



Eucryphia

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Robertson Environment Protection Society – to promote the protection and enhancement of the Robertson Environment
PO Box 3045, Robertson NSW 2577 www.reps.org.au

Next REPS Meeting
Friday 10th June 2011 at 7:30pm
at the Robertson Community Centre

Robert McLean

New Directions in Landscape-Scale Conservation, with a focus on Northern and Western Australia.

Robert McLean is a businessman and a conservationist.

At the time of his retirement from McKinsey & Company in 1997, where he was Managing Director, he invited the The Nature Conservancy (TNC), the world's largest conservation organisation, to establish a presence in Australia. Over the past 10 years TNC has worked with partners such as Bush Heritage, Greening Australia, Australian Wildlife Conservancy, and most recently the Indigenous Land Corporation to protect almost 4 million hectares of high biodiversity land, an area greater than the size of Kakadu and the Blue Mountains National Park together. Rob is Chairman of The Nature Conservancy Australia Board and a member of the Asia Pacific Council of The Nature Conservancy.



Robert McLean

Rob and his wife Paula have had property on the Wingecarribee River at Berrima for almost 20 years. They are members of Land for Wildlife and the Berrima Residents Association.

Rob grew up in Broken Hill where he attended the Broken Hill High School. He holds a first class honours degree in economic statistics from the University of New England. He has an MBA from Columbia University which he attended as a Fulbright scholar.

All welcome. Active discussion. Light supper (Gold coin donation)

Upcoming Events

Thu 2nd June – Talk by Catherine Lewis, landscape architect, 2pm, CWA Hall Moss Vale. page 8
Sun 5th June – CTC 2pm Sunday Series, 'Love On The Run', page 8
Fri 10th June – REPS Talk, Robert McLean 'New Directions in Landscape Scale-Conservation'
Sat 11th June and Sat 25th June – NPA Bushwalks, Red Rocks & Forty Foot Falls, page 8
Sat 25th June, 30th July – Caalang Creek Working Bees – 9:30am onwards, page 8

From the president

Our March meeting presentation was, once again, highly interesting and relevant to our environmental concerns, demonstrated by our keen response with questions and comments from many present. We owe much to David Tranter for engaging so many worthwhile speakers and look forward to the June meeting.

It is indeed good news that Lynn Stevenson is making a pleasing although gradual recovery. She nevertheless will be unable to continue as secretary and I am delighted to announce that Georgina Persse has volunteered to take on this role. Sincere thanks to Georgina from the committee.

Descriptions and names of the wonderful rainforest plants that make our environment special are of great interest to many of us. Sometimes, for various reasons, names are altered. Two highly useful books that have been widely used were edited by Gwen Harden, Bill McDonald and John Williams and published by the University of New England. Gwen has now published revisions of these with updated names and data. Her website, www.rainforests.net.au, advertises these books. Especially interesting there is news of a Rainforest Interactive DVD that is in preparation. Hugh and Nan Nicholson, well known for six books of rainforest plant photographs, are also participants in the project, along with Terry Tame. It will doubtless be a marvellous tool for identification of our local vegetation.

Allan Stiles

April Talk Review

by Leo Butler

Tim Beshara – “The Great Eastern Ranges Conservation Corridor Initiative – Robertson and Southern Highlands District” talk presented at the Robertson Community Centre, Friday 8th April 2011.

David Tranter began by outlining Tim’s background in community conservation and his role within an exciting new project aimed at connecting critical biodiversity corridors along the Great Dividing Ranges from Atherton in northern Queensland to the Victorian Alps in the south (now known as the Great Eastern Ranges Initiative, the GER). The program is a joint initiative with 6 partnership organisations across the eastern seaboard of Australia. Tim, as Science Manager with Greening Australia, has responsibility to coordinate across community

organisations and government and private bodies to support effective on-ground conservation projects (based on credible science) on a large scale which will help “connect the dots” along the GER.

