

HUT NEWS

"Nature Conservation Saves for Tomorrow's People"



Cumberland Plains Woodland

"uninterrupted wood ... filled with a variety of plants, placed in a wild irregular manner."

Because of its history as Commonwealth Department of Defence land, protected by a high fence, the ADI Site at St Marys has been protected from most of the ills that plague suburbia — destruction of bushland, insensitive development, incursion by vehicles and illegal dumping. Cumberland Plains Woodland, which contains over 50 species unique to the area, covers much of the site.

The State Government has released a Regional Environmental Plan which allows the rezoning for housing, commercial or industrial development of most of the 1545 hectares of the ADI Site, the rest to be a Regional Park. The Federal Government is proposing to sell this public land to private developers.

The decision will mean the potential loss or degradation of 850 hectares of endangered Cumberland Plains Woodland. An area of outstanding natural beauty will be destroyed.

Residents and community groups who oppose the proposed development of the ADI Site need our help. **There will be a Protest Rally at the Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre, Penrith, at 1 pm on Sunday April 1.**

The Residents' Action Group have called for the preservation of the entire ADI Site for future generations as a Nature Reserve and Regional Park.

Elizabeth Macarthur described the Cumberland Plains Woodland in 1798. She made a journey between Parramatta and the Hawkesbury on horseback, a distance of twenty miles: "The road is through an uninterrupted wood, with the exception of the Village of Toongabie, a farm of Government,

and one or two others.... The greater part of the Country is like an English Park, and the Trees give it the appearance of a Wilderness or Shrubbery, commonly attached to the habitations of people of fortune, filled with a variety of native plants, placed in a wild irregular manner." (Elizabeth Macarthur to Bridget Kingdon, 1 September 1798. Source: Elizabeth Macarthur and Her World. Hazel King, 1980)

By the 1820's "Demand for land came from the increasing number of free immigrants and the rising population of emancipists who could no longer profitably farm the deteriorating Cumberland Plains, the area immediately around Sydney. In their virgin state the Plains appeared luxuriant and productive, but overstocking soon killed off the most valuable native grasses, locust plagues destroyed pasture, and crop yields fell. Farmers moved on to new ground." (Source: Taming the Great South Land. William J Lines, 1991.)

Today the Sydney suburbs continue to sprawl over much of the Cumberland Plains, and only six percent of the original Cumberland Plains Woodland remains.

Preserving the ADI Site as a nature reserve would preserve one of the largest intact representations of this important woodland.

How can we help? **Write to the politicians responsible for the decision to develop this site** (Hon Bob Carr, Premier of NSW, GPO Box 5341, Sydney 2001; Hon Bob Debus, Member for Blue Mountains and NSW Minister for the Environment, 3/107-109 Macquarie Road, Springwood 2777; Hon John Howard, Prime Minister, Parliament House, Canberra 2600; Senator Robert Hill, Federal Minister for the Environment and Heritage, GPO Box 787, Canberra 2601; Hon Kerry Bartlett, Member for Macquarie, Suite 3, 186 Macquarie Road, Springwood 2777). **Attend the Protest Rally on Sunday April 1.**

March Meeting

Annual General Meeting

The first part of our March General Meeting will be the Annual General Meeting. Come along and have your say by voting for the people who are going to represent the Society for the next 12 months. There will also be the receipt of the President's and Financial Reports.

A Taste of Bush Tucker

Following supper there will be an opportunity to sample some "bush tucker" supplied by our guest speaker Lee Etherington. Lee credits himself as "cook extraordinaire". He manages Kurrajong Australian Native Foods, and operates nature tours where he

shows people where to find the local bush tucker.

What are Australian native foods? Where are they? Who eats them? Who grows them? What are their benefits? What are our local species? Where do they grow? What do they look like?

Lee will answer these questions and

We are expecting a good roll-up for our annual camp at Dunn's Swamp. Mary will be there early to reserve our camp-site.

If you want to know how to get to Dunn's Swamp, or need more information, contact Mary 4757.4133 or Christine 4787.7246.

demonstrate with slides. He will tell us about the best tasting and most interesting varieties of native foods in Australia and the emerging native foods industry, and what you can grow in the Blue Mountains and where you can get it from.

The meeting will be held on Friday 30 March at the Conservation Hut, end of Fletcher Street, Wentworth Falls, commencing 7.30 pm. Visitors are very welcome.

