



# STEP INC.

Community Based Environmental Conservation

## NEWSLETTER

No 43, February 1990

### A BATTY EVENING

We have arranged for the Ku-ring-gai Bat Colony Committee to present a Bat Evening to us. This will be an ideal opportunity for you and your children to get to know more about those dark silent shapes that fly across the night sky to who-knows-where; and to dispel any myths about bats.

The KBCC will have two of their tame bats there, for you to meet and touch. The evening will commence with slides and an introductory talk about bats in general and the grey headed flying fox - a fruit bat - in particular. Flying foxes are intelligent animals and there is some evidence they are, or are related to, the primate family (e.g. monkeys and humans).

Place : Sports Hall, Auluba Rd, South Turramurra

Date : Wednesday 2 May, 1990

Time : 7.00 pm

We suggest you bring a donation (say \$2 each) for the KBCC.

### LANE COVE VALLEY FREEWAY

Despite the announcements by the Government that the freeway will not be built in its current term there remains a very real threat to the bushland of the Valley. Most of STEP's recent efforts have been directed through the Coalition Against Lane Cove Valley Freeways. This group has published a statement of its objectives and a copy is enclosed with this newsletter. There can be no rest on this issue until all corridors, whether formally gazetted or not, are released and the whole of the Lane Cove Valley bushland is permanently protected.

STEP helped the Coalition finance a social impact study by Dr Judy Messer on the effect of the freeway on residents. This has provided a wealth of data which we shall summarise in a future newsletter.

### CASTLEREAGH FREEWAY

A Commission of Inquiry is underway into the proposed F2 or Castlereagh Freeway which impinges on the south side of the Lane Cove Valley bushland. STEP was invited by the Commission to make submissions to it and did so in writing and in an appearance before it by Jenny Simons. Apart from our interest in the bushland this has been an excellent opportunity to study the method and rationale of the RTA. Subject to critical scrutiny the EIS and supporting work of the RTA has been found to be deficient in many areas.



© M. Robinson  
Reproduced  
with permission

## LANE COVE RIVER VALLEY STORMWATER RUNOFF STUDY

The Lane Cove Valley Stormwater Study was instigated by the Northern Region of the Water Board in August, 1989 as an extension of its studies into sewer overflow problems. The study has been largely driven by the community with members drawn from such areas as conservation societies, universities and local government staff and elected representatives as well as Water Board employees. The study area extends from Thornleigh in the upper catchment to Fig Tree Bridge and includes tributary creeks from as far west as Carlingford and east to the Pacific Highway.

In general the study aims are to -

- . identify the extent and nature of stormwater problems
- . identify the environmental impact of uncontrolled stormwater, particularly on the natural systems of watercourses and bushland
- . research current stormwater management practices and policies and their effectiveness
- . prepare educational aids to improve community awareness and encourage control of stormwater runoff at source
- . implement trials for testing a variety of control strategies and rehabilitation measures
- . ultimately produce a Stormwater Management Plan for the valley

To achieve these aims six task forces were set up - Planning Controls, Monitoring, Education, Mitigation Measures, Rehabilitation Measures, Strategic Issues.

The project has so far completed identification of current policies and practices, set up a monitoring program and identified sites where trials of control measures could be implemented. Towards the end of the year two field days were held to demonstrate problem areas and selected trial sites.

The management of stormwater runoff in the Lane Cove Valley has implications for both bushland and water quality. Bushland suffers from scouring, nutrient enrichment and weed invasion as a direct result of urban water runoff. In streams the impact ranges from siltation to unwanted plant growth to toxic effects in stream life. A study of this nature has the potential to redress these problems and in combination with rehabilitation will aid the survival of the Lane Cove Valley's natural systems.

### THE STEP MAP

The final draft of our map is now with the Central Mapping Authority at Bathurst for cartographic amendments and then printing. The STEP Committee is indebted to the vision and hard work of Margaret Booth, who initiated and worked on this project, and to Dr Graeme Aplin of Macquarie University, who volunteered his expertise. In the final stages, Robyn and Peter Tuft and Ralph Pridmore have assisted with further checking and verification. We will soon be able to announce a launching date for our map, perhaps in heritage week.

### BUSHLAND MANAGEMENT WORKING PARTY

STEP is represented on Ku-ring-gai's bushland advisory committee by Robyn Tuft. This committee has been most influential in guiding the development of good bushland management practices and in monitoring their implementation. The Working Party's annual report is attached. We urge members to write to their local aldermen and to Council about any of the issues raised in the report.

