JULY/AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 1995 ind conservation issues; research into

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Lower Mountains Eco-News

NEWSLETTER OF THE LOWER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY INC.

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RETURN ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 119 SPRINGWOOD 2777

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FRIDAY 28th JULY, 1995
FRIDAY 25th AUGUST, 1995
FRIDAY 22rd Communications FRIDAY 22nd SEPTEMBER, 1995 A.G.M. FRIDAY 27th OCTOBER, 1995

8.00 p.m. Springwood Neighbourhood Centre.

MONTHLY MEETINGS.....

Articles for the newsletter would be welcomed for the next issue of ECO-NEWS by Sept. 30th. Send to: P.O. Box 119 Springwood. 2777. NSW



Lower Blue Mountains Conservation Society

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

MEMBERSHIPS.
Australian Conservation Foundation Ltd.
Nature Conservation Council of NSW
Greening Australia (NSW)

OTHER GROUP INVOLVEMENT
Society for Growing Australian Plants
(Blue Mountains Branch.)
The Total Environment Centre
National Parks Association (NSW)
Upper Blue Mountains Conservation Society
WIRES
The Wilderness Society
CHANGE

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

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394079

The opinions expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the view of this Society.



Editorial.

Aleen kindly designed and worked on our display for World Environment Day held at Springwood Civic Centre at the beginning of June. Hugh Paterson dressed as a long weed monster scaring or amusing lots of little ones with his antics from a talking (Very loudly) plant. He was dressed in all manner of weeds, looking very much like our garden. Despite the cold overcast day, the numbers were reasonable, and we sold some books, magazines and had some donations. We welcome Joy and Fred Morrison as new members, who joined the society that day. Thank you to Besse and Aleen for spending the day there on our behalf, setting up and dismantling the display, and to Aleen for the inspiration and design of our display.

After my time on the stand I walked around the other displays, and was impressed by one personned by two school girls who had set up with a large aerial photograph and their own petition against a proposed residential subdivision of swamp land in the Yosemite area of North Katoomba. These swamps feed into the creeks that eventually flow into Govetts Creek. I was told that this subdivision is planned by Blue Mountains City Council.

Thank you to Besse Bramsen for the article on her trip to the National Parks of Western New South Wales and to Frank Winternitz for his "Green Tips" column.

With three months to the next AGM on 27th October, 1995, please give consideration to the direction of the Society, and the positions that need filling, including that of Editor. Next issue, I plan to present a potted history of our Society, and highlight the important work this society has contributed towards the environments of the Blue Mountains, and Australia, and to issues that affect us globally. I look forward to receiving your articles also.

Christine Stickley.







Milo Dunphy, looking rather monk-like in the photo from the Sydney Morning Herald (1/7/95), has been Director of the Total Environment Centre for the last 23 years. Milo is now taking on the position of Vice-president of the Colong Foundation for Wilderness, which he helped to set up in 1968. He now plans to concentrate on protecting wilderness areas as well as lobbying for the creation of new National Parks.

Milo has been long time Vice-president of the Australian Conservation Foundation, and is a lifetime honary member of the National Parks Association.

Without wanting to be too coy, (?) the Herald article by James Woodford, states that Milo Dunphy "is probably at least partly responsible for about half of the national park declarations in NSW in the last 20 years." Hurrah for Milo!

Milo is now recovering from three serious operations, and the Lower Blue Mountains Conservation Society wishes him a gentle recovery, and a triumphant return to enjoying the bushland he loves so much and to which he has dedicated his life to protect for us and future generations. Get Well Soon Milo.



Protection for the Lapstone Escarpment - at last?

The State Government has directed the National Parks and Wildlife Service to investigate adding an extra 13,000ha, including the eastern escarpment, to the Blue Mountains National Park. George Threlfo, the Society's Vice President, has worked for many years towards the protection of the Lapstone Escarpment in a National Park. Developers have been wanting to create further subdivisions on the slopes since the early 1980's, when this society lobbied Penrith City Council to stop a development of 37 houses.

Pam Allen, Minister for the Environment, said the NPWS is assessing areas proposed for the extensions, and will make recommendations to the government.

Bob Debus has said that "Sydney Water catchment lands at Blackheath, Katoomba, Woodford and the Kedumba Valley could also be valuable additions," states the Penrith Press (4.7.95.).

The process will include consultation with the Councils involved and the community. If these additions are approved, it will be another step towards an enhanced application for the Greater Blue Mountains to be placed on the World Heritage Listing.



Green Tips

As a long standing but inactive member of the Lower Blue Mountains Conservation Society, I could not but respond to the Editor's "cry from the heart" (Translated from the French original by the Ed.) and this column is the result. In it I hope to pass on information that is useful and topical.