Autumn Plant Sale Saturday 7 April.

Our autumn sale of native plants will take place outside the Conservation Hut, end of Fletcher Street, Wentworth Falls, between 9 am and 1 pm on Saturday 7 April.

There will be a wide selection of native plants available, in tubes \$2 each, in 125mm pots \$4 each.

No early birds, thank you! *David Coleby, Nursery Manager 4784.1395.*

Dunn's Swamp Weekend Camp 10-11 March, 2001

THE DEADLINE
FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF HUT NEWS IS
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BMCC World Heritage Committee - Vacancy

Following the recent listing of the Greater Blue Mountains as a World Heritage Area, Blue Mountains City Council established a committee to advise on World Heritage matters.

The detailed terms of reference for the committee are still being worked out. Meantime, the Mayor has described it as "a small advisory committee to the City on ways of maximising benefits of World Heritage, as well as to advise on how we can best celebrate the achievement and inform the public on what the listing means."

The Committee comprises representatives from the organisations that oversaw the nomination process, augmented by others with local affiliations.

The society has been given a place on the committee, and we are now looking for someone to occupy it. Les Coyne has been our delegate up to now, but he feels that there must be others who would be interested in participating in the implementation stage of the World Heritage Listing.

So far, there have been two meetings, each lasting about two hours, held after work. We expect that the committee will exist for at least one year, and meet six or eight times.

If you believe that this is an opportunity for you to serve our Society, and the community generally, please contact Les Coyne (4757-3327).

New Hut Lease

The lease on the Conservation Hut is in the process of being renegotiated. NPWS are seeking comments from Hut users and the community. If you have any views on this and would like to have some input phone Robin Mosman 4757.1354.

Federal Environmental Laws Can they help the Blue Mountains?

The Environmental Defenders Office held a workshop in early February about the Environment Protection & Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC).

This legislation allows the federal government to become involved in matters of national environmental significance. Unfortunately this is interpreted very narrowly. To date only six matters have been listed, which includes two which can help protect the Blue Mountains: world heritage properties, and threatened species and ecological communities

There is the possibility of adding other matters to the list of "matters of national environmental significance" in the future. Some of the 'triggers' which have been proposed include greenhouse emissions and native vegetation clearing, above specified levels.

Take the example of some proposed large tourist development right on the edge of the World Heritage Area. It will only be assessed under this EPBC Act if the answer to the following questions is Yes (and if the Minister agrees): Will it

effect the gazetted Values of the W H Area? Will it effect a threatened species or ecological community? Will it have a significant impact? (according to the administrative guide-lines) Is it defined as a 'controlled action' which needs approval?

There are many hoops to jump for this Act to be of any benefit. However it could be useful in the future, if the Federal Environment Minister wants to protect the environment.

The Society has a copy of the workshop papers for anyone interested in borrowing these. Alternatively you could discuss how the Act works with Liz Vesely 4782.1119 or Lyndal Sullivan 4782.1635.

Book Review

Resetting the Compass: Australia's Journey Towards Sustainability, by David Yencken and Debra Wilkinson

I have recently finished reading this impressive volume and would like to recommend it to all members.

The sleeve note reads: "[This book] sets out Australia's environmental problems in their global context and explains what is now needed to fix them. It also illustrates how ecological sustainability can be achieved together with economic, social and cultural sustainability. The book examines the pressures on our environment from population growth, consumption patterns and technological change. It looks at the impacts on human settlements, atmosphere, biodiversity, land and inland waters and the marine environment. The specific actions needed to deal with each of the problems identified are described in detail."

Now we all know that sleeve notes are there to 'talk up' a book, but these ones are right! I have never read a more comprehensive study of global and Australian environmental problems and their solutions.

A quote from Ralph Slater, Australia's Chief Scientist, sums it up nicely: "Everybody should read this book. It is a major contribution to understanding the deterioration of the earth's life support systems and the urgent need to adopt policies and practices which will lead to a sustainable future."

