

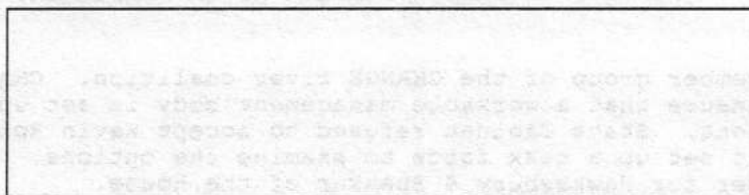


April/May/June 1992

Lower Mountains Eco-News

NEWSLETTER OF THE LOWER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY

RETURN ADDRESS:
LBMCS
P.O. BOX 119
SPRINGWOOD 2777



Notice of Meetings

NEXT GENERAL MEETING

Friday 8 May at Neighbourhood
Centre, Springwood, at 8 pm.

SUE BROOKHOUSE from **WIRES** -
will talk about her experiences in
caring for small mammals (pygmy
possums, ring-tails, brushtails,
wombats, gliders).

Come along, learn about first aid
for injured animals (before taking
them to a WIRES carer) and enjoy
the slides of Sue's success stories.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Tues. 5 May - Glenbrook
Fri. 12 June - Springwood
Fri. 10 July - Springwood

AIMS

To inform the public on environmental and conservation issues; research into population and distribution of flora and fauna in the Blue Mountains and neighbouring regions.

MEMBERSHIPS

Nature Conservation Council of NSW
Australian Conservation Foundation

OTHER GROUP INVOLVEMENT

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)
CHANGE
The Total Environment Centre

Glenbrook Lagoon Society
Eastern Escarpment '530A' Committee
Darks Common Trust
Nepean River Committee
The Colong Foundation (Inc)

SOCIETY CONTACTS

President: Richard Phillipps (39 2568)
V.Presidents: Margaret Baker (54 1196)
Margaret Esson (51 1826)
Secretary: Rowan Huxtable (39 6666)
Publicity: George Threlfo (39 5125)
Editor: Julie Senior (39 6465)
Treasurer: Eileen Brammall (39 6420)
Librarian: Wynne O'Brien (58 6504)
General Enquiries and Talks Organiser:
Aleen Hanley (39 4079)

PROPOSED HAWKESBURY/NEPEAN RIVER MANAGEMENT BODY

LBMCS is a member group of the CHANGE river coalition. CHANGE is currently working to ensure that a workable management body is set up for the whole river catchment. State Cabinet refused to accept Kevin Rozzoli's Bill last June but set up a task force to examine the options. Rozzoli is State Liberal member for Hawkesbury & Speaker of the House.

Unfortunately, the Task Force's recommendations go away from the spirit of Rozzoli's Bill and if implemented will only serve to reinforce the empires of the State authorities (and to some extent the local governments) whose mass of small decisions continue to degrade the river system.

While the initiative was taken from CHANGE with the public release of the Task Force's recommendations, members have worked hard to regain the ground in the past two months. As well as co-operating on a detailed position paper on the recommendations, members have lobbied all relevant parties in electorates, at public meetings, at Parliament House etc. We feel that some ground has been made.

Over the next two or three months, the Task Force will determine its "final" position and have legislation drawn up. CHANGE (which includes members of LBMCS) will then finalise their campaign to have the best possible legislation put through Parliament.

It is critical that adequate provisions for monitoring and enforcing water and air quality standards, and planning controls on all developments within the catchment are set in place. Anyone interested in assisting (which means detailed reading and understanding of the issues) should contact George Threlfo on 39 5125.



GLENBROOK LAGOON

The following report on Glenbrook Lagoon was prepared by Llew Jones of Blaxland in March last year. The Lagoon has been under intense scrutiny this year after complaints about weed infestation and rubbish causing a health hazard. Some residents also had objections to the fact that parts of the lagoon were not visible from surrounding houses and felt this was aiding vandals. The BM Council has now appointed the National Trust to do the terrestrial weeds Management Plan and Andrew Keogh is to do a 2-year study of the lagoon & surrounds. The Council is also appointing a Bush Regeneration Officer to the Mountains area. Some members of the LBMCS are also members of the Lagoon Society.

Llew's findings were as follows:

" The water quality has generally deteriorated over the past 3 to 4 years. Both the quantity of plant life and the quality of the water fluctuates widely - quality of plant life being maximum in Summer and minimal during Winter. The water is clear during Winter and the bottom can be observed (depth \approx 3 to 4 m) and is of poorest quality during Summer and Autumn.

In Summer-Autumn blue-green algae seems to predominate and to collect in thick layers on the fronds of *Myriophyllum verrucosum* - like dust in a house that has not been lived in for years.

As per Sainty & Jacobs pp.456 some of the blue-green algae species present in the lagoon could have accounted for the deaths of 4 to 6 eels (observed) and 3 to 4 Agibberipons - Grey Teal and 4 Mallards and probably 2 mandrakes that were seen to die over a short period of time during February.

