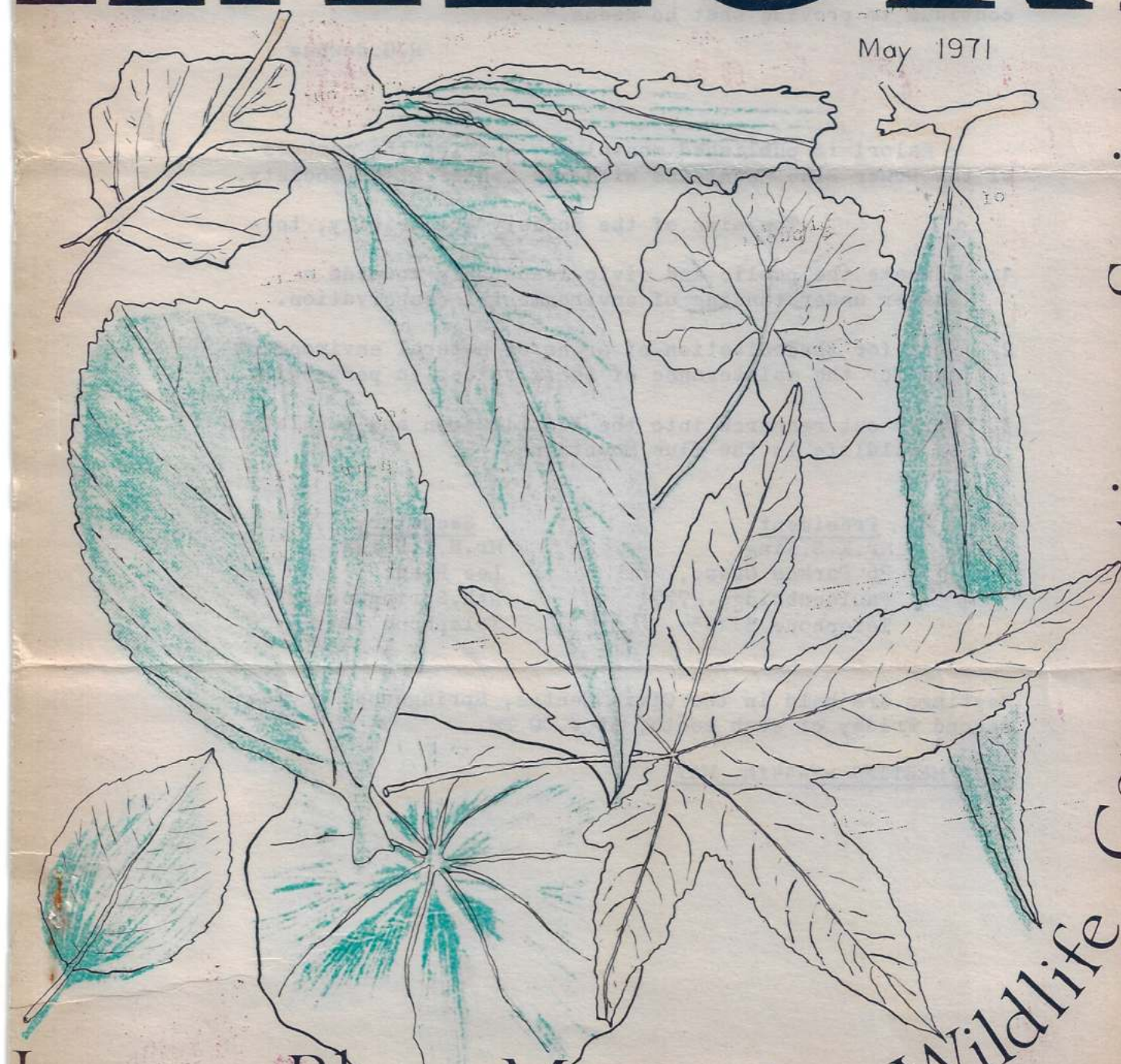


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KALORI

May 1971



Society

Conservation

Wildlife

Lower Blue Mountains

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

R.G.Downes

Kalori is published monthly by and for the members of the Lower Blue Mountains Wildlife 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.

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Meetings are held in the Civic Centre, Springwood, on the second Friday of each month, at 8.00 PM.

NEXT MEETING ---14th. MAY.

THE CONSERVATION SCENE

Conservationists have always been faced with the dilemma of promoting intangible values, against the almost overwhelming arguments of economically substantiated land use concepts. We have been ridiculed, ignored, hoodwinked, coerced, bamboozled and over-ruled.

It was not until first hand evidence began to appear in the form of a rather battered environment, that signs of awakening have been apparent in the general public. It must have come as rather a shock to those brought up on the old adage "Leave it to nature; she'll take care of it", and the concept of dumping in the sea, or the river, or the bush - after all, there are miles of bush untouched, and the sea is vast - to find nature not nearly so resilient as she should have been, and great holes appearing in her armour in the form of barren and scoured hillsides, greasy smelling streams and rivers, fouled beaches, dead and dying birds and fish, and choking eye-smarting city air.

