

# Lower Mountains Eco-News



Newsletter of the  
Lower Blue Mountains  
Conservation Society

December - February (1989)



## **Aims**

Education of the public  
Environmental issues  
Conservation of natural areas  
Research into distribution and population  
of flora and fauna in the Blue Mountains

## **Policies**

Currently being compiled for printing  
Will be available to members and the  
media

## **Memberships**

Blue Mountains Environment Council  
Nature Conservation Council of NSW  
Australian Conservation Foundation  
Society for Growing Australian Plants (Blue Mountains Branch)  
National Parks Association (NSW)  
Australian Museum  
Upper Blue Mountains Conservation Society  
National Parks and Wildlife Foundation  
The Wilderness Society (NSW)  
The Western Sydney Network of Environmental Organisations  
The Total Environment Centre

## **Other Group Involvement**

Glenbrook Lagoon Society  
Eastern Escarpment '530A' Committee  
Darks Common Trust  
Nepean River Committee  
Escarpment Protection Group  
Echo Point  
Native Plant Reserve (Glenbrook)  
The Colong Foundation (Inc)

## **Society Contacts**

**President:** Richard Phillips (39-2568)  
**Vice-Presidents (2):** Margaret Esson (51-1826)  
Chris Cleary (39-5154)  
**Secretary:** George Threlfo (39-5125)  
**Treasurer:** Aleen Hanley (39-4079)  
**Publicity Officer:** George Threlfo (39-5125)  
**Librarian:** Win O'Brien (58-6504)  
**Editor (Newsletter):** Warren Ramage (54-2019)  
**Walks Organiser:** Peter Mobbs (51-2884)

## **Current Major Projects**

Florabella Pass  
Faulconbridge Mallee Area

## **Presidents Report**

This past year has been quite an personal experience for me. Considering that I have only been with the Society for a short period of time. It has been an eventful year with many interesting happenings.

Many members of the Society have been actively pursuing environmental issues throughout the year with submission. For example Agnes Banks Reserve, Hawkesbury/Nepean Regional Environment Plan, River Authority and the Nepean River Working Party submissions to name but a few. Also, Margaret Esson's gallant struggle to protect the Faulconbridge Mallee. Bessie Bramsen has continued her campaign against the noxious Bitou Bush, which is already greatly affecting the Northern Coast of NSW. Hopefully we can stop it taking hold here.

We have also had many exciting walks. Some stand out - the Reptile walk at Agnes Banks, Newnes Plateau with Rod Falconer and Margaret Esson's walk in Dharug National Park.

There have been many varied and interesting talks at our meetings. For example Bronwyn Wood from the Bat Colony, also Jane Little's underwater World was excellent as was Steve Clark's Wilderness areas of the Blue Mountains. A special thanks must go to Aleen Hanley for her efforts not only in organising these talks but also for her fundraising efforts at the Ivy Markets.

In conclusion, I would like to thank everyone for your efforts support throughout my service as President. You are all a hardworking group, striving to bring environmental awareness to the public. It is a pleasure to be associated with such an active Society.

**Peter Mobbs.**

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## **Next Month's Talk**

The February Guest Speaker is Mr Ian White. He is from the Department of Energy and promises to give an interesting and enlightening talk on the uses and type of **alternate energy**. This will be one not to miss for those who have just got their Christmas Greetings from Prospect County Council !!!!



## Current Environmental Actions

### Faulconbridge Mallee.

Margaret and Peter with help from the NPA (Phil. Foster, Audrey Dorne etc.) and local residents are continuing to fight the Muriel Street development. At this point, a decision on whether 20 or more lots are allowed is still before BMCC.

### F4 Freeway

Aleen, George and Robyn Corringham recently discussed with engineering staff of the DMR at Blacktown, the need to plant various shrubs and trees along almost all of the F4 between Blacktown and Lapstone.

Their response was quite pleasing and we expect to have further talks before Christmas with John Chang, Head of the state DMR environmental division.

### Sewerage Strategy

Brent Powys from HAC and Brian Walters from the Water Board gave update of the sewerage strategy at our last meeting.

The good news is that Springwood plant will be closed within two years (kept on standby) and the Woodford plant will close within five years. Effluent from this area will be piped down to the Faulconbridge plant for full tertiary treatment. This is good news for the middle mountains streams.

### Nepean River

The Nepean River Committee (of which we and NPA are members), is awaiting a public statement on the future of high speed powerboating and skiing within Fairlight Gorge and other matters associated with the recreational use of the river.

