



APRIL, MAY, JUNE 1991

Lower Mountains Eco-News

NEWSLETTER OF THE LOWER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY

RETURN ADDRESS:
LBMCS
P.O. BOX 119
SPRINGWOOD 2777



Notice of Meetings

GENERAL MEETINGS (bi-monthly)

Held at the Neighbourhood Centre, Springwood, at 7.30pm:

APRIL 12: Peter Bliss - Trekking in Nepal - Superb slides taken on a recent trek through a newly opened walking area in Nepal.

June 14: John Low - Local History & Conservation.

Speakers for General Meetings on 9th August and 11th October to be Advised.

NO BUSHWALKS PLANNED. Please advise if you would like some arranged.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Fri. 10th May	(Springwood)
Tues. 11th June	(Glenbrook)
Fri. 12th July	(Springwood)
Tues. 13th Aug.	(Glenbrook)
Fri. 13th Sept.	(Springwood)
Tues. 8th Oct.	(Glenbrook)
Fri. 8th Nov.	(Springwood)
Tues. 10th Dec.	(Glenbrook)

Aims

To inform the public on environmental and conservation issues; research into population and distribution of flora and fauna in the Blue Mountains and neighbouring regions.

Memberships

Blue Mountains Environment Council
Nature Conservation Council of NSW
Australian Conservation Foundation

Other Group Involvement

Society for Growing Australian Plants (Blue Mountains Branch)
National Parks Association (NSW)
Australian Museum
Upper Blue Mountains Conservation Society
National Parks and Wildlife Foundation
The Wilderness Society (NSW)
C.H.A.N.G.E.
The Total Environment Centre

Glenbrook Lagoon Society
Eastern Escarpment '530A' Committee
Darks Common Trust
Nepean River Committee
The Colong Foundation (Inc)

Society Contacts

President: Margaret Baker (54-1196)
V. Presidents: Richard Phillipps (39-2568)
Margaret Eason (51-1826)
Secretary: George Threlfo (39-5125)
Publicity Officer: George Threlfo
Editors (acting):
Eileen Brammall, Aileen Hanley
Treasurer: Eileen Brammall (39-6420)
Librarian: Wynne O'Brien (58-6504)
Gen. Enquiries and Talks
Organiser: Aileen Hanley (39-4079)

Secretary's Report :

1. Urban Bushland Seminar. A most successful day was recently held at the University of Western Sydney. The seminar was arranged by the Urban Bushland sub-committee of the Nature Conservation Council in concert with our Society. Before he left for his overseas trip, Richard Phillipps arranged the venue and facilities and we thank him and UWS for their generosity. Participants travelled from as far afield as the Central Coast and Canberra to hear a variety of speakers provide a wealth of information about the current situation regarding protection of remnant natural areas. The mountains were well represented and listened with particular interest to those speakers concentrating on restoration measures. NCC head Judy Messer revealed that a follow-up study of Western Sydney bushland has now been completed and will shortly be published.
2. Londonderry Decision. A most amazing turn of events has seen the Londonderry tip area being given over to a natural recreational area. This came about through the combined efforts of residents, environmentalists, the Member for Londonderry and Penrith Council. Our Society was closely involved in this and related issues from the outset with Margaret Baker's valuable contribution not publicly recognised. A GOLD STAR AWARD is in order !
3. Winmalee Powerline. After our Society's earlier efforts and involvement in activating the local community, we have purposely stepped out of the action. The POWER group has shown itself to be professionally led by Liz Harrison with excellent support from a number of other people. All interested residents are currently producing submissions for the Ministerial Inquiry (including a brief supporting submission to POWER from our Society). At the very least, we are anticipating a new EIS will be prepared canvassing all options rather than the superficial and flawed approach taken by Prospect previously which so insulted the community. Good work POWER and keep it up !
4. Commonwealth Resource Legislation. Environment groups around the country are rightly concerned about the Federal Cabinet's decision to guarantee the forestry industry an ongoing supply of native forest timber to feed current and planned woodchip mills. The industry's evident pleasure at such an agreement is a sure sign that our native flora and fauna will be the big losers. Please write to the Prime Minister, Minister for the Environment, Mrs. Ros. Kelly and local Federal Members Ross Free and Alastair Webster expressing your displeasure and seeking a re-negotiation of this matter with an emphasis on the timber industry growing and using its own timber from its own plantations.
5. GOLD. Glenbrook residents have alerted us to plans by Landcom to develop a large area of Crown land south of Glenbrook Station. The area is adjacent to the National Park, has an extreme fire risk, poor access, difficulties in providing services and contains both aboriginal and European heritage sites. A public meeting is planned for Wednesday, 17 April at Glenbrook - please come !

