



Upper Blue Mountains Conservation Society Inc Newsletter

No. 83 April 1991

CALENDAR

Please note that meetings are resumed at the new CONSERVATION HUT at the western end of Fletcher Street, Wentworth Falls.

<u>April 23 1991</u>	Tuesday	<u>Open Day</u> at Blackheath Nursery. Workshop compound at National Park Heritage Centre, Blackheath. 9.30am to 12md. To introduce you to the people, the plants and the projects.
<u>April 26 1991</u>	Friday	<u>General Meeting</u> . Speaker is R. Corringham on "Norfolk Island".
<u>May 31 1991</u>	Friday	<u>General Meeting</u> . Speaker is Bill Tomasetti on "New Guinea's modern history highlighting societal and environmental pressures".
<u>May 31 and June 1 1991</u>	Friday Saturday	<u>World Environment Day</u> . 10am to 4pm at Katoomba Coles K Mart entrance annex. Static display to highlight environment conservation.
<u>June 28 1991</u>	Friday	<u>General Meeting</u> . Joe Bannfy on "Earth Education - Young Childrens' Perspective", and Paul Curtis on "Environment Education - the Disadvantaged Young Adults' Perspective".
<u>June 29 1991</u>	Saturday	<u>Trip to Oberon and Bathurst</u> to learn the problems of the central-west. Meet 10am at National Parks office near Forestry Commission Office in Oberon. Please bring tucker for the day. Suggestion is to pool cars and share expenses. All Mountains environment groups have been invited.

NOTICE BOARD

Over the years, long time member, Grete Vanry has contributed a lot of money by energetic collection of aluminium cans. To pack and store the cans Grete requires cardboard beer containers, 24 unit size. Please deliver to any meeting. Cans are received, too.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS A few people have not yet paid 1991-92 subs. This serves as a reminder. Please send with the form in this newsletter. Please note the minor change which rectifies an anomaly.

NEWSLETTER ADVERTISEMENTS These are welcomed - \$20 for a quarter page or a barter arrangement.

MEETING PLACE From April Committee Meeting, 18th April, we have limited access to the new building which replaces the old. Please bring seating, chair or cushion, until the building is set up.

The Society has its own mezzanine office and will have the use of the building for general meetings and some other events from time to time. To date no tender for a catering concession has been advertised.

SPRING PLANT SALE is Saturday, November 2.

UPDATE

SUBMISSIONS have been sent to:

Civil Aviation : advice on environmental alphabet for erection of hf masts at King's Tableland.

Council : opposing change in land use "Withcombe", Mt. Wilson.

State Rail : opposing aspects of signalling equipment in galvanised troughing.

and

LETTERS to the City Council are not answered. Enquiry reveals that the Lower Blue Mountains Conservation Society has the same problem.

MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT Mr. Tim Moore, met members of the Society by invitation of State Member, Mr. Barry Morris, during an inspection of the new Conservation Hut. Discussion was limited to matters relating directly to the Environment Portfolio so we spoke of off-road vehicles in Kanangra-Boyd and Wollemi, field staff for National Parks, urban bushland and the Water Board. Mr. Moore says our conspicuous presence at the Conservation Hut is expected and will be appreciated.

FINANCES

The Hut and its hospitality provided the Society with an income. We've been without that for over a year and the committee wanted to neither use reserve money nor reduce activity. Some minor savings were effected by a change in the Newsletter format and in other simple ways but our customary largesse was restricted until February when we could see what cash was available. Treasurer Muriel Healey was generous with the disposable budget and DONATIONS were : ACF for South-east Forests \$100, Nature Conservation Council for Environment Liason Officer) \$100, Greenpeace \$100, Australians for Animals for Wedderburn Koalas \$25, Bl.Mts. Nat. Park for equipment for mammal hair identification \$75. Earlier, \$50 was given to CORE a local group, making \$100 with \$50 from last year. \$50 was given to the Earth Education project at Ellison Road School, Springwood and \$50 was wrung from the Education Department for the same purpose. The groups which are trying and those which are achieving results both for the common good are innumerable. The best

that can be done is that we announce appeals and leave it to your interest. It is not always money that is needed but those equally valuable commodities, time and energy.

