UPPER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY

Black Cockatoos by G.J. Broinowski

Newsletter

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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			
President	Dulcie Toseland	84.1682	
Vice Presidents	Mick Dark	58.7061	
	David Thomas	84.2121	
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 Noble	87.8342	
	Bob Jones	58.8316	
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	
Land Use Officers	Barry Barnes		
	Robin Corringham	58.6561	

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.

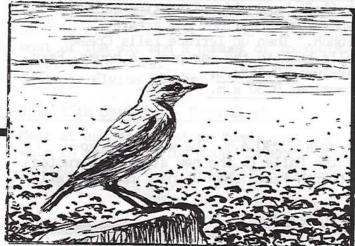
THE HUT: The Society maintains a small museum and information centre at the Conservation Hut. It is manned on weekends and holidays by voluntary helpers.

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.



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Newsletter

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No. 75		April, 1989
COMING TALKS	abi	ar head tale in add
April Slides, Kosciusko	_	Gwynn Addicott
May Poetry Reading & Slides	Ley	Mark O'Connor & Ian Brown
June	-	To be decided

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

WEAR SAFE FOOTWEAR

Protective Rainwear

Hat

ALL PEOPLE ATTENDING WALKS DO SO AT THEIR OWN RISK

April 2nd Sunday - Camel's Back

Meet at Mt Victoria Station at 10.00 a.m. The walk begins with a drive of approx. 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 is optional. The Camel's Back is the old Mt Victoria. This walk has a remarkable forest area and extensive views. 4 hours. Easy.

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 Porter's Pass along the cliff tops to Mt Boyce.A very interesting walk. 6 hours. Medium-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 Lithgow) 10.00 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 hours. Easy. Contact: Bob Jones 58 8361 Sydney train arrives 9.55 a.m. Lithgow train arrives 9.50 a.m.

May 7th Sunday - Slacks Stairs

Meet at The Hut, Valley of the Waters picnic area, 9.30 a.m. The walk will go from The Hut to Wentworth Falls. Along under the Falls to the new steel constructed Slacks Stairs. Down the Stairs and along Wentworth Pass, then up past Empress Falls back to The Hut. 5 hours. Medium. Contact: David Thomas 84.2121

May 18th Thursday - Lawson Round Walk

Meet at the car park in front of Lawson Bowling Club (which is facing Katoomba on the right hand side of Lawson Station) 10.00 a.m. The walk will take in Dante's Glen, Double Echo Point and Fairies Falls. See the old concrete map of Australia near Lawson Swimming Pool. It is an easy walk with only one steep short climb up from Dante's Glen. 4 hours. Easy.

Contact: Grace Bayley 59.1955. Sydney train arrives 9.59 a.m.

Lithgow train arrives 9.47 a.m.

May 20th Saturday - Deep Pass

Meet at Mt Victoria station at 9.00 a.m. The walk is in the area of the border of Wollimi and Blue Mountains National Parks. A variety of scenery and experiences, canyon, gorge, rain-forest and see The Slot. 6-7 hours. Medium. Contact: John Noble 87-8342 Sydney train arrives 8.36 a.m.

June 4th Sunday - Grand Canyon

This walk was cancelled in January due to heavy rain. Meet at Blackheath Station commuter car park (left hand side of station facing Lithgow) 9.30 a.m. Walk down Neate's Glen to Beauchamp Falls then up to Evan's Lookout. 5 hours. Medium. Contact: Bob Jones 58.8361 Sydney train arrives 9.24 a.m.

June 15th Thursday - Berghoffer's pass - Mt York

Meet at Mt Victoria Station at 9.30 a.m. Walk along this historic road. Extensive views. 3-4 hours approx. Easy. Contact: June and Eric Blick 88-1051. Sydney train arrives 8.57 a.m.

June 17th Saturday - Sassafras Gully

Meet at Faulconbridge station(left hand side facing Katoomba) 10.00 a.m. There is a level crossing on the springwood end of the station. Sassafras Gully has a number of interesting features which include a very good example of rain forest. 4-5 hours. Medium.

Contact: Deirdre Morton. 58.8137. Sydney train arrives 9.45 a.m. Lithgow train arrives 10.03 a.m.

July 2nd Sunday - Cliff Walk - Gordon Falls - Echo Point

Meet at Gordon Falls Picnic Area (corner of Olympian Parade and Lone Pine Avenue) at 9.30 a.m. The walk is the Prince Henry Cliff Walk. There is a valley view most of the way and a number of lookouts. 5 hours. Medium. There will be a car ferry for drivers.

Contact: Elvine Thomas. 84.2121

July 15th Saturday - Bird Watch

Meet at end of Gladstone Road, just past Links Road Leura. 10.00 a.m. Short walk to see migrating honey Eaters. Several localities may have to be visited, depending on birds. Easy. Time - Optional. Binoculars. Contact: David Thomas 84.2121

July 20th Thursday - Blair Athol Coal Mine

Meet at Blackheath station commuter car park (left hand side of station facing Lithgow). 10.30 a.m. The mine is one of a number of similar workings, now abandoned, which are scattered throughout the Blue Mountains. Blair Athol coal mine is a well preserved example. A torch is a must and sturdy footwear. 3 hours. Easy.

Contact: Beverley Thomson. 87.2076. Sydney train arrives 10.29 a.m. Lithgow train arrives 10.18 a.m.

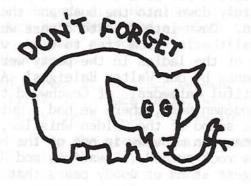
PLEASE NOTE:

Every person participating in an activity conducted by the Upper Blue Mountains Conservation Society does so as a volunteer in all respects and as such accepts responsibility for any injury to her/himself, however incurred. The Society, its office-bearers and leaders cannot accept liability in regard to any injury or damage suffered by any person while engaged in any of the Society's activities.



If you see a red spot on page 1 of your Newsletter, it means your membership is in arrears.

The Society's year ends officially on February 28th each year. Therefore all fees for 1989 start on March 1st. All Office Bearers were elected at the Annual General Meeting on the last Friday in March and are listed on the inside of the front cover.



1989 SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE NOW DUE PENSIONERS AND JUNIORS \$4.00 SINGLE \$6.00, FAMILY \$10.00. PLEASE RENEW PROMPTLY OR THIS COULD BE YOUR LAST NEWSLETTER. RENEWAL FORM ON BACK COVER

WALK - BLUE GUM SWAMP - SUNDAY 4TH SEPTEMBER 1988

This was one of those clear, sunny, early spring days when you love to feel the sun's warmth penetrating your bones.

Twenty-three of us meandered along the fire trail in Blue Gum Swamp, Winmalee, through lovely rainforest along the valley floor, a creek babbling on our right, ferns on each side and the grey trunks of Eucalyptus deanei rising straight up to the blue sky.

We then climbed the track to Grose Head Lookout for the views to Grose Head North and South, Faulconbridge Point and the Mt Tomah region, after which we completed the fire trail loop back to Whitecross Road.

Everyone seemed to relish so much of what we saw or heard that day. So when we were nearly back to our starting point, we sat down in a clearing and compiled a 'shopping list' of the day's experiences for those of you who could not be with us this time.

