

KATOOMBA AND DISTRICT WILDLIFE CONSERVATION SOCIETY.

Newsletter No. 6, September 1971.

Patron: Mr. Allen A. STROM,  
Advisor in Conservation;  
Dept. of Education, NSW.

"Something will have gone out of us if  
we ever let the remaining wilderness  
be destroyed." -- Wallace Stegner -

IN THIS ISSUE:  
-----

- Presidential Message: The Issue of Today.  
Our Society: Meetings, Outings, New Members. Our New Minute Secretary. Around the Conservation Hut. The Library.  
Activities of Members: Walkabout with Graham.  
Coming Events: Earth Day 1971.  
Blue Mountains Conservation Federation,  
Nature Conservation Council of N.S.W.  
Local Items: Walks around Katoomba and Leura.  
Our Aldermen on Conservation.  
Mining Petition of the City Council.  
Conservation Issues: Pollution starts at Home.  
Paradise Lost?  
Pollution Legislation in NSW.  
Welcome to our new Editor.

-----  
Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Society or the Editor.

Contributions for the next issue are anticipated before December first 1971.

Editor: Martin KAUB, 1 Clarencestreet, KATOOMBA, 2780;  
for following newsletters: Graham ALCORN, P.O.Box 29, BLACKHEATH, 2785.

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE: The Blue Mountains Conservation Federation.

The Action Committee of the Blue Mountains Conservation Federation, formed at a meeting called by the Springwood Bushwalkers Club, is operating smoothly, but vigorously. At the present meetings are held every week.

Several pamphlets in the series: "Blue Mountains ... or Black" were printed and distributed. A tentative booking was made for a Public meeting on the B.M. mining issue at Springwood on the 17th September. This meeting is now definitely being held by the B.M. City Council on 14th September in the Civic Centre at Springwood at 8 P.M. and we feel that the Aldermen are to be congratulated on their progressive attitude. The Action Committee will distribute posters, handbills, the Council's Mining Petition etc.

Efforts are being done to have good speakers for the meeting and it is hoped that there will be a big attendance.

I would stress that our role in the Action Committee is a contributing role and a minor one, as the Lower Mountains are fortunate to have young people skilled in lay-out and writing of propaganda material and its distribution. If we can raise funds for this Committee, we will fill an urgent need. Many matters are before this Committee, awaiting to be taken up and therefore many calls on its meagre funds will be made.

I do feel that what concerns one part of the Blue Mountains Region, concerns us all.

Wilson Alcorn.

OUR SOCIETY: Past meetings:

June: For this meeting we were promised a talk by Mr. A. I. Ormsby from Springwood on snakes plus demonstration of live specimen. It was a most instructive and delightful talk. Mr. Ormsby spoke in the first place as a conservationist - urging the members to work towards conservation amongst their local aldermen - and secondly as an expert on reptiles, relating anecdotes from experiences spent with Eric Worrell. Life specimen of lizards and Brown & Tiger snake were generously shown. For once we were thankful for the usual chilly winter weather, experienced so often on our meeting-nights: snakes don't like the cold and they were hardly agile!

July: This meeting brought again a most animated re-acquaintance with the Springwood Bushwalkers, telling all about - and showing their slides on their extensive hikings in Tasmania. Many visitors attended and it all resulted in the promise of many members to write individually to the Tasmanian Premier and/or his Minister for Tourism urging the implementation of a proposed alternative damming scheme for the Gordon River Scheme; this would leave the possibility to preserve Lake PEDDER in its natural state, and also safeguard the preserving of Pedder National Park, (a scenic reserve with title residing in the Scenery Preservation Board) in its entirety. Many members wholeheartedly followed up their promise.

August: A meeting very well attended; meant as a members night, several of our members and visitors showed their interesting and beautiful slides. We saw the excursion to Clutha's black works, many views from Queensland and Western Austr. It was agreed in our discussions that letters of appreciation would be sent to the Management of BHP and Comalco for their waste-combatting efforts and to seek further details about their programme in the conservation of materials. Very gratifying indeed for our group to see that conservation ideas start to penetrate to big industries. We have a feeling that the same is happening at the local council quarters. Our Secretary will be undertaking a big task in approaching personally every candidate for aldermanship in the three Upper Wards in the B.M. before local elections will take place; some burning conservation issues in our region will be brought to their attention.

Coming meeting:

September: The next General meeting in the Conservation Hut on Thursday 30th will be a Film evening. A roaring fire and other heaters will keep you warm.

Outings:

(Held as a rule on the first Saturday in each month)

It is good to notice that the outings continue to grow in popularity; our July outing reaching a total of 24!

It is good too, to note the interest - both among young and old - being taken in the environment. On each walk there is much that is fascinating and also educational, especially when short talks are given by Miss Bowden.

Sassafras Gully (Springwood), White Cross (Springwood), Terrace Falls (Hazelbrook) have been our destinations over the last three months. The next outing (Sept. 11th) is planned for Glenbrook Nat. Park. For further information on the outings please phone me at Wentworth Falls: 293.

New Members: (In the period since the last Newsletter): Nora Dillon.

Our Society welcomes:

Mrs. Hart, Wheeler, Haig, Clift & Blaxland; Miss Burns and Messrs. Brown, Haig, Hockfort & Richard.

Junior members: Miss Hart; David, Hohn & Rodney Haig.

New Minute Secretary: It is a pleasure to announce the appointment of Mrs. E. Penney as our Minute Secretary.

Around the Hut: We are thankful to be able to report that an increasing number of members feel impelled to assist with the work in the Hut and the Society. Many more are doing Hut Duty, come along to working bees and are writing letters of protest among other things. The President has been putting in skilled and hard work on the Nature Trail, and with the aid of helpers - has made great improvements at the West-

Street end. Miss Isobel Bowden has written a leaflet on the new Nature Trail, which will be available at the Hut shortly for distribution to the public. She has also compiled notes and drawn a very attractive map of this trail. These too, will be duplicated and sold at reasonable prices.

