

HUT NEWS

"Nature Conservation Saves for Tomorrow's People"



WORLD HERITAGE LISTING IS JUST THE BEGINNING

Be a voice for the environment! Come to the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area Strategic Plan Workshop at 2 pm on Saturday, 21 September, 2002 at Mid Mountains Community Centre, New Street, Lawson.

When the World Heritage listing for the Blue Mountains was announced, the euphoria amongst conservationists and Mountains residents was whole-hearted. There was a general belief that this would lead to greater protection for the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area (GBMWA). Further down the track, it has become apparent that this is not necessarily so. It was only the first step in the process.

The next step is the preparation of a Strategic Plan of Management. The Strategic Plan will cover management

structure, principles, co-ordination, planning and identification of issues and strategies for dealing with them, etc. and will link the existing Plans of Management for the eight reserves. NPWS has the responsibility for developing this Plan, and is conducting community consultation in centres right across the GBMWA as part of the process.

In order to ensure that a conservation perspective is a significant part of this process, the Society is hosting a consultation at Mid Mountains Community Centre, Lawson, 2-4pm, on Saturday 21 September. Lenore Lindsay, the NPWS Project Officer responsible, will do a presentation, and members of the Society and the public will be invited to offer their perspectives for inclusion in the draft Strategic Plan.

There are many other vested interest groups who have already made significant submissions about the ways in

which they consider the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area should be managed. We understand that many of these have more to do with their particular self interest than with conservation of the Park. Unfortunately, WH listing is seen by some sections of the community as something to exploit, rather than the responsibility to protect this 'goose that has laid a golden egg'.

We urge members to turn up in considerable numbers to this meeting, to demonstrate strong community support for a conservation perspective in the Strategic Plan, and to make sure that conservation issues are enshrined in its policies. Remember, the environment has no voice of its own—if its preservation for future generations matters to us, it is up to us to be its advocates.

Planning for Bushfire

Dick Clarke, president of the Building Designers Association of NSW, will be the main speaker at our general meeting on Friday 27 September.

A recent publication from Planning NSW and the Rural Fire Service pins more hope in heavy clearing of bush around developed areas than on making fire resistant buildings.

There are alternatives! A well managed property of poor design can be saved in severe fire conditions, if the preparation and systems are in place. How much easier would it be if such buildings were designed to a high level of passive resistance.

At our September general meeting Dick Clarke will talk about how more responsibility for bushfire protection can be carried by the building itself and its occupants, with less destruction of bushland as a result. Better building design, use of fire resistant materials, fire boards on windows facing the bush, gutter guards, a water tank and a engine driven pump are some of the ways we can prepare for the next bushfire.

The meeting at will be held at the Conservation Hut, Wentworth Falls, on Friday 27 September, starting at 7.30 pm. Visitors are very welcome.

Sustaining the Catchments

Also at the September General Meeting, Susan Calvert from Planning NSW will speak on the upcoming Drinking Water Catchments Regional Environmental Plan. Susan is a Policy Manager at Planning NSW, formerly the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning.

The talk is timely, as the Draft REP should be on exhibition by then, and it is

a critically important planning document for the Blue Mountains.

Blue Mountains City Council staff tell me that whatever additional development controls are required to meet the requirements of the REP will be rolled into our Local Environment Plan across the city, not just those areas that drain to the Drinking Water Catchments.

I urge you to come along for this information session, to get a copy of the Draft REP, and to voice your concerns during the Exhibition period. *Ross Coster*

Spring Plant Sale

The Society's Nursery will hold its spring plant sale at the Conservation Hut, Wentworth Falls, on Saturday 5 October, 9am to 1 pm. Native plants, some of local origin, some from other parts of Australia, will be on sale at \$3 each (or 4 for \$10), or \$5 each for semi-advanced stock in supertubes.

Tell your friends, and come to see us on the day. David Coleby, Nursery Manager, phone 4784.1395.

September is Biodiversity Month

Sept 7: Threatened Species Day marks the date that the last known Tasmanian Tiger died. Keep an eye out for stories on the day.

Songlines Envirostall at Wentworth Falls School of Arts.

Sept 11-30: Great Grose Gorse Walk. NPWS needs your help. Gorse, broom, blackberry busting activities—for the half day, day, overnight—beautiful scenery and morning tea guaranteed!. All most welcome. No experience necessary. Bring yourselves and/or a group. Phone 4787.8877 or 4787.3112 for more information or to register.

