

LOWER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

THIS MONTH

FRIDAY OCTOBER 12

L.B.M.C.S. P.O. Box 119 Springwood -  
Newsletter October 1973



## LOWER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY

"Man is confronted with the difficult and complex problem of finding out how he can fit into his environment so that it will not deteriorate but will continue to provide what he needs."

R.G.Downes

This newsletter is published monthly by and for the members of the Lower Blue Mountains Conservation Society.

The aims of the society are briefly to:-

1. Educate the public and civic leadership towards a better understanding of environmental conservation.
2. Work for the dedication of areas of natural environment and for the maintenance of their values in perpetuity.
3. Carry out research into the distribution and population of wildlife in the Blue Mountains.

### President

Mr. B.M.Dark  
58 Emu Road,  
Glenbrook 2773  
Ph. 391764

### Secretary

Mr. D.J.Pain  
8 Rickard Road,  
Warrimoo 2775  
Ph. 536358

NEXT MEETING:- THE ANNUAL GENERAL  
MEETING

TO BE HELD AT THE CIVIC CENTRE, SPRINGWOOD.  
OCTOBER 12th. AT 8:00pm.



## PRESIDENT'S REPORT 1973.

Before beginning this report I sat down and read last year's. It was a rather gloomy document, so much so that, having read it I was almost surprised to find that we still existed. However we do, and in better shape, at least morale wise if not numerically.

I think the difference is that this year has been much busier (somewhat too busy at times).

"The Great Blue Mountains Carve Up" meetings of December, January and February were important occasions and led to the recent regional planning conference at Warrimoo at which our vice-president, Michael Smithson delivered a paper. As convenor of the committee responsible for the conference I might add that without the able and unstinted help of this society it would not have got off the ground.

Another occasion in which the society prominently was the escarpment "freeze" instituted in February. Michael Smithson spoke at the resulting public meeting and the society was represented on deputations to Blue Mountains City Council and the S.P.A.

We took part also in the recent Wildlife show in Sydney's Lower Town Hall, with what I feel was a very creditable display.

We heard only one talk during the year, a very interesting one by John Barker on frogs. On the other hand we have been invited to speak to other groups four times: Denis Pain to Hawkesbury District Conservation Society on our escarpment policy, Michael Smithson to Penrith Camera Club & Katoomba & District Wildlife Conservation Society on conservation and trapping respectively and myself to Springwood Camera Club on conservation.

The trapping and spotlighting programme continues successfully if less frequently than we would like. Let's hope that the coming year may provide more opportunities for the interesting things and less need for stirring.

Excursions continue to present problems, not because of any lack of enthusiasm on the part of the organizer or members but generally due to unforeseen circumstances.

In last year's report I spoke of our nature trail proposal (then 1 year old) as not yet commenced, it is now 2 years old and still not started, I begin to feel somewhat pessimistic about its survival.

A notable milestone for the Society was the recent acquisition of our own duplicating machine. This makes us independent of the vagaries of "foreign order" printing. It also seems to have inspired the editor, each successive newsletter (it's a pity about the name) being better than the last.

In conclusion I feel that while there have been noticeable gaps in our activities during the year we have on the whole had a fairly successful and fruitful year, let's see if the coming year can be made more fruitful still.



Minutes of Ordinary General Meeting. 14th September, 1973.

Springwood Civic Centre.

N. McGrath was nominated as delegate to the Blue Mountains Regional Planning Conference.

D. Pain was nominated as delegate to the Nature Conservation Council Conference.

The following motions were adopted to be put to the N.C.C. Conference:-

1. That the Council in view of the increased destruction of marine rock platforms from lack of applied management principals, exhorts the National Parks and Wildlife Service to assume control over and management of marine rock platforms on the N.S.W. Coast. In addition the council suggests to the Dept. of Education the establishment of a marine biology "Class Room" along the lines of a field study centre to be permanently manned by qualified personnel.

Moved M. Smithson, seconded L. Paish.

2. That the N.C.C. commends to the S.P.A. a greater role in regional planning of the state of N.S.W. Moved L. Paish Seconded M. Smithson.

3. That the Secretary of N.C.C. gives an account of the N.C.C. actions on Castlereagh State Forest, and that the N.C.C. form an action committee to deal with this subject.

Moved M. Smithson. Seconded L. Paish.

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## W H A T S O N

### FIELD TRIP.

To Toby's Glen for B.B.Q. and inspection of Aboriginal Carvings, followed by some spotlighting in that area.

The field trip will commence at 3.30pm. October 20. at the Visitors Centre, Glenbrook entrance to Blue Mountains National Park. For information or arrangement of transport contact N. McGrath (ph. 391035)

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### NATIONAL ESTATE: Committee of Enquiry.

Public discussion, Sydney, October 23-24 (times and location to be advised through the press)

The committee has been established by the Australian Government under the Chairmanship of Mr. Justice Hope. The role of the enquiry is outlined by the following press statement of the Honorable Tom Uren Minister for Urban and Regional Development.

