



Eucryphia

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Robertson Environment Protection Society – to promote the protection and enhancement of the Robertson Environment
PO Box 45, Robertson NSW 2577 www.reps.org.au

Next REPS Meeting

**Friday 13th June 2008 at 7:30pm
at the Robertson Community Centre
Caalong Street, Robertson**

Allen Powell on “Animal-Plant Relationships in the Cumberland Plains Woodland at Mount Annan”

Allen Powell Education Officer at Mount Annan Botanic Gardens, will give an informal talk on the ecology of the Cumberland Plains Woodland. He has spent many years observing and collecting information in the area where he lives. He has a particular interest in the interactions between organisms within this ecosystem.

In Allen’s own words.....

My talk will be based around a ‘show-and-tell’ and a white board. I am a technophobe and faint when I get near anything of a technological nature. I am glad to hear that you are a very informal group since that is exactly how I would describe myself. I feel at home already.

My talk will be based on many years of informal observations and information collecting in our section of the C.P.W.

I have been fascinated by the interactions between organisms within this ecosystem. It is like a constant drama unfolding 24 hours a day. Rather than enforcing a concept of the ‘Balance of Nature’, I have decided there is not much balance at all. It is

more like a see-saw occasionally interrupted by one end falling off. The ‘balance’ is played out sometimes in macabre fashion and sometimes in what looks like a really mundane ‘the life of lichen’ type story. But dig a bit deeper and lichen is an amazingly successful relationship which may be more important than we know.

If I tell you more than this, there won’t be anything to talk about. No photo.....if they see me they definitely won’t come. Tell everyone I look like Santa Claus without the suit.



[http://library.uws.edu.au/adt-NUWS/uploads/
approved/adt-UWS20060706.152023/public/03Chapter2.pdf](http://library.uws.edu.au/adt-NUWS/uploads/approved/adt-UWS20060706.152023/public/03Chapter2.pdf)

All Welcome - Gold Coin Donation - Light Supper

Upcoming Events

Fri 13th June – REPS Talk, Allen Powell on the Cumberland Plains Woodland, 7:30pm, Community Centre
NPA Bushwalks – May 31, June 14,20, Aug 2,9
Tue 8th July – NPA AGM & Talk by David Tranter, 7.30pm, CWA Hall, Moss Vale
Sat 31st May & Sat 28th June – Caalang Creek Working Bee – 9:30am, at Robertson Community Centre
See page 7 for the dates of Environmental Levy Community Forums

REPS Submission to the Department of Planning

Re: Upper Nepean (Kangaloon) Borefield (Application 06_0331)

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposal.

Our society would also like to thank the Sydney Catchment Authority for their open and frank discussions as well as their presentations, and thanks to the SCA and the NSW Government for the availability of reports.

The Robertson Environment Protection Society would like to stress some points.

Could you please read these points carefully as we consider them to be important.

Point 1

Project Outcomes and Project Justification (pages 2 & 26 of the Environmental Assessment Summary) lists 9 reasons for this proposal.

These 9 points are listed below with comments.

a) “a new available water source during severe drought (readiness strategy)”

This is not a new available water resource. It is a new way to extract an existing water supply source. The SCA documentation and research shows that most of this aquifer water drains slowly and naturally to the Nepean Reservoir.

The Nepean River and other streams in the area are ‘gaining streams’ due to the base flows from the high groundwater level and this flow is especially important in times of ‘no rainfall’ including times of severe drought.

b) “a new bulk water supply source, with similar capacity to existing storage dams (diversification)”

See point a); also the aquifer is intact (pre pumping) and is not subject to further evaporation or contamination.

c) “potential for staged development, depending on demand and hydrogeological factors (flexibility)”

A borefield development in this catchment area will not leave a long-term, natural and safe water supply feeding from the aquifer system to the reservoir and surrounding important ecosystems.

d) “strategic and progressive development of groundwater sources (expansion)”

This is not strategic development of groundwater sources. If the proposed borefield was situated

below the catchment dams then this would have some strategic merit and may be a new available water source. The more ‘development’ of this groundwater area will lead to more interference, degradation and pollution of the catchment area including the degradation and potential pollution of a efficiently working aquifer system which now supports Sydney’s water supply and the associated catchment area.

e) “potential deferral of an increase in capacity of the desalination plant (lower cost option)”

One of the main reasons to investigate groundwater extraction was to put off building the desalination plant which is now being built. The desalination plant will feed water directly into water pipes in Sydney for Sydney’s consumption. It will also buy wind power energy to run it and will promote wind power as an alternative energy. The Commonwealth Government (Labor) also gave an election promise to augment (expand) the states desalination plants if they wanted to. The desalination plant also takes the pressure off the creeks and rivers and aquifers.

