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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 the last Friday of the month, after January will be held at the Wentworth Falls Public School, Falls Road, until further notice.

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	58.8361
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.

 $\overline{\text{WALKS:}}$ 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.



Newsletter

No. 78

January, 1990

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Contents			Page
Coming Walks & Talks			1
Reports on Walks			3
Make Life Work			6
Thoughts Arising			8
Kings Table			9
Society News		1015	11
Bird Count		nie e	12

COMING TALKS January Ian Brown Sierra Nevada To be Decided February March, 26th Annual General Meeting.

UPPER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY EXCURSIONS JANUARY, FEBRUARY, MARCH, APRIL 1990

> IT IS ESSENTIAL ON ALL EXCURSIONS 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 EXCURSIONS DO SO AT THEIR OWN RISK

MEMBERS ARRIVING BY TRAIN SHOULD ADVISE CONTACT PRIOR TO THE EXCURSION

January 7th Sunday - Grand Canyon

Meet at Blackheath Station car park 9.30 a.m. The two attempts in 1989 to go through the Canyon were abandoned due to flooded creeks. Neates Glen, Grand Canyon, optional Beauchamp Falls, then up to Evan's Look Out. 5-6 hours. Contact: David Thomas. 84.2121 Sydney Train Arrives 9.24 Sydney Train Arrives 9.24 a.m.

January 18th Thursday - Cliff Top

Meet at 'Marked Tree' Katoomba at 10.30 a.m. We will follow the track to Cliff Drive and return, noting development which is being allowed to take place near the cliff edge. 3-4 hours.

Contact: Olive Noble 87.8342

Sydney Train arrives 9.47 a.m. Lithgow Train arrives 10.18 a.m.

January 20th Saturday - Mystery Trip

Meet at Mt Victoria station at 8.45 a.m. and come for a bit of adventure in an interesting area. Be prepared to get your feet wet! 6-7 hours

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

February 4th Sunday - Dantes Glen

Meet in front of Lawson Bowling club (adjacent to railway station, opposite side to Great Western Highway) 10.00 a.m. The walk will start near Lawson swimming pool and should be a cool stroll in some shady valley. 4 hours - longer if you feel so inclined.

Contact: Dierdre Morton. 58-8137

Sydney train arrives 9.49 a.m.

February 15th Thursday - Medlow Bath

Meet at the end of Bellevue Crescent, Medlow Bath at 10.00 a.m. We will explore around Maxine's Grotto and visit The Three Brothers. Extensive views into Megalong Valley. 3-4 hours

Contact: Eric and June Blick 88.1051

February 17th Saturday - Megalong Ford -Cox's River Via The Six Foot Track

Meet at Blackheath Station commuter car park 8.30 a.m. It is optional to spend a number of hours by the river then walk back in the cool of the evening. If you are staying for the afternoon, bring a torch, a late snack and extra water. 6 hours or longer!

Contact: Bob Jones 58.8361 Sydney train arrives 8.29 a.m.

March 4th Sunday - Engineers Track

Meet at Mt Victoria station at 9.30 a.m. Walk down this historic track to the Grose River and return. 5-6 hours.

Contact: Olive Noble 87-8342 Sydney train arrives 9.31 a.m.

March 15th Thursday - Darwin's Walk

Meet just around the corner from the Great Western Highway in Falls Road, Wentworth Falls 10.15 a.m. Details of this historic walk will be related to us on the day by our two guides. 4 hours.

Contact: Reg and Dulcie Toseland 84.1682

Sydney Train arrives 10.07 a.m. Katoomba Train arrives 9.39 a.m.

March 17th Saturday - National Pass Wentworth Falls

Meet at Wentworth Falls Picnic area (end of Falls Road) 9.30 a.m. We will go down Wentworth Falls, along National pass up the Valley of the Waters and back along the Over Cliff track. 5 hours.

Contact: Bob Jones 58. 8361

April 1st Sunday - Megalong Falls

Meet at Blackheath Station car park at 9.30 a.m. We will explore an area near the Six Foot Track where we haven't been before. 5-6 hours.

Contact: David Thomas 84.2121 Sydney Train arrives 9.24 a.m.

April 19th Thursday - Walls Look-Out

A new walk for our agenda. Meet at Mt Victoria station 9.30 a.m. The walk starts from Bell's Line of Road at the Pierce's pass sign post. The track goes through bush, then along an exposed ridge to the edge of the cliff over-looking the Grose River. It is not very steep, some patches to negotiate. Marvellous views and a multitude of flowers in season. 1.5 km from sign. 3-4 hours.

Contact: Grace Bayley 59.1955 Sydney train arrives 8.58 a.m.

April 21st Saturday - Waratah Ridge

time from September to November.

Meet at Mt Victoria station at 8.45 a.m. A little known part of the Blue Mountains National Park. 6-7 hours.

Contact: John Noble 87-8342

Sydney Train arrives 8.36 a.m.

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WALK - EVANS' RESERVE - THURSDAY OCTOBER 19th

We had a pleasant though windy day, and quite a lot of people turned up. walk was chosen to show people the areas where the wild flowers were so prolific last year, but at first it seemed we were to be disappointed. We started from James Road. On the first stretch on which flowers were expected, we found very little this year. We then cut down under the power lines to Braeside Walk, through an area which was slashed flat by Prospect Electricity about 18 months ago. The ground there is now very dry. In Braeside Walk we found the flowers, in considerable variety, a very reddish form of Bauera rubioides being particularly noticeable. The track through Braeside Walk had been a running stream for about six months round autumn 1989, but we found it quite dry on the It appeared that we had arrived on a cicada hatching day; they were all The knowledgeable ones among us said they were Black Princes. then climbed Mount Griffith Taylor, pausing at Luchetti Lookout, walked along the cliff edge towards Evans' Lookout, and took the short cut back along the ridge top to the cars. On this stretch we found the reliable Philotheca salsolifolia, which is flowering later than usual this year, Patersonia, and quite a lot of other species in flower, including a few waratahs.

Rachel Makinson

P.S. I followed the same route again on November 13th, after we had had 39 mm of rain. This time there were masses of flowers everywhere except on the first stretch; from memory, at least 20 species. Particularly noticeable in the drier areas were Poranthera corymbosa and Conospermum, and there were more Waratahs and Philotheca salsolifolia than we saw in October. Braeside Walk was dominated for its whole length by Epacris obtusifolia and Vanilla Lilies. I found a handful of Euphrasia in the usual two places, but no more than eight spikes in all. It must be very marginal there.

I am afraid that the only way you can be sure of seeing this area at its best is to go there a few days after the first good rains in spring, which may be any

R.M.

WALK - RHODODENDRON GARDENS - GOVETT'S LEAP LOOKOUT - SATURDAY OCTOBER 21ST

On a perfect Spring day, a party of thirteen set out to view the Gardens of the Blue Mountains Rhododendron Society at Blackheath. Just a little early in the season for maximum colour, there was nevertheless a splendid display of many varieties of rhododendrons and azaleas in full bloom.