* If you have a wood fire you also have wood ash, which far from being rubbish, is a valuable resource for the garden. Ash has an alkaline ph (our soils are mostly acid) and is rich in magnesium and calcium ions. These properties make it vital for scattering around trees and shrubs. Use it where ever dolomite or lime is recommended. Apple trees are especially appreciative. The "crunch" in your apple is dependent on adequate calcium in the apple's cell wall.

* If you have been looking skywards of late you may have noticed one of the great bird migrations in Australia. Or, maybe, like me, you were oblivious to it until it was pointed out

Yellow-faced and white-naped honeyeaters are flying north for winter in their thousands. Look for a bird just a bit bigger than a sparrow heading due north in flocks at or just below the tree level. Every now and again the bird gives an exuberant "Chip"; this being its contact call.

- * These honeyeaters are arriving from parts South and are here to partake of our winter nectar. This is a relatively scarce resource borne by only a few plants, Banksia ericifolia chief amongst them. The recent wildfires and hazard reductions have killed large numbers of this plant, it being highly fire sensitive. Whilst it is true some fires have caused the germination of thousands of banksia seedlings, it will be five or six years before they will produce significant quantities of nectar.
- * The Management Plan for the Blue Mountains National Park has been a curious affair. This document went through the usual stages display, public comment etc. but when it reached the Minister for the Environment, the Plan went no further. It was never adopted.

further. It was never adopted.

Rumour has it that the 4WD lobby objected to road closures and the Minister, being unable to reconcile competing interests, did nothing. It being five years now, a new management plan will need to be worked on again. Look

out for the same wrangles.

* One of the contentious road closures is that to Faulconbridge Point where after a series of destructive events - 4WD's creating side tracks, dumped cars, household waste disposal, firewood and bush rock collection, the National Parks Service put a gate in and locked it. The 4WD lobby are making it appear as if there were no constituency

for anything but driving in National Parks, whereas, in fact, since the road closure, there has been an upsurge in positive users - families walking, bicycles, bush walkers.

If you agree with the principle of gate closures, please write to the National Parks Service in Blackheath.



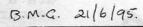
The Arches on Boddington Hill?

Whilst the Mountains might give us succour, do we need the breasts symbol on the top of Boddington Hill to welcome visitors into the true spirit of the Mountains. This DA for the proposal to locate a McDonalds Restaurant at the Brown Horse Inn Site at Wentworth Falls is on exhibition at the BMCC, Katoomba until 12th July. Submissions in writing will be accepted until 5.00pm Friday, 12th July.



The Local Government Elections, September 1995.

The Blue Mountains Wards Three and Four desperately need candidates standing for the environment to run in these Council elections which are around the corner. In the last elections, the "green" candidates played a very important role in preventing those with little concern for the environment obtaining enough votes to take office. Do you know anyone who would stand?





nvironment summit meeting

representatives of community summit in the Mountains.

"During the election campaign I promised to organise a

"I am inviting representa- Debus added. tives of resident action and

tains Bob Debus is inviting of commerce, the tourist present to maintain the charac-representatives of community association and others to a ter of the Mountains, and if we groups to a meeting on July 15 meeting to establish a steering want effective measures to to plan for an environment committee for a much larger contain such growth and meeting later in the year. preserve the natural environ-

Blue Mountains City Council summit where local people not least because the summit could discuss and influence : can act effectively to establish future planning and environ- a wide community consensus ment policy in the Moun- on the Draft Environment Plan tains," said Mr Debus. ----- of Management Stage 2," Mr

"Many people feel that not

State Member for Blue Moun- environment groups, chambers enough is being done at I will work closely with ment we need to establish the widest possible consensus about planning policy," Mr Debus said.

> Mr Debus added that groups interested in sending one or two representatives to the planning meeting would be welcome to contact his office.

The Sydney Morning Herald

1/7/95.

4	Australian Conservation Foundation	Total Environment Welf, D	The Wilderness Society 11 is 45 costs of year on a desiration of costs	National Parks Association	Nature Conservation Council	Greenpeace
suff =10	***	A G Y LOOK	A 10 1160-11	1 3 3 5 5 5 5	1 5	A425 A1
Budget	\$4m	\$250,000	\$295,560	\$419,459	\$\$300,000	\$6.5m
Grants Federal State	\$1,167,000	\$18,000 - stal	\$58,151 00 viet	1 \$22,926 di and	\$97,300 1 ASI \$45,000	NII FINE CAC - NIII
Membership ☐ 1995 ☐ 1990 ☐	16,787	1 ston 700 miles by the	111,000 or griss		100,000	90,000
Chief Executive Control of the Contr	Tricia Caswell	- Jeff Angel	Common Co			Midge Dunn



"A Western Safari" Part 1. by Besse Bramsen

Starting out on the "Mungo, Mootwingee, Kinchega" safari with "Go Bush Safaris, we spent the first night, wet, at Warren. It was an exploratory trip for John Sinclair - an eventful one. We dried out quite well the following day whilst exploring the Macquarie Marshes.

