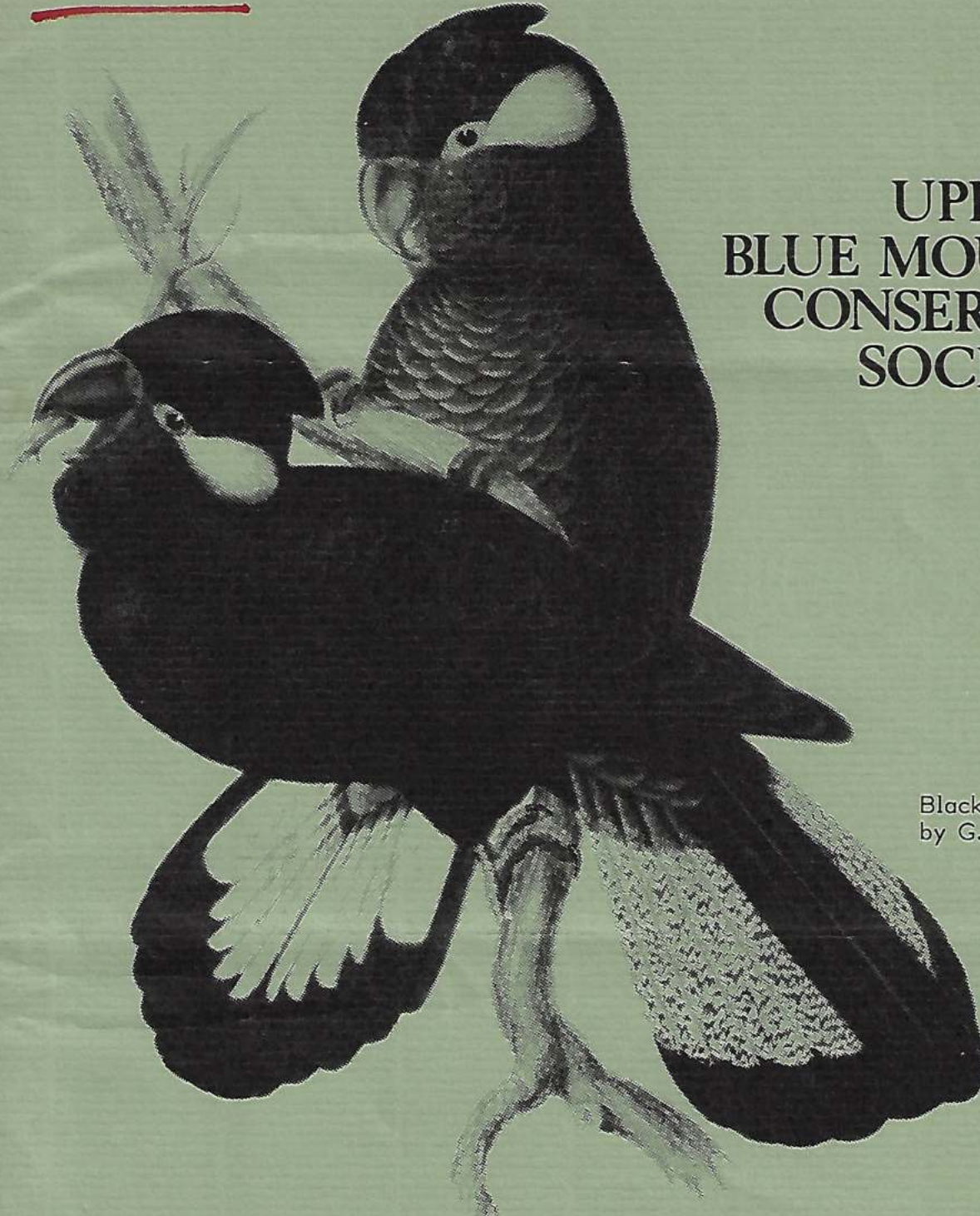


JANUARY 1989  
No. 74

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## UPPER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Black Cockatoos  
by G.J. Broinowski

# Newsletter

Registered by Australia Post—Publication No. NBHO 925

UPPER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY INC.

Incorporated in New South Wales. Registered Office: The Conservation Hut,  
Valley of Waters Reserve, Valley Road, Wentworth Falls 2782.  
Address for Correspondence: P.O. Box 29, Wentworth Falls 2782

SUBSCRIPTIONS: Pensioners and Juniors \$4.00 per year; Single Membership  
\$6.00 per year; Family Membership \$10.00 per year.

MEETINGS: Held on last Friday in the month, January to November inclusive at  
the Conservation Hut, Valley of Waters Reserve, Valley Road Wentworth Falls  
at 7.30 p.m.

For speakers at coming meetings, please see Public notices in the Gazette.

COMMITTEE FOR 1989

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President	..... Dulcie Toseland	84.1682
Vice Presidents	..... Eric Blick	88.1051
	..... Mick Dark	58.7061
Secretary	..... Reg Toseland	84.1682
Treasurer	..... Elvine Thomas	84.2121
Membership Officer	..... Betty Collings	57.2131
Newsletter Editor	..... Ewart Collings	57.2131
Walks Convenors	..... Olive & John Noble	87.8342
Librarian	..... June Blick	88.1051
Hut Duty Organiser	..... Beverley Thompson	57.2076
Land Preservation Officer	Deirdre Morton	58.8137
Publicity Officer	..... Shirley Brown	82.4248

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NEWSLETTER: Four issues a year - April, July, October, January  
Advertising space available.

LIBRARY: A wide range of books on wildlife and conservation available to  
members. Facilities for borrowing and returning books at Monthly Meetings.

THE HUT: The Society maintains a small museum and information centre at the  
Conservation Hut. It is manned on weekends and holidays by voluntary helpers.

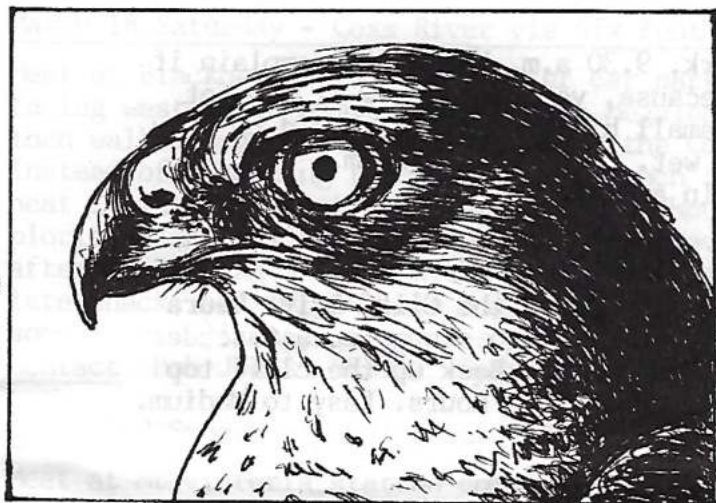
PUBLICATIONS: A range of specialist booklets, posters, maps, postcards etc  
may be purchased at the Hut.

SALE OF NATIVE PLANTS: Opportunities to purchase native plants grown by  
Members are organised from time to time during the year. These sales are  
held at the Hut, proceeds to the Land Preservation Fund.

WALKS: Walks are organised for the first Sunday, third Thursday and third  
Saturday of the month, conducted by experienced leaders.

LAND PRESERVATION: The Society has a Land Preservation Fund which was set up  
to give lovers of the bush an opportunity to preserve environmentally  
important land in the Blue Mountains by purchase and dedication as a reserve.





# UPPER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY

## Newsletter

No. 74

January, 1989

<u>Contents</u>	<u>Page</u>
Coming Walks & Talks	... 1
Reports on Walks	... 3
Search for the Night Parrot	... 5
By Bread Alone	... 6
From Padleys Pedestal	... 8
Down the Drain	... 9
Bushwalkers of the Past	... 10
Society News	... 11
The King	... 12

### COMING TALKS

<u>January</u>	-	Slides
<u>February</u>	-	Friends of the
<u>Weeding</u>		Blue Mountains
<u>March, 31st</u>	-	Annual General
		Meeting

### WALKS PROGRAMME 1989

IT IS ESSENTIAL ON ALL WALKS IN THE HOT WEATHER THAT MEMBERS  
SHOULD CARRY AT LEAST 1 LITRE OF WATER

CARRY ON ALL WALKS:

First Aid Kit  
Torch  
Matches  
Warm Shirt or Sweater  
Protective Rainwear  
Hat

WEAR SAFE FOOTWEAR

ALL PEOPLE ATTENDING WALKS DO SO AT THEIR OWN RISK

### January 1st Sunday - Grand Canyon Area

Meet at Blackheath Station commuter car park (left hand side of Station facing west) 9.30 a.m. Walk down Neats Glen to Beauchamp Falls then to Evans Lookout. 5 hours. Medium.