"The Australian Government is committed to protecting and enhancing the National Estate. The concept of the National Estate should not, in my view, be unnecessarily restricted. The concept should embrace such things as:

1. Historic buildings and structures, buildings of architectural merit, historic towns;
2. National Parks and nature reserves and land for the protection of flora and fauna;
3. Urban parks, urban recreation areas and land necessary for the promotion of urban amenity;
4. Scenic resources and areas of the coastline;
5. Land which has been designated as a scientific documentation areas and so on.

The different parts of the National Estate are owned by the Crown, Government Departments both Commonwealth and State, local councils, private institutions such as banks and insurance companies, charities and, of course, private individuals.

In order to protect and enhance the National Estate, it will therefore be necessary for a number of different organisations to adopt a variety of initiatives and policies.

It is important that policies on the National Estate be a real partnership among all levels of Government - Federal, State and local.

I recognise that cities can and must change. Not every old building can be retained. But this does not mean that every old building should be demolished.

The trouble with some administrators, planners and architects is that their ideal beginning would be a sheep paddock. What you have to do is to get rid of the sheep and then start building building completely new. The trouble is that some people actually apply this principle to some parts of the older cities.



However, people are not sheep, cities are not just buildings, and people are much more important than buildings,

I am firmly committed to the idea of urban rehabilitation - the fixing up of existing cities - rather than urban renewal through urban destruction and rebuilding.

The old type of urban renewal means bulldozing all that stands before you. It means destroying the delicate social fabric of the area. With this type of urban renewal, the social costs far outweigh any physical benefits.

Surely, governments, planners, administrators and architects can learn from the people who have rehabilitated old houses in such places as Carlton in Melbourne, Paddington and Balmain in Sydney. Surely we should all have learnt that older parts of the city can provide convenient and cheap housing for those in need. We should conduct detailed studies of the older buildings and the needs and wants of the people. We can then formulate policies which will at the same time retain the best of the houses and fix up and replace the worst. It's time to call a halt to the wholesale destruction in the name of urban renewal. All levels of Government must work together in the true spirit of federalism. The bulldozer wins too often.

We must put aside the bulldozer mentality. We must replace that mentality with sensitivity and with a real feeling for our heritage.

We must replace that mentality with a real feeling for the individual needs of the people who live in the older parts of our cities."

The committee invites submissions from persons or bodies interested. The committee has informed the society that it values local information from organisations such as ours particularly on matters which should receive urgent attention.

The society has scope here to take an active part in guiding the committee. It is interesting to note that in advertising the enquiry one of the terms of reference is as follows.

(The committee has been established to enquire and advise the Government on) "The manner in which the National Trusts of Australia and other appropriate Conservation Groups could be supported by public funds and the amount required in order that these bodies can immediately increase their effectiveness in arguing and working for the preservation and enhancement of the National Estate."

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#### B. M. C. C. TOWN PLAN.

Members are reminded that the town plan is on exhibition (see times and locations in September Newsletter). Please inspect the plan, the Society will need to lodge objections and your help will make these objections more fruitful.



## CASTLEREAGH STATE FOREST

### A QUESTION OF SURVIVAL

(Continued from last issue)

#### History (Cont.)

In January 1970, the Commission approved in principle this revocation. In that same month, the Officer in Charge, Land Board Office, Sydney, enquired whether the Commission would have objections to the whole Forest, or part of, being revoked as "his department had undertaken a review of land in the area for possible future development for various purposes". The Officer in Charge was advised of the Commission's previous decisions.

The National Parks and Wildlife Service also enquired into the Forest and were also informed of the Commission's decisions. Logging out of the northern section was completed during the second and third quarters of 1970. With revocation, the northern section of the Forest was defined vacant Crown land and placed under the control of the Department of Lands.

Mr. Allen Strom, writing to Mr. Lewis (Minister for Lands) as the Hon. Secretary of the Nature Conservation Council of N.S.W. in April 1970, requested all of the Forest be dedicated under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1967-69. Mr. Strom was convinced that the northern section of the Forest could be restored.

In March 1970, the Commission was informed by the Department of Decentralisation "that a crisis exists in the matter of the disposal of industrial waste near Sydney". The Department outlined the damage caused by illegal dumping of wastes into sewers and thence into the coastal waters around Sydney. The Department considered that responsibility should rest with the Metropolitan Water, Sewerage and Drainage Board, but that this or any other authority would be unable to have a treatment plant functioning for at least 3-5 years.

The Department of Decentralisation then pointed out the need for an interim dump for 300,000 gallons of liquid and sludge. Requiring about 100 acres of land, it suggested such a site may be found at Castlereagh State Forest.

The Minister was expected to raise the matter at Cabinet level and the Commission resolved to submit proposals by the Lands Office and Mr. A. A. Strom to him.



