



January/February/March 1993

## Lower Mountains Eco-News

NEWSLETTER OF THE LOWER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY

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

### COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Note that these meetings have been changed  
to the 4th Friday of every month, 8 pm at  
Springwood Neighbourhood Centre.

Meeting dates: 22nd January  
26th February  
26th March  
23rd April

## AIMS

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

## MEMBERSHIPS

Australian Conservation Foundation  
Nature Conservation Council of NSW

## OTHER GROUP INVOLVEMENT

Society for Growing Australian Plants  
(Blue Mtns Branch)  
National Parks Association (NSW)  
Upper Blue Mtns Conservation Society  
National Parks and Wildlife Foundation  
The Wilderness Society  
CHANGE  
The Total Environment Centre

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

## SOCIETY CONTACTS

President: Richard Phillipps (39 2568)  
V.Pres: Margaret Baker (54 1196)  
Margaret Esson (51 1826)  
Secretary: Rowan Huxtable (39 6666)  
Publicity: George Threlfo (39 5125)  
Editor: Julie Senior (39 6465)  
Treasurer: Elizabeth Ramage (54 2019)  
Librarian: Wynne O'Brien (58 6504)  
General Enquiries:  
Aleen Hanley (39 4079)

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT 1992**

Although the year has seen fewer general meetings and guest speakers, we have been very active in pursuing the aim of a greener region and world, and world heritage listing for our beautiful Blue Mountains.

We fought hard for protection of bushland in the face of greedy over-development, for native species and against exotic weeds and shrubs, against feral cats and against those who would denude rural land in the Mountains and environs with overgrazing. We have sought cleaner air and water and greater care to avoid visual pollution.

Margaret Essen and Margaret Baker pursued actively the cause of preserving the Faulconbridge Mallee and attended many council meetings and court hearings. Margaret Baker and Aleen Hanley have kept up our presence at the Springwood Ivy Markets and sold calenders and books. We have also raised money at garage sales. We have supported many environmental causes with subscriptions and donations. Rowan Huxtable and George Threlfo have been active in writing letters and in keeping the newspapers informed of our activities, as have several other members including Margaret Essen and myself. Support has been given to other environment groups, including those against a super tip at Londonderry and a large powerline at Winmalee.

We have at last become an incorporated body, at some cost in time and money. This gives us a legal status we have not had previously. Members have organised and supported a bush regeneration course.

The accounts and books have been ably kept, first by Eileen Brammall and now by Elizabeth Ramage, and our auditor Bill Tomiczek has pronounced them accurate and fair. Wynne O'Brien has kept up a library on environmental issues and Julie Senior has capably edited the ECO NEWS quarterly. Colin Anderson has had the difficult task of Minutes Secretary. Many others have contributed to the progress of the Society and to the protection of the Blue Mountains and Nepean environment, including Bessie Bramsen and others who have removed many exotic weeds such as privet, lantana, gorse, bitou bush and blackberry. We have also campaigned for more care to be taken of the bush, its flora and fauna, when burning off. Air pollution from controlled burning is also a concern.

Much more needs to be done - all we need is more time, money and workers!

Richard Phillipps.....Oct 92.



---LOWER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY INCORPORATED ---  
Notes to and Forming Part of the Accounts  
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For the Year Ended 30th September 1992

NOTE 1. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES

(a) These financial statements are special purpose reports which have been prepared specifically for the members of the Society.  
They have been prepared:

(i) on the basis of historical costs and do not take into account changing money values or, except where stated, current valuations of non-current assets.

(b) In preparing these Statements, no regard has been given to Statements of Accounting Concepts and Accounting Standards.

*William Tomiczek & Associates*

PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS - COMPANY AUDITORS  
REGISTERED TAX AGENTS

WILLIAM TOMICZEK  
20/400 4/24 2/74

66 Emu Plains Road  
Mt Riverview 2274  
047-39 2948

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT  
TO THE MEMBERS OF  
LOWER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY INCORPORATED  
Scope

We have audited the financial statements set out on pages .1. to ...3. These statements have been prepared on the basis set out in Note 1 to the Accounts.

The Society's management is responsible for the preparation and presentation of the financial statements. We have conducted an independent audit of these accounts in order to express an opinion on them to the members of the Society.

Our audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards to provide reasonable assurance as to whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement. Our procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial statements, and the evaluation of accounting policies and significant accounting estimates. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion as to whether, in all material respects, the financial statements are presented fairly to present a true and fair view of the Society which is consistent with our understanding of its financial position. The financial statements have not been prepared as a general purpose financial report in accordance with Statements of Accounting Concepts and Accounting Standards.

