

HUT NEWS

"Nature Conservation Saves for Tomorrow's People"



Vegetation Preservation Order for the City of the Blue Mountains

In the Blue Mountains a Tree Preservation Order protects trees over a certain height. However other native vegetation has no protection. The natural biodiversity of our bushland can only be maintained by recognising the importance of the shrub and ground layer within the plant community.

With building blocks around the townships all built on, we are now expanding out onto the ridges, with many houses being built bordering the National Park. We need to maintain native vegetation buffers around the urban areas to reduce the negative impacts that our lifestyle has on the National Park. At the same time, within urban areas, remnant bushland needs to be protected so that there are corridors for native wildlife to move through.. If this is not done we will be seeing less of our native birds and more Indian Mynahs and other feral species.

Blue Mountains Conservation Society has made a submission asking Council to implement a Vegetation Preservation Order which will protect the scenery, habitat, biodiversity and character of the Blue Mountains by effectively preventing any unnecessary disturbance to remnant bushland.

We want a Vegetation Protection Order which:

- defines native vegetation in such a way that any stand or community of vegetation which is indigenous to the Blue Mountains is protected
- covers the whole of the Blue Mountains City area
- prevents removal of, or damage to, any component of an area of native vegetation without Council's consent
- prohibits planting of exotic species in bushland
- only allows removal without consent under the following circumstances: within 10m of a house or proposed building site; for legitimate fire hazard reduction activity; to allow necessary works by public authorities.

A Vegetation Preservation Order is an important step to ensuring that as a "City within a National Park" we live in harmony with the Blue Mountains environment. Please support our submission by writing to Mr. Withers, The General Manager, Blue Mountains City Council, PO Box 189, Katoomba 2780. (If you want to discuss this further, phone Jessica on 57.2783.)

C.H.A.N.G.E. (Coalition of Hawkesbury and Nepean Groups for the Environment.)

Every environmental group in the catchment has the opportunity to join CHANGE and enlist its help when needed. As a member group, BMCS receives CHANGE's bi-monthly newsletter and minutes of meetings and has the opportunity to send a representative to meetings, generally held in Windsor.

I am currently secretary of CHANGE and, as the new representative for BMCS, will be able to raise issues of concern to the Blue Mountains which are of importance to the catchment as a whole. The issue of spraying effluent on pine forests in the Newnes area and its effect on the water quality flowing into the catchment of the Hawkesbury/Nepean is one matter I will be raising at the next meeting in July.

Wider issues which CHANGE is monitoring at the moment include:

- The restructuring of the Hawkesbury Nepean Catchment Management Trust
- Warragamba Dam spillway proposal
- Sydney Water sewage overflows environmental impact statement
- The Healthy Rivers Commission
- Proposal for a second airport
- A.D.I. site at St. Mary's and proposed development. — *Rosemary Lathouris.*

Coal Mining and the Blue Mountains

"Coal Mining and the Blue Mountains" is the title of a talk to be presented at the Society's General Meeting at 7.30 pm on Friday 25 July 1997. The speaker is Wilson Alcorn, one of the longest standing members of the Society.

It was way back in the nineteen seventies that a Clutha drilling rig was discovered operating in the Blue Mountains National Park. The uproar which ensued could be heard all over the State. Wilson was a prime mover in the campaign to prevent the coal mining going ahead.

Wilson Alcorn has had a long and distinguished career in the Society, having been at some time secretary, president, and editor of the newsletter.

In passing on his experience and insight in these matters to today's members, Wilson should undoubtedly assist in future campaigns.

Share Your Concern

Enclosed with this issue is a copy of "The Continental Times" which has been produced by the Australian Conservation Foundation to provide people with a guide and an information resource, and to assist

as many people as possible to make a submission to the Commonwealth Environment Power Inquiry.

The first round of submissions for the Senate Inquiry were due on 20 June. However, extensions are possible by contacting the Senate Environment Committee on 06. 277.3525.