Tim stated that we must look at the GER as connected ecosystems of high species richness and endemism, similar to a land-based version of the Great Barrier Reef. Fragmentation is a major problem across the GER with several critical “bottlenecks” of animal migration occurring within NSW, including the Hunter/Mudgee area and our own Southern Highlands/Illawarra. Tim outlined the recent Mackay report which provided evidence that during cycles of greening and browning across Australia (wet and dry periods respectively) animals will migrate into areas of more favorable conditions. He emphasised the need for connectivity across the GER on several scales – ecological, habitat, landscape and ultimately evolutionary which will ensure Australian biodiversity can sustain itself indefinitely.

Tim’s role is centered within the Southern Highlands and Sydney areas of the GER. Up to 15 partnership organisations now exist within the region, largely due to the enthusiasm of Greening Australia and the Hawkesbury-Nepean Catchment Management Authority (CMA). Tim has already collaborated with Sydney University on a major fencing and re-vegetation project at Arthursleigh on the Wollondilly River (planting up to 15 species focusing on tree and shrub layers). He outlined how the GER Initiative will present opportunities for local conservation organisations such as REPS to liaise with council and other partnership organisations, and contribute to on-ground action on a large scale. Local knowledge and action is the heart of the project, and he outlined how user-input is being developed into the Atlas of Living Australia online. This will allow individuals and groups to record and input observations of flora and fauna (especially threatened species). Hopefully, in the long-term a nationwide data-base will be created allowing local knowledge to provide valuable support to the conservation projects along the GER.

Tim’s talk actively engaged all present during the evening and he expressed his enthusiasm for working with REPS and other organisations across the Southern Highlands. Tim was given warm applause and thanked with a gift of appreciation.

From the archives:

a short history of how the guide to the Yarrawa Brush book came to be written

by Helen Tranter

From the foundation of our Society there was a great interest in learning more about the rainforest vegetation around Robertson and field days were organised to identify rainforest species on members' properties. Those working in the Nature Reserve compiled a list of the species growing there with help from Phillip Kodela at the Royal Botanic Gardens. John Williams from the University of New England also helped with identification when he visited Robertson. In June 1991 funding became available under the Save the Bush scheme and REPS decided this could be used to prepare a booklet, to be given free to landholders, to help them identify and value the rainforest remnants on their properties, so helping to maintain species diversity.

REPS was told in January 1992 that they would receive a grant of \$4,400 but the project must be completed in 12 months. David Tranter took on the task of editor. Allan Stiles wrote sections on history, ecology and conservation and a map of the patches of rainforest remnants was prepared for the centre of the booklet. Helen Tranter wrote species notes and drew up keys based on leaf shape and structure. Leaf diagrams for the keys were done by Neil Boughton and Neil also prepared a collage of these for the back cover. Bob McInnes took photos of all the species described in the text and Marion Westmacott, of the Botanic Gardens Trust, provided a botanical drawing of *Eucryphia moorei* for the front cover. Copies of the text and photos were sent to several experts for review and comment.

Lots of hard work and co-operation meant that 1500 copies of the book were able to be printed in December 1992. In February 1993 a very successful and well attended launch was held in the Robertson School of Arts, including plant sales and a display of the plants described in the book. The many local landholders who came along were happy to each receive their free copy of the book

And the Lord spake

And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying "I have good news and bad news. You will go before the Pharaoh and demand that he release all the Hebrew slaves. He will refuse and I will smite the Egyptians

with ten plagues. Eventually, he will let your people go but will change his mind and will go after you. I will then drown his entire army, then lead you through the desert, feeding you on manna, and bringing you to a land flowing with milk and honey."

"That's wonderful, Lord. But what is the bad news?"

"You, Moses, will have to write the Environmental Impact Statement."

The Brush-tailed Rock-wallaby www.rockwallaby.org.au

Melinda Norton spoke at our February meeting in 2008 and I noticed that there was an article in 'Your Times' May edition written by Ford Kristo about the Brush-Tailed Rock Wallaby. You can pick up a "Friends" membership form from the CTC. Ed



Photo: <http://fnpw.org.au/>

Note from Melinda Norton

Hi all – just thought I'd put it out there that the Friends of the Brush-tailed Rock-wallaby group are looking to increase their membership in order to be able to qualify as a deductible gift recipient (DGR). This would mean that all donations to the group would be tax deductible. In addition to this, it's always good to get new members. So, if anyone is interested I have attached a membership form and their brochure. Details on how to join are on both these documents. Please consider joining and helping support our local rock-wallabies. Please also consider sending this on to anyone you think may be interested,

Melinda Norton
DECCW | Highlands Area | (02) 4887 8256

As individuals and as a civilisation we depend, probably more than we know, on domestic animals. Some, especially the horse, excite and delight; but not the sheep, though it must head the list of animals valuable to man – providing clothing and food, and as a reminder of man’s responsibility for created nature. Not, though, a popular subject for poetry.

