



"Nature Conservation Saves for Tomorrow's People"

Special General Meeting

Membership Fee Increase

A Special General Meeting will be held at 7.30 pm on Friday 29 November 1996 at the Conservation Hut, Wentworth Falls, to vote on the motion that: **"Effective 1st December, 1996, Membership fees be set at: Single \$15; Family \$22; Pensioner \$10; Pensioner Family \$14"**

Fees have been unchanged for a number of years. The decision late last year to increase the frequency of the Society's newsletters from four per year to twelve per year has been widely welcomed by the membership. However, costs have increased, and the Management Committee decided at its 22 October 1996 meeting that it needed to recommend to the members that the fees be increased.

It should be noted that the new fees are still less than the cost of servicing each member (newsletter, insurance, meeting costs). The revised fees cover 70% of the cost of servicing each member, with the balance coming from profits from the nursery.

November Speakers

At the general meeting which will follow the Special General Meeting. The Society's Planning Sub-committee will discuss:

- Preparation of a Residents' Manual for Living Near the Bush
- Transport and conservation in the Blue Mountains

Guest speaker Ernst Holland of the Jenolan Caves Trust will speak about the Sooty Owl study.

Visitors are welcome. Please introduce yourself to a committee member (wearing a RED name tag).

Environmental Law Workshop

Enclosed with this issue of *Hut News* is a brochure on the Environmental Law Workshop being conducted at Lawson by the Environmental Defender's Office.

A relatively new area, Environmental Law is not widely understood. Environmentalists need to be aware of the coverage of the current Environmental Law so that they can use the provisions of the law in the fight to save our environment. A knowledge of the current scope of the Environmental Law will enable deficiencies to be identified, highlighted and, hopefully, rectified.

Please support this 23 November 1996 workshop. If you need extra brochures, or have questions about the workshop, please contact Les Coyne on 57-3327

Weed of the Month

Broom (Cytisus scoparius)

Probably our worst weed — Broom is in flower now. Its bright yellow pea flowers turn into green, then black, pods and then **explode....**sending hundreds of seeds far and wide.

Where there is a mature bush there are sure to be many seedlings nearby.

You may have noticed the 1m high bushes flowering along the highway.

Small broom can usually be pulled out roots and all. Tougher ones will need to be dug out or, if this will cause too much disturbance to surrounding plants, cut the stem at ground level and paint on round-up. (Contact your local bushcare group for further advice.)

Ron Wheeler and Carol Butcher have controlled broom without round-up, by cutting on hot days. Either way, it is advisable to check the stems for regrowth the following year.

Hybrid Broom sold in the nurseries has supposedly non-viable seeds. This is questionable, so don't risk it (besides, it **looks** like a weed!!!) — plant a native pea instead. The Society's nursery has *Hovea lanceolata*, *Kennedia rubicunda*, *Hardenbergia violacea* in stock at the moment.

Who needs to grow a weed!

After the Weeds....

A rumour has spread that one of our member's garden is rapidly turning into a desert! They have been conscientiously removing all "weeds of the month".

If you end up with bare patches after removing weeds you could plant some **local** natives. Erosion of bare soil can be prevented by a covering of native leaf litter or brush matting. Brush matting is branches of natives such as *Hakea*, tea-tree or Eucalypts. If mature seed is on the branches they should drop and germinate. Seeds will also be in the leaf litter.

Leaf litter and brush matting is often available from Wildplant Rescue Service (87.6391). Check they have been collected from your area of the Blue Mountains.

Happy weeding and planting!!!

Nature Track Bushcare Group

Eight of us spent an industrious morning removing all the flowering Broom behind Valley Road. We also collected a



water tank and various bits of scrap metal. We had time to discuss some of the problems of our site.

Sections of the track are quite wide and could be made narrower by brush matting the edges. Runoff is causing erosion in places and carrying weeds deeper into the bush.

There is lots to do, so mark **Monday 11th November, 9-12**, in your diary and come and join in the fun!

Bring your own gloves and morning tea. Tools are provided, but extra secateurs could be handy. For more information phone Jessica (57.2783).

Help Needed at the Nursery!

