



"Nature Conservation Saves for Tomorrow"

Management Committee strengthened

Blue Mountains Conservation Society welcomes Beth Rohrlach as Environmental Education Officer and Annette Coulter as General Meetings Convenor. Nearly all the familiar faces returned to our management committee at a successful Annual General Meeting on Thursday 31 March. The contact details for all Management Committee members are on page 2.

Don Morison, continuing President, praised the work of our subcommittees during the past year, citing the very hard work of the Land Use Subcommittee in gaining a satisfactory resolution to State Government stalling over Blue Mountains City Council's preferred Local Environment Plan 2013, as well as the intensity of our Gardens of Stone campaign (part of our "Objective 3" activities) and the vigour of our newly launched No Western Sydney Airport Subcommittee.

Long-term Treasurer Bart Beech delivered a comprehensive financial statement, showing that the Society investments had fared no worse than could be expected in uncertain economic times, and that the Society had been in a position to fund our most important campaign activities throughout.

The work of our Nursery Manager Sue Nicol and other core activities of the Society carried out by various volunteers received warm acknowledgement.

Karen McLaughlin presented an inspiring slide presentation about the landscapes we have strived to preserve.

Members voted to increase the Society's annual membership fees by \$5 for each category, as recommended by Management Committee.

BMCS NURSERY PLANT SALES

Our nursery offers the home gardener, landscaper or large contractor a big variety of quality local native plants at economical prices.

Lawson Nursery, Wednesday and Saturday mornings, 9am to noon. The nursery is located in Lawson Industrial Area on the corner of Park and Cascade Streets - map on our website www.bluemountains.org.au

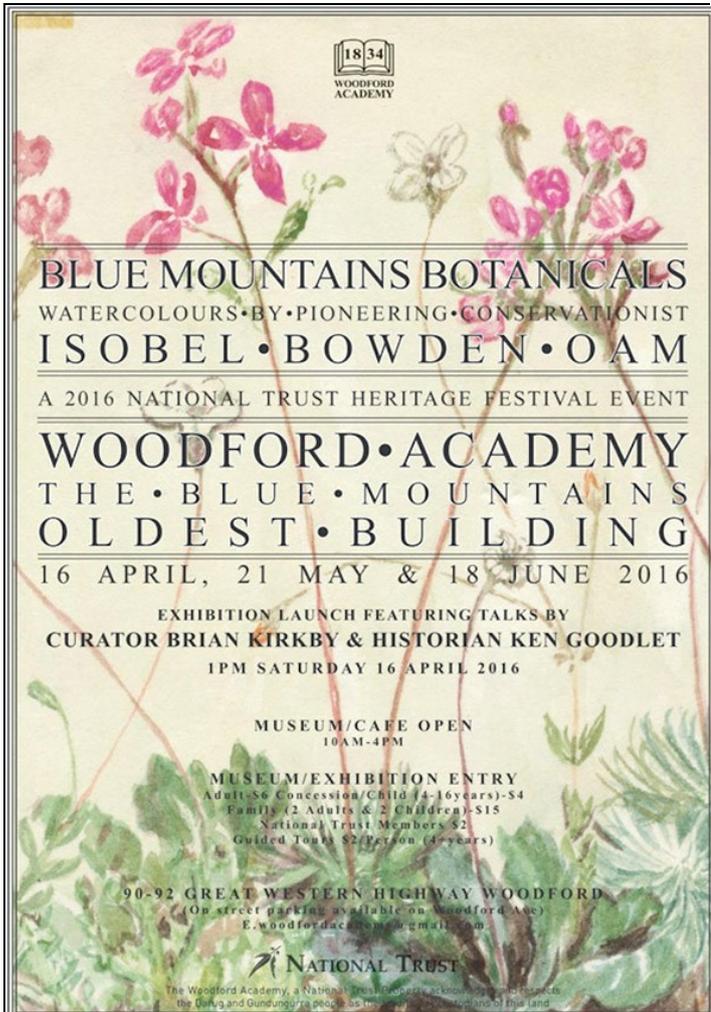
Blackheath Community Market, 1st Sunday of the month at Blackheath Public School, 9am to 1pm.

Magpie Market, 3rd Sunday of month at Lawson Public School, 9am to 2pm.

Tube stock \$3. Larger pots available.

Discounts for bulk orders and large contracts.

Enquiries Sue Nicol 4787 8887,
nursery@bluemountains.org.au



Isobel Bowden: Born in Woodford, Blue Mountains, in 1908, Isobel Bowden spent much of her life in this village where she developed an abiding interest in local and natural history, bush walking and conservation.

Isobel had a long standing association with the Woodford Academy and was a foundation member of the Katoomba and District Wildlife Conservation Society (now known as Blue Mountains Conservation Society). She significantly contributed to raising awareness, appreciation and protection of the unique flora of the Blue Mountains. In 1985 she was awarded the Order of Australia medal in recognition of her services to the community.

Isobel Bowden's 1981 Notes for the 'Nature Trail' bushwalking track have been reprinted. Jim Smith will give out 100 copies of these free of charge at the exhibition. You will find the introduction to these notes on page 4 of this newsletter.

Join Woodford Academy committee members Ken Goodlet and Brian Kirkby for the exhibition launch on April 16 for a talk about the life and art of this extraordinary woman.

"Hut News", the newsletter of
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I recently attended the Blue Mountains Bat Night at NPWS Heritage Centre, Blackheath. There was an impressive turnout of around 450 people, many of whom were young children in playful bat outfits (and several adults with cute bat ears).



I didn't quite know what to expect, and wondered if the local bats would show up on time to entertain us. Luckily a group from Walkabout Park (Central Coast) set up a bat stall to show off their grey-headed flying foxes (mega bats), and although we couldn't have a hands-on experience, we could still get up close and *almost* personal with these oddly endearing creatures, who clearly love a tummy rub and tickle under the wings from their handlers.

As education was the main focus of the evening, we started with a slide-show about micro bats by Margaret Turton (of the Australasian Bat Society). Micro bats are up to about 10 cm in size and there are 21 types of micro bats in the Blue Mountains. Many have engaging names, such as the Chocolate Wattled Bat and the Eastern False Pipistrelle.