Please buy or borrow a copy and read it. You will learn more than you realised there was to learn. I have donated a copy to the Society library. Contact Frances Love if you would like to borrow it. The book is available from CSIRO Publishing: Ph:03-9662-7500, FAX: 03-9662-7555, Web:www.publish.csiro.au. *Ross Coster.*

Ferals OR Wildlife

In Western Australia, according to the NPA (ACT) December newsletter, as a result of extensive aerial fox baiting, there has been such a marked recovery of native species that three endangered species — the bettong, the quenda and the tammar wallaby — have been removed from the threatened register.

In New South Wales, the cessation

Dear Friends,

We would like to thank you most sincerely, for a truly wonderful gathering last night in celebration of the recent World Heritage Listing for our gorgeous Blue Mountains. On our arrival, we were greeted most heartily by Ross Coster, his family and friends.

The opening by Robin Mosman went smoothly, and on time; and Meredith Brownhill was then quite outstanding in controlling the rest of the meeting. The two Aboriginal Ladies were most gracious in welcoming all of us to their own country, and Joan Domicelj then gave a comprehensive and understandable explanation of the acceptance of our nomination. The song by Denis Kevans, followed by the presentation of his poem on the Australian Grand Canyon, brought tears to the eyes; and the arrival of Alex Colley and Dot Butler, with Alex's quite outstanding talk on the origins of conservation in the Blue Mountains, made all the efforts to continue the program, really worthwhile.

The meeting continued with presentations by Keith Muir, Jim Wallace, Les Coyne and Wyn Jones - and the evening concluded with an excellent presentation by David Geering, on the efforts being made, and succeeding, in the local recovery of the Regent Honeyeater.

It was very nice to meet again with old friends, Jill and Mick Dark, Deidre and Ivor Morton, Lyndal Sullivan, Carol Proberts, Marion Hawley, Yvonne Macready, Jim Smith, Wyn Jones and Denis Kevans, and wonderful to see the way that 'our society' has progressed and expanded with over 800 members - and most of them in the younger generations. So many, many youthful and active members in attendance. Did not happen in the past!

The presentation of local plants from David Coleby's Nursery to the important visitors and guests, was obviously much appreciated.

The evening could not have been programmed or presented in any better way, and the 'oldies' would like to compliment you all for a truly enjoyable and worthwhile gathering.

Yours most sincerely, *Dulcie and Reg Toseland, Sat. 27 January 2001.*

of killing horses in the Guy Fawkes National Park means that their numbers will increase once more, destroying native fauna and depriving native fauna of sustenance. (Source: Colong Bulletin)

Wilderness Photography

The Colong Foundation Web Site has a fabulous new feature, The Henry Gold Photo Gallery. This is well worth a look, as it includes some magnificent wilderness photography. Please visit <http://www.colongwilderness.org.au/>

Membership Enquiries

Contact Ross Coster
(Phone - Work) 02 4759.1247
(Phone - Home) 02 4759.1837
(Fax) 02 4759.1095
(Email) haytech@pnc.com.au
(Post) PO Box 29, Wentworth Falls 2782

Glastonbell

Slow ceiling dancers sway
to the sound of Wet Joy,
and Spicy Splash!
Spirally twisting, tripping
Bill arrives, laughing!
Warm sun-glow streams down
gothic trees
and slides over my skin
clothing me in security.

Bernadette (Dec. 2000)

Welcome to New Members

Judith Lake, Wentworth Falls
Jane and Bernard Bell, Katoomba
Lisa Foster, Katoomba
Thomas Egan, Bullaburra
(Quoll Club)
Sue MacDonald, Springwood
Alan R Webber, North Katoomba
Cate Molloy and Damien Wilkinson,
Mt Riverview

Darwin's Walk

On Thursday we walked along Darwin's Walk, a walk I've done many times, but it is always lovely, with the beautiful heathland and creek-side vegetation, the building up of the water flow from the swamps along the way, the pools and waterfalls, and coming eventually to the always breathtaking view across the valley.

Alan Lobb came along to tell us about reptiles. He also identified some of the native grasses along the track. We saw lots of water skinks and some small water dragons and mountain dragons. A little mountain dragon at Rocket Point was sitting beside a line of ants, picking out ants and eating them at his leisure.

There has been some controversy about the felling of some of the pine trees which grow beside the creek. It was good to see the native plants springing up amongst the fallen trunks, where previously the pines had stopped them from growing.

