



"Nature Conservation Saves for Tomorrow"

Our Hut News Editor is recovering from surgery and as a result, this is a one-off shorter edition. We wish Christine a speedy recovery.

UPDATE LAWSON CROWN LAND MASTERPLAN

Council is currently preparing a Masterplan for Crown Land at Lawson, incorporating the old Lawson Golf Course, the Lawson Cemetery, Lawson Dog Off Leash area, and Lawson BMX track and the nearby oval. Council has sought community input into the Masterplan process through public exhibition of options and through community workshops.

Major re-development proposed at Lawson

Council has prepared three re-development options for the site. The three options can be viewed online at: <https://www.bluemountainshaveyoursay.com.au/33840/documents/74708>



The Society has made a detailed submission on the three options which can be found on the Society website here: <http://www.bluemountains.org.au/lawson-crown-land.shtml>.

The Society **does not support** any of the three options developed by Council for the following reasons:

- All options represent a significant over-development of the site, with up to 4 new sporting fields/ovals, new indoor sporting facilities and new amenity blocks and club houses.
- All this requires supporting infrastructure – all options include a new internal road system and extensive new car parking, as well as water, sewage and electricity connection.
- One option includes re-development of the existing BMX track for new residential/aged care and private tourism thereby converting public land to private ownership.
- All options require the removal of stands of existing native vegetation between the old fairways to facilitate re-development.
- The proposed re-development, including the sporting fields and car parks, represents a risk to the nearby creek from urban runoff from hard surfaces, as well as risks from fertiliser use on the fields/ovals.
- Council has not demonstrated the need or demand for such a huge increase in sporting infrastructure in the mid mountains or indicated how much it will cost to build.

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The next Hut News issue

DEADLINE:
19 MAY 2018

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What is the alternative?

The old Lawson Golf Course is a beautiful area which is currently largely used for low impact recreation such as bushwalking, dog walking and picnicking. The local Bushcare group has invested years of volunteer work revegetating the creekline.

Instead of massive re-development the Society would like to see:

- Maintenance of the existing uses at their current locations, including the BMX track, oval, cemetery, dog off leash area and bushwalking tracks – with no new sporting or residential re-development on the site.

- The site being protected as an open space recreation area and bushland reserve.

- Additional small-scale recreational opportunities consistent with the natural values of the site such as a children's nature playground, children's bike track, and other passive recreational opportunities (eg picnic tables and interpretative signage).

- Enhancement of the natural values of the site including widening of the bushland areas along the creekline and improved stormwater management.

- Upgrades and expansion of the existing walking track network.

Site for Society Nursery

One aspect the Society is very supportive of is that one option identifies space for a community nursery and community gardens. This would provide an ideal permanent home in the mid mountains for the Society's native plant nursery.

The Society's nursery is a community not for profit nursery run by volunteers, which provides affordable locally grown and sourced native plants to the general public. The Society has been attempting to find a location to re-open its nursery in the mid mountains for a number of years.

The nursery site proposed in the option developed by Council, adjacent to the creekline and away from the existing local road network, is not suitable however. The Society is instead keen to discuss with Council a nursery site where the old clubhouse is currently located or nearby.

What next?

Council is currently preparing a draft Masterplan which will be publicly exhibited later in the year.

The Society will alert members when this occurs.

- Land Use Sub-Committee



KATOOMBA CHRISTIAN CONVENTION CENTRE REDEVELOPMENT OVER THE TOP

The Society has significant concerns with the proposed re-development of the Katoomba Christian Convention Centre at Cliff Drive Katoomba. The proposal is for a massive redevelopment of the site, including demolition of the existing auditorium and construction of a new 3,500 seat auditorium. As well, the existing 200 seat dining hall/kitchen will be demolished and a new administration/reception building, incorporating a 500-seat dining hall, will be built. Existing accommodation buildings will also be demolished and replaced with new accommodation buildings including six ecolodges and three chalets to provide a total of 390 beds (a net increase of 170 beds). There will also be a new bookshop, a café fronting Violet St and new internal access roads and car parking.