Contact Bob Jones 588361 Sydney train arrives 9.24 a.m.

### January Thursday 19th - Heritage Centre to Horseshoe Falls

Meet in Govetts Leap Road Blackheath, just past the shops 9.30 a.m. Visit the Heritage Centre, then stroll along the Heritage Track to Govett's Leap. The Heritage Track, well maintained by N.P.W.S., has native flora identified by small plaques. The walk from Govett's Leap to Horseshoe Falls is optional for those who wish to spend more time on the Heritage Track. The walk is easy as long as you wish to make it.

Contact Bob Jones 588361 Sydney train arrives 8.50 a.m.



### January Saturday 21st - Mystery Walk

Meet Mt Victoria Station commuter car park, 9.30 a.m. You can't complain if you don't get to where you were going, because, you won't know if you got to where you were going anyway. Just a small hint, the walk should be very unusual and be prepared to get your feet wet. 5 hours. Medium.

Contact John Noble 87 8342 Sydney train arrives 8.36 a.m.

### February Sunday 5th - Leura Forest

Meet at Leura Baths Picnic Area which is situated on the Cliff Drive Leura adjacent to Leura Cascades. 9.30 a.m. The walk will go along Leura Cascades then down to the bottom of the escarpment for lunch. Back up the cliff top track and finish near the Fork and View Restaurant. 5 hours. Easy to Medium.

Contact David Thomas 84 2121

### February 16th Thursday - Point Pilcher

Meet in front of the Hydro Majestic complex (opposite Station on Great Western Highway) Medlow Bath. 10.30 a.m. Good bird country with a variety of native flora. Wonderful view of the Fernery and the Grose Valley. This walk was an old tourist track from the Hydro Majestic to the Grand Canyon and was reopened by Jim Smith last year. 4 hours. Easy.

Contact Shirley Brown 82 4248 Sydney train arrives 10.23 a.m.  
Lithgow train 10.23. a.m.

### February 18th Saturday - Rodriguez Pass

Meet at Blackheath Station commuter car park (left hand side of Station facing west). 8.30 a.m. The walk will go down from Evans Lookout along the Horse Track to Rodriguez pass then back up to Evans lookout. A round trip, steep in one short section only, can be recommended for a variety of interests to conservationists. 6 hours Medium

Contact Olive Noble 87 8342 Sydney train arrives 8.29 a.m.

### March 5th Sunday - Braeside Walk (Bird Watch)

Meet at Blackheath Station Commuter Car Park (left hand side of station facing west) 10 a.m. The walk will be a combined ramble and bird watching event. We will be fortunate to have as a guide Graham Alcorn who is a knowledgeable bird watcher and caller. The walk will start at the end of Braeside Street and go along Govett's Leap Brook to the Bridal Veil Falls. We follow the Brook towards Govett's Leap Falls. From this point, depending on the bird sightings, we might continue some distance further. 4 to 5 hours. Very easy.

Contact Graham Alcorn 881033 Sydney train arrives 9.24 a.m.

### March 16th Thursday - Camels Hump

Meet at Mt Victoria Station. Commuter Car Park 10.00 a.m. Drive to Mt Tomah Picnic Area (about 30 minutes drive) which is situated along the Bell Road. Walk along the Camels' Saddle up to the Camel's Hump. The Hump is 2925M above sea level so there should be a good view. 4 hours easy.

Contact Chris McDonald 045 672188



March 18 Saturday - Coxs River via Six Foot Track

Meet at Blackheath Station commuter car park (left hand side of station facing west) 8.30 a.m. Drive down to Megalong Valley to the Ford Crossing then walk along the Six Foot Track to the Coxs River (about 1 3/4 hrs. Easy) Instead of departing the river after lunch and walking back in the midday heat it is optional to spend a number of hours on the river swimming or exploring then walk back in the cool of the evening. If you are staying for the afternoon, bring a torch with fresh batteries, swimmers and extra food for a late snack, and if you like a good cup of tea, a small billy. There might be some night walking, so torches are a must. 5 hours or longer. Optional. Easy. Contact Bob Jones 588361 Sydney train arrives 8.29 a.m.

April 2nd Sunday - Camels Back

Meet at Mt Victoria station commuter car park. 10.00 a.m. The walk begins with a drive of approximately 30 minutes into Kanimbla Valley via Coxs River Road. The walk will proceed along the side of the Camels Back. The climb to the top of the Camels Back is optional. The Camels Back is the old Mt Victoria. This walk has a remarkable forest area and extensive views 4 hours. Easy. The walk to be confirmed in the April issue of the Newsletter. Contact Rachel Makinson 87 1302 Sydney train arrives 9.31 a.m.

April 15th Saturday Mt Boyce

Meet at Blackheath Station commuter car park (left hand side of Station facing west) 8.30 a.m. The walk will go from the start of the north end of Porters Pass along the cliff tops to Mt Boyce. A very interesting walk. 6 hours, medium to hard, rough in places. Contact John Noble 87 8342 Sydney train arrives 8.29 a.m.

April 20th Thursday - Bedford Creek, Hazelbrook

Meet at Hazelbrook Station commuter car park (left hand side of Station facing west) 10 a.m. The walk will be along some fire trail but the greater portion in the valley to Bedford Creek for lunch. Then up Terrace Falls Creek via Salote Pool, Terrace Falls and Victor Falls back to the car park. 4 hrs Easy. Contact Bob Jones 588 361 Sydney train arrives 9.55 a.m. Lithgow train 9.50 a.m.

N.B. It is always very pleasant to read the walk reports, specially for those who were unable to attend. It would be appreciated if the Leader or someone who had been on the walk, could write a report and have it in the hands of the Editor at least a month before publication.

\* \* \* \* \*

WALK - WALLS' CAVE - SATURDAY OCTOBER 15TH

This is always a popular walk, and this time 29 people turned up. The leader had been a bit dismayed, five weeks earlier, to find that the bridge just before the Cave had been washed away, but wrote to the Water Board expressing the hope that it could be repaired before October 15th - - and it was! We have expressed our thanks to the Water Board.



There are, of course, other ways of getting to the Cave, but they can be regarded as difficult or even dangerous, and certainly not suitable for a large party. The old steps down the side of the Cave would be the best route, if only there was something to hold on to.

The archaeological interest of this cave has been described in earlier reports of this walk, so I will give only a brief report here. It was excavated by Drs E.D. Stockton and W. Holland in the early 1970's, and their findings were reported in Archaeology and Physical Anthropology in Oceania, IX (1), April 1974, 36-65. The cave floor has two levels, a large, front part about 3m above the high level of Greaves' Creek, and a very narrow residual back part at 7m. There is no evidence of human occupation on the upper level, but on the lower two separate occupational levels were found, with chert flakes and Bondi points. The first human occupation was dated at 12,000 BP (before the present) to about 6,000 BP: then there was a gap until about 3,300 BP. The reason for this gap is not known; it did not coincide with any known colder period.

It is interesting to learn that the Aboriginal people in the Upper Blue Mountains, at the time of the white invasion, wore mantles of skin stitched with kangaroo sinew, something which was not done on the coast. They had, by then, given up living in caves.

I am indebted for this information to Ron Compagnoni. We were sorry he could not be with us on the walk.

Rachel Makinson

#### ANNUAL BARBEQUE - SUNDAY 14 DECEMBER

The annual Barbeque was held in the picnic area adjacent to The Hut at The Valley of The Waters.

For the scheduled before lunch' walk we chose the Nature Trail because we wished to visit an area which has significant interest to the Society. Deirdre Morton was the guide.

Back at The Hut for lunch we scattered around in various groups looking for a cool breeze. Some members produced some tempting home made goodies which always disappear quickly.

After lunch most of the people went up to Katoomba for a presentation at 'Varuna'. 'Varuna' is a property which is to become a memorial to authoress Eleanor Dark. 'Varuna' is to become a centre for an arts workshop.

So ends another annual barbeque. A Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to everybody.

Bob Jones.

#### WALK - KANIMBLA VALLEY - SUNDAY NOVEMBER 6TH

An inauspicious start! It was raining and very cold for November (max at Mt Victoria 10C) and the train was 20 minutes late. But the rain stopped as we went down the Little ZigZag (or perhaps we dropped below it), and we had, as usual, a most enjoyable walk, diverting to inspect Bushranger's Cave, and then continuing down to Charles Johnson's place in the Kanimbla Valley. The Little ZigZag is an old stock route, built in 1874 by the stockmen in the Valley, to take their cattle to the railway. It is still in remarkably good condition, but in the last four or five years, erosion has begun at the

corners, mainly because people have been taking short cuts down from zig to zag, instead of going round the zag.