ACF is calling on all Australians to share your concern for the environment with your elected representatives. This paper shows some of the environmental hot spots under threat from Federal Government action (or inaction), and suggests some points you might like to make in your submission. (Just a one-page letter will do — more details in the handout).

Hawkesbury-Nepean Catchment Representative

We are delighted to announce the appointment of Rosemary Lathouris to serve on the management committee as the Society's Hawkesbury/Nepean Catchment Representative.

Catchment protection is a key issue in the Blue Mountains — everything we do up here affects the magnificent Hawkesbury/Nepean River system. Rosemary will represent the Society on CHANGE. What is CHANGE?

"Hut News", the newsletter of the Blue Mountains Conservation Society Inc.
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Deadline for next issue is July 17

Land Use

Resurfacing Developments

To win one battle is not to win the war! Blue Mountains conservationists have been reminded during the past month that various major developments which have suffered setbacks in the past are still high on developers' wish-lists.



BMCC is considering once again the possibility of a new Local Environment Plan to allow a large resort development on Katoomba Golf Course. Evidently, still not enough councillors appreciate the importance of maintaining a steady flow of water over Katoomba Falls to the environmental integrity and morale of the Blue Mountains — not to mention the financial health of local tourism.

BMCS is discussing with Friends of Katoomba Falls Creek Valley what strategies would best cope with these disturbing events.

The dispute over Katoomba Golf Course has now been going on for more than six years and has featured a court action tenaciously and successfully fought by the Friends.

It is inspiring to realise that there are still so many conservationists with the resolve to carry on the struggle after such a long dispute.

Battle Royal over Queens Road

Land and Environment Court Action continues over BMCC's decision to reject part of a subdivision application for land owned by Dr. Keith King on the western side of Queens Road, Lawson, near Anton Avenue. The consulting engineer for the project is Clr. Ralph Williams.

BMCS has attended both discussion sessions about the Court Action. The Society has now written to Councillors other than Mr. Williams stating that nothing that has occurred so far should prevent Council from defending the appeal and seeking to uphold its original decision.

Mystery Consultancy

Letters from a senior BMCC officer to some Lawson residents indicate that certain Council officers have prepared a draft brief for consultants to carry out a major town centre study for Lawson. The draft brief has been shown to the Roads and Traffic Authority but, so far, Council officers have refused to show it to some Councillors or members of the public.

There are important areas of urban bushland near Lawson town centre. Reliable sources indicate that a six-figure consultant's fee is likely to be involved.

Both BMCC General Manager Ted Withers and the RTA have been questioned about this issue.

Materials Stored Near Leura Creek

BMCS has written to the General Manager BMCC about the use of an area in Megalong Street, Leura, opposite Commonwealth Street, as a materials storage compound. BMCS hopes to see measures taken to prevent damage to nearby Leura Falls Creek.

— Don Morison.

Recent Events

There was a wonderful turn out of local environment groups at the Civic Centre, Katoomba, on **World Environment Day**.

Visitors could find out about native plants and animals, weeds and bushcare groups, the urban runoff programme, recycling and worm farming, as well as watch films and theatre or play games.

BMCS had the prime position at the front entrance. Many people stopped to talk, take a newsletter, buy a native plant or sign the petition against Badgery's Creek airport. The kids had fun creating a bush scene on calico which we hung next to our stall. We plan to display the mural with BMCS information around the mountains — so look out for it.

Many thanks to Lloyd Jones for mixing so much paint and for starting off the mural with two young artists.

Thank you also to Christina Jones who helped decorate and look after the stall, as well as Belinda Coster and Harriet Pocock who helped with the mural.

We are now looking for a member willing to put together information about BMCS to go with the mural. Phone Marie (82.7110) or Jessica (57.2783).

Thank you to all the volunteers who helped at our **Winter Magic stall**. The day was a huge success. We collected close to 100 letters of protest about the Second Airport, as well as hundreds of signatures on the petition.