Environmental Management Plan - A BMCC Fantasy.....

In September 1990 the Blue Mountains City Council re-exhibited the **Blue Mountains Environmental Management Plan Stage 1: Draft Local Environmental Plan (EMP 1)**. Members of the LBMCS viewed and assessed the Plan in the light of our submissions on the first exhibition and on Commissioner Simpsons public enquiry into the Plan. We found the new draft seriously wanting.

The purpose of this Plan, as stated on page 1 of the re-exhibition document, *is to realise a vision of the Mountains as a place of exceptional environmental and aesthetic quality for both residents and visitors.* Furthermore, it aims to ensure *the protection of the unique natural and cultural environment of the Blue Mountains.*

We have found however significant differences between the fine aims and objectives of the Plan and its actual implementation. We obviously attach different meanings to the words *Environmental Management* than do members of the Blue Mountains City Council. *Grand Development Plan* would be more appropriate for some parts of the Mountains.

In reality the Plan involves a re-zoning of land now zoned rural within the City of the Blue Mountains. This re-zoning covers land parcels which vary in size from small to large acreages. In many cases major subdivisions of these blocks are proposed. These re-zonings and subdivisions will provide many more housing blocks, plus a few token industrial 'estates' on the fringes of existing settlements. Commissioner Simpson recommended against the subdivision of rural blocks and the extension of the housing sprawl. He has been ignored. Population numbers and densities will increase with obvious impacts on our total environment. Our unique region is under serious threat.

Members of the Society again wrote lengthy submissions covering the area from Faulconbridge to Hawkesbury Heights to Lapstone. We again opposed many re-zonings and subdivisions which had appeared on the original Plan, and argued for the alteration of other changes which appeared on the re-exhibited Plan.

A number of our members, including Margaret Esson, Mark Baker and George Threlfo, were among others invited to speak about particular re-zonings on behalf of the Society and of residents at special BMCC meetings in November 1990. Being residents, not developers, their arguments were all but ignored.

From these meetings came evidence that other re-zonings were intended and that these changes would not be placed on public exhibition as required under Section 66 of the Environmental Planning and Assess-

ment Act 1979. It quickly became very obvious to us that Ward 3, which extends from Faulconbridge to Hawkesbury Heights, had been targeted for extensive development - some proposals were evident on the re-exhibited plan, but too many others escaped the requirement for public scrutiny and were passed by the aldermen.

The latter includes land in east Shirlow Avenue and off Muriel Street, Faulconbridge where subdivisions will allow 8 house per hectare. These developments will impact on Faulconbridge Mallee communities which have been recommended for conservation by the Heritage Council. The integrity of the Eastern Escarpment at Hawkesbury Heights is also under threat from an undisplayed subdivision. Here, a 75 acre lot in Roberts Parade is proposed to be divided into three which will allow among other things, extensive tourist cabin development. It was recently advertised for auction with the attraction being its international tourist development potential!

Working with the Faulconbridge Residents Association, Margaret Esson then compiled a list of 16 of the original 22 aims and objectives of the Plan which had been violated in Faulconbridge by the current proposals. I added examples from Winmalee, Yellow Rock and Hawkesbury Heights and a document was produced which we forwarded to, among others, the Minister for Planning and the Department of Planning. Some of our concerns which include damage to catchment headwaters, extensive clearing of pristine bushland, elimination of land-between town buffers, loss of scientific, educational and recreational values, and building in bushfire-prone areas, and where there are no services were voiced at a meeting with the Department of Planning at Parramatta on the 20th March.

The Blue Mountains Gazette then generously gave us a three page coverage in its March 26th issue. That article provides a clear summary of many of our objections and we refer you to it. Planning maps and documents will be available at our next General Meeting on the 12th April.

This contentious Plan is now awaiting gazettal by the Minister for Planning, Mr Hay. We ask for your support in writing to Mr Hay voicing your opposition particularly to proposals for Ward 3 as outlined in the **Local Environment Plan 1991** (as the document is now known) and calling for him to seek a revised and re-exhibited Plan which truly reflects the original aims and objectives of the LEP, the uniqueness of the environment and the quality of lifestyle of current residents.