Charles came up to meet us at the point where it is easy to lose the track, and then was most hospitable in providing tea, coffee and cheese while we ate our lunches at his house, and in conducting a party round his property to see the wildflowers.

The return journey (an ascent of about 1000 ft) was made at various speeds by different members of the party; as it was such a cold day, they were able to set their own individual records.

Rachel Makinson

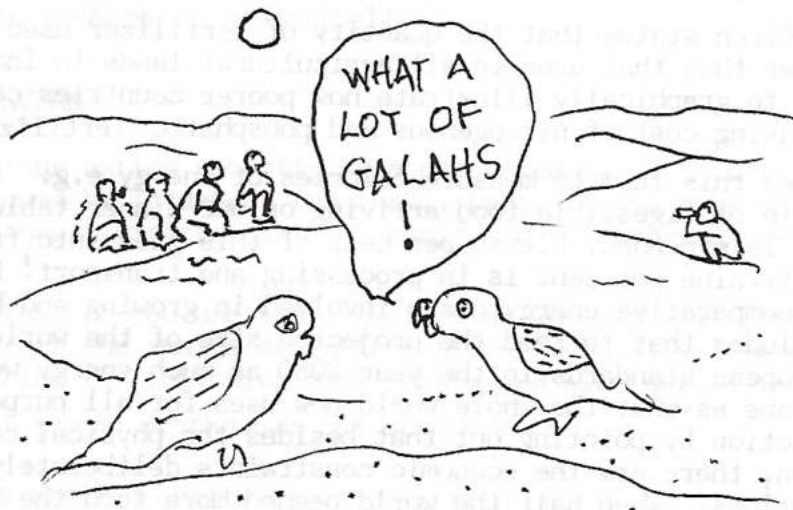
#### SEARCH FOR THE NIGHT PARROT

You can leave the night to the Night Parrot  
As far as I'm concerned.  
I've seen Eyrean Grasswrens and Orange Chats,  
I've seen birds till my eyelids burned,  
But I'm giving up on the Night Parrot.  
I declare the searching adjourned.

Night Parrots drink in the night time.  
Most birds drink in the day.  
So here we sit in the sand dunes  
Shivering away,  
With our spotlights down by the waterhole  
Doing our bit for science  
And all we ask of this dopey bird  
Is a modicum of compliance  
To come and drink at the waterhole  
And let us go home to bed.

You can leave the night to the Night Parrot.  
There is nothing more to be said.

Graham Alcorn.



Coongie Lake Camp.



CONFRONTING THE FUTURE: CHARLES BIRCH - CHAPTER 5. 'BY BREAD ALONE'

In this chapter Birch seems to be stating food production will never satisfy the wants of the present world population, let alone the predicted large increases.

Mankind's whole marketing strategy is based on the profit motive. Sales are made to the highest bidder which of course precludes third world countries.

Nothing it seems can be done until the population growth rate is curbed.

Birch then examines some common beliefs that people have for solving food shortages and finds them all worthless without population control - and even that has its limitation. 'Population could decrease and food production increase, but if the poor population lacks purchasing power it will still live in poverty, while a minority will continue to live in luxury.'

Statistically the world produces enough for all at the moment. The problem is its distribution and marketing. Birch points out the absurdities of third world countries exporting produce to richer countries to earn national incomes in which the poor will never share anyway. He describes waste through insects, rats, both in the field and in storage and the scrape off from the plates of the affluent to the garbage tin.

Now back to these common beliefs that people feel could solve the food shortages :

Land:- Many believe the earth has plenty of land waiting to be cultivated. Birch points out that 70% of this land is unfit for cultivation. The best land is already under cultivation. "Most of the remainder would require immense capital inputs, such as irrigation works before it is ready to produce food." He places some hope that it would be more practical to increase productivity on existing cultivated areas, but in the next breath he points out that if even the productivity was doubled, we would be no better off in 35 years time as the population would have doubled. "There is no solution to feeding the world of the future without control of population growth."

Water:- Immense capital investment in dams, irrigation systems would be necessary to cope with the expected 25% increase in demand for fresh water by the end of the century.

Fertilizers:- Birch states that the quantity of fertilizer used on lawns in U.S.A. is larger than that used in all agricultural lands in India. He uses that statement to graphically illustrate how poorer countries can't afford the ever increasing cost of nitrogenous and phosphatic fertilizers.

Energy:- He uses this term to measure calories of energy e.g. 'in Australia for each calorie of digestible food arriving on our dinner tables five times as much energy is expended. Eleven per cent of this goes into farming and the remaining eighty-nine per cent is in processing and transport.' Birch goes on to compare comparative energy costs involved in growing and harvesting a crop, and concludes that to feed the projected size of the world population at Western European standards in the year 2080 as much energy would be needed in cropping alone as what the whole world now uses for all purposes. He concludes this section by pointing out that besides the physical constraints to food production, there are the economic constraints deliberately engineered by the rich nations. "When half the world needed more food the rich countries



deliberately produced less than they could have done to keep prices up. This is another example of the failure of the world marketing system to cope with distributive injustice."

He sees the need for a world emergency food bank from which afflicted countries could draw in times of famine but once again the idea is frowned upon, it seems, by the large producers.

At the time Birch wrote his book (1976) Australia produced sufficient food to feed 35-40 million people. By 1985 it could be 70 million people. He quotes Dr Morley of the C.S.I.R.O. Division of Plant Industry of writing that Australia could produce enough to feed 200 million. This last figure would pose great risk to our natural resources, much forest cover would have to go, we would have to spend as much as we do on defence, extra trained agricultural scientists and personnel would have to be found. Despite this hypothetical effort, says Morley, we would only be feeding about 5% of the people who will be living in Asia in the year 2000.

Under the heading "What should we do?" he concludes with these pointers.

1. "Something new has to be devised in the New International Order of the future." Food should be distributed according to need rather than capacity to pay.
2. Food production should be in those countries that need it and fertilisers and experts provided.
3. A world food bank should be established to handle future famine.
4. He sees little merit in Australia growing more food unless it can be sent to where it is most needed.
5. Meat raising should be confined to areas unsuited for cropping and plant raising should be for human consumption.
6. I quote the last in full "Australia cannot be the bread basket of the world. It is one of the rich countries that can produce food for the hungry world; but to get the food to the hungry will call for political commitments to a course of action that has much to commend it morally, perhaps nothing to commend it economically."

Lloyd Jones

#### BLUE TONGUED LIZARD CONCERN

It has been brought to our notice recently by a concerned member, that the Blue-tongued lizards could be in danger from snail bait. If you have not seen your usual and frequent visitors lately, could you consider the reasons, please.

It has been suggested that if you use snail bait, that you place it during the late evenings, so that the snails are affected overnight. The lizards will not eat dead snails during the following day. There are alternatives:-

- (a) Sawdust sprinkled around or through the plants will keep snails away.
- (b) A beer can with a small quantity of beer left in and placed in the garden will entice and trap them inside.

Any further alternatives - Please???



## FROM PADLEY'S PEDESTAL

Padley's Pedestal is a good place from which to talk about physical geology.

Let your eyes stray through about 45° - starting where the road winds down Victoria Pass and finishing a little beyond due South where the high Thurat country hides Kanangra Walls - the vane of the trig marker will indicate South. Here are rocks of four geological ages, from Devonian, through Carboniferous, Permian and Triassic i.e nearly 200 million years. This survey is of country defined to the East by the Narrow Neck and by the Cox's River to the West. The Cox's River is the dominant geological feature of the region.

Padley's Pedestal Lookout is on Triassic Narrabeen Group rocks, closely related to those on which our Hut stands. The pedestal itself has been separated from the main Hassan's Walls rock by widening of one of the settlement cracks so much responsible for our local cliffs. Victoria Pass descends from Triassic rocks through Permian coal measures to Permian Marine beds near Berghofer's old home. The Highway and the Gap Road traverse these marine beds till the climb to Brown's Gap through coal measures. As we leave the Gap Road to ascend to Hassan's Walls we leave the Coal Measures and re-enter the Triassic Narrabeen Group of rocks. Note in these rocks the characteristic occurrence of beds of red claystone.

Follow the Triassic skyline from the sugarloaf near Mt Victoria (which could be of Permian Coal Measures) - along the Triassic cliffline of the Shipley Plateau and the Narrow Neck. This line appears to end at Carlon Head and Clear Hill is obscured.

