



ISSN 0727 7717

BUSHRANGER

Newsletter of the
Lane Cove Bushland & Conservation Society Inc

November 2016

NEXT MEETING

8 November 7.30pm

Lane Cove Tennis Club, Blaxlands Corner,
Kenneth St & River Rd

**The next newsletter will be late as the
editors will be on holidays!**

At our AGM the following executive positions were filled:

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| President | Margaret Bergomi |
| Vice Presidents | Ron Gornall, Graham Holland |
| Secretary | Shauna Forrest |
| Treasurer | Alexa Troedson |
| Committee | Frances Vissel, Matt Fisher Doug Stuart |

Other important positions were filled as follows:

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Assist Secretary | Ann Proudfoot |
| Correspondence | Jann Dark |
| Publicity Officer | Sue Ingham |
| Public Officer | Alexa Troedson |
| Newsletter Editor | Wendy Bishop |
| Assist Editor | Graham Holland |
| Newsletter Distribution | Win Chandler |
| General Emails | Alasdair Stuart |
| Bush Kids Rep | Corinne Fisher |
| Bush Kids liaison | Helen Jordon |
| BMAC reps | Norma Stuart, Yvonne Barber, Maralyn Lawson |
| Email monitoring | Mike Kelly |
| Web Maintenance | Bridget Kennedy |
| Twitter and Facebook | Gaye White, Sally Kennedy, Corinne Fisher |
| Plant Stalls | Ruth Neumann |
| Membership Officer | Alexa Troedson |
| Social Events | Helen Fisher |

What we have done

Cameraygal Sustainability Lane Stall

We thank Matt Fisher and Helen Jordan for the stall's success. Matt said he took a different approach this year, relaying a more simple (written) message so as not to overwhelm possible new members with issues, the very attractive photos of plants drew people to the stall.

Many joining forms were given out. 19 Bushwalks of Lane Cove' books, 1 'Beyond the Untidy Fringe' book and photo cards were sold. The stall also benefited from a very sunny day, no wind, with lots of people attending the Rotary Fair and our stall all day.

Greeting Cards



The ever-enterprising Corinne and Matt Fisher prepared greeting cards for sale to raise funds for the Society. It was a successful experiment with 115 cards sold and we plan to make them available to all members in 2017.

Many thanks to Ray and Elma Kearney and Matt Fisher for the use of their photos.

Greater Sydney Commission Lane Cove visit

The site visit on 6th October with GSC District

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Commissioner North Dr Deborah Dearing arranged by LCBCS and SBCRA was a follow up to the August Forum with the GSC.

We visited the Mowbray Precinct as a gross example of overdevelopment and also a large potential development site adjacent to sensitive bushland near Ventemans Reach.

Dr Dearing asked for photos of examples of good development in Lane Cove area. The 30-year old high density development in Helen Street area of Lane Cove North provided a good example. The scope of the authority of the GSC is still unclear. Four LCBCS members attended the Saturday environment panel workshop with TEC and GSC Environment Commissioner Rod Simpson.

NCC Annual Conference

Four members attended the NCC annual Conference as Society delegates. The following motion from the Society was adopted:

“That the NCC write to the Minister for Planning and the Minister for the Environment seeking assurances that in all merged councils the environmental policies regarding protection and maintenance of bushland are based on the highest standards that are now in place in respect of councils that have been merged.”

Website update from Bridget Kennedy

We are very lucky to have Bridget looking after our website with such competence & efficiency. This is what she's had to deal with recently:

In recent months the LCBCS website has been hacked twice. The first time was in July when the hosting provider noticed that a large amount of spam emails were being initiated from the site. The hosting providers then suspended the site. A considerable amount of work was undertaken to remove the offending code that had been embedded by the hackers in the backend files of the site. All passwords were changed and made more complex.

The site was then reinstated.