NOTE THIS DATE IN YOUR DIARY: (Especially Lower Mountains members) 8 November, Glenbrook Fair. We will be looking for volunteers for our stall!

Feathertail Gliders T-Shirts

There will be a clearance sale at our next General Meeting of random sizes, (mostly small sizes) — \$8 sloppy joes, \$5 T-shirts.

Write to Say No to a Second Airport in the Sydney Basin

To: Hon. Kerry Bartlett, MP for Macquarie
(sample letter) Dear Mr. Bartlett

I write to oppose the placement of a further airport in the Sydney Basin. I do not believe anything the forthcoming Environmental Assessment might yield could justify such a decision.

It is of particular concern that an airport at Badgery's Creek could harm Blue Mountains towns and Blue Mountains National Park through air pollution and fuel dumping.

I urge you to continue trying to persuade your colleagues to investigate airport sites outside the Sydney basin, so excluding Badgery's Creek, Holsworthy and Richmond from consideration.

Pine Trees Removed

Pope's Glen Reserve at Blackheath is looking good since the removal of 13 "humungous" pine trees from the reserve. The tree ferns and all the other things the bushcare group has been looking after will thrive, with the extra light. Pope's Glen Bushcare Group works on the fourth Saturday of every month (from 9 a.m.).

ALL the pines have been removed from

Membership Enquiries:

The Society is keen to have new members who are concerned about the welfare of the Blue Mountains natural environment. Contact membership secretary, Ross Coster: Work (047)59.1247, Home 59.1837 FAX 59.1095, or write to P.O. Box 29, Wentworth Falls 2782.

nearby Centenary Reserve — about 20 of them! Now lots of help is needed to spread the mulch. Centenary Reserve Bushcare Group's works on the third Sunday of each month, 9.30 to 12.30. The next workday is Sunday 20 July. Phone Kerry Kirk (weekends) 87.8592, Joan Storey 87.8226.

Water Catchment Under Threat

The 1967 proposal for a huge limestone mine at Colong Caves was defeated in 1974. A plan to plant pines on Boyd Plateau was defeated in 1977.

The Nattai wilderness was declared in 1991, protecting the southern quarter of the Warragamba catchment. The recent declaration of the Kanangra-Boyd wilderness creates an effective buffer between the more intensely-used parts of the outer catchment and stored water.

Wilderness management ensures that the use of the areas closest to Lake Burragarang is limited so that the risk of pollution from erosion, fire and high impact recreation uses is minimised.

Years of good management has enhanced the delicate ecology of the area.

However, Sydney Water is undertaking a review to consider opening the catchment to 4WD clubs, as well as to commercial tourism.

The State Pollution Control Commission's 1979 inquiry into the recreational use of off-road vehicles found "that the desire to explore and trailblaze areas of virgin country can cause immeasurable damage." Narrow trails are widened, hillsides are rut scarred, erosion is initiated, streams are polluted, archaeological relics and wetlands are damaged, and the risk of fire is increased. (source: Keith Muir, Colong Foundation)

Welcome to New Members

Sue Kelly, Blaxland
Joe, Jenny, Ashleigh
and Emily Fowler, Coogee
Carol & Julian Parkinson, Wentworth Falls
Joan Crawley, Wentworth Falls
Jacqueline Reid, Glenbrook
Jennifer Curry, Hazelbrook
Rosemary Lathouris, Wentworth Falls
Kevin and Robyn Burns, Blackheath
Cathy Didcott, Katoomba
Jenny Tomlinson, Leura
Gail Herbert, Blackheath
Rosemary Butler, Little Hartley
William and Patricia Allport, Bullaburra
Peter Crawshay-Williams, Wentworth Falls
Mary Leavesley & Joseph Szelski, Lawson
Carol Cobb, Blackheath
Damian McCann, Wentworth Falls
(The Society now has 486 individual members — Who will be our 500th member?)