Now look south. Under Padley's Pedestal are Permian rocks, on top Coal Measures underlain by marine beds. These Permian beds lie unconformably \* on Carboniferous granite, originally intruded into Devonian rocks but uncovered by action of weathering and perhaps early erosion by a Permian Sea so that the granite is now directly covered by marine deposits.

Granite country is spread widely between the Triassic Walls and the Cox's River. The upper hills are gently rounded but the river has become deeply entrenched and hillsides expose steep, smooth cliffs and many rounded tors. Kanimbla and Megalong Valleys are of granite country. The granite extends south to the region of Galong Creek and its boundary is more or less defined by a line of thick timber from Narrow Neck to the Cox's. The course of the river meanders which to me suggests that it existed prior to the uplift of the Blue mountains and so its increased gradient allowed it to excavate its steep and scenic valley.

Beyond this apparent Southern extremity of the granite are the oldest rocks of the region, mainly quartzites of the marine Devonian Period. These are the rocks from which are fashioned the ridges of the Wild Dogs and the Gangerangs and also the high Thurat Country, dominated by Mt Guouogang (4232 feet) but by its position and bulk obscuring Kanangra Walls. Overlying Devonian Rocks in the Wild Dogs are the spectacular Mouin, Warrigal and Dingo. These comprise lower stratae of Permian marine beds overlain by Permian Coal Measures. Such structures of younger rocks completely surrounded by old rocks are termed outliers. The marine beds too lie unconformably but here on to Devonian rocks as there is no intermediate occurrence of Carboniferous rocks.

\* I wrote of unconformities in Newsletter No 64 - June 1986



Across the Cox's River from the Wild Dogs and of similar geological form, are the high peaks of the Gangerangs. On a clear day one can identify the small humps leading to Mt Cloudmaker and named by Mylos Dunphy, "Rip", "Rack", "Roar" and "Rumble" but because of this distinctive shape given an official title of "Mt Sawtooth".

Ron Compagnoni

This article was written by Ron Compagnoni to accompany and explain the view from Padleys Pedestal Lookout at the start of the November 17th walk from Hassans Walls. Unfortunately Ron was not well enough to lead the walk. Olive Noble was to deputise for him, but the weather was so bad the walk had to be abandoned. No doubt the facts will remain true for another few thousand years.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### DOWN THE DRAIN

The October issue of the Newsletter contained Robin Corringham's distressing story of official lethargy towards the degeneration of the Woodford Creek area. This unhappy tale could probably be repeated hundreds of times around NSW. I am always amazed that bodies such as local or electrical Councils are prepared to spend thousands of dollars on huge machines to carve dirt roads into the bush, but nothing at all on maintenance. When the roads are built elaborate drains are often constructed, drains which would go a long way towards preserving the road if they were kept flowing, but a few good storms washes sufficient debris to block them. At this stage a couple of young people with implements could quickly clear them so the road remained as good as new.

But of course official bodies do not think that way (and we wonder why youth are unemployed) so instead of a few hundred dollars on maintenance the official body permits water (and possibly off road vehicles) to make merry until the road is totally impassable at which time in come thousands of dollars worth of destructive bulldozers.

Unfortunately walking tracks often suffer a similar fate. The track off the bottom of Bundarra Road at Blackheath, leading towards Fort Rook and Centennial Glen, is a striking example. For some years now this track has been an erosion gully (happily very minor compared to the one described by Robin Corringham). It is almost permanently wet, and it diverts the seepage from an entire hill side away from its proper gentle route through the bush to the creek. A track which should have had minimal impact on the environment has now revolutionized local water movements.

This was not the case when the track was originally built. There are still traces of excellent drains along the upper side leading to pipes to take the water to the lower side of the track. Some of the pipes remain, but they are all blocked, and the drains are full of debris. The track itself is the drain, and the only remedy now is to completely re-build it at great expense. It is a shame that when the track was new, neither the original builders nor the public who used it were prepared to devote the tiny amount of time and effort necessary to keep the drains open. Had this effort been expended the track might today be in need of only minor repair. It is to be hoped that the well-crafted tracks that are appearing today, for instance at Wentworth Falls, will not suffer a similar fate.

Barbara Baillie



### BUSHWALKERS OF THE PAST

Jim Smith gave a very interesting talk about "Blue Mountain Bushwalkers of the Past" at the November General Meeting. The talk was illustrated with slides of photographs taken between approximately 1906 and 1921.

The Blue Mountains was a popular holiday resort then as now. Before the days of do-it-yourself photography, professional photographers would station themselves at the top of the falls and accompany groups or couples to be photographed against backgrounds like the Bridal Veil at Leura or the Three Sisters. Family groups with Mother in large ostrich feather hats and long dresses to the ground, Father in a bowler or a boater with a cane and collar and tie and very often babies in arms with large frilly bonnets.

Interesting facts came to light from the study of these pictures - more women walkers than men, the average of 4.3 in a group, all male or all female, honeymooners. Summer was the most popular season and spring the least. Comments on the back of the photos were often amusing and very informative.

Large wicker baskets were carried with elaborate food - lettuce sandwiches, kidneys on toast, wine and vegetables carried in billy cans to keep cool. The tracks seemed in better condition, more water in streams and plenty of scraffiti on trees and rocks. The change in style of dress over the years was noticeable, though very little concession was made for roughness of terrain etc.

### MANAGEMENT

'Management of the Environment is the buzz phrase. It is used in every connection, but there is seldom an aim, or the objective may be so vague that it is not management at all but may be a spurious excuse. That is not to say that 'no management' is not a valid aim.

Consider the bush around us. Is it necessary that it should flower abundantly in the vigour of youth, exposed to the sun, every year? Or should the plants and all that live with them find their own way and pace in ordinary progression through the decades displaying the cycles of succession. Some hazards will be encountered and there will be changes. In the natural way of things who are we to say one course is preferable to another. Ten years ago rice flowers and *Mirbelia* carpeted exposed ground. This spring it is the fragile white crispness of *Leucopogon setiger* that delights.

Think carefully on Management.

Robin Corringham

### THE TANK STREAM TUNNEL

When the First Fleet sailed from Botany Bay and set up its tents and huts on the banks of this clear running rivulet, the Tank Stream was fringed with gum trees and navigable by schooner all the way to what is now Bridge Street. The waters of the fledgling colony's only sure source of refreshment were pure. During the drought of 1790, large holding tanks were cut into the sandstone along the watercourse, giving the stream its eventual name.

Australia's first conservation orders were placed over the Tank Stream by Governor Phillip, who ordered that trees should not be felled or stock allowed to graze within 50 yards of it.

The Tank Stream Tunnel which runs under Sydney's central business district has been placed on the National Estate Register. S.M.H.



## Society News

FEBRUARY MEETING & WORK DAY AT HUT - On Friday 24th February our speakers will be Friends of the Blue Mountains. They want to share with us their experiences, specially of their work at Echo Point. In December they joined forces with 12 young volunteers from various countries - members of Service Civil International (S.C.I.) - and together they worked at Belltrees, Echo Point, the Women's Health Centre and, for a short period, did some very valuable weeding at The Hut! Five National Trust experts taught techniques and supervised at the beginning of the 10 day camp and much valuable information and practical tips were passed on. Jill Dark had a propagating morning with them as well..

On Saturday, 25th February, at 9 a.m., we will meet again with the Friends of the Blue Mountains and be shown the latest techniques in dealing with weeds and looking after our own patch. This will be a very interesting day, so do try to come - for the whole day if possible - bring lunch.

If you can - BRING - gloves  
secateurs  
a thin trowel  
a long sharp (boning) knife (terrific weeding tool)  
a large plastic bag

More information from Melinda 84.1408 or Shirley 82.4248.

### MARCH DATES TO REMEMBER

March 11, 1989 - The next plant sale will be held on Saturday, March 11 - there will be no Friday night sale, but plants will be on sale from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.. Jill Dark will conduct a "Propagating Workshop" at 11 o'clock, with helpful hints on how to propagate native plants successfully. In the afternoon she will lead one of her interesting rambles in the bush, identifying plants where they grow.

March 31, 1989 - Annual General Meeting and election of office bearers for 1989. Reports for year 1988.

SPRING PLANT SALE - We are still recovering from the stunning success of the October sale. About \$1900 was taken! Winner of the Bird Trip to Burragorang with Paul Nagle, was Gladys Corbett of Wentworth Falls (white ticket 85). Graham Alcorn's talk was full of humour and good advice on attracting birds to gardens. He later took quite a group on a long walk on one of the windiest days we've had this year. Jill's booklet - A Hundred Hardy Natives for Blue Mountains Gardens - sold exceptionally well. At only \$2 it is worth remembering as a small gift, specially to newcomers to the Mountains.