Donations to our Society are appreciated. To gain tax relief they can be channelled through ACF, directed to the Society. The committee thanks those who gave money this year.

PLANT SALE Predictably the autumn plant sale of native plants was a success. Most of the sale items came from the Hazelbrook nursery. Thank you Jill and Mick Dark for making space and facilities available. the congenial group of friends who get there to work hard each Tuesday morning is reflected in the high quality of the product. Special thanks are due to Shirley Brown who keeps it all together now and to Deidre Morton who saw the genesis of the sale plants. Grete Vanry sent along a good number. Her plant handling is meticulous. Thanks, too, to the many members who help to make it a pleasant morning.

RETURN OF CLEAN POTS IS ALWAYS APPRECIATED.

* Advertisement *

We have received a heart-rending appeal from

PEOPLE AGAINST VIVISECTION

P.O.Box 23, Blacktown 2148
02-6881443

The Society committee appeals to your humanity to respond direct.

P.A.V. is dedicated to abolition of vivisection on scientific, medical and ethical grounds.

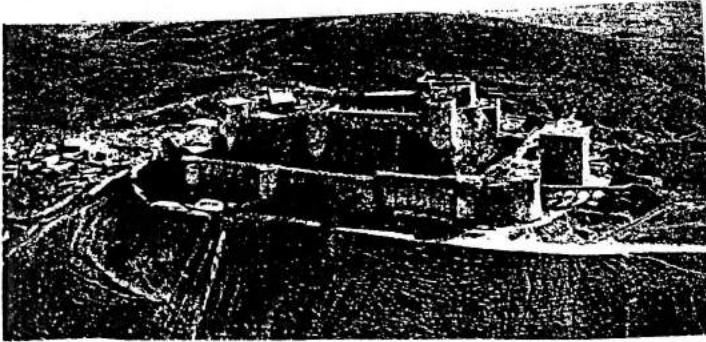
The current task is to stop sale of pound animals for vivisection in Blacktown, Sutherland and Camden councils.

Help required :

- ① Funds for 200000 leaflets in these areas.
- ② Write to local and state newspapers condemning the practice.

TALKS REPORTS

In January Mr. Gregor Manson, Superintendent of Bl.Mts. National Park, took us to Turkey. Gregor spent some time there and his slides and commentaries highlighted the harsh and weathered terrain of a region which has been used intensively for thousands of years. We saw the incredible ruins of the public buildings of Hellenic colonies founded almost 2500 years ago. In one place the sea had retreated some kilometres (? the land advanced) leaving the ruin perched solitary and meaningless. And then there were the strategically sited Crusader castles often on the foundations of earlier castles. And the narrow Gallipoli beaches under lowering hillsides, and eroding troglodyte dwellings in Cappadocia and the clear, clear light.



In February The Rev. Bob Evans took us to the stars and beyond. Bob's interest is discovery and observation of supernovae, those great super-star explosions. The astrophotographs were of nebulae, galaxies and the planets, their moons and rings. Some of the subjects are incomprehensible light years away. At question time interest soon veered away from positive aspects as the audience groped towards hypotheses and philosophy. Bob's answers showed honesty and integrity in a very difficult field where religion and science meet. Would you like to hear this speaker again? Please let a committee member know.

There is a lot of interest in astronomy. The Blue Mountains is a popular viewing platform. Arizona, USA, is headquarters of the International Dark-Sky Association, "Save the night sky for everyone to use and enjoy". Do you know of a place of conspicuous unnecessary night illumination in the Blue Mountains?