Poetry from a school excursion to Walls Cave, Blackheath

Magic

I feel cold wind brush against my skin.
I hear a tiny waterfall making ripples in the water,
I see rocks sticking points out of the blanket of water
Like heads trying to get a better look at the world.
The wind is acting like a sly fox creeping around.
As the black cockatoos circle overhead, I feel alone,
Like I have no soul or brain;
It sounds and feels magic,
Like nothing on earth -
Untouched.
It is mystical.

Elizabeth Barber (3R)

Walls Cave Water

Walking up steps, lots of steps,
pouncing on stepping stones in
the creek,
a very long way to get there.
Listening to the sound of the water,
seeing plants grow on rocks.
Up the valley there is a good view,
in the cave, darkness.
Still water in the creek,
sitting in a bridge,
drawing the plants,
thinking of what this was long ago.

Yvonne Cheng (3R)

(More poems in future issues of *Hut News*)



Walls Cave Poem

I can hear ...
water flowing,
birds chirping which echoes -
a waterfall!

I can see ...
openings,
ferns,
breezes in the water,
moss,
clear water
and reflections.

I can feel ...
wind like a feather,
smooth, crumpled rock.

It is peaceful,
mystical,
gentle,
calm ...
and still.

Julie Ayre (3L)

What's On?

(from WWF Community Calendar)

20-29 October: Bird Week

Contact the Royal Australian Ornithologists Union (RAOU) (03) 9882 2622

July-December: Honeyeater Surveys

Capertee Valley — Regent Honeyeater surveys for birdwatchers only.

12-13 July (02) 9428 4473

16-17 August (047) 39 1190

13-14 September (02) 9669 2712

18-19 October (02) 9428 4473

15-16 November (02) 9873 1363

13-14 December (02) 9669 2712

July 1997 to July 1998: Tree Survey

Only one Eucalyptus copulans individual is known to exist — in the Blue Mountains. Help find others. Contact Cath Ireland, NPWS, Blackheath, (047) 87.8877

9-12 December: Conference

The other 99% — The Conservation and Biodiversity of Invertebrates, Australian Museum, Sydney. Email contact address: invert@amsg.austmus.gov.au

All Year Round: Frogwatch

School, community and individual frog monitoring. Contact Rosie Rowe (02) 9895 7179.

2-8 November, Frog Week

Various activities — awareness raising, monitoring and surveying. Contact Lothar Voit (02) 9371 9129

5 June to 27 July: Exhibition

Kaleidoscope of Life Exhibition
Australian Museum, Sydney

In the Bush

Bunyips are as guilty as any other species of believing distant pastures are ever greener. Occasionally a local find makes one realise that the green pasture is right under our nose.

I extol the pleasures of Madeleine Glen (Springwood) (P129 Jim Smith's "How to see the Blue Mountains). In the short easy space of a couple of kilometers one can enjoy a great variety of typical mountain scenery. Massive sandstone rocks, vast weathered overhangs, colourful Angophoras, stands of Sassafras and the occasional Sydney Blue Gum. Despite the dry weather a modicum of water is still found in

Springwood Creek where the Glen is located. Locals claim springs help this supply. One of these springs was at the head of the creek on the highway and as a popular camp site for early travellers earned Spring-wood its name.

Bunyip's latest water hole has been Lord Howe Island. His observations

there are hardly the local scene but they may reveal some problems which the two areas have in common — namely man's impact on a new environment.

A two hour flight brings the tourist to a speck of ground roughly 700 km east of Port Macquarie.

There is no evidence to suggest that any human saw it before 1788 when Lieutenant Lidgberg happened across it on his way to Norfolk Island from Sydney Cove. So Howe and Sydney shores had European intrusion in the same year. The flora and fauna of the Sydney foreshore though rudely disturbed had their relatives, further inland.

There are no wombats in Waverley but there are plenty further westward. On an island, once a species is wiped out there is no comeback.