They had no observable injury (gunshot, fishhook, stone or dog bites) extant on their bodies. I don't know for certain, but it is possible that these toxic blue-green algae may be toxic during a short period (1 to 2 weeks say) during their life cycle (Sainty & Jacobs quote on algal species *Aecyrtus cyanea* as a common toxic algae killing mice, sheep, horses and wildlife - also *Anabena circinalis*. The growth of these algae species is enhanced by a high phosphorous level (from fertiliser from house gardens) and basic chemical content pH7.6 - possibly coinciding with the reduced or discontinued useage of plant fertiliser during Autumn and Winter.

Water plants I have managed to identify with the aid of "Waterplants of NSW" by G.R. Sainty & W.L. Jacobs and "Flora of the Sydney Region" by Beadle, Evans & Carrollin, are:

1. Cyperaceae (Rushes) *Lepironia articulata*
2. Eleocharis sphacelata
3. Salviniaceae (Aquatic fern freefloating)
Salvinia molesta
4. Haloragaceae (Red water milfoil)
Myriophyllum verrucosum
5. Nymphaeaceae
(a) *Nymphaea alba*
(b) 2 varieties one white flower (dominant)
one pink flower (only 1 patch on Glenbrook side)
6. Lentibulariaceae
Utricularia gibba or *exolata* (submerged to freefloating)

Water Bird species that are currently resident on the lagoon are (from Simpson & Day "Field Guide to Birds of Australia").

Porphyrio porphyrio (Purple swamphen)
Fulica atra (Eurasian coot)
Anas platyrhynchos (Mallards)
Anas superciliosa (Pacific black duck)
Anas gibberifrons (Grey teal)
 plus the odd (itinerant) *Leucocorbo fuscescens* (Black faced shag)
 and 1 mandrake



LOCAL ENVIRONMENT PLAN 1991 DEFERRED MATTERS

This week (7th April) Council again worked into the small hours of the morning considering among other things items of L.E.P. 1991 deferred from gazettal by the Minister who wrote to Council on two occasions. He considered these matters had not been adequately addressed by Council in relation to:

- Bush fire risk
- Lack of services
- Impact of effluent run off.

In addition, all unexhibited changes had to be reconsidered.

Over half of these items (19) are in Ward 3 - and 6 are in Ward 4. After Easter, the new Council decisions will be on exhibition with a further opportunity to make submissions. Please look at the exhibition - look at the Council papers in the library and write your own submission to Council on any decision which you support or do not support.

A submission on behalf of the Society will go to Council on Ward 3 items.
It will support these decisions:

BC(NS) Chapman Parade,
Faulconbridge
BC(NS) Grose Road, Faulconbridge
BC(NS) Farm Road, Springwood
" Yellow Rock Rd, Yellow Rk
" Linden Observatory, Linden

It will NOT support BC 1/ha for Patterson Road, nor Singles Ridge Road and Illingworth Road as Town Planning recommendation was for BC(NS). For unexhibited changes, it will support Part Lot 39 of St. Georges Crescent, Faulconbridge to environmental protection.

For Lot, Hilderleigh Close, Faulconbridge it will NOT support the current approval of DA (Feb. 91, on grounds of current zoning Res.A1) for 6/ha or 24 lots. Town Planning has recommended as preferable 4/ha or 16 lots with an environmental constraint area. Many aldermen and our Society regard this as a "special area" which should be free of development. The NSW Heritage Council stated this to be an item of the State's Environmental Heritage. The Minister for the Environment, Tim Moore, on the recommendation of Head Office of

NPWS made an Interim Protection Order. The Land & Environment Court as a result of an appeal reduced this term from 12 to 7 months. As the result of a further appeal from the developer against Council's refusal for DA to 28 lots, the Court dismissed the appeal and recommended lots to be of a "substantially larger size and of a different shape". Town Planning insists that unless the DA expires (Feb. 93) the present development will go ahead, ie. 24 lots at 6/ha - despite the fact that proposed zoning at the time of application was for 4/ha or 16 lots.

This would inevitably have an impact on the rare Faulconbridge Mallee and on the significant zone of the even rarer species - Acrophyllum australe (found only from Lawson to Faulconbridge) which is on the rock ledge immediately below the edge of the escarpment. Despite expert evidence from NPWS, the judge remained "unconvinced" this species would be endangered (it relies on a constant supply of uncontaminated seepage water). However he recommended a requirement for the preservation of rock and bushland character for any DA. The site would be difficult to service in view of rock and is a very high fire risk area.

Alderman McInnes spoke strongly in Council for the preservation of this site and Council voted for 4/ha as the preferred recommendation of Town Planning. Naturally our Society would prefer to see the site preserved in toto. We are delighted to know that Hawkesbury Road lots have been designated BC(NS) and Cox Street, Glenbrook 7e. - likewise land at Green Parade Warrimoo and Mt. Riverview.

REMEMBER: The coming exhibition and opportunity to comment will be the very last chance to protect these environmentally sensitive areas.

Margaret Essen, Vice President.

12.4.92

BUSH REGENERATION

The Bush Regeneration course held in March attracted 36 people over two Saturdays. It was very encouraging to see so many people keen and involved enough to do something about their belief in protecting our unique environment. Thanks to everyone who attended.