The pines themselves, providing no native habitats when they were standing, laying on the ground are sun-bathing platforms and shelter for lots of skinks. When all the pines are felled and the native vegetation takes over, the creek and environs will benefit and I think even the most vocal critics will be pleased at the result. *Christine Davies.*

How It Was 140 Years Ago

Mrs Meredith described a walk through the valley of Darwin's Walk in Notes and Sketches of New South Wales, 1839 to 1844, published by Ure Smith and the National Trust of Australia in 1973:

After an early breakfast the following morning, we set forth on foot to visit a waterfall. Entering a little valley with low hills on either side, we soon reached the borders of a bright brook that, as it gurgled and glittered over its rocky bed, spoke to me of many a lovely valley and verdant meadow at home, where, instead

of being, as here, precious as a fount in the desert, such a stream would be but one among the thousands that gladden the teeming earth.

After our dry and parching journey, it was delightful to walk close beside it — to be quite sure that it was water — and, when wetted feet did not suffice, to stoop and dabble in it — to scoop it up in tightly clasped hands to drink — and to step over on its large dry stones, with no very great objection to a splash if one's foot slipped.

All the valley was green, too — think of that! And how exquisitely refreshing such moist greenness was to our dust-blinded eyes! Tall rushes grew there, and half-immersed water-plants, from amidst which we heard the sonorous "clap, clap" of the great green frogs; and bright dragon-flies darted about among the high waving reeds; and there were gay flowering shrubs and pleasant odours, and the delicate "fringed" violet, a gem worthy to grace Titania's rarest crown.

As we walked on, a group of slender young gum-trees attracted my attention by their very graceful forms and polished verdure. When opposite to them, we saw — as through a purposed entrance — that they formed a nearly circular bower, beneath whose leafy canopy dwelt a sisterhood of queens, a group of eight or 10 splendid waratahs, straight as arrows.

We pursued our way still along the green little valley, close beside the streamlet which, as we advanced, flowed much more swiftly, and a sound of pouring water reached us, the cause of which was soon explained by one of the most stupendous scenes I ever held,

Our Home & the Environment

It can be overwhelming trying to work out how best to help the environment. Often the problems seem too large and impossible to tackle.

Jessica and I are trying to do something by just staying at home. It is not that we are hermits. It is more that we feel by managing our home so that it is more sustainable, we will be reducing our impacts on the natural environment.

Our idea to make our home more sustainable began after marrying in 1999. We had to sit down and work out where we were going to fit all the furniture, and Jessica's Mum! Either Jessica, her Mum or myself would have to live in the back shed. My preference was for it to be Jessica's Mum! Instead we decided to renovate.

Your home can be the cause of an awful lot of environmental destruction. It is where you spend the most amount of your time; using water, consuming energy, consuming products and materials and producing wastes.

The house takes nice clean water, with only the odd chemical added by your local water supplier for your convenience, puts it through the toilet, the shower, the washing machine and the sink and turns it into a substance that, in the professional parlance is either black (it has passed through the toilet and includes the lumpy bits) or grey (all other waste water from the house).

(Thinking of water that is black sends a bit

Greenhouse Corner Energy Smart

I have been doing a bit of research of late into how we can all use less energy in our homes.

One of the best sources of information is a set of brochures entitled 'Energy Smart'. They are produced by Integral Energy and contain excellent information about water heating, home heating, wood heaters, home cooling, solar energy systems, home insulation, lighting and energy smart house design.

I recommend you all bombard Integral with requests for copies of these brochures so you can learn everything there is to learn about reducing energy use and slowing the Greenhouse Effect.

I firmly believe that the Greenhouse Effect is the greatest environmental problem we have ever encountered (or created?) and we all need to whatever we can to reduce our own impact.

Goodbye

I will be leaving the Blue Mountains Conservation Society Management Committee at the Annual General Meeting in March after five years as Membership Secretary. I will also be discontinuing this column as of this issue.

I hope I have given you all some useful information and inspired you all to reduce your greenhouse gas output. *Ross Coster*

bursting unexpectedly upon us.

Suddenly, we found ourselves standing on the brink of a tremendous precipice; for though I have spoken of traversing a valley, be it remembered that this was on one of the highest parts of the Blue Mountains, and the valley itself merely a watercourse.

of a shiver down my spine.)