Sept 14: Friends of Katoomba Falls Creek Valley, Katoomba South NPWS

9-1pm, to raise awareness of threatened species.

Sept 14-15: Purple Copper Butterfly monitoring Come to Yetholme or Rydal to help count these endangered butterflies. Contact Xuela, NPWS 4787.3104.

Sept 20: Streamsong - an interactive activity for schools to be held at the Katoomba Aquatic Centre. (See Songlines Program.)

Sept 21: A Special Event at Jamison Creek, Wentworth Falls. Information will be presented about local species of interest, and the way residents can help with their conservation. Followed by

Walk led by Clive Heywood-Barker of Blue Mountains Conservation Society, looking out for the rare Blue Mountains water skink or the giant dragonfly. Meet at the beginning of Darwin's Walk at noon. Contact Xuela, NPWS 4787.3104

Sept 27-28: Purple Copper Butterfly monitoring. Help count this endangered butterfly in the Lithgow township. Schools are encouraged on the Friday. More info: Xuela, NPWS, 4787.3104.

Sept 28: Quoll Club: Seed collecting to grow trees for next year's tree day. (See dates for your diary).

Environmental Performance of Councillors

The Ward 4 bi-election this month has brought to the fore claims of concern for the environment from some of the present Councillors. But what is their record?

The enclosed notice "How Much More Development Do You Want in the Blue Mountains", prepared by the Management Committee, will not only be of interest to members in Ward 4, but to members in all Blue Mountains wards who will elect a new Council in 2003.

**"Hut News", the newsletter of
Blue Mountains Conservation Society
Inc.**

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**NOTE: Please send editorial items for
October Hut News
by 23 September 2002**

The Incredible Bells Superhighway

Road lobby groups, headed by National Party Member, Ian Armstrong, MP and the Central Western Regional Organisation of Councils, believe that a superhighway to the west along Bells Line of Road is the answer to traffic snarls in the Mountains. These groups have secured bipartisan State-Federal government funding for a \$2 million "full feasibility study" of the superhighway that would cost \$1.7 billion, with links to the M2 and a bypass over Newnes Plateau.

Maunsell McIntyre previously reviewed this proposal in detail for the Roads and Traffic Authority in 2000 and found that "options involving significant investment will not show an economic return, even under the most favourable growth scenario envisaged" (which included an airport on Newnes Plateau).

The superhighway proposal would require compulsory acquisition of the Grose and Wollemi wilderness areas, World Heritage listed National Parks, damage tourism opportunities, cultural heritage, endangered shale communities, probably Lithgow's drinking water supply, as well as the Gardens of Stone

National Park proposal.

In short, the freeway proposal is an economic and environmental dog. Given its origins, the foreshadowed \$2 million feasibility study is likely to be much more favorable than the Maunsell report. It cannot be assumed that just because long term traffic demand justifies only one primary route across the Mountains that another damaging freeway won't be built. Politicians love overly-costly freeways that benefit residents in marginal seats. *Keith Muir, Colong Foundation for Wilderness.*

VMO: Should Not Regulate Gardens

Blue Mountains City Council has been holding public consultation meetings to discuss the Vegetation Management Order (VMO). At the meetings concerns have been raised in relation to restrictions on gardeners' activities. Members of the Society agreed with other residents who proposed that there be no restrictions on the pruning or removal of exotic vegetation on any size property (as long as sediment/erosion control methods are used where necessary).

The intent of the VMO is being diverted by the inclusion of non-native vegetation in existing gardens. While restrictions protecting trees (already in the existing Tree Preservation Order) remain, restrictions on other non-native vegetation should not be the concern of the VMO whose main purpose is to protect native bushland.

It is important that the purposes of the VMO be achieved and that resources not be channeled into regulating larger gardens which no longer have native vegetation. Removing these restrictions will bring the focus back to the original purpose of VMO which is to protect all levels of native vegetation.

For more information, please contact Claire on 4759.1319.

Bushcare Group at Govetts Leap

2nd Wednesday of each month, 9am

A small but dedicated group of volunteers has been working in this area. Their efforts have already transformed the area as they have enthusiastically tackled Japanese honeysuckle, Montbrecia and Blackberry. But ... they need help, particularly with plantings over coming months. No experience is necessary and morning tea provided. Contact Ranger Vanessa Richardson 4787.8877 for more information or just turn up. You will be most welcome.