With regard to the borefield, this proposal uses ordinary mains power with new infrastructure to be installed. The extracted water must travel over 100 kilometres to Sydney via the Upper Canal to Prospect with losses from evaporation at the reservoirs and losses via the old open canal. The lower cost assumption needs to be properly determined with a cost/benefit analysis.

f) “increased supply security for the Illawarra (certainty)”

The Illawarra is most vulnerable here due to not being able to tap Warragamba Dam. The potential degradation of part of Illawarra’s catchment area and its associated aquifer system reduces supply security and certainty. If in severe drought and /or when overall dam storages drop to around 40% then large scale and continuous pumping of the aquifer is proposed for 2 to 3 years. Then the aquifer system needs about 5 years or more to recover.

At this stage a lot of water that would normally flow naturally to the reservoir from the aquifer will not, due to the lower water table. Some upstream natural flows will also be diverted (naturally) away from filling the reservoir to help fill the aquifer (‘losing stream’). A percentage of rainfall will also go to the aquifer and not directly to the reservoir.

So if the drought conditions continue after the 2 to 3 years there will be a lack of security and certainty for Illawarra’s water supply, being unable to pump over the next 5 to 7 years of recovery.

This is even more important when considering the weather variability with climate change. The best scenario is to retain the natural high water level of the aquifer for long term water supply security.

g) “improved information for catchment and water supply management (surface water/groundwater interaction, research benefits)”

There has been some worthwhile science undertaken as part of this project proposal, however there are still gaps and risks associated with those gaps in knowledge. This point only shows the lack of definitive knowledge that the SCA apparently has with this proposal.

h) “improved monitoring of the natural environment (groundwater, surface water and nearby ecosystems)”

The SCA appears to have drawn mainly from their research over the last few years, which still can be considered preliminary findings, and which reveals a lack of research in this area over the last 100 years or so. The flora and fauna surveys, carried out in Spring and Autumn have been very useful in highlighting the large number of endangered species and communities in this area. This is a rich ecological region and should be left undisturbed.

Monitoring of the natural environment is a good idea but some of the effects of sustained lowering of the water table may take many years to be visible and then it may be too late.

(i) “minimal impact on the environment”

- groundwater levels

The regional groundwater level here is generally 5 to 20 metres below the surface although, at a few sites, the regional water table is close to the surface (EA summary p15). Vegetation could depend on this groundwater with canopy trees being the most obvious example, especially in times of drought when pumping is proposed.

- pollution

The water treatment facilities for iron removal are extensive, including aeration and sand filtration. Backwashing of the sand filter will be required every few days, and this backwash then needs treatment using aluminium sulphate to settle the solids. The use of this chemical adjacent to the Nepean River (previously a class ‘S’ specially protected waterway) is of concern.

The projected iron concentrations of 24,750 kg/month are substantial and could lead to operational problems with this proposal. The iron and associated sludge water (a percentage of the

groundwater extracted) will have to be removed and dumped in an appropriate landfill site. It has the potential to pollute streams with associated bacteria forming oily-looking scums in slow-flowing rivers and pools. This is a large amount of pollution and needs to be considered when evaluating this project. Other extracted minerals (e.g. manganese) and the exceedance of water-quality parameters are also a concern.

The project does not appear to have a neutral or beneficial effect on the landscape. There are risks to the catchment area from all aspects of this proposal. The project outcomes and justification do not appear to be correct and are based on assumptions.

This is short term expediency for long term cost and adversely affects this unique environment and Sydney and Illawarra’s water supply. Infrastructure is also a concern and should not be considered.

Point 2

A recent study has brought into question previous ideas about this proposal. A pumping trial at Butlers Swamp went for almost 4 months and was then stopped due to a significant rainfall event resulting in the Nepean Reservoir overflowing.

This new report (PB 2008) investigated water quality and recharge. By comparing groundwater ages before and after pumping it found that the contribution of new recharge water (e.g. rainfall) was minor and that the water level recovery was primarily due to the inflow of water from aquifer zones unaffected by pumping, into the zones affected by pumping.