The coffeemorning held in aid of the Myall Lakes on the 18th June was a great success. Miss Isobel McKenzie showed a very attentive audience how to paint Banksias and then generously donated the painting for auction. Helped by a cheque for \$ 20.- from one member we were able to send \$ 71.50 to Natural Areas Ltd. towards purchasing land in the Myall Lakes--

The Library:

Four New Books of Particular Interest. Area. Our Committee has purchased two books in memory of Mr. Bernard Schleicher, who started the Conservation Movement in the Blue Mountains and devoted his life to the preaching of the subtle value of the love for nature in depth and breadth. The first book: "The High Country", profusely illustrated by wellknown photographer Helmut Gritscher, complemented by informative text by Graig McGregor; the other book: a delightful "Anthology of Australian Nature Writings" edited by Alec H. Chisholm.

Miss Bowden has donated Harry Frauca's "Book of Reptiles" in memory of Alex Holmes, a life member of this Society, whose interest and activities were with Reptiles and Spiders. The other book: "Trees of the Australian Bush" by Eric Worrell and Lois Sorry is in memory of Doris Chambers, who loved nature, a friend and member of our Society. The library is open to all members on all meetings.

Margaret Pinnigar.

Items of Interest found in periodicals not available in the Hut and worth mentioning:

The Agricultural Gazette of NSW gave an article: "Unplanted Trees" by Johnson & Briggs. No better story could have been written to illustrate and emphasize Sir Garfield Barwick's: "Preservation of Diversity" (A.C.F.-Occasional Publication No.5). The writers point out how at least some trees can survive in the endless clearances of rural areas, where they provide a pleasant contrast in the otherwise dreary uniformity. To regenerate trees in the natural way grazing stock has to be excluded.

Readers are invited to send in such articles (or copies thereof) to our Secretary, so that they can be announced in this Newsletter.

ACTIVITIES OF MEMBERS: Walkabout with Graham.

Helpers at Thornbill's Nest.

An unusual feature of many Australian Birds is that they have "helpers" to feed the young. Last season, at Minni Haha Park, we observed three Sitellas feeding the young at the nest. In a nearby tree was the nest of a Brownheaded Honey-eater, and five adults were feeding the two young. This season (August) there is a Striated Thornbill's nest at Leura Bath attended by no less than seven adults. What is more, they have twice been observed to feed the young in one minute flat.

There are many Currawongs in the picnic park, seeking food-scrap. The Thornbills "buzz" them constantly and won't go near their nest while they are present. When the Currawongs leave, the lightening feeding operations take place.

The nest near the top of the next tree is always approached from below and inside the tree, a Hakea Dactyloides. No more than two birds are in the tree at once, one feeding and one approaching. A remarkable achievement for these small brown birds, to bring up a brood, surrounded by voracious Currawongs! May be a flock succeeds where a pair would fail?

Spring brings feathered Migrants.

Spring is in the air and the lovely migrant birds are starting to arrive: Yellow Faced and White Naped Honeyeaters, who go North in tens of thousands in the winter, are quietly drifting back in small parties.

Silvereyes "peep" in the shrubs and occasionally sing

beautiful whisper-songs. Spotted Pardalotes gleam in the treetops - black, white, gold and red jewels - repeating their bell-like double note: "Be quick, be quick"!

From the large family of Flycatchers, the Flame Robins are already here, seeking out nesting territories in the more open woodland areas - a flame indeed with their orange-red breasts noticeably different from the resident Scarlet Robin. There are many exciting Flycatchers yet to come:

Grey Fantails - plain, but very friendly and cheerful;  
Rufous Fantails - like huge orange butterflies;  
Willie Wagtails; Leaden Flycatchers - croaking like frogs and wagging their tails from side to side;  
Black Faced Flycatchers - pearl-grey, black and cinnamon, calling: "Whyawitchew, whyawitchew!";  
Rufous Whistler - surely one of our greatest songsters - and if you are lucky, you may see the magnificent Satin Flycatcher or the unusual Spectacled Flycatcher, both of which Reta Vellenga reports as having been seen in the Blue Mountains.

Then the Cuckoos - the Fantail Cuckoo is here on and off all the year, but increases in number during the springs. The beautiful Golden Bronze Cuckoo is more often heard than seen, a spring migrant. But if you imitate his whistle: "Peeee, Peeee" he will perch above your head, bronzy green back, barred chest. Also one might see the great Channel Bill Cuckoo, large as a Black Cockatoo with a hoarse, screaming cry. They came the year before last for the great cicada hatch, after 50 years absence; an exciting prospect!

#### A new Use for Paper Hankies.

Paper handkerchiefs (Scotties, Kleenex etc.) are an eyesore in the bush and a headache for rangers. But Striated Thornbills find them useful.

These small brown birds decorate (or camouflage?) their nests with an outer covering of spiderweb cocoons. This year they are using scraps of white tissues as a substitute and/or supplement to the webbing. Six nests discovered as so far have all used some. No other sort of paper is used. Despite the expensive T.V.-advertising the birds reject the coloured tissues!!

Graham Alcorn.

#### COMING EVENTS: Earth Day 1971.

One day in Springtime, preferably the fourth Friday in September, starting this with the 24th, has been declared by Conservation Organizations: EARTH DAY.

Quoting the "Gould Leaguer" of July 1971:

..."We hope that each year on this day, people all over Australia will take a look at their environment and make some decision for further action. In principle it will be along the lines of Arbor-Day, but with a much wider concept. We will hope that schools will be working on projects throughout the year and that such work will culminate on Earth Day. The same might apply to community efforts, when a dedication of a Bushland Reserve, a Cleanathon, a Treeplanting, a survey of local Pollution, etc. could take place..."

A brochure: "Conservation and You" will be available at the Conservation Hut, listing many activities - and many will surprise the average citizen - to help to keep Australia beautiful and interesting, solve the problems pollution and environmental degradation. Miss Bowden who spent great efforts (and is still engaged in it) to establish the Nature trail near the Conservation Hut. This could well be the most important achievement for our Society in 1971. Efforts will be made also to have conservation displays in show windows of our shopping centres. We still need more volunteers for assistance with this work. Please contact the Secretary: Miss W. Gregory, Phone W.W. Falls 401.

#### Blue Mountains Conservation Federation.

It was decided in the July meeting to hold regular quarterly meetings, instead of the occasional meetings for special occasions. Our Society will be the host at the next meeting to be held on Thursday 7th October at 8 P.M. at the Conservation Hut. All interested members are invited to attend. The Federation is also organizing a Dinner on 6th November at

the Warrimoo Citizens Hall. Attendance Fee \$ 2.50 each. Time to be announced. Everyone is invited.