Fauna:

spotted fantail

tracks of the paper-bark wasp

golden whistler

fantail cuckoo

Jacki Jacki lizard.

whip bird

Flora:

Flannel Flowers

Bossia - this golden flowering shrub

was at its peak

Pink Grevillea Pink Boronia

.... and many others

sun orchids Eriostemon

Wonga Wonga bells Gompholobium or

"God help us" (Olive)

Dracophy11um

Bush Tucker: thanks to David(1) for us to try -

Geebung grapes Blueberry ash

It was a lovely day.

(2) for us to be tried for lunch by bullants.

Enid Schafer

WALK - GLADSTONE PASS - SUNDAY OCTOBER 2ND 1988

On a beautiful fresh morning 16 people turned up, the youngest being 7 years old. It is so refreshing to see the young ones enjoying themselves on our walks. At the other end of the scale, Greta was with us, always willing to give of her knowledge to any age. We started off at a brisk pace past the resort development then almost immediately down into the bush and the joy of it; what is above was soon forgotten. Down into Gladstone pass which is not easy going, there being plenty of slithering from tree to vine, vine to tree etc. There were places where some of the ladies in the party were gallantly helped over slippery rocks and mossy banks by our Walter Raleighs! Almost at the top of the pass there is a beautiful cathedral of Coachwood trees. We took 1½ hours to where we joined Lindeman pass, where we had a quick morning tea, setting off again eastwards to the sound of the Golden Whistler, Pilot bird and Lyrebird. This part of Lindemans in my view is one of the best in the mountains. We gloated over various rock orchids, Sassafras and Hakea constablia in flower and later the biggest stand of woody pears that I know.

By midday we were at the junction of Roberts pass. Here by popular vote it was decided to delay lunch and do the climb up the ladders first. Lunch was taken at Inspiration Point or is it Moya where we were welcomed by the resident Cunningham I think. We then visited Moya Point or is it Inspiration. Please which is which and which is the other! An easy amble back across the golf course, tired and happy.

Thank you for a pleasant bush walk with you all.

David Thomas

WALK - FEDERAL FALLS - SATURDAY DECEMBER 17TH 1988

Being so close to Christmas the walk was a short one to allow for Christmas shopping. The day was cool enough to make the walking quite pleasant.

There had been enough rain the week before to make the falls run well. The walking group of about 15 had our morning tea at Junction Falls after we had inspected Adelina Falls where we had a good sighting of a water dragon.

On to Federal Falls and then lunch under Cataract Falls where we had a good sighting of a soccer ball stuck in the Falls. On the serious side the ball was a dangerous tempting sight for young children, being wedged on the Falls halfway down a slippery incline. We tried to dislodge it without success.

After lunch, about 1 p.m., we walked along the fire road back to the cars, wished one another the compliments of the season and so ended the last week of 1988. Thanks for coming.

Ruth Jones

WALK - GRAND CANYON - SUNDAY JANUARY 1st 1989

The walk was intended for a sunny January day but as one wise man said, the only things you can be sure of are taxation and death. On January 1st 1989 it rained as if it was never going to stop.

According to the forecast, the rain was going to clear about noon - it did, the next day. There were seven walkers waiting at Blackheath car park when I arrived which surprised me. We discussed the conditions and decided it would be too dangerous to venture into the Grand Canyon. Just as well we did as I will describe later. With the walk cancelled by mutual consent, we went our various ways except Dick Weston, who decided he would have a walk anyway so Lloyd Jones and his wife gave him a lift to where he wanted to go.

I had three passengers from Hazelbrook, one lady who wanted to go home. The other passengers Bert Davis and a walker from Blacktown, both experienced bushmen wanted to have a look what the effect the rain was having on the creeks near Hazelbrook.

After a cup of coffee at my place we went down to the creek which leads up from Bedford Creek to Terrace Falls. We intended to cross the creek below the Falls. Usually there is only a few inches/cm of water at the crossing.

Bert and Ted went up the creek and returned with the report that it was not fordable and knowing them, if they said you could not cross then it must have been right. We decided to walk along the fire road and go down to look at the Falls at another point.

I was not prepared for what I saw when we arrived at the bottom. The volume of water flowing over the Falls was beyond anything I had imagined. What made the sight more amazing was that the collection creek for these falls is only about 2 km long.

I was having some doubts about cancelling the Grand Canyon Walk as I have always made an effort to lead a walk regardless of the weather if I am the leader. On January 1st 1989, I just feel relieved we did not try. I keep repeating the date because I haven't been so wet for so long for ages. Happy New Year.

Bob Jones

WALK - MYSTERY WALK - SATURDAY 21ST JANUARY

Seventeen members met at Mt Victoria station in the mountain mist, wondering what the day would bring. We drove to Clarence and along the dirt road, making a right hand turn towards the ventilation shaft of the coal mine. Leaving the cars we walked down the wide track to the Bungleboori Creek. Here we put on our paddling shoes and entered the water. By now the mist had lifted and the sun was trying to peep out. We paddled along the creek (which wasn't too deep considering all the rain). We followed the winding creek with its over-hangs, mossy banks, ferns and water-falls, found a sunny spot for lunch, then wandered on again with yabbies for company. Eventually we had to leave our water wonderland and head back up the ridge where we noticed a few late Boronias. So back on to another track and along the ridge back to the cars. The day was cloudy at times and the temperature 19°. The walk was a revelation to some and magical to others.

O. Noble.

WALK - LEURA FOREST - SUNDAY FEBRUARY 5TH

On a wet, misty rainy day four walkers gathered - brave or foolhardy? The decision was taken to shorten the planned walk so we set off from the Cascades to the bottom of Bridal Veil Falls, which was a magnificent sight. We then went towards Federal Pass as far as Linda Falls before taking the path which brought us out at the Fork and View Restaurant. Halfway through the intrepid four were rewarded by the mist lifting giving us a lovely view of Mt Solitary and the Jamison Valley and all through the walk we were enchanted by the myriads of bejewelled cobwebs, ferns and mosses. It was a wet walk, mostly from the various small waterfalls which dripped on us from above and made the ground beneath us very boggy. By the end the wet was reaching the skin, so we were glad to be off home for dry clothes.

David Thomas

WALK - POINT PILCHER - THURSDAY FEBRUARY 16TH

There were 28 of us; the youngest 20, the oldest more than four times that. A beautiful clear mountain day. Out along Rutland Road, Medlow Bath, past the airfield, curving left around it to the second area being regenerated by NPWS, cars parked and a pause at the start of the track to hear a little history. (Track open 1907 by Mark Foy of the Hydro Majestic - guests were brought down to the start in horse drawn vehicles. Over the years the track was almost forgotten until re-opened in late 1987)

Quite a few plants were flowering unseasonably - Dilwynia retorta, Boronia anemonifolia and floribunda, Flannel Flowers and Epacris pulchella. At the lookout - the real Point Pilcher - it is wonderful to see The Fernery below Evans lookout, an area many of us have been in many times, but never seen from afar. Some folk stayed to enjoy lunch there and others went right down to join the Grand Canyon track and had lunch by the water. This track is perhaps one of the less controversial tracks to be re-opened recently, although it goes through a swamp near the powerlines. At one point we wondered why a huge Banksia serrata had been sawn down. It was growing on the edge of the track and the trunk actually grew away from the track, rather than across it. It's removal seemed sadly unnecessary.