This is of great concern as we have been told by the SCA that recharge comes from direct rainfall on the sandstone area. It shows that the area of effect is greater than the anticipated drawdown area and that rainfall may have a minor influence with aquifer recovery. It also questions the validity of earlier assumptions which led to this proposal being considered in the first place.

REPS believes this catchment area is far better left alone and opposes this proposal on all grounds, including environmental, economic, social and water supply grounds.

The aquifer is already supporting Sydney and Illawarra’s water supply and is best left in its natural state for this purpose.

Leon Hall (signed)

President

Robertson Environment Protection Society

April Talk 'Our Place'

By Len and Jan Hainke

Lynn and Chris Stevenson

The Stevenson's desire to build an eco-friendly designed house at Robertson on 22 acres of Caalang catchment provided plenty of challenges.

The construction of the timber house frame progressed as far as the rafters when the builder went broke and disappeared in May 2005. The timbers were vulnerable to damage from the worst of a Robbo winter as legal issues delayed the recommencement of construction. Eventually the home was completed in late 2005 and after two and a half years in residence, the Stevensons are very happy with their new home

Shading battens on the pergola soften the solar impact of summer sun on the generously sized, north facing windows, whilst allowing good viewing through the single glazed, Smart Glass Comfort Plus panes. Conversely, the winter sun warms the house during the day. Inside the house, the unique wood burning fireplace allows both open and slow combustion operation. Ducts distribute heat to other rooms. This heat, of course, can be considered equivalent to sustainable solar energy while tree replanting is maintained.

With a 500m distance from the nearest grid, Chris calculated they could be \$20,000 better off with a solar photo voltaic installation to generate their power needs. Also, the Stevensons were interested in minimising their carbon footprint. Selling surplus power back to the grid was not an option, so storage batteries were required.

The original system consisted of sixteen solar collector panels mounted on a shed roof. In addition, two small wind generators were also installed in the shed roof. It transpired that on cloudy or misty days the total energy collected was insufficient to run a 'normal' household, i.e. washing machine, microwave, dishwasher. A diesel generator, used as a backup was not ideal for a number of reasons.

In October 2007 the solar panels were removed from the shed roof and re-installed on trackers at ground level. These two trackers now follow the sun's path automatically and reset themselves for the next day.

The added cost of the trackers was well worth it as this new arrangement provides a 50% improvement in solar power collected. With careful power usage the Stevensons now have about three days energy supply stored in reserve in batteries. This stored supply provides power independent of frequent Robbo mists, which Chris reports really do disadvantage solar energy collection. Hot water heating is by gas which has a low carbon footprint. The Stevensons can now joke about solar energy collection on misty Robbo days, or how they kicked the noisy diesel generator habit.

Establishing a garden from scratch was another of the challenges to be faced. Lynn and Chris decided to hasten their rehabilitation planting by engaging Wariapendi's professional help for a significant proportion of the new plantings. Recent photos attest to success growth of the native trees and shrubs.

We congratulate them on the finished result of this eco-friendly house building adventure and thank them for sharing their challenges and successes with us.

David and Judith Mee's Flower Farm

Nine years ago the Mees bought 25 acres of basalt soil with a house on Lemmon's old dairy land at Robertson, on the Nepean catchment.

David explained that the join of two ecosystems creates a third, more complex system with additional 'edge' species. Robertson abounds in such 'edge' environments where different soils, plants and scenery meet, making it a fertile and desirable place to live. The north facing, hilly land gives them Blue Mountains views which adds to the appeal, in spite of having to keep a Wonga Wonga vine in check which loves to grow over their house.

The Mees acquainted us with their flower production routine of picking and bucketing on Sunday, "up at the cracka...on Monday", doing the flower shop deliveries that day, home late Monday and presumably 'flop' that night!

They now have about 20 florist shops to service in the Illawarra. It is not generally appreciated that a florist needs to sell approximately \$2000 worth of flowers each week to make a living, and the Mees are but one of the suppliers. They specialise in

'native' flowers for the florist trade including South African proteas and Australian banksias and waratahs. The florist also needs "fillers" such as ferns, some of which they can provide from their home garden.

In the garden, these Gondwanaland species are grown on the eastern side, and exotic plants on the west! The garden contains many Sydney and West Australian species including eucalypts which the Mees can actually grow in Robertson grafted onto suitable root stock. Judith reports that they have grown Christmas Bells, which are great sellers, on their basalt soils, but birds like pecking the flowers off. They would love to grow saleable quantities of them!