Spring has arrived in Blackheath, and our hot house is bursting at the seams with seedlings which need to be potted, the shade house with tube stock which need to be weeded. **More volunteers are needed**, from 9-12 on Tuesday mornings. Contact David Coleby 84-1395. (Nursery Christmas Lunch on 10 December — see page 4)

Book Review

Act Locally! — a do-it-yourself guide to protecting your local environment in NSW (Nature Conservation Council of NSW, 1996)

The book is divided into three easy-to-read sections. The first tells you what you can do about a range of environmental issues, listed from A-Z, what the issue is about, what you can do about it, what laws apply, who the decision-makers are and who to contact. The second explains how government works and how you deal with it. The third is an introduction to campaigning, for when you get really serious!

A useful book and highly recommended to members. If you would like a copy (cost \$12 including postage) contact Les Coyne on 57.3327 or write to PO Box 29, Wentworth Falls **before 30 November** and we will order your copy from the Nature Conservation Council.

"Hut News", the newsletter of the Blue Mountains Conservation Society Inc.
 P.O. Box 29, Wentworth Falls, 2782.
 President: Colin Williams 84-1899
 Vice Presidents: Marion Hawley 84.1933
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 Editor: Christine Davies 87-7246
Deadline for the December issue is November 26

Land Use Report

Court Loss for Golf Course Developer

A loss in the NSW Supreme Court on October 18 is a massive setback for the proposed resort development on Katoomba Golf Course. The developer lost an appeal against an earlier Land and Environment Court ruling.

The resort proposal became one of Blue Mountains Council's most unhappy sagas after the last meeting before the 1991 council election. At that meeting, seven councillors, two of whom are still on Council, voted in favour of the development, thus robbing the incoming Council of its chance to consider the matter. Cllr. Jim Angel has consistently opposed the development.

While responsible developers will always be welcome in the Mountains, this Supreme Court decision should be a warning to those entrepreneurs whose proposals are supported by only a small number of pro-development councillors.

The Friends of Katoomba Falls Creek Valley, who defended the appeal, have had both the law and the interests of the community on their side in defending the priceless Katoomba Falls catchment.

Voluntary Code of Practice for Living Near the Bush

The Planning Sub-committee's presentation on this code will now take place at the November General Meeting. All members will be given a chance to discuss it.

Litter from Fast Food Franchises

BMCS has written to Council expressing concern about litter in the bush. This follows Council's call for comments on a development application by McDonalds for a site at Camp Street and the Highway, Katoomba. Other well-known franchises are expected to apply for nearby sites soon.

Franchised food outlets use more packaging than the local food businesses that have been part of the Katoomba scene for so long. This packaging is often brightly coloured and it has conspicuously blighted many a peaceful bushland setting. The Upper Mountains scenery is unique and fast food litter does not belong here.

—Don Morison.

New Members

Welcome to new members:

Ms Rae Druiitt, Wentworth Falls
Kate Ebzery, Wentworth Falls
Ron Amos, Fairfield Heights
Lida Szabunia, Katoomba

Membership Enquiries: The Society is keen to have new members who are concerned about the welfare of the Blue Mountains natural environment. Contact the membership secretary, Ross Coster (047) 59.1247, FAX 59.1095, or write to P.O. Box 29, Wentworth Falls 2782.

Draft Land Use Planning Position Paper

(To be discussed at November Management Committee Meeting.)

Summary only — Copies of full document available from Secretary, Comments to Don Morison, PO Box 170, Katoomba 2780.

Process:

EMP2, The Environment Management Plan for Blue Mountains Towns, which has already consumed vast amounts of Council staff time and resources, needs to be put on display as a Draft Local Environment Plan. This will bring closer the time when it can function to protect the environment of our communities.

Content of Draft LEP

The draft LEP needs to be put on display retaining the major principles of the Planning Reports prepared by Council staff including a Sustainable Development Threshold (SDT) for raw land and similar constraints for developed areas concerning slopes steeper than 20%, protection for significant plant and animal communities, creeks, attention to bushfire threats and sewer availability.

Changes to the Existing Planning Instrument (LEP91)

This instrument should be changed by reviewing Residential Bushland Conservation Zoning to protect steeply sloping land and sensitive vegetation.

Regional Environment Plans

Controls by these State Government planning instruments should be strengthened, especially regarding wetlands, sensitive vegetation and water courses. Draft REP20, concerning the Hawkesbury-Nepean catchment, should be extended to cover the whole of the proposed Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area.

Closed BMCC Processes

The role of closed meetings should be greatly reduced in Council's planning processes.