In September the site was again attacked. This time different code was embedded into the site by hackers. Google and 'CERT', a Federal Govt agency who keeps tabs on such things detected malicious content and a red 'warning' page was displayed whenever anyone attempted to access the website online. This time, Webcity, the hosting provider, did not detect any issues and did not suspend the site. However, the site was definitely corrupted.

A decision was made to move hosting providers (from Webcity to Gohosting) as we were concerned that

their backend server security may have been vulnerable to attack. A decision was also made to rebuild the Wordpress site on the new server as there was concern that we may not be able to fully identify and remove all the corrupt code.

The website is now in the process of being rebuilt. A number of pages were able to be created from an internet archive. However changes that had been made to the site in the last few months have been lost. Alasdair Stuart and I are slowly recreating these parts. Unfortunately this will take a bit of time. From the public's point of view, the website now looks fine and shows most information that they would need. Hopefully this will be the last of it.

Thanks Bridget. Even small-time innocents like us are vulnerable.

Council Amalgamations update

NSW Premier Mike Baird and Local Government Minister Paul Toole addressed the Local Government Conference in Wollongong on 17 and 18 October 2016. Their speeches were not well received by the majority of councillors - they were heckled and told to withdraw forced amalgamations.

The Premier promised to personally consult with Hunters Hill Council representatives over the proposed merger, and also revealed that :-

The magic "ideal" number of 150,000 people in the new forced merger of Lane Cove, Hunters Hill and Ryde was plucked out of the air - being mid way between Blacktown council (300,000 people) and Hunters Hill Council (15,000 people) - rather than being based on sound empiric evidence and the specifics of each case.

On June 30, we wrote to Minister Toole asking what specific quantified criteria were used to conclude that this merger would have sufficient "scale and capacity". **We now know why we have not received an answer, as the Premier revealed that there were no "specific quantified criteria". It's all arbitrary and at the whim of our politicians.**

Lane Cove Council continues the fight.

At its October 10 meeting, Council resolved to:

1. Lodge a Notice of Intention to Appeal against the judgment brought down in the Land and Environment Court against Council on 20 September 2016; and
2. Conduct a timely briefing session by the HWL legal team upon the release of the Woollahra judgment or at least two weeks prior to the expiration of Council's appeal period.

Stand up for Nature

Last week, the concrete jungle of Martin Place came alive with animal costumes, signs and chants as over

500 people rallied together for our wildlife.

What an incredible collective effort this campaign has been so far! We had heard that Premier Baird would table his new land-clearing laws as early as last week, but it now seems he'll try to introduce them sometime in November.

The best thing you can do to keep the momentum going is call Premier Baird on 8574 5000 and leave a message.

Let's buy more time to win this fight in the New Year - help keep our land-clearing laws safe for the rest of 2016!

Two things you can do right now for our wildlife:

Call Premier Baird - 8574 5000. More information and talking points here.

Tweet at Premier Baird or comment on his recent Facebook post.

With hundreds of people like yourself calling, the Premier's office will be busy, so you might be asked

to contact the Premier online instead. However, you're within your rights to politely insist on leaving a message over the phone.

For too long Mike Baird has allowed the National Party to write our environment policy. It's time for our Premier to stand up with the majority who support strong protections for our wildlife and bushland.

Farmers, scientists, environmentalists and 85% of submissions stand united against Premier Baird's plans to scrap our land-clearing laws! Let's keep urging Mr. Baird to ditch these unpopular changes.

Thanks for your passion in defending our wildlife, and thanks to all of you who've taken action so far!

Corinne for Stand Up For Nature

Stand Up For Nature is an alliance of conservation groups dedicated to improving protection for nature in NSW.



Lane Cove Coal & Gas Watch

The Lane Cove Coal and Gas Watch held a public forum to discuss the fact that NSW State Governments have continued to approve huge open cut coalmines on our farmland despite strong opposition from farmers and citizens and Victoria has banned fracking for coal seam gas but NSW is now offering new exploration licences to the CSG sector.

Sally Kennedy a member of the Coal and Gas Watch said "There is rising concern that we need to protect our farmland for farming so that we have access to fresh locally grown food."