A "Kosciusko Holiday" was shown in March. Val Carless, John Noble and David Thomas exhibited slides which perfectly complemented Elvine Thomas' word picture in this newsletter. We were given vistas of limned blue ridges reaching to forever, February flower posies set in grey stone, ancient weathered watching rocks and exquisite tarns cradled in the laps of the mountains. Several of the holiday makers were present helping with the commentary. We saw them too, on film, clutching hats in a perilous wind, looking thoroughly satisfied and happy.



FAUNA OF CONCERN

Blue Mountains National Park is establishing a Fauna Watch for these scarce creatures. If you observe wildlife closely and think you can keep a useful record, ask R. Corringham (586561) for a fauna record sheet and a list of "Fauna of Concern". The list ranges from platypus, broad-headed snake, mountains skipper butterfly, satin fly-catcher to great barred frog.

And if your interest is frogs, there is a Frogwatch Questionnaire sponsored by NPWS and CSIRO form available on request.



THE WORDS OF POLITICS

Geoff Young

The use of words in the political arena employs the strategy of coining a word or phrase and using it so relentlessly that opponents are confounded by popular acceptance of the term. Clearly, some organisations are at a great advantage in employing this strategy.

Take the word "recycle". Before World War II, shoppers took their own containers to the grocery and purchased a pint of milk -- no problem there with discarded containers. Alternatively, milk was sold in bottles which incurred a deposit. Bottles were used an average of sixty times before a breakage occurred. Bottle dealers patrolled the streets to the cry of "bottle-oh", purchased virtually all types of bottles and jars, and returned them to be used again.

Several factors combined to change the system; the new affluence encouraged people to forego deposits on glass so that goods in aluminium or plastic containers became cheaper.

Now that the system of returning containers to the food manufacturers has broken down, it is left to environmentally conscious people to collect perfectly good glass containers which are melted down by the glass manufacturers. Their efforts can only mitigate the mess. Glass melts at about 1500 deg.C, aluminium melts at 660 deg.C -- temperatures vastly more wasteful of energy than heating water to wash glass.

It is not difficult to think of better systems. Governments could legislate to enforce a deposit on glass containers. The Federal Government could subsidize council collection depots. Bottle and jars could be moulded with a standardized "food" motif -- six sizes of each may suffice. Labels could be affixed with an approved paste that would yield when bottles are washed. The circulation of bottles and jars has the potential of reducing the production of this area of food and drink containers to one sixtieth of their present number. That such measures are not countenanced is doubtlessly due to politicians having a greater loyalty to container manufacturers (or anyone in business) than the environment.

Many people have been duped into believing that "recycling", and all it entails, is environmentally responsible, it isn't, it is the worst system, just better than no system at all.

Another ploy is the phrase "sustainable development". Users of this term try to make the word "développement" acceptable through incessant coupling with the word "sustainable". This is nonsense, a contradiction of terms in a linguistic sense as well as a conservation sense.

When the Federal Government invited the Australian Conservation Foundation to attend a conference on "ecologically sustainable development" the ACF was faced with the choice of attending the conference, thereby signifying acceptance of the term, or staying out in the cold.

Editor's note: A lot of people are a little unsure about this recycling.

The more basic "waste reduction" seems to be more to the point. There is an idea afloat in the Society to facilitate a seminar for Mountains' groups, Chambers of Commerce, council and so on to activate the "no waste" philosophy using the City as a regional pilot.

Clean Up Australia Day, 24th March, was successful with a good turn out of the same staunch members who collected twenty two bags of roadside and bush rubbish from Echo Point to Leura Cascades. Why bother?

The reasons are varied - respect for the bushland and our own habitat, which reflects self-respect. A projection of this is a sense of the good and the care of the common. Hopefully, we will learn by example. An itemisation of collections is required. This should be used to target unnecessary packaging and other discovered factors.