Psalm 95, verses 6 and 7

O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before
the Lord our maker.
For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture,
and the sheep of his hand.

St Luke’s Gospel, chapter 2, verses 5 to 11

To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great
with child,
And so it was, that, while they were there, the days
were accomplished that she should be delivered.
And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped
him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger;
because there was no room for them in the inn
And there were in the same country shepherds abiding
in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.
And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the
glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they
were sore afraid.
And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I
bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to
all people.
For unto you is born this day in the city of David a
Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

St John’s Gospel, chapter 21, verses 14 to 16

This is now the third time that Jesus showed himself to his
disciples, after that he was risen from the dead.
So when they had dined, Jesus said to Simon Peter. Simon, son
of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him,
Yea, Lord: thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him,
Feed my lambs.
He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas,
lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that
I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

Tommy Thumb’s Pretty Song Book, circa 1744

Baa, baa, black sheep,	One for the master,
Have you any wool?	And one for the dame,
Yes, sir, yes, sir,	And one for the little boy
Three bags full:	Who lives down the lane.

William Shenston (1714–1763): from **A Pastoral Ballad**

My banks they are furnish’d with bees,
Whose murmur invites one to sleep;
My grottoes are shaded with trees,
And my hills are white over with sheep.

A B Paterson (1864 – 1941): **Shearing at Castlereagh**

The bell is set a-ringing, and the engine gives a toot,
There's five-and-thirty shearers here a-shearing for the loot,
So stir yourselves, you penners-up, and shove the sheep along -
The musterers are fetching them a hundred thousand strong
And make your collie dogs speak up; what would the buyers say
In London if the wool was late this year from Castlereagh?

The man that 'rung' the Tubbo shed is not the ringer here,
That stripling from the Cooma-side can teach him how to shear.
They trim away the ragged locks, and rip the cutter goes,
And leaves a track of snowy fleece from brisket to the nose;
It's lovely how they peel it off with never stop nor stay,
They're racing for the ringer's place this year at Castlereagh.

The man that keeps the cutters sharp is growling in his cage,
He's always in a hurry; and he's always in a rage -
'You clumsy-fisted mutton-heads, you'd turn a fellow sick,
You pass yourselves as shearers, you were born to swing a pick.
Another broken cutter here, that's two you've broke today.
It's awful how such crawlers come to shear at Castlereagh.'

The youngsters picking up the fleece enjoy the merry din,
They throw the classer up the fleece, he throws it to the bin;
The pressers standing by the rack are waiting for the wool,
There's room for just a couple more, the press is nearly full;
Now jump upon the lever, lads, and heave and heave away,
Another bale of golden fleece is branded 'Castlereagh'.

Helping Citizen Science grow in Australia...

As promised, Tim Beshara has sent the link for “The Atlas of Living Australia”, an interactive website which allows people to record species of all types in their locality. You can have a look at this website and see that a number of species have already been recorded in Robertson and surrounds.



From the website:

“The Atlas of Living Australia” has developed a Citizen Science web application to help naturalist groups and researchers collect species observation information from community volunteers. We have set up a number of demonstration sites where you can explore what’s been done...

Across all of our implementations of the software, one thing is common – we want to provide useful tools for citizen scientists to use, but we also want to help make this data available to a wider audience, by allowing the data to be mobilised through the Atlas of Living Australia.

<http://www.ala.org.au/>

The Secret life of Plants

REPS member Joan Freere thought this article would be of interest to REPS members. You can subscribe to New Scientist or come into the CTC to read the full article. It is also relevant since the Sydney Fungal Studies Group recently held their annual fungi foray in Robertson to study the species found in the Robertson Nature Reserve.