There we had as guide an employee of the Water Resources Commission and were privileged to have permission to enter some private lands. At one of the weirs in the North Marshes we saw a large European Carp - a specimen of the introduced fish that is denuding our waters of native amphibians and fish. After viewing weirs, canals and a fish ladder, we got into swamps -mostly dry. In drought, birds were not plentiful though we did see a couple of Brolgas. There were some parrots, and occasional Willy Wagtail or Magpie. Getting out to a billabong there were a few black swans, ducks, a rare cormorant and heron. There was a fox and wild pig. In the late afternoon in the Nature Reserve we saw and heard a number of small birds. The cattle there appeared in fair condition despite the dryness and harshness of grasses. The best one can say of the Macquarie Marshes is that they are a prime example of mismanagement of land and water resources.

The second night's camp was at Nyngan, beside the Bogan River. We were late in camp because of a mishap with the trailer. In the next morn's light we found it was a lovely spot but noted advanced erosion on the river banks and much exposure of tree roots. But skiers were blithely enjoying the water.

A short stop at Cobar for morning tea allowed an opportunity for a quick visit to the museum - an opportunity to catch up on a bit of history. Back on the road we detoured to see Mt. Grenfell - a rocky hill which is an aboriginal reserve to preserve three examples of interesting rock art. On the highway again we traversed many miles of flat gibber country on the long haul to Wilcannia. It was not uninteresting. Despite what maybe called the monotony, I found interest in the changes in vegetation on the red sandy soil with its patterns of black gibber gravel.

We arrived in Wilcannia before sunset, so were able to take a look at the Darling River before striking camp. A depressing sight; it was just a mud slick; and there was no evidence of re-planting dead or dying trees.

After a look around the old town next morning we set out for White Cliffs, intending to spend a couple of hours on a quick viewing of the old opal mining town. On arrival, the first sight of note was the line of dishes for making solar power -

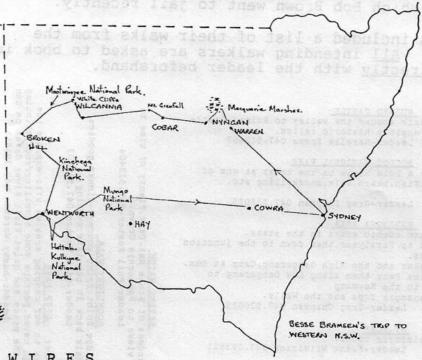
now dis-used. John inquired for a guide to show us around and was introduced to Jock. But he got us only as far as the opal shop when it was realized there was a broken spring on the trailer. He directed us passengers to an underground art shop and historical museum while he sat and waited the two hours it took John and Russel to install a new spring. Then, after sharing lunch with us he took us around the old diggings and shafts to the highest spot for an overview of the town and surroundings. He had been a miner and was full of history. We also had a look through a spacious and beautifully appointed underground Motel.



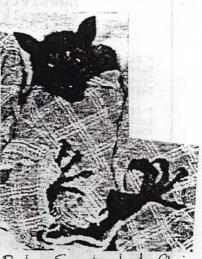




We should have been at Mootwingee for lunch. Finally, after another mishap on the road, we arrived there at 8.00 p.m., to be met by very agitated and concerned rangers - four aboriginal and one white. We had missed our afternoon excursion. By the headlights of one of their trucks they all pitched in setting up our tents and unloading luggage while the cook prepared a very hurried but very good dinner.



....to be continued. by Besse Bramsen.



Spectacled rescued in North tox Oversland.

W.I.R.E.S.

At the last LBMCS meeting, Jill Dark presented a most interesting talk, with slides of animals, furry and feathered, rescued by herself and other members of Blue Mountains WIRES. Each member of WIRES undergos a number of training courses in the handling and care of animals. The work done by WIRES members is entirely voluntary, needing to be available to attend to injured animals and take calls at all times of the day. A duty roster is in operation so that someone is always available to take a distress call. The members have to construct their own holding areas for the array of animals that come in for care, and need to provide the food for their "guests" themselves. Many of the temporary residents are baby birds, which cry out for feeding at very frequent intervals, a time consuming job for a surrogate Some require Vetinary care, needing broken bones When the animal has recovered enough to be mother. set etc. released, there is a strict policy of releasing the creature in the area where it was found. This has necessitated long drives out west to relocate kangaroos that were rescued by drivers and brought to the Blue Mountains Wires for care.

Money raising activities are held throughout the year by the group to help pay for their ongoing work. Keep an eye out for their garage sales or stalls, and give them your support.