Margaret Baker

WATER, WASTE

and ecological sustainability

Nature Conservation Council of NSW

Judy Messer, Chairperson

Ecological sustainability is clearly the necessary precondition for a sustainable economy over the long term. Since the early 1970's the Nature Conservation Council's policies have called for less and more efficient use of NSW's natural resources, for waste control at the source, and for re-use and recycling in preference to end-of-pipe/stack/landfill solutions.

However, the conversion of a whole society to ecologically sustainable practices is a very complex process. It requires government to set mandatory targets for pollution reduction and natural resource conservation. It will be obstructed by various interest groups unless the community as a whole is kept fully informed and is allowed to play a pro-active role in environmental decision-making.

The management of NSW water resources and industrial and sewerage wastes illustrates the choices confronting decision-makers and the community.

Water Pricing

The demand for water will increase so long as State and Federal Government policies promote population growth in the Sydney region, resulting in the expansion of Warragamba Dam or a new one at Welcome Reef. Either solution will

have major impacts on the environment and the taxpayers. In spite of this undesirable scenario, water conservation and re-use is still a virtual non-event in the Sydney region.

This is because water is underpriced. Domestic consumers are subsidised by industry. This results in the profligate use of high quality drinking water for gardens, swimming pools, and car washing. Industry and commerce also use this high quality water.

The Nature Conservation Council believes that the price of water should be raised to a level that will discourage inappropriate usage of drinking quality water while encouraging on-site 'water harvesting' and re-use systems. Cross subsidies should be abolished. Reduced water usage should be rewarded.

Sewage Disposal

Sewage disposal is an unremitting problem for all communities, but sewage contaminated by toxic substances creates extra environmental, management and financial problems.

The public has rightly focussed on the causal role of industry and government. However, the domestic community has done little to reduce its contribution of toxics, plastics, nutrients such as phosphorus.

This means that while the sewage from 23 inland plants can be composted, much of Sydney's sludge cannot be applied to the land without restriction. Incineration and co-generation would merely shift the polluted sludge effects from the ocean or land to the air, and polluted liquid effluent still goes into the rivers and ocean.

The Nature Conservation Council calls for:

- ** no discharge of liquid wastes to wetlands, creeks, rivers or the ocean if harm will result to human health or natural ecosystems (based on Class 0 standard of the Clean Waters Act).
- ** sludge discharge into the ocean from Bondi, Malabar, and North Head to cease by 1992;
- ** no new ocean outfalls, or existing off-shore outfalls extensions to deep-water outfalls;
- ** no incineration or co-generation of sludge contaminated by toxic substances;
- ** the preferred use of sludge for compost and fertilizer production.

Throughout the world, environmental waste management is creating new industries and jobs. Australia is at the leading edge with some technologies.

The transition to true-cost water pricing and environmentally safe water supply and waste management systems would generate many value-added activities in the public and private sectors.

All candidates in the forthcoming NSW elections should be strongly urged to support the above policies.

**Support the Lower Blue Mountains Conservation Society
and buy your books from our stall at the Ivy Market**

Springwood Civic Centre, 2nd Saturday of every month except
January, and two markets in November, 8.30am - 12.30pm

We sell new books on the Blue Mountains, Australian native plants and animals,
bushwalking, conservation and related titles. If the book you want
isn't there on the day we can generally obtain it for you.



GARAGE SALE GARAGE SALE GARAGE SALE

AT 7 DAVID STREET, GLENBROOK

ON SATURDAY 20TH, SUNDAY 21ST APRIL

Thanks to members who donated so many items (record player, books, suitcases, folding bed, coffee maker, bric-a-brac, native plants - **ALL BARGAINS!**)

Turn off the highway at Glenbrook lights, go to top of Hare Street, turn right into Levy Street, left into David Street.

Come along! We may have the very thing you've been looking for

EXCURSION

MULGOA - PROPOSED NATURE RESERVE

Sunday 4 August 1991, 10.30am.

Meet at the main roundabout, Glenmore Park Estate, Regentville, reached following the Mulgoa exit of the western freeway F4..

