



SOUTH TURRAMURRA
ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION
(S.T.E.P.) INC.

NEWSLETTER

JULY, 1987.

Yvonne Langshaw, President,
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Turrumurra. 2074. 449-1541.

Pam Morse, Sec. 449-3875.

Geoff Suggate, Treas. 449-4029.

On our June walk in the local bushland, led by Jenny Simons, we were joined by members of the North Shore Group, Society for Growing Australian Plants. This was a pleasant and leisurely walk from the end of Kissing Point Road to Browns Water Hole and then towards West Pymble with a stop for lunch and plenty of time for sharing knowledge of the flora.

NEXT CUTING--ASKANIA PARK. CURIMBAH--SUNDAY 26TH JULY, 1987--
Meet at 9.30 a.m. at Kissing Point Shops with a pick-up point at Fox Valley Shops.

Askania Park, winner of a 1986 N.S.W. Tourism excellence award, is a beautiful, rich, coastal rainforest with a great diversity of sub-tropical and warm temperate rainforest flora. The main features of the park are: over 160 different rainforest species, 7 rainforest species at their southern limit; 50 plant identity plaques along the walks; a 10 minute walk, a 40 minute walk, a 1 1/2 hour walk and a 2 hour walk; 12 paintings of the birds and animals of the forest are placed along the walks; over 100 different bird species have been recorded; picnic areas; gas BBQ's; children's playground; and Willy Wombat and Wally Wallaby live nearby. The tracks are of a very high standard and very easy walking.

We will be arranging a car pool to transport members and friends to the Park at a cost of \$5 (adult) \$2-50 (child). Additional entry charge is Adults \$3-50, pensioners and children 5-16 years \$2-50; groups of 20 or more \$2-50 each.

Bring picnic lunch or BBQ--some refreshments, tea, coffee etc. are available at the kiosk.

Please phone Yvonne Langshaw 449-1541 or Jenny Simons 449-8945 to reserve your place or offer transport. We expect to return to Turrumurra by 5.00 p.m.

For this "rain" forest visit it is advisable to bring some wet weather gear and wear suitable footwear.

FREEWAY NEWS.

The Roads 2000 study is a rational approach to road planning. It is the product of a reassessment of the State's requirements and the allocation of the likely available funds on a priority basis. There are other more profound considerations which Roads 2000 does not address--matters such as the outlook for fossil fuels, balance of payments (purchase of fuel and vehicles from overseas are two of Australia's highest import costs and balance of payment factors) and the proper role of public transport in our society.

The middle Lane Cove Valley corridor from Epping Road to Linley Point as well as the Blue Gum Creek corridor are being given up because they are no longer seen as having any role to play in the road system. This will save many hectares of valuable wetlands and bushland and the D.M.R. is to be congratulated on releasing this land back to the community.

However there is a continuing threat to the valley from the sections--Pearces Corner to Kissing Point Road and Kissing Point Road to Epping Road for possible construction after the year 2000. The Union of Lane Cove Valley Conservationists and Coalition for Urban Transport Sanity (S.T.E.P. is a member of both these organisations) are currently formulating a policy for a campaign against the construction of these sections of Freeway and alienation of any more Lane Cove Valley bushland.

1987 HAZARD REDUCTION.

Council's attempt at control burning the area below Geoffrey Street, South Turramurra has only been partly accomplished because of the wet conditions and only serves to emphasise the questionable effectiveness of this strategy. Word has been received that Council has no intention to burn the creek area and that the cleared access tracks will be repaired with cut brush.

CANCON ROAD NETBALL COMPLEX PARKING AND TRAFFIC PROBLEMS.

S.T.E.P. was alerted to the fact that the Netball Association recently circulated a petition asking Council to provide parking for some 400 to 500 vehicles at the Netball complex. This would inevitably mean destruction of more of the fragile and rare ridge top vegetation and appears contrary to views expressed at the meeting held at Council of all groups concerned.

More parking would mean more traffic on the already choked local roads. The whole complex is obviously too large and unsuited to the site with no through roads for free flow of traffic. A solution would be to locate games at two other centres in the municipality, thereby lessening traffic congestion whilst retaining valuable bushland and the amenity of the area.