The Nature Conservation Council of NSW.

The 1971 Annual Conference and Dinner are being held on 16th October at North Sydney's Council Hall, Blue Point Road, McMahons Point. Our Society has submitted three resolutions and is to be represented by two delegates. Observers are also welcome.

At this point we like to mention that the GOULD LEAGUER of July 1971 writes on page 18: "Information on where Help is needed".

"Many organizations within the conservation field need the help that young people can give. Example: Katoomba and District Wildlife Conservation Society - Information centre and Museum; Maintenance work; Tracks repairs in Valley-of-the-Waters; Gardening-.."

Thank you Gould League.

LOCAL NEWS: Walks Around Katoomba And Leura:

By courtesy of the Katoomba and Leura Parks & Reserves 530A-Committee we add to this issue a sketchmap of lookouts and walks in the Leura area. Nowhere in NSW is a greater concentration of lookouts than in this area. Due to the activity of some well-known rangers in this area is still improving.

Petition on Mining by Blue Mountains City Council.

Our City Council is concerned about the present prospecting activities for coal mining in the Blue Mountains. So are we all - and therefore we should give the utmost support to the special petition on mining printed and issued by our City Council. Citizens are requested to demonstrate their feelings by signing these petitions at any Council office of the B.M.C.C., at the Conservation Hut, Valley-of-Waters, W.W.Falls,; at the special protest meeting to be held on 14th Sept. at Springwood Civic-Centre or with Mr. E.J.Edwards, Shirlow Av., Faulconbridge. Better still: collect empty petition forms at any of the above addresses, then obtain as many signatures as you can and hand in the filled out forms to the Town Clerk, requesting for endorsement to the proper authorities. Train Commuters note: here is your opportunity to collect a fair number of signatures.

Our Aldermen on Conservation.

As mentioned on Page 2, our Society - through much hard work of the Secretary - has been approaching the candidates for aldermanship on the B.M.C.C. for the first time with a request on important conservation issues in the mountains and in general; it is hoped to get a big number of answers from these ladies and gentlemen stating their views and opinions on these important matters.

The first one to answer, Mrs. Joyce Crick, went into a great effort to detail her intense interests; as a matter of interest Mrs. Crick has also offered to address our Society.

While we are getting this newsletter printed as so far we have received answers of the following candidates:

Mr. A. Bennett; Mrs. D. Cox; Ald. Mrs. J. Crick; Mr. C. Cullen; Mr. L. Darroch; Ald. J. Feltwell; Mr. J. Gottwald; Mr. C. Hibbard; Mr. R. Searle; Mr. P. Tonner; Mr. R. Viney; Mrs. Th. Murphy.

All expressed their agreement and support. We know that we will receive answers from the other candidates whom we have approached - however we have to have this newsletter in the mail by the weekend and therefore we cannot include the other names, but we will make mention of them in the next issue.

STOP -GAP: Extinction of Animal Life.

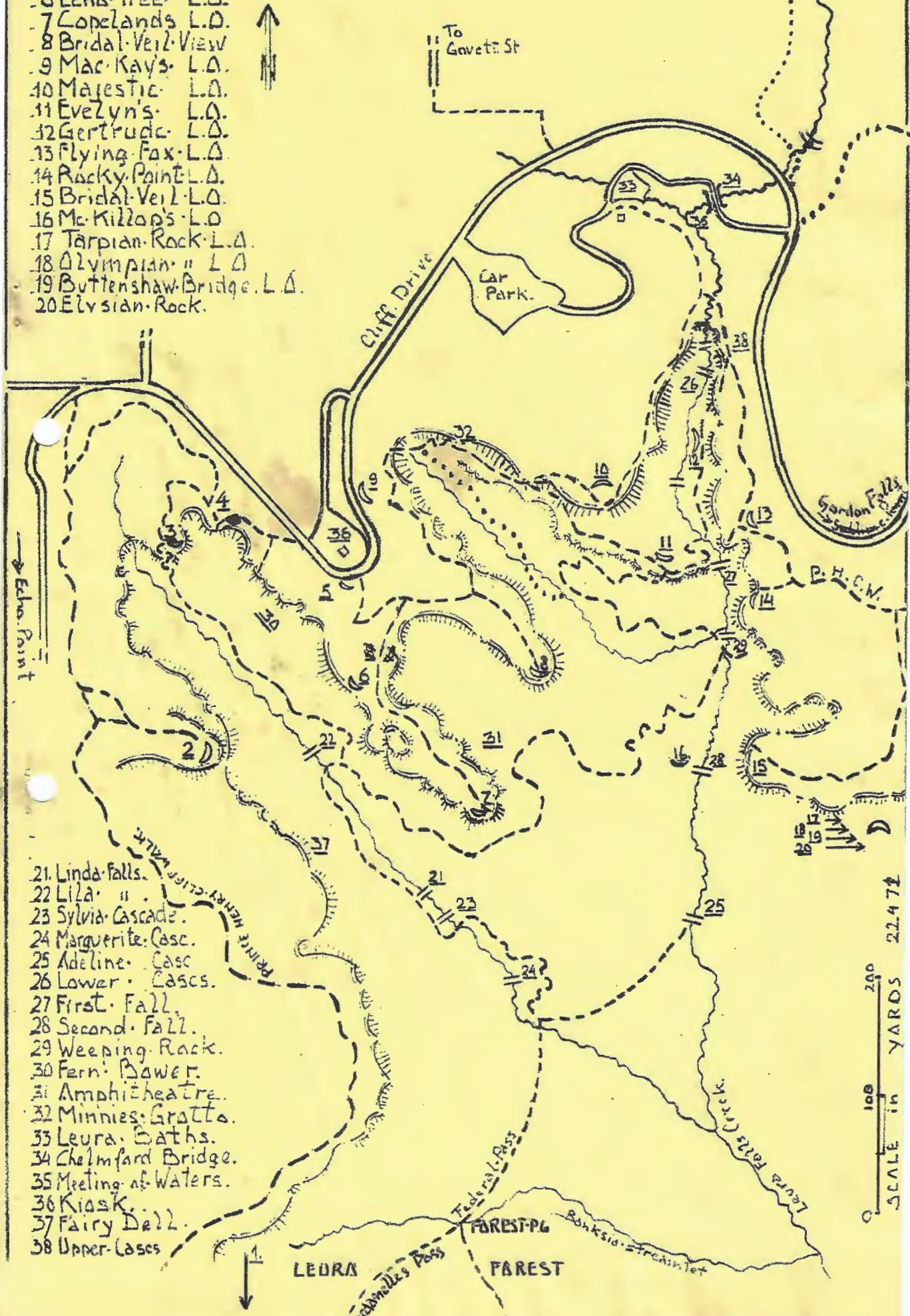
Until 1800 ... 100 species became extinct;  
 From 1800 - 1900 another 100 species disappeared;  
 " 1900 - now a further 123 species were lost.  
 Some Kangaroo species are included in these numbers  
 Other " " " in danger of extinction.