We strolled along some of the 3.2 km of tracks winding through the garden - on the high ground they pass through the natural bushland, and on the lower slopes among the plantings of rhododendrons. The valley floor was carpeted with massed kurume azaleas amongst the ferns and tall E. oreades.

Even the wood ducks enjoyed the day, parading their young across the lake with great pride

After a visit to the Lodge for morning tea and a look at the beautiful display of cut blooms, we moved on to the Memorial Park.

There the older rhododendrons made a great wall in pink and mauve around the expanse of lawn above the swimming pool. This was voted the spot for lunch, following which several members left the party to attend an environmental meeting at Katoomba.

The remainder walked on through the park to Darwin's Walk along Pope's Glen Creek to the top of Horseshoe Falls (this track sadly overgrown with gorse in some areas). From the Falls we took the track along the cliff to Govett's Leap Lookout, enjoying the views of the Grose Valley along the way. The outing concluded with a brief inspection of the N.P.W.S. Heritage Centre.

Joan Storey.

REPORT - RUINED CASTLE - SATURDAY NOVEMBER 18TH

There were eleven people for the walk on this day which was overcast but cool. The Sydney train was 35 minutes late, so Llyod Jones stayed behind to pick up any train travellers.

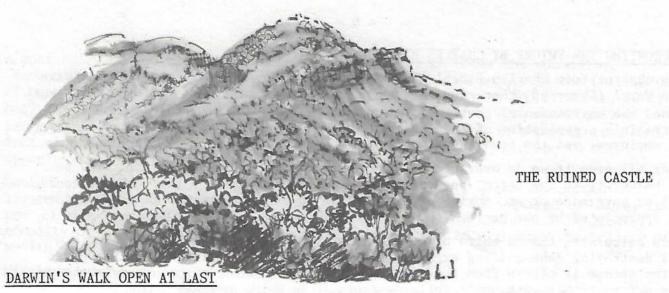
The walk was altered from a start at the Golden Stairs to a start from the Scenic Railway car park via the rail car. This change added much more to the walk than I had calculated as the walk didn't finish till 5.30 p.m. What prompted the alteration was the reports I had received about car break-ins on Narrow Neck.

The land slide track is safe in dry weather if care is taken but could be slippery if wet. There were no leechs sighted on the track under Narrow Neck. At the Ruined Castle, we met a very friendly raven. When I held out a small piece of meat the raven walked over and took it from my hand. Later on while I was pouring a drink the raven hopped onto my lunch box and made off with half of my lunch sandwich in its beak.

Despite all the rain for the first half of the year the track up the Golden Stairs on the way back was better than I had anticipated. Then began the road back to the car park. Sorry about the extra mileage but I must say those ten other walkers were a very tolerant lot, because everyone talked to me when we reached the car park and not one black look was thrown my way during the last bit of the long road walk.

As the end of year approaches, Olive Noble and I would like to thank all the 1989 Walks' Leaders who made the walks possible by their willing co-operation and the people who came on the walks and made the walks something to remember in later years by their cheerful company.

Bob Jones



After much delay Darwin's Walk was declared open at last on Saturday, December 2nd, 1989. The delay was caused by a dispute that arose where the track crossed private land. This has at last been resolved and the track is open for all to enjoy. In the absence of the Mayor, Barbara Towers of the 530A Committee gave a short address giving the history of the walk and how it eventually became a well constructed and properly drained walk.

Charles Darwin walked along the banks of Jamison Creek in 1836 to view the falls and the valley, and was greatly impressed by what he saw. He described the cliffs and valleys as "extremely magnificent".

In 1986 our Society arranged a walk along the creek to mark the 150th anniversary of Darwin's visit. The track then was unmade and very hazardous at the crossings. The Blue Mountains City Council has since restored the track with stout foot bridges across the creek, well planned gutters to preserve the tracks and duck-boarding in the swampy areas. Along the way there are plaques where information is given about the flora and fauna and history of the area. The walk is gentle, sloping towards the valley with pools and cascades along the way.

About 16 people made the trip as far as Rocket Point where a magnificent view of both stages of Wentworth Falls can be had.

We returned via the short cut from the Wentworth Falls Reserve to the "Hut" where a very welcome cup of tea was waiting.

Grete Vanry cut the ribbon at the opening ceremony, which was most fitting she is one of the oldest and most dedicated members of our Society.

P.S. As was mentioned in Jill Curnow's article last month, the track is threatened by exotic pests. The swamp areas are in danger of being drained by developers and the water flow is probably much less than when Darwin first "strolled" along its banks. The creek hasn't moved, but the suburban sprawl has. This is of great concern to all conservationists,

XMAS BREAK-UP-SUNDAY-DECEMBER 3.

This occasion had special significance because it was probably the last function to be held in the old Hut, whose demolition was put off until the end of January. A group photograph was taken with Hut in the background. Thirtyfour members set off in the walk down to Empress Falls. Good work has been done by N.P.W.S. to improve the paths; the handrails were very strong and adequate. The ladders require care and cannot be skipped down lightly. The Falls themselves were magnificent. A little six petaled flower was blooming everywhere on the rocks and crannies, but without Jill Dark, nobody seemed to know its name. We returned to the Hut in time for lunch — sitting on the grass at the back of the Hut, beguiled by David Thomas' pickled onions. It was a nostalgic occasion. Lloyd Jones water colours of the Hut went like hot cakes.

CONFRONTING THE FUTURE BY CHARLES BIRCH - MAKE LIFE WORK

This chapter from Charles Birch's book "Confronting the Future" is labelled 'Make Life Work' (Cheer up, there are only three more left). Having more or less scrutinised the environmental problems of the globe Birch now narrows his focus to Australia's organization of industry, its goals, the relationship between employer and employee, and the inevitable changes he sees happening.

After all even if we do overcome all the environmental problems how can life be any better if we don't feel personally good within ourselves. Each of us should feel we have made or are making a contribution to our society and that our efforts are appreciated by our peers.

Birch calculates that a third of our life is given to work yet for many it is a soul destroying dehumanizing experience. The only satisfaction work time gives is the escape it offers from the domestic situation and the opportunity 'smoko' time offers to mix with one's fellow workers.

The introduction of automation has done away with many jobs of this nature but at the same time introduced new problems. The worker becomes and feels an even smaller cog or he becomes redundant. Understimulation can lead to "psychosomatic ill-nesses, apathy, non-involvement and alienation.

Birch states the solution is not to put the clock back and turn our backs on modern technology. The task before us is to change industrial society so radically that man and not the machine and its products become central. Already this is occurring in some industries says Birch. Automated technology and computer technology for example have advanced the efficiency of companies and corporations to a dead end position. The new problem which arises is the groove into which those bodies fall. The maintenance of such systems require skilled employees who because of its triumphant efficiency become no more than bored 'baby' sitters who feel their working hours, though well paid, are meaningless and dull. Such efficiency can lead to dangerous rigidity and the exclusion of really bright people, "authoritarian forms of discipline, hierarchical regimentation and the fragmentation of the labour force."