The Society has made a detailed submission to Council on the proposal which can be found on the Society website here http://www.bluemountains.org.au/submissions_2018.htm. The Society believes the proposal is inappropriate for the site – the new buildings exceed current height limits and cover too much of the site. The extensive tree and vegetation clearing required for construction and bushfire protection will not only destroy critical habitat but will also mean the development will not be screened from view. The re-development will also result in unending traffic jams and noise for local residents, and a loss of local amenity. Given the height, size and loss of vegetation, the development will be visually intrusive and will have significant impact on scenic values as it will be clearly seen from key escarpment vantage points.

The Society's concerns include:

➔ **Flora and Fauna.**

The redevelopment will result in the loss of 673 trees (60% of the trees currently on the site), and will negatively impact on local flora and fauna and migratory birds.

➔ **Geology.**

The Society has serious concerns about more intensive development occurring on the site due to the geology, including the instability of the escarpment in the vicinity of Malaita Point, as indicated in the proponents own Geotechnical Assessment Report.

➔ **Height.**

The development exceeds the current height limits on the site and the auditorium even exceeds the proposed new height limit for the precinct (10m). The auditorium is proposed to be 12.9 metres high.

➔ **Size.**

The proposed site coverage (17%) exceeds the maximum allowable (15%) for the site.

➔ **Traffic, parking and noise issues.**

The development will see a huge increase in traffic on local roads and a huge demand for parking, especially during peak holiday times. The Society believes the applicant should assess traffic impacts and parking requirements on the basis of the proposed capacity of the new auditorium and the potential for 3,500 people to be on the site at the same time.

➔ **Visual impact.**

This is a massive development on the edge of the escarpment and will result in unacceptable visual impacts due to the height of the proposed buildings, development intensification, and proposed vegetation clearing for construction and bushfire zones. The Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) undertaken by the proponent does not consider the visibility of the proposed development from other popular tourist viewing areas e.g. King's Tableland, Wentworth Falls, and Sublime Point Lookout, Leura.

➔ **Blue Mountains National Park.**

There has been no assessment of the impact of the development and its construction on the adjoining world heritage listed Blue Mountains National Park. The proposal includes major excavation and vegetation removal resulting in the potential for hydrological disturbance and for weed and sediment runoff into the national park.

The Society believes that the issues we have raised are of such seriousness and importance that approval should not be granted. We believe the developer needs to go back to the drawing board and re-think the whole proposal.

The Society is also very concerned about the short time period for residents and community to make a submission. The proposal is large and complex and will result in significant environmental and community impacts. The time period for public consultation and community input (4 weeks) was totally inadequate given the size of the project and the extent of the documentation.

As the total cost of the development is \$63million it will not be determined by Blue Mountains City Council. It will instead be determined by a Joint Regional Planning Panel (JRRP). JRRPs have been established by the State government to determine large regionally significant developments, with members appointed by the Department of Planning.

- *Land Use Sub - Committee*

ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENDERS OFFICE (EDO) WORKSHOP

Are you alarmed by the significant loss of trees particularly in the Lower Blue Mountains?
Or maybe extensive bulldozing for a new development is occurring near you.

14 July 2018 2pm - 4 pm

Mechanics Institute, Great Western Highway, Lawson

Register: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/edo-workshop-tickets-45420824910>

There have been a number of changes in the laws about land clearing, bushland removal and the cutting down of trees. These may apply differently in different areas. The EDO will be running a workshop to inform us about the legislation and processes that now exist to protect bushland here in the Blue Mountains.

The aim of the workshop will be to let each of us know what to do when either:

- Clearing is taking place and you suspect that it is not legal, or
- A development application is open for public comment and bushland removal is involved

You will learn:

- Which government agency can or should be taking action (who has responsibility and can help) and how the process works
- What laws and regulations exist to protect bushland, or can be used to argue a case or to push for action



illustration by Jim Low



The Society continues to campaign to save the wonderful Radiata Plateau and have the area included in the Blue Mountains National Park. The Society's Management Committee recently re-committed to continuing the campaign, including funding, throughout 2018. Two local Pulpit Hill Road residents Emil and Rod feature in a recently released short video where they share the Plateau's special values and why they love the area, which can be seen on the campaign web page at:

<http://www.bluemountains.org.au/leaveradiataplateauwild/updates.htm>

The Society has also commenced discussion with the owners of the Plateau about their future intentions for the area.