The collection of cans has brought in about \$200 in 1988 - many thanks to Grete Vanry.

Many thanks also to those who have returned pots for re-use; if it is possible to wash pots before returning them, it will save such a lot of time and be much appreciated.

COUNCIL'S RECYCLING SERVICE - A Warning! B.M.C.C. is surveying the glass and paper collections over the next few months - and to quote a letter received in December from the Council "the service needs to be cost effective and the future of the service will depend on the survey". Please urge as many people as you can to USE the service, as if withdrawn, the opportunity to recycle these resources will be lost to us, to say nothing of the resulting increased garbage disposal problem. Hut Duty folk could assist by taking home all the cardboard packaging from around drinks, etc., as well as any bottles, to add to their own collections. If this is a problem, leave them in boxes inside the Hut and someone will collect. Of course, all aluminium cans are kept at the Hut for recycling as well.



### THE KING

The falcon drank at the mirror-pool  
On the ledge, high in the air,  
While the swirls of water spun their cloth  
Far down on the turrets bare;  
And I stood alone as I sang my song  
To the evening's rushes of red.  
And what did I see as I moved to go  
By the bones of the gravel bed?  
He sat alone like a king of stone,  
And he gazed at the gleaming pool,  
And he dipped his head and he splashed the pearls  
Of water into the pool;  
He eyed me without moving his face,  
Without moving a feather so trim.  
And I stood and I gazed at the falcon of stone,  
For the king of the Mountains was he.  
Then he lifted off with a sheer disdain,  
And he fell through the liquid air,  
And the breeze that adjusted his sails again  
Carried him here and there.  
He never looked back, nor right nor left,  
Just journeyed upon his way;  
And I cherished the moment in the mountain pass  
When I met the king that day.

Denis Kevans

\*\*\*\*\*

An oak tree is just a nut that stood its ground.

Fred Shero

The earth we abuse and the living things we kill  
will, in the end, take their revenge, for in ex-  
ploiting their presence we are diminishing our  
future.

Marya Mannes

□ WE don't know how we can tell you this, but figures supplied by the Wilderness Society show that the paper used in last Saturday's record-sized *Herald* consumed at least 7,911 average-sized trees.



## LAND PRESERVATION FUND

The Society has a Land Preservation Fund which was set up to give lovers of the bush an opportunity to help to preserve some environmentally important land in the Blue Mountains by its purchase and dedication as a reserve.

### Tax Deductible Donations (Minimum \$10.00)

The forms below show you how to make a tax deductible donation to the Australian Conservation Foundation, advising ACF of your preference that the funds be used for the Land Preservation Fund of the Upper Blue Mountains Conservation Society.

---

The Director  
Australian Conservation Foundation,  
672B Glenferrie Rd.,  
HAWTHORN VIC 3122

Dear Sir,

I attach a donation to the Australian Conservation Foundation. I prefer that this donation be spent for the purposes of the Upper Blue Mountains Conservation Society Land Preservation Fund. I understand that this donation is tax deductible and therefore look forward to your receipt.

Name (block letters) .....

Address .....

.....

Amount ..... Signed ..... Date .....

---

The Treasurer,  
Upper Blue Mountains Conservation Society,  
P.O. Box 29,  
WENIWOOTH FALLS 2782

Dear Sir,

I have forwarded today to the Australian Conservation Foundation a donation expressing a preference that it be spent for the purpose of the Upper Blue Mountains Conservation Society Land Preservation Fund.

Name .....

Address.....

.....

Amount ..... Signed ..... Date.....



### UPPER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Objects of the Society as set out in the Constitution are:

- (a) To disseminate and foster an understanding of the ideals of Conservation among members of the Society and the public generally, particularly in relation to the unique resources of the Blue Mountains.
- (b) To conduct meetings, excursions and research, and such other activities as may be determined by the Society in relation to Wildlife Conservation, and especially through the Conservation Hut at the Valley of the Waters, Wentworth Falls, to provide information on Conservation matters.
- (c) To maintain friendly relations with other Conservation Societies especially local bodies.

### UPPER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY

PO Box 29, Wentworth Falls.

#### MEMBERSHIP / RENEWAL FORM\*

The Membership Secretary:

I enclose a cheque or postal note for ..... for membership or renewal of my membership.

Name .....

Address .....

Phone .....

Single	\$6.00
Family	\$10.00
Concession	\$4.00

\* strike out which is not applicable



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Monday to Friday - 9.00 a.m. to 5.30 p.m.

Saturday - 9.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m. (047) 82 3467



*This version of the Newsletter was re-typed from the original by Phoebe Coster in January 2024 to enable search engines to 'see' the text. Minor changes have been made to correct typographical errors and to add clarity.*

January 1989

No. 74

UPPER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER.

Registered by Australia Post – Publication No. NBHO 925

UPPER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Incorporated in New South Wales. Registered Office: The Conservation Hut, Valley of Waters Reserve, Valley Road Wentworth Falls 2782.

Address for Correspondence: P.O. Box 29, Wentworth Falls 2782.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: Pensioners & Juniors \$4.00 per year; Single Membership \$6.00 per year; Family Membership \$10.00 per year.

MEETINGS: Held on last Friday in the month, January to November inclusive at the Conservation Hut, Valley of Waters Reserve, Valley Road Wentworth Falls at 7.30 p.m.

For speakers at coming meetings, please see Public Notices in the Gazette.

COMMITTEE FOR 1988

President.....	Dulcie Toseland	84.1682
Vice-Presidents.....	Eric Blick	88.1051
	Mick Dark	58.7061
Secretary.....	Reg Toseland	84.1682
Treasurer.....	Elvine Thomas	84.2121
Membership Officer.....	Betty Collings	57.2131
Newsletter Editor.....	Ewart Collings	57.2131
Walks Conveners.....	Olive and John Noble	87.8342
Librarian.....	June Blick	88.1051
Hut Duty Organiser.....	Beverly Thompson	57.2076
Land Preservation Officer...	Deidre Morton	58.8137
Publicity Officer.....	Shirley Brown	82.4248

NEWSLETTER: Four issues a year – April, July, October, January. Advertising space available.

LIBRARY: A wide range of books on wildlife and conservation available to Members. Facilities for borrowing and returning books at Monthly Meetings.

THE HUT: The Society maintains a small museum and information centre at the Conservation Hut. It is manned on weekends and holidays by voluntary helpers.



PUBLICATIONS: A range of specialist booklets, posters, maps, postcards etc may be purchased at the Hut.

SALE OF NATIVE PLANTS: Opportunities to purchase native plants grown by Members are organised from time to time during the year. These sales are held at the Hut, proceeds to the Land Preservation Fund.

WALKS: Walks are organised on the first Sunday, third Thursday and third Saturday of the month, conducted by experienced leaders.

LAND PRESERVATION: The Society has a Land Preservation Fund which was set up to give lovers of the bush an opportunity to preserve environmentally important land in the Blue Mountains by purchase and dedication as a reserve.

### Contents

Coming Walks & Talks

Reports on Walks

Search for the Night Parrot

By Bread Alone

From Padleys Pedestal

Down the Drain

Bushwalkers of the Past

Society News

The King

### COMING TALKS

January – Slides

February – Friends of the Blue Mountains Weeding

March, 31<sup>st</sup> – Annual General Meetings

### WALKS PROGRAMME 1989

IT IS ESSENTIAL ON ALL WALKS IN THE HOT WEATHER THAT MEMBERS  
SHOULD CARRY AT LEAST 1 LITRE OF WATER

CARRY ON ALL WALKS:

- First Aid Kit
- Torch
- Matches
- Warm Shirt or Sweater
- Protective Rainwear
- Hat

WEAR SAFE FOOTWEAR

ALL PEOPLE ATTENDING WALKS DO SO AT THEIR OWN RISK

### January 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday – Grand Canyon Area

Meet at Blackheath Station commuter car park (left hand side of Station facing west) 9.30 am.

Walk down Neats Glen to Beauchamp Falls then to Evans Lookout. 5 hours. Medium

Contact Bob Jones 588361 Sydney train arrives 9.24 am.



#### January Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> – Heritage Centre to Horseshoe Falls

Meet in Govetts Leap Road Blackheath, just past the shops 9.30 am. Visit the Heritage Centre, then stroll along the Heritage Track to Govett's Leap. The Heritage Track, well maintained by NPWS, has native flora identified by small plaques. The walk from Govett's Leap to Horseshoe Falls is optional for those who wish to spend more time on the Heritage Track. The walk is easy as long as you wish to make it.

Contact Bob Jones 588361 Sydney train arrives 8.50 am.