More and more people are accepting the idea that the values of large natural areas are not so intangible after all, and that man, adaptable and resourceful as he is, is still utterly dependant upon the basic life cycles to which he owes his existence.

I would like to think that in perhaps a hundred years a more enlightened generation will look back at the 1970's and wonder how we allowed the environment to deteriorate to such an extent before taking measures to safeguard it.

However, I am inclined at times to take a more pessimistic view and to wonder if, in a hundred years there will be any reasoning beings capable of looking back. This pessimism is heightened by occurrences such as the recent legislation regarding Clutha Developments Pty. Ltd. which gives such huge concessions to a foreign company. See the last issue.

That a government could take such drastic steps to solicit barefaced exploitation, with the threat of massive pollution, in the face of mounting public concern for the environment (al or \$5 000 000 per year) proves the utter disregard that the present government has for the integrity of N.S.W. and for the welfare of its people.

Questions that should be asked

Is it true that an enquiry was conducted by the Department of Agriculture into the massive application,

mainly by aerial spraying, of insecticides on the cotton growing areas of Wee Waa? If so, have the results of this survey ever been published?

On reading through the Sim committee report it is noted (para 2.140) that the northern half of the area proposed for the Myall Lakes National Park has been earmarked for State Forest purposes. We might ask what precautions have been taken by the Forestry Commission to safeguard the few stands of coastal rain forest which exist in the vicinity of Seal Rocks. These extremely interesting small patches, never very extensive, are disappearing rapidly and absolutely in the wake of beach sand mining, and perhaps the best examples are now confined to this area.

What is happening in regard to the proposed new Sydney airport rumoured to be located in the Castlereagh-Londonderry area? Why the sudden quiet?

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Dont hold your breath while waiting for the good news, but it seems that, short of a sudden sell-out, the efforts of the Colong Committee may now be about to bear fruit. The annual general meeting of A.P.C.M. was transferred to Melbourne this year, and was attended by a reported five hundred shareholders. The meeting was, as usual, most entertaining if not downright hilarious, and followed the pattern of past annual general meetings. The chairman of directors stated, when interviewed that night on television, that if the alternative deposits (Murruin Creek) were favourable - and he had reason to believe that the report from the company's geologists would be so - the company would negotiate with the state government to transfer the mining lease.

The Committee for Social Responsibility in Science is preparing a report on the environmental implications of the Clutha scheme. This is most encouraging, because while the problem seems to be quite obvious and the solution quite simple, we know that the government will need to be shot at with big guns before it will even admit that a problem exists. Perhaps the Colong problem will be solved in time to permit us to concentrate on Clutha before it is too far gone for correction.

GOODBYE AUSTRALIA FAIR!

(Re-printed from Paddington Journal, March, 1971)

If a force of foreign soldiers landed on our coast to take our land rights, we'd be at war. But on November 24, 1970, the land rights of the people of the State of N.S.W. were given, by Act of Parliament, to Mr. Daniel K. Ludwig, American billionaire and owner of Clutha Development Pty Ltd., and there has hardly been a stir.

Perhaps it sounds too incredible. Certainly the few concerned and horrified people who have read this Act (Clutha Development Pty. Ltd. Agreement Act, 1970, price 35c), which became available from the Government Printer on February 8 last, have been trying to make its contents widely known and to assess the full effects of its clauses. But apart from articles in the Financial Review of January 27 and 28, some odd letters in various newspapers and growing coverage in the South Coast press, there has scarcely been a ripple of interest from the big communication media.

This special Act of Parliament was passed to allow Clutha to build a private railway to bring coal from its mines in Burragorang Valley to its private port to be built at Coledale, for export in its giant bulk carrier ships.

One of the reasons the magnitude of the sell-out of the civil and property rights of N.S.W. citizens under this Act has been obscured is that the pollution it will bring to the South Coast between Sydney and Wollongong is so terrible it has formed the main basis for protest. There will be a coal dump to hold 1 million tons of coal fines (dust) on top of the wooded cliffs just south of Stanwell Park beach, with a conveyor down the 1300 feet of cliff to the giant bulk carriers which will be loaded from a wharf to be built out from the bottom of the cliffs. The air will be full of wind-whipped coal dust and the lovely wooded cliffs will become black slag heaps. The coast road at the bottom of the cliffs, if it is still able to be used, will go under the coal conveyor. No-one knows if the bush covered cliffs are strong enough to support a million-ton weight. The sea and beaches will be fouled and it should not be long before the area, now an important breathing space between Sydney and Wollongong, becomes a disaster area.

Under this Act, Clutha is removed from the great body of law passed over 180 years of settlement to protect the public interest. Clauses in the Mining Act and the Public Works Act under which citizens may object to land plans or resumption are nullified for Clutha. Clutha is removed from the planning sections of the Local Government Act, so is not subject to zoning restrictions and can legally build what it likes where it likes. Crown land is rented to Clutha for 50c per acre per year ... "clear of all rates taxes and assessments to which the land is now or at any time during the said term may be subject or liable", and under Clause 6, Clutha pays no stamp duties. As well, the Act says:

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GOODBYE AUSTRALIA FAIR!