Shirley Brown

WALK - RODRIGUEZ PASS - SATURDAY 18TH FEBRUARY

The walk started from Evan's Look-Out, down to the start of the Horse Track. Thirteen members turned up. A little way down the track we took a diversion along a ridge high above Beauchamp Falls, where we obtained a different view of the Falls. Returning to the Horse Track we walked down to Greaves Creek and along the track some members saw a Black Snake. We sat by the tumbling waters of one of the many water-falls to have lunch, before climbing the steep steps to Beauchamp Falls. There is so much to see that the effort of climbing up is diminished by the beauty of the surroundings. A rest at Beauchamp Falls and then through a very pleasant section before climbing up through "The Fernery" to Evans' Look-Out. The weather was warm, the temperature was 26°

O. Noble.

* * * * * * * * *

WATCHING THE DESERT BIRD

Today we all have seen the Gibber Chat,
An animated stone upon the plain
Of gibbers shimmering near Innamincka,
Five paces from the road beside the coach
From which, field glasses ready, poured the watchers,
Eager to see this rare and splendid bird.
We stood around it in a peering ring.
Defiantly it flashed its yellow breast.

A desert flower which signalled — I belong. Through the searing heat of the dry days And the icy nights of winter I survive And will survive and multiply and thrive. This is my niche and I have triumphed here, And triumph still, if you don't interfere.

Beside Innamincka Airfield Graham Alcorn

CONFRONTING THE FUTURE: CHARLES BIRCH - THE POWER TO SEE IT THROUGH

'The power to see it through'is the title and theme for this chapter of Birch's book "Confronting the Future". He starts with a quote from Erlich's 'The ultimate limits to the use of energy come not from its shortage, but from the problem of dissipating the heat to which all useful energy is ultimately degraded'. 1972. Since that prophetic statement twentyseven years have passed and the Greenhouse Effect is now a daily topic of comment.

All nations are caught up in the desire to cater for the demands of their citizens and of industry. "The biggest use of fossil fuel is the U.S.A. where the average rate of growth is about 6% annually. Consumption of electrical power has increased at the rate of about 7% annually which is a doubling every ten years." For the globe Birch predicts a doubling of energy use at least every fifteen years. In Ausralia between 1963 and 1973 consumption of electricity doubled and this placed us amongst the highest users of energy per person in the world.

Birch claims that the world's climate would be "unacceptable" in less than a century if these rates of energy consumption persist. Remember though that his book was written twentythree years ago so no doubt his prediction could be drastically reduced. He suggests the climatic problem may never arise because of the exhaustion of energy sources. The rest of his chapter is given over to an assessment of our various fuel supplies, their suggested replacements and how we could conserve what we now squander. Briefly then: Oil will be the first fuel to disappear. Recent discoveries of new fields have extended his quote of twenty years supply, but it is a finite resource and its exhaustion is inevitable.

Coal: His graphs show coal production peaking in the 2100's but falling away to nothing about 2400. He questions our right to use up all these reserves when they are so useful as lubricants, plastics and other petrochemicals. Nuclear: He sees little chance of it ever taking over the position of fossil fuels because of problems of disposing the highly radioactive materials and in building safe reactors. Solar Power: Centralising and storing the vast supply of power coming from the sun is a major problem yet.

Plants have devised ways of tapping and storing energy from the sun. Our oil and coal were formed from plants but science can secure methyl alcohol from them. He suggests we, i.e. Australia, could produce enough methane to meet all our power needs but at the moment it is about four times the present cost of oil.

Energy options for Australia: - Under this heading Birch suggests we can (1) Use up all our fossil fuels and go nuclear (2) We can rationalise our use of fossil fuels by stringent energy saving techniques and hope a safe way of going nuclear may eventuate (3) Aim for zero energy growth by the year 2000. It would be associated with zero population growth and reduction in growth of industries producing consumer goods. This policy, though viewed with much scepticism by many industrialists and economists is supported in the Birch camp because it would reduce the intense technological effort needed to eke out the dwindling resources, it would reduce pollution of the environment, it may give the poor nations an opportunity to achieve an "acceptable standard of living".

To give feasibility to his No. 3, Birch reminds us of the wasteful practices in our own experiences. A motor car, he writes, provides eleven passenger kilometres per litre of fuel, buses average thirtyfive to fortyfive, trains, thirty to seventy and a Boeing 707 about 7.5 passenger kilometres per litre.

Another striking example in the misuse of energy is in the use of aluminium in drink cans. Five times as much energy is needed to produce the same amount of aluminium as steel. As a result an aluminium can needs 75.0 10 BTU, a steel can 38.6 and a 19 trip returnable bottle 15.9.

The salient points in his summing up of the situation are (1) we halve the use of energy in the decade ahead and strive for zero at least by the twentyfirst century (rapid public transport must be favoured over private cars), much more use of the rail system, public education in energy saving, recycling of metal and glass (2) reject nuclear power until it is much safer (3) more research, into solar power and the use of methane (4) a National Energy Budget for planned production and consumption

Lloyd Jones

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

From Barbara Baillie:— "For a change, two fragments of environmental good news. The first concerns the track I mentioned in the last issue of the Newsletter, the one leading off the bottom of Bundara Road at Blackheath. 'They', or'someone' is doing something about repair, stones and branches have been placed in the erosion gullies to provide footsteps and check the flow of water, several little dams have been built across the track to send run-off into the bush, all possibly done by individuals who use the track. Further round, towards Wall's Ledge, some quite substantial repairs have been effected. Congratulations to whoever is/are responsible, and lets hope the improvements are maintained.

The second bit of news refers back to Lloyd Jones article on the human population avalanche in the issue of last October. People concerned about the sort of issues he raised have formed an association called "Australians for an Ecologically Sustainable Population". The subscription is \$10 per year and the address is G.P.O. Box 1875, Canberra, ACT 2601."

From Dennis Maxwell-Gill:- "I refer to Chapter 5 of 'By Bread Alone' by Charles Birch which was submitted by Lloyd Jones.

In my opinion the premise stated by the author for feeding the starving of this world is too simplistic and is unpractical. It only states one side of the picture and is based on two assumptions:- (1) that all the 'rich' wish and desire to feed the unfortunate; (2) that the resources of planet Earth are limitless.

To produce all the extra food necessary to support the unfortunate of this world needs effort and effort has to be paid for. This is only achieved by raising taxes and raising taxes means a lower standard of living. No one, and I repeat, no one is prepared to accept a lower standard unless it is forced on them. A politician would not risk his job by introducing such a measure. Secondly, there is the question of how to produce all this extra food and deliver to where it is needed. Growing food takes a lot of energy to prepare the land, to sow and reap, and to produce the fertiliser and insecticides. Again energy is required to store and move it around as required. The amount of energy available to us is limited and furthermore the energy we are using today is obtained at the expense of the future. It is obtained by raping the earth and making it less able to support the populations of the future. Cutting down forests to make more arable land is not the answer as it is usually poor soil and will only produce for a short period. It also leads to more carbon dioxide resulting in more acid rain and increased green house effect. As Charles Birch states "nothing it seems can be done until the population growth rate is curbed". The literature dealing with nature report that in the animal kingdom some species regulate their population according to the food supply available in their territories. Mankind has not yet reached this state of wisdom.

It is flattering to know at least four people have read my articles. The Editor, the typist (poor lady), and our two correspondents.