#### January Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> – Mystery Walk

Meet Mt Victoria Station commuter car park, 9.30 am. You can't complain if you don't get to where you are going, because, you won't know if you got to where you were going anyway. Just a small hint, the walk should be very unusual and be prepared to get your feet wet. 5 hours. Medium.

Contact John Noble 87 8342 Sydney train arrives 8.36 am.

#### February Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> – Leura Forest

Meet at Leura Baths Picnic Area which is situated on the Cliff Drive Leura adjacent to Leura Cascades. 9.30 am. The walk will go along Leura Cascades then down to the bottom of the escarpment for lunch. Back up the cliff top track and finish near the Fork and View Restaurant. 5 hours. Easy to Medium.

Contact David Thomas 84 2121

#### February 16<sup>th</sup> Thursday – Point Pilcher

Meet in front of the Hydro Majestic complex (opposite Station on Great Western Highway) Medlow Bath 10.30 am. Good bird country with a variety of native flora. Wonderful view of the Fernery and the Groase Valley. This walk was an old tourist track from the Hydro Majestic to the Grand Canyon and was reopened by Jim Smith last year. 4 hours. Easy

Contact Shirley Brown 82 4248 Sydney train arrives 10.23am Lithgow train arrives 10.23 am.

#### February 18<sup>th</sup> Saturday – Rodriguez Pass

Meet at Blackheath Station commuter car park (left hand side of Station facing west). 8.30 am. The walk will go down from Evans Lookout along the Horse Track to Rodriguez pass then back up to Evans Lookout. A round trip, steep in one short section only, can be recommended for a variety of interests to conservationists. 6 hours Medium.

Contact Olive Noble 87 8342 Sydney train arrives 8.29 am.

#### March 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday – Braeside Walk (Bird Watching)

Meet at Blackheath Station Commuter Car Park (left hand side of station facing west) 10 am. The walk will be a combined ramble and bird watching event. We will be fortunate to have as a guide Graham Alcorn who is a knowledgeable bird watcher and caller. The walk will start at the end of Braeside Street and go along Govett's Leap Brook to the Bridal Veil Falls. We follow the Brook towards Govett's Leap Falls. From this point, depending on the bird sightings, we might continue some distance further. 4 to 5 hours. Very Easy.

Contact Graham Alcorn 88 1033 Sydney train arrives 9.24 am.

#### March 16<sup>th</sup> Thursday – Camels Hump

Meet at Mt Victoria Station. Commuter Car Park 10.00 am. Drive to Mt Tomah Picnic Area (about 30 minutes drive) which is situated along the Bell Road. Walk along the Camel's Saddle up to the Camel's Hump. The Hump is 2925M above sea level so there should be a good view. 4 hours easy.

Contact Chris McDonald 045 672188



#### March 18<sup>th</sup> Saturday – Coxs River via Six Foot Track

Meet at Blackheath Station commuter car park (left hand side of station facing west) 8.30 am. Drive down to Megalong Valley to the Ford Crossing then walk along the Six Foot Track to the Coxs River (about 1 ¾ hrs. Easy) Instead of departing the river after lunch and walking back in the midday heat it is optional to spend a number of hours on the river swimming or exploring then walk back in the cool of the evening. If you are staying for the afternoon, bring a torch with fresh batteries, swimmers and extra food for a late snack, and if you like a good cup of tea, a small billy. There might be some night walking, so torches are a must. 5 hours or longer. Optional. Easy. Contact Bob Jones 588361 Sydney train arrives 8.29 am.

#### April 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday – Camel's Back

Meet at Mt Victoria station commuter car park. 10.00 am. The walk begins with a drive of approximately 30 minutes into Kanimbla Valley via Cox's River Road. The walk will proceed along the side of the Camel's Back. The climb to the top of the Camel's Back is optional. The Camel's Back is the old Mt Victoria. This walk has a remarkable forest area and extensive views. 4 hours. Easy. The walk to be confirmed in the April issue of the Newsletter. Contact Rachel Makinson 87 1302 Sydney train arrives 9.31 am.

#### April 15<sup>th</sup> Saturday – Mt Boyce

Meet at Blackheath Station commuter car park (left hand side of Station facing west) 8.30 am. The walk will go from the start of the north end of Porters Pass along the cliff tops to Mt Boyce. A very interesting walk. 6 hours, medium to hard, rough in places. Contact John Noble 87 8342 Sydney train arrives 8.29 am.

#### April 20<sup>th</sup> Thursday – Bedford Creek, Hazelbrook

Meet at Hazelbrook Station commuter car park (left hand side of Station facing west) 10.00 am. The walk will be along some fire trail but the greater portion in the valley to Bedford Creek for lunch. Then up Terrace Falls Creek via Salote Pool, Terrace Falls and Victor Falls back to the car park. 4 hours Easy. Contact Bob Jones 58 8361 Sydney train arrives 9.55 am. Lithgow train 9.50 am.

**N.B. It is always very pleasant to read the walk reports, specially for those who are unable to attend. It would be appreciated if the Leader or someone who had been on the walk, could write a report and have it in the hands of the Editor at least a month before publication.**

\*\*\*\*\*

#### WALK – WALL'S CAVE – SATURDAY OCTOBER 15<sup>th</sup>.

This is always a popular walk, and this time 29 people turned up. The leader had been dismayed, five weeks earlier, to find that the bridge just before the Cave had been washed away, but wrote to the Water Board expressing the hope that it could be repaired before October 15<sup>th</sup> – and it was! We have expressed our thanks to the Water Board.

There are, of course, other ways to getting to the Cave, but they can be regarded as difficult or even dangerous, and certainly not suitable for a large party. The old steps down the side of the Cave would be the best route, if only there was something to hold on to.

The archaeological interest of this cave has been described in earlier reports of this walk, so I will give only a brief report here. It was excavated by Drs E.D. Stockton and W. Holland in the early 1970's and their findings were reported in Archaeology and Physical Anthropology in Oceania, IX (1), April 1974, 36-65. The cave floor has two levels, a large, front part about 3m above the high level of Greave's Creek, and a very narrow residual back part at 7m. There is no evidence of human occupation on the upper level, but on the lower two separate occupational levels were found, with chert flakes and Bondi points. The first human occupation was dated at 12,000 BP (before the present) to about 6,000 BP: then there was a gap until about 3,300 BP. The reason for this gap is not known; it did not coincide with any known colder period.

It is interesting to learn that the Aboriginal people in the Upper Blue Mountains, at the time of the white invasion, wore mantles of skin stitched with kangaroo sinew, something which was not done on the coast. They had, by them, given up living in caves.

I am indebted for this information to Ron Compagnoni. We were sorry he could not be with us on the walk.

Rachel Makinson

#### ANNUAL BARBEQUE – SUNDAY 14<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER

The annual Barbeque was held in the picnic area adjacent to The Hut at The Valley of The Waters.

For the scheduled before lunch walk we chose the Nature Trail because we wished to visit an area which has significant interest to the Society. Deirdre Morton was the guide.

Back at The Hut for lunch we scattered around in various groups looking for a cool breeze. Some members produced some tempting home-made goodies which always disappear quickly.

After lunch most of the people went up to Katoomba for a presentation at "Varuna". "Varuna" is a property which is to become a memorial to authoress Eleanor Dark. "Veruna" is to become a centre for an arts workshop.

So ends another annual barbeque. A Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to everybody.

Bob Jones

#### WALK – KANIMBLA VALLEY – SUNDAY 6<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER

An inauspicious start! It was raining and very cold for November (max at Mt Victoria 10C) and the train was 20 minutes late. But the rain stopped as we went down the Little ZigZag (or perhaps we dropped below it), and we had, as usual, a most enjoyable walk, diverting to inspect Bushranger's Cave, and then continuing down to Charles Johnson's place in the Kanimbla Valley. The Little ZigZag is an old stock route, built in 1874 by the stockmen in the Valley, to take their cattle to the railway. It is still in remarkably good condition, but in the last four or five years, erosion has begun at the corners, mainly because people have been taking short cuts down from zig to zag, instead of going round the zag.



Charles came up to meet us at the point where it is easy to lose the track, and then was most hospitable in providing tea, coffee and cheese while we ate our lunches at his house, and in conducting a party round his property to see the wildflowers.

The return journey (an ascent of about 1000 ft) was made at various speeds by different members of the party; as it was such a cold day, they were able to set their own individual records.

Rachel Makinson.

#### SEARCH FOR THE NIGHT PARROT

You can leave the night to the Night Parrot  
As far as I'm concerned .  
I've seen Eyrean Grasswrens and Orange Chats,  
I've seen birds till my eyelids burned.  
But I'm giving up on the Night Parrot.  
I declare the searching adjourned.

