



# STEP Inc. Newsletter

Community Based Environmental Conservation Since 1978. No.81 October 1996

## COMING EVENTS

**Dr. Walter Boles** from the Australian Museum will give a talk about the Evolution of Australian Bird Fauna on Wednesday, 6th November, 1996, at 8.00pm at the St. Andrews Uniting Church Hall, corner Vernon and Chisholm Sts., South Turrumurra. Recent fossil finds have given fascinating insights into evolution of birds in Australia, and Dr. Boles, who is deeply involved in research of the fossil record, will tell us about it.

**Christmas Barbecue** – As foreshadowed earlier, we are planning a get-together at the back of Leuna Ave., Wahroonga, for a pre-Christmas BBQ, on Sunday, 8th December, 1996. It is a wonderful venue and will give us all a chance to talk to each other in a relaxed atmosphere. BBQ's will be provided, but please bring your own food, drinks, tables and chairs as required. Since it is likely to be fairly warm weather, we will start in the late afternoon, say 5.00 pm, and that will give us a few hours without making it too late. Hot water will be provided.

Access is from the corner of The Broadway and Leuna Ave. on to the grassed area at the back of Leuna Ave.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Our AGM was held on 17/10/96 in the Kissing Point Sports Club Hall.

The meeting followed the normal agenda, including the President's and Treasurer's reports and election of office bearers for 1996/97.

An abbreviated version of the President's report is contained in the body of this Newsletter.

In addition to those matters, the **Special Resolution**, copy of which had previously been circulated to all members, was put to the meeting and carried unanimously.

This will, when accepted and registered in Canberra, allow donations to STEP to be tax deductible in the hands of the donor.

The new Committee will consist of reelected members Sue Jones, Neroli Lock, John Martyn, Jennifer Schwarz, Geoff Suggate, and Helen Wortham, plus newly elected members Michelle Leishman and Ron Seymour. Hugh Roberts was reelected as Treasurer, and Bruno Krockenberger as President. There were no candidates for Vice President or Secretary, and the Committee will again split the tasks between themselves.

The formal business was completed in approximately half an hour, and

was followed by a very entertaining presentation by Barbara Bryan, Vice President of the North Shore Camera Club, talking about her introduction to, and subsequent enthusiastic pursuit of photography.

She exhibited a selection of her work to illustrate various styles, methods and opportunities in subject matter when viewed through a camera lens.

Photographs taken by a few members were also on show and were then discussed by Barbara with the members and they will surely benefit from her advice.

Wine and cheese were enjoyed by all present during the discussion period, which extended past 11.00 pm.

## URBAN CONSOLIDATION AND KU-RING-GAI'S HOUSING STRATEGY RESPONSE

The Carr Government has replaced the dual occupancy policy with a new strategy for urban consolidation setting targets for Councils to accommodate additional dwellings in their areas.

This new policy is contained in two new draft planning instruments, which are currently open for comment until 9th November.

These are the **Metropolitan Residential Development** instrument and the **Housing for Older People or People with Disabilities** instrument.

The former aims to encourage the provision of housing that will broaden the choice of building types and locations available in the metropolitan area.

The latter aims to encourage the provision of housing that will increase the supply and diversity of housing that meets the needs of older people or people with disabilities.

Copies of these documents are on exhibition at Council Chambers and libraries.



Ku-ring-gai Council has prepared a response in the form of a **Draft Housing Strategy**, which is also currently on display at Council and libraries, and which is open for comment by 15th November, 1996.

Council has also arranged a **Public Meeting on Tuesday, 29th October, 1996, at 7.00pm Council Chambers**, to discuss the Draft Housing Strategy.

STEP has prepared a more detailed outline of the various documents, which is available on request (Hugh 9144 1353 or Bruno 9449 1985).

STEP's position on medium density policies is well known, seeing it as inevitably leading to degradation of our natural and built environment.

However, faced with the proposed planning instruments, STEP's first reaction is to urge the State Government to stem population growth in the metropolitan area, but recognises that some additional housing will be needed, even if the State Government moves to set limits on growth in the metropolitan area.

In this context on first reading it appears that Council's strategy is a valid approach to the problem. The details of the strategy will require further consideration.

The STEP Committee will prepare a submission to Council to comment upon the strategy in due course, but members should, if at all possible, form their own view, attend the public meeting and make comment. Since this has the potential to affect the future of the municipality profoundly it is too important a matter to ignore.



## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE AGM**

*The following is an abbreviated version of the President's Report:*

### **Activities**

Three bushwalks were conducted, Bouddi National Park led by John Martyn, Browns Field led by Andrew Jennings and Wallalong Crescent to De Burgh's Bridge led by Jennifer Schwarz.

Four talks were organised, Yvonne Langshaw/John Martyn at the last AGM, Dr. Lin Sutherland on Volcanoes, Andy Skidmore on Computers and Environment, and Durno Murray on Wandering Albatross.

**Clean-up Australia Day** was again supported, very effectively, with teams covering several locations in South Turrumurra. Our information and sales display stand was set up at various public events through the year.

**Our Membership Survey** provided some grassroots feedback about members concerns and priorities.

### **Sales of Publications**

The Field Guide continues to sell steadily, and we have received the second print run. It will require some promotional effort during 97. Maps continue to sell slowly.

### **Newsletters**

Seven Newsletters were published, from No. 73 in August, 1995 to No. 79 in June/July 1996. a variety of articles were included.

### **Pam Morse Bequest**

The bequest received in the previous year has now been invested in an interest bearing deposit, but a suitable way in which the interest can be used to promote the objectives of STEP is still to be found.

### **Committee**

The Committee has met regularly to deal with business at hand.

Jim Mitchell and Andy Skidmore resigned from the Committee during the year, and Hugh Roberts was appointed as Treasurer in accordance with the constitutional powers of the Committee.