Re. Mr. Gill's comments - I have not done justice to Birch if I have conveyed that Birch assumes the resources of the earth are limitless. He definitely does not. As for the rest of his letter, I cannot but agree. Readers have no idea how depressed I feel after summarising Birch's chapters. It takes a couple of beers (aluminium cans) in front of the air conditioner in summer or a five bar radiator in winter to regain normal equilibrium!

So it is nice to realise from Barbara Baillie's letter that there are active workers for the environment both in Blackheath and Canberra.

Lloyd Jones

AN ALLEGORY FOR OUR TIME

There was a pond at Woodford. It was not always so. Some years ago Alf the Plumber needed sand to fill a dip in his yard and he took it from a service track on a ridge-top. Time mooched on while the sump left in the road periodically filled with water and dried out.

Unexpectedly it did not silt up. Frogs found it and in the warm months tadpoles swarmed. It became an adventitious watering hole for small animals and even a swamp wallaby. Large wading birds discovered it and left their distinctive foot prints. Tracks of snakes and water dragons made criss-cross patterns around the edge. Sometimes the frogs mistimed events and tadpoles were stranded in drying, cracking mud, giving a feast to scavenging ants. One late autumn a hatching of thousands of tadpoles was rescued and reared in the shelter of a nearby garden. When unusually wet seasons came sedges germinated and prospered for the pond nearly always had some moisture.

Then the pool expanded and the overflow cascaded over the cliff edge. Such a volume of water accumulated in the valley below that sports like water skiing became popular. At the same time pressure for land for housing became so great that the rocky ridges of erstwhile reserves were now seen to be both suitable and desirable and were expensively serviced as home sites with water views.

But the water flow increased further and, as the sorcerer's apprentice had once found, it could not be managed. Some use was gained when a hydroelectricity scheme was started. The cheap energy was offered to Japanese industry which established in the national park on the south side of the railway and highway, both upgraded to handle the new city's traffic.

Some old timers still hang about the district. Not knowing quite what to do, enduring the crises of radical change and alienation, they are inclined to cling to each other for a modicum of comfort. Alf's place is still there and they think they make make it a memorial but are bewildered and not sure now what they are remembering? Was it the trees felled for chipping? Was it the philosophy of moderation? Was it the dreamtime?

Society News

AUTUMN PLANT SALE - A very successful Native Plant sale was held on Saturday March 11th. Despite the awful weather and the fact that there was no sale on the Friday night, a large crowd was waiting on the doorstep at 9 a.m. when the Hut was opened and by 10 a.m. most of the plants were gone.

The weather continued wet and a lot of the buyers stayed on to hear Jill Dark give a very excellent talk on Propagating Native Plants. Jill outlined five methods of propagating plants:- (1) By seeds; (2) By cuttings: (3) By division: (4) By grafting: and (5) by scientific cloneing.

Jill concentrated on the first two methods and gave practical demonstrations of the type of pots, the correct propagating mixture of sand and peat and correct time and method of picking and preparing cuttings.

Her talk was full of humour and good helpful advice which encouraged those of us who are usually daunted by the propagation of natives.

The weather cleared a lot after lunch and Jill Dark valiantly took a group on a walk in the bush to see what effect the rains had had on the wild flowers. It was a very successful day all round financially and horticulturally - about \$1800 was taken.

<u>CAMELS HUMP</u>: In the last newsletter "the Camels Hump (2925M)" was inadvertantly elevated far beyond its station to the highest mountain in Australia. This modest peak we're told is actually about 880M or 2896 ft high.

CONSERVATION KIT: At the January General Meeting Dale Wengate gave a very interesting talk on the making of a "Conservation Kit". This was designed for study by High School students (Years 11 and 12) as part of the General Studies subject in the H.S.C. examination. Slides showing beautiful pictures of native plants and animals combined with an interesting script made an informative introduction to the subject of conservation.

CONCERNED

Members are probably worried and concerned about matters of conservation from time to time. Reg Toseland has compiled a list of likely topics and the relevant ministers to whom you should write a letter of protest.

<u>List of some Concerns</u>: Wood Chips - Transport - Crown Lands - Duck Shooting Environmental Planning - Tourism - Mining

Relevant Ministers

Hon Tim MOORE M.P.

MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT
LEGAL & GENERAL HOUSE
8-18 Bent Street SYDNEY 2000

Hon I.R. CAUSLEY M.P.
MINISTER FOR NATURAL RESOURCES
c/- Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY 2000

Hon I.M. ARMSTRONG M.P.
MINISTER AGRICULTURE & RURAL AFFAIRS
AND MINISTER FOR MINES & TOURISM
c/- Parliament House
Macquarie Street SYDNEY 2000

Hon D.A. HAY M.P.

MINISTER FOR PLANNING AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

c/- Parliament House

Macquarie Street

SYDNEY 2000

Other suggested names on Page 12

THE SOUTH-EAST WOODCHIP ISSUE - SOME PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS

We visited Eden over Christmas. It was our first exposure, close up, to the logging industry and you can't ignore it. Trucks thunder past with alarming regularity, loaded with logs or wood chips, posters adorn shop windows pushing the logging cause, bushfire reports on the radio are "proudly sponsored by Harriss-Daishowa" paintings in the Fisherman's Club donated by the same company, a logging display at the Whaling Museum and, across the bay, the furnace of the chip mill dominating the horizon.

To get to the mill you drive through forest sign-posted to indicate when it was logged. The grounds of the mill's Visitor's Centre are landscaped with Australian native plants and the promotional video running inside features close-ups of birds and animals all enjoying their logged habitat. The whole emphasis of the Centre is on the 'benefits' of logging and the 'environmentally sound' methods used. The arguments are the same. They're shallow but probably sound quite reasonable to a lot of the public: improved access to forests, fewer bushfires, increases in some native animals and the usual focus on 'gum trees' without any consideration of ecosystems or the interdependence and complexity of nature. In fact, if you believe their PR blurb, you have to wonder how Mother Nature ever managed before the advent of Harriss-Daishowa. The visitor's book attests to the controversial nature of the industry with some lengthy (and fiery) comments.

Around town you're constantly reminded that wood-chipping is the areas biggest industry, and of all the 'improvements' it's brought. We asked a local shop-keeper where we could do some bushwalking and were immediately met with the response, "You're not Greenies are you?"

Our waitress in a restaurant told us how a friend who worked on the oil rigs had been layed off because of a dispute with the 'greenies', 'Imagine the damage they're causing down there!'

In Eden, if you want a happy holiday, you keep your politcal view to yourself.

Perhaps we'd feel a little better if this destruction of our forests was for some vital purpose but the bottom line is that our trees are being felled for the Japanese to make paper.

With its long history of whaling, and the present day wood-chipping industry, Eden is not a comfortable place for anyone with an environmental conscience.

Sue Hutchins - in the Lower Blue Mountains Conservation Society Newsletter

* * * * * * * * * * * * *

From page 11

OPPOSITION SHADOW MINISTERS

Mr Pat ROGAN - ENVIRONMENT
Mr Tim DOYLE - PLANNING

Mr Jack HALLAM - AGRICULTURE

DEMOCRATS IN UPPER HOUSE

Elizabeth KIRKBY Richard JONES

PARLIAMENT HOUSE MACQUARIE STREET SYDNEY 2000

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.,

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 Mour	
Conservation Society Land Preservation Fund. I understand that	
donation is tax deductible and therefore look forward to your recei	pt.