Environmental Education Conference

'Echoes into the Future': 25th Annual Environmental Education Conference, will be held at Katoomba Christian Convention Centre, 8.30 am Friday 11th to 2.30pm Sunday 13th October. For registration details and costs contact Jenny Hill 4782.1303.

(If you would like to volunteer to help in any capacity — greeting people, helping with morning teas, etc. contact Jenny.)

Mountain Watch Training Day

Mountain Watch is a network of Society members interested in looking after their local area. This is done by

monitoring 'developments' and having a say in the planning process. We check development applications to see if they are suitable for the area and that special features like creeks, rocky outcrops or swamps are protected.

We have developed a kit to help 'Mountain Watchers' assess development applications. It is planned to trial this on Saturday afternoon, 19 October. This will be a good opportunity for members interested in joining Mountain Watch to find out what it is all about and get some basic training.

If you are interested in coming to this training day please contact Lyndal Sullivan on 4782.1635. Or if unable to attend that day please contact us, so another date can be planned.

Art of the Environment Exhibition

Photographers, sculptors and all artists within the Society are invited to exhibit their works at the *Art of the Environment* Exhibition to be held 12-20 October in Katoomba Civic Centre. The Exhibition is being organized as an Artspace Project and is the second of three Community Art Exhibitions.

An open section for Conservation Society members will be held in the exhibition. Artworks and installations can be on a range of environmental subjects. It is a great opportunity for members to enter photographs, paintings and drawings of their favourite places and bushwalks and promote the beauty of the mountains at the same time. Application forms can be obtained from Carolynne Skinner, phone 4757 4001 or email carolynneskinner@hotmail.com

Fuel-Stove Only Policy:

Acacia Flat (Grose Valley)

As of 22 September 2002, a fuel-stove only policy will be operating at Acacia Flat camping area. This means a ban on all wood fires in the area. The policy has been introduced as one measure to reduce environmental impacts in this sensitive area. Your co-operation is greatly appreciated. Please help us inform other users.

Sustainable Transport Workshop

The 'motor age' is affecting the earth through massive earthworks and land clearing for road building, pollution of our atmosphere and increased danger to our communities. What can we do to change the dominance of the motor vehicle? On a personal level we can walk more, ride bikes, catch public transport etc. How can we influence the different levels of government to make changes that will improve the situation?

Come to a workshop on Saturday 7 September, 2pm to 6pm and work with other like minded people to start solving these issues. Guest speakers, including a local bike club representative. The workshop will take place at the Mid Mountains Community Centre, Lawson.

Membership Enquiries

Contact Elizabeth van Reyswoud

Phone 4757.2694

Email: ereyswoud@hermes.net.au

Post: PO Box 29, Wentworth Falls 2782

Blue Mountains Swamp Dwellers

Last month we mentioned four small mammals commonly found in and around Blue Mountains swamps: Bush

Rat, Swamp Rat, Dusky Antechinus, and Brown Antechinus. This month we will feature the Antechinus species.

Dusky Antechinus, *A. swainsonii*. Largest of the Blue Mountains antechinuses, the stocky body and feet are a rich dark brown colour. Head and body: 130mm; tail: 100mm; Weight: male 50 to 90g, female 40 to 60g. A moderately common resident of swamps and wet sclerophyll forest. More terrestrial and more active during the day than the other antechinuses. A Dusky Antechinus released on a tree trunk will climb down, whereas a Brown Antechinus will climb up. Nests are made at ground level within a hollow log or, sometimes, at the end of a tunnel dug into a creek bank. Young born August-September.

Brown Antechinus, *A. stuartii*. A mouse-like animal with pointed snout and a mouth full of small sharp teeth. The body and feet are uniform grey-brown, belly lighter. Head and body 100mm; tail 90mm. Weight male 28-40g, female 19-30g. Common throughout the Mountains. Found in a variety of vegetation types, wherever there is dense undergrowth. Spends most of its time on the ground but also readily climbs into shrubs and trees. Builds a nest of dry leaves in a rock crevice, hollow log, tree hollow or behind the bark of a standing tree. Young are born September-October.

Antechinuses are opportunistic insectivores, with beetles, spiders, amphipods and cockroaches making up the greater part of the diet, but, for their size, are ferocious hunters. The mouse-sized Brown Antechinus will



Dusky Antechinus

readily attack and devour mice, lizards and small birds.