Scientists have been experimenting with the idea that plants communicate for the purpose of social co-operation, or sometimes to gain advantage, by sending chemical messages. There is also work being done looking at the mycorrhizal network and how plants use it to share water and nutrients and possibly as a communication tool.



Photo by Denis Wilson, *Mecopodum striatum* taken at the Robertson Nature Reserve

Heard it on the grapevine: The secret society of plants

29 March 2011 by Ferris Jabr

Magazine issue 2805

The botanical underground is a social network of powerful alliances and nepotism. Decoding its messages could lead to radical change in farms and forests. Every autumn swarms of dusty grey moths engulf the mountainside birch forests of northern Scandinavia, laying their eggs on twigs so that, come springtime, the newly hatched larvae can feast upon budding leaves. It looks like a battle that the trees, with no natural defences, are doomed to lose, but some have a secret weapon. They form an alliance with a neighbouring plant, a kind of rhododendron, borrowing wafts of its volatile insecticides as a sort of olfactory camouflage. "This kind of interaction has never been observed in the field before," says Jarmo Holopainen at the University of Eastern Finland in Kuopio, who made the discovery (New Phytologist, vol 186, p 722).

<http://www.newscientist.com/>

Robertson and surrounds e-news

Would you like to subscribe to the free monthly Robertson e-news? Follow the steps below and a newsletter will be sent to your email address at the beginning of each month,

1) Click on the link below to the Robertson e-news page on the tiny letter website.
<http://tinyletter.com/robertsonctc>

2) Enter your email address and click on the subscribe button.

3) Tiny letter will send you an email to confirm your registration. You need to confirm your subscription by clicking on the link in the email.

The newsletter content is put together at CTC@Robertson and includes relevant information for Robertson residents.

Ancient False Teeth Discovered in Ancient Lake Bed

by Caroline Graham
Vice President
Rivers SOS Alliance

Many years ago, a German man was boating on the most beautiful of the five once beautiful Thirlmere Lakes. Overcome with joie de vivre, he was yodelling with great energy as his little boat bobbed on the blue water. But, to his dismay, his false teeth came loose and flew out into the lake, disappearing into the depths. He and his friends did their best to find the precious set, diving and probing, but with no success.

Now, we want to find this man!

We want him to know that on 9 May, a group went down to inspect the Lakes, which now seem to be permanently dried up. Lo and behold, the teeth were found on the desiccated bed of Lake Nerrigorang. We have a photo of the teeth, taken by Denis Wilson of Australian Water Campaigners. It is on the entry for 12 May, on his "peonyden.blogspot.com".

The story of the yodelling man has been confirmed by June Racklyeft who, with her late husband, used to run the holiday camp on Lake Nerrigorang and still lives (with her memories) at Thirlmere.

Meanwhile we on the executive committee of the Rivers SOS Alliance harbour the suspicion that longwall mining, which was allowed to go within 700m of the Lakes, may be responsible for the fact that the Lakes have been progressively drying up since mining went through in the late '90s.

The Lakes were the jewels in the crown of the World Heritage listed Greater Blue Mountains National Park. Rivers SOS is contacting the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, which monitors the World Heritage sites, to ask one of their officials to visit NSW and see how we look after our most precious environmental assets.

The Lakes were loved and used by generations of local people around Thirlmere/Tahmoor/Picton. They are supposedly looked after by the National Parks and Wildlife Service and the DECCW department but they have, until now simply attributed the drying of the Lakes to the "Drought". After our site inspection with the NPWS officials, they have now arranged for several monitoring bores to be installed close to the lakes.

Local residents have produced a selection of their old photos for us, to prove that the lakes were usually full - now they are just mud puddles or dried and cracked peat. They have been empty on two occasions of major drought in the last 100 years, but have always refilled rapidly. No longer .. These lakes are said to be 15 million years old.

Anyone may Google "Thirlmere Lakes" to access information about the unique status of the lakes, their great scientific value, and the rare and endangered species they contained.

Rivers SOS is campaigning for an Independent Inquiry into the tragedy. No, this won't save the Lakes. But if longwall mining has damaged the aquifers which fed the lakes for 15 million years, then at least governments in future will be able to avoid approving mine plans going too close to sensitive and irreplaceable sites like this one.