For those who felt like some seriously batty fun, a Bat Cave was set up with activities that included making bat mobiles, masks and badges. A sausage sizzle was also on offer.

How to protect bat habitats

Bats occupy diverse habitats, including mines, caves, tree hollows, culverts, and have even been found snoozing under umbrellas! Ways to help bats cope with loss of habitat include: bush regeneration, retaining tree hollows, providing bat boxes and supplying clean water sources. The use of wildlife-safe garden netting and fencing is also important so that bats and other native animals don't become entangled.

Some bat facts

- As mammals, bats are wonderful mothers. They even have crèche units so that pups can be cared for while mothers fly.
- Bats are vital for pollination – one migrating flying fox flew 500 km in *one night* (tracked by satellite), which is long-distance haul pollination indeed!
- In the last 20 years, only 3 people have died from bat viruses, compared with 254 human deaths from horses in the last 10 years alone.
- Never touch a bat – they *do* bite. Call WIRES if you find an injured bat.

Many thanks to the friendly volunteers for this delightful and touching evening.

For more information about bats visit www.ausbats.org.au or www.sydneybats.org.au

DEADLINE for the next issue of HUT NEWS is **16 APRIL 2016**
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No Western Sydney Airport – What Are We Doing?

The Banner has now been updated, and has been displayed several times (the above photograph, taken near the Conservation Hut, Wentworth Falls, by Heather Coster, was in March Hut News).

Also see it here: <http://www.penrithcitygazette.com.au/story/3787958/at-out-there-summit-all-eyes-on-western-sydney-airport/4319197/>

Our latest Flyer, Mark III, has been developed by people at RAWSA (Residents Against Western Sydney Airport), specifically targeting Western Sydney. The composite map they have produced is a beauty, including flight paths and noise footprints that were spread over multiple grainy maps in the Draft EIS.

We have printed 25,000 Mark III Flyers in colour, and

they will be letterboxed into noise-affected areas around St Marys and Penrith.

We have worked with No Badgerys Creek Airport to organise a Strategy Forum, arranged meetings with several key politicians, and written to the new Infrastructure Minister.

The Blue Mountains Greens are running a forum on High Speed Rail on 3-Apr-2016 at Warrimoo.

RAWSA have organised protests and wobble-boarding at multiple sites on multiple occasions, printed corflutes, and are printing t-shirts.

In short, we (the anti-Airport community) are flat-out opposing this stupid proposal. Ross Coster.

Protest and Political Doublespeak – NO AIRPORT!

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull received a rowdy reception from anti-airport campaigners when he arrived for morning tea at Glenbrook Panthers Bowling Club on 30 March. The protest was organised by Residents Against Western Sydney Airport (RAWSA).

Inside the venue, Mr Turnbull spoke about the National Broadband Network, manufacturing and the need for Australians to create 'their own niche market', and the Western Sydney jobs that could be available when the airport is completed. He reassured everyone that aircraft movements would be managed to least disrupt the people.

On ABC News, Ms Markus said that she understood the proposed flight paths were causing concern for locals. "I believe that we can have an airport that is state of the art, and at the same time have the Greater World Heritage Area of the Blue Mountains protected, with no or little impact on that, and also that people can continue to live in this area free of any significant impact from the airport."

An airport at Badgerys Creek **will** impact a lot on the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area. An airport at Badgerys Creek **will** impact a lot on people who live in the area. Fiddling with flight paths for political advantage will not change this. If aircraft movements are managed to least disrupt the people there will be more impact on



A quiet and environmentally-friendly airport?

the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area.

Blue Mountains residents need to vigorously and totally oppose the proposed Western Sydney Airport, with or without a curfew, and no matter what fanciful lines are drawn on a map to indicate flight paths that might (but most probably won't) be the ones used if the airport opens.

Write letters, attend meetings and rallies. Keep informed by visiting our website www.bluemountains.org.au

The Nature Trail in the Valley of the Waters, Wentworth Falls
Isobel Bowden's notes. A reprint of the 1981 edition
Introduction by Jim Smith

Over a fifteen year period, between 1895 and 1910, the Wentworth Falls Reserve rangers constructed a track for tourists between the main track into the Valley of the Waters and West Street near the Great Western Highway. The work was begun by Irish immigrant Peter Mulheron and continued by Bob Burke. The track was neglected after World War II, becoming overgrown and eroded. As early as 1966 the Katoomba and District Wildlife Conservation Society was planning to restore it as a "nature trail which will point out the geological and botanical points of interest". In 1969 it was announced that "the West Street track is to be developed as a Nature Trail by the Society". Members of the Springwood Bushwalking Club were among the volunteers who helped Conservation Society members in the re-clearing. During this year "Winter outings were given to work on the Nature Trail which has been cleared to the Flora's Bath Crossing, and a preliminary survey made of natural history items". By the end of 1970 good progress had been made. "The Nature trail is almost completed, creek crossings are done and work is in hand for the trail marking."

In 1972 the Society's Annual Report recorded:

"Miss Isobel Bowden spent a lot of her time during the year (of 1971) compiling notes and making a most attractive illustrated map of the Nature Trail. The Society is very fortunate in having someone so competent and artistic to do this. They will be on sale as soon as the Nature Trail is in good order. The 530a Committee had a well constructed timber bridge put over the major swamp. Some working bees were held along the Trail but much remains to be done."

The 530a Committee was a voluntary group of local conservationists, appointed under section 530a of the Local Government Act, which was given small grants by Blue Mountains City Council to help maintain tracks and tourist facilities in the Wentworth Falls reserves. The

new bridge was constructed in 1971 by Kevin Browne and cost \$170.