## DEGRADATION OF BUSHLAND PROJECT

In the last issue of our newsletter, we dealt with the subject of weed invasion of urban bushland at some length. Many members responded to our request to let Council know of their concern with the problem of weeds in Ku-ring-gai, the need for Council to intensify its attack, and to allocate more funds to saving our bushland. If you didn't get around to writing last year, we would appreciate your doing so now, as it is important to keep up a steady pressure on this issue. The Committee is keeping the matter under review, and welcomes your support.

## FIRE HAZARD REDUCTION IN KU-RING-GAI

Ku-ring-gai Council's Fire Officer, Steven Ilek, addressed a recent meeting of the STEP Committee, by invitation. Steven is preparing a Fire Management Plan for the municipality and a Fire History map. He reported on Council's adoption of the ongoing maintenance of fire trails, together with the rehabilitation of trails no longer required, such as the Canoon Rd North trail; the use of hazard reduction burning at 10 yearly intervals; building codes for buildings adjacent to bushland; and a move to exclude future housing development from high bushfire risk areas. Steven also confirmed that Council is currently using the environment-friendly method of hazard reduction by handclearing which was pioneered by STEP, under the leadership of Alan Catford.

## BUSH REGENERATION

For our 1990 project, STEP proposes to work in the Twin Creeks Reserve which is bounded by Rothwell Rd, Mitchell Crescent, Roland Avenue, Kissing Point Rd, Howson Ave and the Comenarra Parkway. We are planning to meet fortnightly at the Reserve, on the 2nd Monday and the 4th Sunday of each month (except December, January and February). Each session will last about 2 hours. We hope that as many members as possible will attend - either occasionally or on a regular basis. The principles and techniques of bush regeneration will be taught to all newcomers by qualified bush regenerators. You will find that some of what you learn will be applicable to home gardening. Children are welcome. STEP supplies the necessary tools, but you should bring gardening gloves and a large plastic bag or garbage bag for the weeds.

Our first meetings of the year will take place in March.

Dates : Mondays        March 12, April 9, May 14 etc.  
          Sundays        March 25, April 22, May 27, etc.

Time : Monday 10.30-12.30, Sunday 2-4

Place : The culvert at the corner of Montrose & Rothwell Streets, Turramurra

KEEP AUSTRALIA BEAUTIFUL A phone-in is underway, sponsored by the North Shore Times and the Keep Australia Beautiful Council, for members of the public to express their concern about aspects of their immediate environment which are in need of attention by way of care, maintenance, etc. STEP members may like to take this opportunity to raise individual matters of concern. The STEP Committee suggests the issue of weed invasion. Is there a weed infested area near you?

Phone :552 1824

Times :10am - 3pm

Dates : Until Feb 28

## QUARRY CREEK PROJECT

STEP has been approached by Ku-ring-gai Council to become the manager of an ambitious bush regeneration proposal for Quarry Creek in 1991. (Quarry Creek originates in Bicentennial Park, flows under the Comenarra near Kooloona Ave, and joins the Lane Cove River in bushland near the end of Gloucester Ave. Stephanie Knox, of Ku-ring-gai Council is making a preliminary submission to the National Soil Conservation Authority. If the application is successful in principle, a detailed submission will be prepared. If that should be successful also, then Ku-ring-gai Council will match STEP's grant on a dollar-for-dollar basis. STEP is gratified to be approached by Council on this matter and has agreed to be nominated in principle. If the project were to go ahead, we would need the co-operation of many STEP members to ensure its success.

Therefore, if you are interested in becoming a bush regenerator, please join us this year at Twin Creeks Reserve. It is enjoyable, not overly strenuous, and is one way in which you can actively demonstrate your care for the environment. The Bradley method is an efficient low energy ( - but high person power) method of helping the bush to heal itself. Do come along.

MEMBERSHIP With this newsletter we have included a second invoice for those members who didn't get around to renewing their STEP membership for the current year (July 89 - June 90). Members give strength to an organisation such as ours, so we hope you will renew your membership. We would be sorry to lose your support.

NORTH SHORE RAILWAY CENTENARY As you may have noticed in the local press, this year the North Shore Railway Line is celebrating. A "Clean-up the Railway Corridor" day is proposed, the date to be announced shortly. STEP has supported this proposal.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY The STEP Committee agreed that it would be desirable to create a new position of Assistant Secretary. Our thanks to Committee member Judy Meacham for agreeing to take on this job.

