



**"Nature Conservation Saves for Tomorrow"**

The Society held its AGM and monthly meeting at the Conservation Hut on Thursday 29 March. A summary of the President's report is on page 11. Bart Beech reported that the Society's finances are in good order thanks to a healthy income generated by our Native Plant Nursery and strong donations. Kevin Bell reported on the activities of the Nursery.

Members re-elected Lachlan Garland as president and elected a management committee for the year 2012/13. Office holders and their contact details are on page 2. There is a vacancy – **Publicity Officer**. Contact Lachlan if you are interested in this position.

After a short tea break our guest speaker Brad Purcell told us about his work studying the dingo populations in the remote southern Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area. Starting in 2004, this study took place over six years and earned Brad a PhD at the University of Western Sydney.

The study included collecting data from 20 dingoes fitted with GPS tracking collars. The more than 50,000 GPS data points collected showed defined patterns of movement. Motion sensor cameras showed dingo behaviour in the family groups.

The nine dingo packs Brad studied each stayed within a territory, with regular patrols to its outer boundaries. Individual dingoes never went beyond the boundaries except to look for a mate. Breeding occurs once a year. Juveniles are educated through careful stages, learning first to hunt easier prey such as Brushtail Possums.

And to address the question posed in March Hut News "Is the future of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area held in the jaws of a dingo?" The dingo is Australia's main top order predator. Top order predators are vital for ecosystem health—they control native grazing animals and maintain species diversity. Without the dingoes there would be more foxes and cats within the territory and therefore fewer small marsupials, several species of which are listed as endangered, which are eaten by those predators.

## Monthly Meeting

7.30 pm, Thursday 26 April 2012  
at the Conservation Hut, Wentworth Falls

### LORD HOWE ISLAND: a personal, environmental, social and political perspective Nick Rigby

Lord Howe Island was World Heritage listed in 1982 in recognition of its outstanding natural beauty and its exceptional biodiversity. Two thirds of the island is a Permanent Park Preserve. The surrounding waters were declared a Marine Park in 1998. The island has over 130 species of bird; the sheltering coral reef hosts over 500 species of fish and 90 different corals. The reef is in pristine condition, washed by the cleanest ocean on the planet.

The Lord Howe Island Board and the Islanders themselves go to considerable lengths to preserve their Paradise, with comprehensive recycling programs; a tourist bed limit; and environmental management plans.

Between 2004 and 2008, Nick was Chief Executive Officer of the Lord Howe Island Board.

Nick lived on Lord Howe during his term in the position, and led the Boards administration through a dynamic and challenging period. In particular the revision of the Regional Environment Plan, which introduced a controversial cap on residential development.

Nick will take us on a personal, political and environmental journey of living on the island, and the challenges of protecting and conserving this World Heritage listed island, as well as providing for the social and economic needs of a unique community.

Nick Rigby took up the role of Manager Environmental Sustainability with BMCC in September 2011. Nick came to the Blue Mountains from Brisbane, where he was Director of Wildlife Management with the Department of Environment and Resource Management

Photo: On Lagoon Beach at Lord Howe Island. (Nick is the taller of the two.) Nick's son Connor spent the first four years of his life on the island.



"Hut News", the newsletter of  
Blue Mountains Conservation Society Inc.  
P.O. Box 29, Wentworth Falls, 2782  
Phone 4757 1872

Email: [bmcs@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:bmcs@bluemountains.org.au)  
Web page: [www.bluemountains.org.au](http://www.bluemountains.org.au)

President: Lachlan Garland: 0415 317 078  
[lachlan.a.garland@bigpond.com](mailto:lachlan.a.garland@bigpond.com)

Senior Vice President: Tara Cameron  
0419 824 974 [taracameron4@gmail.com](mailto:taracameron4@gmail.com)

Second Vice President: Don Morison  
8230 2116 [2vp@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:2vp@bluemountains.org.au)

Treasurer: Bart Beech (h)4739 9947  
(f)9688 1440 (w)9896 9512  
[bart.beech@invensys.com](mailto:bart.beech@invensys.com)

Administration Officer: Wes Maley 4757 3942  
[admin@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:admin@bluemountains.org.au)

Bushcare/Threatened Species Officer:  
Clive Heywood Barker 0413 577 160  
[ozbundu@hotmail.com](mailto:ozbundu@hotmail.com)

Environmental Education Officer:  
Gary Humble 4784 1648 0427 841 078  
[gaz.humble@gmail.com](mailto:gaz.humble@gmail.com)

Landuse Officer: Ann Cantwell  
4751 3215, [cantwell@ef.tel.net.au](mailto:cantwell@ef.tel.net.au)

Lithgow Regional Subcommittee Coordinator:  
Chris Jonkers 6355 1179  
[chrisandjulie@activ8.net.au](mailto:chrisandjulie@activ8.net.au)

Meetings Secretary: Heather Hull  
4739 1493 [hhull001@bigpond.net.au](mailto:hhull001@bigpond.net.au)

Membership Secretary: Lachlan Garland:  
0415 317 078  
[lachlan.a.garland@bigpond.com](mailto:lachlan.a.garland@bigpond.com)

Monthly Meeting Convenor: Brendan Doyle  
4757 2197 [brendan049@gmail.com](mailto:brendan049@gmail.com)

National Parks/World Heritage Officer:  
Brian Marshall 4784.1148  
[briannamar@bigpond.com](mailto:briannamar@bigpond.com)

Newsletter Editor: Christine Davies  
4787 7246 [hutnews@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:hutnews@bluemountains.org.au)

Plant Nursery Manager: Kevin Bell  
ph/fax 4787.6436 [kevinbell@ef.tel.net.au](mailto:kevinbell@ef.tel.net.au)

Publicity Officer: VACANT  
Sustainable Population and Climate Change  
Officer: Peter Green 4751 9474  
[peter@pwgreen.id.au](mailto:peter@pwgreen.id.au)

Website Officer: Alan Page 4784 1704  
[webmaster@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:webmaster@bluemountains.org.au)

Walks Convenor: Maurice Kerkham  
4739 4942  
[mauricekerkham@hotmail.com](mailto:mauricekerkham@hotmail.com)

Project Officer-Food and Environment:  
Craig Linn [craig.csmc@exemail.com.au](mailto:craig.csmc@exemail.com.au)

Project Officer-Events: Rob Baigent  
4759 3104 [rob.baigent@bigpond.com](mailto:rob.baigent@bigpond.com)

Bushfire Representative: Hugh Paterson  
4751.2303, mob 0427 512 303  
[goodbush@pnc.com.au](mailto:goodbush@pnc.com.au)

**DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT  
ISSUE OF HUT NEWS IS  
21 APRIL 2012**

[hutnews@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:hutnews@bluemountains.org.au)  
47877246

