

Pth

AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF BUSH REGENERATORS

NEWSLETTER NO. 3.

JUNE 1987

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Members and intending members are invited to the Annual General Meeting to be held on 5 September at the Visitors Centre of the Field of Mars Wildlife Refuge, off Pittwater Road, Ryde. The meeting will commence at 11 o'clock and finish at 2 p.m. Bring your lunch - coffee and tea will be provided.

BUSH REGENERATION REGISTER OF SITES AND SPECIES LISTS

AABR is compiling a register of sites being regenerated by members, together with species lists. Details of sites, with phone numbers of contacts, can be given to Helen Petersen and Species Lists to Madeline Schofield at the A.F.M., or sent to Helen at 10 Stainsby Close, S. Turramurra 2074 and Madeline at 154 Powderworks Road, Elanora Heights 2101.

MEMBERSHIP FEES

Membership fees fall due on 1 July. To be eligible to vote at the AGM, fees of \$10 can be forwarded to the Treasurer Jenny Roxburgh, 20 Euroka Street, Northbridge 2063, or paid at the meeting. Jenny will be available from 10.30 am until the meeting commences at 11.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

The following jobs for people trained in bushland regeneration techniques have been noted recently.

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| Willoughby Council | 3 Bush regenerators
1 Supervisor
(all positions filled) |
| Ku-ring-gai Council | Leading Hand
Parks Technical Officer
Phone Robin Grimvade 498 0888 |
| Woollahra Council | Parks Manager
Phone Noel Ruting 326 0222 |
| Lane Cove SRA | Bush regenerators
Phone July Kortlock 412 1558 |

BUSH REGENERATION AT WAHROONGA PRIMARY SCHOOL.

Wahroonga Primary School, widely known as "The Bush School" or "The School in the Trees", is situated on 3.5 hectares of land between Burns Road and Water Street, Wahroonga. The School stands on a high E-W ridge (about 200 metres above sea level), and experiences an annual rainfall which is considerably greater than that recorded at Observatory Hill in the City of Sydney. The school is unusual in that its grounds and those of an adjacent reserve retain a significant area of natural wet sclerophyll and some rainforest vegetation and the numerous trees, which exceed 30 metres in height, form a striking landmark which is visible from many vantage points in the northern suburbs. The soil is a heavy clay overlying the parent Wianamatta shale. The area is a major source of water for the northern tributary of Lovers Jump Creek.

Today the tree population consists of Eucalyptus pilularis, E. saligna, and E. paniculata; Angophora costata and A. floribunda; Syncarpia glomulifera with an understory of Pittosporum undulatum and groundcovers varying from mostly ferns on the south facing slope to thick shrubs on the eastern slope. Invasive weeds have infested most of the area. This infestation ranges from slight to very severe. A large volume of rainwater drains from the playgrounds and floods across the bush, where it causes extensive soil erosion. Bare, erosion-scalded soil and tree roots washed bare by erosion have reduced ground cover and led to deterioration of trees. Practices such as the riding of bicycles through the bush and the construction of cubby houses have accelerated erosion.

Bush regeneration began at the school in 1982 when as part of a three phase scheme to render the playground safer for the children the belt of trees on the northern boundary was fenced off to allow natural regeneration. During 1982 my family began work on the southern slope, removing weeds, mostly privet and camphor laurel and arresting erosion by building "beaver dams". By late 1984, despite the continued activities of the school children and the weekend bike-riders, a significant improvement had been achieved and we were able to interest the deputy principal and finally the principal in the importance of the bushland as a valuable teaching resource.

In mid-1985 a comprehensive program was adopted. It consisted of 6 related projects which provided all the children with opportunities to participate in the planning and execution of measures to improve the school environment. The arrival of a new principal and deputy in 1986 has meant a temporary (?) curtailment of the grade projects but bush regeneration work has continued. A teacher, Margaret Booth, with Gould League children and her class care for the northern area and 1-3 parents working one full day each week attack the southern and eastern areas. The weekly Junior Ranger activities have continued and grown in strength.

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Our bush regeneration was given a tremendous stimulus in October last when Helen Petersen and her team arrived to begin the restoration of the reserve adjacent to the school. Her expert advice, practical help and above all dauntless attitude have been so encouraging that the seemingly Herculean task of restoring the bushland at Wahroonga School now seems possible. When it is restored, the School will have gained an invaluable resource and both the school and the community will have gained an exquisite piece of bushland.

Elza Chapman Wade.