In March 1972 the Society's newsletter recorded that "continued heavy rain has done considerable damage to the track" but that the new bridge and areas repaired during the society's working bees had stood up well. Isobel Bowden's Nature Trail track notes were then "in the hands of the printer". Volunteer working bees were still continuing every fortnight and, in April 1972, there were thirteen volunteers at work including students from the Blue Mountains Grammar School and local scouts. By mid-1972 the first edition of the brochure was on sale at the Conservation Hut for ten cents. It consisted of four foolscap roneoed pages, on two sheets, stapled at the corner with Isobel's delightfully illustrated map, printed in green ink. This included 22 vignettes of local flora and habitats along the track. Isobel noted that the "loitering time" to do the walk was about two hours. The Society decided to enter the Nature Trail project into an Earth Day competition sponsored by the Daily Telegraph and the Bank of New South Wales. The Society won the regional section of the competition, receiving a cheque for \$65. In the State competition the Society won third prize and a further cheque for \$200.

Isobel Bowden's original Nature Trail brochure and map continued to be sold at the Conservation Hut until an updated edition was produced in late 1981. This included observations on the effects of the August-September 1980 bushfire in the Reserve. The length of the brochure increased to seven foolscap pages. It sold in large enough numbers that the Society regarded it as a good source of income.

Jim Smith will give out 100 copies of Isobel Bowden's reprinted 1981 Notes for the 'Nature Trail' bushwalking track, free of charge, at the "Blue Mountains Botanicals" exhibition at Woodford Academy. (Details on page 1.)

THE KING by Denis Kevans

The falcon drank at the mirror-pool
On the ledge, high in the air,
While the swirls of water spun their cloth
Far down on the turrets bare;

And I stood alone as I sang my song
To the evening's rushes of red,
And what did I see as I moved to go
By the bones of the gravel bed?

He sat alone like a king of stone,
And he gazed at the gleaming pool,
And he dipped his head and he splashed the pearls
Of water into the cool.

He eyed me without moving his face,
Without moving a feather so trim,
And I stood and I gazed at the falcon of stone,
For the king of the Mountains was he.

Then he lifted off with a sheer disdain,
And he fell through the liquid air,
And the breeze that adjusted his sails again
Carried him here and there.

He never looked back, nor right nor left,
Just journeyed upon his way;
And I cherished the moment in the mountain pass
When I met the king that day.

Published in Upper Blue Mountains
Conservation Society Newsletter, January 1989.

Swamps killed despite coal's death throes¹ Brian Marshall

Newnes Plateau is a substantial portion of the Gardens of Stone Stage 2 proposal. Amongst its numerous environmental values are outstanding examples of rare upland swamps known as Newnes Plateau Shrub Swamps (NPSS) and Blue Mountains Hanging Swamps (BMHS). These swamps are living ecosystems, whereas coal is a fossil fuel which, through extraction by underground longwall mining, destroys those ecosystems. The relationship may be expressed as a simple environmental equation:

'swamp-life' + extraction = 'swamp-death'

But there is an equally simple economic equation:

extraction + 'swamp-death' = coal-dollars

At the 2015 Paris conference, the world committed to curtailing greenhouse gas emissions in order to limit global warming to <2°C. Any society which sacrifices living swamps for coal-dollars is exhibiting voracious greed. Such greed affronts the Paris agreement and all who value the civilised world and its biodiversity. The transition to renewable energy sources is rapidly escalating; coal is in the early stages of its death throes and should be left in the ground.

The importance of upland swamps as the breeding habitat for threatened species has recently been highlighted by Ian Baird and his co-workers^{2,3}. The swamps are, however, equally valued for their roles in regulating the water-quality, flow-rate, and base-flow in creek- and river-systems. The latter, from their sources on Newnes Plateau, enter and contribute to the scenic and recreational values of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area, and they also help to sustain the water-supplies for Sydney, Lithgow and the Emirates' Wolgan Valley Resort.

Reflecting the importance of upland swamps, governments in their wisdom sought to protect them. NPSS and BMHS are listed under Commonwealth and NSW legislation as an Endangered Ecological Community which should be protected from a range of threatening processes. The NSW Scientific Committee has long recognised alteration of habitat by longwall mining as a key threatening process, while the Independent Scientific Committee on Coal Seam Gas and Large Coal Mining has expressed extreme concerns about the impacts of longwall mining on swamps in advice to the Commonwealth's Department of the Environment.

Unfortunately, when confronted with the need either to reject development applications involving longwall mining under swamps and their crucial hydrogeological regimes, or at least excise swamps from the application to avoid direct undermining by longwalls, governments' wisdom is supplanted by political expedience. Economic and positive social values resulting from extracting the coal are deemed to outweigh the environmental values and negative social outcomes. The company's consultants tell government in the environmental impact statement (EIS) that swamp-damage will be 'nil' or 'negligible' due to various mitigation measures and, should they be wrong due to 'unforeseen circumstances', the damage can be 'offset' under 'pro-mining' government policies. But the swamp is irreversibly

damaged and faces a lingering death!

Over the past 14 years, swamps on Newnes Plateau have been damaged by longwall mining yet the company still ascribes the damage to climatic events and circumstances unrelated to mining-induced subsidence; this is despite being subject to a \$1.45 million Enforceable Undertaking. Even the last two longwalls from the mining approval prior to the now-approved Springvale extension, have undermined Sunnyside East and Carne West swamps and caused damaging desiccation through lowering the watertable; but the company remains in denial and, despite contrary evidence, invokes lack of rainfall⁴. This is wrong and unacceptable!

In the EIS for the now-approved Springvale extension, the company considers it has learnt from past mistakes (which it still denies making!) and claims that damage will be 'nil' or 'negligible'. Because the Department of Planning and Environment and the Planning Assessment Commission lack sufficient confidence in this prediction, the approval's consent conditions provide for an **advisory** Independent Monitoring Panel to comment on the need for additional monitoring of the swamps and for further modifying the mining extraction plans (adaptive management) should damage eventuate. The unfortunate outcome is paradoxical in that the swamp-ecosystems must experience irremediable damage in order to prove they need better protection. The devised system inevitably and indeed iniquitously results in 'offsetting' nationally-listed dead swamps.

In essence, the company fill its coffers, swamps are killed, and government sanctions environmental murder!

So what can I do?