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, WENIWORTH 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
 Single
 \$6.00

 Address
 Family
 \$10.00

 Concession
 \$4.00

Phone _____ * 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.

April 1989 No. 75

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.

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

<u>MEETINGS:</u> 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	Mick Dark	58.7061
	David Thomas	84.2121
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 Noble	87.8342
	Bob Jones	58.8316
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
Land Use Officers	Barry Barnes	
	Robin Corringham	58.6561

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

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

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

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

<u>SALE OF NATIVE PLANTS</u>: 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.

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

<u>LAND PRESERVATION</u>: 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.

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Society News

Woodchip Issue

COMING TALKS

<u>April</u>

Slides, Kosciusko – Gwynn /addicott

<u>May</u>

Poetry Reading & Slides – Mark O'Connor & Ian Brown

<u>June</u>

To be decided

WALKS PROGRAMME 1988-89

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

WEAR SAFE FOOTWEAR Hat

ALL PEOPLE ATTENDING DO SO AT THEIR OWN RISK

April 2nd Sunday – Camel's Back

Meet at Mt Victoria Station at 10.00 am. The walk begins with a drive of approx 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 is optional. The Camel's Back is the old Mt Victoria. This walk has a remarkable forest area and extensive views. 4 hours Easy.

Contact: Rachel Makinson 87.1302 Sydney train arrives 9.31 am.

April 15th 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 Porter's Pass along the cliff tops to Mt Boyce. A very interesting walk 6 hour. Medium – Hard. Rough in places.

Contact: John Noble 87.8342. Sydney train arrives 8.29 am.

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

Meet at Hazelbrook Station commuter car park (left hand side of station facing Lithgow) 10 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.

<u>Contact</u>: Bob Jones 58.8361 Sydney train arrives <u>9.55 am</u>. Lithgow train arrives <u>9.50 am</u>.

May 7th Sunday – Slacks Stairs

Meet at The Hut, Valley of the Waters picnic area, 9.30 am. The walk will go from The Hut to Wentworth Falls. Along under the Falls to the new steel constructed Slack Stairs. Down the Stairs and along Wentworth Pass, then up past Empress Falls back to the Hut. 5 hours. Medium. Contact: David Thomas 84.2121

May 18th Thursday – Lawson Round Walk

Meet at the car park in front of Lawson Bowling Club (which is facing Katoomba on the right hand side of Lawson Station) 10 am. The walk will take in Dante's Glen, Double Echo Point and Fairies Falls. See the old concrete map of Australia near Lawson Swimming Pool. It is an easy walk with only one steep short climb up from Dante's Glen. 4 hours. Easy.

Contact: Grace Bayley 59.1955. Sydney train arrives 9.59 am. Lithgow train arrives 9.47 am.

May 20th Saturday – Deep Pass

Meet at Mt Victoria station at 9 am. The walk is in the area of the border of Wollemi and Blue Mountains National Parks. A variety of scenery and experiences, canyon, gorge, rain-forest and see The Slot. 6-7 hours Medium

Contact: John Noble 87.8342 Sydney train arrives 8.36 am.

June 4th Sunday – Grand Canyon

This walk was cancelled in January due to heavy rain. Meet at Blackheath Station commuter car park (left hand side of station facing Lithgow) 9.30 am. Walk down Neate's Glen to Beauchamp Falls then up to Evans Lookout. 5 hours. Medium.

Contact: Bob Jones 58.8361 Sydney train arrives 9.24 am.

June 15th Thursday – Berghoffer's Pass – Mt York

Meet at Mt Victoria Station at 9.30 am. Walk along this historic road. Extensive views. 3-4 hours approx. Easy.

Contact: June and Eric Blick 88.1051. Sydney train arrives 8.57 am.

June 17th Saturday – Sassafras Gully

Meet at Faulconbridge station (left hand side facing Katoomba) 10am. There is a level crossing on the Springwood end of the station. Sassafras Gully has a number of interesting features which include a very good example of rain forest. 4-5 hours. Medium.

Contact: Deidre Morton. 58.8137 Sydney train arrives 9.45 am. Lithgow train arrives 10.03 am.

July 2nd Sunday – Cliff Walk – Gordon Falls – Echo Point

Meet at Gordon Falls Picnic Area (corner of Olympian Parade and Lone Pine Ave) at 9.30 am. The walk is the Prince Henry Cliff Walk. There is a valley view most of the way and a number of lookouts. 5 hours. Medium. There will be a car ferry for drivers.

Contact: Elvine Thomas. 84.2121

July 15th Saturday – Bird Watch

Meet at end of Gladstone Road, just past Links Road Leura 10 am. Short walk to see migrating Honey Eaters. Several localities may have to be visited, depending on birds. Easy. Time – Optional. Binoculars.

Contact: David Thomas 84.2121

July 20th Thursday – Blair Athol Coal Mine

Meet at Blackheath station commuter car park (left hand side of station facing Lithgow) 10.30 am. The mine is one of a number of similar workings, now abandoned, which are scattered throughout the Blue Mountains. Blair Athol coal mine is a well preserved example. A torch is a must and sturdy footwear. 3 hours. Easy.

<u>Contact</u>: Beverley Thomson. 87.2076 Sydney train arrives <u>10.29 am</u>. Lithgow train arrives <u>10.18 am</u>.

PLEASE NOTE:

Every person participating in an activity conducted by the Upper Blue Mountains Conservation Society does so as a volunteer in all respects and as such accepts responsibility for any injury to her/himself, however incurred. The Society, its office-bearers and leaders cannot accept liability in regard to any injury or damage suffered by any person while engaged in any of the Society's activities.

RED SPOTS

If you see a red spot on page 1 of your Newsletter, it means your membership is in arrears.

The Society's year ends officially on February 28th each year. Therefore all fees for 1989 start on March 1st. All Office Bearers were elected at the Annual General Meeting on the last Friday in March and are listed on the inside of the front cover.

DON'T FORGET

1989 SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE NOW DUE

PENSIONERS and JUNIORS \$4.00

SINGLE \$6.00 FAMILY \$10.00.

PLEASE RENEW PROMPTLY OR THIS COULD BE YOUR LAST NEWSLETTER.

RENEWAL FORM ON BACK COVER

WALK - BLUE GUM SWAMP - SUNDAY 4th SEPTEMBER 1988

This was one of those clear, sunny, early spring days when you love to feel the sun's warmth penetrating your bones.

Twenty-three of us meandered along the fire trail in Blue Gum Swamp, Winmalee, through lovely rainforest along the valley floor, a creek babbling on our right, ferns on each side and the grey trunks of Eucalyptus Deanei rising straight up to the blue sky.

We then climbed the track to Grose Head Lookout for the views to Grose Head North and South, Faulconbridge Point and the Mt Tomah region, after which we completed the fire trail loop back to Whitecross Road.

Everyone seemed to relish so much of what we saw or heard that day. So when we were nearly back to our starting point, we sat down in a clearing and compiled a 'shopping list' of the day's experiences for those of you who could not be with us this time.

<u>Fauna</u>: spotted fantail, fantail cuckoo, tracks of the paper-bark wasp, Jacki Jacki lizard, golden whistler, whip bird.