Birch supports the notion that "cellular organisation" would be a more satisfying way for human employees. By this he means, instead of a successful firm expanding its production by enlarging its work force with people who just produce more and more of the units which made the whole, they would be organised instead into a "cell" similar in size to the one existing before expansion took place.

By this way the employees would find the work place less dehumanizing and their self esteem and initiative would grow and possibly to the company's ultimate advantage.

Quite stimulating are Birch's thoughts on shorter working hours which increased production beguiles us into believing as a inevitable and progressive step. Instead he suggests rather than a shorter working week we have a shorter working year. The shorter working week he suggests "can mean idle hours, more of them in the pub and the gambling machine. The shorter working year provides greater opportunity for continuing education and increased creativity." We could travel, do a pottery or painting course, do a new job training course - the sky is the limit!

Industrial democracy and worker participation are two fields Birch thinks could be developed much more to "enrich the life of the worker" and to contribute to "efficiency and industrial peace." He writes "The implementation of these ideals has many difficulties, especially in large companies. Two necessary conditions seems to be: the understanding by workers and management of each other's values and a readiness to compromise.

A most relevant and current issue is discussed by Birch under the subheading "Redundancy and the redevelopment of human resources" - He points to the fall in numbers of people employed in agriculture and manufacturing industries and predicts (as it has) its continual decline and a similar decline in clerical work as automation progresses. He writes "We must expect and encourage a change in emphasis from manufacturing to services".... we need "to plan alternative projects and to develop opportunities for learning new sorts of skills.

Another provoking and stimulating thought is suggested by Birch who advocates a limited maximum wage. Why should people be paid more than is required to house, feed and clothe them comfortably? Such a limitation he feels would lead to greater equality of incomes and wealth. This in turn could lead to a greater channelling of wealth away from consumer goods to services.

His last sub-heading is on "Unions in Australia". He states "It would be tragic if the Australian union movement which at the beginning of this century made such a significant contribution to the development of the unions should now rest on its laurels and stagnate".

Such comments were prompted by the seeming neglect of the unions to address the many changes which have occurred in the structure of the work force e.g. the increasing proportion of women in the work force, a better educated work force, a more skilled component, increasing needs for retraining. None of the suggestions he has made in this article has been mooted by the A.C.T.U.

Perhaps the touchiest suggestion of his whole chapter is that unions should support tariff cuts to allow undeveloped countries to export goods to us and so help their desperate economies. It is a "moral issue" Birch writes.

One wonders are they up to such an idealistic move and for that matter, are we?

Lloyd Jones

WARD 2 BY-ELECTION CANDIDATE

Carol Gaul, a resident of Lawson, has been endorsed by the Blue Mountains Environment Council, CORE, and by former Ward 2 Alderman David Lawton to stand as an independent environmental and social justice candidate in the February Ward 2 by-election.

Carol has been a resident of Lawson for 16 years, and is a former school teacher. She has been involved with various groups concerned with youth and women's issues and is presently on the Youth Centre Management Committee. Carol is also a member of Rainbow Alliance an organisation committed to 'green politics', which recognises the connection between the exploitation of people and the exploitation of the natural environment for self-interested short term gain.

She wants to see more grass-roots participation in the decision-making processes, and will play her part in protecting the Blue Mountains natural and township environment, from damaging development.

A concert will be held to raise much needed campaign funds at the Wentworth Falls School of Arts on January 27th at 2 p.m. We hope all greenies will support Carol by coming along. If we don't get her in, we may find another representative of developers interest on Council.

THOUGHTS ARISING FROM LLOYD JONES ARTICLES

Those of you who have enjoyed Lloyd Jones' articles about Charles Birch's book may be interested in a paper published at Parliament House September 1989. It concerns the economics of Australia's immigration policy, or rather the problems associated with our lack of population policy. The paper makes excellent reading (would you believe a paper on economics that is comprehensible to the reading public?) The following extracts are an indication of its contents.

It is normally asserted that we need more people to boost economic activity. The paper agrees that overall economic activity will rise as a result of numbers, but adds "projections of the long term economic benefits in terms of PER CAPITA GDP are so small as to be virtually insignificant, and very uncertain. Any potential long-term benefits could easily be dwarfed by the cumulative negative effects of repeated bout of high interest rates in response to unsustainable demand to which immigration makes a clear contribution." (my caps., p.18). "A smaller current account deficit may only be feasable with a slower rate of population and economic growth. (Note that slower economic growth combined with slower population growth does NOT imply slower growth in per capita incomes)." p.20. "Immigration induces investment in housing and urban infrastructure, but these funds may be more productively applied, developing exporting and import replacing industries." p.21. "Australia's exports are dominated by agricultural and mining commodities The available supplies of these are constrained by a finite resource endowment and are capital intensive..... Immigration will stimulate imports, but Australia's ability to boost exports to pay for the extra imports may be limited by factors such as soil degradation and the size of world demand. This suggests that expansion of the population may lead to diminishing returns in exports per capita, i.e. a real decline in the standard of living. p.22. It is sometimes argued that immigration is essential to check the ageing of our population, that paper points out (p.25) that migrants also age, that the problem will merely be postponed, and that in any case the economic problems associated with ageing may be much over-rated.

In the Sydney region we watch hectare after hectare of good agricultural land and bush being rezoned for the urban sprawl. The paper quotes authorities in the housing industry stating "the immigrant buyer was fast becoming the major factor in the increasing demand for new homes". p.18. "The pressures to expand agricultural exports to sustain the living standards of a growing population could lead to further irreversable damage to the environment, and ... population growth around water catchment areas can also cause problems in the light of Australia's relatively scarce water resources. The cost per capita of overcoming problems such as these could conceivably rise if more marginal land is cultivated and less accessable water resources are exploited." p.16.

This paper is entitled "The Economics of Immigration: who Benefits?" which is a good title. Politicians may notice it even if they don't read it. However as you can see from these few quotes, it deals with the issue of how many polluters (us) we can cram onto this poor battered continent. I can thoroughly recommend this paper to anyone interested. It is available from the Legislative Research Service, Department of the Parliamentary Library, Canberra 2600.

Jill Curnow

NATIVE PLANTS. People wishing to buy native plants without waiting for the Society's Spring and Autumn Plant Sales, may obtain them from Jill Dark direct. Jill has a plant-potting day each Tuesday at her home in Hazelbrook. 'phone number is 58.7061.

SUNDA

THE SEA

BY UP TO

AGE

LEVEL FELL

150 m DURING

THE LAST ICE

MAINLAND AUSTRALIA,
TASMANIA AND

WERE JOINED

NEW GUINEA

SAHUL

KINGS TABLE ABORIGINAL SITE

This was the subject of Greg Gaul's talk to the September general meeting. The oldest evidence for the occupation of Australia is dated to 40,000 years from the present. Some researchers suggest that there is evidence at lake George, near Canberra, of changes in the vegetation by regular, human, firing of the bush 120,000 years ago.

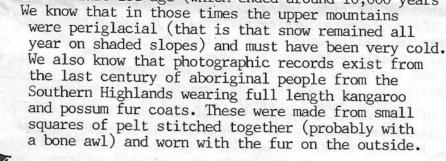
The most popular view of the colonisation of Australia all those years ago is that people from the (then) mainland of South East Asia crossed the water barrier (the Wallace Line) which has separated the land masses of Asia and Australasia for millions of years.