## MEMBERSHIP ENQUIRIES

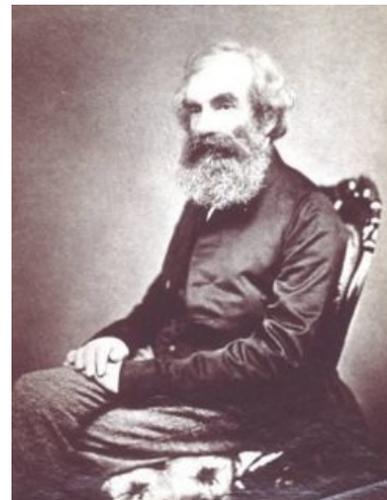
Lachlan Garland  
0415 317 078

[membership@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:membership@bluemountains.org.au)  
PO Box 29, Wentworth Falls 2782

## Nursery News

**A New Contract:** You will have noticed the new Cultural Centre taking shape in Katoomba and despite the unfavourable comments about the aesthetics of the building, it will have one desirable feature, namely a roof-top garden with a café and we have secured the contract to supply about 2,150 plants to adorn that garden. We were recommended to the building contractor and Council by the landscape company *Equatica* (formerly *Aquatica*) with whom we collaborated on the project to supply Council with plants for the Echo Point drainage works. We will be supplying some plants in August, which we already have in stock, with the remainder, on which we are working at the moment, coming in November. So, when the building is open, enjoy a coffee there and admire the plants in the garden produced by your nursery volunteers.

**Plant of the Month:** This time it is *Backhousia myrtifolia*, the solitary member of this genus in our area. The genus was named by the famous botanist, Baron Ferdinand von Müller in 1853 in honour of the nurseryman, botanist and Quaker missionary, James Backhouse (1794 - 1869). Backhouse was the 4<sup>th</sup> of 9 children of James and Mary Backhouse, a Quaker business family of Darlington, County Durham. After initially working in a chemical and pharmaceutical facility, early contraction of tuberculosis forced him into an outdoor occupation and he began the study of botany. Together with his brother Thomas, he purchased a nursery in 1815, married in 1824 but his wife, Deborah, died just 3 years later, leaving him to care for a son and daughter. His strong concern for the welfare of others led him with his fellow missionary Quaker, George Washington Walker, in 1831 on a voyage to Australia where he arrived in Hobart in September 1831. His children were put into the care of relatives. He spent the next 6 years in missionary work in Tasmania and the eastern states where his highly regarded and compassionate work with aboriginal people, convicts and settlers gained favour with the authorities and he was frequently commissioned to carry out studies for the governments. He combined his missionary work with botanical collection and sent specimens to Kew Gardens. Finally leaving Australia in 1838 from Fremantle with Walker, they arrived in Mauritius and spent time in South Africa before returning to England in 1841. His book *A Narrative of a Visit to the Australian Colonies* (1843) and a similar one from his time in South Africa present interesting accounts of life there at that time. He resumed his nursery business with his brother and continued to write including a biography of his fellow missionary, Walker. When his brother died in 1845, he brought his son, James, into the business. His concern for the welfare of others endeared him to all who knew him and his obvious passion for nature clearly rubbed off on his son James who wrote the authoritative work *A Handbook of European Birds* published in 1890.



James Backhouse (1794-1869), by unknown photographer, Allport Library and Museum of Fine Arts, State Library of Tasmania.

*B. myrtifolia* (with leaves like the genus *Myrtle*), commonly known as the Grey Myrtle, is a rainforest, bushy tree (3-7m x 2-4m) with lanceolate leaves (4-7cm long) and large specimens are slightly buttressed with brown, fissured bark. It is found from Fraser island in Queensland to southern NSW and is common in the rainforest areas of the Blue Mountains. It produces clusters of greenish-yellow flowers in summer and makes an interesting specimen tree for a shaded area in a large garden. Its wood was used by early settlers for making axe handles. We grew our plants from seed which germinates readily but slowly and we now have nice specimens for sale. Drop into our nursery or see us at the Blackheath and Lawson markets if you would like one or select from our big range of currently available plants. **Kevin Bell, Nursery Manager.**

## Submission writing time is here!

The Blue Mountains Conservation Society will be holding a series of short workshops on writing submissions to formally object to the 'Coalpac Consolidation Project' proposal.

This destructive proposal threatens to open-cut mine a beautiful part of the Gardens of Stone area we have proposed for protection and would surround Cullen Bullen with dust for 21 years.

**It's important we get as many individual submissions written by our supporters as possible.**

Unfortunately signatures received on a duplicated submission will only count as 'one' submission, regardless of how many people sign it.

So come along and get involved in a short workshop that will guide you through how to jot down a simple submission, on the spot. It will be quick, easy and painless!

We will deliver your submissions to the Department of Planning and Infrastructure on your behalf by the due date.

**If you would like to host a submission writing workshop** for your group in another area, please contact Justin on 0404 824 020 or email [justin.mckee@ethicalintegration.com](mailto:justin.mckee@ethicalintegration.com)



### WORKSHOPS:

**Cullen Bullen: Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2012**

5- 6pm Cullen Bullen Progress Association Hall  
37-39 Castlereagh Highway, Cullen Bullen NSW

**Wentworth Falls: Monday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2012**

5:30 - 7pm The Conservation Hut  
Fletcher Street, Wentworth Falls, NSW.  
Parking: Carpark at the venue (free)

**Springwood: Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2012**

5:30 - 7pm Lower Hall, Springwood Civic Centre  
106-108 Macquarie Road, Springwood NSW  
Parking: Carpark at the venue (free)

**Newcastle: Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> May 2012**

5:45 - 7pm The Wilderness Society Newcastle  
Hunter Heritage Centre, 90 Hunter Street, Newcastle.  
Parking: On street parking. Train station one minute walk away.

**Sydney: Monday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2012**

6:00 - 7:30pm, Nature Conservation Council of NSW  
Level 2 / 5 Wilson Street, Newtown NSW.  
Parking: Metred, on-street parking. Train station one minute walk away.

## The campaign to stop the 'Coalpac Consolidation Project'

Coalpac Pty Ltd's proposal threatens to open-cut and highwall-mine 1,088 hectares of the Ben Bullen State Forest. This public forest is the western gateway to the stunning Gardens of Stone area that we have been lobbying to see protected as a State Conservation Area (SCA). SCAs provide a 'win-win' for situation for conservationists, the mining industry and the State as they allow underground mining to continue in an area while preserving the natural environment on the surface. This means the State can continue to invest in nature-based tourism and the biodiversity of the area can remain intact.

Environment groups, Local Member for Bathurst Paul Toole, Lithgow City Council, the majority of Cullen Bullen residents, NSW ALP, and NSW Greens publicly oppose the proposal and wish for mining in the area to remain underground. The Society organised an on-site protest rally in May 2011 and over 120 people attended. Many Society members have written letters to politicians objecting to the proposal. **Now that the proposal is finally on public exhibition we need to do more.**

This scale of open-cut mining in a publicly reserved forest, which has outstanding natural values and is proposed for conservation, is overwhelmingly against the public interest. The effective privatisation and liquidation of a large part of the forest is an outrageous precedent that should not be set; it is a direct challenge to the state's efforts to reduce deforestation.