<u>Flora</u>: Flannel Flowers, sun orchids, Bossia- this golden flowering shrub was at its peak, Eriostemon, Wonga Wonga bells, Pink Grevillea, Gompholobium or "God help us" (Olive), Pink Boronia, Dracophyllum and many other.

<u>Bush Tucker</u>: thanks to David (1) for us to try - (2) for us to be tried for lunch by bullants., Geebung grapes, Blueberry ash.

It was a lovely day.

Enid Schafer

WALK - GLADSTONE PASS - SUNDAY OCTOBER 2nd 1988

On a beautiful fresh morning 16 people turned up, the youngest being 7 years old. It is so refreshing to see the young enjoying themselves on our walks. At the other end of the scale, Greta was with us, always willing to give her knowledge to any age. We started off at a brisk pace past the resort development then almost immediately down into the bush and the joy of it; what is above was soon forgotten. Down into Gladstone pass which is not easy going, there being plenty of slithering from tree to vine, vine to tree etc. There were places where some of the ladies in the party were gallantly helped over slippery rocks and mossy banks by our Walter Raleighs! Almost at the top of the pass there is a beautiful cathedral of Coachwood trees. We took 1 ½ hours to where we joined Lindeman pass, where we had a quick morning tea, setting off again eastwards to the sound of the Golden Whistler, Pilot bird and Lyrebird. This part of Lindeman's in my view is one of the best in the mountains. We gloated over various rock orchids, Sassafras and *Hakea constablia* in flower and later the biggest stand of woody pears that I know.

By midday we were at the junction of Roberts pass. Here by popular vote it was decided to delay lunch and do the climb up the ladders first. Lunch was taken at Inspiration Point or is it Moya where we were welcomed by the resident Cunningham I think. We then visited Moya Point or is it Inspiration. Please which is which and which is the other! An easy amble back across the golf course, tired and happy.

Thank you for a pleasant bush walk with all.

David Thomas

WALK - FEDERAL FALLS - SATURDAY DECEMBER 17th 1988

Being so close to Christmas the walk was a short one to allow for Christmas shopping. The day was cool enough to make the walking quite pleasant.

There had been enough rain the week before to make the falls run well. The walking group of about 15 had our morning tea at Junction Falls after we had inspected Adelina Falls where we had a good sighting of a water dragon.

On to Federal Falls and then lunch under Cataract Falls where we had a good sighting of a soccer ball stuck in the Falls. On the serious side the ball was a dangerous tempting sight for young children, being wedged on the Falls halfway down a slippery incline. We tried to dislodge it without success.

After lunch, about 1 pm. we walked along the fire road to the cars, wished one another the compliments of the season and so ended the last week of 1988. Thanks for coming.

Ruth Jones

WALK – GRAND CANYON – SUNDAY JANUARY 1st 1989

The walk was intended for a sunny January day but one wise man said, the only things you can be sure of are taxation and death. On January 1st 1989 it rained as if it was never going to stop.

According to the forecast, the rain was going to clear about noon – it did, the next day. There were seven walkers waiting at Blackheath car park when I arrived which surprised me. We discussed the conditions and decided it would be too dangerous to venture into the Grand Canyon. Just as well we did as I will describe later. With the walk cancelled by mutual consent, we went our various ways except Dick Weston, who decided he would have a walk anyway so Lloyd Jones and his wife gave him a lift to where he wanted to go.

I had three passengers from Hazelbrook, one lady who wanted to go home. The other passengers Bert Davis and a walker from Blacktown, both experienced bushmen wanted to have a look what the effect the rain was having on the creeks near Hazelbrook.

After a cup of coffee at my place we went down to the creek which leads up from Bedford Creek to Terrace Falls. We intended to cross the creek below the falls. Usually there is only a few inches/cm of water at the crossing.

Bert and Ted went up the creek and returned with the report that it was not fordable and knowing them, if they said you could not cross then it must have been right. We decided to walk along the fire road and go down to look at the Falls at another point.

I was not prepared for what I saw when we arrived at the bottom. The volume of water flowing over the Falls was beyond anything I had imagined. What made the sight more amazing was that the collection creek for these falls is only about 2 km long.

I was having some doubts about cancelling the Grand Canyon Walk as I have always made an effort to lead a walk regardless of the weather if I am the leader. On January 1st 1989, I just feel relieved we did not try. I keep repeating the date because I haven't been so wet for so long for ages.

Happy New Year.

Bob Jones

WALK- MYSTERY WALK – SATURDAY 21st JANUARY

Seventeen members met at Mt Victoria station in the mountain mist, wondering what the day would bring. We drove to Clarence and along the dirt road, making a right hand turn towards the ventilation shaft of the coal mine. Leaving the cars we walked down the wide track to the Bungleboori Creek. Here we put on our paddling shoes and entered the water. By now the mist had lifted and the sun was trying to peep out. We paddled along the creek (which wasn't too deep considering all the rain). We followed the winding creek with its over-hangs, mossy banks, ferns and water-falls, found a sunny spot for lunch, then wandered on again with yabbies for company. Eventually we had to leave our water wonderland and head back up the ridge where we noticed a few late Boronias. So back on to another track and along the ridge to the cars. The day was cloudy at times and the temperature 19°. The walk was a revelation to some and magical to others.

O. Noble.

WALK - LEURA FOREST - SUNDAY FEBRUARY 5th

On a wet, misty rainy day for walkers gathered – brave or foolhardy? The decision was taken to shorten the planned walk so we set off from the Cascades to the bottom of Bridal Veil Falls, which was a magnificent sight. We then went towards Federal Pass as far as Linda Falls before taking the path which brought us out at the Fork and View Restaurant. Halfway through the intrepid four were rewarded by the mist lifting giving us a lovely view of Mt Solitary and the Jamison Valley and all through the walk we were enchanted by the myriads of bejewelled cobwebs, ferns and mosses. It was a wet walk, mostly from the various small waterfalls which dripped on us from above and made the ground beneath us very boggy. By the end the wet was reaching the skin, so we were glad to be off home for dry clothes.

David Thomas

WALK - POINT PILCHER - THURSDAY FEBRUARY 16th

There were 28 of us; the youngest 20, the oldest fore than four times that. A beautiful clear mountain day. Out along Rutland Road, Medlow Bath, past the airfield, curving left around it to the second area being regenerated by NPWS, cars parked and a pause at the start of the track to hear a little history. (Track open 1907 by Mark Foy of the Hydro Majestic – guests were brought down to the start in horse drawn vehicles. Over the years the track was almost forgotten until re-opened in late 1987).

Quite a few plants were flowering unseasonably — Dilwynia retorta, Boronia anemonifolia and floribunda, flannel flowers and Epacris pulchella. At the lookout — the real Point Pilcher — it is wonderful to see The Fernery below Evans lookout, an area many of us have been in many times, but never seen from afar. Some folk stayed to enjoy lunch there and others went right down to join the Grand Canyon track and had lunch by the water. This track is perhaps one of the less controversial tracks to be re-opened recently, although it goes through a swamp near the powerlines. At one point we wondered why a huge Banksia serrata had been sawn down. It was growing on the edge of the track and the trunk actually grew away from the track, rather than across it. It's removal seemed sadly unnecessary.