All antechinuses are short lived. Males live about 11 months and all die soon after the hectic mating season, a phenomenon known as 'male die-off'. Death results from the stress associated with the social demands of the mating season, a time when the males stop feeding, live on their reserves and seek all opportunities to mate. It seems that stress hormones reduce the effectiveness of the immune system. For the next month, until the young are born, there are no males in the population. Females may survive to breed in a second, rarely a third, year. Litters numbering up to twelve, are for several weeks dragged about clinging to the mother's rudimentary pouch area. Later, young are left in a nest of dry leaves and grasses while their mother forages.

References: "Fauna of the Blue Mountains", Judy and Peter Smith; Australian Museum's "The Mammals of Australia" Photo: Australian Museum fact sheets at <http://www.austmus.gov.au/factsheets/>

National Tree Day in the Mountains

Sunday 28 July was the focus for Planet Ark's National Tree Day. Volunteers in the Blue Mountains planted over 250 shrubs and sedges in a degraded swamp site in east Leura.

Much care was a must on the day, not only because of the sensitivity of the swamp environment, but because of an intent not to disturb the habitat of the endangered Blue Mountains Water Skink (*Eulamprus leuraensis*). Little is known about the ecology of the Skink, although it is known to shelter in yabbie-type holes. For this reason, it was imperative that when planting, any obvious holes were avoided. When digging, sub-surface tunnels also had to be avoided so that disturbance to the Skink's habitat was kept to a minimum.

The history behind the swamp's degradation was related to the common urban impact of weeds. Plants from neighbouring gardens escaped and established themselves in the lush open area that the swamp provided, changing not only the makeup of the swamp, but altering the amount of water in it.

Many weeds have been removed, and erosion minimised and the moisture regime re-ignited with swamp specific plant species put back in the soil where they belong. There is still much to do. A Landcare group will be formed, made up of local residents wanting to make a difference—to restore the environment back to what it used to be. The Blue Mountains Water Skink, with the colourings of a ripe banana (black with yellow stripes) and about the length of a pen, is just one species that will benefit from such restorative work.

For more information, contact Xuela Sledge, Threatened Species Community Programs Facilitator, (ph) 4787 3104, (email) xuela.sledge@npws.nsw.gov.au

donPeak

Newnes Plateau in Wattle Time

The rain-starved tablelands offered perfect weather for bushwalking as our annual multi-day activity took us to Newnes Plateau. Our progress towards Gooch's Crater, with Bald Hill dominating the skyline, revealed intriguing grey-brown pagodas that framed an ancient valley floor lined with swamps and yellow grasses. We crossed the plateau from east to west, noting the incredible ability of the high-country Eucalypts to survive fire and the large tracts of Newnes State Forest still under native vegetation.

Soon the ultimate barbecue was underway in the ultimate camping cave. I arranged my sleeping bag to allow a view of the night sky and waxed lyrical about shooting stars, the yipping of the sugar gliders and the boobook owl's call, to the delight of those trying to sleep.

On our return to the plateau next morning, the ice in the puddles convinced us that camping in a canyon had been a good idea. The area's most accessible campsite, Bungleboori Clearing, is attractive as *Pinus radiata* groves go. It does contain a collection of recent and vintage whitefella's rubbish that it might be better off without.

Not far away, a few hectares of native forest had escaped bulldozing for pines. Here were faint engravings and axe grinding grooves left by the Aboriginal occupants, natural wells and rock pools with fascinating shapes and mosses, lichens and ferns growing in inexplicable patterns over the tessellated surfaces.

An intensive exploration of Deep Pass occupied us for three days. We shared our campsite with a tame family of wombats, as well as wrens, honeyeaters and robins. A lyrebird stared at us disdainfully from atop the pagoda overlooking our tents. Then he danced along a fallen tree to the ground and disappeared.

The most rewarding day walks were upstream and downstream along Nyadgy Creek. The former route leads to a classic slot canyon with dark, cool overhangs. Some of us took advantage of conveniently placed ropes to steer ourselves over the deep icy pools.

Down the creek the whole landscape appears to have convulsed. The canyon is wider and straight-sided. For almost a kilometer, the water burrows under a massive pile of boulders. On both sides, the tall cliffs are rent by huge fissures, chasms and perforations. The signs of the cliffs' disintegration are everywhere—it is hard to believe this canyon may take thousands more years to collapse. Patterns of Aboriginal hand stencils accompany powdery yellow rocks that seem ideal for body painting.