THE WOODY PEARS IN THE SNOWYS

Elvine Thomas

Woody Pears in the Snowys you say, there aren't any but Yes. During the first week in February that redoubtable group of walkers known as the Woody Pears took themselves to the Snowys on R. & R. Some of our own members belong to this very friendly group and there were one or two others. Perhaps our readers would like to enjoy a day in the life of the Woody Pears who had their base in the camping area of Sawpit Creek. The day could start in darkness and a quick trip down to the Thredbo River and there wait in utter silence in the piccaninny dawn, with the only sound a plop of a fish here and there, until it was light enough to see the first platypus. Then the kookaburras to begin to conduct the symphony of the birds and the morning light banished the magic.

Back to breakfast and getting into each other's way while the chores were being done before we headed out to the High Country with packs full of all the necessities that good walkers need.. We then had hours to enjoy the botanical brilliance of snow daisies, blue-bells, everlastings, alpine celery, eyebright, alpine mint bush and many more. There were also the magnificent snowgums with their guardians of pippits and ravens. A wedge-tailed eagle's nest was spotted high in the tallest snowgum. There was plenty of sun and wind to play havoc with our fair skins even with the protection of sunscreen. Mostly it was a case of early to bed to be ready for another exciting day of exploration and we could go to sleep knowing we were watched over by the kangaroos and possums of Sawpit Creek.

UPPER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY. P.O.Box 29, Wentworth Falls. 2782

Membership / Renewal Form

Name.....	Family	\$15	per	year
Address.....	Single	\$10	"	"
.....	Pensioner Family	\$10	"	"
.....	Single Pensioner	\$6	"	"

Membership corresponds to the year April 1991 to 31 March 1992. Please enclose stamped addressed envelope if a receipt is required.

The Environmental Management Plan is based on a vision of the Blue Mountains as a place of exceptional environmental and aesthetic quality in which to live or visit. The stated aims of the E.M.P. are to maintain the Mountains' unique sense of "place", its distinctive environment of waterfalls, cliffs and streams, and natural and cultural heritage. At the same time, it aims to achieve sustainable development - that is, activity that adds to the character, respects the features and limitations of its site and does not destroy the qualities that make development attractive or viable in the first place.

We have just completed Stage I, which covers rural and environmentally significant areas, plus Mt. Wilson, Mt. Irvine, Mt. Tomah, Berambing, Shipley Plateau, Sun Valley and the Megalong Valley. Most of these lands were zoned 'rural' under the current L.E.P. 4, which permitted a wide variety of land uses and were seen as possibly being threatened by inappropriate development.

There has been the opportunity for full public involvement, with Council taking on board many points made in submissions from the conservation movement and other concerned people and state authorities.

The Plan introduces new zones, protected areas and an emphasis on development criteria. The protected areas (now shown on the Map) are Canopy Conservation, Environmental Constraint Area, Escarpment Area, Land between Towns, and Water Supply Catchment Area.

The land use table indicates specifically what development is prohibited and what may be carried out with Council consent. Council must assess each development application on its merit. Development may be restricted or not permitted, despite the zoning, due to particular characteristics of the site.

It is noted that the aldermen voted to acquire some critical areas in the Upper Mountains. These are swamp land at Blackheath, escarpment land at Katoomba and land containing hanging swamps at Wentworth Falls.

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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.

The Plan is now known as the "Blue Mountains Local Environmental Plan 1991" and will be gazetted in a few months time. This is a planning instrument of major significance for the environment and community of the Blue Mountains. It strikes a balance between conservation and strictly controlled low-key development in areas where the zoning permits.

Council is presently amending L.E.P. 4 so that the development criteria appearing in L.E.P. 1991 - height of buildings, sewage disposal, access, design and character, environmental impact, site clearing and tree preservation - apply to the whole of the City area. This will ensure that new development throughout the City respects the special character of the Mountains and minimises the impact on the environment.

Further stages of the Environmental Management Plan will include a Social Plan (already under way), Tourism Plan and assessment of the town areas. These will result in separate draft L.E.P.'s, which will be placed on public exhibit in the future.