Do you care? The address of the Kangaroo Protection Committee is:  
 BOX 3719 G.P.O. SYDNEY, 2001.

HUMAN life is also ANIMAL life. The only way to wipe out this writing on the wall, is Conservation ACTIVITY.

KATOOMBA/LEURA 550A  
WALKS + RESERVES COMMITTEE.

- 1 Honey moon P.
- 2 Burrallaroo L.O.
- 3 Flat Rock L.O.
- 4 Jamieson L.O.
- 5 Kiah L.O.
- 6 Echo Tree L.O.
- 7 Copelands L.O.
- 8 Bridal Veil View
- 9 Mac Kay's L.O.
- 10 Majestic L.O.
- 11 Evelyn's L.O.
- 12 Gertrude L.O.
- 13 Flying Fox L.O.
- 14 Rocky Point L.O.
- 15 Bridal Veil L.O.
- 16 Mc Killop's L.O.
- 17 Tarplan Rock L.O.
- 18 Olympian " L.O.
- 19 Buttenshaw Bridge L.O.
- 20 Elysian Rock.



- 21 Linda falls.
- 22 Liza " "
- 23 Sylvia Cascade.
- 24 Marguerite Casc.
- 25 Adeline Casc.
- 26 Lower Cascas.
- 27 First Fall.
- 28 Second Fall.
- 29 Weeping Rock.
- 30 Fern Tower.
- 31 Amphitheatre.
- 32 Minnie's Gratto.
- 33 Leura Baths.
- 34 Chelmsford Bridge.
- 35 Meeting of Waters.
- 36 Kiosk.
- 37 Fairy Dell.
- 38 Upper Cascas

SCALE IN YARDS 21474  
 0 100 200

CONSERVATION ISSUES: Pollution Starts at Home.

It is not only charity that starts at home, so does Pollution. Detergents in your washing-machine cause a persistent foam in the effluent discharge. The common phosphate components of the detergent fertilize the algae in the sewer and create those un-sightly green grass scums; enzyme-containing detergents may cause skin diseases. One can have or cause a lot of trouble by not selecting carefully the right washing-powder. Ignore those beaming advertizing slogans; for example "non-ionic" is nonsense; it does more harm to the sewerage treatment than "ionic" detergents; another: "enzyme-containing" is a risk to health, and biodegradable by itself is not good enough. By the way: a new soappowder "SNOW" is marketed now; it is stated to be biodegradable and free from phosphates and enzymes. Give it a try!

Paradise Lost?

"This is the end of tears, no more lament" -

Editorial.

Sophocles.

- Aren't we almost brainwashed and scared to death by predictions of disaster in conservation? To quote a few out of many:
- 1/ Am. Prof. Ehrlich in a T.V. program (on 30th Aug.) called "Monday-night Conference" frightened his audience and viewers with statements that an overpowered technology and economy are in the final stages of rendering Life on Earth as bearable.
  - 2/ Sir Garfield Barwick, President of the Aust. Conservation Foundation, writes: "The ultimate physical product of our economic Life is garbage and the mental and muscular exhaustion of Men".
  - 3/ Dick Martin says: "Man's most important goal in the 1960's is not to be exterminated by pollution in the 1980's".

However the poet-philosopher Goethe said: "There is nothing more frightening than ignorance".

These gloomy forecasts are for a world ignoring the implementation of conservation. We - that means you and I - have ignored to give conservation a fair go; we have ignored love and understanding of nature and its meaning. Have we seriously reflected on conservation issues? Did we really understand what the leaders in Conservation meant when they preached: Preservation of the Habitat of Wildlife; Preservation of our Environment and keeping it clean from Pollution; a Wise Usage of resources that are Finite? Is "quality-of-living" only a measure of consumption of material, or a mental notion for cultural sanity? Could we admit that we would rather be driven by idealism than to surrender body and soul to inhuman calculations of a computerized world? No, we are not blind for the delicacies of Nature. We are blessed to live in our Blue Mountains, filled with endless charms, areas of beauty, clean and unspoilt. If we really try hard to give conservation the full support it deserves, we will realize that we must try to preserve our blessings for "the people of Tomorrow". But we must not sit back and let others do what a combined effort can do better. We don't want to be downhearted, we are confident that Conservation will be coming out on top. I for one have complete faith in our combined efforts. "This is the end of tears"; Paradise is not yet lost. Sure, it will hurt if we kick down the computer-haberdashery to the level where it belongs, but it will be refreshing to take a sniff of fresh air in the Mountains if we put in an effort to keep it so. If we keep sanity for our Earth, the Earth will keep fit for Man.

Pollution Legislation in NSW.

Alderman Mrs. Margery Anderson kindly provided us with a copy of the "Preliminary" Report of the Minister for Environmental Control, entitled: "Management of Pollution".

Achieved are the State Pollution Control Commission Act (1970) and the Clean Waters Act (1970), but little is said when action evolving from these Acts will be implemented; no facts are given how we are going to manage Pollution. The nature of environmental pollution is nicely dissected and shown, but little satisfaction is to be gained from a total lack of action and an abundance of statements like: "the Government will look closely; we

we have proposed to require by 1974 the installation of positive crankcase ventilation; something less than general agreement exists on safe tolerances, if other evidence becomes available, the Government intends to rigidly enforce the relevant section of the Motor Traffic Act (smoke pollution and diesel engines); it is ~~is~~ likely that small pockets of pollution will show up and the Government intends to closely watch the quality of fuel oils; there is an area where the Government proposes to take action; the Government believes that if urban planning measures were better coordinated that pollution problems could be avoided or greatly mitigated. There is need for careful and continuous review, (but they haven't started one iota yet. Ed.) More attention needs to be paid and the Government intends to investigate closely."

