

Wolli Creek Update

PO Box 270, Earlwood NSW 2206

SEPTEMBER 2002

It's Annual Dinner time again, reserve your place now!

Friday the 25th October, 7.00 pm, at the Earlwood-Bardwell Park Bowling Club, Doris St, Earlwood

It's that time again - and doesn't it seem to roll around fast! The annual dinner is an important fundraising activity for the Society, a chance to meet and chat with other members, try your luck with

the raffle, and enjoy an eminent guest speaker. This year's speaker is Barry O'Keefe, President of the National Trust of NSW.

A Chinese buffet meal will be available,

and will include vegetarian dishes.

Tickets are \$35-00 each. Please fill in the enclosed form and post it in as soon as possible. For more information phone Deb Little on 9554 3176.

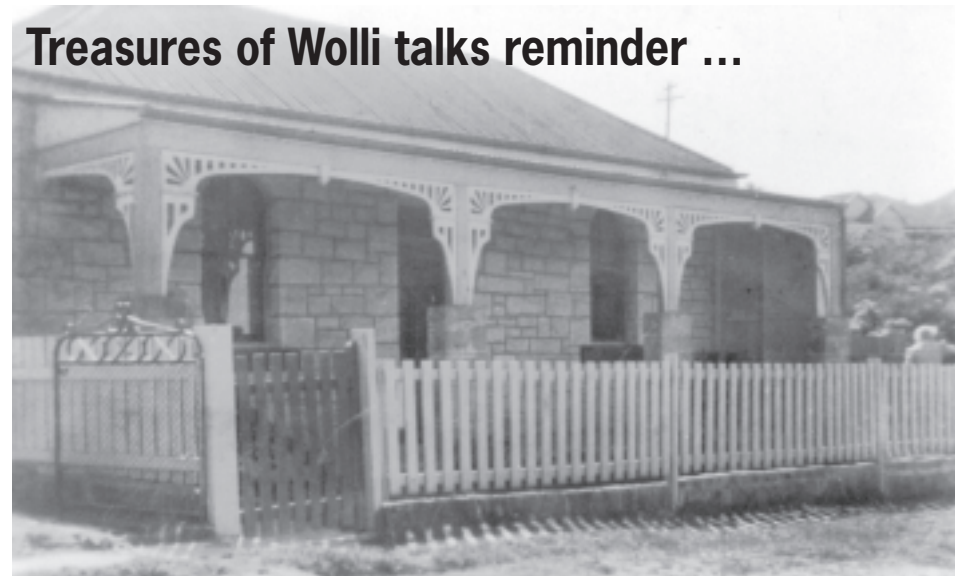
Can you help promote the Society?

In connection with upcoming activities we are hoping to do a letterbox drop in particular areas of the valley's catchment. Could you undertake to be one of the distributors for a specific area? We expect this to take no more than one to two hours per person and we are especially keen to get the support of those members who don't have the time for greater involvement. The first such exercise is programmed for October. Please contact Jenny Druce on 9579 5507. This is part of our larger plan to increase promotion activities and if you would like to be involved in the planning of that please contact James Sen Gupta on 9599 9457.

Restoring Wolli Society plans bush regeneration action

WHILE campaigning to conserve the valley continues unabated (see cycleway and cable bridge items over page), we are also planning to once again organise some bush regeneration work in the valley. There'll be something for almost everyone in the programme we're planning around on-the-ground work.

For those who know little about it we're planning an evening presentation on what bush regeneration is, why it's important, what approaches are used (and why), the role of revegetation (plantings) as well as the issues of handwork versus herbicides. It will be a good opportunity to learn about bush regeneration.



Number 12 Jackson Place in the 1940s

Treasures of Wolli talks reminder ...

The story of Jackson Place

THE FINAL SESSION in our 2002 talks series is coming up on **Wednesday 27 November**. Our President, Judy Finlason, will be presenting the story of Jackson Place at the Undercliffe end of the valley. After he reached Wolli from England, William Jackson became, among other things, a quarryman. In one of his quarries he built the six sandstone cottages of what is now known as Jackson Place.

It's a fascinating tale of the early days of the valley's occupation by Europeans. The much awaited reprint of Judy's booklet, *The Place that Jackson Built*, will be available at the session, which will be from 7:30 to 9:00 pm at the Earlwood-Bardwell Park RSL in Hartill-Law Avenue, adjacent to Bardwell Park station; buses 471 and 446 pass by. There's ample parking at the club.