Members can help by writing letters to Council Aldermen supporting retention of the bushland by locating games at other sites. (A 50 word "Votergram" can be sent to all Ku-ring-gai Aldermen on this issue for \$2--Contact "Votergrams" a division of Australian Community Relations P/L., Box 722 P.C., Crows Nest, 2065 (439-6083) or dropping a clearly printed message and \$2 to Greg Bloomfield, 16 Cancon Road, Turramurra.)

BROWN'S FOREST/DALRYMPLE HAY NATURE RESERVE, Mona Vale Road, Pymble.

Congratulations to Ku-ring-gai Bushland and Environmental Society on obtaining Community Employment Program funds to carry out further bush regeneration work in this important reserve. It is one of the few sizeable areas of publicly-owned land where the giant blackbutt and blue-gum forests which covered the fertile shale ridge-tops of the North Shore prior to European settlement, still exist. Ku.B.E.S. is fortunate to have the services of Helen Petersen as Consultant and Supervisor for the Project.

FRIENDS OF THE EARTH. World President, Des Wilson, will be speaking on "Face of the Earth--Global Environmental Problems--The Role of Citizen Action" WEDNESDAY, 29TH JULY, 1987, 7.30 p.m., Mereweather Building, University of Sydney.

ADDRESS GIVEN BY PROFESSOR CARRICK CHAMBERS, (formerly of Melbourne University and now Director, Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney) to a combined meeting of Ku-ring-gai Bushland and Environmental Society, West Pymble Bushland Society and South Turramurra Environment Protection Inc. on Thursday, 21st May, 1987.

The following are some excerpts from the address in which Professor Chambers firstly spoke about the Herbarium and its function and then went on to talk about his interests in conservation and plants as related to the work of scientists in the Herbarium.

"A small group of ecologists who are interested in the relationship of plants in the environment...are primarily concerned with mapping the existing vegetation in N.S.W. It might horrify you to know that vast tracts of the vegetation in N.S.W. is disappearing in our life-time and there is no mapping, no evidence of what was there. Now this does not apply to National Parks or forest reserves; it applies to the rural countryside. The most serious problem facing Australia today is associated with the decline of tree cover in our rural lands. As we clear more and more vegetation from the rural countryside, the few trees that are left age, and by and large Eucalypts do not live for long periods, they fail to regenerate under the pressure of European introduced grazing stock. They can't tolerate hares and rabbits and sheep and pigs and goats and cattle and horses. They can tolerate kangaroos. The vast area of land from which much of our wealth is derived as a nation is declining in productivity. That is an extremely serious thing.

As the cover is reduced, so is the amount of shelter and shade for stock. We are all familiar with that last lonely tree in the paddock and all the cattle clustered under it. They are transferring the nutrient from the improved pasture to under that tree which is marvellously adapted to a low nutritional regime. Trampled, lack of aeration of the roots, transfer of nutrients and ring-barking: finally the last tree in the paddock dies. And when the last tree in that paddock dies it takes with it the memory of what species were native to that area and that indeed is a tragedy in itself because it is losing the marvellous Australian character of the landscape.

But the next step is much more serious. The deep rooted trees were holding the water table down and the loss of trees allows what is often salty water table to rise, killing the roots of grasses. Sheet erosion starts and the land goes out of productivity. People downstream have salty water instead of fresh for their stock and their land goes out of productivity.

And I can take you to vast areas of inland N.S.W. and Victoria and even worse in Western Australia where this is happening on the most incredible scale--a quite unbelievable scale. The sort of scale we can't hope to battle completely successfully with the technology we now have available. If we put 9,000,000 trees back a year successfully in the paddocks of N.S.W. we wouldn't quite be holding our own."

Professor Chambers spoke further about the relationships of our native animals and plants and the part they play in keeping the grasses and woodlands in balance, and relating this to some of the problems in our bushland.

He concluded by emphasising the need for mapping vegetation so that only species indigenous to an area are replanted, thus retaining the marvellously unique character of the Australian landscape. S.T.E.P.'s role, supporting the Professor's challenge, is to maintain and indeed in some areas, restore, the character of our own bushlands. Copies of the complete address can be obtained from Y. Langshaw.