

More bush restoration volunteers needed

The Society has worked with Canterbury City Council to submit a grant application to the Cooks River Foreshore Improvement Program for further professionally-supervised bush restoration work in 2005. We should know the result by about the end of this year.

We are committed to providing an average of six volunteers a month for eleven sessions, so new helpers are always welcome. Introductory training and on-the-job guidance will be available.

To register for 2005 or for further information, ring Peter on 9554 3176 or email to info@wollicreek.org.au. Existing volunteers are asked to re-register so that we keep abreast of changing commitments.



Some of the many volunteers who have worked on the Society's site at Bray Avenue over 2003/4.

FRIDAY 22 OCTOBER, 7.00 PM, MARRICKVILLE GOLF CLUB

Earthbeat presenter Alexandra de Blas to speak at our 21st Annual Dinner!

For the Wolli Creek Preservation Society's 21st Annual Dinner we have a very special guest speaker, Alexandra de Blas, the presenter of Radio National's popular environment program, Earthbeat.

Alexandra began her career with the ABC in 1987 working in outback Queensland. She then went on to present daily rural programs in Tasmania and Victoria.

Alexandra has a BSc from the University of Sydney (Zoology and Psychology) and Graduate Diploma of Environmental Studies with first class honours from the University of Tasmania.

Her honours thesis, on the environmental effects of the Mount Lyell copper mine on Tasmania's West Coast,



was highly controversial and received national media attention. Her research was the subject of a multi-award winning Dateline program on SBS Television.

Following her public stand Alexandra received the Vincent Fairfax Ethics in Leadership award. Then in 1996 she withdrew from her PhD studies and returned to the media where she took up the post at Earthbeat.

Outside of her work for the ABC, Alexandra also played an integral role in the development of

Tasmania's French black truffle industry in the mid 1990s.

• **For Annual Dinner details see back page or booking form enclosed with this newsletter.**

Why not renew your membership for 2005 now?

The WCPS membership year is calendar, but memberships begun or renewed after October 1 each year are effective until the end of the following calendar year. So, renew now and be financial to 1 January 2006! Seriously, early renewal really helps us with budgetary planning so we want you to DO IT NOW on the form enclosed. Your membership adds to the pressure we can exert in favour of the valley. Save money by sending it with your booking for the Annual Dinner!

Choosing plants for your garden?

If you want to evolve your garden towards greater compatibility with our local bush and wildlife, but don't know just what to remove from your plantings or what to add to them, we have volunteers to lend a guiding hand: contact Sue Stevens on 9558 9866 or Deb Little on 9554 3176 or send a cry for help to info@wollicreek.org.au. There are other resources to help you, too.

Within Tempe Reserve, Marrickville Council has developed the Cooks River Valley Gardens as a showcase for locally native species, with planting begun in September 2001. These are very well worth a visit. Inspiration for the gardens' design came from Doug Benson, Danie Ondinea and Virginia Bear's book, *Missing Jigsaw Pieces: The Bushplants of the Cooks River Valley* (published 1999, available from the Royal Botanic Gardens, Marrickville Council, or Marrickville Community Nursery). The book discusses what the valley is likely to have been like as a natural landscape, and the changes that have come about in the area as a result of farming and industry.

It also describes the vegetation communities that would have existed in the Cooks River catchment, including Wolli. Although the Tempe Reserve site is likely to have been mudflats prior to European settlement, it is now able to support species that represent key vegetation communities of the Cooks River Valley as identified in *Missing Jigsaw Pieces*. These vegetation communities provided the key for the garden's layout.

The gardens therefore provide not only a broad reference for local species of the Cooks River Valley, but also vegetation communities, so that you can select species accord-



New Holland honeyeater on a waratah

Gavin Gatenby (courtesy NPWS)

ing to soil types that you are working with and get to see how well they can look as cultivated plants. Many of the plants are available through the Council-supported Marrickville Community Nursery at Addison Road (ring 0412 435 948 Wed-Fri for opening hours and other information).

An additional resource is the listing of Wildlife Habitat Plants of the Wolli Val-

ley (compiled by Danie Ondinea), which indicates which species are used by what wildlife for what purpose. So you can learn which of the local species to plant if you want to attract, say, butterflies. A short version of this listing is on the Society's website and a full version is available for \$3 at most Society events (or \$3+ \$1 p&p if request sent to the Society at PO Box 270, Earlwood, 2206).

Tell Lyn about the birds!

Lyn Wotton has agreed to take on the role of 'bird anchorperson' for the Society. Any identification problems or unusual sightings?, tell Lyn. Want advice on making a bird-welcoming backyard or whether to feed wild birds?, ask Lyn. Phone 9787 2848, email birds@wollicreek.org.au.