Whether this crossing was 60,000 or 120,00 years ago it was the earliest known sea voyage of history and was probably one of many such voyages. This interpretation also suggests that, as they were coastal people, they spread around the coastlines of Australia and New Guinea and up the major river systems utilising the food resources which were familiar and abundant.

The aboriginal people of Australia eventually settled across the whole of the continent and the lifestyle, languages and mythology of these people developed as many variations as you would find across Europe or Africa.

The Blue Mountains have been occupied for a very long time. The oldest date for a site with charcoal associated with a stone flake is 22,000 years before the present, that is 21,828 before Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson crossed the Blue Mountains. That Ice Age site is at King's Table, Wentworth Falls. The famous European explorers certainly were not the first people to cross the Blue Mountains and in the case of Barralier did so with the help of aboriginal guides who knew the well-trodden trails.

In fact there are three locations in the upper Blue Mountains which show that people occupied rock shelters in the last ice age (which ended around 10,000 years ago.



The archaelogical evidence does not seem to be strong enough to suggest that these early mountain people were anything more than occasional visitors who may have come up onto the higher plateaux from the warmer valleys.

The evidence does show that there was a big change in the habits of the people from about 4000 years ago when rock shelters were used by more people and new types of stone tool were added to the old stone tool kit.

The records of early European observers tell us something of the distribution of the mountain people but by that time, the disastrous impact of the European colonisation was already taking its toll. The accounts are still extremely valuable.

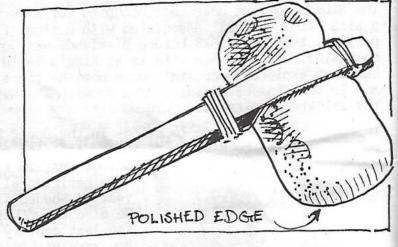
For example, this one from Mitchell which expresses some surprise at the standard of comfort.

Mitchell 1839 (Blue Mountains) - "In crossing one hollow, we passed among the huts of a native tribe. They were tastefully distributed amongst drooping acacias and casuarinacae... . Each hut was semi circular, or circular, the roof conical, and from one side a flat roof stood forward like a portice, supported by two sticks. ... The interior of each looked clean, and to us passing in the rain, gave some idea, not only of shelter but even of comfort and happiness."

The tribal territories were fairly fluid but it seems that the southern part of the Blue Mountains (the Burragorang and Kanangara areas) was the domain of the Gundungara tribe while the main part of the central Mountains was the territory of the Daruk people.

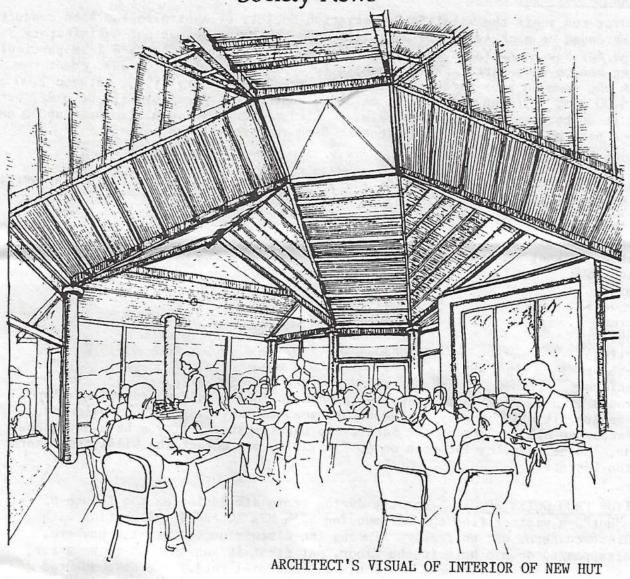
Greg said if he were to hazard a guess at the population make up of the mountains some five hundred years ago, he would say that the central mountains was occupied by some 4 or 5 hundred people who travelled from the valleys to the plateaux in 'family'groups of 10 or more. These groups became larger or smaller and sometimes joined with others according to needs and at times, gatherings took place which included not only the mountain people but also people from the enormous tribal areas to the west, the Wiradjuri and the Kamilaroy.

The grinding grooves you see at King's Table are the result of many hours of industry at a place with a fantastic view. In fact all the grinding groove sites in the mountains have terrific views. Granite stones from the rivers below were shaped by removing flakes from the "blank" by striking it with a hammer stone, the blank was then polished on two sides using water from the pools as a lubricant. Finally the axe was hafted onto a wooden handle and fixed with resin from the grass tree and the long sinew from a kangaroo tail.



Most of the material possessions of the people were made of wood and unfortunately very little remains due to the acidity of the sandy deposits in the rock shelters. We do know, however, that wooden digging sticks (for digging up yams and other roots), dishes, spears and boomerangs as well as woven baskets and the beautiful kangaroo and possum fur coats were also part of the material culture of the mountain people.

Society News



THE NEW HUT. The old Conservation Hut at the Valley of the Waters - our "Hut" - will come tumbling down soon. Riddled with white ants, the National Parks and Wildlife Service has decreed that the Hut must come down and be replaced. The demolition will take place about the end of January. Hopefully we may still be able to hold our next General Meeting (January 26th) at the Hut, after which we will meet at Wentworth Falls School on the last Friday of each month.

The new Hut is planned for completion about June of 1990. During its construction we are hoping to obtain the use of a replacement structure so that we can keep in touch with our members and tourist visitors.

Before the new building is completed, we must decide what part of the services of this complex we will be able to provide - gift shop, catering, guided walking tours, information centre, etc. Whether we can manage all or part of these services is of deep concern. NPWS has ensured that we will have at least a meeting place and room for our library,

AUSTRALIA DAY BIRD COUNT

For over ten years the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia has been conducting a bird count on each Australia Day. In 1988 the response was not satisfactory except for New South Wales and Queensland, so if you live interstate I am particularly asking you to take part. What you have to do is quite simple. Just count the birds who come to your garden on Australia Day, 26th January, 1990, between 7.00 a.m. and 8.00 a.m. If you can't do it on 26th, another day close by will be okay, but it must be between 7.00 and 8.00 a.m. Birds flying over can also be counted and make a note of the weather conditions. Send your results to:-

WILD LIFE PRESERVATION SOCIETY, G.P.O. BOX 3428, SYDNEY. 2001

I have not yet received results for 1989, but in 1988 the results for N.S.W. were: No. of results received - 389.

Species	% Gardens	Average
Indian Mynah	60	. 5
Rainbow Lorikeet	47	12
Indian Dove	44	3
Magpie	43	3
Currawong	42	3
Sparrow	40	7
Bulbul	36	. 4
Starling	30	4
Kookaburra	29	2
Rayen/Crow	28	2

If you'd like to receive the results, please enclose a self-addressed envelope, but beware, it will be many months before you hear anything. I would like to encourage all members of the Society to participate. If you have any questions, 'phone Beverley Thompson on (047) 572076, or contact the Wildlife Preservation Society.