Yet aircraft pollution is cured by magic, for "effects produced by atmospheric pollution to some extent cancel each other."

Noise: "the Government will give Noise abatement a high priority by referring the whole matter to the State Pollution Commission (but this Commission states that community noises pose no immediate hazard to health, although it constitutes one of the commonest causes of complaint by the public.) Ways of cutting down pollution will be examined. It is good to be ensured that the new Dept. for the Environment will cooperate with the Depts. of Local Government and Health."

Pesticides are regarded with apprehension, however when used properly acc. recommendation, there is little likelihood of gross contamination."

This Report is a masterpiece of non-committance. If SMOG restricts clear observation, this Report is most smoggy. At the end of the report we are promised, that "given time", there is every reason to predict that the quality of living in this State will be improved. Readers are invited to borrow this report from our Library and get confused.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW EDITOR: Graham Alcorn.

Our Graham will produce this newsletter while your present Editor is overseas - until the middle of next year. The newsletter will be in good hands; I could not wish for a better man; we all know Graham by his lovable stories in his Walkabouts, and also by so many other ornithological and outdoor activities.

I would welcome it if at least some of our readers - while being glad enough to be rid of me and my efforts - have become enlightened enough by the subject, that we might expect some contributions or even someone might come forward with the utmost desire to become a future Editor. In my efforts I might have assisted in some way to give you an understanding of conservation matters. It would be ungracious of me to leave my readers who have so valiantly suffered my attempts, without some sort of farewell. I leave you with the words of Wallace Stegner - Professor in English at the Stanford University (U.S.A.):

"Something will have gone out of us as a people ..."

.. if we ever let the remaining wilderness be destroyed;

.. if we permit the last virgin forest to be turned into comic books and plastic cigarette cases ....."

.. if we pollute the last clean air and dirty the last clean streams and push our paved roads through the last of the silence, so that never again will people be free in their country from the noise, the exhausts, the stinks of human and automotive waste, ... and so that never again can we have the chance to see ourselves single, separate, vertical and individual in the world, ... part of the environment of trees and rocks and soil, brother to the other animals, part of the natural world and competent to belong in it." <sup>be</sup> We simply need that wild country available to us, for it can/a means of reassuring ourselves of our sanity as creatures, as part of the struggle for hope." ....

STOP PRESS:

We wish Betty and Martin KAUB (resp. Publicity Officer and Editor) a very happy and restful overseas trip, which starts on Oct. 4th, and we thank them for being such enthusiastic and willing workers in the cause of Nature Conservation.

Winsome Gregory, Secr.



KATOOMBA AND DISTRICT WILDLIFE CONSERVATION SOCIETY.

Newsletter No. 6 September 1971.

Patron: Mr Allen A Strom, Advisor in Conservation, Department of Education NSW

“Something will have gone out of us if we ever let the remaining wilderness be destroyed.” Wallace Stegner.

IN THIS ISSUE:

Presidential Message: The Issue of Today.

Our Society: Meetings, Outings, New Members. Our New Minute Secretary.  
Around the Conservation Hut. The Library.

Activities of Members: Walkabout with Graham.

Coming Events: Earth Day 1971.  
Blue Mountains Conservation Federation,  
Nature Conservation Council of NSW.

Local Items: Walks around Katoomba and Leura.  
Our Alderman on Conservation.  
Mining Petition of the City Council.

Conservation Issues: Pollution starts at Home.  
Paradise Lost?  
Pollution Legislation in NSW.

Welcome to our new Editor.

-----

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Society or the Editor.

Contributions for the next issue are anticipated before December first 1971.

Editor: Martin Kaub, 1 Clarence Street Katoomba 2780; for the following newsletters: Graham Alcorn, Po Box 29 Blackheath 2785.

-----

PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE; The Blue Mountains Conservation Federation.

The Action Committee of the Blue Mountains Conservation Federation, formed at a meeting called by the Springwood Bushwalkers Club, is operating smoothly, but vigorously. At the present meetings are held every week.

Several pamphlets in the series: “Blue Mountains..or Black” were printed and distributed. A tentative booking was made for a Public meeting on the Blue Mountains mining issue at Springwood on the 17<sup>th</sup> September. This meeting is now definitely being held by the Blue Mountains City Council on 14<sup>th</sup> September in the Civic Centre at Springwood at 8 pm, and we feel that the Aldermen are to be congratulated on their progressive attitude. The Action Committee will distribute posters, handbills, the Council’s Mining Petition etc.

Efforts are being done to have good speakers for the meeting and it is hoped that there will be a big attendance.

I would stress that our role in the Action Committee is a contributing role and a minor one, as the Lower Mountains are fortunate to have young people skilled in lay-out and writing of propaganda material and its distribution. If we can raise funds for this Committee, we will fill an urgent need. Many matters are before this Committee, awaiting to be taken up and therefore many calls on its meagre funds will be made. I do feel that what concerns one part of the Mountains Region, concerns us all. Wilson Alcorn.

#### OUR SOCIETY: Past Meetings:

June: For this meeting we were promised a talk by Mr A I Ormsby from Springwood on snakes plus demonstration of live specimen. It was a most instructive and delightful talk. Mr Ormsby spoke in the first place as a conservationist urging the members to work towards conservation amongst their local aldermen, and secondly as an expert on reptiles, relating anecdotes from experiences spent with Eric Worrell. Live specimen of lizards and Brown and Tiger snake were generously shown. For once we were thankful for the usual chilly winter weather, experienced so often on our meeting nights: snakes don't like the cold and they were hardly agile!

July: This meeting brought again a most animated re-acquaintance with the Springwood Bushwalkers, telling all about and showing their slides on their extensive hiking's in Tasmania. Many visitors attended and it all resulted in the promise of many members to write individually to the Tasmanian Premier and/or his Minister for Tourism urging the implementation of a proposed alternative damming scheme for the Gordon River Scheme; this would leave the possibility to preserve Lake Pedder in its natural state and also safeguard the preserving of Pedder National Park, (a scenic reserve with title residing in the Scenery Preservation Board) in its entirety. Many members whole heartedly followed up their promise.