Members of the committee are hardening their attitudes and expect to be working for the complete removal of this menace from all sections of the river above Penrith.

The Blue Mountains Environment Council is also one of a number of environment groups along the valley system currently forming a Hawkesbury/Nepean Environment Coalition.

### Lapstone Tunnel

We have continued to make representations to the SRA and to the local member, Guy Mathieson over transfer of the lands east and west of the tunnel to a Crown Reserve.

### Car Dumping

Guy Mathieson is also quite on side regarding this issue and we are hoping for some financial action through the State Government to clean the areas and fence down the Mitchell's Pass Road.

### Support for State Environmentalists

We have written to the State Government over issues such changes to the Botanic Gardens Act, Harbour Tunnel, the sham EIS for the southern forests, dog poisoning in various National Park areas and coastal developments.

### Crown Lands Act

George has commented on this Bill on behalf of NCC and seen a number of parliamentarians with regard to possible tactics for delaying its passage and hence allowing wider public examination of its contents. We are confident this will occur when the Bill goes to

the Upper House. Many parts of the Bill are good but the current State Government has facilitated easy sale, lease and licence provisions and cut out any public participation. This will no doubt assist conversions of thousands of square kilometres of leases to freehold to the benefit of National party supporters.

### Blue Mountains Environmental Management Plan

The recent re-decision by BMCC with Ald. David March altering his vote has enabled the fauna park group to proceed to a rezoning at Bodington Hill.

This is very ominous. We have been shown by this action that enough current Aldermen will throw aside the principles of the Environment Management Plan whenever it suits their purposes to assist a developer.

This process will continue unabated even when the plan is gazetted. It unfortunately represents simply a public relations exercise ironically promoted by the most pro-development person in BMCC - Mayor Williams. Currently, he also has a casting vote as Mayor to deliver such developments whenever the vote is tied.



# Statement on Forestry and Tree Preservation

by Alec York (Reprint from Native Plants for N.S.W., Sept./Oct., 1988)

In all the debates on forestry and tree conservation there are some fundamental principles which must be kept uppermost to reach correct decisions.

1. The maintenance of forests and tree cover is essential for survival of the human species as well as many other species of plants and animals. Without trees we would all die.

2. To maintain the existing level of tree cover and regenerate forests lost to logging and clearing around the world - currently running at the equivalent of a football field every second, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT FOR EVERY TREE CUT DOWN ANYWHERE AND FOR WHAT-EVER REASON AT LEAST TWO OR MORE ARE REPLANTED. This principle should be enshrined in every logging or clearing operation or tree preservation order.

3. In order to gauge the demands on forests around the world, the amount of timber products consumed by each individual human being on the planet should be calculated. Thus for example if we estimate that FROM THE CRADLE TO THE COFFIN EACH HUMAN BEING REGARDLESS OF LIFESTYLE WILL CONSUME SAY TEN MATURE TREES. For every use from toilet paper, newspaper, firewood, furniture, buildings, boats etc. etc. The mix would vary according to lifestyle but the end result would be similar. This then ties tree consumption to forestry operations around the world. The greater the population the greater the demand. This is the basic cause of forest degradation and desertification in countries like Nepal and Brazil along the Amazon Basin. It is less obvious but still evident in countries like Britain, once covered by forests of Oak and Beech where only remnants are left.

In Australia, using the estimated figure of ten trees per person/lifetime this would require THE CONSTANT REPLACEMENT OF 10 TIMES 15 MILLION PEOPLE OR 150 MILLION TREES.

On a world basis, with the current population at 5 billion people and doubling in another 20 years, we need tree replanting at the rate of 50 billion rising to 100 billion. It is evident that neither at national nor world level is this level of tree regeneration being attained.

4. The economic factor is the basic reason why tree losses far outweigh tree planting and natural regeneration. For Forestry Industries to maximise profit it is necessary for them to cut down the oldest and largest trees available in natural forests. Thus whole species of natural grown trees are progressively eliminated from each country. In California it was the giant Sequoia Redwood, in Oregon, the Douglas Fir, in Britain and Japan the Oak and Beech, in Australia the Red Cedar and currently being logged the Mountain Ash, *Eucalyptus Regnans*, appropriately named as it is the tallest tree in the world and the largest flowering tree, only exceeded by the giant Sequoias, (a conifer species) in total volume.