Editor's observation : This is the ideal that Terri and others are working for. In the meantime, there is unseemly haste to have zonings changed and undesirable developments approved before the gazettal of the Local Environmental Plan. Some of these have been publicly criticised, others have led to appeals to the Minister for Planning by this Society and its peer in the Lower Mountains for open enquiry. While the new L.E.P. is a bit rough around the edges it is aimed in the right direction and our elected representatives must be made to see that reference to the Plan is the only way we have for the foreseeable future for development to be integrated with the top priority of environmental protection. A majority of the recommendations made by the Society, following extensive field work were included in the re-exhibited Plan. Let the Society know if you want any land use issues in the particular framework of the new L.E.P. considered. We would appreciate some basic research if you want the case followed.

MISSING FILES When we move back to the Conservation Hut there will be a big filing work day. We have a body of valuable research garnered over 25 years, such as the 1984 LEP submissions. Return is imperative. Please check.



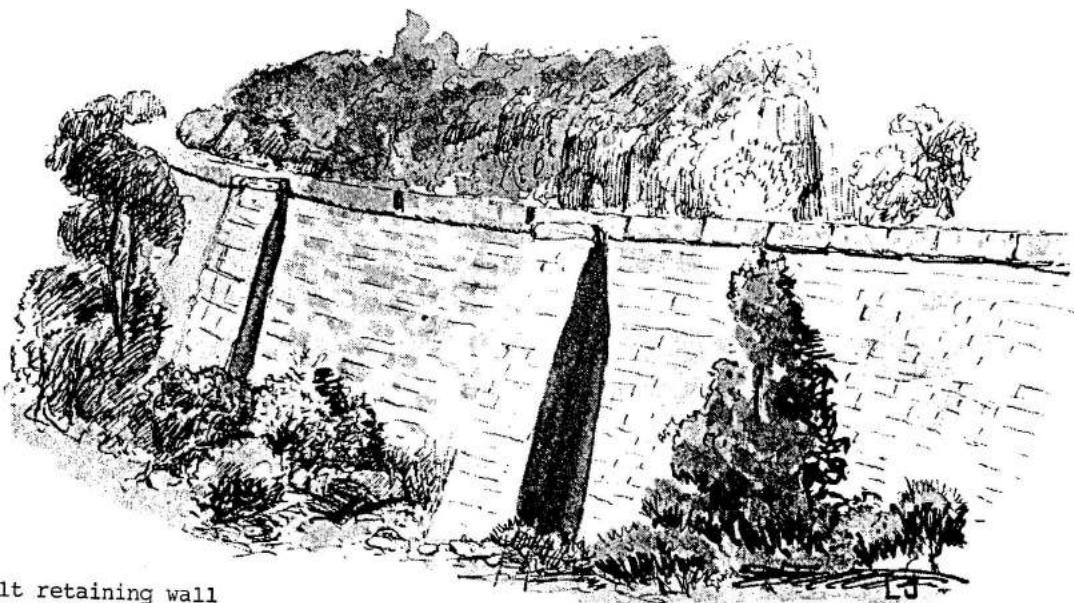
URBAN BUSHLAND

In some contexts the contiguity of the National Park to the City of Blue Mountains is a liability. I refer to the disregard of our urban bushland. This precious resource is lost in the vastness of the Park "out there".

To learn more about the legal and management updates a Society delegate attended a seminar arranged by the Nature Conservation Council of NSW (an umbrella organisation to which the Society belongs). Topics included regeneration guidelines and advice and experiences in mounting campaigns to save urban bushland.

Many Sydney councils employ bush regenerators who also lead teams of volunteers. In all, Sydney has 600 + volunteers working formally in restoring bushland. We have no such scheme in the Blue Mountains. Recognition of urban bushland here is imperative and we must press to influence council to change its collective mind. While it may not be wise to offer volunteers as lib there is an important contribution to be made.

