



"Nature Conservation Saves for Tomorrow"



Minister Kean – buy Radiata Plateau today:

This is the message of our advertisement which appeared in the Blue Mountains Gazette on 14 August. (Read more page 7.)

A timely article (Sydney Morning Herald 18/8/19) by environment reporter Peter Hannam could encourage some optimism. The heading is: NSW minister proposes 10-fold increase in national park creation rate. "National parks are key to protecting our native animals and our natural environment," Mr Kean, NSW Energy and Environment Minister, said in a Facebook post, noting they were home for 85 per cent of NSW's threatened species. "I am determined to protect and increase [national parks]," he said. "That's why I want to see 200,000 more hectares added to our national park estate over the next years."

Threatened species in the Blue Mountains

Threatened Species Day was declared in 1996 to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the death of the last remaining Tasmanian tiger (also known as the thylacine) at Hobart Zoo in 1936. It is time to reflect on what happened in the past and how similar fates to the thylacine could await other native plants and animals unless appropriate action is taken.

Our Local Government Area contains approximately 10 percent of the listed threatened species in New South Wales.

Blue Mountains City Council employs an Environmental Scientist who delivers an annual threatened species recovery program. This focuses on threatened species which are endemic (ie only occurring in the Blue Mountains) or that have a stronghold in the Blue Mountains.

How can you help? Join your local Bushcare, Landcare or Swampcare group; Plant a bush friendly garden without invasive species and control weeds on your property.

www.bmcc.nsw.gov.au/environment/bushland-management/threatened-species

Threatened Species Day events Saturday 7 September 2019

Blue Mountains Cultural Centre, Katoomba, 10 am to 2 pm.

Free event. Talks, kids activities, eco-cinema, environment market, art and book displays. Blue Mountains Conservation Society will be supporting this event. Please say hello to Cathy and other volunteers from our Society. Read more:

www.bluemountains.org.au—Threatened Species Day.

REPTILE DAY - NPWS Heritage Centre, Blackheath, 10am to 2pm. This fun family event is a great opportunity to gain fascinating insights into the wonderful world of reptiles, with talks,

walks and lots of fun activities for adults and children of all ages. Read more: www.bluemts.com.au/news/get-ready-to-wriggle-at-reptile-day-2019/ or phone the Heritage Centre 4787 8877. Entry by gold coin donation.

"No" to feral horses, say environment supporters

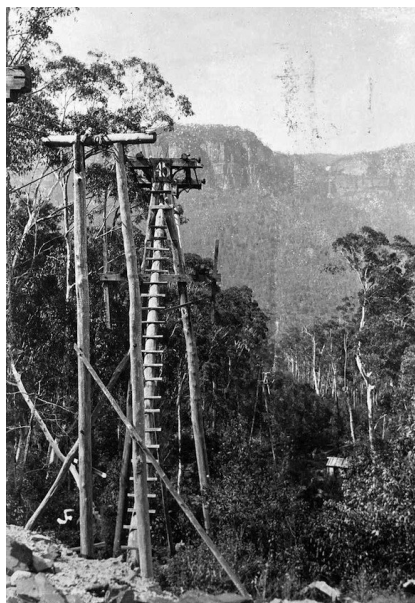
On August 22, Blue Mountains State representative Trish Doyle presented a petition of more than 12,300 signatures to State Parliament calling for repeal of laws protecting feral horses in Kosciuszko National Park and for prompt action to cull the burgeoning horse population.

Horses in Kosciuszko threaten native animals like the Corroboree Frog, threaten safe recreational use of our state's biggest park and threaten drinking water and river quality for populated areas like Canberra and the Murray–Murrumbidgee catchments.

A packed public gallery watched an excellent speech from Trish Doyle, backed by state Labor's Kate Washington and Shooters Fishers and Farmers member for Murray Helen Dalton. Sadly a sympathetic speech from new Liberal Environment Minister Matt Kean was undermined by the Coalition voting not to note the petition, whatever that may mean.

Earlier, anti-ferals campaigners watched a presentation explaining important facts featuring Greens Upper House MP Kate Faehrmann and a scientist who resigned from a Government committee to make his anti-feral point, David Watson. A *Save Kosci* Group rally at the Archibald Fountain heard a moving speech by Independent MLC Justin Field. Our banner holders were joined by former Blue Mountains State Member Bob Debus.

Overall, it was an uplifting day, proving that much more needs to be done to protect our national parks. (See photo on page 12.)



What lingering evidence of kerosene shale mining can be found in the Upper Blue Mountains?
Read more on page 11.

"Hut News", the newsletter of
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School Strike 4 Climate seeks your support on Friday 20 September 2019

Blue Mountains: Springwood Town Centre - outside the Springwood Hub, 11 AM – 12:45 PM. More information: www.facebook.com/MESCA.NSW/

Sydney: Venue to be determined. 12 PM—2 PM. More information: www.schoolstrike4climate.com

Statement from School Strike 4 Climate:

We are school students from cities and towns across Australia. Most of us have never met in person before but are united by our concern about our planet. We are striking from school to tell our politicians to take our futures seriously and treat climate change for what it is - a crisis. Politicians can show us that they care by taking urgent action to meet our demands.

Our Demands: 1. No new coal, oil and gas projects, including the Adani mine. 2. 100% renewable energy generation and exports by 2030. 3. Fund a just transition and job creation for all fossil-fuel industry workers.

Climate change is one of the biggest problems facing the world and it isn't being addressed quickly enough. In Australia, education is viewed as immensely important and a key way to make a difference in the world. But simply going to school isn't doing anything about climate change. And it doesn't seem that our politicians are doing anything, or at least not enough, about climate change either.

So, as our contribution to the changes we want to see, we are striking from school. We are temporarily sacrificing our education in order to save our futures from climate wrecking projects like the Adani coal mine.

Our Network is School student led – Decentralised – Grassroots – Non-partisan – Inclusive – Non-violent – Mission-focussed – Ambitious – Creative. <https://www.schoolstrike4climate.com/>

Gardens of Stone Update

The Gardens of Stone Alliance groups are continuing to promote the *Destination Pagoda* vision for a state conservation area in the Gardens of Stone north-west of Lithgow. A further film showing was scheduled for Lithgow Library on 21 August. Talks and stalls are planned for the Sydney area.