With your support, we have lobbied NSW Government to keep mining in the area underground, to declare the Ben Bullen State Forest as a State Conservation Area and to reject the 'Coalpac Consolidation Project' proposal entirely.

### Public Rally in Springwood: 'Protect the Gardens of Stone'

Some 40,000 hectares of the visually stunning Gardens of Stone, North-West Blue Mountains and its internationally significant pagodas, remain unprotected from high-impact activities like open-cut mining.

Supporters are invited to protest the 'Coalpac Consolidation Project' which seeks to rip-up 1088 hectares of habitat for over 350 native plant species, and 32 animal species.

If approved, large amounts of dust will be unleashed into the atmosphere, surrounding the town of Cullen Bullen and its Public School for 21 years with dangerous particles.

**11am - 12pm Saturday 5th May 2012**

**Town Square, 180-184 Macquarie Road,  
Springwood**

A peaceful rally of supporters who will gather for a media photo opportunity and listen to speakers..

### BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY

'Like' us on Facebook: Blue Mountains Conservation Society

Follow us on Twitter: [bmcsnsw](https://twitter.com/bmcsnsw)

## Rally rejects NSW Government's "Gateway Process" on CSG Jan O'Leary

Around 150 people attended a rally outside Parliament House in Macquarie Street on 15 March to protest the NSW Government's recently released plans governing coal seam gas projects.

Prior to the election the government promised to exclude key agricultural land from mining activity and protect underground water resources and high value conservation lands. However, the government's Draft Strategic Regional Land Use Plans and Aquifer Interference Policy released on 5 March fail to do either, the rally was told.

The new regime would involve a "Gateway Process" in which a scientific committee would advise on the soil and groundwater impacts of coal seam gas extraction before lodgement of a development application could occur. However, "Gateway" provisions could be overridden if Cabinet deemed a project to be an "exceptional circumstance" based on the value of the resource.

Minister Brad Hazzard, in his media release on 6 March presented the measures as safeguards for "high quality agricultural land and its water sources from mining and coal seam gas projects". Farming and environmental groups see the measures as anything but safeguards. Perhaps, more tellingly, shares in big coal seam gas companies Santos and AGL rallied on the announcement of the government's plans.

No water catchment areas, farmland nor high conservation or sensitive areas, outside of actual National Park land, has been automatically exempted from potential development. For example the Putty Valley, which is completely surrounded by the Wollemi and Yengo National Parks, has been mapped by the government as having open-cut and/or underground coal resource potential and high and moderate coal seam gas potential.

Coal seam gas extraction is often justified on the grounds of it being a cleaner, greener alternative to coal. However, two recent pieces of research by Richard Howarth and Tom Wigley in the U.S. suggest coal seam



Hunter Valley farmer Graham Gibson addresses the rally

gas can emit a greater quantity of greenhouse gas per unit of energy generated.

Earlier on the day of the rally a moratorium bill put to the Upper House by Greens MP Jeremy Buckingham was narrowly defeated when Shooters and Fishers and Christian Democratic Party MPs voted with the government. The bill called for a 12 month moratorium on CSG mining approvals in NSW and a prohibition on CSG mining in the Sydney Metropolitan Area and the Sydney water catchment area. The bill may be re-presented in an amended form following the release of the NSW Upper House Inquiry on 5th May this year.

During the rally Greens MP Jamie Parker presented a petition to the Legislative Assembly containing more than 20,000 signatures calling for a moratorium of all CSG activity and a Royal Commission into all aspects of CSG activity. A general invitation was issued to attend a further rally organised by the NSW Farmers Association outside of Parliament House on 1st May.

On-line submissions to the Draft Aquifer Interference Policy and the Draft Code of Practice for Coal Seam Gas Extraction can be made at <http://haveyoursay.nsw.gov.au>

### A NUCLEAR REACTION!

From Jabiluka to Fukushima to Muckatya?

AN AFTERNOON OF FILMS and SPEAKERS

**SUNDAY, 15th APRIL, 2 pm to 5.30 pm**

**WENTWORTH FALLS SCHOOL OF ARTS**

Award winning documentary film maker **DAVID BRADBURY** presents a compilation of his films on the dangers of uranium mining and the nuclear industry - updated to include impacts on Japan.

**PROFESSOR RICHARD BROINOWSKI**, respected former diplomat, academic and author, will discuss his forthcoming book, "Fallout from Fukushima" - with emphasis on implications for Australia.

Presented by Blue Mountains Nuclear Free Group, working for a nuclear-free future.

Contact us at: [BMNuclearFreeGroup@gmail.com](mailto:BMNuclearFreeGroup@gmail.com)

Entry by donation Refreshments available

### The Gardens of Stone Visitors Map

The experiences offered by the magnificent Gardens of Stone region are known to relatively few, despite the region being easily accessible from Sydney and the Central West. To promote low impact visitor experiences and its reservation as a state conservation area, Colong Foundation and Blue Mountains Conservation Society have developed a Visitors Map with detailed interpretive notes on the reverse side.

The Visitors Map is in full colour, 60 by 85 cm in size, and covers the entire Gardens of Stone region at a 1:100,000 scale. It includes the locations of key attractions, as well as the new Capertee National Park. The Notes on the reverse side of the map contain twenty panels of information that explain many aspects to help make the Gardens of Stone a unique experience and a 'must visit'.

Price is \$7.50 plus \$1.50 postage. You can buy the map online ([www.bluemountains.org.au](http://www.bluemountains.org.au)), write to BMCS, PO Box 29, Wentworth Falls 2782 with your cheque or money order, or save postage and ask for a copy at our monthly meeting.

## Conservation Volunteers Australia Projects Newnes SF and Capertee Valley

Conservation Volunteers Australia is seeking volunteers to join with them in environmental projects in the Greater Blue Mountains area over the next few months.

**Newnes State Forest:** 10-14 April and 16-20 April.

Volunteers would stay with CVA in accommodation in Lithgow and head out daily to undertake nature conservation works such as the removal of exotic pine seedlings in the snow gum and scribbly gum forests of the Newnes plateau.

Stay 5 days and 4 nights (food and accommodation provided) for \$206 or come for the day and meet in Lithgow.

**Capertee Valley:** 7-11 May (to directly follow the May Capertee tree planting weekend).

The project, which is in aid of the Regent Honeyeater Recovery Programme, will be based at 'Port Macquarie' homestead in Capertee NP. It will involve maintenance weeding work on existing plantings and carrying out further native plantings.

Stay 5 days and 4 nights (food and accommodation provided) for \$206 or come for the day and meet onsite.

Information from CVA 9663 0020

[www.conservationvolunteers.com.au](http://www.conservationvolunteers.com.au)

## Nature has the power to move people!

What was your most moving and memorable experience in connecting with Nature?