Welcome to New Members

Diane Cousins
 Bernadeth Derupe
 Cecilia Jones
 Joe Barillari
 Angela Hoare
 Gillian Fitzgerald
 Griffin Arnold
 Harmony Arnold
 Alexie Papanicolaou
 Kay Anantanawat
 Kaz Stoddart
 Jenny Le Gros
 Garry Le Gros
 Kayla Le Gros
 Allan Le Quesne
 David Harmer
 Sionhan Harmer-Knight
 Finn Harmer-Knight
 Sam Knight

**BLUE MOUNTAINS
 CONSERVATION SOCIETY**
www.bluemountains.org.au

'Like' us on Facebook:
 Blue Mountains Conservation Society

THE OLD BLUE GUM

Near my old home there is a tree
 One I have known since I was three
 And when I thought I'd grown quite big
 My height was measured with its twig.

The possums, furr'd in grey and brown
 Have made a pathway up and down;
 And hidden 'neath a curly root,
 There dwells a little bandicoot.

From out its branches in the Spring
 The baby birds are taught to sing
 And from the boughs, the blossoms rare
 With fragrance sweet perfume the air.

There is a place, just near the butt,
 Where years ago my name was cut;
 In scrawling letters on that tree
 A sweetheart chiselled M and G.

And now that I am apt to roam
 That dear old tree still stands at home;
 Protecting, caring, useful, strong,
 A tree that fills my heart with song.

From *Yabba-Yabba Stories and Verses of Australia* by Mrs **Marion James**. This book was written for children. Mary Gilmore notes in the book's foreword, that "*all recollection is valuable, as it is history, and history that every day is slipping farther away from us and soon will be lost if not gathered now*" (5 Sept 1943)

NSW & ACT 2018

THREATENED SPECIES
CHILDREN'S

ART
COMPETITION



The 2018 Threatened Species Children's Art competition will be open for entries between **June 4 and August 3 2018**. Children from **5-12 years old in NSW** are invited to unleash their creativity while learning about our threatened species. Each child chooses **one of over 1000 threatened species in NSW**, researches, then draws or paints it, and writes a short explanation of their work.

Photographs of artworks and written explanations can be submitted on our website. Fifty finalists will be chosen for an exhibition in Sydney in September, with winners announced at **Parliament House Sydney on September 7, Threatened Species Day**.

More information is available on the website at www.threatenedspeciesartcomp.net.au

Henry Gold's *Wild Light* Photographic Exhibition

Bondi Pavilion, 5-17 June 2018, 10-5 pm
Free entry.

All funds raised from the sale
of photographs will go to conservation.

Wild Light opening by **Clover Moore**
Wednesday 6 June, 6pm, Bondi Pavilion

All welcome.

www.colongwilderness.org.au for information

BMCS NURSERY PLANT SALES

We offer the home gardener, landscaper or contractor a big variety of quality local native plants at economical prices.

Blackheath Community Market

1st Sunday of the month at Blackheath Public School, 9am to 1pm

Magpie Market

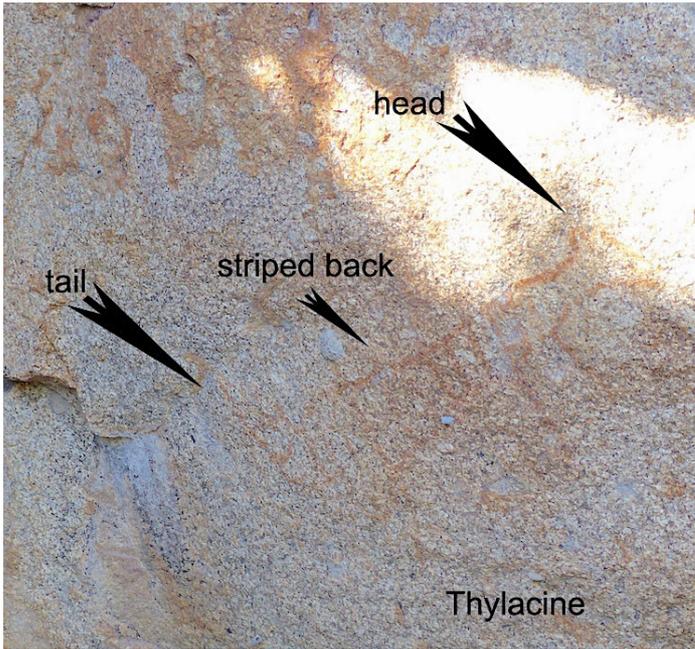
3rd Sunday of month at Lawson Public School, 9am to 2pm

Tube stock \$3. Discounts for bulk orders.