Destination Pagoda demonstrates how the proposed Gardens of Stone state conservation area could be a world-class conservation and tourism destination for the Greater Sydney area.

The latest survey of visitor numbers to national parks shows a 16 per cent increase in 2018 compared with 2016. Our own Blue Mountains National Park remains the most popular park in NSW with visits "surging more than 60 per cent over the past two years to 8.43 million" (SMH 12/8/19).

Sydney needs the Gardens of Stone State Conservation Area to increase recreational space in the Sydney region and take pressure off Blue Mountains National Park.

Madi Maclean, GOS Officer.

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 \$3.50. Discounts for bulk orders.

nursery@bluemountains.org.au

OUR KOALAS ARE IN CRISIS

Australians for Animals Inc aims to harness people power to insist that our State and Federal Governments act urgently and decisively to protect Koala habitat.

Not far from the Blue Mountains, some 69,000 houses are planned for Campbelltown, Camden and Wollondilly in a massive metropolis known as the Greater Macarthur Growth Area. This Growth Area includes Cumberland Plain vegetation and is home to threatened species including the largest, disease free koala population in Sydney.

Underneath we reproduce an open letter to the Premier

which appeared in the North Shore Times, a local newspaper serving Premier Berejiklian's electorate. Blue Mountains Conservation Society is a signatory to the letter.

What you can do: Email Premier Berejiklian and let her know that you support the open letter as published in the North Shore Times. Also remind her that Koalas are dying during extended heat waves and urgent action on climate change is required. <https://www.nsw.gov.au/contact-us/contact-the-premier/>

Read more: <https://www.australiansforanimals.org.au/>

SOUTHWEST SYDNEY

KOALA

POPULATION FACING EXTINCTION



Dear Premier,

The level of public concern over the plight of the koala population in southwest Sydney must be acknowledged by you, as Premier, and acted upon by your government.

This healthy expanding population of approximately 500-1000 koalas is one of the largest, most critically important regional colonies remaining in NSW. Yet the government has completely failed to ensure their protection and protection of their habitat.

The NSW Koala Strategy lists habitat protection as the primary recommendation to ensure the continued existence of koalas in this state. Around 70,000 houses are planned in an area which is prime koala habitat, ensuring the population will inevitably be lost.

Road construction works planned by Roads & Maritime Services and Lendlease completely fail to protect koalas and other wildlife.

Koalas and wildlife will be trapped behind exclusion fences with no ability to escape from bushfires or other catastrophes whilst their behavioural needs are ignored.

Unless underpasses and overpasses are sited in known areas where animals move, they are useless. Any connectivity must be put in place before any road works are commenced. Corridors planned by the developer are completely inadequate.

Without adequate corridors, connectivity and recognition of the importance of retaining habitat, koalas are doomed to vehicle strike, dog attacks, and disease caused by stress and an inability to disperse.

It is now breeding season and a time when koalas should not be subjected to stress which causes disease and death.

Independent koala scientific experts must evaluate the conservation, corridors and connectivity plans for the Mt Gilead, Appin, Wilton and Greater Macarthur Growth Plan. Primary habitat cannot be replaced by biobanking and offsets.

The koalas are facing politically driven extinction as a result of the failure to implement the recommendations of the Koala Strategy and to address the urgent need to protect habitat for all remaining NSW koalas.

The public is deeply concerned by the ongoing loss of koalas and the complete failure of your government to understand that the economy and our future relies on healthy ecosystems and biodiversity.

Unless your government acts to protect habitat, there's little doubt history will demonstrate NSW koalas went extinct as a result of your policies.

This open letter to the Premier of NSW was jointly funded by a coalition of concerned citizens and organisations. To those of you who have helped make this open letter possible, thank you so much for your caring, kindness and awareness.

- Australians for Animals Inc.
- Green Triangle Koala Community
- International Koala Intervention
- Total Environment Centre
- Indigenous Justice Network
- Bundjalung Elders Council
- Adelaide Hills Koala Rescue
- Mount Gravatt East Townhouse Development Action Group
- Clarence Environment Centre
- Blue Mountains Conservation Society
- Bellingen Environment Centre
- Koala Rescue Queensland
- Queensland Koala Society

- The Koalition, Munich
- Lawyers for Companion Animals
- Magnetic Island Koala Hospital
- Lismore Environment Centre
- Put Your Hands Up for Animals Network
- Lawyers for Companion Animals
- Two Thumbs Wildlife Trust
- Animals Australia
- Possumwood Wildlife Recovery and Research Inc.
- NPA MacArthur Branch
- Caldera Environment Centre
- Sustainable Australia Party
- Georges River Koala Network

- Surfrider Foundation
- Sydney Wildlife
- Australian Forests & Climate Alliance
- Keep Sydney Beautiful
- NSW Animal Justice Party
- Vegan Australia
- Help Save Appin
- Save Mt Gilead
- SERCA
- Save Sydney's Trees
- George's River Environmental Alliance
- Wilton Action Group
- Rewilding Australia
- Better Planning Network

- Terania Rainforest Publishing
- Catholic Earth Care
- Norfolk Island Environment Centre
- World Society for Protection of Animals
- Hunter Environment Centre
- Animal Liberation NSW
- Kalang River Forest Alliance
- Northern Rivers Guardians Inc.
- Nimbin Environment Centre
- Blacktown & District Environment Group Inc.
- Bryon Environment Centre
- International Fund for Animal Welfare
- South East Forest Alliance
- Chip Busters



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Aboriginal Australians and Water Management

None of us will have forgotten the horrifying images of the fish kills that occurred on the Darling River near Menindee last summer. A report on that ecological disaster concluded that it was the inland equivalent of coral bleaching and that it was caused by a combination of excess upstream irrigation, drought, and inappropriate water releases from the Menindee Lakes.¹

Recurring droughts are a fact of life in Australia, an environmental condition that we have to learn to live with. But the other two causative factors identified by this very reputable expert panel are clearly subject to human regulation -- factors that should be controlled by effective water management.