Jim Smith spoke at the Blue Mountains Conservation Society meeting at the Wentworth Falls School of Arts in July 2011. The subject of his talk was "Things seen as dusk: 35 years of nature observation at Wentworth Falls and nearby". Jim has been studying this special time of day for over three decades and told stories of some of the remarkable things he has seen and heard at Wentworth Falls and beyond.

After the talk several people approached Jim with stories of their own about events that they had experienced while connecting with Nature.

It was decided to follow up on this talk and let members tell THEIR stories at a meeting to be held later this year.

Jim Smith and the Society want to hear from people who would like to tell us about their experiences, an event where you connected with Nature. It doesn't have to be anything spectacular. It can be something very small, your first encounter with a particular bird. But it was something that was special to you.

(One special memory I have is of walking along a fire trail on the Newnes Plateau, surrounded by 'dancing orange butterflies'. It was a Conservation Society bushwalk. The butterflies were the "Common Brown" and there must have been a lot of them that year. As we walked along they took off from the ground and appeared to dance around us. That was about 20 years ago. *Christine.*)

Please contact Christine Davies, 4787 7246 or [hutnews@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:hutnews@bluemountains.org.au) if you want to be part of this event. We need people to commit beforehand. You need only speak for a minute or two, or if you are reluctant to speak in public you can write it down for somebody else to read. Jim Smith will open up and host the forum. The rest will be up to YOU.

## National Wildlife Corridors Report

Conservation history was made recently when the Australian Government released Australia's draft **National Wildlife Corridors Report** for community consultation. The draft report to the Australian Government Minister for the Environment was prepared by the National Wildlife Corridors Advisory Group, a Group which was chaired by the Hon Bob Debus AM.

**This is the first whole-of-continent approach to connectivity conservation for the world** and recognises a range of different corridors at different scales, including, importantly, a few select and strategic (yet to be designated) National Wildlife Corridors. The draft report also advises that new Legislation is proposed to be introduced later this year to formalise the implementation of the NWC plan. This is a proactive step by the Australian Government to help achieve both Aichi (CBD) Targets as well as Australia's own Biodiversity Strategy targets. It is a formidable step forward in assisting Australian and migratory species survive in a climate change world.

Comments on this draft would be very welcome and the website provides guidance on how to achieve this. The Draft Plan will be upgraded and then formalised by the Minister following the community consultation period which ends on April 20th 2012. The draft report is available on line at: <http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/wildlife-corridors/index.html>

## Public Rally in Sydney 'Protect Our Land & Water'

The O'Farrell government has released its strategic regional land use plans, which make a mockery of its promise to permanently protect sensitive natural areas and prime agricultural land from mining and coal seam gas exploration and extraction.

Conservation groups from around the State are up in arms that internationally significant areas like the Gardens of Stone will be left vulnerable.

**Join members of the Society and wave our 'Protect the Gardens of Stone' banner.**

When: **12:00 - 1:30pm, Tuesday 1st May 2012**

Where: **Gather in Martin Place and walk to NSW Parliament House**

What: **NSW Regional rally over the failure of the NSW government's draft Strategic Land Use Policy Plans.**

**BUSHCARE GROUP:** 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 hat. New members are always welcome.  
Phone Karen on 4757 1929.

# Hydro-power: a passport to damnation? Brian Marshall

**This is Part 1 - the second part will be in the May edition of Hut News.**

Part 1 focuses on the Three Gorges Dam (TGD) to develop a thesis which will be broadened in terms of both the global picture and the far-reaching implications of rampant energy consumption in Part 2.

The overall article stems from "*The Three Gorges Dam; an engineering success or environmental desecration*" delivered at the Society's February Monthly Meeting. In preparation for the talk, I asked (February Hut News p7) if the TGD was 'black, white or khaki', and suggested that most would probably say khaki in view of the renewable<sup>1</sup> power (environmentally positive) and various growth-linked economic benefits outweighing archaeological, social, and diverse environmental costs. In today's world, you can't make an omelette without cracking eggs!

So, is the TGD a success story? To answer, we need to know the primary objectives of the TGD, decide whether these were achieved, and consider the supplementary benefits.

The primary objectives were hydro-electric power generation, flood mitigation in a monsoonal region, and increasing year-round shipping capacity through safer dry-season navigability. The TGD is the world's largest single dam in terms of its instantaneous generating capacity (22,500 MW), and the second largest measured by the maximum annual generating capacity (84.7 TWh)<sup>2</sup>. The flood-control capacity is an enormous 22.15 km<sup>3</sup> and this, plus energy dissipation factors<sup>3</sup>, reduces peak flood-flows by 30-40%. Finally, two-way shipping capacity, reflecting year-round navigability, has increased from a pre-dam 10 million t/year (pre-dam) to a post-dam 100 million t/year. The TGD has clearly met its primary objectives.

High-value supplementary benefits, such as hydro-engineering and construction expertise (now 'exported' to developing countries), focusing national and international tourism, substantially boosting Chinese 'can-do' beliefs, and opening up the Chongqing and Sichuan regions through to Tibet, have resulted. In both primary and supplementary respects the TGD is an undoubted success; but what is the down-side? I will deal with this in benefit/cost terms.

The principal claimed benefits include:

- Replacing coal-fired power generation with hydro-power '**saves**' 31 Mt of coal, 100 Mt of greenhouse gas emissions (GGE), 1-2 Mt of sulphur dioxide, and large amounts of other 'nasties'.
- Larger ships and year-round operation reduce costs and enable energy/t reductions which '**save**' 650 kt of GGE per year<sup>4</sup>.
- Flood mitigation in the middle and lower Yangtze River benefits 15+ million people, city infrastructure, industry and agricultural production.
- 'Development-oriented' resettlement of 1.23 million people to modern accommodation in new cities improves life-styles and contributes to economic growth.

- The generated power is a fundamental component of China's economic growth and improving its people's welfare.

The principal costs include:

- The forced resettlement and redeployment of 1.23 million people has social (as well as direct economic) costs and compromises agricultural productivity.
- The one-off construction, materials and energy inputs, and ongoing maintenance requirements have large GGE penalties which tend to be disregarded.
- Social infrastructure, cultural heritage and the scenic values of the Three Gorges were either drowned or diminished by the rising water level, while complex ecosystems and endangered species have been destroyed.
- Reservoir-induced 'quakes' could damage the dam, despite the dam being designed for a magnitude 7 event, while landslides due to seasonal water-level fluctuations constitute a navigational hazard.
- The massive expenditure, estimated at 180 billion yuan or ~US\$22.5 billion, could have been used in other ways, so there are likely to be substantial foregone opportunity costs.

Aspects of the benefits merit closer examination.