The audit opinion expressed in this report had been formed on the above basis.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements present fairly the financial position of Society at 30th September, 1992, and its revenues, and expenses for the year then ended, on the basis of accounting which complies with a cash accounting basis.

Signed at Mount Riverview this eighth day of October 1992

W. Tomiczek

LOWER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION  
SOCIETY INCORPORATED

BALANCE SHEET

As at September 30th.1992

CURRENT ASSETS

	30.09.92	30.09.91
Cash		
Cash on Hand	6.40	7.77
Credit Union Account	1,131.83	1,296.79
	1,138.23	1,304.56
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	1,138.23	1,304.56
TOTAL ASSETS	1,138.23	1,304.56
TOTAL LIABILITIES	-	-
NET ASSETS	1,138.23	1,304.56

TRUST FUNDS

Reserves		
Accumulated Profit	1,304.56	621.78
Retained Profits	-	682.78
Accumulated Losses	(166.33)	-
TOTAL TRUST FUNDS	1,138.23	1,304.56

PROFIT & LOSS STATEMENT

For year ended September 30th.1992

	30.09.92	30.09.91
Ivy Market, Garage Sale	417.25	1,488.09
Membership Fees	266.00	544.00
Donations Received	90.00	100.00
Sale Calendars, Diaries, Plants	542.20	-
Interest Received	18.43	38.98
	1,333.88	2,171.07
LESS EXPENSES		
Advertising & Promotion	9.45	27.00
Audit Fees	75.00	170.00
Bank Fees & Charges	3.66	6.24
Calendars	423.00	179.10
Insurance	167.25	-
Licences & Lodgments	60.00	-
Purchase Books	-	160.42
Postage Printing & Stationery	300.20	338.53
Rental	35.00	95.00
Rent P.O. Box	37.00	35.00
Seminars & Conferences	15.20	-
Subscriptions & Donations	345.00	457.00
Telephone	29.45	20.00
Total Expenses	1,500.21	1,488.29
NET LOSS	166.33	(682.78)





## MEMORIES OF MOUNT TOMAH

*(There was a misprint in the previous episode of these memoirs - "Decline of a Rainforest" (Econews Oct/Nov/Dec.). In the first para, "110 more trees should be taken" should read "NO more trees should be taken". Apologies from Editor.)*

On with the memories - and the earliest is as clear in my mind now as it was in my very juvenile sight at about three years old. It is a picture of goats on lush grass on a green hillside. Perhaps it was so striking and memorable because the travelling would have been through so many miles of unsettled and wild bush from Mt Irvine - and immediately after passing this scene we were back in the same type of country.

Slightly more mature memories begin when we settled at Bilpin and joined neighbourhood picnics on the mountain. We drove horse-drawn vehicles up there (for us, eight miles) with our baskets and billies, on the occasional Sunday - spread rugs on shaded grass for the feast, then played games amongst the undergrowth and went for walks.

There was an extensive area of cleared land along the summit of the mountain. The cleared paddock was massed with bracken fern and scotch thistles. A smaller area to the north had been cleared in earlier years, but was deserted and becoming overgrown again. The broken and scattered remains of a stone house were there and a large walnut tree - under which we sometimes gathered nuts. The remained of the mountain was still closely forested - "heavily timbered" was the expression describing it in those days. The summit, except for the two clearings, and the eastern slopes were covered in the same rainforest vendure as Mt Irvine had been. It was thick with tree ferns and ground ferns; and the trees carried festoons of climbing ferns and epiphitic orchids. And the trees were very big timber.

Strangely, the early explorers seem to have taken little or no note of the fauna, though one mentioned a scarce bird population. But in my recollections - more than a century after Cayley - the birdlife was a delight in colour and sound. From the smallest finches, robins and fantails to several species of gaily coloured parrots, all the black and whites and grey kurrawongs to hawks and wedge-tailed eagles soaring overhead - all were there.

On the slopes of the mountain, more amongst the eucalypt trees, koalas were not uncommon and wallabies could be seen. Though by this time they had been heavily culled by shooters. On the rare occasion that we remained into the night on the mountain, I enjoyed hearing the howl of a dingo - so rare down at Bilpin, where they had been shot and poisoned almost to extinction. That wild, lonely cry touched a response in the rather morose and uncivilised child that I was.