The disaster that occurred last December at least brought the issue of water management to public attention. But, despite much debate since then, water management was not a significant issue in either the State or Federal elections earlier in the year.

Unfortunately, though not on the same scale as at Menindee last December, fish kills are continuing to occur as decades-old fish, particularly Murray Cod are being trapped in ever-shrinking water holes along the river. Moreover, authorities are warning that it appears increasingly likely that there will be more fish kills in the coming summer.²

All of which suggests that we need to remind ourselves of the water management practices of Aboriginal Australians --- practices which we ruthlessly displaced, in some parts of the country only 175-180 years ago, although they had been in place and working effectively for millennia.

Two examples are the fish traps established by the Gunditjmarra Aboriginal people near Budj Bim (Mount Eccles) in south-western Victoria³; and the Ngemba fish traps on the Barwon River at Brewarrina⁴ in NSW. Both were highly productive aquaculture systems that supported large numbers of Aboriginal people at times of ceremony when thousands of people converged on them for weeks at a time. The Victorian site is estimated to be at least 23,000 years old and the site at Brewarrina is perhaps more than 40,000 years old making both among the oldest man-made structures on earth. (The Budj Bim site was recently listed by UNESCO as World Heritage.)

Surely such examples should make us reflect on our repeated policy blunders and our mismanagement of our precious and very finite water resources. Perhaps we might also reflect on why we persist with our carbon heavy tourist obsessions in far-off lands when we have such wonders of the world here in Australia.

Paddy Cavanagh

¹ Australian Academy of Science, Expert Panel, *Investigation of the Causes of Mass Fish Kills in the Menindee Region NSW Over the Summer of 2018–2019* Australian Academy of Science 18 February 2019. Accessible online at: <https://www.science.org.au/files/userfiles/support/reports-and-plans/2019/academy-science-report-mass-fish-kills-digital.pdf>

² ABC Broken Hill. *Murray cod fish kills 'every week' have graziers concerned about depleted state of lower Darling River*. Posted 16th August 2019. Accessible online at: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-08-16/dozens-of-murray-cod-dying-every-week-in-darling-river/11420942>

³ See Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation. At: <https://www.gunditjmirring.com/budjimbimdp>

⁴ See NSW Office of Heritage and Environment. *Brewarrina Aboriginal Fish Traps / Baiame's Ngunnhu*. Accessible online at: <https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/heritageapp/ViewHeritageItemDetails.aspx?ID=5051305>

SELECTIVE FEDERALISM COULD WORSEN CRISES

Opinion piece by Don Morison



Rarely has Australia been more in need of federal leadership to relieve intensifying environmental crises. And rarely have we had a federal government less willing to provide that leadership.

For decades now, thinking people have

been crying out for a consistently pursued national energy policy. Some state governments have despaired of the energy sector being federally coordinated to the point where they have pursued their own versions of the National Energy Guarantee, one of many policies discussed and then discarded at the federal level. It would be in the interests of Australia's international reputation and the vast majority of ordinary Australians to have a climate-friendly federal policy on energy.

The Murray-Darling system has been under discussion for decades but some state governments continue to try to reinvent the wheel. States downstream are still at the mercy of what other state governments do to pander to parochial interests. Our federal government still struggles to find the political will to overrule parish pump politics.

Our World Heritage areas are there because people around the world care about them. Yet threats like the Warragamba dam wall raising and coal mining in Barrier Reef-affecting areas of Queensland keep rearing their heads. The federal government does not apply itself when it should.

The above issues provide just some of the reasons why federal governments need to care more about the environment. Only recently, we have glaring examples of how inappropriately selective some federal politicians' thinking on their intervention in state matters is. Even now, we have federal politicians who try to dictate to state politicians how they should vote on matters like abortion reform legislation but show zero interest in federal intervention to protect the environment.

These contemporary attitudes towards federalism are failing present and future generations of all the species in Australia.

BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY www.bluemountains.org.au

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Blue Mountains Conservation Society

Follow us on Twitter: [bmcnsnw](https://twitter.com/bmcnsnw)

Economic Growth at Any Cost? Part 2. Ross Coster

Human impact on the natural environment

Governments and economists try to convince us that we need to increase our population so that we produce more and consume more and our economy will grow and that will be good for the country. Impacts on the environment and future generations are generally ignored.

Human impact on the natural environment is summed up in a simple formula: $\text{Impact} = \text{Population} \times \text{Affluence} \times \text{Technology}$. All of these are rising! So how do we reduce our impact over time?

Population

We as individuals can only do so much to reduce the first variable. My wife and I had 2 children, then I was sterilised, at age 25 (the doctors were somewhat reluctant!).

Global population is rising more slowly over time, as more affluent people tend to have fewer children. This panics the Boosters, as growth in population, wealth and affluence is all they seem to understand. They 'fix' this with high levels of immigration, money (the baby bonus) and dumb political statements (have a child for him, and a child for her, and one for the country).

Affluent countries in general tend to have low population growth, as the presence of good education (teaching people how reproduction works) and health (my kids probably will not die young so I didn't need to have seven of them) leads to lower birth rates.

As the whole world becomes affluent, global population will peak at about 11 billion (50% higher than now) - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Projections_of_population_growth
How do we help to reduce that incredible peak number of 11 billion? The best ways involve educating and empowering women in developing nations, so perhaps your next charity dollar can be directed there? Improving health services also helps.

- ⇒ Perhaps a letter to your Federal MP about directing foreign aid to education and health, rather than to weapons and dams?

Affluence

The second variable is up to us all to reduce. Affluence is all about how much we consume individually. Flying to Melbourne for a shopping trip is an extreme example of affluence that has only been possible in recent years. Please don't do this. Shop locally. If you must travel, catch a train, or drive a car, but avoid planes. Eating more vegetables and less meat is another thing we can all do, for our health, and to reduce our impact. Meat



production has massive environmental impact, vegetable production far less.

- ⇒ Fly less. Eat less meat and dairy. These are the best way to reduce our impact.

Technology

While we like to see technology as our saviour here (electric cars, solar panels, wind turbines) the reality is that our lives are full of technology that caused environmental impact during manufacture. Do you really need 4 large-screen televisions, 3 cars, dozens of kitchen appliances, your own set of power tools?