Enquiries: Hugh Brougham 0407 955 028
or Sue Nicol 0457 140 905

Email: nursery@bluemountains.org.au

A Visit to Yeddonba Aboriginal Cultural Site



I have been wanting to visit the Yeddonba cultural site for a while. But rain made the dry weather only track unsafe. However, a clear, sunny autumn day this month made things possible.

Located in the Chiltern-Mt Pilot National Park in northern Victoria, this walk takes under an hour and is certainly worth a visit. Interpretive signs guide the visitor around the site. The words of local Aboriginal spokesperson Rex Atkinson are contained on these signs and they certainly add a welcoming touch to the walk.

The highlight of the visit for me was seeing a possible representation of a thylacine, painted in ochre by a once known Aboriginal painter. Now faded by the years and weathering, the image can still be discerned along with that of a snake and goanna. It was quite sobering to think that the painting in front of you could be over 2000 years old. Apparently there is another painting of a possible thylacine in another neighbouring, but not so accessible, part of the park.

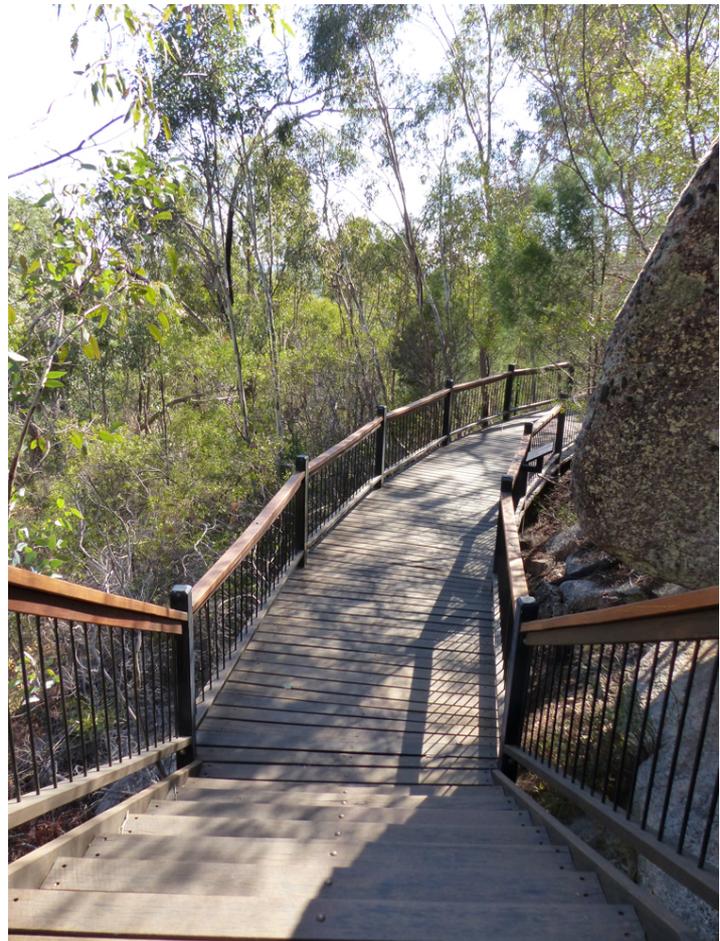
Of course, the scenic beauty, variety and grandeur of the country you traverse cannot be over emphasised. I was very interested to learn while there that bracken, rather than being an introduced weed, is in fact an Australian native. Further more, the roots can be roasted, pounded into a paste and eaten. I felt somewhat guilty when I reflected on all the bracken I have dug up over the years in my backyard.

From the start your days were numbered
You could not roam wild and free
They were looking for a scapegoat
And it's you it seemed to be
Did you really kill all those sheep?
The facts just don't ring true
But it's hard to argue with them
When their traps were set for you.

You were here for such a long time
In this ancient, southern land
You roamed the hills and the forest
Your destiny seemed planned
With your sense of smell and cunning
You preferred to hunt at night
On your head they placed a bounty
To rid you from their sight.

Old thylacine, old thylacine
Just a picture in a magazine
Your eyes search mine
You've no more time
You're only missed
Now that you're gone.