On our way back we viewed the reflections of more pagodas in the beautiful waters of the Dargan Creek weirs. Thanks to all participants, but especially D Burrell, Dina, T Sweeney (bush chefs), R Coster, W Mosman, D Levy (reconnoitering and logistics), A Miller (on camera), K Putting, T Stephens (general inspiration) ... 2003 plans in January 'Hut News'.

Don Morison.

THE GREATER STICK NEST RAT

Chorus:

Rakali, Motit, Wopilkara, Wilkinti,
Pakooma, Moolpoo, Djintamoonga,
Djookooropa, Walyadji, Djidjiparra,
Yirrkoo, Mayaroo.

Those gents in their stiff coats and breeches,
With snuffbox, and well-whitewashed spats,
Called everything living in burrows,
Rats, rats, rats, rats, rats, rats, rats.

Now the name of our bush-rats are changing,
I think it's about time, don't you?

Stead of names like "The Greater
Stick Nest Rat" -
Wopilkara, Moolpoo, Mayaroo.

Hear the music in all of syllables
That the murris and nyungahs do sound,
In their stories of the spirits of creatures,
Who live down in holes underground.

Their names flow like poems forgotten,
Like a lone bird out in the Paroo,
Can you see them at play in the moonlight?
Wopilkara, Moolpoo, Mayaroo.

Denis Kevans

Bushwalkers: Help Save a Swamp

There are a few walking tracks in the Blue Mountains that cut across hanging swamps. Obviously any interference with the water flowing through a swamp is not good for it. The damage caused by tracks through swamps is usually greater than a worn path devoid of vegetation. Erosion of tracks through the peaty swamp soil can be quite rapid with deep ruts quickly developing. Such a track may channel the water away from downslope sections resulting in it drying up. Little is understood about the hydrology of swamps.

One track which cuts across a swamp is on Bruce's Walk. This track, originally from Blackheath to Lawson, in the Grose River catchment, was built in 1931 following the line carrying power from Lithgow. Between Bullaburra and Wentworth Falls there is a section where walkers are causing damage to the swamp. Although the track appears to have only light traffic, large ruts are forming and plants have been dislodged in the swamp just north west of the Blue Mountain Creek crossing.

Would it be possible to find an alternate route in this section to avoid such a sensitive community? Are you a bushwalking member interested in exploring this section to work out an alternate route? This could be your contribution to the Society's efforts to protect hanging swamps! Contact Lyndal Sullivan on 4782 1635 for more information.

Swampwatch:

"Swampwatch" is an initiative that involves the community in threatened species management. The National Parks and Wildlife Service is seeking the assistance of residents living near swamps to be on the lookout for threatened species such as the Blue Mountains Water Skink or Giant Dragonfly.

For information about these unique creatures, how to recognise them and what to do if you see one, join the NPWS and Blue Mountains Conservation Society for a special event at Jamison Creek on September 21 (see page 1), or contact Xuela Sledge, Threatened Species Project Officer, 4787 3104 or email: xuela.sledge@npws.nsw.gov.au

Welcome to New Members

Frances Bentley, Springwood
Ross Day, Wentworth Falls
Val Swift, Wentworth Falls
Joamy Smith, Leura
Yvonne and Gary Bramwell,
Faulconbridge

Robert & Mary Lee, Hazelbrook
Ron and Margaret Withington,
Wentworth Falls
Joe Horacek, Leura
Felicity Mildren, Leura
Rick Deveridge, Wentworth Falls
Libby & Rudi Renson, Blackheath.

The Swamp Dance

The swamp dance was a huge success and lots of fun for young and old. The

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- September:** **Biodiversity Month.** Lots of activities. See Page 1 for a selection.
September: **Songlines Festival.** A program is enclosed with this newsletter.
Sept 07 **Threatened Species Day.**
Sustainable Transport Workshop. (See page 2).
Sept 11-30: **Great Grose Gorse Walk 2000.** (See page 1).
Sept 21 (Sat) **Management Meeting,** 9am, Mid Mtns Community Centre, Lawson.
Sept 21 (Sat) **World Heritage Strategic Plan Workshop.** (See Page 1)
Sept 27 (Fri) **General Meeting at The Hut,** 7.30 pm. (See page 1.)
Oct 05 (Sat) **Spring Plant Sale** (See Page 1).
Oct 11-13 **Environmental Education Conference** (See page 2).
Oct 12-20 **Art of the Environment Exhibition** (See page 2).
Oct 19 **Mountain Watch Training Day** (See page 2).