The house, at the flick of a switch, uses electricity supplied by a large power plant, pouring out "black" air into the atmosphere and transported 'many a mile' via power lines to your kettle. It is built with materials that have taken vast amounts of energy, from that power plant, to be manufactured eg, bricks, aluminium windows, glass and kettles. And then it is filled with chemicals and fumes, which are toxic during manufacture and use, eg, paints, plastics and glues.

We have spent the last 18 months researching how to renovate our small fibro house so that we would have minimal impact on the environment during the renovations and later when we live in the house.

Over the coming months this column is going to be a regular feature of Hut News. It will be about our research and how we build our environmentally friendly house. We hope we can give readers some ideas, whether for building from scratch or for just putting up a shelf.

One thing we have learnt is that there is never an absolutely right answer for deciding how to build sustainably. It is always a matter of finding a balance between many variables.

So we hope you can join us each month to find out the dos and don'ts and the ins and outs of building a sustainable house. Next instalment will be about the influence of optimising passive winter heating and summer cooling of the house. Cheers —

Greg Wellham and Jessica Yuille.



Studying Biodiversity

Recently I have been able to receive email information distributed by Ross Coster. I think he has done a great job in all of the portfolios that he has taken on and in sending info around.

One piece that I received was an invitation to participate in a biodiversity study being run by the National Parks at Mt Werong. I participated in this and found it very interesting, though I must say tiring as the days began at 5.30am and ended at about 11pm. There were an interesting group of people taking part and the study was being done by Ray Mjadwesch of Mjadwesch Environmental Service Support.

We set up three different types of traps which had to be inspected twice a day, animals caught identified, released and the traps closed. From the Elliott traps we caught three bush rats (sweet smelly creatures), three species of Antechinus, and a Dunnart, along with about 40 funnel web spiders as well as a few other varieties of spider, and lizards. During the day insect traps were set and flora and birds were identified — in fact anything that was alive in any way was identified and recorded. Then there was spotlighting at night. This has led to a new field for me and I hope to do this a bit more. Thank you Ross for the information. *Mary Jane Shaw.*

... Looking for Caterpillars

I had an interesting night on Monday night 12th February. I joined Ray Mjadwisch at Lithgow to look for the caterpillars of the Bathurst copper butterfly.

They only come out at night and live in coordination with a particular ant and they eat the leaves of the blackthorn bushes. The caterpillars live in the ants nests and are shepherded out in the night to eat. There may be a few of them living in the same nest but often they aren't all out at once - take their turns.

The ants are minute and I couldn't see them, so, I wasn't very much use and when Ray asked me if I saw the 2 black (thin) stripes on the caterpillar's back, I had also to admit that I hadn't.

However, our last call was to a pine plantation at Liddesdale where Ray had seen yellow gliders the night before and wanted to photograph them and record their call as he had heard a lot of it. They weren't there but I was the one who first saw the animal that we heard moving around - a ring tailed possum in a Eucalypt. It was a late night - 2am to bed in Bathurst but was enjoyable, especially standing in the pine forest with the moon shining through the trees and listening to the bush sounds. There seems to be an endless variety of volunteering that one can do. *Mary Jane Shaw.*

What to do on a rainy day

Hello there, Are you sitting at home looking out of the window at the rain? It has been raining here for the last couple of weeks. Yesterday we went all the way out to Mount Solitary — even though it

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- Mch 24 (Sat)** **Management Meeting**, 9 am, Mid Mountains Community Centre, Lawson.
- Mch 30 (Fri)** **Annual General Meeting**, at the Conservation Hut, 7.30 pm. Election of Officers, receipt of the President's and Financial Reports. "A Taste of Bush Tucker". Sample some "bush tucker" supplied by our guest speaker Lee Etherington (see Page 1).
- Mch 02 (Fri)** "Turning Caring into Action" Environmental Education Forum at the Conservation Hut, 7.30 pm. Contact Bob Seaborne 4751.6100
- Mch 04 (Sun)** **Clean Up Aust. Day**. Contact Heather 4739.1493, Vera 4782.5375.
- Mch 10-11** **Dunn's Swamp Weekend Camp**. (See Page 1)

QUOLL CLUB (Activities for 12 and under)

For more information contact Jessica on 4757.2783. For a copy of the Quoll Club Newsletter, phone Ross Coster 4759.1247.

BUSHCARE (Tools provided — bring morning tea and gloves.)