How can the foresters claim to maintain sustainable yield of these trees when cutting rates so far exceed growth rates? The evidence shows that they cannot. Within our own lifetime many species of timber have become progressively scarcer as they have been logged out e.g. Red Cedar, *Toona Australis*; Golden Deal, *Dorophora Sassafras*; Hoop Pine, *Auracaria Cunninghamii*; Coachwood, *Ceratopetalum Apetalum*; Silky Oak, both from *Cardwellia Sublimis* and *Grevillia Robusta*. Tallow wood, *Eucalyptus Microcorys*; Turpentine, *Syncarpia Glomulifera*. There are many more.

5.

Employment is constantly used as argument against forest conservation but the current practice of 'Mining' natural forests for the mature age trees is self defeating and eventually leads to unemployment when the forest is logged out. (Remember how it happened to the Cedar getters). By replanting-regenerating both natural forest and plantations ON THE SCALE NECESSARY TO SUPPORT THE NEEDS OF THE FUTURE HUMAN POPULATION, more jobs would be created and on a longer term than current practice as the future needs would require on-going tree planting on a massive scale. However because the returns on tree planting are long term it is essential for governments to underwrite the system until it becomes self-sustaining, by various means such as tax incentives, advance payments to tree growers against eventual harvest etc. Setting up tree planting teams to replant areas previously cleared and now degraded, could create many jobs for unemployed people particularly in country areas.

6. Cost of Inaction - We spend many millions of dollars on defence - against imaginary enemies who might want to take our country from us. Yet the enemy that is actually doing it goes unnoticed. Loss of forests produces deserts and soil erosion with consequent loss of economic viability of the land. The cost of correcting these things will be far more than our defence budget if we allow it to go on.

Such a massive re-organization of the timber industry would require all parties; government, industry, and conservationists, to work together to ensure the survival of all.

7. Tourism - would create more long term employment than logging. Showing people the wonders of the world's tallest trees - the biggest and oldest living things on the planet - must be better than cutting them down to make paper. The example of the Redwoods, (Sequoia Species) in California should be followed, where a thriving tourist industry has replaced the logging which would have eliminated them forever.

## Conclusions

To obtain a true sustained yield of timber for each species there are two possible approaches:

a. Only cull aged trees at the end of their natural life four to six hundred years, or trees prematurely killed by disease, fire or other cause. (This is done now but only to a limited extent)

b. Use fast growing species in plantations on short-life turnover as currently done with Radiata Pine. This is done to great effect in South Africa where vast areas of the Trasvaal are covered with plantations of Radiata Pine and Eucalyptus Saligna (Sydney Blue Gum). These make South Africa self sufficient for paper pulp and timber for its mining industry.

This plantation system needs to be extended to species previously logged out, to ensure future timber supplies and perhaps survival of the species. Such plantations need not be monocultures, but planned mixed species to resemble the natural bush.

The economics of the timber industry must be brought into line with the true environmental costs. The current practice of selling woodchips at \$60 per tonne and buying paper at \$1,500 per tonne is a recipe for disaster. Selling timber products at their true cost which must include the overhead of replanting - regeneration, will increase paper and timber costs to consumers. Market forces will then ensure alternative sources of supply for paper and economic recycling. The cost of building and furniture timber will encourage replanting of the best species (e.g. Red Cedar) as a long term investment.



## November Walk

by Peter Mobbs

Peter Smith led this walk into the upper parts of Campfire Creek. Eleven walkers were present and were introduced to a variety of bird calls found in this area. Some heard were the Grey Fantail, the White Throated Tree Creeper and many more.

The trek into the Creek area had us walking through stands of *Boronia fraseri*. Though nearing the end of their season, they still had an abundance of flowers and that unmistakeable scent.

Once in the creek bed, the children were delighted to discover many frogs and a large colourful yabbie. Morning tea uncovered a few unwelcome hitchhikers - LEECHES (Yecchhh). After removing these unwelcome guests we continued on, passing many showy specimens of *Elaeocarpus reticulatus* (Blueberry Ash).

Whilst stopping on occasion to listen to various bird calls, we passed many rock pools where many water dragons and other lizards were sighted.

The climb out was hampered by the overgrown walking track, with everyone arrived back hot and tired but happy from a most enjoyable day.