New birds of Wolli book in preparation

The Society is working on a series of projects arising from the sustained systematic observation work of the late Neil Rankin, whose *Birds of Wolli Creek* many of you will already own. In particular, we are well into preparing a revised edition, perhaps to be called Rankin's Birds of Wolli, to replace our exhausted stock of copies of the original. Now would be a good time to advise us of any errors you may have noticed. Again, let Lyn know, preferably by email at birds@wollicreek.org.au.

We're now online at www.wollicreek.org.au with lots of great resources!

New Wolli website launched

During August, we launched our new website at www.wollicreek.org.au. The *Valley Times* picked up the story on 2 September (right).

As part of our efforts to promote the site, the valley and the Society itself we have also printed a bookmark and are distributing it to libraries, schools and conservation-friendly outlets elsewhere.

For your own bookmark, cut off the bottom of this page. If you would like to print off a batch of bookmarks to distribute yourself we can send artwork, set out at six bookmarks to an A4 page. Email request to info@wollicreek.org.au. Give them to friends, leave them in library books; be inventive, but get the message out!

Why not come on a Wolli picnic?

During the spring months we are experimenting with general membership picnic arrangements, but timing them to occur in conjunction with bush restoration sessions. So if you want the chance to enjoy Girrahween Park's excellent new facilities and to meet other members, please come and join us at the picnic tables (enter from Fauna Street) from about 12:45 on the third Sunday of the Spring months: 19 Sept; 17 Oct; 21 Nov. It's BYO everything, but remember there are electric BBQs and toilets available.

Increasing awareness

PROTECTING Canterbury City's most precious environmental asset has been the Wolli Creek Preservation Society's goal for the last 21 years.

Wolli Creek is the area's last significant remaining piece of bushland, but over the years it has repeatedly come under threat.

The society has put out a call for members to help boost its battle to keep the remaining bushland.

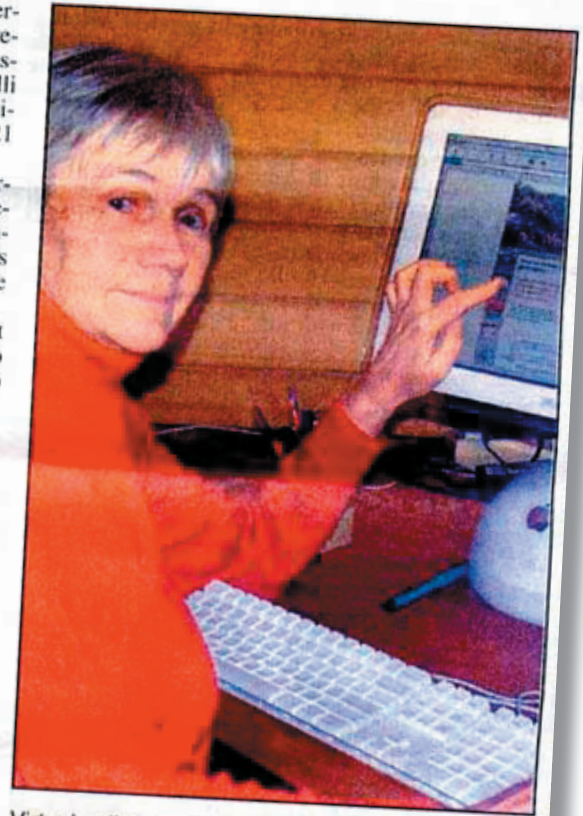
Preservation Society president Judy Finlason said she remains very keen to increase public awareness of the valley and its bushland.

"We want people to join in with supporting the preservation and enhancement of the valley's natural values through membership of the society," Ms Finlason said.

"A strong membership increases our influence with state and local governments."

In March the society enjoyed one of its greatest triumphs when the government announced that Wolli Creek will be turned into a protected regional park.

The society has also



Virtual valley . . . Wolli Creek Preservation Society president Judy Finlason hopes the group's new website will increase awareness of the important stretch of bushland.

revised its website to mark its 21st anniversary and to back up the significant list of publications about the valley.

Visit wollicreek.org.

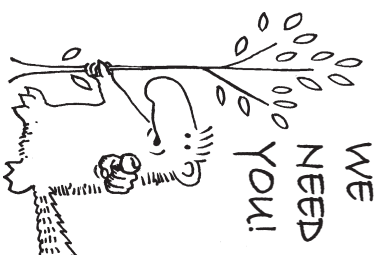
au for more information about the society, facts about Wolli Creek and an interesting selection of pictures, or to join the society.

All-singing, all-dancing Annual General Meeting

This year we've changed our arrangements for the AGM. We're keen to have more members come along to review the past year and help with priorities for the future. And to make it even more attractive we're screening the five-minute video, *The Battle for Nannygoat Hill*, and, we hope, the first cut of our soon-to-be web-based 'virtual walk' from Girrahween Park to Turrella.