Of the fifteen land birds indigenous to Lord Howe Island, nine are extinct mainly because they were edible and knew no fear of man. The notes of one visitor compiled in 1788 makes chilling reading ... "Several of those I knocked down and their legs broken I placed them near me as I sat under a

tree. The pain they suffered caused them to make a doleful cry which brought five or six dozen of the same kind to them and by that means I was able to take nearly the

whole of them."

Whalers and sealers raided the area for food supplies and released pigs and goats for later harvesting. Even today the birds show little concern over the presence of humans. Woodhens came out of the bush on top of Mt. Gower and strolled freely among the

seated walkers and accepted tidbits during the luncheon break.

With loud cries the guide called down the Providence Petrels which had been soaring gracefully overhead. They plummeted down through the canopy and waddled awkwardly around our feet and their burrows. Squabbles arose amongst them. A feuding pair could be picked up but their differences persisted even after they were placed back on the ground. (More about Lord Howe next issue.)

—The Bunyip

**BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY NATIVE PLANT NURSERY
OPEN TUESDAY MORNINGS 9 am to 12 noon
PLANT SALES VOLUNTEERS ARE WELCOME TO HELP
CONTACT DAVID COLEBY 84.1395**

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

JULY

- 06 (Sun) **Bushwalk — Mount Banks.** Meet at Mount Victoria Station at 9.30 am. Contact Basil Tickner 87.7264. Duration 5-6 hours
- 07 (Mon) **Leisure Walk — Glow Worm Tunnel.** (Day bus trip — booked out). Contact Mervyn Bird 87.7959.
- 14 (Mon) **Leisure Walk — Pulpit Rock, Wind-eroded Cave, Anvil Rock.** Meet Blackheath Neighbourhood Centre at 9.30 am. Contact Christina Jones 84.1101.
- 16 (Wed) **Bushwalk — “There is Life Below Woodford”, Walk 2.** Glenbrook Creek between Blue Pool and the Duckhole. Meet at the Glenbrook entrance to National Park at 10 am. Contact Allan Maaulay 39.2767. Grade 6, as some scrambling is necessary. Duration 4-5 hours.
- 17 (Thu) **Committee Meeting.** 7 pm at Mid Mountains Community Centre, Lawson.
- 21 (Mon) **Nature Track Bushcare Group, 9-12.** Meet at The Hut at 9 am. Contact Jessica Yuille 57.2783.
- 21 (Mon) **Leisure Walk — The Transit of Venus.** Meet 9.30 am, end of Clearview Parade, Hazelbrook. Contact Helen Lomax 58.6993
- 25 (Fri) **General Meeting at The Hut, 7.30 p.m.** Guest speaker Graham Alcorn “Coal Mining and the Blue Mountains”.
- 28 (Mon) **Leisure Walk — The Nature Trail.** Meet 9.30 at The Conservation Hut, Wentworth Falls. Contact Jan Cutler 84.3079. (A picnic lunch afterwards and tree planting at The Hut.)
- 28 (Mon) **ARBOR DAY.** Join the Leisure Walkers at The Hut Picnic Ground at 12.30 for a picnic lunch and plant a tree or shrub or groundcover in the John Buki Garden to celebrate Arbor Day. (David Coleby and his dedicated group of nursery workers are busy getting native plants of local provenance ready for the occasion.)