Email Planning Minister Stokes [via a set form at <https://www.nsw.gov.au/ministercontactform/contact-minister-planning>] and Environment Minister Speakman [office@speakman.minister.nsw.gov.au] and tell them:

- Nationally-listed swamps must be protected by avoidance rather than inadequate mitigation and minimisation.
- Offsetting dead swamps is a burial, not a solution.
- Environmentally destructive longwall coal mining is incompatible with Australia's commitment at the Paris conference on global warming.

¹ Essential references only - a fully referenced article may be obtained from the Editor or Author

² Baird, I R C & Burgin, S, 2015, *Conservation of a groundwater-dependent mire-dwelling dragonfly - implications of multiple threatening processes*, J Insect Conserv, v19, no6

³ <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-03-05/ecologists-warn-of-mounting-pressure-on-nsw-swamp-animals/7223028>

⁴ LW 411-418, Subsidence Management Status Report, Springvale Colliery, March 2016, 62pp.

JOIN Blue Mountains Conservation Society,
or renew your membership online.
www.bluemountains.org.au

The brain power of amateur shooters

NSW may be missing out on the wisdom of those who want to shoot wildlife for fun since shooting in our National Parks fizzled and the Game Council of NSW was abolished by former Premier O'Farrell (owing to the Council's much publicised misconduct).

Consider the 31 year-old poster girl involved in campaigns and photographs related to United States activists' demands for a free-for-all on firearms. Her apparently unrestrained 4 year-old son was able to pick up a loaded pistol from the back seat of her motor vehicle while she was driving, earlier this year. He discharged it into her back, causing a policeman driving nearby to note "her steering became erratic". The mother was taken to hospital in Florida in a stable condition. The 4 year-old was unhurt and the little boy is "expected not to face any criminal charges" ... That's a relief!

Could Australian weapon toters "trump" American ingenuity? How about the Victorian duck shooter who was checking out a lake near Geelong, anticipating an exciting duck season. The quality of duck shooting depends on how much water is in a lake and this all-Australian bloke didn't notice this one was mostly mud until he was stuck up to his middle. A mass convergence of Emergency Service personnel and paparazzi ensued. Volunteers kneeling on boards around the semi-immersed genius yanked his nether regions back into the light. He cheerfully told the assembled media he was heading east of Melbourne to look for a wetter lake.

Do we really have to tolerate Florida or Victoria having all the smart people?

Poets' Corner

WOLLEMI

Within the blue horizon
where eucalypt oil distills,
ragged mountains hide
the relic of Jurassic time
waiting to be found.

In valleys masked by cloud
creeks pick and stumble
through escarpment falls,
a hiker enters history
and claims his dinosaur.

In city hulks of noise
and clammy haze
where mysteries are tamed,
the ancient pine is cloned,
adapts to life in pots-

kept as post-modern star
in high rent towers,
the feature on suburban blocks
of whip edged turf,
far from its secret home.

Michele Fermanis-Winward

Readers of Hut News are invited to send a poem inspired by the Blue Mountains, maximum of 20 lines. Each month, one or two will be published in Poets' Corner. Poems can be emailed to brendan049@gmail.com or even posted to Poets' Corner at 5 Lurline Street, Wentworth Falls 2782. Brendan Doyle.

STOP BAIRD'S WAR ON TREES

The Baird government plans to repeal the *Native Vegetation Act* and the *Threatened Species Conservation Act* and introduce a new conservation law this year.

Conservation groups have formed an alliance called Stand Up For Nature ([#standup4nature](https://www.facebook.com/standup4nature)) that will campaign for stronger environmental protections. The alliance is calling on Premier Baird to ensure his *Biodiversity Conservation Bill* and associated measures:

- Protect and enhance the health and variety of our wildlife, protect water supplies and ensure healthy soils and productive farmlands
- Ensure no return to broadscale land clearing by retaining clearing controls
- Pay "cash for conservation" to support farmers who protect wildlife, healthy soils and pure water supplies in return for maintaining strong vegetation laws
- Identify and rule out clearing bushland that is critical as habitat for threatened wildlife
- Rule out offset schemes that allow developers to destroy wildlife habitat in exchange for cash or dissimilar types of habitat

- Use tree-clearing controls to maximize the amount of carbon pollution captured and retained by native bushland, and
- Require comprehensive and accurate mapping of the state's 1500 vegetation communities so we know exactly where they are and can protect them properly.

Member groups include the Nature Conservation Council of NSW, Total Environment Centre, National Parks Association of NSW, The Wilderness Society, WWF-Australia, Humane Society International, WIRES, and Colong Foundation for Wilderness.

Stand up for nature - sign the petition to stop Baird's war on trees!

<http://www.standupfornature.org.au/>

VALLEY OF THE WATERS BUSHCARE

The Valley of the Waters Bushcare Group meets on the second Saturday of each month, 9am till noon. Tools and gloves are available. Bring a drink, a snack and a sunhat. New members are welcome.
Phone Karen 4757 1929.

NAMING THE WILD DOG MOUNTAINS—Jim Smith (Part 1 of 7)

I enjoyed reading Don Morison's thoughtful article 'The Name Game' in *Hut News*, November 2015.

Don objects to "names that have precious little to do with our mountains" and admits to "a bias against trite names associated with the passing fashions of non-indigenous people developing particular types of attachment to the Blue Mountains."

In my Historical Report in the *Blue Mountains Walking Track Heritage Study*¹ I have a section devoted to the origins of hundreds of local bush placenames, nearly all of which were bestowed, between the 1880s and 1930s, by the trustees of our original bushland reserves. I divided them into categories: commemorating war experiences, British Empire associations, commemorating Australian Federation, associations with royalty, literary/biblical, classical allusions, associations with the United Kingdom, romantic themes, wildlife/nature, fantasy, religious, Aboriginal ('generic', i.e. not local words), descriptive/imaginary resemblance and persons. These names represent the social and cultural attitudes of the time and, so long as they are not misleading, there is no harm in allowing them to remain on our maps. Many were intended to create intriguing or romantic associations with particular bushland destinations to encourage tourists to visit. The great majority of these names are within a few kilometres of our Blue Mountains townships and are part of the history of the development of tourism in the area.