Night Parrots drink in the night time.  
Most birds drink in the day.  
So here we sit in the sand dunes  
Shivering away,  
With our spotlights down by the waterhole  
Doing our bit for science  
And all we ask of this dopey bird  
Is a modicum of compliance  
To come and drink at the waterhole  
And let us go home to bed.

You can leave the night to the Night Parrot.  
There is nothing more to be said.

Graham Alcorn.

#### CONFRONTING THE FUTURE: CHARLES BIRCH – CHAPTER 5. 'BY BREAD ALONE'

In this chapter Birch seems to be stating food will never satisfy the wants of the present world population, let alone the predicted large increases.

Mankind's whole marketing strategy is based on the profit motive. Sales are made to the highest bidder which of course precludes third world countries.

Nothing it seems can be done until the population growth rate is curbed.

Birch then examines some common beliefs that people have for solving food shortages and finds them all worthless without population control – and even that has its limitation. 'Population could decrease and food production increases, but if the poor population lacks purchasing power it will still live in poverty, while a minority will continue to live in luxury.'

Statistically the world produces enough for all at the moment. The problem is its distribution and marketing. Birch points out the absurdities of third world countries exporting produce to richer countries to earn national incomes in which the poor will never share anyway. He describes waste through insects, rats, both in the field and in storage and the scrape off from the plates of the affluent to the garbage tin.

Now back to these common beliefs that people feel could solve the food shortages:

Land:- Many believe the earth has plenty of land waiting to be cultivated. Birch points out that 70% of this land is unfit for cultivation. The best land is already under cultivation. "Most of the remainder would require immense capital inputs, such as irrigation works before it is ready to produce food." He places some hope that it would be more practical to increase productivity on existing cultivated areas, but in the next breath he points out that if even the productivity was doubled, we would be no better off in 35 years time as the population would have doubled. "There is no solution to feeding the world of the future without control of population growth."

Water:- Immense capital investment in dams, irrigation systems would be necessary to cope with the expected 25% increase in demand for fresh water by the end of the century.

Fertilizers:- Birch states that the quantity used on lawns in U.S.A. is larger than that used in all agricultural lands in India. He uses that statement to graphically illustrate how poorer countries can't afford the ever increasing cost of nitrogenous and phosphatic fertilizers.

Energy:- He uses this term to measure calories of energy e.g. 'in Australia for each calorie of digestible food arriving on our dinner tables five times as much energy is expended. Eleven per cent of this goes into farming and the remaining eighty-nine per cent is in processing and transport.' Birch goes on to compare comparative energy costs involved in growing and harvesting a crop, and concludes that to feed the projected size of the world population at Western European standards in the year 2080 as much energy would be needed in cropping alone as what the whole world now uses for all purposes. He concludes this section by pointing out that besides the physical constraints to food production, there are the economic constraints deliberately engineered by the rich nations. "When half the world needed more food the rich countries deliberately produced less than they could have done to keep prices up. This is another example of the failure of the world marketing system to cope with distributive injustice."

He sees the need for a world emergency food bank from which afflicted countries could draw in times of famine but once again the idea is frowned upon, it seems, by the large producers.

At the time Birch wrote his book (1976) Australia produced sufficient food to feed 35-40 million people. By 1985 it could be 70 million people. He quotes Dr Morley of the CSIRO Division of Plant Industry of writing that Australia could produce enough to feed 200 million. This last figure would pose great risk to our natural resources, much forest cover would have to go, we would have to spend as much as we do on defence, extra trained agricultural scientists and personnel would have to be found. Despite this hypothetical effort, says Morley, we would only be feeding about 5% of the people who will be living in Asia in the year 2000.

Under the heading "What should we do?" he concludes with these pointers.



1. "Something new has to be devised in the New International Order of the future." Food should be distributed according to need rather than capacity to pay.
2. Food production should be in those countries that need it and fertilisers and experts provided.
3. A world food bank should be established to handle future famine.
4. He sees little merit in Australia growing more food unless it can be sent to where it is most needed.
5. Meat raising should be confined to areas unsuited for cropping and plant raising should be for human consumption.
6. I quote the last in full "Australia cannot be the bread basket of the world. It is one of the rich countries that can produce food for the hungry world; but to get the food to the hungry will call for political commitments to a course of action that has much to commend it morally, perhaps nothing to commend it economically."

Lloyd Jones

#### BLUE TONGUED LIZARD CONCERN

It has been brought to our notice recently by a concerned member, that the Blue-tongued lizards could be in danger from snail bait. If you have not seen your usual and frequent visitors lately, could you consider the reasons, please.

It has been suggested that if you use snail bait, that you place it during the late evenings, so that the snails are affected overnight. The lizards will not eat dead snails during the following day. There are alternatives:-

- (a) Sawdust sprinkled around or through the plants will keep snails away.
- (b) A beer can with a small quantity of beer left in and placed in the garden will entice and trap them inside.

Any further alternatives – Please???

#### FROM PADLEY'S PEDESTAL

Padley's Pedestal is a good place from which to talk about physical geology.

Let your eyes stray through about 45° – starting where the road winds down Victoria Pass and finishing a little beyond due South where the high Thurat country hides Kanangra Walls – the vane of the trig marker will indicate South. Here are rocks of four geological ages, from Devonian, through Carboniferous, Permian and Triassic i.e. nearly 200 million years. This survey is of country defined to the East by the Narrow Neck and by the Cox's River to the West. The Cox's River is the dominant geological feature of the region.

Padley's Pedestal Lookout is on Triassic Narrabeen Group rocks, clearly related to those on which our Hut stands. The pedestal itself has been separated from the main Hassan's Walls rock by widening of one of the settlement cracks so much responsible for our local cliffs. Victoria Pass descends from Triassic rocks through Permian coal measures to Permian Marine beds near Berghofer's old home. The Highway and the Gap Road traverse these marine beds till the climb to Browns Gap through coal measures.

As we leave the Gap Road to ascend to Hassan's Walls we leave the Coal Measures and re-enter the Triassic Narrabeen Group of rocks. Note in these rocks the characteristic occurrence of beds of red claystone.

Follow the Triassic skyline from the sugarloaf near Mt Victoria (which could be of Permian Coal Measures) – along the Triassic cliff line of the Shipley Plateau and the Narrow Neck. This line appears to end at Carlon Head and Clear Hill is obscured.

Now look south. Under Padley's Pedestal are Permian rocks, on top Coal Measures underlain by marine beds. These Permian beds lie unconformably\* on Carboniferous granite, originally intruded into Devonian rocks but uncovered by action of weathering and perhaps early erosion by a Permian Sea so that the granite is now directly covered by marine deposits.

Granite country is spread widely between the Triassic Walls and the Cox's River. The upper hills are gently rounded but the river has become deeply entrenched and hillsides expose steep, smooth cliffs and many rounded tors. Kanimbla and Megalong Valleys are of granite country. The granite extends south to the region of Galong Creek and its boundary is more or less defined by a line of thick timber from Narrow Neck to the Cox's. The course of the river meanders which to me suggests that it existed prior to the uplift of the Blue Mountains and so its increased gradient allowed it to excavate its steep and scenic valley.

Beyond this apparent Southern extremity of the granite are the oldest rocks of the region, mainly quartzites of the marine Devonian Period. These are the rocks from which are fashioned the ridges of the Wild Dogs and the Gangerangs and also the high Thurat Country, dominated by Mt Guouogang (4232 feet) but by its position and bulk obscuring Kanangra Walls. Overlying Devonian Rocks in the Wild Dogs are the spectacular Mouin, Warrigal and Dingo. These comprise lower stratae of Permian marine beds overlain by Permian Coal Measures. Such structures of younger rocks completely surrounded by old rocks are termed outliers. The marine beds too lie unconformably\* but here on to Devonian rocks as there is no intermediate occurrence of Carboniferous rocks.

\* I wrote of unconformities in Newsletter No 64 – June 1986.

Across the Cox's River from the Wild Dogs and of similar geological form, are the high peaks of the Gangerangs. On a clear day one can identify the small humps leading to Mt Cloudmaker and named by Mylo Dunphy, "Rip", "Rack", "Roar" and "Rumble" but because of this distinctive shape given an official title of "Mt Sawtooth".

Ron Compagnoni

This article was written by Ron Compagnoni to accompany and explain the view from Padley's Pedestal Lookout at the start of the November 17<sup>th</sup> walk from Hassan's Walls. Unfortunately Ron was not well enough to lead the walk. Olive Noble was to deputise for him, but the weather was so bad the walk had to be abandoned. No doubt the facts will remain true for another few thousand years.