'**Saving**' GGE by substituting one form of energy for another is commendable, but only if the combined annual GGE for the two energy forms decreases. In China, this is not so; the TGD was to have met 10% of China's power needs but is now supplying <3%! The coal-fired power to hydro-power ratio in China is ~6:1 and increasing, such that GGE 'saved' by new hydro-power is accompanied by disproportionately larger increases in all forms of fossil-fuel power. The notion of real GGE-reduction by one power form supplanting another is a gross distortion. Rampant energy-intensive economic growth is driving uncontrolled power- and GGE-production. **It is unsustainable from the viewpoints of finite energy resources, population growth and 'advancement', and climate-change mitigation.**

In Part 2, I will look at the global expansion of hydro-power, the failure to transition from fossil fuel energy dependency and stop population growth. **The longer-term implications for an energy-reduced world are horrifying.**

<sup>1</sup> Subject of course to climate change and damming rivers for agricultural uses and domestic water supply.

<sup>2</sup> For comparison, the Snowy scheme, comprising 7 dams and 16 power stations, has an 'instantaneous' capacity of 3,756 MW and an annual production of 4.5 TWh.

<sup>3</sup> Flow-energy is dissipated as flood waters pass through the turbines and, if necessary, are discharged through the spillway.

<sup>4</sup> On this reasoning, the more the river is used the greater will be the savings! Rampant growth is good?

*Renewable energy has the potential to become the basis of Australia's energy system, providing 24-hour baseload power to everyone everywhere, says Dr Mark Diesendorf, Associate Professor and Deputy Director of the Institute of Environmental Studies at UNSW.*

Nowadays renewable energy deniers are almost as active in spreading misinformation as the deniers of anthropogenic climate change. One of their principal false claims is that renewable energy sources are too unreliable to form the basis of an energy system for an industrial society. In particular, they assert that renewable energy cannot replace conventional base-load (24-hour) power and is only suitable for niche markets. The research reported in this article helps to refute these claims.

In Europe, as wind and solar installations grow rapidly and perform well, political commitment to sustainable energy systems, based on 80-100% renewable energy, is also growing. The government of Germany has committed to an 80% renewable energy target by 2050 and, in the wake of the Fukushima disaster, has passed legislation to phase out nuclear energy by 2022. The Danish government has invited proposals for sourcing just over half its electricity from wind turbines by 2020 and all its electricity from renewable sources in 2050.

Scenarios for 80-100% renewable energy have been developed by government agencies, academics and NGOs for Australia, Denmark, Germany, United Kingdom, Japan, New Zealand, Ireland, northern Europe, the European Union and the whole world.

Last year a ground-breaking study, 'Zero Carbon Australia Stationary Energy Plan', found that 100% renewable energy is technically possible for Australia and estimated that it would cost about \$370 billion. The core of this study was an hour-by-hour computer simulation, by Jack Actuarial Consulting, of Australian electricity demand in 2008 and 2009. The principal renewable energy sources chosen were concentrated solar thermal power (CST) with thermal storage and wind power. Some constraining assumptions were made:

- Western Australia was connected at great expense to the eastern states with new transmission lines with the aim of improving system reliability through geographic diversity.
- Second-generation CST power stations, 'power towers', for which there is little operating experience, were chosen as the principal energy source. These solar stations were given a solar multiple of 2.5 and thermal energy storage equivalent to 17 hours of full power output.
- A daily average was taken for solar energy inputs, although hourly data enable more detailed dynamic modelling.
- To compensate for the reduction in sunshine in winter, a vast excess of CST generating capacity was introduced.
- Also for winter, biomass residues were transported to the solar power stations to be combusted in order to heat the thermal storages when necessary.

At the University of New South Wales, PhD candidate Ben Elliston, Associate Professor Iain MacGill and I commenced an independent simulation project, which removed all of the above assumptions of the ZCA study. However, we still have some assumptions of our own that will be progressively removed. Ben presented the first of our projected series of peer-reviewed papers on this topic at the Australian Solar Energy Society's Solar 2011 conference [1].

We performed a series of hour-by-hour computer simulations of the 2010 electricity demand in the five Australian states covered by the National Electricity Market. To meet demand we chose a broader energy mix than ZCA: mature parabolic trough CST technology with thermal storage, wind in existing wind farm locations, solar PV in the major population centres, biofuelled gas turbines and existing hydro, all commercially available technologies. Together the two types of direct solar technology provide about half the electricity generated.

Gas turbines are highly flexible generating plant ideally suited to supporting fluctuating renewable generation. Some are already deployed in Australia as peaking plant fuelled on natural gas. However, they can also burn liquid biofuels produced sustainably from the residues of existing crops. Indeed, jet aircraft on some overseas commercial flights are already flying with one or more of their engines burning biofuels.

Our research confirms that it is technically feasible to supply current electricity demand by 100% renewable energy with the same reliability as the existing fossil fuelled system. The key challenge is meeting demand on winter evenings. A large part of this demand is of course residential space heating. At sunset of overcast days, the thermal energy storages are not full and sometimes wind speeds are low as well. In our initial baseline simulations, we used biofuelled gas turbines to fill the gap. This is likely to be lower cost than ZCA's solution of choosing a vast excess of CST power stations, many of which would not be operated in summer.

The UNSW study also proposes an even cheaper solution than lots of gas turbines or CST: namely a revitalised residential energy efficiency program to reduce peak electricity demand on winter evenings. In a second paper [2] we show that reducing the winter peak demand by only 16% allows us to reduce the gas turbine capacity by 27% and the biofuel combusted by 8%, while still maintaining the required reliability. Furthermore, in a future 'smart' electricity system it will be easier to reduce demand quickly during periods of low supply.

Both the ZCA and UNSW studies refute the claims by renewable energy deniers that renewable energy cannot replace base-load (24-hour) coal-fired power. ZCA interprets its results by saying that CST with thermal storage is base-load. We interpret the simulation results differently, concluding that although CST can perform in a similar manner to base-load in summer, it cannot in winter. However, that doesn't matter. In a predominantly renewable energy supply mix, the concept of 'base-load power station' is redundant.

(continued on page 11)

## LIVING COAL

As the sun comes up, we turn on our kettles to make the brews that open our eyes to the new day. Back in the power stations the confluence of these little actions requires a major burst of electricity to go out into the grid. The coal furnaces are opened up – 10 million cuppas go up the stacks.

What's it like to live in a coal community?

Coal communities are often proud of their heritage, of the hard work that has made that heritage. There remains a solidarity and community feeling within these communities that fast disappearing in the cities, where most of us now live. They can also feel defensive, as the role of coal in our world has become more challenged.

I work as a doctor in Lithgow, one of these coal communities – and I have come to see another side, another cost, of our modern power needs: illness and death.

Lithgow shares a health profile like many of the coal communities: high asthma rates (especially children), higher levels of diabetes, heart attacks, strokes and cancers, and more premature deaths. The political apparatus tries to push these off on to people's adverse lifestyle choices – too many Big Macs and ciggies, not enough exercise. It's always easier to blame people for their bad choices.