There was one very early mill on Mt Tomah; but I believe it did not last long. I do not know now whether my father moved his timber milling outfit there in 1913 or 1914. But after his few short years there, there was a series of mills. Also the mountain was severely plundered for ferns and orchids for many years. Only a very small area of bedraggled rainforest remains. The southern end of the mountain had been enormously scarred by basalt mining; but is making progress in healing now; and I believe a number of the settlers there are conservation conscious and trying to restore some of their own areas.

From the once honoured pastimes of wallaby shooting, then rabbit shooting, the fame of Mt Tomah is now the glorious cold climate Botanic Garden.

Besse Bramsen

Dec. 1992



*The following letter has been sent by Margaret Baker, Vice President of the Society, to Mr John Fahey, Premier of NSW, in relation to the Mt Airly Coal Project. This project is under review with the Commissioner's findings reportedly to be revealed early next year.*

Dear Sir,

I am writing to express the opposition of the Lower Blue Mountains Conservation Society to the Development Proposal for the Mt. Airly Coal Project by Novacoal Australia (a CRA subsidiary).

The spectacular cliffs and pagodas of the mesas of Mt. Airly and neighbouring Mt. Genowlan, which is also proposed to be mined, form some of the most magnificent scenery in Australia. Already extensive clearing and disturbance of natural wildlife habitat areas for farming, forestry and mining has threatened many native species with extinction.

This area has a large Lyrebird population, one of the many species residing here that rely on the cliff and rock formations for breeding in safety from predators. Other cliff and rock dwellers that occur here include the rare Peregrine falcon, Wedge Tailed Eagle, Rock warbler and here is the possibility that other species, including the rare brush tailed Rock Wallaby, Southern Brown Bandicoot and perhaps our endangered Koalas, use this area also.

There are vulnerable eucalypt communities in the project area, the Capertee Stringy bark being classified as a rare species. Seven other rare plant species occur here and 15 more are expected to be found. The Mt. Airly - Mt Genowlan region represents part of a landscape with a unique geological and geomorphological history unlike any other part of Australia and is even quite different to most of the better-known parts of the Blue Mountains. Its development began with the formation of the geologic Sydney Basin over 290 million years ago and its rock layers and sculptured forms provide an invaluable insight into the development history of that Basin through to the present. The sandstone/ conglomerate/ironstone bands produce remarkable landforms of both immense fragility and unlimited eco-tourism potential. These combined values make Mt. Airly-Mt. Genowlan a national Gem.

Mt. Airly is part of our famous Pagoda Country which is unique to this area and limited to 40 000 hectares from Newnes Plateau near Lithgow to Mt. Airly. Protection of Mt. Airly-Mt. Genowlan should not be considered in isolation from activities occurring in the remaining Pagoda country. Subsidence is a major problem that has resulted from mining, causing changes to water flows, drainage of wet areas and cliff collapses. Hassan's Walls has been undermined and is still subsiding causing cliff and pagoda collapses and crevices opening up after 12 years after mining ceased. Newnes Plateau is also being undermined by Angus Place and Baal Bone Collieries causing cliff and pagoda collapse at places such as Blackfellows Hands and Lambs Creek (believed to be a protection zone). The Temples of Doom, a remarkable array of fragile stone formations and deep fern filled valleys to the north of Lithgow, are indeed doomed. Large cracks which widen daily, have criss-crossed these magic formations.

The New Springvale Colliery is preparing to mine under another large area of the Newnes Plateau, and Clarence Colliery has applied for extensions to their lease to mine under Newnes Plateau. Ben Bullen State Forest, another Pagoda area, is being undermined and has signs posted warning of the dangers of subsidence to potential visitors. The great proportion of coal measures lying beneath the proposal are well within or very close to, the 'Angle of Draw' (a measure of prohibitive distance) of fragile and important landscape features, such as cliffs, gorges and pagoda clusters. Mt. Airly-Mt. Genowlan is a small but significant part of the whole. We are asking that it be protected undisturbed and not be placed in jeopardy.

Mr. Fahey, you stated in relation to the closure of the Newvale Colliery, on the Channel 7 News (17.11.92), that we are producing too much coal and there are not enough markets for it, so why is the Government even considering a development proposal at Mt. Airly? There has been enough mining and more than enough destruction of these unique and irreplaceable features. It is time to call a halt to the landscape destruction associated with mine subsidence beneath sensitive areas.



The area under consideration and the remaining Pagoda Country should, rather than be subjected to further mining destruction, be immediately declared the Gardens of Stone National Park and the region submitted for World Heritage Listing along with the rest of the Greater Blue Mountains National Park.

We plead with you therefore, Mr. Fahey, to advise the Minister for Planning not to allow the coal mining development at Mt. Airly-Mt. Genowlan to go ahead.