Collecting flowers on this hilly terrain is made easier by using a 2 bench motor cart which doubles as entertainment for their grandchildren on weekends.

Pricing and knowing what sells well is a delicate business – you don't want to price yourself out of the market. For florists, buying at the Flemington markets is a very time consuming and tiring business requiring long, early morning drives, returning home the same morning ready for business. David and Judith are providing freshly picked, locally grown flowers to south coast florists, helping to relieve the tedium and hassles of driving to Flemington. Surely a mutually beneficial relationship and in today's world, a good example of "acting locally".

Another of their enjoyable and satisfying contributions to the welfare of the environment is their Native Vegetation Conservation project along their stretch of the Nepean. Weeds have been removed and replanting is taking place.

This form of 'retirement' might sound like hard work, but the grandchildren appear to find the Mee family 'folly farm' to be a great heap of fun and David and Judith look as though they are thriving.

The Pine Trees in the Nature Reserve

The 5 hectares of the Robertson Nature Reserve were dedicated in 1884 as "Robertson Park for Public Recreation". It was a place where people came by horse, horse and cart or on foot to meet together or celebrate special events. There was a gazebo style tea house to sit in for picnics. In those days, before the railway line was built, South Street in front of the reserve would have been much less used because Main Street went straight through to what is now Missingham Parade.

There was also, at one time, a bandstand where visiting brass bands would play and, at some stage, the pine trees were planted on what must have been a cleared grassy area. A Fauna Protection Panel leaflet from when the reserve was "Wildlife Refuge No.24" shows 'old pines' and a fireplace near the northern entry. In 1978 it was gazetted a Nature Reserve to be managed by the National Parks and Wildlife Service who put in a stabilized path and later signs to identify the trees.

Now the old pine trees have grown to be very large with long, heavy side branches covered in Rock-felt Fern (*Pyrrosia rupestris*). Every so often a large branch comes crashing down and one fell across the road last year. The area under the pine trees has been colonised mainly by small leaved privet and holly because very few rainforest species can grow there.

East of the entrance there was a mixture of privet and rainforest trees from which, by monthly working sessions over the years, we have been able to get rid of nearly all of the privet. We have to work gradually so as not to let too much sunlight or drying winds which would damage the rainforest plants.

Because they have become a hazard the pine trees are to come down soon and this will let a lot of sunlight into that part of the reserve. This means we will have to get to work to remove the privet and other weeds that will come up so that the hardier rainforest species can establish themselves as soon as possible. Other species will gradually come back over the years.

More volunteers are always welcome.

New Sign for Laurence Langley Memorial Redwood Grove by Denis Wilson

The man behind the selection and planting of the Redwood Grove, opposite the Nature Reserve in Robertson, was Mr. Laurence Langley. Mr Langley, once lived in a property out at the end of Mackey's Lane, where he grew many rare and interesting trees. In fact he created a private arboretum there.

But he was not content with that. He was responsible for the planting of the double flowered Ornamental Cherries along the Illawarra Highway, through Robertson. He also was responsible for the planting of the Douglas Fir trees as street trees along the top end of Caalong Street).

However, as far as tree planting is concerned, his greatest achievement in Robertson was the grove of Californian Redwoods ([Sequoia sempervirens](#)) which stand opposite the Robertson Nature Reserve.

As a lover of grand trees, Mr Langley had researched these trees, and knew that they ought to be suitable to Robertson high rainfall and rich, acidic red basalt soil. He imported seed from New Zealand, where they had been successfully established, and then he personally raised the plants from seed. I understand that a major working bee was held to plant these trees where there had been a plantation of *Pinus radiata* trees (originally planted as a revenue source for the Robertson Primary School). Those trees reached maturity and then were harvested, and replaced by the Redwoods.

Some time ago, Mr Langley left Robertson, and moved to the Coast. He died there last year.



Photo: Denis Wilson

17th May 2008

On 17 May 2008, the Robertson Environment Protection Society held a working bee to cut back (and paint with Glyphosate) numerous Privet bushes which were blocking the view of the old sign. Then they erected the new sign, made by REPS member, Ian Foster.

The sign proudly proclaims the "Laurence Langley Memorial Redwood Grove", which was previously known as the "Robertson School Forest".