But why do coal communities have worse health figures than other

communities with similar lifestyle profiles? Surely it couldn't be their environments, with their local industries that mine and burn your morning cuppa?

Illness and death for jobs is the unspoken rationale. If people can earn money digging up and burning coal, then they can accept dying a bit earlier. That's fair enough, isn't it?

William Castleden et al, in the Sept. 2011 Medical Journal of Australia, have outlined, "The mining and burning of coal: effects on health and the environment". It is stark reading. Mining and transport accidents, adverse local health profiles – of both body and mind, local and global environmental costs (global warming not the least) – these are the tailings of our cups of coffee, at least currently while 84% of them are made from coal-generated power in this country. The authors hold that if the full social, health and environmental costs of coal are included, it is far from a cheap energy source.

Why do we keep mining and burning coal? Clearly it's about money - for governments and mining companies (with a diminutive trickle to local communities) - and about 'cheap' power – cheap because the costs are carried by less fortunate others.

We have some new initiatives in our region. The mining companies, Coalpac Pty Ltd and Enhance Place Pty Ltd, are seeking to significantly expand their open cut mining operations via the Coalpac Consolidation Project and the Pine Dale Stage 2 extension, respectively.

Consider the residents of Cullen Bullen and Blackmans Flat. If Coalpac Pty Ltd gets its way, Cullen Bullen will be almost completely ringed by open cut mines. While residents sip their morning cuppas, they will also be hearing and feeling mining blasts that shake their dwellings, and breathing in dust clouds that filter into their homes.

If Enhance Place Pty Ltd succeeds, Blackmans Flat residents will need to contend with an industrial assault on their local landscape – levelling pagoda-filled hills, razing the biodiverse forest that unfortunately sits over the coal. They already live under the shadow of the Mt Piper coal-fired power station, with its pollution and overflowing fly ash

dam.

Even the mining orientated Lithgow City Council has voted against Coalpac's proposal. They too are aware that these new open cut mines represent a significant increase in impact when compared to the traditional underground mines of the region.

Only two of the last 1000 or so mine applications have been rejected by the NSW government - one because the mines had the gumption to suggest mining out the horse studs of the rich and famous, the other because of overwhelming social and environmental costs.

We have so many reasons to move away from coal - or else, ultimately, it will not just be those poor bastards in Cullen Bullen and Blackmans Flat who will be the unfortunates. It will be all of us. How much effort is it worth to us, to try to extricate ourselves from this sooty mess?

I hope these mines won't go ahead. I hope these towns will retain the rich natural heritage of their hinterlands. I hope the locals can partner with industry use their regions' assets in other ways. We all deserve the right to live in a healthy community.

This is a microcosm of the shift – in thinking and in living – that we all need to contemplate.

Enjoy your cuppa!

*Dr Richard Stiles, Medical practitioner with an interest in moral philosophy and human sustainability.*



Photo: Dr Richard Stiles, Lithgow Medical Practitioner

### BMCS NURSERY PLANT SALES

**Lawson Nursery** –Wednesdays and Saturdays, 9am to noon.

The nursery is located in the Lawson Industrial Area on the corner of Park and Cascade Streets, opposite Federation Building Materials (see the map on our website

[www.bluemountains.org.au](http://www.bluemountains.org.au)).

**Blackheath Community Market**, 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month at Blackheath Public School, 9am to 1pm.

**Magpie Market**, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month at Lawson Public School, 9am to 2pm.

Tube stock \$2.50 each.

Enquiries Kevin Bell 4787 6436, email [kevinbell@eftel.net.au](mailto:kevinbell@eftel.net.au)

## Loose Feathers, with Carol Proberts

Possibly the most under-appreciated bird in our area is the Brown Thornbill. This tiny bird, barely 10cm from the tip of its bill to the tip of its tail, is one of the most common members of a group known to birders as "LBJs".

To many birdwatchers, "LBJ" means "frustrating" or "tricky to identify". They are in fact the "Little Brown Jobs", finely attired in many subtle shades of brown, grey and buff. Each has its unique markings and character, and if you know the typical behaviour and distinctive calls of each species, they are not that tricky after all.

Brown Thornbills spend much of their day gleaning insects from the foliage of the understorey and middle layer of the forest. In contrast, their close relative, the Striated Thornbill generally feeds higher in the trees, searching for insects in the canopy in groups, keeping in contact with a constant soft high-pitched "tss tss...". But the Brown's cheerful, trilled warble and fussy scolding is surprisingly loud, varied and low-pitched for such a small bird.

And the call is not the only surprising thing about them. A Brown Thornbill banded as an adult at Bridgewater, South Australia in 1978 was recaptured by researchers at the same place 17 and a half years later, making it at least 18 years of age.

In most areas they are sedentary, meaning not that they sit at home watching telly, but that they stay in the same area throughout their life and don't migrate. The furthest a banded individual has been known to travel was only 4 kilometres, but in many cases, a pair of birds will remain in the same territory, perhaps less than a hectare or two, for their entire adult lives.

Other "LBJs" in our area include other species of thornbill, the scrubwrens, heathwren, Brown Gerygone (pronounced "jer-RIG-a-nee"), and female fairy-wrens, whistlers and robins. It's always worth paying special attention to these "little brown jobs". Far from being dreary and difficult, they are fascinating and charming, and often allow a closer approach than larger birds. You might even find yourself being watched by a curious Brown Thornbill.

**Carol Proberts** ([origma@westnet.com.au](mailto:origma@westnet.com.au))



(Photo: Brown Thornbill, Carol Proberts)

**The Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Experience**  
[www.worldheritage.org.au](http://www.worldheritage.org.au)

## Membership Application Form

(Use capitals please—even for email address)

Name(s) 1. ....  
 2. ....  
 3. ....

Address: .....  
 ..... PC .....

Phone(s) .....

Email .....

**MEMBERSHIP FEES** (please circle one item)

Single \$30 Concession (Senior/Student)\$20  
 Household \$35 Concession (Senior/Student)\$25  
 Corporate (open to negotiation) \$100

Bushwalkers only:  
 (\$20 per walker per annum) \$.....

Donation (tax-deductible) \$.....

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

**TOTAL AMOUNT INCLUDED** \$.....

Note: All fees include GST at the relevant rate.

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; Web or database management; Plant nursery assistance; Bushcare; Publicity/photography; Water quality/sourcing studies; Society administration.

**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. ....

**ENQUIRIES:** Phone (02 4757 1872  
 Email: [membership@bluemountains.org.au](mailto:membership@bluemountains.org.au)

Please cut out and forward this form with your cheque or money order to:

**Blue Mountains Conservation Society Inc.**  
**PO Box 29, Wentworth Falls NSW 2782**  
**or pay online at [www.bluemountains.org.au](http://www.bluemountains.org.au)**

### The Tables Turned

By Graham Alcorn

The Emu and the Painted Snipe  
 And other species of this type,  
 Behave in a manner that could vex us  
 Men, reversing the role of sexes.

