

## **ROD TUDGE SPEECH -BMAC 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration 12/4/2016**

### **The history of the Bushland Management Advisory Committee.**

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Member of the Lane Cove Bushland and Conservation Society  
Councillor Lane Cove Council, 1983 to 2012  
Mayor, 1995-1996

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Things do not just happen; people make them happen. The Bushland Management Advisory Committee didn't just happen it was a concerted effort by a number of people over many years.

And although the Bushland Management Advisory Committee has only been in existence for 25 years its formation has as its genesis in the 1960s and 70s. Lane Cove Council has supported active programs in the conservation of its bushland since the 1960s and was the first council to adopt the Bradley regeneration technique, employing the Bradley-May team in 1978. Bush Regenerators have been employed on staff since 1979, but some weeding of bushland areas was done by Council staff as early as 1972 and bush regeneration volunteers worked at Greenwich Point from 1967-72 in Bushland Park and Batten Reserve.

The Lane Cove Bushland and Conservation Society has contributed to urban bushland management since its formation in 1971. It has advised Council on bushland management matters and has played a vital part in raising a constituency for bushland conservation in Lane Cove. The Society played a key part in the preparation of the original Plan of Management for Bushland.

Council's Tree Preservation and Landscape Policy, first adopted in 1983, reflects the importance of bushland to the character of Lane Cove. Retention of remnant indigenous trees, replanting with indigenous species grown from locally collected seeds and landscaping requirements for public land and land that was subject of a development consent all contribute significantly to the bushland character of Lane Cove.

In the 80s there was a study of runoff and into impacts on bushland. This study indicated that Lane Cove's gullies were changing from dry to wet sclerophyll because most of runoff was being channelled through the drainage system. Further, when rain entered the gullies it had a propensity to generate erosion. Thus the report recommended the systematic treatment of the problem and suggested a committee to manage the implementation. This committee recommended that the council develop bushland management plans, or a plan of

management, for bushland. This plan took many years to develop and relied heavily on the expertise of the Lane Cove Bushland and Conservation Society and council staff working in collaboration. In particular, a great deal of support internally was given by Jack Hartman and the Bushland Management Manager, Bruce Stuckey.

To measure the effectiveness of the Bushland Management Advisory Committee, when I first joined council, in 1983, Council was spending approximately \$30,000 a year on bushland management, today it is fifteen times that amount.

Many people have contributed to BMAC over the years. However, I would like to name some long serving members Norma Stuart, Lynne McLoughlin, Frances Vissel, Susan Butler, Margaret Bergomi and Rosilyn Baxter.

The first Plan of Management for Bushland in Lane Cove was adopted in 1990 and resulted in the appointment of the Bushland Manager and a Bushland Management Advisory Committee (BMAC) to coordinate and evaluate the bushland program.

BMAC is the only known such committee having direct internal administrative connections to their local council and this has been the real strength of the committee. In Lane Cove, bushland management includes bush regeneration, track and bush drainage works, development assessment and environmental planning. by Council staff, contractors and volunteers. The plan of management was revised in 1995/96 and regularly thereafter every 5 years.

Lane Cove Council in response to recommendation of the Bushland Management Advisory Committee has continued to fund ongoing bush regeneration and other project works associated with bushland. These include a network of sign posted walking tracks, landscape studies and plans for specific bushland reserves and their surrounds, stormwater initiatives, plant and animal surveys and education materials for residents and schools. There was a significant increase in funds for bushland work in 1988, partly from Bicentennial grants, and again in 1995, in response to increased grant funding from the NSW and Australian Government.

Development Control Plan (DCP) 1 - Control of Development Adjacent to Bushland was adopted by Council in 1994. This DCP was prepared in response to development pressures arising on properties with a common boundary to bushland reserves, residents' reaction to these pressures and determinations in the Land and Environment Court on development applications for two of these properties. The control plan aims to protect bushland, both private and public, from development through to development standards which encourage sustainable building and landscaping design.

When Mayor of Lane Cove I instituted a trip for every newly elected councillor on the Lane Cove River. I would proudly point out that looking at Hunters Hill you saw the trees between the houses, looking at Lane Cove you saw the houses between the trees. All this is due, in no small part, to the Lane Cove Bushland Management Advisory Committee and the Lane Cove Bushland and Conservation Society. If you wish an epitaph to their work look around Lane Cove.

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