## Bessie Bashes Bitou Bush.

by Bessie Bramsen

On Monday November 1st, Peter Mobbs, Peter Kell and myself set out on a "search and destroy" mission for *CHRYSANTHEMOIDIES monilifeia*. We spent the morning in spots where the invasion has been known for some years now. This is on the Northern side of the railway line - Home Street Faulconbridge, Highlands Avenue and the rail embankment near the Water-hole at Linden.

We came home with a large garbage bag full of seed heads. We also despatched a large number of seedlings and young shrubs. We found where one fairly large shrub had been burnt on a fence line on the highway, and we removed many seedlings who had turned up for the funeral. By the way this plant just loves to re-generate after fire - so don't burn it!

This year, the flowers have gone off early. There is often some bloom well into November. Next year, we will need to rally the troops in early Spring when it is

easiest to spot the flowering plants.

Luckily, we had already visited the Blaxland and Warrimoo stands. It is pleasing to hear that other members have rallied to the call and carried out destruction on the Southside of the railway.

## Educational Forest Fanfare.

(Penrith Press 22/11/88)

As reported in "Penrith Press", it is encouraging to read that a neglected piece of bush (448 Ha according to the report) on the Northern Road near Windsor. Anyone who has driven this road over the last couple of years will recall the Castlereagh State Forest as being a haven for abandoned burnt out cars and other delapidated rubbish.

All this has now gone in a bicentennial project for the area. Tracks and roads have been repaired, new fencing constructed and all car bodies removed. As well, the gravel pits inside the boundaries have been rehabilitated.

All this is, needless to say, good for the area, but it must be remembered that this same Commission was responsible for the removal and despoilation of the original Ironbark forest. As well, once you reach the Western Boundary, observe the bounteous beauties of the Castlereagh Toxic Waste Depot. Take a deep breath (if you're game !!!)

**SIR: Nature conservation in NSW is now under serious threat from NSW Inc.**

Forestry Commission land, which under the Labor Government was generally open to review for its natural qualities and potential protection, has been declared by the Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources, Mr Moore, as off-limits for consideration as national park.

Crown leasehold lands of national park and wilderness value in the central and eastern division of the State are about to be sold off by the minister to freehold purchasers.

And where is the Coalition's commitment to the new NSW Wilderness Act which was unanimously supported by Mr Greiner and colleagues in Parliament last year? Why are we still waiting on the extension to the Mann wilderness area, near Grafton, which was agreed to by the Coalition before the State election?

The current policies of NSW Inc concerning our natural heritage can only result in a major loss to the public in exchange for a gain to a select few.

Rosemary Brooks,  
Ray Road,  
Epping.

October 5

SMH  
12/10/88



# Talks ordered

## on rare mallees

25/10/55

**DEVELOPERS, conservation groups and government departments have been ordered back to the negotiation table over the Springdale subdivision in Faulconbridge.**

Controversy over the land, which lies at the end of Muriel St, has come about because it is one of the last stands of the rare Faulconbridge mallee.

In putting their case to Blue Mountains Council last

*REV. A. T. H. P. R. E. S. S.*

Tuesday, spokesman for the developers, Mr Barry Gardner, said the subdivision had "been clouded by the Faulconbridge mallee".

In drawing up the 28 lot subdivision of escarpment land, "every possible conciliation has been attended to", he said.

The mallees had caused "nine months of frustration and conciliation".

Supporting the development, the mayor, Alderman Ralph Williams, said: "Clearly the applicant has bent over backwards to please everyone concerned. 'I can't see why we are bending over backwards any further.'"

The Lower Blue Mountains Conservation Society put its own subdivision plan

to council.

The society's priority is to have the land included in Blue Mountains National Parks but spokesman, Mrs Margaret Essan, said it would accept the development if based on its subdivision plan which involves only 20 allotments and a slightly different road route.

The plan would minimise destruction of the mallees, improve fire safety, reduce runoff and create a better quality development.

In ordering the groups concerned to reach a compromise, committee chairman, Alderman David Lawton said: "Maybe we can come up with a smaller number of lots satisfactory to all."

# Fairy penguins need a friend

5m 11 28/11/58

By HELEN PITT

**MELBOURNE:** It's not the Phillip Island Foster's Fairy Penguins, but it might be soon.

Last week the operators of the Phillip Island fairy penguin parade completed the final stage of a \$3.6 million redevelopment program and are now looking for corporate sponsorship.

While guemseys for the little birds and cigarette advertising hoardings have been ruled out by the manager of the penguin reserve, Mr Peter Thomas, he feels a sponsor for the parade would help keep admission costs down.