RECYCLED PAPER A member of STEP has informed us that the Australian Geographic Society is selling recycled paper at a very good price ( phone 450 2344). Another supplier is Ecowise. They also sell rainwater tanks, passive solar greenhouses, a product called tempul which solidifies cooking oil and tea tree mulch. (phone 555 1322. 148 Beattie St, Balmain)

KU-RING-GAI RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION STEP members may be interested in joining this organisation which has a complementary role to ours. (Phone 44 5716; P.O. Box 270 Gordon 2072)

AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY OF BUSH REGENERATORS This is another organisation which may be of interest. From time to time they run introductory workshops on bush regeneration. (phone 419 6803)

BUSH REGENERATION PUBLICATION Robin Buchanan's new book is entitled " Bush Regeneration. Recovering Australian Landscapes ". Robin assisted STEP substantially in the preparation of our Plan of Management for Turramurra Bushland and was subsequently made an honorary member of STEP. We congratulate her on her latest achievement.

ART EXHIBITION Members will be interested to know about, and perhaps to visit, an exhibition of recent paintings by Yvonne Langshaw, a foundation member of STEP, Past President and Committee member. The exhibition runs from February 15 for approximately 2 weeks at the North Sydney Contemporary Gallery, 65 Union St, North Sydney. Times - Wed-Sat 11-6, Sun 12-4pm.

# GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL FUTURES

## NPA SYDNEY BRANCH LECTURE SERIES 1990

to be introduced at 6.00 pm, MONDAY, MARCH 12, 1990

by

PAM ALLAN

Shadow Minister for the Environment in NSW

A series of eight lectures from March to October will be held in the Hallstrom Theatre, Australian Museum, William Street, Sydney, from 6.00—7.00 pm. Cost is \$6.00 per night or \$35.00 for the series. Pensioners and students \$4.00 or \$22.00.

Monday  
March 12 "THE MODERN ENVIRONMENT  
OF ANTARCTICA".

What we are learning about the past environment from ice drilling and geological field studies.

Lecturer: Dr Pat Quilty — Deputy Director, Australian Antarctic Division.

Monday  
April 9 "CAN THE DESERT BLOSSOM  
AS THE ROSE?"

A review of the nature and causes of land degradation in rangelands and an outline of some alternative management strategies.

Lecturer: Dr Peter Mitchell — Senior Lecturer in Land Management, School of Earth Sciences, Macquarie University.

Monday  
May 14 "IS MODERN AGRICULTURE  
ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE?"

Australia has an excellent opportunity to provide global leadership in the development of ecologically sustainable and economically viable agriculture production systems.

Lecturer: A/Prof. E.W. (Snow) Barlow — Dean of Horticulture, University of Western Sydney/School of Biological Sciences, Macquarie University.

Monday  
June 18 "PROBLEMS OF WORLD CONSERVATION  
OF FORESTS".

A discussion of the problems of conserving the forests of the world against a background of increasing populations and changing technology.

Lecturer: Dr Kenneth R. Shepherd — Reader, School of Forestry, Australian National University and Silvicultural Consultant to Nepal/Australia Forestry Project.

Monday  
July 9 "IMPACT OF RISE IN SEA LEVEL ON  
ESTUARINE HABITATS".

New programs and revised priorities will need to be established through the mid 1990s to qualify the impact of sea level rise on estuarine habitats.

Lecturer: Rob Williams, M.Appl.Sci., Research Coordinator and Scientific Officer, NSW Fisheries Research Institute.

Monday  
Aug. 13 "ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE".

We have many options for shifting to less environmentally damaging fuels — for using non-fossil energy sources and above all increasing our efficiency of energy use.

Lecturer: Dr George Wilkenfeld — Energy Policy and Planning Consultant.

Monday  
Sept. 10 "WATER RESOURCES ISSUES".

Lecturer: Dr Peter Crabb — Senior Lecturer in Geography, School of Earth Sciences, Macquarie University.

Monday  
Oct. 8 "THE PROBLEMS OF ENVIRONMENTAL  
DEGRADATION CAUSED BY THIRD WORLD  
COUNTRIES' DEBTS".

Lecturer: Representative from AIDAB (Australian International Development Assistance Bureau) — to be announced later.

Cheques should be made payable to NPA, c/o Heather Roy, 34 Hilltop Road, Clareville Beach, NSW 2107, Phone 918 9259. Send self-addressed, stamped envelope for ticket please. Also payable at the door, but only 120 seats available.

Lectures are open to all members of NPA, their friends and the public.

Further enquiries: ring Heather Roy 918 9259 (H) Or Elizabeth Cameron 57 6621 (H).

This newsletter was compiled by Jenny Simons, John Burke, Robyn Tuft, Ralph Pridmore and Sue Jones.

### President

Jenny Simons  
242 Kissing Pt Rd  
Turramurra  
449 8945

### Secretary

Sue Jones  
40 Howson Ave  
Turramurra  
449 4718

### Treasurer

Geoff Suggate  
43 Bowen Ave  
Turramurra  
449 4029