QUOLL CLUB (Activities for 12 and under)

- Sept 28 (Sat)** **Seed Collecting** to grow trees for next year's Tree Day. Meet at park in Cambridge Street, Valley Heights (next to No.16) at 10am.
☎ Jessica 4757.3686 for more information.

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

- Sept 14 (Sat)** **Valley of the Waters Bushcare Group.** (9 am, 2nd Saturday of every month) Tools provided. Bring morning tea, gloves and drinking water. Contact Karen on 4757.1929 for the meeting place.

BUSHWALKS:

Monday Leisure Walks: *Usually half day walk unless noted, leisurely pace.*

- Sept 16** **Florabella Pass.** ☎ Kees 4759.1958. Meet Springwood Station south 9am. Medium. Bring lunch.
Sept 23 **Engineer's Track to Grose River.** ☎ Meet Mount Victoria Station 9am. Medium. Bring lunch.
Sept 30 **Darwin's Walk to Kings Tableland.** ☎ Bill G. 4759.1692. Meet Wentworth Falls Station 9am. Medium.
Oct 07 **Pack Saddlers and Tin Pot Ridge.** ☎ Terry 4787.6918. Meet Blackheath Commuter carpark 9am. Medium. Bring lunch.
Oct 14 **Newnes Historic Ruins Bus Trip.** Book now with Kees 4759.1958. 8am start from Katoomba Council Depot. Easy.

Very Easy Walks on Thursdays. These walks are conducted at a slow pace to suit the walkers on the day and are usually 2 hours starting at 10am. Lunch follows for those so inclined. Contact Bill 4759.1692 for any enquiries about the program.

- Sept 12** **Wall's Lookdown.** Meet Mt Victoria Station. Lunch/BBQ, Mt. Vic Park.
Sept 19 **Point Pilcher.** Meet Medlow Bath Station north side 10am. BBQ lunch.
Sept 26 **Lockley's Pylon.** Meet Cnr Mt Hay Road and GWH, Leura (NOTE 9am start). Easy, but long. Take lunch.
Oct 03 **Braeside Walk to Bridal Veil Falls.** Meet Blackheath Neighbourhood Centre 10am. BBQ lunch.
Oct 10 **Blackheath Parks in Spring.** Meet as above. BBQ lunch.

Weekend Bushwalks: *Bushwalkers are requested to phone the contact before 8 pm the day before the walk. The walk may be cancelled if fewer than 4 walkers register. or if other circumstances make conditions unsafe.*

- Sept 14 (Sat)** **Mt Victoria, Cox's Cave, Mt Piddington.** Meet Mt Victoria Station 9.50am. ☎ Mary, Terry 4787.6918. Med. Bring lunch.
Sept 21 (Sat) **Nepean Lookout.** Meet Glenbrook Station carpark 9.30am. ☎ June 4787.7312. Med. Long walk, bring lunch.
Sept 29 (Sun) **Lawson's Long Alley, a round walk.** Meet Mt Victoria Station 9.50 am. ☎ Elizabeth 4754.4966. Med. Track and road walk. Bring lunch.
Oct 05 (Sat) **Breakfast Creek.** Meet Blackheath Railway carpark, west side of station, 9.40 am. ☎ June 4787.7312. Med. Long day, bring lunch.
Oct 12 (Sat) **Crossing the Blue Mountains of NSW: Blackheath to Mount Victoria.** Meet Blackheath Railway carpark (west side of station) at 9.13am. A hard challenge. We walk along the Kanimbla Valley Escarpment below the cliff top to the old incline railway site. Lunch is in the vicinity of Fairy Bower, then up to the top of the rail site and on to Mt Victoria, passing the old Toll House en route. ☎ Jim 4758.6009. Bring extra water and lunch.

Gang Gangs provided the music and had everyone swamp-stomping all night, and there was a special swamp song by Rebecca V. A giant dragonfly (an endangered species) had been designed for the night and its body created by those who attended the dance out of environmental weeds as a community art project. The giant dragonfly will be part of the Art of the Environment exhibition in

October.

Many thanks to everyone who came and created the wonderful community feeling, and all the Society members who helped out on the night. Many thanks also to those who organised displays and activities, to Sid's Kitchen for the great food, and of course the Gang Gangs for the great music.