\*\*\*\*\*



### DOWN THE DRAIN

The October issue of the Newsletter contained Robin Corringham's distressing story of official lethargy towards the degeneration of the Woodford Creek area. This unhappy tale could probably be repeated hundreds of times around NSW. I am always amazed that bodies such as local or electrical Councils are prepared to spend thousands of dollars on huge machines to carve dirt roads into the bush, but nothing at all on maintenance. When the roads are built elaborate drains are often constructed, drains which would go a long way towards preserving the road if they were kept flowing, but a few good storms washes sufficient debris to block them. At this stage a couple of young people with implements could quickly clear them so the road remained as good as new.

But of course official bodies do not think that way (and we wonder why youth are unemployed) so instead of a few hundred dollars on maintenance the official body permits water (and possibly off road vehicles) to make merry until the road is totally impassable at which time in come thousands of dollars worth of destructive bulldozers.

Unfortunately walking tracks often suffer a similar fate. The track off the bottom of Bundarra Road at Blackheath, leading towards Fort Rook and Centennial Glen, is a striking example. For some years now this track has been an erosion gully (happily very minor compared to the one described by Robin Corringham). It is almost permanently wet, and it diverts the seepage from an entire hill side away from its proper gentle route through the bush to the creek. A track which should have had minimal impact on the environment has now revolutionized local water movements.

This was not the case when the track was originally built. There are still traces of excellent drains along the upper side leading to pipes to take the water to the lower side of the track. Some of the pipes remain, but they are all blocked, and the drains are full of debris. The track itself is the drain, and the only remedy now is to completely re-build it at great expense. It is a shame that when the track was new, neither the original builders nor the public who used it were prepared to devote the tiny amount of time and effort necessary to keep the drains open. Had this effort been expended the track might today be in need of only minor repair. It is to be hoped that the well-crafted tracks that are appearing today, for instance at Wentworth Falls, will not suffer a similar fate.

Barbara Baillie

### BUSHWALKERS OF THE PAST

Jim Smith gave a very interesting talk about "Blue Mountains Bushwalkers of the Past" at the November General Meeting. The talk was illustrated with slides of photographs taken between approximately 1906 and 1921.

The Blue Mountains was a popular holiday resort then as now. Before the days of do-it-yourself photography, professional photographers would station themselves at the top of the falls and accompany groups or couples to be photographed against backgrounds like the Bridal Veil at Leura or the Three Sisters. Family groups with Mother in large ostrich feather hats and long dresses to the ground, Father in a bowler or a boater with a cane and collar and tie and very often babies in arms with large frilly bonnets.

Interesting facts came to light from the study of these pictures – more women walkers than men, the average of 4.3 in a group, all male or all female, honeymooners. Summer was the most popular season and spring the least. Comments on the back of the photos were often amusing and very informative.

Large wicker baskets were carried with elaborate food – lettuce sandwiches, kidneys on toast, wine and vegetables carried in billy cans to keep cool. The tracks seemed in better condition, more water in streams and plenty of scraffiti on trees and rocks. The change in style of dress over the years was noticeable, though very little concession was made for roughness of terrain etc.

## MANAGEMENT

Management of the Environment is the buzz phrase. It is used in every connection, but there is seldom an aim, or the objective may be so vague that it is not management at all but may be a spurious excuse. That is not to say that 'no management' is not a valid aim.

Consider the bush around us. Is it necessary that it should flower abundantly in the vigour of youth, exposed to the sun, every year? Or should the plants and all that live with them find their own way and pace in ordinary progression through the decades displaying the cycles of succession. Some hazards will be encountered and there will be changes. In the natural way of things who are we to say one course is preferable to another. Ten years ago rice flowers and *Mirbelia* carpeted exposed ground. This spring it is the fragile white crispness of *Leucopogon setiger* that delights.

Think carefully on Management.

Robin Corringham

## THE TANK STREAM TUNNEL

When the First Fleet sailed from Botany Bay and set up its tents and huts in the banks of this clear running rivulet, the Tank Stream was fringed with gum trees and navigable by schooner all the way to what is now Bridge Street. The waters of the fledgling colony's only sure source of refreshment were pure. During the drought of 1790, large holding tanks were cut into the sandstone along the watercourse, giving the stream its eventual name.

Australia's first conservation orders were placed over the Tank Stream by Governor Phillip, who ordered that trees should not be felled or stock allowed to graze within 50 yards of it.

The Tank Stream Tunnel which runs under Sydney's central business district has been placed on the National Estate Register.

S.M.H.



## Society News

FEBRUARY MEETING & WORK DAY AT HUT – On Friday 24<sup>th</sup> February our speakers will be Friends of the Blue Mountains. They want to share with us their experiences, specially of their work at Echo Point. In December they joined forces with 12 young volunteers from various countries – members of Service Civil International (S.C.I.) - and together they worked at Belltrees, Echo Point, the Womens Health Centre and, for a short period, did some very valuable weeding at The Hut! Five National Trust experts taught techniques and supervised at the beginning of the 10 day camp and much valuable information and practical tips were passed on. Jill Dark had a propagating morning with them as well...

On Saturday, 25<sup>th</sup> February, at 9 am, we will meet again with the Friends of the Blue Mountains and be shown the latest techniques in dealing with weeds and looking after our own patch. This will be a very interesting day, so do try to come – for the whole day if possible – bring lunch.

If you can – BRING – gloves  
secateurs  
a thin trowel  
a long sharp (boning) knife (terrific weeding tool)  
a large plastic bag

More information from Melinda 84.1408 or Shirley 82.4248

### MARCH DATES TO REMEMBER

March 11, 1989 – The next plant sale will be held on Saturday, March 11 – there will be no Friday night sale, but plants will be on sale from 9 am to 5 pm. Jill Dark will conduct a “Propagating Workshop” at 11 o’clock, with helpful hints on how to propagate native plants successfully. In the afternoon she will lead one of her interesting rambles in the bush, identifying plants where they grow.

March 31, 1989 – Annual Genral Meeting and election of office bearers for 1989. Reports for year 1988.

SPRING PLANT SALE – We are still recovering from the stunning success of the October sale. About \$1900 was taken! Winner of the Bird Trip to Burraborang with Paul Nagle, was Gladys Corbett of Wentworth Falls (white ticket 85). Graham Alcorn’s talk was full of humour and good advice on attracting birds to gardens. He later took quite a group on a long walk on one of the windiest days we’ve had this year. Jill’s booklet – A Hundred Hardy Natives for Blue Mountains Gardens – sold exceptionally well. At only \$2 it is worth remembering as a small gift, specially to newcomers to the Mountains.

The collection of cans has brought in about \$200 in 1988 – many thanks to Grete Vanry.

Many thanks also to those who have returned pots for re-use; if it is possible to wash pots before returning them, it will save such a lot of time and be much appreciated.

COUNCIL'S RECYCLING SERVICE – A Warning! BMCC is surveying the glass and paper collections over the next few months – and to quote a letter received in December from the Council “the service needs to be cost effective and the future of the service will depend on the survey”. Please urge as many people as you can to USE the service, as if withdrawn, the opportunity to recycle these resources will be lost to us, to say nothing of the resulting increased garbage disposal problem. Hut Duty folk could assist by taking home all the cardboard packaging from around drinks, etc, as well as any bottles, to add to their own collections. If this is a problem, leave them in boxes inside the Hut and someone will collect. Of course, all aluminium cans are kept at the Hut for recycling as well.

#### THE KING

The falcon drank at the mirror-pool  
On the ledge high in the air,  
While the swirls of water spun their cloth  
Far down on the turrets bare;  
And I stood alone as I sang my song  
To the evening's rushes of red.  
And what did I see as I moved to go  
By the bones of the gravel bed?  
He sat alone like a king of stone,  
And he gazed at the gleaming pool,  
And he dipped his head and he splashed the pearls  
Of water into the cool;  
He eyed me without moving his face,  
Without moving a feather so trim.  
And I stood and I gazed at the falcon of stone,  
For the king of the Mountains was he.  
Then he lifted off with a sheer disdain,  
And he fell through the liquid air,  
And the breeze that adjusted his sails again  
Carried him here and there.  
He never looked back, nor right nor left,  
Just journeyed upon his way;  
And I cherished the moment in the mountain pass  
When I met the king that day.

Denis Kevans

\*\*\*\*\*

An oak tree is just a nut that stood its ground.

Fred Shero

The earth we abuse and the living things we kill  
will, in the end, take their revenge, for in exploiting  
their presence we are diminishing our future.

Marya Mannes

\* WE don't know how we can tell you this, but figures supplied by the Wilderness Society show that the paper used in last Saturday's record sized Herald consumed at least 7,911 average sized