"The real economic benefits of coal mining are worse than you think when you take into account the loss of jobs in other industries, such as tourism, wineries and horse breeding." "The well attended public forum included three experts in coal, energy and advocacy for locally grown food who explained the need for new legislation which puts people and communities ahead of the mining dollar".

The information they had to share left people in little doubt that they should speak up about the issues. A motion was put to the floor to do just that and it was passed unanimously.

A second motion was also unanimously upheld to ask Lane Cove MP Anthony Roberts, Minister for Energy and Resources to commit to not issuing any new mining exploration licences in NSW and to not renew any expired mining exploration licenses.

"There is still a long way to go but it would be a step in the right direction" said Sally.

Below: September Plant Stall, Lane Cove Plaza



In other news

New housing code

The NSW Government has released a draft of the Medium Density Housing Code. It proposed extending complying development and the scope for private certifiers, both of which are cause for concern. The Society will be making a submission and we suggest that members look at the documents. Submissions close on December 12th.

The documents are at: -

<http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/Policy-and-Legislation/Housing/Medium-Density-Housing>

About Jack Munday

Lane Cove author, architect and planner, Jim Colman, describes for the first time how Munday moved from his early days as a young builder's labourer from north Queensland to a leadership role in the Australian heritage movement.

Colman's book is a very readable, thoroughly researched and lavishly illustrated coverage of Munday's key achievements and activities in the planning and conservation fields during a busy half century. It reveals how this erstwhile communist and trade union leader became a dedicated conservationist who achieved fame – and notoriety – for exploits which were praised by the many, denounced by the few. And despite its evidence that we have made some solid progress in heritage conservation during the Munday era, it concludes with a warning from the man himself:

"The greatest single threat to the environment, locally as well as globally, is the rapacious greed of big multi-national corporations." **The House That Jack Built: Jack Munday, Green Bans hero.**

Published 2016. NewSouthBooks.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT FOR 2015-2016

I am pleased to provide the President's Report for the year 2015-2016. This has again been a very busy and successful year for the Society. We managed to find some time to celebrate the Society's achievements over the decades and to continue with active campaigning and liaising on crucial state-level environmental and conservation matters which will impact on our local environment. I would like to extend a particular thanks to the members of the Executive for their ongoing hard work and their unwavering support and counsel. Their experience and expertise remains invaluable to the Society. This expertise extends of course to all our members who have been active and instrumental in the success of our activities this past year.

Key Issues and Activities for the Society 2015-2016

We started the year with a stock-take of recent planning and pressures on our Lane Cove environment and an environmental scan of threats and opportunities for our natural environment, in particular our urban bushland. We examined development in Lane Cove with presentations by Doug Stuart and Guy Hallowes; threats to, and the management of, our bushland with insights from Maralyn Lawson; council amalgamations reported by Graham Holland. The aim of these presentations was to enable us to become more strategic in our advocacy focus within the resource constraints of the Society. We developed the following guidelines for 2016:

1. Advocate to retain as a minimum the current proportion of bushland and open space in Lane Cove.
2. LCB&CS to actively promote the establishment of a 'network' of neighbouring independent bushland/conservation advocacy groups (eg WEPA etc).
3. LCB&CS to become more savvy in the use of social media and grow our following.
4. LCB&CS to establish, as a sub-group of the Society, a "Friends of Lane Cove bushland". (Independent of any council).

It was not envisaged that we achieve these all immediately and I suggest that they remain relevant since much of the context in which these guidelines were developed continues – there is still no definitive outcome of council amalgamations and the Greater Sydney Commission has been established to take a proactive role in planning with the development of district plans to occur over the next months. The finalization of the NSW Biodiversity

Legislation Review is likely very shortly and there will be repercussions for our bushland.