And when they realised what they had done
Already it was too late
No expedition to seek you out
Could stop your cruel fate
They hunted you to extinction
Through fear and greed alike
Insensitive and ignorant
No-one could win this fight.



© Jim Low (song lyrics - Old Thylacine)

BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY Inc: BUSHWALKING ACTIVITIES

Membership of the bushwalking group is open to Society members. The BMCS Bushwalking Guide which explains the numbered grades can be found on the Society's website www.bluemountains.org.au or can be posted on request. For more information call Maurice Kerkham 4739 4942, mobile 04024 02783, email mauricekerkham@hotmail.com or write to PO Box 29, Wentworth Falls 2782. Late changes to the program will be published on the website.

SATURDAY WALKS:

Usually a full day longer walk at a faster pace. Bring morning tea, lunch and adequate water. If you are a new walker to Saturday walks, before attending contact the designated contact person or the Group Co-ordinator:
Harold Thompson harold.thompson@bigpond.com 6355 1762 or mobile 0409 010 737

Saturday Walks driver reimbursement: *In an effort to ensure that car drivers are adequately compensated for the use of their vehicles a driver reimbursement policy applies (Check www.bluemountains.org.au Saturday Walks page for details)*

May 05 - **Wongarra Ridge, Walls LO.** Some off Track. Leader Alice & Lotti 47393086, Meet at Blackheath Stn. Car Park, 8.30am, 7.5km, GR3, Map Mt Wilson

May 12 - **Goochs Crater.** Leader, Bob 0408947325. 6km, Gr3 map Wollangambie & Mt Wilson. Contact leader to book

May 19 - **Grose Head, South Trig.** Alice & Lotti 47393086 Meet at WFCP & WhiteCross CP 8.30 & 9.00am 11km Grade 3 map Springwood

May 26 - **Four - Five - Six walk!** Come along and have it explained Bob 0408947325 8.30am 5km Grade 4 map Cullen Bullen Contact leader to book

June 02 - **Jungabarra and the Rock Climbers Steps** Emanuel 0419773906 10km Grade 4 map Mt Wilson Contact leader to book

MONDAY LEISURE WALKS:

Short Day walks of 3-5 hours, suitable for walkers of an average fitness. Bring morning tea and lunch and adequate water. The Group Co-ordinator is Keith Dorrian: 4736 1010, 04111 62345 keithdor53@hotmail.com

May 07 - **Victoria Falls, Mount Victoria.** Pleasant walk down to falls and return. Meet Mount Victoria Station 9.50 am. Car pool. Tracy 0434 362 611. Grade 3.

May 14 - **West Concord to Meadowbank.** Chance to see new foreshore, sculptures, bridge over Homebush Bay and Nature Walk. About 10 km but flat mainly on footpaths. Train arrives Strathfield Station 9-09am (platform 2) We leave Strathfield Station 9-30am (platform 6) Judith 0419 780 640 or 4758 6310 Grade 2

THURSDAY PLEASURE WALKS:

Walks 2-3 hours conducted at a leisurely pace to suit walkers on the day. Bring morning tea, adequate water and lunch if noted. Group Co-ordinator is Beverley Thompson, 4757 2076 denfenella12@bigpond.com

May 3 - **Nature Trail, Wentworth Falls.** Meet Stockyard Car Park, Wentworth Falls 9.30am. Leader Christine 4757 2864. Car pool. Take lunch. Grade 2

May 10 - **Darks Common and Bluff, Glenbrook.** Meet Glenbrook Station Car Park East 9.30am. Leader Maurice 4739 4942. Car pool. Take lunch. Grade 2

May 17 - **Red Hands Cave, Glenbrook.** Ancient rock art. Meet Glenbrook Station Car Park East 9.30am. Leader Keith 0411 162 345. Car pool. Take lunch. Grade 3

GARDENS OF STONE VISITORS MAP

The Visitors Map is full of suggested walks and trips. It is in full colour, 60 by 85 cm in size, and covers the entire Gardens of Stone region at a 1:100,000 scale, making it ideal for planning your next trip to the area.

You can buy a map on the society's website at:
www.bluemountains.org.au/GoS_VisitorsMap.htm

Visit the Society Bush/walks
on Facebook

[https://www.facebook.com/
bmcslongerbushwalks/](https://www.facebook.com/bmcslongerbushwalks/)