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"Neither the Registrar-General nor any other person shall be concerned to enquire whether the provisions of (specific protective clauses in this and other Acts) have been complied with". So the Government will have virtually no jurisdiction over the actions of this Company, and we have no right of appeal against its demands. If Clutha wants your land, you must sell. If you do not, the Government must resume at VG prices for Clutha. Any lands thus acquired, then not needed may be sold or leased by Clutha for its profit, and no objections can be raised.

The same rights and privileges given to Clutha also apply to any company or person associated with it, no matter how slightly. There is no way of knowing what those companies may be, where they may operate or in what commodities they may deal.

We are not competent to say whether this Agreement can be cancelled or modified but if Clutha is to be contained and brought into line with what is legal for the rest of the community in its operations here, then the time to act and protest is now. Once they spend their money, then we are indeed lost.

It is a stunning realisation that because this State has no Constitution, that anything the Parliament does is legal. Even the outright sale of the State's assets and its citizens' property.

It may well be asked what fortune the State sold out for. The Premier estimates it will get about \$5 million per year royalties on the coal carried by Clutha's private railway. The royalty rates set may not be altered for 20 years so that means the State can expect \$100 million over that time. Against this, the Institute of Transport in Australia estimates that the loss to the Railway over the same period from revenue it would have had carrying this coal is "at least \$70 million". That leaves a nett gain to N.S.W. of only \$30 million over 20 years, and as well there is the loss of all sorts of other revenue which would lessen our gain.

On the other hand, Clutha expects to earn \$90 million profit per year for 20 years exporting coal from mines that were State owned and sold for \$9 million a few years ago. And your property and mine and our assets if they are in the way and Clutha wants them, must be given up.

This is the State that is so hard up it is at its wits end for money. To get a mere pittance, it has sold out its own and our property, some of its revenue rights, many of our civil rights and priceless natural assets. It is mismanagement to the point of disaster. It was not even an election issue. So where do we go from here? Or doesn't anyone care?

GOVERNMENT ACTS ON POLLUTION

Late in November last year the New South Wales Premier, Mr. R.W. Askin, M.L.A., outlined a programme for combatting pollution in New South Wales. The measures included:-

The Clean Air Act will be amended to prohibit sales of cars or engines unless fitted with anti-pollution devices.

Litter laws will be amended to increase penalties and the power of Local Government to impose them - including on-the-spot fines.

The Clean Waters Act will classify all natural sources and subject users to licences. The Act will be administered by the Public Health Department with a committee of experts for advice.

The Waste Disposal Bill adopts the recommendations of the Barton Report in licencing dumps and waste collectors by a single authority whose responsibility covers everything from household rubbish to industrial wastes. The Metropolitan Waste Disposal Authority will control all rubbish in the Sydney area in an attempt to avoid both air and water pollution.

The State Pollution Control Commission Bill is to set up a supervising and co-ordinating body for all activities - including land usage, environment protection, clean water, clean air and waste disposal. It will have power over public authorities as well as private industry and report direct to the Premier. Its main function is seen as a co-ordinating body of all the various anti-pollution authorities.

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NEW SOUTH WALES CLEAN WATERS ACT

Australia's first Clean Waters Bill was introduced into the N.S.W. Parliament late in 1970 by the Minister for Health, Mr. Jago.

For offences against the Act, polluters are to be fined a maximum of \$10 000, and a penalty of \$5 000 for each day the offence continues.

All waters in N.S.W. will be classified according to the uses to which they will be put. There are five classifications. Class A is excellent quality water, suitable to drink. Pollution of it will be prohibited. Class B water is suitable for bathing or fishing. Class C water is suitable for boating, irrigation or industrial use as cooling water. Class D is really poor water, suitable for navigation and the transport of wastes. Class E water is what is left - that is, mainly sewage

water.

When the classifications for all rivers, streams, lakes, lagoons, dams and watercourses, tidal waters and artesian bores in the State are worked out, they will be published in local papers and objections to the classifications will be heard by an appeal board. After that it will be an offence to discharge into any water any wastes - solid, gas or liquid - without a licence. Licences will also state how much you may discharge. The Act is to be carried out by a Water Pollution Advisory Committee of 16 members including one representative of conservation groups and one representing sporting or "recreational pursuits".

Anyone wanting to discharge anything into N.S.W. waters will have to get a licence which will state the conditions he will have to observe. Meters and sampling devices will also have to be installed so that the whole operation may be checked by inspectors.

A two year period of grace will be allowed for polluters who cannot find an alternative method of waste disposal so that operations can be rearranged or depolluting equipment installed.

The Minister for Health, Mr. Jago, expressed the hope that the Bill would not only stop pollution, but would rescue and revive rivers that have been so polluted that all life had long ago died.

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NEXT MEETING

Mr. Colin Slade, Manager of the National Trust property, Everglades, will give us a talk on 'Ferns and Mosses'. Dont miss it!

FRIDAY 14th MAY == SPRINGWOOD CIVIC CENTRE.