Don Morison argues that one particular group of placenames has a greater significance than these examples:

However, one particular non-indigenous explorer possessed so much foresight, charisma and timeliness that his geographical names surpassed their initial triteness and are likely to last. Myles Dunphy (1891-1985) deserves to have his "Snarling Dog", "Growler", "Yellow Pup" and all their canine cousins reside forever in the Greater Blue Mountains National Park system he envisaged. We can only yap our approval.

Myles Dunphy's contributions to the conservation movement are well documented, however, I do not agree that these, in some way, make him "deserving" of having all his made-up names "reside forever" on our maps. In response to Don's contribution I have decided to do a review of the place names in the area we know as the 'Wild Dog Mountains'.

There were three eras of place naming along the Cox River. The Aboriginal inhabitants had a dense network of placenames associated with their Creation stories. The European settlers who came into the country also developed many names related to the history of their occupation. The next period of naming arose amongst the bushwalkers who accessed the area for recreational purposes. The first two eras of naming were very poorly documented, with few maps published showing these names, and only a small number making it on to modern maps. Because Dunphy was the first to do detailed maps of what he called the Wild Dog Mountains it is his names which have become most familiar to the present day. The Surveyor General at the time he was mapping the Southern Blue Mountains² encouraged Dunphy to use

Aboriginal names where possible, but did not specify that these Aboriginal placenames should have local significance. Dunphy made no effort to seek out members of the then culturally strong Gundungurra-speaking communities who could have told him many placenames for the Southern Blue Mountains. The only true Gundungurra names that appear on his maps are those recorded by early surveyors and which appeared on Parish Maps. In one case he decided to move one of these names from its true location to a mountain far away³. Instead of acknowledging that surviving Gundungurra people had knowledge of their country, he preferred to go through old issues of the journal *Science of Man*. This magazine published alphabetical lists of Aboriginal words from all over Australia, often without acknowledgement of the language group they came from, and with poorly documented and often misunderstood 'meanings'. Dunphy used these lists by selecting words that sounded euphonious to him and that had meanings he felt appropriate to the landscape features he was naming. As a result, there are many hundreds of features in the Blue Mountains named with Aboriginal words from as far away as Queensland and Western Australia. In his search for words which sounded pleasing to him, and had meanings he related to, Dunphy often combined, in hyphenated names, words from two different languages. In addition, the combinations of words that he used involved the mangling of Aboriginal grammars.

The settlers that came into Gundungurra country developed their own placenames for landscape features so that they had a language they could use to discuss their journeys, such as cattle mustering trips, with other members of the community. The names of many early settlers were commemorated in this way and incidents of local history became associated with particular places.

I believe that Dunphy made only a token effort to record these settlers' names, interviewing just a few people such as Norbert Carlon (1883-1958), but not endeavouring to seek out other knowledgeable people such as the Duncans and Tolhursts. In some cases, he scoffed at local community names, for example describing the place names of Tinpot and Ironpot as "ridiculous"⁴.



Norbert Carlon, on the right, with his parents and sisters at Green Gully in 1911. Photo courtesy of Keith Duncan.
(Endnotes on page 8)

Shame on the NSW Government!

Brian Marshall

The following is abridged and contains excerpts (italicised) from a speech by our local member, Trish Doyle, to Parliament (Tuesday, 15 March) in relation to the **NSW Government's Inclosed Lands, Crimes and Law Enforcement Legislation Amendment (Interference) Bill 2016**. It expresses her strong feelings and captures the feelings of the Blue Mountains Conservation Society. It is a shameful piece of legislation that has regrettably passed both Houses of Parliament, despite its impact on fundamental human rights¹. In many ways it encapsulates the attitudes of the Baird Government to environmental issues and democratic processes.

*"As a member of the Labor team I oppose the **Inclosed Lands, Crimes and Law Enforcement Legislation Amendment (Interference) Bill 2016**... We stand alongside... [those who]... fight to stop the spread of coal seam gas exploration and mining in New South Wales..." We defend "...the right to protest peacefully against any or all manner of government transgressions..." We protect a citizen's right to protest against "...the overreach, negligence or criminality of private companies wherever or whenever circumstances call for it."*

"The legislation would see penalties for unlawful entry to inclosed lands increase from \$500 to \$5,000." It effectively criminalises "...protests by farmers on their own land. It gives New South Wales police extraordinary search and seizure powers without the need for a warrant, and erodes the property rights of individuals whose property or vehicle has been seized by police." Furthermore, by giving police additional powers to direct persons in public places, it essentially criminalises peaceful public protests. The legislation is "...an appalling attack on the rights of ordinary citizens of this State."

"The Blue Mountains has a long history of peaceful democratic protest... against coal seam gas mining, pollution of our waterways... the internment of refugees on island prisons, and to protect... rights and conditions at work. The Blue Mountains Unions Council, the Blue Mountains Conservation Society, the Wilderness Society, the Colong Foundation, Residents Against Western Sydney Airport and the Blue Mountains Refugee Support Group are among the many local groups... impacted by this attack on our collective right to democratic protest action. The Knitting Nannas travelled the State during the last election and sat in at electorate offices... knitting away to draw attention to... the damage done to our waterways and farmland by coal seam gas..." It seems that "...the legislation brought forward today... [intends] to create criminals of the Knitting Nannas. Why?"

"...I have stood outside this place... and protested against the bad decisions made by this Government and its predecessors." Recent protests outside Parliament House involved "...taxi-drivers, environmentalists, nurses, teachers and trade unions, as well as local residents concerned about... the forced council amalgamation agenda. These people's right to

democratic, peaceful protest will be put in jeopardy by this legislation and that is completely unacceptable."

Australia lacks a Bill of Rights, so the restriction or limitation of freedoms to conduct protest action largely rests with the States. Unfortunately, "...rather than [having] consistent, national benchmarks to protect basic rights to protest, we are left with a hodgepodge of proscriptive legislation that varies across [State] borders." This approach "...treats protest action as a crime, rather than starting from a point of established and protected freedoms that all citizens can confidently enjoy." In NSW, it has resulted in rights of assembly and association being gradually eroded "...under the guise... of tackling criminality. One does not reduce criminality by expanding its definition to capture peaceful, democratic protests or the rights of individuals to collaborate and associate with like-minded people."