Highlight of Activities

In April we held a **special event to mark the achievements of the Society** over the decades and to mark 25 years – a quarter century! – of the Society's work with Lane Cove Council through Council's Bushland Management Advisory Committee (BMAC). This was a special and unique occasion – I'm not aware of many community associations that have had such a long, productive relationship with their local council and that can claim a major role in the wonderful urban bushland reserves for which Lane Cove is renowned. St Ignatius College at Riverview provided the Cove Cottage for the special celebration, the Mayor of LC Cllr Hutchens opened our celebrations and Rod Tudge reminded us of the Society's significant role in the development of a local Bushland Plan of Management and the subsequent establishment of BMAC. Ron Gornall awarded certificates to the nine Society members (Norma Stuart, Margaret Bergomi, Ros Baxter, Frances Vissel, Yvonne Barber, Win Chandler, Shauna Forrest, Vickie Lee and Maralyn Lawson) who have contributed to BMAC over this time. Over 70 people attended the celebrations, including the Mayor and several councillors, past and current Council staff and 6 of the Society's 7 presidents. It was important to pay tribute to the hard work and achievements of the Society and its successful work with council over the decades.

A second major event was the **forum hosted by the Society with the Greater Sydney Commission** attended by representatives from some 32 community associations in the North Shore. The forum was addressed by Rod Simpson Environment Commissioner and Dianne Knott A/Director Engagement with Dr Deborah Dearing District Commissioner North attending for the Q&A session. A feature of the Q&A session was presenting questions prepared by participating groups to the Commissioners and having opportunity to engage with them through their responses. A survey conducted on the evening provided input to the GSC of our local community concerns and planning priorities as well as how we wish to engage with the Commission as it develops the District Plan. In October a further follow up was a bus tour for 9 Society members with experience in planning and bushland management with Dr Dearing of specific sites – Batten Reserve and the Mowbray Precinct, Ventemans Reach and the industrial area, and the centre of Lane Cove – to view and discuss examples

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of good and bad planning with key principles that we would wish to see incorporated as Dr Dearing develops the District Plan. We have established good communication channels with the GSC and our role in this will continue over the coming year.

A third major role this year was the ongoing work in relation to **fighting council amalgamations**. In addition to the submissions written by Graham Holland on the behalf of the Society, Sue Ingham tirelessly engages with Lane Cove community groups to support and guide action against this undesirable State Government policy. The fight continues.

In its **ongoing work the Society** expanded its role in protecting our natural environment with **the establishment of the Coal and Gas Watch** as a sub-committee to campaign for no go zones for coal and coal seam gas mining with a campaign timeframe until the 2019 State election. As previously we continued with submissions in relation State environmental and planning changes as well as the local development applications which affect the bushland of Lane Cove. The **Lane Cove Bush Kids Advisory Committee** was established to continue its guidance of the LCBK program in this first year of its operation with LCC - chaired by Corinne Fisher with members Norma Stuart, Ann Proudfoot and Helen Jordan working with Council staff. The Society again held two native plant stalls in the plaza in March and September, Matt Fisher provided our stall at

Sustainability Lane, Ron Gornall lead a particularly well-attended spring bushwalk at The Sanctuary North Head and we contributed three members (Norma Stuart, Maralyn Lawson and Yvonne Barber) to be part of the BMAC. We are also participating as community representatives on Ausgrid's Tree Trimming Working Group. The monthly newsletter produced by Wendy Bishop and Graham Holland continues to inform members and Alasdair Stuart regularly emails our members of developments. Society emails are regularly monitored by Mike Kelly , our website is well maintained by Bridget Kennedy and Gaye White and Sally Kennedy continue to keep our facebook page current and relevant. However, overall we will need far more members with social media skills – this is where future communication lies.

The Future

The many hard-won environmental achievements of the past decades remain under threat and the coming year will be just as busy. We will need to be strategic in our activities and to work within our resource capacity. Especially we need to remember that major activities require serious commitment with follow-through and that needs to be factored in our planning. Thankyou all for your constructive and productive work 2015-2016 and the wonderful ability of the Society to advocate harmoniously for the benefit of our environment.

Ruth Neumann, President, 11 October, 2016