Another for the walkers among us, this walk is about 5km through undulating woodland and grassland. George Threlfo of the Lower Blue Mountains Conservation Society will accompany us, as will an eminent naturalist. Mulgoa Nature Reserve proposal covers significant remnant tree stands on Wianamatta shales just south of Penrith. The begetation is quite different from that of the sandstone country and both the bird and vegetation communities have affinities with woodlands west of the Great Dividing Range. We will see three sections of the Reserve proposal including the ruins of 'Regentville', the house built by Sir John Jamison on his estate in the 19th century. We will enjoy lunch along the way.

BYO DRINKS AND CUPS DONATION TO TEC \$20

Contact TEC for bookings. For preference write to TEC Tours, 18 Argyle Street, Sydney, 2000. The telephone number is (02) 241 2523 or (02) 247 4714. Please send donation with booking.

Wanted Urgently

A Newsletter Editor for the Lower Blue Mountains Conservation Society.

Could you co-ordinate the compilation of four small newsletters a year?

If you would like to volunteer please contact
Margaret Baker 541196

A bouquet for fighters.
(reprinted from the
Penrith Press, 2.4.91)

The Lower Blue Mountains Conservation Society congratulates the people of Londonderry, Penrith Council and their many supporters in their victory against the State Government's proposal to locate a mega-tip in Londonderry.

Your tireless opposition has protected the lifestyle of residents and saved the 290ha of unique urban bushland, a valuable remnant of the mosaic of forests which once covered western Sydney.

Your campaign has high-lighted the deficiencies of waste management in this State and will bring about great changes in waste minimisation and disposal.

Margaret Baker

Letter publised in the Mountain Gazette on 13.3.91:

Sir. - Re the State Electoral Agenda - Blue Mountains 1991:

The following are broad Blue Mountains/environmental matters being pursued by our society and various State-wide environmental groups.

They should all be on the political agenda in the lead-up to the next State election and we would appreciate at this early stage the responses of all likely contenders to fulfilment of each of them:

1. Additions to Blue Mountains National Park:
 - (a) Nattai proposal - north of Mittagong;
 - (b) Gardens of Stone or Pagoda Lands proposal - north of Lithgow;
 - (c) All remaining Eastern Escarpment lands between Hawkesbury Lookout and Glenbrook Gorge;
 - (d) Proposed transfers of various lands under the care of Blue Mountains City Council for the Lands Department. These include areas at Mt Wilson, middle Mountains and Florabella Pass. What has happened to this proposal?
2. Wilderness declarations under the State Wilderness Act in the Kanangra-Boyd area.

Little money has been given by the State Government to process nominations across the State.

Under the Wilderness Act, they should be completed within two years. The Kanangra-Boyd issue wasn't even given to the Blue Mountains NPWS staff for 18 months. The two years limit was up last September.

3. Processing of a World Heritage nomination for the Blue Mountains region from the Hunter Valley to Goulburn.

We seek the support of the public to put these issued before all current State Members and other candidates.

GEORGE THRELFO

Lower Blue Mountains
Conservation Society.

HANDY HINTS FOR REDUCING POLLUTANTS IN THE HOME

In the Kitchen

All Purpose Cleaner: Mix 2 heaped tablespoons bicarb soda with 1 tablespoon white vinegar. Store in air tight container. For really stubborn spots use with an old toothbrush and scrub well.

Aluminium Pans: To shine, boil a mixture of vinegar and water in them.

Bench Tops and stainless steel sinks: Clean with plastic scourer and soap or bi-carb soda. Stubborn dried on spots can be soaked by leaving a sodden cloth on them for ten minutes and then wiping off.

Blocked Drains: Use rubber plunger to clean grease-blocked drains.

Brass: Shine with a loose paste of vinegar and salt.

Burnt Pots: Dissolve two teaspoons of bi-carb soda in water and bring to the boil in the saucepan. When cool, clean off with a scourer or steel wool.

Chrome: Polish with apple cider vinegar.

Copper: Using a soft cloth, rub with vinegar. Polish with a dry cloth.

Decanters and Vases: Clean with uncooked rice and a little tea with a few tea leaves, or clean with crushed egg shells and a little vinegar.

Dishwasher: Biodegradable dishwashing powders manufactured by Herbon and by Caring are now available in some health food stores. The use of conventional dishwashing detergents (that are not biodegradable) can be minimised by using washing soda each alternate wash. This way you use only half the amount of detergent while avoiding scum build-up, which can occur when using washing soda only.