You can mix a cake or knead dough by hand, rent or borrow a car or a power tool when you need it, travel on foot or by public transport, make technology items last longer by having them repaired rather than replaced and discarded, and of course recycle those items that are at end-of-life.

- ⇒ Buy green power if you can afford it (5c per kwh more) to encourage the rollout of renewable energy generation.
- ⇒ Use timber in construction rather than steel and bricks and concrete (all of which have huge impacts).

Think about your technology, how it was made, whether you really need it, what other ways there are to do things. We all need to reduce our 'Affluence' through behaviour and technology choices to give the global biosphere a chance to survive the onslaught of the human plague.

Cartoon by Adrian Teal, CartoonStock.

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

Additions and corrections to August 2019 Hut News:

The image on page 8 of August Hut News (**It's our turn now!**) showed climbers on the first ascent of Boars Head Rock in 1931. The scene was photographed by James (Jim) Starkey and is part of The Starkey Collection, donated to Blue Mountains City Library—Local Studies by Jim Starkey's daughter Jane Chadwick and his son Ian. Eleanor Dark is belaying, Eric Lowe is approaching the Mantelpiece, followed by Osmar White with Eric Dark last.

Page 5, final paragraph, **Destination Pagoda campaign –recent events**. How the name "Ian Brian" appeared instead of our well known and well loved local environmentalist IAN BROWN, the person who did the presentation, is a mystery. I can only suggest that the computer did it, and apologise to Ian Brown. The omissions and mistakes were rectified in the electronic copy of August Hut News. Editor.

Flora and Fauna Park Wentworth Falls

The Society continues to raise concerns in regard to the Flora and Fauna Park development at Bodington Hill, Wentworth Falls. Since the last report in *Hut News*, members of our Landuse Subcommittee has met with senior Council officers, Mayor Mark Greenhill and MP for Blue Mountains Trish Doyle. We understand that Council is still investigating whether the land clearing was undertaken consistent with the original 1989 development consent.

Site owner Mr Amirbeaggi has publicly stated that he plans a “\$30 million dollar five to six star wildlife park development with 40 hotel rooms which will attract one million people per year”. “Talks will occur with the NSW Department of Planning to increase the size and scale and there will be multiple species ... reptiles, koalas, wallabies ... and I think the answer is yes to crocodiles” (*Blue Mountains Gazette*, May 31, 2019).

New perimeter fencing has appeared around the site (see photo) with signage promoting “Blue Mountains Wildlife Park”. If the developer proceeds, as he has stated, to build a Flora and Fauna Park, construction of this aspect of the development can’t begin until a new Construction Certificate is lodged with Council. This hasn’t happened so far. It is also important to note that the original development consent was for a Flora and Fauna Park only. Any expansion or substantial variation of the development, such as a hotel, will require additional development assessment and consent.

The Society raised concerns with the Building Professionals Board (BPB) that the Construction Certificate may have been issued in breach of planning legislation and, potentially, in breach of the development consent. As a result of our complaint, the private certifier was issued with a Penalty Infringement Notice (PIN) for \$1,500. The BPB did not disclose to us what infringement the certifier was found to have been guilty of and what aspects of our complaint were upheld. This is highly unsatisfactory and points to another problem with the private certification system and its regulation – lack of transparency and full disclosure in relation to the outcomes of complaints made by members of the public and any resulting disciplinary actions.

Council acknowledges a climate emergency

Extinction Rebellion (XR) is a dynamic, global movement that has been taken up with gusto by Blue Mountains residents. I have joined the rebellion and been impressed watching the self organising that is occurring in the Mountains as working groups and affinity groups have been formed. To find out more, enter *Extinction Rebellion Blue Mountains* into your preferred search engine, and there is an active Facebook Page with this name.

In an initial local action, XR requested BMCC to take a motion declaring a climate emergency to the Local Government NSW Annual Conference in October. At the Council meeting on 30th July, Tom Colley, Keira Minter and Meike Edwards spoke to the motion which was passed by a majority of councillors. (Meike’s speech is reproduced on page 8.)

If Councils across NSW vote to support the motion in October, they will be recognising the need to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees, and the urgent timelines for achieving this goal stipulated in the IPCC’s 2018 Special Report (e.g. reducing greenhouse emissions globally by 45% from 2010 levels by 2030). They will also be calling on State and Federal Governments to implement actions, frameworks and funding that support local government to implement the necessary emission reductions in their jurisdictions. The motion further states that councils need to play a leadership role in the transformation of the economy to zero emissions.

Clare Power.



Because of the implications of this case for land clearing throughout the state, the Society lodged a submission in relation to the private certification system and its regulation to the current *NSW Legislative Council Public Accountability Committee’s Inquiry into the regulation of building standards, building quality and building disputes*. (View our submission at www.bluemountains.org.au/submissions.htm)

We have written to Rob Stokes (Minister for Planning and Public Spaces), Kevin Anderson (Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation) and Matthew Kean (Minister for Energy and Environment), drawing their attention to these shortcomings of the private certification system.

The Society also requested urgent legislative reform to put a time limit on implementing decades old development consents. Both this Flora and Fauna Park and a hotel development adjacent to Katoomba Golf Course are examples of so-called ‘zombie’ DAs being activated decades after the original development consents were issued. The Society is also pursuing these issues with our local MP Trish Doyle.

The Eagle

I live where sun first strikes the ridge,
rise as its warmth unknots my bones.
Wattles flower winter long,
turn muted greens a patchwork gold,
the valley fills with light,
I soar on pollen scented air.

Early spring feeds serpent winds
that rock the home I built, like me
it frays, rubbed smooth with time,
my days are tightly bound,
held to the changing scarp.

Once mountain gums ringed my nest
and sheltered me from storms.
One by one, with years they fell
to fire and drought’s decay,
each season’s mark exposed
upon bald slabs of rock.

When morning gales are buffeting
I fold my head and nestle in.
Beyond the range of canyon walls
I ride on thermals of the mind
across new territories of dreams.

Michele Fermanis-Winward

Eucalypt Distillery, Ginninderra Press 2017.