We're always keen to gain new committee members to help run the Society, organise events and activities, and campaigning to protect Wolli Valley from a frequently changing set of threats. President Judy Finlason 9559 2821, or Vice-President Peter Stevens 9554 3176, will be happy to discuss what's involved.

The AGM will be held at 7:30 on Wednesday 3 November in CECAL's hall at 15 Clarke Street, Earlwood, followed by a brief first committee meeting for the year. As always, members are welcome to attend the committee meeting as well as the AGM.



Campaign to protect and enhance the Wolli Valley

Educate the public on environmental issues

Issue publications, newsletter

Have a bush regeneration group

Have walks, talks, activities

Support tunnel stack filtration

Lobbied for the regional park

Stopped the MSE surface road

We ...

Society Inc.

Preservation

creek

Wolli

Join the

enquiries: info@wollicreek.org.au ... join today!

Shared vision for the future of Wolli Creek needed

Society calls November community information meeting

We are organising a public information-gathering meeting at 7pm on Tuesday 23 November, to be held at the River Canoe Clubhouse on the bank of the Cooks River at Tempe. The meeting is to gain information relevant to the future of the creek in the Wolli valley and its southern bank. It will be of interest not only to members, but to all local residents and stakeholders in the wider, regional role of the valley as a natural area. Please come along and help by advertising the meeting wherever you can. If you can assist in this way, please contact Peter on 9554 3176.

Issues to be canvassed include: the overall management and rehabilitation of the creek; litter and water quality; the Turrella weir; protection and enhancement of creek ecology, including the endangered coastal saltmarsh community; flood

Wolli Creek in flood at the Henderson Street weir



management.

Among those to be invited are community groups, local Councils and MLAs, and State agencies, including DIPNR, Fisheries, Sydney Water, RTA, RailCorp, NPWS.

Gathering information about agency responsibilities and plans for the creek is

an important element in the development of a shared community vision of what the creek can become as a complement to the Regional Park being established on its northern bank, from Bexley North to Tempe. We expect NPWS to report on progress with the park as part of the meeting.

Wolli Events Calendar

Bush restoration group at Bray Avenue, Bardwell Park

- Sundays 19 September, 17 October, 21 November, 19 December

New volunteers always welcome – please discuss with Peter on 9554 3176 beforehand.

Picnic at Girrahween Park

- Sun Sept 19, 12:45 pm.

Details page 3, of this Update..

Wolli Birds and Birdwatching

- Saturday 16 October, 9 am, free to members.

Experienced watcher and bird-bander, Alan Leishman will lead a bird walk from Girrahween to Turrella, encountering a variety of bird habitats along the way. Alan will provide tips on bird identification and what to watch for where and when. Bookings and information: Deb on 9554 3176. Numbers limited.

Picnic at Girrahween Park

- Sun 17 October, 12:45 pm.

Details page 3, of this Update..

WCPS Annual Dinner

- Friday 22 October, 7.00 pm. Cost \$35 Marrickville Golf Club, Marrickville (enter off Wharf Street).

Guest speaker: ABC Earthbeat presenter Alexandra de Blas.

It is 21 years since the formation of the Society, so let's make this dinner a really big one. As usual, good company, the scrapbooks, prizes and a great speaker. Book early (9554 3176), organise a table. See booking form for more details.

Teddy Bears' Picnic

- Saturday 30 October (morning) Cost \$10 per child (parent free!)

For parents and children 3-8 Includes a short talk, a 2 km walk with activities at the end. To register and for further information contact Isabel on 9789 0634. Offers to help with organisation very welcome.

WCPS Annual General Meeting

- Wednesday 3 November 7:30 pm

CECAL 15 Clarke Street Earlwood. Time to renew

and expand the committee! We will also be showing the famous video clip *The Battle for Nannygoat Hill* and, hopefully, a first version of Wolli – the virtual walk! To nominate, contact Peter on 9554 3176.

Wolli from Creek to Crest

- Saturday 20 November 12:30 – 5 pm. Cost \$20

A rare opportunity to combine a look at Wolli from the water (by kayak), and from above (at Nannygoat Hill). Paddle from Tempe to Turrella, walk to the hill top. Hire kayaks available, but numbers severely limited (8). To register call Peter on 9554 3176.

Picnic at Girrahween Park

- Sun 21 November 12:45 pm

Details page 3 in this Update.

Public Meeting: the future of Wolli Creek

- Tues 23 November 7 pm

River Canoe Club, Tempe. Another important gathering to keep government agencies moving. See details in story above.



60 ha regional park being created
Beautiful family picnic areas
Extensive bushland
Walking tracks
Great birdwatching
Extensive views
Rugged sandstone escarpments
Parkland, heath, woodland, forest
Easy public transport access

pictures and information: www.wollicreek.org.au