent of Harriss-Daishowa. The visitor's book attests to the controversial nature of the industry with some lengthy (and fiery) comments.

Around town you're constantly reminded that wood-chipping is the areas biggest industry, and of all the "improvements" it's brought. We asked a localshopkeeper where we could do some bushwalking and were immediately met with the response, "You're not Greenies are you?".

Our waitress in a restaraunt told us how a friend who worked on the oil rigs had been layed off because of a dispute with the "greenies", "Imagine the damage they're causing down there!".

In Eden, if you want a happy holiday, you keep your political views to yourself.

Perhaps we'd feel a little better if this destruction of our forests was for some vital purpose but the bottom line is that our trees are being felled for the Japanese to make paper.

With its long history of whaling, and the present day wood-chipping indusry, Eden is not a comfortable place for anyone with an environmental conscience.

Sue Hutchins