

## **50th Anniversary Dinner Speech by Lachlan Garland – 29th Oct.’11**

Welcome everyone on behalf of the current committee of the society.

Also welcome to our special guests who were able to make it tonight. Sadly, since our last major anniversary, many of our pioneer members are no longer with us. Others have left the Mountains, possibly to live in warmer climates and were unable to make the trip to be with us.

Instead of looking back over our past history, which most of you will know more about than me, I would like to look at where we are now. For those who may want some history there is an excellent section in “About Us” on our website.

We are a Society of 852 members.

We have 266 bushwalkers, with walks programmed 3 days a week.

22 volunteers helping out in the nursery, producing wonderful plants for sale to the public and commercial operators throughout the Mountains.

10 members in the bushcare group, maintaining the area around the Valley of the Waters and beyond.

A number of enthusiastic plant lovers in the Plant Study Group.

We also have a number of people working on campaign and issues or just keeping the Society running in our various subcommittees:

Administration, Finance and Membership

Climate Change and Sustainability

Communications and Promotions

Education

Groundwater

Land Use

Objectives 3, covering a myriad of issues on the western escarpment and beyond

An Investments Committee

And a Lithgow Region Subcommittee

And after the large hiccup on Wednesday we may have to get the Transport Subcommittee up and firing again also!

Plus we have a number of people who work on projects as they arise.

We also have a Webmaster who keeps one of the best websites I have ever come across.

And the ever reliable Hut News comes out every month to inform and inspire.

All of this is happening because a group of people realised back in 1961 that we live in a special place and it needs our help and protection.

I don't want to keep you too long, but tonight would not have happened without some special people:

Liz van Reyswoud who put this whole gig together, with assistance from Alan Page, Bart Beech and Christine Davies

Ron Withington for producing and printing the special guest invitations

Very importantly, our own cooks

Jill Hogwood

Gwen Wilson

Ann Cantwell

Heather Hull

Liz van Reyswoud

and Ron Hyslop

and Entertainment

Jill Hogwood

Finally, to finish up, I received this from Keith Muir:

The Colong Foundation for Wilderness congratulates BMCS on attaining your 50 year anniversary.

We have been so pleased to work with BMCS since 1988 on campaigns such as World Heritage, protection of 5 wilderness areas in the World Heritage Area and now on Gardens of Stone.

The Foundation looks forward with pleasure to a continued successful relationship.

And from Justin McKee, our GoS campaigner:

Congratulations to all at BMCS for the fantastic legacy that has been left for current and future generations to enjoy.

More of our natural places are better protected as a result of BMCS's work.

Thank you everyone for coming tonight and long may the force be with us!