VISITOR FROM OUTER SPACE. Lately, during tense discussion on the future of our "Hut", a visitor from the surrounding bush has attended the meeting with apparent concern, but no fear. Finding the discussion was getting nowhere, he disappeared down a hole in the floor. At first it was thought to be a rat, but is now considered to be an antechinus (marsupial rat). We were assured he would do no harm as he was a carnivore. However, he has developed a great liking for Smith's Potato Chips, and threatens to ruin our economy. We've tried to discourage him in various ways, but it seems the only thing left is to catch him in a trap and return him to outer space — the further away the better.

GARN -1'M GREENER THAN

EVERY DAY

AFTERMATH - TASMANIAN ELECTION

The politicians in frustration
Are turning now to conservation.
Once it was a dirty word
Like reds and beds and treason.
Now certain voting has occurred
They suddenly see reason
And beg that we should all take note
That they're the ones for whom to vote.
So vote for them and don't be meanies,
For now they're greener than the Greenies.

Graham Alcorn

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 Dear Sir, I attach a donation to the Australian Conservation Foundation. 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. WENTWORTH 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

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

please tick if receipt required



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

January 1990 No. 78

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	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.

Contents

Coming Walks & Talks
Reports on Walks
Make Life Work
Thoughts Arising
Kings Table
Society News
Bird Count

COMING TALKS

<u>January</u>

Sierra Nevada – Ian Brown

February – To be Decided

March, 26th - Annual General Meeting.

UPPER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY EXCURSIONS

JANUARY, FEBRUARY, MARCH, APRIL 1990

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
	$\hfill\Box$ Warm Shirt or Sweater
	☐ Protective Rainwear
	☐ Hat

WEAR SAFE FOOTWEAR

ALL PEOPLE ATTENDING EXCURSIONS DO SO AT THEIR OWN RISK

*MEMBERS ARRIVING BY TRAIN SHOULD ADVISE CONTACT PRIOR TO THE EXCURSIONS

January 7th Sunday – Grand Canyon

Meet at Blackheath Station car park 9.30 am. The two attempts in 1989 to go through the Canyon were abandoned due to flooded creeks. Neates Glen, Grand Canyon, optional Beauchamp Falls, then up to Evan's Look Out. 5-6 hours

Contact: David Thomas. 84.2121 Sydney Train Arrives 9.24 am.

January 18th Thursday – Cliff Top

Meet at 'Marked Tree" Katoomba at 10.30 am. We will follow the track to Cliff Drive and return, noting development which is being allowed to take place near the cliff edge. 3-4 hours.

<u>Contact</u>: Olive Noble 87.8342 Sydney Train arrives <u>9.47 am</u>

Lithgow Train arrives 10.18 am

January 20th Saturday – Mystery Trip

Meet at Mt Victoria station at 8.45 am and come for a bit of adventure in an interesting area. Be prepared to get your feet wet! 6-7 hours

<u>Contact</u>: John Noble 87.8342 Sydney Train arrives <u>8:36am</u>

<u>February 4th Sunday – Dantes</u> Glen

Meet in front of Lawson Bowling club (adjacent to railway station, opposite side to the Great Western Highway) 10 am. The walk will start near Lawson swimming pool and should be a cool stroll in some shady valley. 4 hours – longer if you feel so inclined.

<u>Contact</u>: Dierdre Morton. 58-8137 Sydney Train arrives <u>9.49 am.</u>

February 15th Thursday – Medlow Bath

Meet at the end of Bellevue Crescent, Medlow Bath at 10 am. We will explore around Maxine's Grotto and visit The Three Brothers. Extensive views into Megalong Valley. 3-4 hours Contact: Eric and June Blick 88.1051

February 17th Saturday – Megalong Ford – Cox's River Via The Six Foot Track

Meet at Blackheath Station commuter car park 8.30 am. It is optional to spend a number of hours by the river then walk back in the cool of the evening. If you are staying for the afternoon, bring a torch, a late snack and extra water. 6 hours or longer!

Contact: Bob Jones 58.8361 Sydney Train arrives 8.29 am.

March 4th Sunday – Engineers Track

Meet at Mt Victoria station at 9.30 am. Walk down this historic track to the Grose River and return. 5-6 hours.

<u>Contact</u>: Olive Noble 87-8342 Sydney train arrives <u>9.31 am.</u>

March 15th Thursday – Darwin's Walk

Meet just around the corner from the Great Western Highway in Falls Road, Wentworth Falls 10.15 am. Details of this historic walk will be related to us on the day by our two guides. 4 hours.

Contact: Reg and Dulcie Toseland 84.1682 Sydney Train arrives 10.07 am.

Katoomba Train arrives 9.39 am.

March 17th Saturday – National Pass Wentworth Falls

Meet at Wentworth Falls Picnic area (end of Falls Road) 9.30 am. We will go down Wentworth Falls, along National pass up the Valley of the Waters and back along the Over Cliff track. 5 hours. Contact: Bob Jones 58.8361

April 1st Sunday – Megalong Falls

Meet at Blackheath Station car park at 9.30 am. We will explore an area near the Six Foot Track where we haven't been before. 5-6 hours.

<u>Contact</u>: David Thomas 84.2121 Sydney Train arrives <u>9.24 am.</u>

April 19th Thursday – Walls Look-Out

A new walk for our agenda. Meet at Mt Victoria station 9.30 am. The walk starts from Bell's Line of Road at the Pierce's pass sign post. The track goes through bush, then along an exposed ridge of the cliff over-looking the Grose River. It is not very steep, some patches to negotiate. Marvellous views and a multitude of flowers in season. 1.5 km from sign. 3-4 hours

<u>Contact</u>: Grace Bayley 59.1955 Sydney Train arrives <u>8.15 am.</u>

April 21st Saturday – Waratah Ridge

Meet at Mt Victoria station at 8.45 am. A little known part of the Blue Mountains National Park. 6-7 hours.

<u>Contact</u>: John Noble 87.8342 Sydney Train arrives <u>8.36 am.</u>

WALK – EVAN'S RESERVE – THURSDAY OCTOBER 16th

We had a pleasant through windy day, and quite a lot of people turned up. This walk was chosen to show people the areas where the wild flowers were so prolific last year, but at first it seemed we were to be disappointed.

We started from James Road. On the first stretch on which flowers were expected, we found very little this year. We then cut down under the power lines to Braeside Walk, through an area which was slashed flat by Prospect Electricity about 18 month ago. The ground there is now very dry. In Braeside Walk we found the flowers, in considerable variety, a very reddish form of *Bauera rubiodes* being particularly noticeable. The track through Braeside Walk had been a running stream for about six months round autumn 1989, but we found it quite dry on the surface. It appeared that we had arrived on a cicada hatching day; they were all around us. The knowledgeable ones among us said they were Black Princes. We then climbed Mount Griffith Taylor, pausing at Luchetti Lookout, walked along the cliff edge towards Evan's Lookout, and took the short cut back along the ridge top to the cars. On this stretch we found the reliable *Philotheca salsolifolia*, which is flowering later than usual this year. *Patersonia*, and quite a lot of other species in flower, including a few *waratahs*.