The course was directed by the National Trust whose workers shared their expert advice and breath of knowledge, along with their Bush Regeneration Toolkits. On the first Saturday we were given a background briefing on the principles behind bush regeneration, and insight into the major causes of weed infestation. This led to a practical demonstration of weed removal at a gully at Lapstone. On the second day we carried this practical work through to Glenbrook Lagoon where we were given a tour of trouble spots.

Bush Regeneration is becoming part of mainstream consciousness. It has been adopted by government programs, taken up by enlightened Councils and some schools have introduced it into their activities.

Volunteer groups in the lower mountains area include:

- ** Glenbrook Lagoon Society
(taking care of the lagoon surrounds - volunteers welcome all year round)
Contact: Aleen Hanley (39-4079)
- ** Eastern Escarpment Advisory Cmte
(working on Lapstone tunnel area - mainly Autumn/Winter work)
Contact: Lillian Erskine (39-3007)
- ** Fairy Dell Restoration Cmte
(working on the Fairy Dell bush reserve - currently doing a major clean up and urgently wanting volunteers)
Contact: Thelma Murphy (51-6046)

There are similar working groups in all areas of Sydney. As well, nationally we have:

- ** Australian Trust for Conservation Volunteers (NSW)
(working in Sydney and NSW country areas. This group runs daily, weekend and week long projects, as well as training workshops. They also liaise with a Californian Conservation group on an exchange program for 18-30 yr olds.)
Contact: (02) 413 5502
- ** Greening Australia (NSW)
(working in Sydney and NSW country areas. Daily, weekend and longer projects.)
Contact: (02) 550 0720.

George Threlfo of the Society is part of a working group whose aim it is to network appropriate Bush Regeneration and Tree Planting groups in the Penrith/Lower Mountains area. Ideally, this network will eventually share equipment, plants and seed stock, exchange information and generally give mutual support. Anyone interested in getting involved at this level, which will mean liaison with government and councils, should contact George on 39-5125.

**Support the Lower Blue Mountains Conservation Society
and buy your books from our stall at the Ivy Market**

Springwood Civic Centre, 2nd Saturday of every month except
January, and two markets in November, 8.30am - 12.30pm

We sell new books on the Blue Mountains, Australian native plants and animals,
bushwalking, conservation and related titles. If the book you want
isn't there on the day we can generally obtain it for you.



ECO THOUGHTS :

Since European settlement in Australia, just 200 years ago, at least half of Australia's forest has been cleared. Three quarters of our rainforests has been destroyed. In NSW, the first State settled, even greater clearing has occurred, with two-thirds of its forest cleared and 80% of its rainforest gone. The situation is worse in regard to the original 'old growth' forests of 200 years ago (where 'old growth' is the original pristine forest of an area). In NSW, only 33% of our original forest remains, and only about 10% of this is undisturbed old growth forest. Thus only about 3% of NSW forest still remains as undisturbed old growth.

Forests are a key focus of the environment movement because they contain the most productive and complex ecosystems, and are some of the most beautiful places on Earth. Our forests are a wonder and a treasure we must keep in trust for the future.

Quotes from: 'Ecosolutions' by Haydn Washington (1991).

This handbook is a treasure and can be purchased from Margaret Baker at the LBMCS stall at the Ivy Market, or by phoning her on 54-1196.

GARAGE SALE

**SATURDAY - 30TH MAY
8 AM TO 5 PM
AT 7 DAVID STREET, GLENBROOK**

Bric-a-brac, records, tapes, household goods,
all welcome for LBMCS garage sale. Please
leave any items at above address or ring
39-4079 (Aleen Hanley) for pick-up.

*Help!
Are there any
creative people
out there who
can help with
drawings.
Ph. Ed. 396465*

TOTAL ENVIRONMENT CENTRE ONE DAY TOURS

**Sunday 3 May 9.45 am
COME TO SEA ON THE GOOD SHIP 'MIRABEL'**

Meet at the Georges River Ferry Co, Henry Lawson Drive, East Hills. The wharf is within walking distance of East Hills Railway Stn. Cruise down the Georges River past many interesting and historic landmarks to Botany Bay where we will see Kurnell, the Nature Reserve at Towra Point, Bare Island and many more sights.

Tea & coffee will be available during the morning and lunch will be served on board. We return to East Hills by about 3.30 pm.

Donation to TEC \$30. BYO drink & cup

**Sunday 7 June 10 am
ART DECO WALK IN SYDNEY**

Meet at the War Memorial in Hyde Park south. A guide from the Art Deco Society of Sydney will take us through the interesting art deco buildings of the Macquarie Street area. Lunch at History House, the HQ of the Royal Australian Historical Society, an interesting building from an earlier time.

After lunch walk to the newly opened Museum of Contemporary Art at Circular Quay where a guide will meet us. The Museum belongs to the art deco period and was recently restored.

Donation to TEC \$25 (Museum entry extra)
BYO drink & cup.

BOOKINGS : Contact TEC - 247 4714 or 241 2523