Penrith City Library.

Penrith's new library is a wonderful facility to have on our doorstep. Tucked away in a corner on the left hand side of the library, is a library in itself; The Local Studies This area is open from 1.00 pm to 5.00pm each day, Library. and contains all manner of reports, studies, photographs, newspaper cuttings, indexed newspaper reports, slides, environmental impact statements etc. on the local environment and local history.





The National Parks Association.

The local branch of the National Parks Association meets at Springwood Neighbourhood Centre at 8.00 pm on the third Wednesday of each month, and has kindly invited our members to attend. On Wednesday, 16th August is a slide presentation by Ross Knowles of the Wilderness Society on the Tarkine Wilderness in Tasmania which is threatened by a new road, over which Bob Brown went to jail recently.

I have also included a list of their walks from the newsletter. All intending walkers are asked to book in on the walk directly with the leader beforehand.

* Sat.22nd July RUINED CASTLE

Down the scenic railway, then walk around the valley to Ruined Castle.

Great views, plenty of time to explore historic relics.

EASY DAY WALK Leader-Narelle Spees 047.512467

* Fri.28th/Sun.30th July BOUDDI NATIONAL PARK
Arrive late Fri.for weekend in a Pole House on the coast at one of
the gems of the central coast.Fish, beach walk, snorkelling etc.
LIMIT 8; BOOK BY 15th JULY.
EASY WEEKEND Leader-Greg Chapman 047.536025

* Fri.4th/Mon.7th Aug. KANANGRA AREA
Traverse some of the wildest and scenic areas in the state.
Day 1.From the Kanangra Rd out to Paralyser, then down to the junction of Whalania and Kanangra Creeks.
Day 2.Up the ridges to Cloudmaker and the High Gangerang.Camp at Dex.
DAY 3.Along the range to Gentles Pass then along Low Gangerang to Willa Wonka Mt.then Big Wonga to the Kowmung.
Day 4.Along Gingra Range to Kanangra Tops and the Walls.
HARD FULL PACK WALK Leader-Greg Chapman 047.536025

* Sat.12th August MT.YORK Explore Mt.York-Hartley Vale historic roads.

EASY DAY WALK Leader-Frank Wilkinson 047.393621

* Sat.19th August

SOCIAL-CURRY NIGHT Contact-Narelle Spees 047.512467

* Sun.20th August EVANS CROWN

Granite area-unique flora-great views from the high tors.Option to do some easy climbs on granite.

EASY DAY WALK

Leader-Tony Foster-047.542148

* Fri.25th/Sun.27th Aug. JENOLAN CAVES
Arrive Fri.night to stay at comfortable cabins in Jenolan Area.
Sat.Walks around J.C.Take a cave tour.Buffet dinner in Caves House.
Sun.Kanangra Tops to Crafts Walls.Great views of the Blue Breaks.
LIMIT 12;BCCK BY 1st AUGUST.
EASY WEEKEND Leader-Greg Chapman 047.536025

* Sat.2nd September
Chance to visit the new Gardens of Stone Nat.Park.Plenty of time to explore the pagodas.Great views to Pantoneys Crown.

EASY DAY WALK

* Sat.9th September

* Sat.9th September

* Sat.9th September

* Sat.16th/Sun.17th September

* Sat.16th/Sun.17th September

* Sat.16th/Sun.17th September

* Sat.16th/Sun.17th September

* Sat.15th/Sun.17th September

* Sat.23rd September

EASY WEEKEND

* Sat.23rd September

* Sat.23rd September

* Sat.23rd September

Evans Lookout.-Beauchamp Falls--Grand Canyon--Neates Glen.Walk 54

in Vol.2 of N.P.A.'s Walks.

Leader-Frank Wilkinson 047.393621

30



Rezoning of Prime Koala Habitat on Tilligerry Peninsula,

ACI Minerals has applied to the Port Stephens Council to mine the southern corridor of Tilligerry Peninsula, after being given permission to mine 1,000,000 tonnes of silica on the Northern Corridor of the Peninsula.

The Port Stephens Draft Koala Management Plan, completed in 1994, recommended that the Southern Corridor be rezoned as Environmental Protection. This would enable this vital southern corridor to be protected in a critical area for a large population of Koalas whose habitat is under increasing pressure from clearing associated with sand mining and extraction, and urban development.

To quote the Hunter Koala Preservation Society: "It appears that since ACI approached Robert Webster, the then Minister for Planning and his Director, Ms. Kibble, the DOP is in the process of watering down the Rezoning under instruction from senior bureaucrats...."

The Society has sent a letter to Pam Allen, Minister for the Environment to support the Hunter Koala Preservation Society's call for the rezoning to go ahead as first recommended in the management plan.