Rachel Makinson

<u>P.S.</u> I followed the same route again on November 13th, after we had had 39 mm of rain. This time there were masses of flowers everywhere except on the first stretch; from memory, at least 20 species. Particularly noticeable in the drier areas were *Poranthera corymbosa* and *Conospermum*, and there were more *Waratahs* and *Philotheca salsolifolia* than we saw in October. Braeside Walk was dominated for its whole length by *Epacris obusifolia* and *Vanilla Lilies*.

I found a handful of *Euphrasia* in the usual two places, but no more than eight spikes in all. It must be very marginal there.

I am afraid that the only way you can be sure of seeing this area at its best is to go there a few days after the first good rains in spring, which may be any time from September to November.

R.M.

WALK - RHODODENDRON GARDENS - GOVETT'S LEAP LOOKOUT - SATURDAY OCTOBER 21st

On a perfect Spring day, a party of thirteen set out to view the Gardens of the Blue Mountains Rhododendron Society at Blackheath. Just a little early in the season for maximum colour, there was nevertheless a splendid display of many varieties of rhododendrons and azaleas in full bloom. We strolled along some of the 3.2 km of winding tracks through the garden – on the high ground they pass through the natural bushland, and on the lower slopes among the plantings of rhododendrons. The valley floor was carpeted with massed kurume azaleas amongst the ferns and tall *E. oreades*.

Evan the wood ducks enjoyed the day, parading their young across the lake with great pride. After a visit to the Lodge for morning tea and a look at the beautiful display of cut blooms, we moved on to the Memorial Park.

There the older rhododendrons made a great wall in pink and mauve around the expanse of lawn above the swimming pool. This was voted the spot for lunch, following which several members left the party to attend an environmental meeting at Katoomba.

The remainder walked on through the park to Darwin's Walk along Pope's Glen Creek to the top of Horseshoe Falls (this track sadly overgrown with gorse in some areas). From the Falls we took the track along the cliff to Govett's Leap Lookout, enjoying the views of the Grose Valley along the way. The outing concluded with a brief inspection of the NPWS Heritage Centre.

Joan Storey

REPORT – RUINED CASTLE – SATURDAY NOVEMBER 18th

There were eleven people for the walk on this day which was overcast but cool. The Sydney train was 35 minutes late, so Lloyd Jones stayed behind to pick up any train travellers.

The walk was altered from a start at the Golden Stairs to a start from the Scenic Railway car park via the rail car. This change added much more to the walk than I had calculated as the walk didn't finish till 5.30 pm. What prompted the alteration was the reports I had received about car breakins on Narrow Neck.

The land slide track is safe in dry weather if care is taken but could be slippery if wet. There were no leeches sighted on the track under Narrow Neck. At the Ruined Castle, we met a very friendly raven. When I held out a small piece of meat the raven walked over and took it from my hand. Later on while I was pouring a drink the raven hopped onto my lunch box and made off with half of my lunch sandwich in its beak.

Despite all the rain for the first half of the year the track up the Golden Stairs on the way back was better than I had anticipated. Then began the road back to the car park.

Sorry about the extra mileage but I must say those ten other walkers were a very tolerant lot, because everyone talked to me when we reached the car park and not one black look was thrown my way during the last bit of the long road walk.

As the end of year approaches, Olive Noble and I would like to thank all the 1989 Walks Leaders who made the walks possible by their willing co-operation and the people who came on the walks and made the walks something to remember in later years by their cheerful company.

Bob Jones

DARWIN'S WALK OPEN AT LAST

After much delay Darwin's Walk was declared open at last on Saturday, December 2nd 1989. The delay was caused by a dispute that arose where the track crossed private land. This has at last been resolved and the track is open for all to enjoy. In the absence of the Mayor, Barbara Towers of the 530A Committee gave a short address giving the history of the walk and how it eventually became a well constructed and properly drained walk.

Charles Darwin walked along the banks of Jamison Creek in 1836 to view the falls and the valley, and was greatly impressed by what he saw. He described the cliffs and valleys as "extremely magnificent".

In 1986 our Society arranged a walk along the creek to mark the 150th anniversary of Darwin's visit. The track then was unmade and very hazardous at the crossings. The Blue Mountains City Council has since restored the track with stout foot bridges across the creek, well planned gutters to preserve the tracks and duck-boarding in the swampy areas. Along the way there are plaques where information is given about the flora and fauna and history of the area. The walk is gentle, sloping towards the valley with pools and cascades along the way.

About 16 people made the trip as far as Rocket Point where a magnificent view of both stages of Wentworth Falls can be had.

We returned via the short cut from the Wentworth Falls Reserve to the "Hut" where a very welcome cup of tea was waiting.

Grete Vanry cut the ribbon at the opening ceremony, which was most fitting she is one of the oldest and most dedicated members of our Society.

<u>P.S.</u> As mentioned in Jill Curnows article last month, the track is threatened by exotic pests. The swamp areas are in danger of being drained by developers and the water flow is probably much less than when Darwin first "strolled" along its banks. The creek hasn't moved, but the surburban sprawl has. This is of great concern to all conservationists.

XMAS BREAK-UP-SUNDAY-DECEMBER 3.

This occasion had special significance because it was probably the last function to be held in the old Hut, whose demolition was put off until the end of January. A group photograph was taken with Hut in the background. Thirty four members set off in the walk down to Empress Falls. Good work has been done by NPWS to improve the paths; the handrails were very strong and adequate.

The ladders require care and cannot be skipped down lightly. The Falls themselves were magnificent. A little six petaled flower was blooming everywhere on the rocks and crannies, but without Jill Dark, nobody seemed to know its name.

We returned to the Hut in time for lunch – sitting on the grass at the back of the Hut, beguiled by David Thomas' pickled onions. It was a nostalgic occasion. Lloyd Jones water colours of the Hut went like hot cakes.

CONFRONTING THE FUTURE BY CHARLES BIRCH - MAKE LIFE WORK

This chapter from Charles Birch's book "Confronting the Future" is labelled 'Make Life Work' (Cheer up, there are only three more left). Having more or less scrutinised the environmental problems of the globe Birch now narrows his focus to Australia's organization of industry, its goals, the relationship between employer and employee, and the inevitable changes he sees happening.

After all even if we do overcome all the environmental problems how can life be any better if we don't feel personally good within ourselves. Each of us should feel we have made or are making a contribution to our society and that our efforts are appreciated by our peers.

Birch calculates that a third of our life is given to work yet for many it is a soul destroying dehumanising experience. The only satisfaction work time gives is the escape it offers from the domestic situation and the opportunity 'smoko' time offers to mix with one's fellow workers.

The introduction of automation has done away with jobs of this nature but at the same time introduced new problems. The worker becomes and feels an even smaller cog or he becomes redundant. Understimulation can lead to "psychosomatic illnesses, apathy, non-involvement and alienation.