**John Burke** did not stand for reelection at this AGM, to allow him to devote more time to his family and his business interests. For many years John has been unstinting and very effective in his efforts to promote the interests of STEP within the community, in providing leadership as President, and guidance as "elder statesman", and he has been largely responsible for establishing the status and widely held respect which STEP enjoys in the community.

We, the Committee and members of STEP, owe John a great deal, and we wish him well, and of course we hope that at some time in the future he may see his way clear to rejoin the Committee with new vigour.



I would also like to thank other Committee members for their contributions: John Martyn as talks and walks organiser, Jennifer Schwarz as delegate to the Total

Catchment Management Committee, Sue Jones as Membership Secretary, Geoff Suggate as delegate to the Parks and Reserves Committee, Neroli Lock as Wildflower Gardens delegate and Helen Wortham as Publicity Officer.

### Representation

STEP was represented on: Ku-ring-gai Council's Bushland Management Working Party, Wildflower Gardens Committee, Parks and Reserves Advisory Committee and the Residential Environment Advisory Committee, as well as on the Lane Cove Valley Total Catchment Management Committee and the Union of Lane Cove Valley Conservationists.

STEP has also maintained participation in the Coalition Against Lane Cove Valley Freeways and the advisory committee for the access road to the UTS campus at Lindfield.

STEP is also a member of the NSW Nature Conservation Council.

STEP has made submissions on many issues through its delegates or direct.

### Issues

The issues identified by the membership survey have been variously addressed.

On the transport scene, the official abandonment of the B2/B3 options of the Lane Cove Valley Freeway has been welcomed.

STEP's efforts on the M2 Tollway are now confined to minimising the impact through the LCTCMC.



Since STEP is not directly involved in bush regeneration, the issues of weed infestation, water pollution and feral animal impact are also confined to action through various committees and dissemination of STEP's views about these matters.

**Urban consolidation and residential development controls** are matters of concern which STEP is trying to influence.

In the matter of **communications towers** we welcome the abandonment of the Optus tower at West Pymble.

### Finances

STEP's financial position continues to be sound as reported by the Treasurer.

### Challenges Ahead

These fall into categories of transport, urban consolidation, residential development and Mona Vale Rd.

The effects of the M2 Tollway on the adjacent road system are emerging in the West Chatswood and Lane Cove areas.

Other proposals in the Dundas Valley/Eastwood area are now also causing concerns, and the problems of heavy traffic on the Pacific Highway's northern section will continue to cause residents and

commercial interests to agitate for solutions in transport.

The threat of a link between the F3 at Wahroonga and the M2 Tollway at North Ryde, although officially abandoned, is still in the background and cannot be ignored.

The challenge for STEP is to continue to provide information so that the detrimental effects of further road developments on our local and metropolitan environment can be understood, and to support efforts to change the planning culture.

The potential development of a bus depot in the Mona Vale Rd. corridor would irrevocably change the nature of the corridor. Since the bushland adjoining the road forms the last remaining link between the bushland of Garigal and Ku-ring-gai Chase National Parks, it has special significance for the future of both these parks.

The urban consolidation strategy and the preparation of a new Residential Development Control Plan are two challenges in which STEP will be endeavouring to achieve satisfactory outcomes. In all these issues we see our role as being proactive and forward looking.

Finally, we must not forget to promote the enjoyment and appreciation of our natural bushland, and we are planning to provide suitable activities for the coming year.

I thank you for your support in the past year.

Bruno Krockenberger.



## Have you pondered what to give your friends for CHRISTMAS?

Why not consider a copy of the

### *Field Guide to the Bushland of the Upper Lane Cove Valley?*

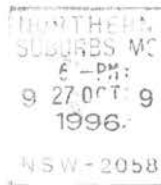
Even if your friends don't live in this area, the book makes good reading for the armchair bush-walker, and it would prepare them for the walk which you will take them on when they come to visit you next time. It is full of good scientific information for anyone who is interested in nature, even if they live far from here, say on another continent. Your friends in Hong Kong, or Los Angeles, or Berlin, or Moscow would be entranced to read about the diversity of the Lane Cove Valley's urban bushland.

For your copy contact the author, John Martyn (9449 7962), and he will inscribe a dedication to your friend, if you wish, or Hugh (9144 1353), or Bruno (9449 1985), or send your cheque for \$34-95 to STEP Inc. P.O.Box 697, Turrumurra, 2074. But do it in time to ensure delivery before Xmas.

If the Field Guide doesn't hit the spot, consider a copy of the STEP map, which is also a valuable asset for the bushwalker, and would only cost \$6 posted, or \$5 if you pick it up.

For the map, contact Hugh or Bruno, or send your order to our PO Box.

SENDER  
STEP INC.  
P.O.Box 697,  
Turrumurra, 2074.



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## CYCLING IN REVERSE?

Bicycle NSW has drawn attention to the saga of the bicycle link across the Pyrmont Bridge.

It appears that the link was first put on the official plans in 1982 as part of the Darling Harbour Management Plan. It was confirmed as an important link in the 1985 D.H. Transport Study, and reinforced in 1992, and funding of \$6 million was obtained from the Federal Government's Better Cities initiative.

In June 1993, Minister Langton called for cycle access to be built, and in August 1993 the temporary link was demolished and cycle access **banned** from the new facility. A new study was instigated, and in September 1996 the Darling Harbour Authority announced that the project had been scrapped.

*These are strange meanderings on the way to sensible cycleways in our city and suburban areas.*

Bicycle NSW is now conducting a campaign to get this project back on the rails (or cycle path), and to advocate promotion of cycling for transport during the Olympics, a worthwhile cause to support.

For information on how you can help, contact Bicycle NSW on 9283 5200.