## History (Cont.)

Without public warning, there appeared in the "Daily Telegraph" on 14th November 1972, an article headed "Forest to be Dump". The report stated that the Castlereagh State Forest would "become a new dumping ground for liquid trade wastes". The State Government's Metropolitan Waste Disposal Authority (MWDA) had informed Penrith City Council of the decision, the day previous (13/11/72), that dumping operations would begin the next morning (14/11/72).

Protests flooded in to the Premier, Sir Robert Askin, Penrith City Council, Mr. R. J. Mulock M.L.A., and the Lower Blue Mountains Conservation Society protested strongly.

The MWDA's action followed the closure of the normal dumping ground near Sydney. The decision to use the Forest as a dump was made by Mr. Beale, Minister for Environmental Control, Lands Minister Lewis and the M.S.W. & D.B.

The situation was further complicated, but discreetly buried, when in the "Daily Mirror" of the same day (14/11/72) the whole scheme was reported to have been dropped. The director of the MWDA stated that the Forest had been considered for a dump "but was discarded after a full investigation of environmental and technical aspects". The MWDA was also reported to be "making a thorough survey of modern methods of liquid waste disposal and the size of the liquid waste problem".

The proposal however sparked off a large amount of correspondence from the Lower Blue Mountains Conservation Society over the Forest. These letters were congratulatory letters to Penrith City Council and Mr. R. J. Mulock M.L.A. for their stand against the dump proposal, and letters asking for the dedication of all the Forest as nature reserve (a recommendation of the N.C.C. of N.S.W. letter of 1970) to Mr. Lewis (Lands Department), and the Minister for Conservation, and the Premier, Sir Robert Askin. The Society also was critical of the lack of management of the Forest's naturalness and its declining state. Replies were unrewarding if received at all.

The Minister for Local Government, Mr. Cutler, was reported as complaining that no-one wants a waste dump in their electorate, in reply to a question raised by Mr. R. J. Mulock M.L.A., asking that, as the Castlereagh State Forest dump proposal had been dropped and the usual dump near Sydney had been closed, where was the waste being dumped at the present time (15/11/72).

On December 13, 1972, the "Daily Telegraph" reported that liquid waste was to be dumped in a "former gravel pit covering 20 acres of crown land at Castlereagh in the Penrith Council area". Toxic waste was to be prohibited and pollution would be strictly



## History (Cont.)

controlled. Mr. Connolly of the MWDA stated "the site was thoroughly investigated, particularly on environmental issues". "Every precaution has been taken to guard against any water pollution and water board conditions will be strictly observed and continually maintained".

Later that month, in a telephone conversation between myself and Mr. Forest of the MWDA, it was revealed that the new dump site was now situated not at Castlereagh but in the revoked northern section of Castlereagh State Forest (in the Londonderry area). In fact, the area previously investigated and found unsatisfactory for the waste dump was approximately 1 mile away from the new site which experienced the same conditions and was situated in the same type environment.

Mr. Forest also assured me that the waste would be non-toxic - acids and alkalis and cement slurries. He also assured me that the dump area was "quite derelict".

Penrith City Council awaited an Environmental Impact Study on the matter before they gave their consideration to the new plan. Regardless of what Penrith City Council decided, Mr. Forest confided, they can be overruled.

Meanwhile, Nepean M.L.A. Mulock's fears were made concrete when illegal waste dumping occurred near the site for the waste dump. Penrith City Council officers caught one of the offenders but waste covered the ground and killed regenerating trees nearby. L.B.M.C.S. members viewed the area and took samples and photographs.

On the 12th January 1973, I contacted Mr. Thomas of the MWDA. I asked him was he aware that illegal waste dumping had taken place. He replied he was, and that action was being taken. I asked him if the inquiry into the waste dump site would be open - "An open enquiry? Oh No!" he replied, "Not an open enquiry".

In fact, this Environmental Impact Study brought the L.B.M.C.S. in conflict once again with the Government. Unable, as working people, to view the study at the offices of the Department of Environmental Control, I rang that Department to enquire as to the availability of a copy, even just for loan. A girl answered and replied that she had never heard of the Forest or the Study, and later, after much confusion, she informed me that there was only one copy available and that was attached to the Department. She then gave me the names of other Government departments which may have the study. Finally, I was back where I started - and no study! Therefore, the L.B.M.C.S. made a formal complaint to Mr. Mulock M.L.A. and, at this stage, the situation is at a standstill.

(to be continued next issue)



LOWER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name.....

Address.....

.....

Phone.....

OPTIONAL INFORMATION

Occupation.....

Skills/Interests.....

.....

I would like to participate in:-

( ) Field Trip.

( ) Live Trapping Programme.

( ) Meetings etc.

( ) I cannot be an active member.

I wish to apply for membership of the society.

I enclose \$ for subscription.\*

signed.

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\*SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Adult.p.a.	\$ 2-00	Life.	\$20-00
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Family.p.a.	\$ 3-00	Associate.p.a.	\$ 1-00
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Junior.p.a.	\$ 0-50		
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All members receive a copy of the society newsletter.

SEND TO:-

The Secretary,

LOWER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY

P.O. Box 119

Springwood N.S.W. 2777