In the Mount Victoria / Mount York area long established walking tracks are being lost because they traverse privately owned land which is now being taken up and developed. Also, it appears that some roads and reserves are not gazetted. An inventory and survey is required and management plans should be developed. Is there room for Society initiative? Comment is invited by the Land Use Committee person.



Convict built retaining wall
Victoria Pass.
from the card series by Lloyd Jones

Photocopy by Blue Mountains Business Equipment P/L.
132 Katoomba Street, Katoomba

Newsletter compiled by Robin Corringham. Service page designed by Margaret Baker.

Excursion Programme April – July 1991

It is essential on all excursions in the hot weather that members carry at least 1 litre of water.

Please 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.

Heritage Week 7 – 14th April

To mark Heritage Week a seed gathering walk will be held on Friday 12th April.

Place: Corner of the car park, Queen Victoria Hospital, Tableland Road, Wentworth Falls

Time: 10.00am to about 3.00pm

Equipment: Bring lunch, secateurs, containers for seed

Purpose: To learn about seeds; collect seed for the nurseries

Leader: R. Corringham

Regular Walks

May 5th Sunday – Last part of Six Foot Track: Forestry Huts to Caves House

Meet at Mt Victoria Station Car Park at 8.30 am. 6 - 7 hours

Contact: Bob Jones 58 8361

May 16th Thursday – Prince Henry Cliff Walk

Meet at Leura Cascades at 10.00 am. 4 hours

Contacts: Reg and Dulcie Toseland 84 1682

May 18th Saturday – Gibraltar Rocks

Meet at Mt Victoria Station Car Park at 8.45 am. 6 – 7 hours

Contact: John Noble 87 8342 Sydney train arrives 8.37 am

June 2nd Sunday – Narrow Neck

Meet on Great Western Highway side of Katoomba Station at 8.30 am 6 – 7 hours

Contact: Bob Jones 58 8361

June 15th Saturday – Mt Wilson to Wallangambie River

Meet at Mt Victoria Station car park at 8.45 am. 6 – 7 hours

Contact: Olive Noble 87 8342 Sydney train arrives 8.37 am

June 20th Thursday – Bird Walk

Meet Great Western Highway side of Medlow Bath station at 10.30 am. 3 – 4 hours Area depending on the best place for birds at this time of the year.

Contacts: Graham Alcorn 88 1033 or Bob Jones 58 8361 Sydney train arrives 10.23 am; Lithgow train arrives 10.23am

July 7th Sunday – Lawsons Long Alley

Meet at Mt Victoria Station car park at 8.45 am. 6 hours

Contact: David Thomas 84 2121

July 18th Thursday – Florabella Pass

Meet on Great Western Highway side of Warrimoo Station Car Park at 10.30am. 4 – 5 hours

Contact: Alan Macauley 39 2767 Sydney train arrives 10.32 am; Lithgow train arrives 10.14am

July 20th Saturday – First part of Six Foot Track: Nellies Glen to Megalong Ford Reserve

Meet on Great Western side of Katoomba Station at 8.30am 6 hours Car swap will be arranged

Contact: Muriel Healey 58 6575 Sydney train arrives 8.16 am; Lithgow train arrives 8.29am

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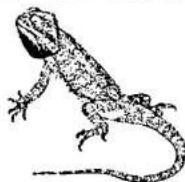
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Registered by Australia Post – Publication No. NBHO 925

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The Blue Mountains Mystery Track Lindeman Pass

A History of the Jamison Valley Volume 1

by **Jim Smith**

Between 1909 and 1911 a 6km walking track was built at the base of the cliffs between Wentworth Falls and Leura. It was never opened and lay neglected for over 70 years. Many bushwalkers came to doubt its existence.

This book tells of the dedication of a few bushwalkers in finding, clearing and opening this elusive track, and of the life of Charles Lindeman who designed the track. It is a unique social history.

Maps and descriptions allow walkers to enjoy Lindeman Pass and associated tracks.

112 pages + 16 pages of photos and maps RRP \$15.95