For instance, it's of no avail  
 Courting a Painted Button Quail,  
 Before you've considered what to do  
 The female Quail is courting you.

When she's laid the eggs she'll leave you,  
 Caring not that this might grieve you.  
 Alas, they'll never understand us  
 Men—they're polyandrous.

## 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.



*Phonognatha graeffei*,  
the leaf-curling spider.

Down the Wallaby Track: a backward glance, with John Low

## A GHOST OF THE ROAD

On Friday morning 29 August 1823 Thomas O'Brien, a young Irish free settler with pastoral ambitions, walked his horse onto the punt at Emu Ferry, crossed the Nepean River and rode up the Lapstone escarpment headed for Bathurst. The road he travelled, rough and steep in parts and hewn through dark 'forest' along a narrow ridge that dropped off alarmingly at times into deep valleys on either side, was described several years later by the anonymous letter writer 'XYZ' as "the most interesting of any of the roads from Sydney". He called the Western Road "the romantic road" and the years since its opening in 1815 have, indeed, seen a rich accumulation of stories about the people who lived, worked and travelled its length.

With its bicentenary fast approaching, we will all be challenged to engage imaginatively with many of these stories, especially those of the early years, when to cross the Blue Mountains was more like embarking upon an epic bush walk, a difficult, often dangerous, adventure through unforgiving country. Elizabeth Hawkins, fresh from England and with her husband, elderly mother and eight children, took 18 days to reach Bathurst in April 1822; in October that same year the judge and literary figure Barron Field, unburdened by family and belongings, made the journey in under half the time, declaring that, though the road had its difficulties, it was as safe as the road "from London to Bristol". Sadly, safe arrivals were not always the rule.

Around midday O'Brien arrived at Springwood and sought corn for his horse at the military depot, sharing a drink and conversation with the soldiers of the 48<sup>th</sup> Regiment stationed there. After refreshing himself and not being a man to rest much while travelling, he rejected the corporal's suggestion that he remain the night and made ready to leave. An inn had recently opened at the base of Mount York (Collits') and he was determined to make that his day's destination. While a soldier prepared his horse, O'Brien checked and reloaded his blunderbuss, reports of 'bushranging' prompting him to request fresh musket balls from the military supply. Thus armed and with bread to sustain him in the pocket of his great coat, he rode out of the depot before 2pm. The following morning his saddled horse wandered back into Springwood minus its rider. Thomas O'Brien was never seen again!

As the weeks passed and his brother Henry searched the mountains with increasing desperation, rumours and theories, implying everything from suicide to murder, began to circulate and the mystery of his fate passed into the folklore of the road. Within a few years "a melancholy spot" somewhere between present-day Linden and Woodford (a particularly rough section) was being referred to by travellers as the place where "O'Brien lost himself". It was here, no doubt, that the last trace of him had been found - several slices of bread scattered at intervals along the road!

John Low ([johnlow@iprimus.com.au](mailto:johnlow@iprimus.com.au))

## Wildlife at the Ivanhoe

*Phonognatha graeffei*, the leaf-curling spider is fairly common in the upper Blue Mountains during March. It weaves a leaf into the centre of its web as a hide away from birds and other predators. But sometimes a town-dwelling spider has to improvise.

This spider (photographed left) had its web on a shrub outside Blackheath's Ivanhoe Hotel. The snail shell would also be a good shelter from the rain—very useful this year! Christine.

## One hundred per cent renewable electricity for Australia (continued from page 7)

The important result is that renewable energy mixes can give the same reliability of the whole generating system in meeting demand as the existing polluting fossil-fuelled system.

Similar results and conclusions are obtained for the USA by David Mills in a paper presented at Solar 2011 [3].

The first UNSW paper does not consider the internal transmission requirements within the NEM region for 100% renewable electricity and so has not yet performed an economic analysis. More complex simulation models are being developed to tackle this task.

It should be emphasised that neither the modelling of ZCA nor UNSW establishes a timescale for the transition to 100% renewable electricity. However, the main body of the ZCA report claims that the transition could be made in a decade. That claim is actually an assumption based on the observations that Australia could supply the raw materials for manufacturing the systems and that solar and wind technologies are suitable for rapid manufacture.

While these observations are valid, they don't justify the notion of a very short timescale for the transition. ZCA doesn't consider the time needed to undertake a huge training program for engineers (especially electric power engineers) and other essential professionals, or the challenges of reversing the industry policies of many previous Australian governments that have decimated most of our manufacturing capacity, or the complex institutional reforms needed, such as changing the rules of the National Electricity Market. ZCA cites no literature on technology diffusion or even on wartime mobilisation of industry. An entirely different kind of research project is needed to investigate possible transition timescales.

### REFERENCES:

[1] Elliston, Ben, Diesendorf, Mark & MacGill, Iain, I. (2011) 'Simulations of scenarios with 100% renewable electricity in Australian National Electricity Market', Solar 2011 Conference, Australian Solar Energy Society, Sydney, 30 Nov – 2 Dec. <<http://www.ies.unsw.edu.au/staff/mark.html>>.

[2] Elliston, Ben, Diesendorf, Mark & MacGill, Iain, I. (2012) 'Simulations of scenarios with 100% renewable electricity in the Australian National Electricity Market', *Energy Policy* (in press) . doi:10.1016/j.enpol.2012.03.011.

[3] Mills, David R. & Cheng, Weili (2011, to be published) 'Powering the USA from wind and solar power', Solar 2011 Conference, Australian Solar Energy Society, Sydney, 30 Nov – 2 Dec.

*Dr Diesendorf's latest book is "Climate Action: A campaign manual for greenhouse solutions", UNSW Press, 2009, <http://www.unswpress.com.au/>*

## Welcome to New Members

Harold Thompson, Liverpool  
Robert Taylor, Leura  
Diana Taylor, Leura  
Tracy Longden, Blackheath  
Craig Whitford, Merewether  
Janice Riley, Leura

## Summary of President's Report 29 March 2012

BMCS President Lachlan Garland started by thanking the many volunteers who have contributed to the work of the Society during the past year – management committee, nursery volunteers, bushwalk leaders, bushcare volunteers, and others. "People are the most important part of our Society .. We are the largest regional conservation group in NSW and we are totally run by volunteers. Many outside the Society do not realise this and express surprise when told."

"My thanks go to the members of the Landuse, Objective 3 and Groundwater sub-committees who write letters, run workshops, conduct site visits and produce submissions amongst other things. These subcommittees are ably supported by a number of informal advisers who help with policy issues and detailed advice."

Lachlan reported that the Society's membership has remained fairly steady and is currently at 858 members. "Addressing ways of increasing membership further will be a task for the coming year."