Margaret Baker

Vice-president LBMCS

December 1992.

## NOTEBOOK

**GOOD NEWS** - Land at the end of Shirlow Avenue, Faulconbridge, which takes in stands of Faulconbridge Mallee on the western side of the gorge has been zoned Residential Bushland Conservation 8/ha. However the area to be developed has been reduced by half which means a 4/ha outcome.

**\*\*** *The LBMCS has agreed to join a workshop on Environment and the Law organised by the Environmental Defenders Office at The Hut, Wentworth Falls in Autumn on a date to be fixed. Watch The Gazette for further information.*

**WORLD HERITAGE** - The Secretary of the LBMCS recently received a reply from Michael Photios, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for the Environment on World Heritage status for the Blue Mountains. Mr. Photios states that "The NSW Government has consistently been keen to carry out an evaluation of the proposal and to proceed with the nomination, if this proves to be possible." HOWEVER, the buck passes to ... "While the Commonwealth has recently given an impression of eagerness to proceed with assessing the nomination, NSW is still awaiting a clear statement that Commonwealth financial assistance will be available for the relevant studies and nomination preparation. In an attempt to end the confusion that apparently exists, the Minister a few weeks ago wrote to the Federal Minister requesting clarification. A reply is awaited."

Recently officers of the NPWS at Blackheath approached the Department of Arts, Sport The Environment and Territories with the proposal and received a verbal commitment to proceed with steps towards nomination. Ros Kelly, the appropriate Minister, has also given a commitment to fund a study of the area. It is now important to ensure that any study done truly reflects the broad advocacy for this nomination.

**PHOTOGRAPHERS ALERT** - *The National Parks Journal is desperately looking for B&W photographs of areas proposed as national parks, existing national parks and plants and animals. If you have any recent B&W photos, or feel inspired to take camera into wilderness, get your results to Journal Editor Peter Wright on (02) 264 7994.*

**ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES FOR SCHOOLS** - Margaret Alexander, a TEC volunteer, has established a recycling system whereby environmental journals are redirected from subscribers to country school libraries where they are used as resource material for pupil's environmental projects. So if you get a journal and want to pass it on, phone Margaret on (02) 360 6323.

**POWERLINES** - *George Threlfo has followed through with the Springwood-Warrimoo-Winmalee Powerline issue with which the society has been involved since 1990. The latest meeting to which the Society had input (10/12/92) passed proposals including a supplementary EIS to be produced for public examination early in 1993, adoption of recommended routes from Springwood and Warrimoo substation to Winmalee. The Water Board has volunteered to pay the cost of upgrading the access road along its waterline.*

**PICTON SEWERAGE WORKS** - *At a public meeting on 10/12/92, Bob Wilson of the Water Board indicated they are proposing a complete grey water reticulation system through Picton to use the highly treated effluent on lawns and gardens. A further EIS on this and other matters will be issued early next year.*



## *ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES- 1993*

The following courses will be conducted in the area next year:

### ***PLANTS OF THE BLUE MOUNTAINS***

(part of the Continuing Education West program, University of Western Sydney, Nepean)

Time: 7-9 pm Wednesday  
Venue: Red Cross Hall, Springwood  
Duration: 10 March to 5 May 1993  
7 evening meetings, 3 field trips.  
Teacher: Margaret Esson  
Contact: UWS, 02-6785400.

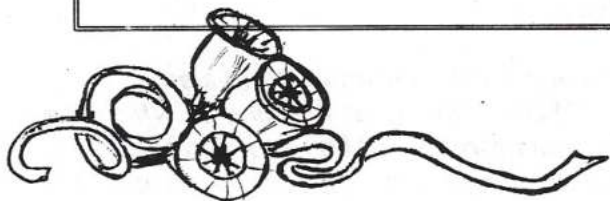
### ***ADVANCED CERTIFICATE IN OUTDOOR GUIDING***

Time: Thursday nights and most weekends  
Venue: Katoomba TAFE and field trips  
Duration: 2 years part-time  
Teachers: Jim Smith & M. Baker  
Contact: Mike Wright, Katoomba TAFE, 047-821099.

***Note also that ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES can be taken as part of the Tertiary Preparation Certificate Course.***

Venue: Katoomba TAFE  
Duration: 1 year full-time  
Teacher: Margaret Baker  
Contact: Mike Wright, Katoomba TAFE, 047-821099.

Any contributions for this newsletter will be gratefully accepted.  
We would welcome any poetry, letters, comments, articles,  
etc.



MERRY XMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR  
TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY

AND THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUING SUPPORT