- Mch 11 (Sun)** **Digger Cooper Reserve Bushcare Group**. (2nd Sunday of every month) Meet 9 am at the Reserve (GWH, West of Sorenson Bridge). Contact Ross Coster 4759.1247.
- Mch 13 (Tue)** **Valley of the Waters Bushcare Group**. (2nd Tuesday of every month) Contact Jessica 4757.2783 for the meeting place. (following Tuesday if wet).

BUSHWALKS: *Carry drinking water (minimum 1 litre), bring morning tea, and lunch for day walks. Wear shoes with a good tread.*

Monday Leisure Walkers: *Usually half day walks, easy/medium, leisurely pace.*

- Mch 05** **Point Pilcher**. Meet at Medlow Bath Station 9 am. Contact Jock McKechnie 4758.6346. Medium. BBQ lunch.
- Mch 12** **Fort Rock**. Contact Norah Gaynor 4757.4058. Meet Blackheath Neighbourhood Centre 9 am. Easy, half day, lunch in the park.
- Mch 19** **Evan's Crown — Bus Trip**. Contact Jock McKechnie 4758.6346. Reserve seats with Bill Graham 4759.1692. Easy/medium. Day. Lunch at Tarana Hotel.
- Mch 25 (Sun)** **Walker's Reunion Brunch at the Lake, End of Daylight Saving**. 25 walkers arrived last year and a good time was had. Contact Bill Graham 4759.1692. Meet Wentworth Falls Lake picnic area at 11.30 am. Easy walk around the dam. Take lunch or BBQ.
- Mch 26** **Blue Gum Swamp Circuit**. Contact Alan Macaulay 4739.2767. Meet end of Whitecross Road, Winmalee. Medium, half day, BBQ after.
- Mch 25/26/27** **Kiama 3-day Trip**. Small bus, limit 8. Contact Anna Marie Houterman 4759.2353. Visit Kiama sights and walks to falls in the hinterland.
- Apr 02** **Three Brothers**. Contact Jock McKechnie 4758.6246. Meet at Medlow Bath, opposite Hydro Majestic. Half day, BBQ after.

Bushwalks: Bushwalkers — NEW — You are requested to phone the leader before 8 pm the day before the walk to advise that you are walking. The leader may cancel the walk if fewer than 4 walkers register, or if other circumstances make conditions unsafe. These walks are of various grades, full or half day.

- Mch 03 (Sat)** **Fairy Bower to Pulpit Rock**. Meet Blackheath Station commuter carpark 9.30. Contact Judy Dervin 4787.1191. Easy/Day.
- Mch 10-11** **Dunn's Swamp Camp**. (See page 1)
- Mch 17/24/31** **No walks planned. See Leisure Walkers above.** Other excursions can be included if you call Bill on 4759.1692 to arrange.
- Apr 07 (Sat)** **Blair Athol mine and Ikara Head**. Contact Judy Dervin 4787.1191.

Meet at Mount Victoria Station 9.30. Medium, day, bring lunch.

Walks are generally Easy to Medium Grade, unless otherwise noted. Easy: Mostly good surfaces, but some rough or steep sections. Suited to people of average fitness. **Medium:** Includes rough or steep sections, some of which may require clambering over natural obstacles. Discuss with leader if in doubt. **If this is your first walk**, or you are in any doubt, contact the leader or Bushwalks Convener Bill Graham 4759.1692.

rained every inch of the way. We got soaked, but it was great fun.

The bush was so fresh and clean. Three of us (everyone else cancelled out) were the only people in the entire valley. It was great — the only negative being the millions of leeches everywhere.

We climbed right to the top of Mount Solitary and then climbed the very highest rock. There would have been a wonderful view from the top, had we not been surrounded entirely by mist. Coming down that mass of rock was pretty scary — much more difficult to find hand and footholds coming down. I

was rather glad the mist was hiding the yawning chasm. But, apart from that top rock, the walk was not difficult — just seems a bit long on the way back, when the poor old legs have begun to stiffen up from being continuously wet and cold.

Climbing up the Golden Staircase was fun — it had been turned into a waterfall. The water was absolutely cascading down the steps — wish I'd had a camera with me. We plodded upwards with the water cascading round our legs and into our boots — it was WILD!!! We felt sorry for those wimps who stayed home. *Rosylin.*