The legislation reflects "...the ideological antipathy that exists within... Government... towards workers, environmentalists, trade unionists and now, even farmers and small business owners." The Government is "...so captured by big business [and] the mining and CSG industries", that it is alienating parts of its traditional supporter base. "For example, The Nationals failed to listen to their communities and after 27 years of incumbency the electorate of Ballina went to The Greens at the last election". Likewise, "...the environmental vandalism being carried out by the Baird Government..." resulted in the Blue Mountains electorate returning to Labor. Regional, rural and outer metropolitan voters are recognising that the Coalition cannot be trusted to champion local interests in the face of the commercial priorities of big business.

"This is... dangerous legislation... [and] Mike Baird... is a bad Premier. He is... captive to the mining and CSG industries. He... does not share the values or principles of the broadly progressive people throughout this State; [and he is responsible for] this anti-democratic, draconian and sneaky legislation..." "Labor stands with the people in opposing this undemocratic legislation. We stand here today to protect the rights of all citizens to engage in peaceful, democratic protest activity on any issue or cause [that] they see fit."

¹ <https://www.lawsociety.com.au/about/news/1098244>

Naming the Wild Dog Mountains

(continued from page 7).

Endnotes:

¹ Published by National Parks and Wildlife Service, 1999.

² Hamilton Bartlett Mathews, 1873-1959, was Surveyor General from 1926 to 1937. He was a son of the anthropologist R. H. Mathews.

³ Jim Smith, 'Myles Dunphy and William Cuneo. Two misguided nomenclaturists of the Blue Mountains', *Placenames Australia*, March 2006, pp.1, 4-5. Partly reprinted in *The Bushwalker*, Winter 2006, pp.9-10.

⁴ Patrick Thompson (ed), *Myles Dunphy Selected Writings*, Ballagirin, Sydney, 1986, p.61.



Grey Shrike-thrush and hairy caterpillar

Shortly before this very friendly Grey Shrike-thrush presented itself at my door I had observed it in the driveway with a large caterpillar. It appeared to be holding the caterpillar carefully by the head and rubbing it, lengthwise, repeatedly on the ground. It did this for some time, dropping the caterpillar several times and picking it up and rubbing it on the ground again. Eventually it took the caterpillar to the top of the gate post and banged it on the bricks.

I didn't have binoculars handy so couldn't get a good look at the caterpillar. Some Australian caterpillars are hairy and the hairs can cause irritation. I wondered if the bird was removing the hairs from the caterpillar before eating it.

When I googled "Grey Thrush and hairy caterpillar", I learned that several species of Australian birds eat hairy caterpillars.

Dr Leong Tzi Ming in Singapore posted the following observations, which also describe the behaviour I had witnessed of the Grey Shrike-thrush.

WHITE-CRESTED LAUGHINGTHRUSH TACKLES HAIRY CATERPILLAR

"On the 22nd September 2014, I was observing a small group of White-crested Laughingthrushes (*Garrulax leucolophus*) foraging at a local park when a particular individual caught my eye. It had just found a feisty moth caterpillar which was covered in irritant hairs and stinging spines. My curiosity was aroused and I wondered how this bird would surmount the walls of self defence put up by the wriggly and spiky caterpillar.

"Firstly, the laughingthrush used the tip of its beak like a pair of forceps and gripped the caterpillar at a safe distance. It then smeared the caterpillar vigorously against exposed earth. When it felt that there was insufficient exposed soil, it moved aside fallen leaves to expose dirt space for additional rubbing.

"Satisfied that most of the hairs and spines of the caterpillar had been removed, it then brought the 'undressed' caterpillar to an exposed root. The laughingthrush then began to swing and bash the caterpillar against the dense root repeatedly. (photo on right)



"So after stripping and swinging the spiky caterpillar, this tasty snack was finally certified as being safe to swallow.

"Upon ingesting the limp and lifeless larva, the laughingthrush certainly had the last laugh in this battle between predator and prey, so its white crest was erected in triumph."

To see more photographs and a video, go to <http://www.besgroup.org/2014/11/23/white-crested-laughingthrush-tackles-hairy-caterpillar/>

You can become a member of Blue Mountains Conservation Society

- Post this Application Form with your cheque or money order to: Blue Mountains Conservation Society, PO Box 29, Wentworth Falls, NSW 2782, **OR**
- Join online at: www.bluemountains.org.au

(Use capitals please—even for email address)

Name(s) 1.
2.
3.

Address:
.....PC

Phone(s)

Email

I/We agree to support the aims and objectives of the Society as set out on reverse side of this membership application:

Please sign if named above.

Signature(s) 1.
2.
3.

MEMBERSHIP FEES (please circle one item)

Single \$35 Concession (Senior/Student) \$25
Household \$40 Household Concession \$30
Corporate (negotiable)

Membership (circled above) \$

Donation (tax deductible) \$

Bushwalkers: please add
\$20 per walker per annum. \$

TOTAL AMOUNT \$

Send my copy of Hut News by
Please tick box mail internet only

Would you like to be involved in any of the following activities or working groups? (Please underline):

Land use/development issues; Environmental Education; Threatened species issues; Website and social media; Plant nursery assistance; Bushcare; Publicity/photography; Water quality/sourcing studies; Administration;

ENQUIRIES: Phone 02 4757 1872

Email: membership@bluemountains.org.au

A BEQUEST: Please remember us in your Will.

The Law Society of NSW recommends the following wording: "I bequeath the sum of \$... to the Blue Mountains Conservation Society Inc. for its general purposes and declare that the receipt of the treasurer for the time being of the Blue Mountains Conservation Society shall be complete discharge to my executors in respect of any sum paid to the Blue Mountains Conservation Society".

**BLUE MOUNTAINS
CONSERVATION SOCIETY**

Blue Mountains Conservation Society is a community organisation working to achieve the preservation and regeneration of the natural environment of the Greater Blue Mountains.

The Society believes that World Heritage status provides an opportunity for local community members to become custodians of the unique biodiversity and scenery of the Blue Mountains.