Invitation to Kanimbla Valley

Charles Johnson and the SGAP have invited our members to come along on an outing to his property in the Kanimbla Valley on Sunday 17 November.

Charles has arranged an interesting day which should suit everyone, with some walking but not too strenuous. He plans to show us first an area of country was quite badly degraded but has been replanted with natives by a Landcare group and is now doing well.

This is granite country which differs from an area on his property which is sandstone. We should find it interesting to compare the different plants used in each.

Meet at the Mount Victoria General Store carpark on the highway at 10.30 am. Bring a picnic lunch.

**COME TO THE
BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY'S
CHRISTMAS PARTY
AT THE HUT PICNIC AREA
ON SATURDAY 7 DECEMBER
MEET AT 10 AM AT THE HUT
FOR A SHORT BUSHWALK BEFORE LUNCH
(LUNCH AT 12.30)
A GAS BARBEQUE WILL BE AVAILABLE
BYO MEAT AND DRINKS AND A PLATE OF
SALAD, DESSERT OR NIBBLES, ETC
(A FOLD-UP CHAIR WOULD BE HANDY)**

Garden Inspection

About 20 people from SGAP and BMCS (some members of both organisations) braved the elements to visit Rachel Makinson and inspect her native garden. The morning was very damp, with low cloud hanging over the mountains and the occasional shower. We managed to inspect Rachel's garden between showers.

The garden was magnificent, with flowers and perfumes of Boronias, Grevilleas, Prostantheras, Eriostemons, Oxylobium and many other natives, with a special crispness of the leaves and the brightness of the lichens brought about by the rain.

As we enjoyed a generous morning tea put on by Rachel, the weather cleared and we were able to gaze out at the lush green fields and darker tree-clad hills of the Kanimbla Valley, with the cloud clinging to the southern mountains and then gradually rising until just touching the hill at Edith above Jenolan Caves. Thank you, Rachel.

The Last of its Species?

The last known specimen of a species of Eucalypt growing in the wild, which was growing out of a sandstone railway culvert at Wentworth Falls, has fallen in a storm.

Eucalyptus copulans is a mallee, growing to about 10 metres. Surveys of adjacent areas have failed to find other specimens. However scientists have managed to grow two seedlings.

While waiting to see whether new shoots will spring from the roots and stump of the 40 year old tree, NPWS is conducting an emergency rescue service.

Efforts are being made to propagate from seed and by tissue culture. A controlled burn around the tree may stimulate the growth of any seeds in the surrounding soil.

The species is NOW protected under the State's threatened species legislation.

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THE BUSHLAND CATHEDRAL

by W. Lawrence Regan (1940's)

In seeking relaxation

For the City oft times palls,
I went, high in the mountains,
To a place called Wentworth Falls;
And there, as midst the trees and ferns
A winding track I took,
I heard the distant murmur
Of a babbling mountain brook.
I took the path past 'Pulpit Rock'
To 'Denfenella Dell'
And then the pass called 'Undercliff'
To where the waters fell.
I wandered on to 'Weeping Rock',
And past the 'Queen's Cascade'
And crossed the stream
Ere o'er the cliff its downward plunge it made.

I descended then the cliff face
By the steps cut in the rock
And at the bottom found
A landslide there the path did block.
I clambered o'er the landslide
Till I came beneath the fall,
Where, looking upwards
I beheld the finest sight of all.
The Sun was at its zenith,
Shining down upon the stream,
And it made the falling waters
Like a shower of diamonds seem;
A veil of glistening tears they seemed
While looking up at them;
Each drop, a tear;
Each tear, a gem fit for a diadem.
And thus, in wonder gazing,

From the place where I did stand,
I knew, beyond all doubt,
This was the work of God's own hand.
No other hand could make it,
And so arrange the light
To make this humble waterfall
So beauteous a sight.

Enthralled I stood and gazed awhile,
Then, round the pass did go
To 'The Valley of the Waters'.
Where the waters always flow;
They tumble down from rock to rock,
Fall after waterfall,
Until they reach the valley deep
Where sounds the wild birds' call.
And there, I saw some Lyre Birds
In a secluded glen,
The cock with tail erect and spread
To woo his bashful hen.
While resting there I pondered
On the things I'd seen that day,
And climbing from the valley's depths
My cares all fell away.
I thought: 'If all the glories
Of The Mountains I'd unveil
There surely then could never be
An ending to my tale'.
At last I reached the top. And there
I bowed my head to pray,
To thank my God
That He my steps had led throughout the day.
For in His Bushland Cathedral,
With the music of its creeks,
I had found that relaxation
Which the City dweller seeks.