A bushwalkers' "Poets Lunch"

Maiyingu Marragu holds special meaning to Wiradjuri people because of their continuing cultural connection to the place. Our intention was to show respect to the present owners and their ancestors and to gather together to tell stories from people of another culture who have grown familiar with the Australian landscape and especially the Blue Mountains.

Some read their own poetry and prose, while others read the words of friends now gone.

TING, 1 August 2019.

Minister Kean – buy Radiata Plateau today: This is the message of the advertisement (partly reproduced below) which appeared in the Blue Mountains Gazette on 15 September.

The Minister and Shayne Mallard made these statements during the Minister's visit to the Blue Mountains in late July. "We are having a very close look at acquiring Radiata Plateau for the purpose of incorporating it into the national park network." Matt Kean, NSW Minister for the Environment. "I call on my colleagues at the NSW Government to intervene and save the iconic Radiata Plateau from sale to developers. This is a once in a lifetime opportunity to acquire this environmentally and culturally important site for the benefit of future generations." Shayne Mallard, Liberal NSW Upper House MLC.

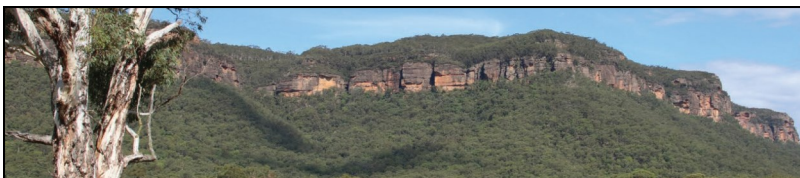
The Society continues to campaign strongly to have the Plateau purchased by the NSW Government. Our goal is 500 letters sent to the Minister. So far, we know over 175 letters have been sent.

Blue Mountains City Council has again recently voted to support acquisition of the Plateau by the NSW Government for inclusion in the national park system. Local member Trish Doyle continues to strongly support the campaign, as does Labor Shadow Minister for the Environment Kate Washington who recently reiterated Labor's support for purchase of the Plateau.

Add your voice to the call to have the Plateau acquired by the NSW Government and included in the national park system, safeguarding the Plateau's biodiversity and heritage values and ensuring ongoing public access, by sending a personal letter to Minister Kean.

What to do: Go to the *Leave Radiata Plateau Wild* website at <https://www.bluemountains.org.au/radiata/what.shtml> to download suggested text for your letter to Minister Kean and find where to send it. You should personalise your letter as individual personalised letters carry more weight with politicians than form letters or emails.

The Society believes management by the National Parks and Wildlife Service is the best option to conserve in perpetuity the Plateau's biodiversity and heritage values and ensure ongoing public access. However, if the Minister ultimately says no to purchase we are looking at alternatives such as partnering with other conservation not-for-profits. Many people have also approached the Society about commencing a crowd funding campaign to purchase the Plateau. The Society is also actively looking at crowd funding options, if the Minister says no to purchase.



MINISTER KEAN BUY RADIATA PLATEAU TODAY
MAKE A LANDMARK DECISION FOR CONSERVATION AND OUR COMMUNITY

The community has been campaigning for over thirty years to have Radiata Plateau permanently conserved and included in the national park reserve system.

Today is the day to make this happen Minister Kean.

By doing this you will:

- safeguard its biodiversity, including nationally significant flora and fauna species



NSW Koala Inquiry

A NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into Koala populations and habitat in NSW is underway. The Committee undertaking the inquiry is chaired by Cate Faehrmann MLC The Greens and is required to:

inquire into and report on actions, policies and funding by government to ensure healthy, sustainable koala populations and habitat in New South Wales.

The Committee report is due by June 2020.

Blue Mountains Conservation Society has made a submission to the inquiry, noting our concerns in regard to Koalas in the Greater Blue Mountains, in particular:

- Rapid climate change
- Loss of habitat
- Fragmentation of habitat
- Degradation of habitat
- Lack of resources for management and monitoring of Koalas
- Adequacy of legal protection for Koalas

A copy of our submission, along with other submissions made by the Society, is available on our website www.bluemountains.org.au

Judy Smith, Threatened Species Officer

For information about PLANT STUDY GROUP and TING (Thursday Interpretive Nature Group) Go to our website www.bluemountains.org.au and click on "Activities"

**Women and men of the past built the foundations of modern-day
Blue Mountains environmentalism. Their stories can inspire us.**

It's our turn now!

Christine Davies

1. Louisa Anne Meredith (1812-1895)

Mrs Meredith, who grew up in Birmingham, England, was a poet, writer, artist and amateur actress who lived in NSW from 1839 to 1844 with her husband Charles who was a pastoralist and, later, a Tasmanian politician.

The ANU education website says she was largely educated by her mother, that she learned to think independently on religious and social issues and that she was known for her vivacity and cheerfulness.

A significant part of her book "Notes and Sketches on New South Wales" describes travels between Sydney and Bathurst in the 1839/1840 period. Although the Blue Mountains had been studied for specific purposes earlier (for example by Charles Darwin), Meredith's work is one of the earliest attempts to present a comprehensive idea of the Blue Mountains from the viewpoint of an ordinary person. It was widely read as one of Murray's Colonial and Home Library series.

Describing cultivated land on the Cumberland Plain, Meredith writes: "The system of clearing here by the total destruction of every native tree and shrub gives a most bare, raw and ugly appearance to a new place. Unless a settler can see an expanse of bare, naked, unvaried, shadeless, dry, dusty land spread all around him, he fancies his dwelling wild and uncivilised."

Referring to a family running an 1839 inn near the present location of Springwood, she states: "Several children were lying or lounging about in close companionship with the pigs, equally dirty but apparently less lively".

The ANU site says Meredith's work "provoked angry reviews in Sydney". Surely it stimulated serious discussion of many topics.

Reading "Notes and Sketches on New South Wales" today, it shows the author's intense interest in the flora and fauna and the way the indigenous people were living their lives. In the days before photographs, her



description of the view from the top of Wentworth Falls is exquisite. <https://bit.ly/2OQUSRE>

It is clear that Meredith was willing to walk at least short distances into the bush to observe things like "the lovely native Indigo of New South Wales". She would spend long periods watching bush ants, although she fiercely disliked them in her own kitchen.