August: A meeting very well attended; meant as a membership night, several of our members and visitors showed their interesting and beautiful slides. We saw the excursion to Clutha's black works, many views from Queensland and Western Australia. It was agreed in our discussions that letters of appreciation would be sent to the Management of BHP and Comalco for their waste-combatting efforts and to seek further details about their program in the conservation of materials. Very gratifying indeed for our group to see that conservation ideas start to penetrate to big industries. We have a feeling that the same is happening at the local council quarters. Our Secretary will be undertaking a big task in approaching personally every candidate for aldermanship in the three Upper Wards in the Blue Mountains before local elections will take place; some burning conservation issues in our region will be brought to their attention.

#### Coming Meeting:

September: The next General meeting in the Conservation Hut on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> will be a Film evening. A roaring fire and other heaters will keep you warm.

Outings: (Held as a rule on the first Saturday in each month)

It is good to notice that the outings continue to grow in popularity; our July outing reaching a total of 24!

It is good too, to note the interest – both among young and old- being taken in the environment. On each walk there is much that is fascinating and also educational, especially when short talks are given by Miss Bowden. Sassafras Gully (Springwood), White Cross (Springwood), Terrace Falls (Hazelbrook) have been our destinations over the last three months. The next outing (Sept 11<sup>th</sup>) is planned for Glenbrook National Park. For further information on the outings please phone me at Wentworth Falls: 293. Nora Dillon.

New Members: (In the period since the last Newsletter):

Our Society welcomes: Mrs Hart, Wheeler, Haig, Clift and Blaxland; Miss Burns and Messers. Brown, Haig, Mockfort and Richard.

Junior members: Miss Hart; David, John and Rodney Haig.

New Minute Secretary: It is a pleasure to announce the appointment of Mrs E Penny as our Minute Secretary.

Around the Hut: We are thankful to be able to report that an increasing number of members feel impelled to assist with the work in the Hut and the Society. Many more are doing Hut Duty, come along to working bees and are writing letters of protest among other things. The President has been putting in skilled and hard work on the Nature Trail, and with the aid of helpers has made great improvements at the West Street end. Miss Isobel Bowden has written a leaflet on the new Nature Trail, which will be available at the Hut shortly for distribution to the public. She has also compiled notes and drawn a very attractive map of this trail. These too, will be duplicated and sold at reasonable prices.

The coffee morning held in aid of the Myall Lakes on the 18<sup>th</sup> June was a great success. Miss Isobel McKenzie showed a very attentive audience how to paint Banksias and then generously donated the painting for auction. Helped by a cheque for \$20 from one member we were able to send \$71.50 to Natural Areas Ltd, towards purchasing land in the Myall Lakes area.

The Library: Four New Books of Particular Interest.

Our Committee has purchased two books in memory of Mr Bernard Schleicher, who started the Conservation Movement in the Blue Mountains and devoted his life to the preaching of the subtle value of the love for nature in depth and breadth. The first book: "The High Country", profusely illustrated by well-known photographer Helmet Gritscher, complemented by informative text by Graig McGregor; the other book; a delightful "Anthology of Australian Nature Writings" edited by Alec H Chisholm.

Miss Bowden has donated Harry Frauca's "Book of Reptiles" in memory of Alex Holmes, a life member of this Society, whose interest and activities were with Reptiles and Spiders. The other book: "Trees of the Australian Bush" by Eric Worrell and Lois Sorry is in memory of Doris Chambers, who loved nature, a friend and member of our Society. The library is open to all members on all meetings. Margaret Pinnigar.

Items of Interest found in periodicals not available in the Hut and worth mentioning:

The Agricultural Gazette of NSW gave an article: "Unplanted Trees" by Johnson and Briggs. No better story could have been written to illustrate and emphasize Sir Garfield Barwick's "Preservation of Diversity" (A.C.F.-Occasional Publication No. 5). The writers point out how at least some trees can survive in the endless clearances of rural areas, where they provide a pleasant contrast in the otherwise dreary uniformity. To regenerate trees in the natural way grazing stock has to be excluded.

Readers are invited to send in such articles (or copies thereof) to our Secretary, so that they can be announced in this Newsletter.

ACTIVITIES OF MEMBERS: Walk about with Graham.

Helpers at Thornbill's Nest.

An unusual feature of many Australian Birds is that they have "helpers" to feed the young. Last season, at Minni Haha Park, we observed three Sitellas feeding the young at the nest. In a nearby tree was the nest of a Brownheaded Honey-eater, and five adults were feeding the two young. This season (August) there is a Striated Thornbill's nest at Leura Bath attended by no less than seven adults. What is more, they have twice been observed to feed the young in one minute flat.

There are many Currawongs in the picnic park, seeking food scraps. The Thornbill's "buzz" them constantly and won't go near their nest while they are present. When the Currawongs leave, the lightening feeding operations take place. The nest near the top of the next tree is always approached from below and inside the tree, a Hakea Dactyloides. No more than two birds are in the tree at once, one feeding and one approaching. A remarkable achievement for these small brown birds, to bring up a brood, surrounded by voracious Currawongs! May be a flock succeeds where a pair would fail?

Spring brings feathered Migrants.

Spring is in the air and the lovely migrant birds are starting to arrive: Yellow Faced and White Naped Honeyeaters, who go North in tens of thousands in the winter, are quietly drifting back in small parties.

Silvereyes "peep" in the shrubs and occasionally sing beautiful whisper songs. Spotted Pardalotes gleam in the treetops-black, white, gold and red jewels – repeating their bell like double note: "Be quick, be quick"!

From the large family of Flycatchers, the Flame Robins are already here, seeking out nesting territories in the more open woodland areas- a flame indeed with their orange-red breasts noticeably different from the resident Scarlet Robin.

There are many exciting Flycatchers yet to come:

Grey Fantails plain, but friendly and cheerful;

Rufous Fantails like huge orange butterflies;

Willie Wagtails; Leaden Flycatchers croaking like frogs and wagging their tails from side to side;

Black Faced Flycatchers pearl-grey, black and cinnamon, calling “Whyawichew, whyawichew!”;

Rufous Whistler surely one of our greatest songsters and if you are lucky, you may see the magnificent Satin Flycatcher or the unusual Spectacled Flycatcher, both of which Reta Vellenga reports as having been seen in the Blue Mountains.