The Mission of the Society is to help conserve the natural environment of the Blue Mountains.

The Aims and Objectives of the Society are to:

- **Disseminate and foster an understanding of the ideals of Conservation.**
- **Promote the need for ecological sustainability.**
- **Protect the natural environment—flora, fauna, habitat, water, land and air.**
- **Actively oppose those human activities which degrade or destroy the natural environment.**
- **Repair the adverse effects of human activities upon the environment.**
- **Encourage the love of the natural environment by conducting a regular program of bushwalks.**
- **Increase the pool of expert knowledge about the natural environment, through meetings, excursions, research and other activities.**
- **Provide information to the public on matters of Conservation, especially through the Conservation Hut at the Valley of the Waters, Wentworth Falls.**
- **Maintain close and friendly relations with like-minded groups.**

**VOTE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT
2016**

Go to **Blue Mountains Conservation Society** website. Find out how you can help elect a parliament to save the environment.

Candidates' questionnaire responses will appear when available.

www.bluemountains.org.au

Contact Don Morison 8230 2116 or president@bluemountains.org.au if you would like to join our subcommittee or find out more.

Paradise Almost Lost? Ross Coster

Why do you live in the Blue Mountains? Do you have a special place where you go or remember?

I have a favourite spot, in Govett Creek, a few kilometres upstream of the junction with the Grose River and the Blue Gum Forest.

I found this spot in 1976, while camping with some mates.

We had camped overnight on the sand next to the creek, in the morning I went out looking for firewood, and stumbled across a clearing. It was surrounded by tall timber, on the opposite side of the creek to the walking tracks, and I imagined I had found somewhere nobody had ever been. Once I discovered the long-operated campfire area, and a few horse dung heaps, I realised my mistake. Back then there were wild feral horses down in the valley, all gone now, hunted out by NPWS staff.

Tall cliffs all around, the burbling of Govett Creek, the wind in the evening as the temperature gradients sorted themselves out, the absolute stillness and silence at night, unbelievable fields of stars above. We swam in the creek, and floated downstream on lilos, the deep blue sky above, huge blue gums all around. We sat by the campfire and imagined what animals were out there in the dark.

I have been back there many times, with my girlfriend, fiancée and wife, with mates, with my kids, on personal bushwalks, on Society bushwalks, the place never changes, it is always beautiful.

This place is why I live in the Blue Mountains, drawn to the area like a moth to flame, all because of a camping trip with some mates in 1976.

The Society was part of a campaign in the 1990's that had this area declared as Wilderness, had the Grose river declared as a wild river, had the entire area declared as a World Heritage Area.

In about 10 years my grandkids will be ready to go camping with me, but I may not take them there.

If the Western Sydney Airport goes ahead, in 2025 huge aircraft will be flying overhead at all hours. The nights won't be silent anymore. There will be lumbering Airbus A380's, weighing 560 tonnes at takeoff, roaring their way over the Mountains, taking their hundreds of passengers directly to Dubai in one hop. There will be even noisier 747-8F freight planes (still being manufactured today despite assurances that they are being "phased out"). These freight planes will arrive at night, their cargoes unloaded and trucked out of WSA into the M12/M7/M4/M9 Motorway network before morning peak hour.

When looking at the sky above from Govett Creek, you won't just see an unbelievable field of stars, there will be the navigation beacons of dozens of aircraft in their holding pattern over the Grose valley, waiting for the early morning fog to clear at Badgers Creek.

The silence and beauty and majesty and awe I experienced as a 15-year-old in 1976 will be replaced by noise, fumes, a rain of fine particulates, flashing lights, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, an endless procession of huge aircraft passing overhead.

Western Sydney Airport doesn't have an ocean to use as a noise buffer, so it will use the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area. And my Grandkids will never know this special place, and your Grandkids and Great Grandkids will never know your special places. They will not be special anymore. Ross Coster.



15. STILE COUNTRY, CENTRAL MEGALONG CREEK CATCHMENT

The “Six Foot Track” was a bridle track cut in 1884 to a specified width to allow tourist horse riders between Katoomba and Jenolan Caves. Now it is one of the most popular of the longer walks in the Greater Blue Mountains.

Where it crosses private property, east of Megalong cemetery, a series of stiles take walkers across the fence lines. The lack of cars and off-road vehicles make this one of the most attractive sections of the track. Eastern Grey Kangaroos and various wallaby species are often seen. Many old trees have been left undisturbed on these agricultural lands, including large *Angophora floribunda*, *Eucalyptus punctata* and other species of the *Myrtaceae* family.

The countryside undulates gently. The going for walkers is fairly easy except when substantial rains turn the normally tame watercourses into frothing torrents. The mixture of agricultural land and woodlands attracts a variety of birds including flocks of White-winged Choughs.

This trail section is one of the best vantage points to view the unspoilt cliffs of Narrowneck Plateau, a short distance to the south.

16. FORMER BREWERY SUBDIVISION, OAKEY PARK

Richard Inch and his brother converted Mort’s old meatworks to the Blue Mountains Brewery during the years 1902 to 1904. The pockets of development around Lithgow contain a number of distinctive styles of housing which were largely occupied by manual workers engaged in the various industrial and mining enterprises which have defined Lithgow’s history. Few are as picturesque as the brick and stone cottages in Bragg and Brisbane Streets, near the brewery in Oakey Park.

They are mainly single storey, with an occasional upper storey. A few have original looking verandahs. The size of the windows and the thickness of the walls attest to the severity of the winters. Elaborate and ornate chimneys survive on some of the cottages. The numerous watercourses through the subdivision have never been piped and the riparian vegetation and old wooden foot bridges are a feature of the area.

Contributing to the visual spectacle are the rings of hills, cliff-faces and pagodas surrounding the elongated Lithgow basin. It is hidden treasures like this which make Lithgow a photographer’s paradise.



This “Blue Trail” is a collective description for sites in the western Blue Mountains that arouse natural or cultural interest or both. Most are only a short walk from roads or vehicular tracks. One day, a high quality walking path may link them.