Above all, Louisa Meredith was extremely inquisitive and, for a 19th century woman, thoroughly willing to disagree with the orthodoxies adopted by the various classes and professions of people who were colonising New South Wales. She is a fitting character to begin a series on those who should inspire modern Blue Mountains environmentalists.

Image: Louisa Anne Meredith, source en.wikipedia.org

Meike's speech—(see *Council acknowledges a climate emergency* on page 6)

As a student I hear about the climate emergency almost every day through school and through social media. At this point it is near impossible for you to have not heard about it over and over again. But my question is why is no one acting like its real?

To me it seems simple. The Earth is sick. It needs help right now but no one is willing to give it the help that it needs. If we are going to stop and slowly begin to reverse the life threatening effects of climate change we need to be working as a team. We don't need a few people living a perfect sustainable life; we need thousands doing it imperfectly. We need people putting pressure on their governments and local councils to declare the climate emergency. And for those councils who have acknowledged it? They have to act like it's real.

We need to conceive real change and fast or we will start to see our water, our electricity and our food slip from our

fingers as well as putting every single living being at risk of extinction.

When I was younger I used to think that the world would end millions of years after I died but as I've grown older the deadline has started to look closer and closer to the point where I see the human race collapse in my own lifetime. I'm seeing my favourite animals become endangered and the oceans that I played in as a child fill with plastic. I'm seeing my future turn from bright to clouded with pollution. But this doesn't mean I've lost hope.

In fact this sad image of a dying future only makes me want to fight harder and scream louder. I believe that everyone in this room has the dedication it takes to bring about change and I'm trusting you to fight for me, your children and our future. But most importantly for the survival of our planet. There is no other choice for me and there is no other choice for you.

Climate Change - the greatest security threat Australia has ever faced Robin Mosman

At the Paris climate conference in 2015, goals were set to keep global warming down to 1.5 to 2°C. What is not often discussed is that even 1.5°C is not a good outcome, if one thinks of the disastrous effects being felt around the world already at 1°C warming.

What is even less talked about is that, given the lack of political commitment to climate action on a global scale, the climate system is actually heading to 3°C and possibly even more.

The priority of any government should be to protect its people. With climate change, the greatest security threat the Australian people have ever faced is already looming.

Yet, "The 'Official Future' in Australia for the last 20 years, subscribed to by the majority of political and corporate leaders, has been, and remains, climate denial and predatory delay". Because of this, "the Australian community is totally unprepared for the climate impacts which are already causing havoc across the continent, and will escalate".

"Policy, such as it is in Australia, reflects a desire to stay within our comfort zone, using predatory delay to prolong the life of our high-carbon economy as long as possible for short-term financial gain, irrespective of the damage it may do".

There is "a denialist view that climate change is a non-problem and if anything is done at all, it should be to wait and adapt".

"Such attitudes represent nothing less than criminal negligence by our political and corporate incumbency".

The above quotes are from *The Third Degree: Evidence and implications for Australia of existential climate-related security risk*, a discussion paper published by *Breakthrough – National Centre for Climate Restoration*.

The chilling conclusion is from Emeritus Director of Potsdam Institute, Prof Hans Joachim Schellnhuber: "Climate change is now reaching the end-game, where very soon humanity must choose between taking unprecedented action or accepting that it has been left too late and bear the consequences. There is a very big risk that we will just end our civilisation. The human species will survive somehow but we will destroy almost everything we have built up over the last two thousand years".

When I first read this report I felt a deep despair. I wept for the world, this beautiful land that I love, for my grandchildren and all the other children of the world and their hopes for the future. But over time, my feeling has changed. It has hardened and strengthened into one of outrage, an outrage that will not let me sit and watch this destruction without fighting. It is a feeling that the people of England must have felt in the face of invasion by Germany in the last war.

This feels like a war, one that ordinary people need to sign up for in a way that we have never done before. We have to challenge our political and corporate leaders, to demand that they act in the interest of Australia's citizens, not the vested interest of the coal industry, and actively pursue policies that will bring down our carbon emissions to zero by 2050, as the UK and Germany are doing.

So I will rally and march, and keep on doing it, again and again. I will join Blue Mountains school students in their climate strike on September 20. I will do whatever is needed, whatever I can think of doing, to demand climate action NOW! Will you join me?

You can become a member of Blue Mountains Conservation Society

- **Post** this Application Form with your cheque or money order to: Blue Mountains Conservation Society, PO Box 29, Wentworth Falls, NSW 2782, **OR**
- **Join online** at: www.bluemountains.org.au

(Use capitals please—even for email address)

Name(s) 1.
2.
3.

Address:
.....PC

Phone(s)

Email

I/We agree to support the aims and objectives of the Society as set out on reverse side of this membership application:

Please sign if named above.

Signature(s) 1.
2.
3.

MEMBERSHIP FEES (please circle one item)

Single \$35 Concession (Senior/Student) \$25

Household \$40 Household Concession \$30

Corporate (negotiable)

Membership (circled above) \$

Donation (tax deductible) \$

Bushwalkers: please add

\$20 per walker per annum. \$

TOTAL AMOUNT \$

Send my copy of Hut News by

Please tick box ☐ mail ☐ internet only

Would you like to be involved in any of the following activities or working groups? (Please underline):

Land use/development issues; Environmental Education; Threatened species issues; Website and social media; Plant nursery assistance; Bushcare; Publicity/photography; Water quality/sourcing studies; Administration;

ENQUIRIES: Phone 02 4757 1872

Email: membership@bluemountains.org.au

VALLEY OF THE WATERS BUSHCARE GROUP

The Valley of the Waters Bushcare Group meets on the second Saturday of each month, 9am - noon. Tools and gloves are available. Bring a drink, a snack and a sunhat.

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME

Phone Karen 4757 1929

BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Blue Mountains Conservation Society is a community organisation working to achieve the preservation and regeneration of the natural environment of the Greater Blue Mountains.

The Society believes that World Heritage status provides an opportunity for local community members to become custodians of the unique biodiversity and scenery of the Blue Mountains.