Then the Cuckoos the Fantail Cuckoo is on and off all the year, but increases in number during the springs. The beautiful Golden Bronze Cuckoo is more often heard than seen, a spring migrant. But if you imitate his whistle: “Peeee, Peeee” he will perch above your head, bronzy green back, barred chest.

Also one might see the great Channel Bill Cuckoo, large as a Black Cockatoo with a hoarse, screaming cry. They came the year before last for the great cicada hatch, after 50 years absence; an exciting prospect!

A new use for Paper Hankies.

Paper handkerchiefs (Scotties, Kleenex ect) are an eyesore in the bush and a headache for rangers. But Striated Thornbills find them useful.

These small brown birds decorate (or camouflage?) their nests with an outer covering of spiderweb cocoons. This year they are using scraps of white tissues as a substitute and/or supplement to the webbing. Six nests discovered as so far have all used some. No other sort of paper is used. Despite the expensive T.V. advertising the birds reject the coloured tissues!! Graham Alcorn.

COMING EVENTS: Earth Day 1971.

One day in Springtime, preferably the fourth Friday in September, starting this with the 24<sup>th</sup>, has been declared by Conservation Organizations: EARTH DAY.

Quoting the “Gould Leaguer” of July 1971.

“We hope that each year on this day, people all over Australia will take a look, at their environment and make some decision for further action. In principle it will be along the lines of Arbor Day, but with a much wider concept. We will hope that schools will be working on projects throughout the year and that such work will culminate on Earth Day. The same might apply to community efforts, when a dedication of a Bushland Reserve, a Cleanathon, a Treeplanting, a survey of local Pollution, etc could take place”

A brochure: “Conservation and You” will be available at the Conservation Hut, listing many activities and many will surprise the average citizen to help to keep Australia beautiful and interesting, solve the problems of pollution and environmental degradation. Miss Bowden who spent great efforts (and is still engaged in it) to establish the Nature trail near the Conservation Hut. This could well be the most important achievement for our Society in 1971.

Efforts will be made also to have conservation displays in show windows of our shopping centres. We still need more volunteers for assistance with this work. Please contact the Secretary: Miss W Gregory, Phone Wentworth Falls 401.

#### Blue Mountains Conservation Federation.

It was decided in the July meeting to hold regular quarterly meetings, instead of the occasional meetings for special occasions. Our Society will be the host at the next meeting to be held on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> October at 8pm at the Conservation Hut. All interested members are invited to attend.

The Federation is also organizing a Dinner on the 6<sup>th</sup> November at the Warrimoo Citizens Hall. Attendance Fee \$2.50 each. Time to be announced. Everyone is invited.

#### The Nature Conservation Council of NSW.

The 1971 Annual Conference and Dinner are being held on the 16<sup>th</sup> October at North Sydney's Council Hall, Blue Point Road, McMahons Point. Our Society has submitted three resolutions and is to be represented by two delegates. Observers are also welcome.

At this time we like to mention that the GOULD LEAGUER of July 1971 writes on page 18: "Information on where Help is needed".

"Many organizations within the conservation field need the help that young people can give. Example: Katoomba and District Wildlife Conservation Society – Information centre and Museum; Maintenance work; Track repairs in the Valley of the Waters; Gardening."

Thank you Gould League.

#### LOCAL NEWS : Walks Around Katoomba and Leura:

By courtesy of the Katoomba and Leura Parks and Reserves 530A-Committee we add to this issue a sketch map of lookouts and walks in the Leura area. Nowhere in NSW is a greater concentration of lookouts than in this area. Due to the activity of some well-known rangers this area is still improving.

#### Petition on Mining by Blue Mountains Council.

Our City Council is concerned about the present prospecting activities for coal mining in the Blue Mountains. So are we all - and therefore we should give the utmost support to the special petition on mining printed and issued by our City Council.

Citizens are requested to demonstrate their feelings by signing these petitions at any Council office of the Blue Mountains City Council, at the Conservation Hut, Valley of the Waters Wentworth Falls; at the special protest meeting to be held on 14<sup>th</sup> September at Springwood Civic Centre or with Mr E J Edwards, Shirlow Ave Faulconbridge. Better still: collect empty petition forms at any of the above addresses, then obtain as many signatures as you can and hand in the filled out forms to the Town Clerk, requesting for endorsement to the proper authorities. Train Commuters note: here is your opportunity to collect a fair number of signatures.

#### Our Aldermen on Conservation.

As mentioned on Page 2, our Society – through hard work of the Secretary – has been approaching the candidates for aldermanship on the Blue Mountains City Council for the first time with a request on important conservation issues in the mountains and in general; it is hoped to get a big number of answers from these ladies and gentlemen stating views and opinions on these important matters.

The first one to answer, Mrs Joyce Crick, went into great effort to detail her intense interests; as a matter of interest Mrs Crick has also offered to address our Society.

While we are getting this newsletter printed as so far we have received answers of the following candidates:

Mr A Bennett; Mrs D Cox; Ald Mrs J Crick; Mr C Cullen; Mr L Darroch; Ald J Feltwell; Mr J Gottwald; Mr C Hibbard; Mr R Searle; Mr P Tonner; Mr R Viney; Mrs Th Murphy.

All expressed their agreement and support. We know that we will receive answers from the other candidates whom we have approached – however we have to have this newsletter in the mail by the weekend and therefore we cannot include the other names, but we will make mention of them in the next issue.

#### STOP – GAP: Extinction of Animal Life.

Until 1800 100 species became extinct ;

From 1800-1900 another 100 species disappeared;

From 1900 now a further 123 species were lost.

Some Kangaroo species are included in these numbers.

Other Kangaroo species are in danger of extincton.

Do you care? The address of the Kangaroo Protection Committee is : Box 3719 GPO Sydney 2001

HUMAN life is also Animal life. The only way to wipe out this writing on the wall, is Conservation ACTIVITY.

This Page is a map of the Katoomba/Leura SSOA Walks + Reserves Committee.