"We don't want to have the Foster's Fairy Penguins, but there is a

lot more we could do if we had the money," he said.

The development that was opened officially last week includes two concrete grandstands which can seat up to 3,800 people, a boardwalk which follows the path of the penguins to their burrows, and special lighting similar to sports ground beacons which shine on the beach. A new sound system provides commentary (in English and Japanese) as the 1,800 or so birds come back to their breeding ground.

For your \$2.50 entry fee you can also visit a new education centre, designed by Mr Daryl Jackson, who designed the Bicentennial exhibition, which includes a theatre and diorama (a simulated room which

includes sound-effects of the penguins' feeding areas in the Bass Strait).

A spokesman for the Victorian Tourism Commission said up to 50 busloads of mainly Japanese tourists can visit what is deemed the State's most popular tourist attraction each night.

Local restaurants have been quick to cash in on the tourist potential offering package deals to Japanese travelling groups including a seafood meal and the penguin viewing for a set price.

Mr Thomas expects more than 500,000 tourists will visit the penguins this year. Last year 476,000 visited the reserve.

## The Black Australians

A Lament

Through the long ages they lived with their land, Through the long ages of upheaval and change Lived the dark people so close to their land, So long and so close that the land and the spirit became one and the same. Gaining a knowledge, and a deep understanding To take each day just enough for their need. Hunting the wild life, gathering the seed. Teaching the young to live by the law, and so the way to the Dreaming. Then came the white man

to "develop" the land, Ignorant and arrogant with an axe in his hand. To dispossess and despoil with a gun in his hand, While alien beasts spread like a plague on the land. The billabongs are silent now but for willfowl crying. Nights are quiet now but for dingos howling; No longer echo to beat of stick and tribal singing. Silent the laughter of children, silent the didgeridoo. Now broken and lost are the dark people, For there is no turning

back and the future is bleak. Life's spiritual meaning was lost with their land So too, the long way to the Dreaming.

These verses are my comment on the Aboriginal Land Rights issue — a subject that we white people should think well on.

On a recent visit to a mid-western town this was forcefully brought home to me by the sight of people of mixed blood hanging round the pubs, not bothering anyone, just hanging round for the lack of anything better to do.

M. Edmunds, Springwood.



### Treasurer's Report

For the period October 1, 1987 to October 14, 1988

Presented to the Annual General Meeting of the Lower Blue Mountains Conservation Society.

Prepared by: Warren Ramage

Cash at Bank - Opening balance as at 1/10/87 \$276.18  
 Petty Cash on Hand as at 14/10/88 \$35.10  
 Postage Stamps on hand as at 14/10/88 \$2.34

**Total Cash on Hand**

**\$37.10**

#### **Income Received:**

Membership Subscriptions \$164.00  
 Sales \$885.00  
 Donations \$3.00  
**Total Income \$1052.00**

#### **Expenses**

Administration Items \$20.00  
 Advertising \$76.60  
 Audit Fees \$60.00  
 Donations \$180.00  
 Fees - Conferences \$25.00  
 Meeting Hall Rental \$66.00  
 Newsletter Expenses \$230.29  
 Photocopying \$26.90  
 Postage (non-newsletter) \$80.05  
 Purchases for re-sale \$178.59  
 Subscriptions paid \$28.00  
 Sundry Expenses  
   Council Minutes \$90.00  
   M Essen \$28.36  
   P Mobbs \$50.00  
   M Oldfield & Sons \$53.25

**Total Expenses \$1205.54**

Cash at Bank as at 14/10/88 \$565.02

**Total Funds on hand \$602.12**

## SAVE THE SOUTH EAST FORESTS

Right now the Federal Government is deciding whether to grant another 20 year woodchip export licence to Harris-Daishowa over the south east forests.

100,000ha of native forest and the national park proposals of Tantalawangalo, Coolangubra, Egan Peaks and Bemboka are at stake.

Your letters will stop the clearfelling of wilderness, rare plant communities and vital water catchments.

Write to Bob Hawke, Prime Minister, Senator Peter Cook, Minister for Resources and Senator Graham Richardson, Minister for Environment, c/ Parliament House, Canberra 2600, urging:

- \* no renewal of the export licence
- \* Federal Government action to protect the forests

Further Information: South East Forest Alliance c/ Total Environment Centre 18 Argyle St Sydney 2000.