The Mission of the Society is to help conserve the natural environment of the Blue Mountains.

The Aims and Objectives of the Society are to:

- Disseminate and foster an understanding of the ideals of Conservation.
- Promote the need for ecological sustainability.
- Protect the natural environment—flora, fauna, habitat, water, land and air.
- Actively oppose those human activities which degrade or destroy the natural environment.
- Repair the adverse effects of human activities upon the environment.
- Encourage the love of the natural environment by conducting a regular program of bushwalks.
- Increase the pool of expert knowledge about the natural environment, through meetings, excursions, research and other activities.
- Provide information to the public on matters of Conservation, especially through the Conservation Hut at the Valley of the Waters, Wentworth Falls.
- Maintain close and friendly relations with like-minded groups.

A BEQUEST: Please remember us in your Will

The Law Society of NSW recommends the following wording: "I bequeath the sum of \$. to the Blue Mountains Conservation Society Inc. for its general purposes and declare that the receipt of the treasurer for the time being of the Blue Mountains Conservation Society shall be complete discharge to my executors in respect of any sum paid to Blue Mountains Conservation Society".

Welcome to new members

Ian Coleman	Sarah Terkes
Susan Coleman	Max Horn
Leonie Waldron	Nuala Gattenhof
Richard Waldron	Margaret Vickery
Tyler Waldron	Glenn Vickery
Holly Waldron	John McCann
Richard Maude	Laxton Martin

Lithgow and the "Lost World" in April 2008

Cathy Cavanagh

It was raining and cold. My women friends and I stopped at Lithgow and we looked at the murals on the railway bridge. They trace the history of Lithgow from Aboriginal occupation up to the coal mines and the bitter strikes of the 1940s. Then I showed them Lake Pillans and Blast Furnace park.

I never cease to feel a shiver as I turn into the park and see the reclaimed industrial pool and park. This is the site of Australia's first attempt to make steel. The pool - Lake Pillans - is clear now with a family of ducks; I saw ducklings last time I was here. 10 years ago it was stagnant and blue. The small hill has been replanted by my Indigenous Land Management class, all from Walgett.

The relic of the blast furnace looms above the hill, almost like a cathedral in size and design, with round and arched openings. The poplars of Lithgow, yellowing now, are framed in the distance. It's so crisp and clean now, almost 80 years since it ceased to operate. We stood where the noise, dirt and heat of the inferno is now memorialised. The remnants of the pigs and sows in the argot of steel manufacturing are inscrutable to us, the soft handed voyeurs.

The trip through the valley past the State Mine and up the dirt road to Bungleboori camp ground was quiet and beautiful, the stone walls and cavernous shapes of the rocks beginning to form the *pagodas*.

Quite a contrast to the camping ground itself. Situated on the edge of a dark pine forest it was full of tents, four-wheel drive vehicles, dirt bikes, big motor bikes, peewee bikes and macho-type utes.

Dirt bikes skittered past us, up on one wheel showering water and mud gleefully. Groups of men in padded coats and helmets prepared themselves for the next onslaught into the bush. The only light in this apocalyptic scene was the brightness in the soft rain of the autumn leaves of a single Plane tree - electric lemon light. We stood under this and ate our lunch around a picnic table with wet leaves as a tablecloth. None of us felt comfortable enough to sit.

We began our walk to the *Lost City*. It wasn't long before a convoy of a four-wheel drive club forced us off the path. We watched them slither and slip through the deep holes created by countless other cruel wide rubber wheels. The walk was constantly marred by bikes and utes passing and the constant threatening noise of unseen bikes on other paths. Like Vietnamese villagers during the war or the Northern Irish during *the troubles* I listened and imagined a helicopter searching for me. Those seated inside their high four-wheel drives smiled patronisingly down on us as we walked and one driver enquired if we were ok. No one else seemed to walk this track.

When we reached the *Lost City* the four-wheel drive convoy was in the destructive process of turning and reversing, shuddering the earth and crushing the bush's small attempts at regenerating the track.

At last we were alone with the rock formations described as the *Lost City*, *Gardens of Stone* or *Pagodas*. All these terms attempt to describe these rocks, weathered and yes, castle like in an eastern style. I've seen Borobodor but not the Cambodian temples. These old rocks are more mysterious. We don't know about them. No stories are left to us to understand them. We can look and try to feel their power.

I only know that on the way back I saw a flame robin drinking at the muddy pool formed by the four-wheel drives.

The bird turned to show me its scarlet orange breast. Like a little ageless miracle it lives here near the mysterious rocks, hairpin banksias and tall gums with long peeling bark strips. It hears the encroaching motor noises and sees the dark moving shapes of the four-wheel drives on its estate.

BLUE TRAIL QUESTION 2 – What lingering evidence of kerosene shale mining can be found in the Upper Blue Mountains?

Mining shale for kerosene took place at Ruined Castle and Nellies Glen near Katoomba from the 1870s to c1903 and also at Hartley Vale from 1865 to 1921.

Limited evidence survives of the elaborate structures used to transport mined shale from valleys to mainline rail heads. An aerial ropeway using large wooden towers and metal cables operated from Ruined Castle to the site of Scenic World for a few months in 1884 (see photo page 1).

A tramway for horse-drawn skips was more enduring and followed the contour from Ruined Castle to the base of the incline now known as the Scenic Railway. Later, traffic from the Glen Shale Mine on the western flank of Narrowneck joined this route via the “Mount Rennie Tunnel”, which still cuts under Narrowneck today but is usually flooded. The name of the “Golden Stairs” walking track echoes the lyrics of a hymn Salvation Army missionaries used to sing while rescuing the souls of hard-bitten miners camped in tents at the Ruined Castle diggings.

Until 1931, tracks from the shale era gave high quality pedestrian access to the iconic Mount Solitary. Then the cliff at Malaita Point above the timber-reinforced coal mining adits collapsed in the “great landslide”. The Federal Pass between Malaita Point and the Golden Stairs has never been in good condition since.

On private land where the Six Foot Track and the Devils Hole track meet, note the sites of buildings for the village serving the Glen Shale mine. Mine owner John Britty North established a walking path from his home east of the Explorers Marked Tree via the head of Bonnie Doon Falls to the mine. Minimal evidence of this track survives.