#### CONSERVATION ISSUES: Pollution Starts at Home.

It is not only charity that starts at home, so does Pollution. Detergents in your washing machine cause a persistent foam in the effluent discharge. The common phosphate components of the detergent fertilize the algae in the sewer and create those unsightly green grass scums; enzyme containing detergents may cause skin diseases. One can have or cause a lot of trouble by not selecting carefully the right washing powder. Ignore those beaming advertising slogans; for example “non-ionic” is nonsense; it does more harm to the sewerage treatment than “ionic” detergents; another: “enzyme-containing” is a risk to health, and biodegradable by itself is not good enough. By the way: a new soap powder “SNOW” is marketed now; it is stated to be biodegradable and free from phosphates and enzymes. Give it a try!

#### Paradise Lost?

“This is the end of tears, no more lament” – Sophocles.

#### Editorial.

Aren't we almost brain washed and scared to death by predictions of disaster in conservation? To quote a few out of many:

1/ Am Professor Ehrlich in a TV program (on 30 Aug) called "Monday night Conference" frightened his audience and viewers with statements that an over powered technology and economy are in the final stages of rendering Life on Earth as bearable.

2/ Sir Garfield Barwick, President of the Australian Conservation Foundation, writes: "The ultimate physical product of our economic Life is garbage and the mental and muscular exhaustion of Men"

3/ Dick Martin says: "Man's most important goal in the 1960's is not to be exterminated by pollution in the 1980's".

However the poet philosopher Goethe said: "There is nothing more frightening than ignorance".

These gloomy forecasts are for a world ignoring the implementation of conservation. We – that means you and I – have ignored to give conservation a fair go; we have ignored love and understanding of nature and its meaning. Have we seriously reflected on conservation issues? Did we really understand what the leaders in Conservation meant when they preached: Preservation of the Habitat of Wildlife; Preservation of our Environment and keeping it clean from Pollution; a Wise Usage of resources that are Finite? Is "quality of living" only a measure of consumption of material, or a mental notion for cultural sanity? Could we admit that we would rather be driven by idealism than to surrender body and soul to inhuman calculations of a computerized world?

No, we are not blind for the delicacies of Nature. We are blessed to live in our Blue Mountains, filled with endless charms, areas of beauty, clean and unspoilt. If we really try hard to give conservation the full support it deserves, we will realize that we must try to preserve our blessings for "the people of Tomorrow". But we must not sit back and let others do what a combined effort can do better. We do not want to be down hearted, we are confident that conservation will be coming out on top. I for one have complete faith in our combined efforts. "This is the end of tears"; Paradise is not yet lost. Sure, it will hurt if we kick down the computer-haberdashery to the level where it belongs, but it will be refreshing to take a sniff of fresh air in the Mountains if we put in an effort to keep it so. If we keep sanity for our Earth, the Earth will keep fit for Man.

#### Pollution Legislation in NSW.

Alderman Mrs Margery Anderson kindly provided us with a copy of the "Preliminary" Report of the Minister for Environmental Control, entitled: "Management of Pollution".

Achieved are the State Pollution Control Commission Act (1970) and the Clean Waters Act (1970), but little is said when action evolving from these Acts will be implemented; no facts are given how we are going to manage Pollution. The nature of environmental pollution is nicely dissected and shown, but little satisfaction is to be gained from a total lack of action and an abundance of statements like "the Government will look closely; we have proposed to require by 1974 the installation of positive crankcase ventilation; something less than general agreement exists on safe tolerances, if other evidence becomes available, the Government intends to rigidly enforce the relevant section of the Motor Traffic Act (smoke pollution and diesel engines); it is likely that small pockets of pollution will show up and the Government intends to closely watch the quality of fuel oils; there is an area where the Government proposes to take action; the Government believes that if urban planning measures were better co-ordinated that pollution problems could be avoided or greatly mitigated. There is need for careful and continuous review, (but they haven't started one iota yet. Ed.) More attention needs to be paid and the Government intends to investigate closely."

Yet aircraft pollution is cured by magic, for "effects produced by atmospheric pollution to some extend cancel each other."



Noise: "the Government will give Noise abatement a high priority by referring the whole matter to the State Pollution Commission (but this Commission stated that community noises pose no immediate hazard to health, although it constitutes one of the commonest causes of complaint by the public.) Ways of cutting down pollution will be examined. It is good to be ensured that the new Department for Environment will cooperate with the Departments of Local Government and Health."

Pesticides are regarded with apprehension, however when properly acc. recommendation, there is little likelihood of gross contamination."

This Report is a masterpiece of non- committance. If SMOG restricts clear observation, this Report is most smoggy. At the end of the report we are promised, that "given time", there is every reason to predict that the quality of living in this State will be improved. Readers are invited to borrow this report from our Library and get confused.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW EDITOR: Graham Alcorn.

Our Graham will produce this newsletter while your present Editor is overseas – until the middle of next year. The newsletter will be in good hands; I could not wish for a better man; we all know Graham by his lovable stories in his Walkabouts, and also by so many other ornithological and outdoor activities.

I would welcome it if at least some of our readers while being glad enough to be rid of me and my efforts have become enlightened enough by the subject, that we might expect some contributions or even someone might come forward with the utmost desire to become a future Editor. In my efforts I might have assisted in some way to give you an understanding of conservation matters. It would be ungracious of me to leave my readers who have so valiantly suffered my attempts, without some sort of farewell. I leave you with the words of Wallace Stegner – Professor in English at the Stanford University (USA):

"Something will have gone out of us as a people...

..if we ever let the remaining wilderness be destroyed:"

..if we permit the last virgin forest to be turned into comic books and plastic cigarette cases.."

..if we pollute the last clean air and dirty the last clean streams and push our paved roads through the last of the silence, so that never again will people be free in their country from the noise, the exhausts, the stink of human and automotive waste,

...and so that never again can we have the chance to see ourselves single, separate, vertical and individual in the world,

...part of the environment of trees and rocks and soil, brother to the other animals, part of the natural world and competent to belong in it. We simply simple need that wild country available to us, for it can be a means of reassuring ourselves of our sanity as creatures, as part of the struggle for hope,"...

STOP PRESS:

We wish Betty and Martin KAUB (resp Publicity Officer and Editor) a very happy and restful overseas trip, which starts on Oct 4<sup>th</sup>, and we thank them for being such enthusiastic and willing workers in the cause of Nature Conservation. Winsome Gregory, Secretary.