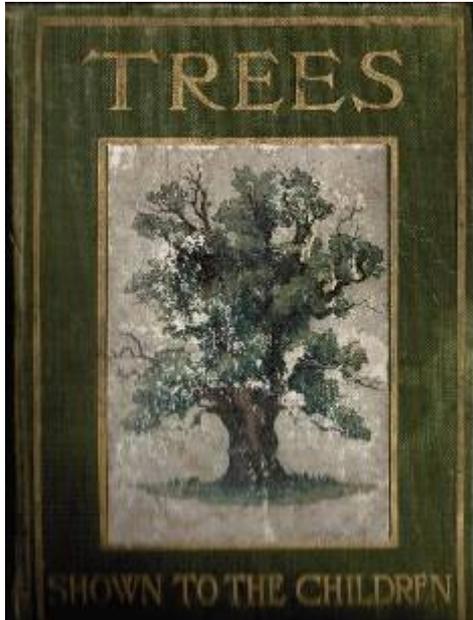
Wollondilly Council supports this call, as does the new MP for Wollondilly, Jai Rowell, who used to camp on the lakes in his youth.



Photo: Denis Wilson

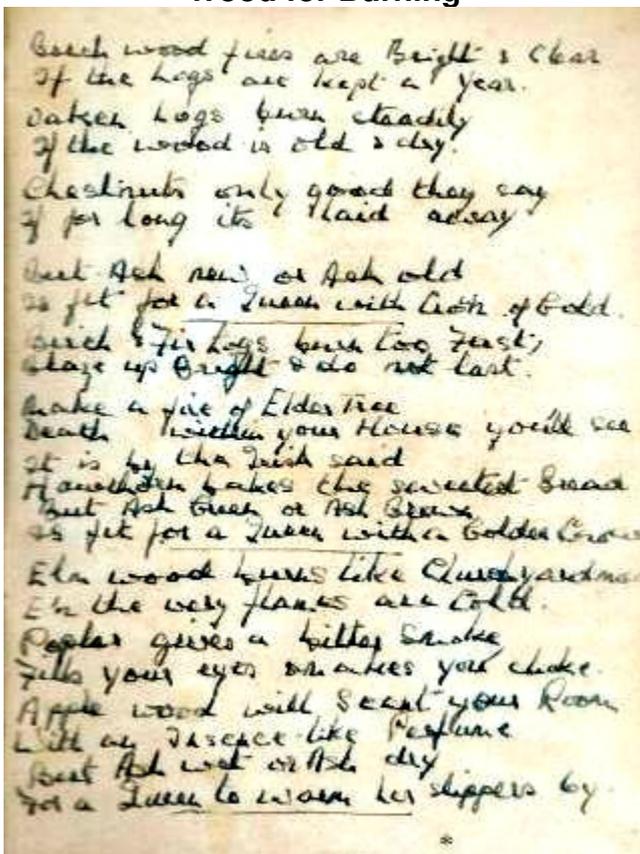
Trees – from a series of books “Shown to the Children”

Well-known member Jan Hainke has kindly lent us a book of her mother’s, inscribed 1917, describing the common trees of Britain and with beautiful colour illustrations.

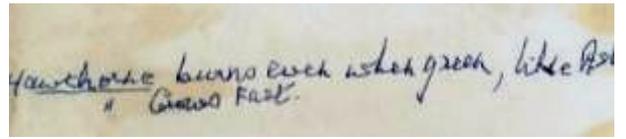


On the fly leaf at the front is a hand-written poem

“Wood for Burning”



and an extra note written opposite



The descriptions in the book are very clear and charmingly detailed. You might like a look? Check with Jan.

In reply:

This is a wood poem sent by Lyndal Breen after reading the “Wood for Burning” poem. This was published as a picture book in 1995 by Cameron Miller and Dominique Falla.