The erection of this sign coincides with the Council's recent recommendation that: "The Lawrence (sic) Langley Memorial Californian Redwood Grove, Robertson" be included on the list of properties for future heritage review.

Reference: Heritage survey review pp 209-291
http://www.wsc.nsw.gov.au/files/5184/File/2008-04-30_Agenda.pdf

Cecil Hoskins Nature Reserve Protected

The Foundation for National Parks & Wildlife has for a long time helped preserve Australia's freshwater wetlands. In 1974 the Foundation assisted the establishment of the Cecil Hoskins Nature Reserve near Moss Vale, New South Wales. This tranquil wet land is essentially a manmade swamp. It is an important wetland attracting over ninety species of birds, of which, nearly a third are water fowl. It provides a protective habitat for platypus.



Taken from PAWS – Newsletter for Parks and Wildlife Supporters – Winter 2008, issue 16

If you would like to have a look at this newsletter simply copy and paste this link into your browser
http://www.fnpw.org.au/ForSupporters/PAWS/PAWS_Winter2008_Wetlands.pdf

There is information about "Private Conservation Grants" in this edition.

Wingecarribee Shire Council News

Environmental Special Rate Variation

The current environment levy program ends on 30 June, 2008. The council has to apply to Minister for Local Government for a continuation of the levy. Council is holding a series of community forums if you would like to voice an opinion. The forums are to be held at:

Tue May 27 Robertson Community Centre 11am – 2pm

Thu May 29 Berrima Reserve 11am – 2pm

Mon June 2 Henrietta Rose Room 11am – 3pm

Wed June 4 Bundanoon Hall 11am – 3pm

Thu June 5 Moss Vale Civic Centre 2pm – 7pm

Mon June 9 Lake Alexandra 11am – 2pm

Or express your opinion by writing to the General Manager or via email wscmail@wsc.nsw.gov.au by the close of business on June 16, 2008.

The environment levy is used to fund the Wingecarribee Our Future Environmental Program.

Robertson Sewerage Scheme Update

The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed Robertson sewerage scheme was placed on public exhibition on 21 May 2008 at the council chambers in Moss Vale. The proposed development assessed by the EIS comprises:

- **hybrid sewage collection system involving a low infiltration gravity system for the main catchment at Robertson, with three outlying catchments being served by pressure sewerage;**
- **enclosed sewage treatment plant to be located near the north western corner of the village;**
- **effluent management system incorporating a pipeline to transfer reclaimed water downstream of Wingecarribee Dam for storage and agricultural irrigation, with excess effluent being released to the Wingecarribee River during particularly wet periods.**

The summary from the EIS is available for download as a pdf file.

http://www.wsc.nsw.gov.au/files/5296/File/EIS_Robertson_Sewerage_Summary_May08.pdf

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT PLANNING

Develop a cohesive Farm Management Plan that aligns land use with land capability, improve productivity in a sustainable way.

6 x 1 DAY (monthly) workshops –Accredited

First workshop held Saturday 21st June, 2008

MOSS VALE 9.30 am to 4 pm

Cost: \$ 350 per Farm Family...normally \$2,157.00

Numbers Limited....for Bookings & Information for all locations

Contact: Department of Primary Industries

Phone: 4640 6333 or 0408 492 039.

Email: maryke.hession@dpi.nsw.gov.au

NPA Bushwalks

Saturday 31 May - Bundannoon Creek

Day walk to Bundannoon Creek via Riverview Lookout, Nicholas Pass and Fairy Bower. Steep descent and ascent of approximately 400 metres. Approximately 7 km. Beautiful rainforest and waterfalls. Liz Thompson, 48691483. Contact by Thursday 29, May. Map: Bundannoon 8928-1-S.

Saturday 14th June - Morton National Park

Day walk, McPhales Fire Trail 10km steep decent Joan Lowe 0248612996. Phone by Thurs. 12, June. Car shuffle will be organised.

Walk commences 2kms past Fitzroy Falls Visitors Centre and descends into Kangaroo Valley through beautiful forest area. Map: 8928-1-S Bundannoon

Saturday June 14 –

Budder Track and Gerringong Falls

Easy day walk along the Budderoo Track (off Jamberoo Mountain Road) to Gerringong Falls. Approx. 8 km. Liz Thompson 02 48691483. Phone by Thursday 12, June.