HERITAGE WEEK

During Heritage Week, the Hon. Bob Carr MP Minister for Planning and Environment opened a heritage exhibition at the Hyde Park Barracks. One of the aspects of this exhibition, titled Rarely Regarded, was bushland. On the day of the opening Mr. Carr with the press and members of his staff, and others, went on a bush walk in Harold Reid Reserve in Willoughby Municipality to publicise the exhibition and Heritage Week. AABR was invited along to meet Mr. Carr and on this occasion Toni McKay was our representative. At the official opening Heather Cooper represented us. Both occasions were very pleasant and members will be pleased to know that Mr. Carr was aware of AABR having met Helen Petersen, in her capacity as President earlier this year.

GARAGE SALE

So far, apart from subs and the sale of plants at the Museum, our only source of income has been from the garage sale. Convenor Frances Stewart, 1 River Avenue, Chatswood 412 4775, has already received articles for our next sale in November. If you have anything that you want to part with, please bring it along to the AGM or phone Frances to arrange delivery. If your talents lie in the direction of plant propagation (not only natives) we would be pleased to receive any contributions. Frances assures us she has plenty of storage room.

BRANCHES

The question of branch membership has been broached by Tein McDonald. This matter has been considered by the committee, which agrees in principle. Legal advice is being sought and the issue will be on the agenda at the AGM. If you are unable to attend and have ideas on this matter, would you please direct them to the Secretary.

DISCOVERY ROOM AT MUSEUM 11/12 and 18/19 APRIL

This was our third display at the Museum and was even better than before. We are collecting some very interesting material with which to publicize bush regeneration. Bush Regenerators take Care of the Bush is one of our themes. Ways of getting this message across include photographs of regeneration work, particularly before and after, a display of weeds in bushland with the emphasis on garden escapes, colouring-in sheets with a conservation theme, posters, a game, native plants for sale, and poems and drawings by children. Members are on hand at all times to give information on bush regeneration and to sell plants.

Once again Frances Stewart did a marvellous job of co-ordinating. She, Pal Costin and Elza Wade worked very hard to set up the display with the help of Margaret Booth, from Wahroonga School, who supplied drawings and poems done by her pupils. The lovely work of these children and drawings and posters from children at Warrae School caused a great amount of interest.

Fern Levack's colouring-in sheets were a great hit as usual. We kept running out of them.

Sally Fisher from Wirreanda Nursery organized the plants for sale.

Jan Perry's posters and banners were very eye catching and colourful, as were Madeline Schofield's excellent photographs.

Helen Levack, Heather Cooper, Janet Fairlie-Cunninghame, Gwen Wilson, Bill Jones, Noela Kirkwood, Lisa Napoli, Jenny Roxburgh, Margaret Beavis, Helen Petersen and Toni McKay were on hand to man the exhibition, with Shirley and Bob Slatyer and Frances doing the dismantling.

Thanks to everyone concerned for making this exhibition such a success. We have been invited again for early next year.

BUSH REGENERATION REQUESTS

As interest in bush regeneration accelerates the Association foresees receiving requests for help from groups and individuals. To be able to deal with these, the committee would like to hold a list of members interested in assisting in this work. Please let the Secretary know if you would like to be on the list.

CONGRATULATIONS

Bruce Rodgie has been acting in a temporary position at Ulladulla with the NP & WS. From 1 July he takes up a permanent position in the Southern Region as a Park Ranger, based at Nowra. His area of responsibility will be the recently created Minnamurra National Park.

Helen Petersen has begun work as a Consultant-Supervisor with a CEP team in the Dalrymple Hay Nature Reserve-Browns Field.

Madeline Schofield has been appointed to the position of Supervisor of bush regeneration at the Gordon Bat Colony. The Committee recently received a grant to carry out this work.

Noela Kirkwood and Bill Jones have announced that they will be married on 1 August at the Field of Mars Wildlife Refuge.

Robin (Buchanan), Tom and Kim Hanson welcome Jessica Yeon Kee, born in December 1986.

Congratulations from all AABR members.

THINKING OF SOWING GAHNIA?

Gahnia is a sedge-like perennial herb up to 2m. tall, from the Cyperaceae family, commonly called "Sword Grass". It has a feathery inflorescence, somewhat similar to Pampas Grass (now a noxious weed) but darker and more stringy. It is usually found in damp places, including creek surrounds. The seeds are plump red-brown or brown-black when ripe, depending on the species and food for birds such as currawongs. To collect, I wait until the seeds are full size and easy to dislodge with the fingers before cutting off the fronds, then strip the seeds with their husks attached. Rub these between 2 sheets of sandpaper (mine are fitted to wooden boards) to remove husks, and to scratch the hard seed coat so that water can penetrate and germination begin. Sifting and/winnowing will separate out the seed from the husk and dust. Sow into a clean container, using a sandy mix, and cover with the same, until the seeds can no longer be seen. Place on a clean surface out of the direct sun, to avoid drying out. Water when necessary to keep moist. Germination may take some months, so don't be hasty in throwing out the seed tray. Tube up when large enough to handle. Store seed in a clean, labelled paper bag or envelope if not sowing immediately. Seed will lose its viability with time. Gahnia sp. is lovely, local and worthwhile growing, so.....Good luck...