Lachlan then went on to talk about some of the important events and campaigns during 2011/12. *Gardens of Stone Stage 2 Proposal*: "Last year, Tara reported the gazettal of Mugii Murum-ban State Conservation Area. This year, Capertee National Park was gazetted. Although this Park does not form part of the Gardens of Stone proposal (GoS2), if links are made as tentatively planned, it could form an extension to GoS2 and see the Capertee Valley surrounded by National Park.

"The Society celebrated turning 50 in October last year. A tree planting was held in the Buki Garden at the Conservation Hut and a celebratory dinner was enjoyed by many in the evening".

Following a successful court case run by the Environmental Defender's Office on our behalf, Delta Electricity admitted to polluting the Cox's River. "Our work isn't finished here. We now need to ensure the Environment Protection Authority and Delta does adequately protect this river now and into the future."

Our meetings are always interesting and cover a wide range of topics. The production of our interactive website to celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area has been followed up with the production of a DVD showcasing 40 panoramas from the website. Karen McLaughlin has produced a wonderful visitors' map of The Gardens of Stone. Our water bottles, part of our Drink Tap Water Campaign, are proving very popular with members and the general public as a whole.

We again contributed \$2,000 to help fund the Environmental Liaison Officer (ELO) based at our umbrella group, the Nature Conservation Council of NSW. The ELO helped the environment groups to work efficiently and run a joint campaign for the NSW State election.

*Coalpac Consolidation Project*: "This project to consolidate more open cut and high wall mining near the town of Cullen Bullen has sapped much of our time and resources. However, in saying that, we have managed to consolidate ourselves." (continued on page 12)

## BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY 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](http://www.bluemountains.org.au) or can be posted on request. For more information call Maurice Kerkham 4739 4942 email [mauricekerkham@hotmail.com](mailto: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. Before attending ring the designated contact person or the Group Co-ordinator Jim Percy 4758 6009 or email [jp34@tpg.com.au](mailto:jp34@tpg.com.au)

- Apr 14 **Transit of Venus Track.** Mabel, Edith and Hazel Waterfalls and Paradise Pool. Leader: Bob 4757 2694. Meet Woodford Station CP south side, 8.50 am. 6 km. Grade 2. Map: Katoomba.
- Apr 21 **Mount Piddington area. Ferris cave, Hornes Point and other surprises.** Leader: Liz 4754 4966. Meet at Mount Victoria Station 9am. Approx 8 km. Grade 2/3. Mount Wilson map.
- Apr 28 **Bell's Creek area, with some exploratory.** Scrambling. Party limit of 8 (wilderness area). **BOOK EARLY OR MISS OUT.** Leader: Hugh 4757 3145 or 0423 309 854, best after 8pm (SMS if unanswered). Grade 3. Mount Wilson map.
- May 5 **Deep Pass and River Cave.** Visit Stanley Chasm and the spectacular River Cave where you're guaranteed wet feet. Leader: Emanuel 4757 1090, after 7pm. Contact leader phone or email [emanuelanddi@yahoo.com.au](mailto:emanuelanddi@yahoo.com.au) Approx 6 km. Grade 3. Rock Hill map.
- May 12 **Baal Bone Point.** Spectacular 360 degree views—2 x 4WDs needed. Leader Bob 4757 2694. Meet Wentworth Falls Stockyard carpark (7.30 am) or Gearins Hotel CP (8 am). Approx 8 km. Grade 3. Cullen Bullen/Ben Bullen maps.
- Check the BMCS website ([www.bluemountains.org.au](http://www.bluemountains.org.au)) for updates.

**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 Maurice Kerkham, 4739 4942, [mauricekerkham@hotmail.com](mailto:mauricekerkham@hotmail.com)

- Apr 16 **Fortress Ridge.** "Views down the Grose". Grade 2. Contact Eddie 4784 2691. Meet Leura Station car park 9.30am. Car pool.
- Apr 23 **Sun Valley. "Walk Valley Heights to Warrimoo".** Grade 2. Contact Kate 4759 1943. Meet Valley Heights Rail car park 9.10 am.
- Apr 30 **Wollongambe Creek and Joe's Canyon, Mt Wilson.** "Spectacular creek and canyon view". Grade 3. Contact Maurice 4739 4942. Meet Mount Victoria Station 9.45 am. Car pool.
- May 7 **Rose Bay to Watson's Bay. Coastal walk.** Possible lunch at Watson's Bay. Grade 1. Contact Ken 0423 450 200. Meet top of escalators, Central Station, 9.30am.
- May 14 **Lockley's Pylon.** "Best views of the Grose and Mounts Hay and Banks". Grade 2. Contact Mary 4757 4569. Meet Leura Station car park 9.30am Car pool.

**THURSDAY PLEASURE WALKS:** Walks of 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, [roybev12@bigpond.net.au](mailto:roybev12@bigpond.net.au)

- Apr 12 **Popes Glen, Blackheath.** Walk up from Govett's Leap. Car pool. Take lunch. Meet Blackheath Neighbourhood Centre 9.45 am. Contact Barrie 4782 9235. Grade 2.
- Apr 19 **Silver Mist to Solitary Restaurant Leura** - cliff top walk with many lookouts. Car pool. Take lunch. Meet Katoomba Station Car Park 10.30am. Contact Joan c/o 47572076. Grade 2.
- Apr 26 **Fire trail to Yellow Rock Lookout, Springwood.** Car pool. Take lunch. Meet behind Springwood Civic Centre 9.30am. Contact Robyn 4751 6328. Grade 2.
- May 3 **Radiata Plateau, Katoomba.** Reasonably flat walk through heath to breathtaking lookout. Car pool. Take lunch. Meet Katoomba Station Car Park 10.30am. Contact Joan c/o 47572076. Grade 2.
- May 10 **Deanei Reserve, Springwood.** Wander through a blue gum forest. Meet behind Springwood Civic Centre 9.30am. Contact Maurice 47394942. Grade 2.
- May 17 **City walk to Lavender Bay** with option of climbing bridge pylon. Take lunch. Meet top of escalators Central Station 9.30am. Contact Chris 4757 2864. Grade 1-2.

### Summary of President's Report, 29 March 2012

(continued from page 11)

"We have over 1,000 supporters beyond our normal membership backing our opposition to this project. This project is now coming to a head and I encourage all members to make a submission when the time comes."

"The Land Use Subcommittee has continued to work on specific developments and planning policies at a Council and State Government level. A particular focus has been the Local Environment Plan 1991 review and we are working to have environmentally sensitive land protected through appropriate zoning."

"The Society has continued to attempt to protect the Newnes Plateau swamps by engaging with the various

companies that undermine the area. A number of submissions were made through the year regarding various mining proposals." This work is ongoing, with more damaging proposals about to rear their ugly heads. The success of the campaign to have this area reserved in a State Conservation Area is essential to lessen the impact of these activities. (You will be able to read the full report on our website [www.bluemountains.org.au](http://www.bluemountains.org.au))

JOIN Blue Mountains Conservation Society,  
or renew your membership online.  
[www.bluemountains.org.au](http://www.bluemountains.org.au)