Escarpment views into the Upper Kangaroo Valley. Map: Kangaroo Valley 9028-4-S

Sunday 20th July - Mt Alexandra NR

Short day walk, Lake Alexandra to 40 Foot Falls and return, 6kms some steep sections and fallen trees to negotiate. Joan Lowe 0248612996 Phone by Thurs. 17, July.

Walk commences at Lake Alexandra and proceeds along Gibbergunyah Creek to the Nattai River and then up the Nattai Creek to 40 Foot Falls. Map: 8929-2S Mittagong

Saturday 2 August –

The Butter Track and Caloola Pass

Day walk from Lees Road near Robertson, steep descent and ascent, on track and off track, approx. 6 km. Liz Thompson 48691483. Please phone by Thursday 31, July.

Fabulous walk down the escarpment and into the valley below via the historic Butter Track and then back up the adjacent Caloola Pass. Map: Robertson 9028-4-N

Saturday 9th August -

Thirlmere Lakes and Nattai National Parks

Day walk, Thirlmere Lakes to Little River 16kms 150m ascent Joan Lowe 0248612996. Phone by Thurs. 7, August.

The walk commences at the locked gate at the end of Thirlmere Lakes and follows the Blue Gum Creek through the very attractive Blue Gum Forest to the causeway at the Little River. Maps Picton 9029-4S and Nattai 8929-1S.

Poetry Corner

Edited by Jonathan Persse

We are all familiar with the idea of a snake, from our own experience and from stories we've heard. These three Australian poets speak for us.

SNAKE

The tiger snake moves
Like slow lightning. Like
A yard of creek water
It flows over rocks
Carving the grass.

Where have you gone,
Long fellow, cold brother,
Like a lopped limb or
Truth that we shy from
Leaving a cast skin ?

Snakes are like a line
Of poetry: a chill
Wind of noon,
A slalom in the spine
Setting ears back, hair on end.

'Some people will not live
With a snake in the house.'
Mice make off. Look
Under your chair; worse
Take down a book:

A line like an icicle !

David Campbell
(1915-1979)

SNAKE

Suddenly the grass before my feet
Shakes and becomes alive.
The snake
Twists, almost leaps,
Graceful even in terror,
Smoothness looping back over smoothness,
Slithers away, disappears,
--And the grass is again still.

And surely, by whatever means of communication
Is available to snakes,
The word is passed:
Hey, I just met a man, a monster, too;
Must have been, oh, seven feet tall.
So keep away from the long grass,
It's dangerous there.

Ian Mudie
(1911-1976)

Hunting Snake

Sun-warmed in this late season's grace,
Under the autumn's gentlest sky
We walked, and froze half-through a pace.
The great black snake went reeling by.

Head-down, tongue flickering on the trail,
He quested through the parting grass;
Sun glazed his curves of diamond scale
And we lost breath to watch him pass.

What track he followed, what small food
Fled living from his fierce intent,
We scarcely thought; still as we stood
Our eyes went with him as he went.

Cold, dark and splendid he was gone
Into the grass that hid his prey
We took a deeper breath of day,
Looked at each other, and went on.

Judith Wright
(1915-2000)

Rediscovering Historic Passes: A walk with Jim Foran & Co.

By Tegyn Angel

“Here, put these on.” Said Jim Foran, passing me a high visibility vest and construction site helmet. Such was my introduction to the wonderful world of Bushwalking with Jim Foran.

For Jim, this was a walk long in the making. I was personally involved for the last two reconnaissance missions (15May08 and 18May08) and the National Parks Association (Southern Highlands) walk itself (the realisation of the project 24May08) – but Jim had spent many hours pouring over maps, trading aerial photographs and networking with the Lowland tribes (i.e. those from the Kangaroo Valley) in order to see the project come to fruition.

The plan was to open up a loop track, dropping from the highlands into the Kangaroo valley and back via both McAndrew’s Gap and Denner’s Pass. The only obstacle, other than obtaining the permission of relevant landowners, was to actually FIND the track!

Both McAndrew’s and Denner’s, once used regularly, were completely overgrown. Although listed on local topographic maps, it took quite a few hours of bush bashing and of following faint traces of former tracks before we broke a trail worth guiding. On our first reccie we located the way through the escarpment and walkable tracks top and bottom. The second reccie saw us retrace our footsteps and mark the track with biodegradable, fluorescent tape. On this latter outing we also met with some of the landowners and paved the way for the official walk.