Wood Lore

Yew trees grown throughout the ages,
 have the wood the bowyer favours.
 Maple and spruce are always kings
 for makers of lutes and violins.
 Bodgers made the Windsor chair
 from Beechwood turned and left to air.
 Alder wood is cut into logs
 Seasoned, tapered and carved into clogs.
 For furniture fit for royalty
 The New World gave Mahogany.
 Blackwood and Box are hard and dense
 to make sweet woodwind instruments.
 The use of cherry and walnut defines
 the simple beauty of Shaker designs.
 When ships sailed out from dock to trade,
 of Burmese Teak the decks were made.
 Traditionally Yellow Pine of course
 makes the perfect rocking horse.
 Oak flitches are what the cooper saves
 the best are used for barrel staves.
 A camphorwood chest for clothers, they say
 keeps moths and silverfish away.
 Young Willow trees that grow in glades
 are split into wedges for cricket bat blades.
 Ash felloes are best the wheelwrights say,
 cut from boughs that bend the right way.

If you have any ‘gems’ of your own to share, we’d love to have them. Ed



Next REPS Working Bees Saturday 25th June & 30th July

Meet at the footbridge in Hampden Park from 9:30am onwards. Don't forget water, hat and gloves. We now have tools available, but if you can, bring your own.

Queries to Steve Douglas 42714957 or Leon Hall 48882222.

Help Care for Our Nature Reserve 1st Wednesday of each month 9:00am to noon

All welcome. Please bring garden gloves. For further information, phone Ford Kristo (NPWS) during business hours: 4887 8244

Australian Plants Society

- 2nd June, 2pm, CWA Hall Moss Vale. A talk by Catherine Lewis, a landscape architect with an interest in native flora.
 - 3rd July, 10am, Fitzroy Falls visitor centre. A walk along the track and a look at the plant specimen collection.
-

NPA Walks

Saturday 11th June, Red Rocks NR Mt Cambewarra

Grade 3 - 14kms - 100m asc/desc

The walk follows a fire trail to a trig point overlooking Kangaroo Valley. A side track out to Brown Mountain Lookout on the return journey passes an aboriginal site.

Contact Joan Lowe 48612996 or 0417492981
joan.lowe@bigpond.com by Thursday 9th June.

Saturday 25th June, Mt Alexander Nature Reserve

Forty Foot Falls and the Incline

10.5 km - long, steep ascent, descent

Walk commences from the Boxvale Picnic area. Walk out along the Boxvale Track to 40 Foot Falls and along the Nattai. Follow the Nattai to Boxvale Creek and ascend the very steep old skip loading track.

Contact Liz Thompson 48691483 or 0400493312 by Thursday 23 June
Map 8929-2S Mittagong

Saturday 23rd July, Budderoo NP Gerringong Falls

Grade 3 18kms 100m asc/desc

The walk is mainly on a fire trail but there is some rough track to gain access to the falls. There is some swampy ground and a couple of creek crossings.

Contact Joan Lowe 48612996/0417492981

joan.lowe@bigpond.com by Thursday 21st July

CTC 2pm Sunday Series | Sunday 5th June *Love On The Run*

Tony Williams discusses the working relationship between new wave director Francois Truffaut and actor Jean Pierre-Leaud. Truffaut discovered Leaud when he was 14 and starred him in the movie *The 400 Blows* based on Truffaut's life. As Leaud grew older, Truffaut made three more films with Leaud. When Leaud was 34, Truffaut made *Love On The Run*. For this film Truffaut developed a story that combined his previous three Leaud films as flashbacks. Rated M.

- Sunday 5th June - 2pm
 - Cafe opens at 1.30pm, tea & coffee available BYO beer/wine
 - Adults \$10 children \$5 (CTC fundraiser)
 - Bookings recommended 4885 2665
e.info@robertsonctc.org.au
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Contact REPS

All those who are interested in supporting our aim are welcome to join REPS. Our aim is to promote the preservation and enhancement of the Robertson environment. We welcome contact with individuals and other community groups.

Please contact The Secretary

PO Box 3045, Robertson NSW 2577

or President – Allan Stiles on 4885 1608

Also, we are always looking for new contributions to Eucryphia. If you have an essay, article, poem or photograph that you want to share with other REPS members please contact Monica Engel.

Telephone: 4885 2665

Or email: monicaengel@robertsonctc.org.au

All contributions will be most welcome.

www.reps.org.au