Sally Fisher

MEMBERSHIPS

Since the last meeting we have gained the following members. This steady growth is most encouraging. We now have members in the Blue Mountains, the Central Coast, West Wyalong and the Lismore area.

Tein McDonald	Foundation
Van Klaphake	Full
Gwen Wilson	Associate
Jenny Simons	Associate
Rosemary Joseph	Full
Graham Swinsburg	Full

Welcome to membership of AABR

BUSH REGENERATION IN THE BLUE MOUNTAINS

Last year an interested group in the Blue Mountains arranged a bush regeneration Outreach Course through TAFE. Robin Buchanan and Toni McKay went to Katoomba to conduct a 2 day course and to visit some of the sites where the group had been working. They decided to concentrate their efforts on the bush at Echo Point which is in need of help, and where they would be visible and might attract financial help. Work has been suspended over the winter months due, of course, to the cold, but the team hopes to get back on the job soon.

Susanne Gardner was pleased to report that a CEP team, with Tiu Vanamois as Supervisor, is now working at Govetts Leap in an area where the volunteers had worked previously.

HOW TO REMOVE TRADESCANTIA.

Mow it!

Flavio Ferri, who is a full-time regenerator with Lane Cove Council, uses, in some areas, a combination of mowing/poisoning/hand weeding. The results can be seen at Smoothery Park, Greenwich. Article to follow.

ARTICLES FOR THE NEWSLETTER

As you will see from this and the last newsletter, contributions from members are trickling in, with interesting articles from Elza Wade, Bill Jones and Sally Fisher.

One of the aims of AABR is to inform. What can you tell us about-

- where you work, the problems and how you are solving them
- interesting observations you have made
- theories you may have
- successes with poisoning
- more economic ways of working
- new tools
- propagation
- other

Please share with us your experiences and knowledge. The Secretary will welcome any contributions.

EASY BUSH WALKS

Some time ago a Council Community bus driver who takes elderly people on short excursions asked me if I knew any suitable bush areas where she could take her passengers. Her requirements are a flat short track to a view, vista or pleasant place where she could seat 10 or more people. Although she does bring some chairs, some seating would be necessary. Other groups are more mobile and can walk a longer distance. It was suggested at a meeting of AABR that we produce a booklet on different grades of walks. Finances don't permit this at the moment but the work could begin. The booklet could include short bush tours on which to take overseas visitors. Give it some thought, and if you have any ideas, submit them to me at the present until a committee is convened.

Toni McKay

WAHROONGA SCHOOL PROJECT

Students of Wahroonga Public School (the Bush School in Elza Wade's article) are involved in a project which aims to provide locally indigenous trees for the Bathurst area. In all 18 areas are to get trees for planting on public land to replace trees lost by clearing, farming and development. The pupils recently potted on nearly 3,000 seedlings. These will be cared for by the children and protected in a shade house until they are ready to be taken to Bathurst later this year to be hardened off, and then planted. According to Prof. Carrick Chambers, director of the Royal Botanic Gardens (The Northern Herald 25-6-87) the loss of trees in Australia is a serious problem which would not be rectified if NSW farmers planted 90m. trees a year. The children of Wahroonga Public School are setting a wonderful example to others.

CAMPING WEEKEND

At the end of March some AABR members and friends spent a relaxing two days exploring gorges and rock formations of the Newnes Plateau. Included was a walk through the glow worm tunnel and along the remains of the track of the railway line which serviced the shale mines in the valley.

Our thanks to Henry Fairlie-Cunninghame for leading us through such fascinating country and for sharing his knowledge of and interest in the area.

Heather Cooper

The office bearers of the Association are listed below:-

President	Helen Petersen 449 4526
Vice President	Robin Buchanan B.A. (Hons) 457 9945
Secretary	Toni McKay 419 6803
Minutes Secretary	Heather Cooper BSc 411 5891
Treasurer	Jenny Roxburgh 958 3674
Public Officer	Janet Fairlie-Cuninghame B.A. 449 8725

Toni McKay
Secretary.