0800 Saturday the 24th of May saw nine people carpooling from the rendezvous point in Robertson to the start point of the walk at the end of Wallaby Hill Road. We proceeded down McAndrew’s pass, this time easily navigating the comparatively well-marked track. We met a congregation of Lowlanders and took part in a highly salubrious albeit humorous exchange of gifts to mark the coming-together of the Highland and Lowland tribes.

Our two tribes here joined forces and continued the walk in strength. We paralleled the escarpment for approximately 2km before climbing up Denner’s Pass and back into the Highlands. Once we had said

our goodbyes most of the Highlanders left the group, while Jim, Martin and I guided the Lowlanders back down McAndrew’s gap.

When all was said and done this was perhaps one of the easier Foran walks, requiring scrub bashing and route finding a mere 50% of the time. It’s a great half-day walk and in no way should it be underestimated in its ability to challenge and delight.



Photo: Tegyn Angel

“looking back up at the escarpment from the bottom of McAndrew’s gap”

Community Nursery Working Bee.

The following activities will be part of the first Community Nursery working bee

- **Seed Collection in Berrima Weir Reserve:** Come and expand your knowledge of native seed collection and the learn how to complete a seed collection data sheet.
- **Native Seed Bank Data Entry:** Learn why we need a Native Seed Bank Data Base and how the seed collection data system works.
- **Propagation:** Participate in a propagation session. Plants propagated on the day will be used in a number of environmental projects currently planned for the next year in the Wingecarribee Shire.
- **Nursery Construction:** We need to layout a gravel floor in the nursery drying out area. So if you can push a wheel barrow and work with a shovel your help would go a long way to completing the nursery site.

When: 14 June 2008

Time: 9.00am – 12.00pm

Where: Moss Vale Council Works Depot, Berrima Road, Moss Vale

Contact: Greg Bray, WSC on (02) 48 603 008 or Daniel Anderson, Hawkesbury Nepean Catchment Management Authority on (02) 48 619 014.



Caalang Creek Working Bees

Caalang Creek Working Bees are held on the last Saturday of each month from 9:00 am onwards subject to the weather. Please come and join us for as long as you are able.

The next Working Bees will be on the 31st May and the 28th June

Meet at the Community Centre. If in doubt due to inclement weather or for more details, please contact Sandy Morse on telephone 4885 1905. Please bring along a hat, gloves, shovels, watering cans etc.

Help Care for Our Nature Reserve

1st Wednesday of each month

10:00am to noon

All welcome. Please bring garden gloves. For further information, phone Helen: 4885-1394

NPA Southern Highlands Branch AGM and NPA Talk

David Tranter: "What are the forces that drive contemporary climate change?"

David will describe the natural and man-made forces that drive climate change on earth identifying the reasons why climatologists believe contemporary global warming is almost certainly man-made.

He will deal with the causes of prehistoric ice-age cycles and the role of positive feedback mechanisms in amplifying mild variations in earth's orbit round the sun to such an extent that the global climate has alternated between icehouse and greenhouse conditions for the past million years.

He will also describe how carbon dioxide is continuously recycled between one global reservoir and another, emphasizing the crucial role of the ocean in this regard and Antarctic sea-ice in particular.

7.30 pm Tuesday 8 July, 2008

CWA Hall, Elizabeth Street, Moss Vale

Supper provided

Gold Coin donation

Welcome New REPS Members

Tony and Anna Williams

REPS Meetings for 2007

Please make a note in your diary of the following dates for this year's REPS Public Meetings. These meetings will include a talk that will be publicised in the Eucryphia prior to each meeting.

Friday 13th June

Friday 8th August

Friday 10th October

Friday 14th November (Annual General Meeting)

Friday 12th December (Christmas Party)

Prograze and Landscan Farm Management Courses

Register your interest by the 30th May 2008.

Courses are held as workshops or sessions over a number of months.

For more information contact NSW Department of Primary Industries

Telephone: 02 4828 6600 or email on:

Goulburn.office@dpi.nsw.gov.au

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. For further information and subscriptions please contact:

The Secretary – Jill Keft
PO Box 45,
Robertson NSW 2577

or President – Leon Hall on 4888 2222

We are always looking for new contributions to Eucryphia. If you have an essay, article, poem or photograph that you would like to share with other REPS members please contact Monica Engel or Sheila McInnes
email: monicaengel@robertsonctc.org.au

All contributions will be most welcome.

Visit the REPS website

www.reps.org.au