

LOWER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY

NEWS BULLETIN

DECEMBER 1974

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Christmas Social;

Over the past years the society has not held a normal general meeting in the month of December- preferring to get together informally for a B-B-Q and drinks; The last few years at our presidents house (Mick Darks).

This year is going to be slightly different and I hope highly successful.

The committee hopes to see those many members who have not, for various reasons been seen through the year at our meetings and functions.

This years christmas 'get 'ogether' will be held at the SETTLERS ARMS Mulgoa on Sunday December 15th. The evening will feature The Settlers resident entertainer - local Folk Singer Garry Tooth.

The evening begins at 6pm. and members can avail themselves of the Settlers 'Sunday Special' for \$2.50 or choose from the normal Menu. The Settlers is licenced and the evening will conclude around 10pm.

This will be a throughly enjoyable evening providing members with an oppertunity to meet the men and women who have done so much for the society and kept the ideals of conservation alive inthe Blue Mountains communityover the past year or two.
BOOKINGS BOB CHAPMAN PH.536107 BEFORE SUNDAY 8TH. DECEMBER.

January Monthly General Meeting;

The next monthly general meeting will be held on Friday 10th. January 1975, at 8pm., at the Red Cross Centre, Macquarie Rd., Springwood.

Plaza Display;

The display which was scheduled for Penrith Plaza 20th. - 23rd. November was unfortunatly postponed by the society until early February 1975. The reason for the postponement was that the display could not be manned fulltime by members because of the christmas season.

REPORT ON ON SOCIETY FUNCTIONS

Guest Speaker;

At the last meeting of the L B M C S Mr. Ben Miller gave a talk on Water Birds and Wetlands. Mr. Miller is studying for a Doctorate of Science and working especially with Cormorants. His studies include - Bird life of the inland waterways and lakes; Their breeding habits and how these are affected by prevailing conditions; The effects of artificial lakes (man made reservoirs) have on natural life used to foraging and nesting in shallow billabongs; Finally the many other encroachments of settlement, plus the introduction of exotic fish have on their habitat.

The talk was fully illustrated with slides of the many varieties of birds on inland wetlands, and those of surrounding areas (Owls, Swallows, and even the Mallee Fowl on its mound).

Spotlighting Run;

On the 27th, - a rather moist Sunday evening - a few of our members enjoyed a B-B-Q and spotlighting run in the Blue Gum Creek area. Before sunset and through the dusk we heard a veritable chorus of birds. As they gradually settled down many frogs and crickets took over. We even heard the hooting of two different owls, which seems rare now in these hills.

Although clouds blotted out the moon, the promising conditions only saw one animal of the tree-tops a Greater Glider. It did not move away from the beam of light however, so we were able to observe it at length. It was delightful to see also in the beam of the spotlight that there is still a wealth of orchids high in the trees.

Turning our attention to the streams and pools, the amount of life they contained was surprising. Besides Frogs, Water Beetles and Spiders there was a profusion of 'yabbies' from the infantile, almost transparent, stage to the old grandads carrying smaller creatures adhered to their solid, dark shells.

Bessie Bramsen

High Density Housing;

A U.S. Federal Government Report released recently titled "COSTS OF SPRAWL" for the first time studied comparisons of three broad types of land use:-

- * Allowing communities to sprawl haphazardly across the landscape..
- + Erecting planned high density clusters.
- + Mixture of both.

Measuring the cost of putting 10,000 dwelling units plus schools and public buildings on 6,000 acres of public land (note not maximum development as we know it). The research revealed that with cluster development - 75% less land used for houses yielding more space for parks and recreation; 44% less cost as all facilities (houses, streets, sewer power water etc.) would be concentrated; 45% less air pollution (due to less need for private transportation) and 44% less energy (fewer cars). Some social costs would be reduced, such as commuting but, the report says others would be increased such as the crime rate and psychic stress especially in poorly designed developments.

* In the U.S. 600,000 acres of fertile agricultural land are lost each year by the inroads of highways, shopping centres and housing developments.

Condensed from TIME MAGAZINE.

Ozone under pressure;

World wide research indicates that the Ozone layer of the Earth's atmosphere is so fragile that it might be damaged or destroyed by large scale atmospheric nuclear tests, military and civilian supersonic aircraft, and the widespread use of aerosol sprays. Ozone is a form of oxygen that has three instead of the usual two atoms of oxygen in each molecule of gas. Most of the ozone of the air is concentrated in a layer 15 to 30 miles above the earth, where it absorbs much of the sun's ultraviolet radiation. The gas is far from stable - readily giving up one of its oxygen atoms to other gases to form oxygen which does not block ultraviolet radiation.

Physicist Ralph Cicerone of the University of Michigan has found that spray-can gases, mostly chlorine such as Freon, are highly stable under normal circumstances. Thus they are building up in the lower atmosphere and gradually rising up toward the ozone layer. At that altitude, the ultraviolet radiation breaks down Freon and other chlorine based gases causing the release of chlorine atoms. They then react with ozone, converting it into oxygen.

Cicerone estimated that even if the use of aerosol sprays was halted immediately, the gases already in the atmosphere would cause a 10% reduction of ozone in the layer by 1990. That would result in substantial increase of ultraviolet radiation - causing at the very least a greater incidence of skin cancer. It might also disrupt the food chain by affecting the food, crops and plankten in the oceans. It may also have incalculable consequences like changing the earths weather patterns.

Cicerone's report was based on an earlier report by two University of California's scientists. It is further supported by Michael McElroy a Harvard Atmospheric Physist, who in independent calculations concluded that the projected 10% annual increase in the use of aerosols would reduce the ozone layer by 10% in 20 years and 40% by 2014 wreaking havoc on terrestrial life.

Other threats to the ozone layer come from the large amounts of nitric oxides given by the exhausts of super sonic aircraft. Researches at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, commissione by the U.S. Department of Transportation used a mathematical model to simulate the effects on the earths atmosphere of a projected fleet of 500 SST's operating for eight hours a day - most aviation experts agree that at least 500 SST's will be in operation by the end of the century. The M.I.T. team fed data into their computerised model of the the upper atmosphere. The results, based on the emmissions of the Concord showed that supersonic exhaust discharges in the general lattitude of Paris and New York would deplete the ozone layer by 12% in 25 years. The ozone layer would be also thinned significantly in the Southern Hemisphere, where the computer assumed no flights.

In the past few months scientists have been emphasising the even greater menace of nuclear explosions, which generate huge amounts of nitric oxide. A nuclear war or atmospheric testing, they say might temporarily at least wipe out the ozone layer.

Condensed from TIME MAGAZINE.