Birch states the solution is not to put the clock back and turn our backs on modern technology. The task before us is to change industrial society so radically that man and not the machine and its products become central. Already this is occurring in some industries says Birch. Automated technology and computer technology for example have advanced the efficiency of companies and corporations to a dead end position. The new problem which arises is the groove onto which those bodies fall. The maintenance of such systems require skilled employees who because of its triumphant efficiency become no more than bored 'baby' sitters who feel their working hours, through well paid, are meaningless and dull. Such efficiency can lead to dangerous rigidity and the exclusion of really bright people, "authoritarian forms of discipline, hierarchical regimentation and the fragmentation of the labour force."

Birch supports the notion that "cellular organisation" would be a more satisfying way for human employees. By this he mans, instead of a successful firm expanding its production by enlarging its work force with people who just produce more and more of the units which made the whole, they would be organised instead into a "cell" similar in size to the one existing before expansion took place.

By this way the employees would find the work place less dehumanizing and their self esteem and initiative would grow and possibly to the company's ultimate advantage.

Quite stimulating are Birch's thoughts on shorter working hours which increased production beguiles us into believing as a inevitable and progressive step. Instead he suggests rather than a shorter working week we have a shorter working year. The shorter working week suggests "can mean idle hours, more of them in the pub and the gambling machine. The shorter working year provides greater opportunity for continuing education and increased creativity." We could travel, do a pottery or painting course, do a new job training course – the sky is the limit!

Industrial democracy and worker participation are two fields Birch thinks could be developed much more to "enrich the life of the worker" and to contribute to "efficiency and industrial peace." He writes "The implementation of these ideals has many difficulties, especially in large companies. Two necessary conditions seems to be: the understanding by workers and management of each other's values and a readiness to compromise.

A most relevant and current issue is discussed by Birch under the subheading "Redundancy and the redevelopment of human resources" – He points to the fall in numbers of people employed in agriculture and manufacturing industries and predicts (as it has) its continual decline and a similar decline in clerical work as automation progress. He writes "We must expect and encourage a change in emphasis from manufacturing to services"..... we need "to plan alternative projects and to develop opportunities for learning new sorts of skills.

Another provoking and stimulating thought is suggested by Birch who advocates a limited maximum wage. Why should people be paid more than is required to house, feed and clothe them comfortably? Such a limitation he feels would lead to greater equality of incomes and wealth. This in turn could lead to a greater channelling of wealth from consumer goods to services.

His last sub-heading is on "Unions in Australia". He states "It would be tragic of the Australian union movement which at the beginning of this century made such a significant contribution to the development of the unions should now rest on its laurels and stagnate.

Such comments were prompted by the seeming neglect of the unions to address the many changes which have occurred in the structure of the work force e.g. the increasing proportion of women in the work force, a better educated work force, a more skilled component, increasing needs for retraining. None of the suggestions he has made in this article has been mooted by the ACTU.

Perhaps the touchiest suggestion of his whole chapter is that unions should support tariff cuts to allow undeveloped countries to export goods to us and so help their desperate economies. It is a "moral issue" Birch writes.

One wonders are they up to such an idealistic move and for that matter, are we?

Lloyd Jones

WARD 2 BY-ELECTION CANDIDATE

Carol Gaul, a resident of Lawson, has been endorsed by the Blue Mountains Environment Council, CORE, and by former Ward 2 Alderman David Lawton to stand as an independent environmental and social justice candidate in the February Ward 2 by-election.

Carol has been a resident of Lawson for 16 years, and is a former school teacher. She has been involved with various groups concerned with youth and women's issues and is presently on the Youth Centre Management Committee. Carol is also a member of Rainbow Alliance an organisation committed to 'green politics', which recognises the connection between the exploitation of people and the exploitation of the natural environment for self-interested short term gain.

She wants to see more grass-roots participation in the decision-making processes, and will play her part in protecting the Blue Mountains natural and township environment, from damaging development.

A concert will be held to raise much needed campaign funds at the Wentworth Falls School of Arts on January 27th at 2 pm. We hope all greenies will support Carol by coming along. If we don't get her in, we may find another representative of developers interest on Council.

THOUGHTS ARISING FROM LLOYD JONES ARTICLES

Those of you who have enjoyed Lloyd Jone's articles about Charles Birch's book may be interested in a paper published at Parliament House September 1989. It concerns the economics of Australia's immigration policy, or rather the problems associated with our lack of population policy. The paper makes excellent reading (would you believe a paper on economics that is comprehensible to the reading public?) The following extracts are an indication of its contents.

It is normally asserted that we need more people to boost economic activity. The paper agrees that overall economic activity will rise as a result of numbers, but adds "projections of the long term economic benefits in terms of PER CAPITA GDP are so small as to be virtually insignificant, and very uncertain. Any potential long-term benefits could easily be dwarfed by the cumulative negative effects of repeated bout of high interest rates in response to unsustainable demand to which immigration makes a clear contribution." (my caps., p.18). "A smaller current account deficit may be feasible with a slower rate of population and economic growth. (Note that slower economic growth combined with slower population growth does NOT imply slower growth in per capita incomes)".p.20. "Immigration induces investment in housing and urban infrastructure, but these funds may be more productively applied, developing exporting and import replacing industries." p.21. "Australia's exports are dominated by agricultural and mining commodities The available supplies of these are constrained by a finite resource endowment and are capital intensive..... Immigration will stimulate imports, but Australia's ability to boost exports to pay for the extra imports may be limited by factors such as soil degradation and the size of world demand. This suggests that expansion of the population may lead to diminishing returns in exports per capita, i.e. a real decline in the standard of living." p.22. It is sometimes argued that immigration is essential to check the ageing of our population, that paper points out (p.25) that migrants also age, that the problem will merely be postponed, and that in any case the economic problems associated with ageing may be much over-rated.

In the Sydney region we watch hectare after hectare of good agricultural land and bush being rezoned for the urban sprawl. The paper quotes authorities in the housing industry stating "the immigrant buyer was fast becoming the major factor in the increasing demand doe new homes".

<u>p.18</u>. "The pressures to expand agricultural exports to sustain the living standards of a growing population could lead to further irreversible damage to the environment, and ... population growth around water catchment areas can also cause problems in the light of Australia's relatively scarce water resources. The cost per capita of overcoming problems such as these could conceivably rise of more marginal land is cultivated and less accessible resources are exploited." <u>p.16</u>.

This paper is entitled "The Economics of Immigration: who Benefits?" which is a good title. Politicians may notice it even if they don't read it. However as you can see from these few quotes, it deals with the issue of how many polluters (us) we can cram onto this poor battered continent. I can thoroughly recommend this paper to anyone interested. It is available from the Legislative Research Service, Department of the Parliamentary Library, Canberra 2600.

Jill Curnow

<u>NATIVE PLANTS</u>. People wishing to buy native plants without waiting for the Society's Spring and Autumn Plant Sales, may obtain them from Jill Dark direct. Jill has a plant-potting day each Tuesday at her home in Hazelbrook. Her phone number is 58.7061.