AUGUST

- 03 (Sun) **Excursion — Airley Historic Site.** Visit to beautiful Mount Airley (near Capertee) and exploration of 100 year old coal mining relics. Contact Christine Davies 87.7246 (before 28 July) . Beautiful views and easy walking.
- 04 (Mon) **Leisure Walk — The Three Brothers.** Meet 9.30 outside Hydro Majestic, Katoomba end. Contact Mervyn Bird 87.7959
- 11 (Mon) **Leisure Walk — Gladstone Lookout.** Meet 9.30, bottom of Fairmont car park, Leura. Contact Fay Arnold 84.3225, Jan Cutler 84.3079.
- 16 (Sat) **Bushwalk — The Lost World.** A beautiful lower mountain walk. Meet outside Springwood Station, Macquarie Street, at 9.a.m. Contact Ron Wheeler 57.1526.
- 18 (Mon) **Nature Track Bushcare Group, 9-12.** Meet at The Hut at 9 am. Contact Jessica Yuille 57.2783.
- 18 (Mon) **Leisure Walk — The Wonderland Track.** Meet 9.30 outside Hydro Majestic, Blackheath end. Contact Gillian Janus 87.6181.
- 20 (Wed) **“There Is Life Below Woodford” — Walk 3.** Kanuka Brook, Crayfish Pool, Red Hands Cave area. Meet Glenbrook entrance to National Park at 10 am. Contact Allan Macaulay 39.2767. Grade 4. Duration 4-5 hours.
- 21 (Thu) **Committee Meeting .** 7 pm at Mid Mountains Community Centre, Lawson.
- 25 (Mon) **Leisure Walk —(to be advised)**
- 29 (Fri) **General Meeting at The Hut, 7.30 pm.**

Bushwalks

While the Monday Leisure Walks are going from strength to strength, our weekend walks are not well attended.

What do Society bushwalkers want? Do you want weekend bushwalks? Would there be any interest in a weekend half-day leisure walk? — and who would like to lead walks? Any ideas? Please drop a line to PO Box 29, Wentworth Falls 2782, or phone Christine on 87.7246.

At present the Walks Co-ordinator’s position on the Management Committee is vacant. If you want to know more about this position phone the Secretary Les Coyne 57.3327.

“Getting to Know You”

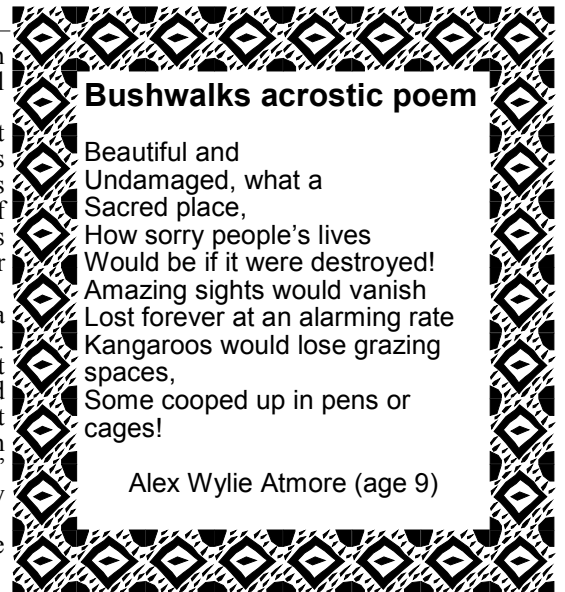
The Ladies on Monday 2 June leisure

walk wish to thank Kees Putting for an interesting walk and a delightful barbeque lunch up in the park.

Kees left us having morning tea at the Falls to return by following his bush instructions like vines tied across the tracks and arrows made out of sticks pointing us in the right directions where he had prepared a picnic spot for us on a perfect day in the bush.

There were tables and seats, a boiling kettle and sizzling barbeque. We sat around enjoying a cuppa and hot sausage, exchanging conversations and laughs from some trivia pursuit questions. We all agreed it was an opportunity for “getting to know you” and voted for a once a month Monday stopover lunch after our leisure walks.

Thank you Kees, from “The Ladies”.



Bushwalks acrostic poem

Beautiful and
Undamaged, what a
Sacred place,
How sorry people’s lives
Would be if it were destroyed!
Amazing sights would vanish
Lost forever at an alarming rate
Kangaroos would lose grazing
spaces,
Some cooped up in pens or
cages!

Alex Wylie Atmore (age 9)

This issue of *Hut News* has been printed on 100% Recycled Paper