Shirley Brown

WALK - RODRIGUEZ PASS - SATURDAY 18th FEBRUARY

The walk started from Evan's Look-Out, down to the start of the Horse Track. Thirteen members turned up. A little way down the track we took a diversion along the ridge high above Beauchamp Falls, where we obtained a different view of the Falls. Returning to the Horse Track we walked down to Greaves Creek and along the track some members saw a Black Snake. We sat by the tumbling waters of one of the many water-falls to have lunch, before climbing the steep steps to Beauchamp Falls. There is so much to see that the effort of climbing up is diminished by the beauty of the surroundings. A rest at Beauchamp Falls and then through a very pleasant section before climbing up through "The Fernery" to Evan's Look-Out. The weather was warm, the temperature was 26° .

O. Noble

WATCHING THE DESERT BIRD

Today we all have seen the Gibber Chat,
An animated stone upon the plain
Of gibbers shimmering near Innamincka,
Five paces from the road beside the coach
From which, field glasses ready, poured the watchers,
Eager to see this rare and splendid bird.

We stood around it in a peering ring. Defiantly it flashed its yellow breast.

A desert flower which signalled – I belong. Through the searing heat of the dry days And the icy nights of winter I survive And will survive and multiply and thrive. This is my niche and I have triumphed here, And triumph still, if you don't interfere.

Beside Innaminka Airfield Graham Alcorn

CONFRONTING THE FUTURE: CHARLES BIRCH – THE POWER TO SEE IT THROUGH

'The power to see it through' is the title and theme for this chapter of Birch's book "Confronting the Future". He starts with a quote from Erlich's 'The ultimate limits to the use of energy come not from its shortage, but from the problem of dissipating the heat to which all useful energy is ultimately degraded'. 1972.

Since the prophetic statement twenty seven years have passed and the Greenhouse Effect is now a daily topic of comment.

All nations are caught up in the desire to cater or the demands of their citizens and of industry. "The biggest use of fossil fuel is the USA where the average rate of growth is about 6% annually. Consumption of electrical power has increased at the rate of about 7% annually which is a doubling every ten years." For the globe Birch predicts a doubling of energy use at least every fifteen years. In Australia between 1963 and 1973 consumption of electricity doubled and this placed us amongst the highest users of energy per person in the world.

Birch claims that the world's climate would be "unacceptable" in less than a century if these rates of energy consumption persists. Remember though that his book was written twenty three years ago so no doubt his prediction could be drastically reduced. He suggested the climatic problem may never arise because of the exhaustion of energy sources. The rest of his chapter is given over to an assessment of our various fuel supplies, their suggested replacements and how we could conserve what we now squander.

Briefly then:

<u>Oil</u> will be the first fuel to disappear. Recent discoveries of new fields have extended his quote of twenty years supply, but it is a finite resource and its exhaustion is inevitable.

<u>Coal</u>: His graphs show coal production peaking in the 2100's but falling away to nothing about 2400. He questions our right to use up all these reserves when they are so useful as lubricants, plastics and other petrochemicals.

<u>Nuclear</u>: He sees little chance of it ever taking over the position of fossil fuels because of problems of disposing the highly radioactive materials and in building safe reactors.

<u>Solar Power</u>: Centralising and storing the vast supply of power coming from the sun is a major problem yet.

Plants have devised ways of tapping and storing energy from the sun. Our oil and coal were formed from plants but science can secure methyl alcohol from them. He suggests we, ie, Australia, could produce enough methane to meet all our power needs but at the moment it is about four times the present cost of oil.

Energy options for Australia:- Under this heading Birch suggests we can (1) Use up all our fossil fuels and go nuclear (2) We can rationalise our use of fossil fuels by stringent energy saving techniques and hope a safe way of going nuclear may eventuate (3) Aim for zero energy growth by the year 2000. It would be associated with zero population growth and reduction in growth if industries producing consumer goods. This policy, though viewed with much scepticism by many industrialists and economists is supported in the Birch camp because it would reduce the intense technological effort needed to eke out the dwindling resources, it would reduce pollution of the environment, it may give the poor nations an opportunity to achieve an "acceptable standard of living".

To give feasibility to his No. 3, Birch reminds us of the wasteful practices in our own experiences. A motor car, he writes, provides eleven passenger kilometres per litre of fuel, buses average thirty five to forty five, trains, thirty to seventy and a Boeing 707 about 7.5 passenger kilometres per litre.

Another striking example in the misuse of energy is in the use of aluminium in drink cans. Five times as much energy is needed to produce the same amount of aluminium as steel. As a result and aluminium can needs 75.0 10⁶ BTU, a steel can 38.6 and a 19 trip returnable bottle 15.9.

The salient points in his summing up of the situation are (1) we halve the use of energy in the decade ahead and strive for zero at least by the twenty first century (rapid public transport must favoured over private cars), much more use of the rail system, public education in energy saving, recycling of metal and glass (2) reject nuclear power until it is much safer (3) more research into solar power and the use of methane (4) a National Energy Budget for planned production and consumption.

Lloyd Jones

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

<u>From Barbara Baillie</u>:- "For a change, two fragments of environmental good news. The first concerns the track I mentioned in the last issue of the Newsletter, the one leading off the bottom of Bundara Road at Blackheath. 'They', or 'someone' is doing something about repair, stones and branches have been placed in the erosion gullies to provide footsteps and check the flow of water, several little dams have been built across the track to send run-off into the bush, all possibly done by individuals who use the track. Further round, towards Wall's Ledge, some quite substantial repairs have been effected. Congratulations to whoever is/are responsible, and let's hope the improvements are maintained.

The second bit of news refers back to Lloyd Jones article on the human population avalanche in the issue of last October. People concerned about the sort of issues he raised have formed an association called "Australians for an Ecologically Sustainable Population". The subscription is \$10 per year and the address is GPO Box 1875, Canberra, ACT 2601."

<u>From Dennis Maxwell-Gill</u>:- "I refer to Chapter 5 of 'By Bread Alone' by Charles Birch which was submitted by Lloyd Jones.

In my opinion the premise stated by the author for feeding the starving of this world is too simplistic and is unpractical. It only states one side of the picture and is based on two assumptions:- (1) that all the 'rich' wish and desire to feed the unfortunate; (2) that the resources of planet Earth are limitless.

To produce all the extra food necessary to support the unfortunate of this world needs effort and effort has to be paid for. This is only achieved by raising taxes and raising taxes means a lower standard of living. No one, and I repeat, no one is prepared to accept a lower standard unless it is forced on them. A politician would not risk his job by introducing such a measure. Secondly, there is the question of how to produce all this extra food and delivered to where it is needed. Growing food takes a lot of energy to prepare the land, to sow and reap, and to produce the fertiliser and insecticides. Again energy is required to store and move it around as required. The amount of energy available to us is limited and furthermore the energy we are using today is obtained at the expense of the future. It is obtained by raping the earth and making it less able to support the populations of the future. Cutting down forests to make more arable land is not the answer as it is usually poor soil and will only produce for a short period. It also leads to more carbon dioxide resulting in more acid rain and increased green house effect. As Charles Birch states "nothing it seems can be done until the population growth rate is curbed". The literature dealing with nature report that in the animal kingdom some species regulate their population according to the food supply available in their territories. Mankind has not yet reached this state of wisdom".

It is flattering to know at least four people have read my articles. The Editor, the typist (poor lady), and our two correspondents.