Old shale mining infrastructure is more obvious in the Hartley Vale area but much of it is on private property. There was a long narrow gauge railway from Hartley Vale Station (where the main line tracks are spread near the corner of Hartley Vale Road and Darling Causeway) to the head of an incline accessing the valley workings. Travelling slowly along the road east of the Comet Inn, visitors can see a plaque and substantial evidence of clearing and disturbance on both sides of the road.

In the late 19th century, kerosene was an essential part of Australia’s energy needs but the mining technology of the time was such that the mined areas have now partly recovered and the ongoing interference with ecological systems is slight, compared to the effects of methods such as modern long-wall coal mining.



Images: (Page 11, from top)

Door latch from shale skip, Kedumba Valley

Eastern entrance of the Mt. Rennie Tunnel (Rennies Tunnel)

The Katoomba area photos were taken on a “Fat Canyoners” expedition led by Philip Hammon, a prolific local history author and former chief of Scenic World. Story and more photos.

<https://fatcanyoners.org/2013/08/31/ruined-castle-archaeology/>

Oil tanks on main incline, Hartley Vale (Trove)

(On page 1)

Southern terminal of the aerial ropeway to Ruined Castle

This “Blue Trail” is a collective description for sites in the western Blue Mountains that arouse natural or cultural interest or both. Most are only a short walk from roads or vehicular tracks. One day, a high quality walking path may link them.

Sections of the Blue Trail featuring the western Blue Mountains can be found in past issues of Hut News: www.bluemountains.org.au/hutnews.shtml The full Blue Trail is being added at www.simplyaustralia.com.au/category/blue-trail/

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)

Sep 14 **Victory Track and Magdala Track.** Leader **Eddie 47842691.** Meet Falconbridge Stn. CP Nth. side 8.30am. 12k, Gr 3, Map Springwood.

Sep 21 **Nepean River Narrows Lookout, via Rileys Mountain Mulgoa,** Leader, **Alice 47393086 or 0425738766.** Meet Glenbrook Stn. CP, 8.30am. 13k, Gr2. Map, Penrith.

SUNDAY Sep 22 OLDIE'S DAY -The Devil's Maw. Not difficult. All welcome. Leader **Hugh 0423 309 854 or huespe47@gmail.com** Ring Leader for details and to book in. 2k, Gr2, Map, Ben Bullen.

Sep 28 **Rock Island.** Leader **Harold 0409010737** Contact leader for details. 9k GR 3, Map Check with leader.

Oct 5 **Clerestory Spurs. Spectacular pagoda country.** Leader **Hugh 0423 309 854 or huespe47@gmail.com** Contact leader for details., 6k. Grd 3. Map, Cullen Bullen.

Oct 12 **Legendary Donkey Mountain.** Leader **Harold 0409010737.** Contact leader for details. 8k, Gr 3/4, Map Cullen Bullen.

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

Sep 16 **Rodriguez Pass - Blachheath.** Govetts Leap circuit via Junction Rock and Evans Lookout. About 12km with ascents/descents over 600m with a lot of steps. It's a very beautiful walk following waterways most of the day. Blackheath Neighbourhood Centre 8-40am. Freda : fredanarr@outlook.com Grade 3-4.

Sep 23 **Toongabbie to Parramatta stations.** 12Km through parks and along green corridors
Be on Blue Mountains Train arriving Blacktown Station 9-10am. Judith 0419 780 640 Grade 2

Sep 30 **Bus Trip - Bent's Basin, Wallacia.** "Includes walk to Gorge Lookout" Bring National Park Pass. Steep climb at start. Springwood car park rear of Westpac 9-15am. Fare \$10. Book and pay Maurice. Maurice 4739 4942. Grade 2/3.

Oct 7 **Empire Pass Lawson.** Walk to Frederica Falls from Hugh's Ave and then along creek to Dante's Glen, Fairy Falls, Echo Bluff and out via a little known track back to Hugh's Ave then return to Lawson Station. Approx 8Km. Lawson Bowling Club Car Park 8-40am. Jane Boyd 0403 470 101. Grade 3.

Oct 14 Asgard Swamp and Thor Head, Bell. Mt Victoria Station 9.50 am. Car pool fare \$5. Tracy 0434 362 611. 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

Sept 12 **Fortress Ridge with option to continue to Darks Cave.** Meet cnr Leura Mall and Megalong Street 9.30am. Leader Roger 4787 7432. Carpool, 4WD preferred. Take lunch. Grade 2

Sept 19 **Nature Trail, Wentworth Falls.** Meet Stockyard Car Park, Wentworth Falls 9.30am. Leader Christine 4757 2864. Carpool. Take lunch. Grade 2.

Sep 26 **October Creek, Mount Wilson.** Meet Mount Vic Station 9.50am. Beverley 4757 2076. Carpool \$5. Take lunch. Gr 2.

Oct 3 **Bents Basin and Gorge Lookout. National Park Entry required.** One steep climb on fire trail. Meet Glenbrook Station Car Park (east) 9.30am. Leader Maurice 4739 4942. Carpool \$5. Take lunch. Grade 2

Oct 10 **Katoomba Airfield to Point Pilcher.** Meet Medlow Bath Station northside 9.30am. Leader Tracy 0434 362 611. Carpool. Take lunch. Grade 2

Oct 17 **Evans Lookout to Govetts Leap, Blackheath.** Meet Blackheath Neighbourhood Centre 9.45am. Leader Tracy 0434 362 611. Carpool. Take lunch. Grade 2

Society bushwalks on facebook: Visit <https://www.facebook.com/bmcslongerbushwalks/>



"No" to feral horses! (left to right) "Corroboree frog", Paddy Cavanagh, Bob Debus, Christine Davies, Lyndal Sullivan, Don Morison. Photo by Geoff Dernee.

BMCS Planning & Development Resource Kit

Do you want to take action on an environmental issue in your neighbourhood or the Blue Mountains more broadly?

Do you want information about the laws and procedures relating to development and environmental protection?

Find out what YOU can do! Go to the Planning and Development Resource Kit

www.bluemountains.org.au/pdrk-welcome.shtml