The Blue Mountains Folkbook

The poem, "The Bushland Cathedral" is included in Don Morison's "The Blue Mountains Folkbook", a book of poems, songs and stories of the Blue Mountains. The book will be available in November. Denis Kevans will be at the November general meeting and will sing one or two of his songs which appear in the Folkbook.

Thank You, Ladies.

I would like to thank Heather for allowing Millie and I to take our eight-year-old granddaughters on the Monday 30 October leisure walk — Boardwalk Leura. I really appreciated her patience and understanding and her encouragement to the little girls to "lead on". It was an experience they enjoyed in the Blue Mountains and part of their holiday they will never forget. The walk was wonderful and extremely beautiful as all the wildflowers were out, especially at Empress rock where the pink boronias were blooming.

May I also thank Lee for inviting us to her garden to see the white Waratah. It was a lovely touch to finish an enchanting walk.

— Christina Jones.

In the Bush

Bunyip eagerly deserted his home billabong for an opportunity to paint and walk in the Flinders Ranges. They run for about 400 kms north from the head of Spencer Gulf. St Mary Peak, in Wilpena Pound, 1165 metres is by far the highest peak. Eight hundred metres would be a more typical height for most of the mass. All mountains go blue with distance but this range has a distinctly purple quality. As the surface colour of the rock is a bright orange red one can assume its mixture with blue creates the leaning towards the famed purple colour.

Several peaks are scattered along the length of the Ranges. Wilpena is the largest of them, about 50 kms N to S which is small compared to our Blue Mountains National Park. Nevertheless it and the others have their own special charm and are well provided with good quality walking tracks.

Good rains this year have carpeted S.A. with bright green grass. This,

the masses of bright yellow wattle and the red rocks make a rare combination.

Goats and roos abound despite the efforts of the park rangers but thanks to the new virus we did not see a rabbit. We were a little early for a mass display of flora but many of those in flower were quite different to our mountain flowers.

The size, shape and colour of the mature River Red Gums lining Wilpena

Creek were qualities which will "flash upon that inward eye" forever. In such a timber-starved State they were heavily exploited in the early days but the originals must have been immense. The nights were frost-free so camping was not as cold as expected.

From Sydney to Nyngan, Wilcannia to Broken Hill, the Flinders through to Renmark, Hay the countryside was green — phenomenal! Here is a chance to maintain a ground cover to reduce erosion and establish trees but our culture does not run that way.

The local scene:
With a group of

friends I walked the first half of Bruce's Walk recently. Some Society members may remember the efforts of fellow member, the late Dick Rushton, to find the line of the track. Jim Smith and his associates

completed the job in 1986. The more open nature of the bush makes the second half of Bruce's Walk much easier to follow. This first half is tricky in places where forest falls, debris and fern fronds conceal the narrow path. The day is saved by the little white squares nailed at eye level but constant vigilance is needed to spot them. It would be a pity to see this section revert back to bush through lack of use. Jim quotes an extract from Dick's notes ... "The main attraction of this walk is the peace and tranquility of the area.

Lindeman's Pass is another track recently covered. Sad to say the traverse of Lindeman's is not the problem but the exits on designated paths at the Leura end are just that. "Track Closed" signs are a sorry sight to see when one is a trifle weary. The signs are quite warranted. I'd hate to be caught there in heavy rain and descending darkness.