Re. Mr Gill's comments – I have not done justice to Birch if I have conveyed that Birch assumes the resources of the earth are limitless. He definitely does not. As for the rest of his letter, I cannot but agree. Readers have no idea how depressed I feel after summarising Birch's chapters. It takes a couple of beers (aluminium cans) in front of the air conditioner in summer or a five bar radiator in winter to regain normal equilibrium!

So it is nice to realise from Barbara Baillie's letter that there are active workers for the environment both is Blackheath and Canberra.

Lloyd Jones

AN ALLEGORY FOR OUR TIME

There was a pond at Woodford. It was not always so. Some years ago Alf the Plumber needed sand to fill a dip in his yard and he took it from a service track on a ridge-top. Time mooched on while the sump left in the road periodically filled with water and dried out.

Unexpectedly it did not silt up. Frogs found it and in the warm months tadpoles swarmed. It became an adventitious watering hole for small animals and even swamp wallaby.

Large wading birds discovered it and left their distinctive foot prints. Tracks of snakes and water dragons made criss-cross patterns around the edge. Sometimes the frogs mistimed events and tadpoles were stranded in drying, cracking mud, giving a feast to scavenging ants. One late autumn a hatching of thousands of tadpoles was rescued and reared in the shelter of a nearby garden. When unusually wet seasons came sedges germinated and prospered for the pond nearly always had some moisture.

Then the pool expanded and the overflow cascaded over the cliff edge. Such a volume of water accumulated in the valley below that sports like water skiing became popular. At the same time pressure for land for housing became so great that the rocky ridges of erstwhile reserves were now seen to be both suitable and desirable and were expansively services as home sites with water views.

But the water flow increased further and, as the sorcerer's apprentice had once found, it could not be managed. Some use was gained when a hydro-electricity scheme was started. The cheap energy was offered to Japanese industry which established in the national park on the south side of the railway and highway, both upgraded to handle the new city's traffic.

Some old timers still hang about the district. Not knowing quite what to do, enduring the crises of radical change and alienation, they are inclined to cling to each other for a modicum of comfort. Alf's place is still there and they think they make it a memorial but are bewildered and not sure now what they are remembering? Was it the trees felled for shipping? Was it the philosophy of moderation? Was it the dreamtime?

Robin Corringham

Society News

<u>AUTUMN PLANT SALE</u> – A very successful Native Plant sale was held on Saturday March 11th. Despite the awful weather and the fact that there was no sale on the Friday night, a large crowd was waiting on the doorstep at 9 am when the Hut opened and by 10 am most of the plants were gone.

The weather continued wet and a lot of the buyers stayed on to hear Jill Dark give a very excellent talk on Propagating Native Plants. Jill outlined five methods of propagating plants:- (1) By seeds; (2) By cuttings; (3) By division; (4) By grafting; and (5) by scientific cloneing.

Jill concentrated on the first two methods and gave practical demonstrations of the type of pots, the correct propagating mixture of sand and peat and correct time and method of picking and preparing cuttings.

Her talk was full of humour and good helpful advice which encouraged those of us who are usually daunted by the propagation of natives.

The weather cleared a lot after lunch and Jill Dark valiantly took a group on a walk in the bush to see what affect the rains had had on the wild flowers. It was a very successful day all round financially and horticulturally – about \$1800 was taken.

<u>CAMELS HUMP</u>: In the last newsletter "the Camels Hump (2925M)" was inadvertantly elevated for beyond its station to the highest mountain in Australia. This modest peak we're told is actually about 880M or 2896 ft high.

<u>CONSERVATION KIT</u>: At the January General Meeting Dale Wengate gave a very interesting talk on the making of a "Conservation Kit". This was designed for study by High School students (Year 11 and 12) as part of the General Studies subject in the HSC examination. Slides showing beautiful pictures of native plants and animals combined with an interesting script made an informative introduction to the subject of conservation.

CONCERNED

Members are probably worried and concerned about matters of conservation from time to time. Reg Toseland compiled a list of likely topics and the relevant ministers to whom you should write a letter of protest.

<u>List of some Concerns</u>: Wood Chips – Transport – Crown Lands – Duck Shooting – Environmental Planning – Tourism – Mining

Relevant Ministers

Hon. Tim MOORE M.P.

MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT
LEGAL & GENERAL HOUSE
8-18 Bent Street SYDNEY 2000

Hon I.M. ARMSTRONG M.P.

MINISTER AGRICULTURE & RURAL AFFAIRS AND MINISTER FOR MINES & TOURISM c/- Parliament House

Macquarie Street SYDNEY 2000

Hon I.R. CAUSLEY M.P.

MINISTER FOR NATURAL RESOURCES
c/- Parliament House

Macquarie Street SYDNEY 2000

Hon D.A. HAY M.P.

MINISTER FOR PLANNING AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
c/- Parliament House

Macquarie Street SYDNEY 2000

OPPOSITION SHADOW MINISTER
Mr Pat ROGAN – ENVIRONMENT
Mr Tim DOYLE – PLANNING
Mr Jack HALLAM – AGRICULTURE

DEMOCRATS IN UPPER HOUSE Elizabeth KIRKBY Richard JONES

PARLIAMENT HOUSE MACQUARIE STREET SYDNEY 2000

THE SOUTH-EAST WOODCHIP ISSUE – SOME PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS

We visited Eden over Christmas. It was our first exposure, close up, to the logging industry and you can't ignore it. Trucks thunder past with alarming regularity, loaded with logs or wood chips, posters adorn ship windows pushing the logging cause, bushfire reports on the radio are "proudly sponsored by Harriss- Daishowa" paintings in the Fishman's Club donated by the same company, a logging display at the Whaling Museum and, across the bay, the furnace of the chip mill dominating the horizon.

To get to the mill you drive through forest sign-posted to indicate when it was logged. The grounds of the mill's Visitor's Centre are landscaped with Australian native plants and the promotional video running inside features close-ups of birds and animals all enjoying their logged habitat. The whole emphasis of the Centre is on the 'benefits' of logging and the 'environmentally sound' methods used. The arguments are the same. They're shallow but probably sound quite reasonable to a lot of the public: improved access to forests, fewer bushfires, increases in some native animals and the usual focus on 'gum trees' without any consideration of ecosystems or the interdependence and complexity of nature. In fact, if you believe their PR blurb, you have to wonder how Mother Nature ever managed before the advent of Harriss-Daishowa. The visitor's book attests to the controversial nature of the industry with some lengthy (and fiery) comments.

Around town you're constantly reminded that wood-chipping is the area's biggest industry, and of all the 'improvements' it's brought. We asked a local shopkeeper where we could do some bushwalking and were immediately met with the response, "You're not Greenies are you?

Our waitress in a restaurant told us how a friend who worked on the oil rigs had been layed off because of a dispute with the 'greenies', 'Imagine the damage they're causing down there!'

In Eden, if you want a happy holiday, you keep your political view to yourself.

Perhaps we'd feel a little better if this destruction of our forests was for some vital purpose but the bottom line is that our trees are being felled for the Japanese to make paper.

With its long history of whaling, and the present day wood-chipping industry, Eden is not a comfortable place for anyone with an environmental conscience.

Sue Hutchins – in the Lower Blue Mountain Conservation Society Newsletter