Photos:
Narrowneck cliff-face and clouds from Six Foot Track (Christine Davies)
A woman with stile (Don Morison)
Oakey Park houses framed by pagoda studded ridges (Christine Davies)

BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY Inc: BUSHWALKING ACTIVITIES

Membership of the bushwalking group is open to Society members. The BMCS Bushwalking Guide which explains the numbered grades can be found on the Society's website www.bluemountains.org.au or can be posted on request. For more information call Maurice Kerkham 4739 4942, mobile 04024 02783, email mauricekerkham@hotmail.com or write to PO Box 29, Wentworth Falls 2782. **Late changes to the program will be published on the website.**

SATURDAY WALKS: Usually a full day longer walk at a faster pace. Bring morning tea, lunch and adequate water. If you are a new walker to Saturday walks, before attending contact the designated contact person or the Group Co-ordinator Jim Percy—phone 4758 6009, email jp34@tpg.com.au Check www.bluemountains.org.au for updates.

Saturday Walks driver reimbursement: *In an effort to ensure that car drivers are adequately compensated for the use of their vehicles a driver reimbursement policy applies* (Check www.bluemountains.org.au Saturday Walks page for details)

- Apr 16 **Gardens of Stone** – your chance to see the majestic **Cathedral Cave** - off track - Contact Leader for more detail. Leader **Hugh** 0423309854. 5Km. Gr 3. Map **Cullen Bullen**.
- Apr 23 **Anzac Day LWE - Golden Stairs, Mt Solitary, to Chinamans Cave** and return. Leader **Warren 4787 5403**. Meet at Katoomba Station Carpark 8.15. 15Km. Grade 3. Map **Katoomba**.
- Apr 30 **Gardens of Stone** – off track - part exploratory. Contact Leader for more detail. Leader **Hugh** 0423309854. 5Km. Gr 3. Map **Cullen Bullen**.
- May 7 **Platform Rock, Tarpean Pool** - even yet more adventures with Harold. Leader **Harold** 0409 010737. Meet at Blackheath Station Carpark 7.30 am. 6 Km. Gr 3. Map **Cullen Bullen**
- May 14 **Gardens of Stone** – off track - part exploratory. Contact Leader for more detail. Leader **Hugh** 0423309854. 5Km. Gr 3. Map **Cullen Bullen**.
- May 21 **Darks Cave and Fortress Rock** – Blue Mountains history. Leader **Eddie** 4784 2691. Meet at Primary school in Mount Hay Road 8.30am. 5 Km. Gr 3. Map **Katoomba**.

MONDAY LEISURE WALKS: Short Day walks of 3-5 hours, suitable for walkers of an average fitness. Bring morning tea and lunch and adequate water. The Group Co-ordinator is Keith Dorrian, 4736 1010, keithdor53@hotmail.com

- Apr 11 **Ikara Head**. Meet Mount Victoria Station 8.50 am. Car pool fee \$5, Warren 4787 5403. Grade 2.
- Apr 18 **Rhodes to Cabarita. Foreshore walk via the Kokoda Track** (The Sydney one!). 10 km, mostly flat. Meet Strathfield Station, bottom of platform 2 ramp, 9.15am. Ros 0417 261 465. Grade 2.
- Apr 25 **Anzac Day**. No scheduled walk.
- May 2 **Darks Common and The Bluff**, historic walk plus lookouts. Meet Glenbrook Station car park 9.30. am. Maurice 0402 402 783. 4739 4942. Grade 2.
- May 9 **Asgard Swamp and Thor Head**, Mount Victoria. Bring torch for possible old mine inspection. Meet Mount Victoria Station 9.50 am. Car pool fee \$5. Tracy 0434 362 611. Grade 2.

THURSDAY PLEASURE WALKS: Walks 2-3 hours conducted at a leisurely pace to suit walkers on the day. Bring morning tea, adequate water and lunch if noted. Group Co-ordinator is Beverley Thompson, 4757 2076, denfenella@optusnet.com.au

- Apr 14 **Merriwa Street to Echo Point, Katoomba**. Meet Katoomba Station 9.30am. Leader Beverley 4757 2076. Car pool. Take lunch. Grade 2.
- Apr 21 **Princes Rock, Stonehaven Pass, Den Fenella, Breakfast Point, Short Cut Track, Wentworth Falls**. Meet Stockyard Car Park, Wentworth Falls 9.30am. Leader Beverley 4757 2076. Car pool. Take lunch. Grade 2.
- Apr 28 **Waverley Cemetery, Sydney**. Meet top of escalators Central Station 9.30am. Leader Doreen 6351 2371. Take lunch. Grade 1.
- May 5 **Euroka to the Nepean River, Glenbrook**. Four kilometres return. Meet Glenbrook Station Car Park 9.30am. Leader Beverley 4757 2076. Car pool \$5. Take lunch. Grade 2.
- May 12 **Glow Worm Tunnel, Newnes**. Take a reliable torch as it is dark, wet and rough in the tunnel. Meet Mount Victoria Station 8.45am. Leader Maurice 0402 402 783. Car pool, 4WD preferred \$8. Take lunch. Grade 2.

Read about our bushwalkers' exploits on Facebook—with lots of wonderful photos.

<https://www.facebook.com/BmcsBushwalking>
<https://www.facebook.com/bmcslongerbushwalks>

BMCS Planning and Development Resource Kit

Do you want to take action on an environmental issue in your neighbourhood or the Blue Mountains more broadly?

Do you want information about the laws and procedures relating to development and environmental protection?

Find out what **YOU** can do! Go to the Planning and Development Resource Kit www.bluemountains.org.au/pdrk-welcome.shtml



Always have the camera handy! I walked out to the car to find four Crested Pigeons perched prettily on the dead branches of an Acacia. Usually I see only two together, resting on the grass verge or perching on the TV antenna.

Once restricted to arid and semi arid zones of inland Australia, the Crested Pigeon has become a common urban bird. Their wings make a whistling sound when they take off and when they land they swing their tails to balance. Christine.

Welcome to new members

Arlene Ross
Joan Lawson
James Anderson

Christopher Scott
Boyd Robinson