KINGS TABLE ABORIGINAL SITE

This was the subject of Greg Gaul's talk to the September general meeting. The oldest evidence for the occupation of Australia is dated to 40,000 years from the present. Some researchers suggest that there is evidence at lake George, near Canberra, of changes in the vegetation by regular, human, firing of the bush 120,000 years ago.

The most popular view of the colonisation of Australia all those years ago is that people from the (then) mainland of South East Asia crossed the water barrier (the Wallace Line) which has separated the land masses of Asia and Australasia for millions of years.

Whether this crossing was 60,000 or 120,000 years ago it was the earliest known sea voyage of history and was probably one of many such voyages. This interpretation also suggests that, as they were coastal people, they spread around the coastlines of Australia and New Guinea and up the major river systems utilising the food resources which were familiar and abundant.

The aboriginal people of Australia eventually settled across the whole of the continent and the lifestyle, languages and mythology of these people developed as many variations as you would find across Europe or Africa.

The Blue Mountains have been occupied for a very long time. The oldest date for a site with charcoal associated with a stone flake is 22,000 years before the present, that is 21,828 before Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson crossed the Blue Mountains. That Ice Age site is at King's Table, Wentworth Falls. The famous European explorers certainly were not the first people to cross the Blue Mountains and in the case of Barralier did so with the help of aboriginal guides who knew the well-trodden trails.

In fact there are three locations in the upper Blue Mountains which show that people occupied rock shelters in the last ice age (which ended around 10,000 years ago).

We know that in those times the upper mountains were periglacial (that is that snow remained all year on shaded slopes) and must have been very cold. We also know that photographic records exist from the last century of aboriginal people from the Southern Highlands wearing full length kangaroo and possum fur coats. These were made from small squares of pelt stitched together (probably with a bone awl) and worn with the fur on the outside.

The archaeological evidence does not seem to be strong enough to suggest that these early mountain people were anything more than occasional visitors who may have come up onto the higher plateaux from the warmer valleys.

The evidence does show that there was a big change in the habits of the people from about 4000 years ago when rock shelters were used by more people and new types of stone tool were added to the old stone tool kit.

The records of early European observers tell us something of the distribution of the mountain people but by the time, the disastrous impact of the European colonisation was already taking its toll. The accounts are still extremely valuable.

For example, this one from Mitchell which expresses some surprise at the standard of comfort.

<u>Mitchell 1839 (Blue Mountains)</u> – "In crossing one hollow, we passed among the huts of a native tribe. They were tastefully distributed amongst drooping acacias and casuarinacae... Each hut was semi circular, or circular, the roof conical, and from one side a flat roof stood forward like a portice, supported by two sticks... The interior of each looked clean, and to us passing in the rain, gave some idea, not only of shelter but even of comfort and happiness."

The tribal territories were fairly fluid but it seems that the southern part of the Blue Mountains (the Burragorang and Kanangara areas) was the domain of the Gundungara tribe while the main part of the central Mountains was the territory of the Daruk people.

Greg said if he were to hazard a guess at the population make up of the mountains some five hundred years ago, he would say that the central mountains was occupied by some 4 or 5 hundred people who travelled from the valleys to the plateaux in 'family' groups of 10 or more. These groups became larger or smaller and sometimes joined with others according to needs and at times, gatherings took place which included not only the mountain people but also people from the enormous tribal areas to the west, the Wiradjuri and the Kamilaroy.

The grinding grooves you see at King's Table are the result of many hours of industry at a place with a fantastic view. In fact all the grinding groove sites in the mountains have terrific views. Granite stones from the rivers below were shaped by removing flakes from the "blank" by striking it with a hammer stone, the blank was then polished on two sides using water from the pools as a lubricant. Finally the axe was hafted onto a wooden handle and fixed with resin from the grass tree and the long sinew from a kangaroo tail.

Most of the material possessions of the people were made of wood and unfortunately very little remains due to the acidity of the sandy deposits in the rock shelters. We do know, however, that wooden digging sticks (for digging up yams and other roots), dishes, spears and boomerangs as well as woven baskets and the beautiful kangaroo and possum fur coats were also part of the material culture of the mountain people.

<u>THE NEW HUT</u>. The old Conservation Hut at the Valley of the Waters – our "Hut" – will come tumbling down soon. Riddled with white ants, the National Parks and Wildlife Service has decreed that the Hut must come down and be replaced. The demolition will take place about the end of January. Hopefully we may still be able to hold our next General Meeting (January 26th) at the Hut, after which we will meet at Wentworth Falls School on the last Friday of each month.

The new Hut is planned for completion about June of 1990. During its construction we are hoping to obtain the use of a replacement structure so that we can keep in touch with our members and tourist visitors.

Before the new building is completed, we must decide what part of the services of this complex we will be able to provide – gift shop, catering, guided walking tours, information centre, etc. Whether we can manage all or part of these services is of deep concern. NPWS has ensured that we will have at least a meeting place and room for our library.

AUSTRALIA DAY BIRD COUNT

For over 10 years the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia has been conducting a bird count on each Australia Day. In 1988 the response was not satisfactory except for New South Wales and Queensland, so if you live interstate I am particularly asking you to take part. What you have to do is quite simple. Just count the birds who come to your garden on Australia Day, 26th January, 1990, between 7.00 am and 8.00 am. If you can't do it on 26th, another day close by will be okay, but it must be between 7.00 am and 8.00 am. Birds flying over can also be counted and make a note of the weather conditions. Send your results to:-

WILD LIFE PRESERVATION SOCIETY, GPO BOX 3428, SYDNEY, 2001

I have not yet received results for 1989, but in 1988 the results for NSW were: No. of results received – 389.

<u>Species</u>	% Gardens	<u>Average</u>
Indian Mynah	60	5
Rainbow Lorikeet	47	12
Indian Dove	44	3
Magpie	43	3
Currawong	42	3
Sparrow	40	7
Bulbul	36	4
Starling	30	4
Kookaburra	29	2
Raven/Crow	28	2

If you'd like to receive the results, please enclose a self-addressed envelope, but beware, it will be many months before you hear anything.

I would like to encourage all members of the Society to participate. If you have any questions, phone Beverley Thompson on (047) 572076, or contact the Wildlife Preservation Society.

<u>VISITOR FROM OUTER SPACE</u>. Lately, during tense discussion on the future of our "Hut", a visitor from the surrounding bush has attended the meeting with apparent concern, but no fear. Finding the discussion was getting nowhere, he disappeared down a hole in the floor. At first it was thought to be a rat, but is now considered to be antechinus (marsupial rat). We were assured he would do no harm as he was a carnivore. However, he has developed a great liking for Smith's Potato Chips, and threatens to ruin our economy. We've tried to discourage him in various ways, but it seems the only thing left is to catch him in a trap and return him to outer space – the further away the better.

<u>AFTERMATH – TASMANIAN ELECTION</u>

The politicians in frustration
Are turning now to conservation.
Once it was a dirty word
Like reds and beds and treason.
Now certain voting has occurred
they suddenly see reason
And beg that we should all take note
That they're the ones for whom to vote.
So vote for them and don't be meanies,
For now they're greener than the Greenies.

Graham Alcorn