—The Bunyip

**Note: All walkers MUST carry water on ALL walks
ONE LITRE MINIMUM**

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

NOVEMBER

- 03 (Sun) **Bushwalk—Sassafras Gully.** Meet at 9.30, carpark opposite Springwood Station in Macquarie Road. Duration 4 hours. Grade 4. Contact Valerie Collins 59-2472.
- 04 (Mon) **Leisure Walk—Darwin's Walk.** Meet Wilson Park, Cnr. GWH/Falls Road at 9.45. Contact Heather Hastie 84.1297.
- 06 (Wed) **Empire Pass.** Meet at Lawson Bowling Club, North Lawson, at 10 am. Duration 3-4 hours. Grade 4. Contact John Gibbs 82.6509.
- 11 (Mon) **Nature Track Bushcare Group.** Meet at The Hut at 9 am. Contact Jessica Yuille 57.2783. (See Page 1).
- 11 (Mon) **Leisure Walk—South Lawson Waterfalls.** Meet at the War Memorial, Honour Avenue, Lawson, at 9.30. Contact Helen Lomax 58.6993.
- 16 (Sat) **Bushwalk—Reinert's Pass.** Meet at Mount Victoria Station at 10 am. Duration 5 hours. Grade 4-5. Contact Carol Butcher 57.3830.
- 18 (Mon) **Leisure Walk—Chinaman's Hat and the Pheasant's Cave, Mount Wilson.** Meet at Mount Victoria Station at 9.30. Contact Christine Davies 87.7246.
- 18 (Mon) **DON'T FORGET!** Registrations for Environmental Law Workshop due by 21 November.
- 20 (Wed) **Bushwalk—Porter's Pass.** Meet at Blackheath Station commuter carpark at 10 am. Duration 4-5 hours. Grade 5. Contact John Gibbs 82.6509.
- 23 (Sat) **Environmental Law Workshop** at Mid Mountains Neighbourhood Centre, Lawson. (A brochure is enclosed with this newsletter). Registration required by Thursday 21 November.
- 25 (Mon) **Leisure Walk—Giant Stairway-Federal Pass-ride Scenic Railway.** Meet in carpark above the Echo Point Tourist Information Centre (Cliff Drive) at 9.30. Contact Lee Tredinnick 57.4030
- 26 (Tues) **Committee Meeting** at The Hut at 7 pm.
- 29 (Fri) **General Meeting** at The Hut at 7.30 pm. Guest speaker Ernst Holland of Jenolan Caves Trust — "Sooty Owl Study". Planning sub-committee of BMCS will discuss the preparation of a Residents' Manual for Living Near the Bush, and Transport and Conservation in the Blue Mountains.
- 29 (Fri) **Special General Meeting** (will precede the General Meeting). See page 1.

DECEMBER

- 01 (Sun) **The Ruined Castle.** Meet outside Gearins Hotel, Katoomba, at 9.30. Duration 6 hours. Grade 8. Contact Chris Woods 82.3419. (Steep descent and ascent of Golden Stairs.)
- 02 (Mon) **Leisure Walk — Evans Lookout, Clifftop Walk, and Rachel's Track** (Car swap). Meet at Blackheath Neighbourhood Centre at 9.30. Contact John Gaynor 87.6071.
- 07 (Sat) **CHRISTMAS PARTY** in The Hut picnic ground. Meet at 10 am for a short bushwalk followed by a picnic lunch. A barbeque will be available. Bring your own meat and drinks and a plate (with food on it) to share. (A fold-up chair might also be useful.). Contact Christine Davies 87.7246.
- 09 (Mon) **Leisure Walkers' Christmas Lunch at Hargrave's Lookout.** There will be a short walk followed by lunch. Meet at the Blackheath Neighbourhood Centre at 10.30 am. Bring a plate of food to share. Contact Norah Gaynor 87.6071. LEISURE WALKS WILL RESUME ON MONDAY 13 JANUARY 1997.
- 10 (Tues) **Nursery's Champagne and Orange Christmas Lunch** at Govett's Leap picnic area at 12 noon. All welcome. Bring a plate of food to share.
- 17 (Tues) **Committee Meeting** at The Hut at 7 pm.
- 18 (Wed) and 21 (Sat) **Bushwalks**— to be advised.

Walks have been graded: 1-3 easy, 4-7 medium, 8-10 harder. If in doubt contact the leader.



KIDS' CORNER

Hut News would like to hear from children with poems, stories or essays about the Blue Mountains.

The Phantom Waterfall was written at Wall's Cave at a Yr. 3 Writers' workshop, 1996.

The Phantom Waterfall—Alicia Lyons (8 years)

Gigantic leafy fingers
strung with ivy leaves,
hidden in a blanket
of luscious green beans.
A piece of shiny glass,
a swarm of dancing fish,
all misty movements crying
but the phantom of the wind.

A secret passage way
leads to peeling paperbark,
slithering, sliding.
Bubbling water
trickling across pebbles
so soft and warm.
A mirage of echoing birds,
a laugh of honeyeaters,
brown and ancient stone
hidden in a secret sponge.

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