For those who want to make their own garden supportive of our treasured Wolli bushland, enjoy more visits from native birds and other wildlife, and perhaps help to educate others - there'll be a simple leaflet of do's and don't's and contacts for assistance. We're planning a talk early

in 2003 on the NPWS Backyard Buddies program.

For those who want to help more directly with the bush regeneration programme - there'll be a training session and monthly work in the bush with a

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professional supervisor. If you can't undertake this level of physical work or the time commitment - you could assist with the distribution to houses in the area surrounding the proposed worksite of the leaflet of do's and don't's or contribute to a special WCPS fund to support the work ("sponsor a volunteer").

To register an early interest in any aspect of this programme please contact Peter Stevens on 9554 3176. On-the-ground work is projected to commence in March 2003.

The cable bridge issue

The Society and the Valley look set to lose out over this particular infrastructure "nibble" at the Valley. The proponent, Transgrid, is a State instrumentality so Canterbury Council as the consent authority for this particular section of the new power cable for the CBD can only impose conditions on its approval *with the concurrence of Transgrid!* This means that there is no effective independent regulation or oversight of the environmental decisions taken by what is essentially an engineering organisation.

Transgrid claim that it is not feasible engineering to modify the cable route so that its bridge crosses the Creek at right angles and close to the Bexley Road bridge (to minimise construction and subsequent visual impacts). But there is no check on this and it could cover a decision made on purely economic or convenience grounds. We've taken extensive photographs to enable the Society to monitor the changes brought about. We would like to hear from members living near the Bexley Road bridge who could take regular note of any happenings at the site. Please contact Lee on 9567 8502.

The cycleway issue

Since the last Update the Society has:

- Been on a site inspection of the proposed cycleway route with the RTA and the Nature Conservation Council (NCC) and received detailed plans of the engineering works the RTA anticipates. These involve 380 m of elevated structures on pylons driven into the bed of the creek or its tributaries or into the immediate flood plain of the creek. A further

190 m of the creek banks would be converted into hard gabion structures. For much of the rest of the 2.5k section from Bexley North and Turrella, the cycleway would be immediately on top of the creek banks and subject to flooding in high flood events. A 1.8 m mesh fence topped by three strands of barbed wire would run all along the railway side and along many lengths of the creek side of the cycleway (the total cage idea appears to have been dropped).

- Met with members of several local Bicycle User Groups (BUGS). These are sub-groups of Bicycle NSW (BNSW). Efforts to meet with the NCC and BNSW jointly have been thwarted by BNSW refusals. Our meeting with the BUGs was productive as most cyclists share our twin objectives - cycleways and the preservation of bushland and riparian zones - although the perceived balance is understandably different.

- Arranged to undertake a site inspection of alternative routes with the cyclists (late September).

- Submitted resolutions to the Annual Conference of the NCC seeking action against the RTA's preference for creekside cycleways and criticising the current leadership of Bicycle NSW for its continuing support of such routes. (These will be emailed to those of you on our emailing list - to be added to this send an email to dlps@ozemail.com.au.)

Wolli Treasures talk 3 The flora of the valley

PAUL IBBETSON from the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service gave us a very comprehensive and enthusiastic account of the plant communities, and interesting individual plant species of the valley, illustrating his talk with many slides. The valley has a great diversity of plant species, ranging from saltmarsh, and wetland plants, through to sandstone heathland and open forest plants. We were treated to ferny banks set against the smooth, muscular pink trunks of smooth-barked apples (*Angophora costata*), different species of wattle in bloom, as well as towering cliff faces supporting cascading ferns and small delicate heathland plants - and all with-

out leaving our chairs! Paul also showed us images of some of the "bad" plants that have invaded the valley, such as privet, and talked about the impact of such plants on the Valley's biodiversity. He encouraged us to all get out there and have a look at what's in the valley, particularly with spring coming up, and showed us samples of some of the books available about Sydney's flora, including one about the bushland plants of the Cooks River catchment (see enclosed leaflet with this update if you receive the hard copy version).

Important notice

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

■ The AGM will be held at the Earlwood-Bardwell Park RSL in Hartill-Law Avenue at Bardwell Park at 7:30 pm on Wednesday 23 October.

■ Come along and hear reports of the year's activities and help elect the committee for the next year. We have four office bearers (President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer) as well as general committee members. We warmly encourage you to put yourself forward for the committee, where we currently have vacancies.

■ The committee meets monthly for about two hours (first Wednesday of each month). Your participation would enable you to be involved in ongoing decision-making. The AGM is a good way to get a feel for how it is currently done.

■ For more info call Peter on 9554 3176