



Wolli Creek Preservation Society

Update

September 2010

It's way past time ...

... that the NSW Government honour its **1998 promise** to protect inner South Western Sydney's largest and most significant bushland, the **Wolli Creek Valley** and make it a **Regional Park**.

WE'VE GONE PUBLIC!

Most people enjoying the bush and waterways of Wolli Creek Valley assume that this bushland is already under the protection of a Regional Park. It's not. Some progress has been made, but the commitment is still a long way from being met. We've now gone public with our campaign to finally make the Wolli Creek Valley a Regional Park.

We have sent information about the campaign to every MP and to the media and we're expecting growing media interest in the lead up to a State election next year.

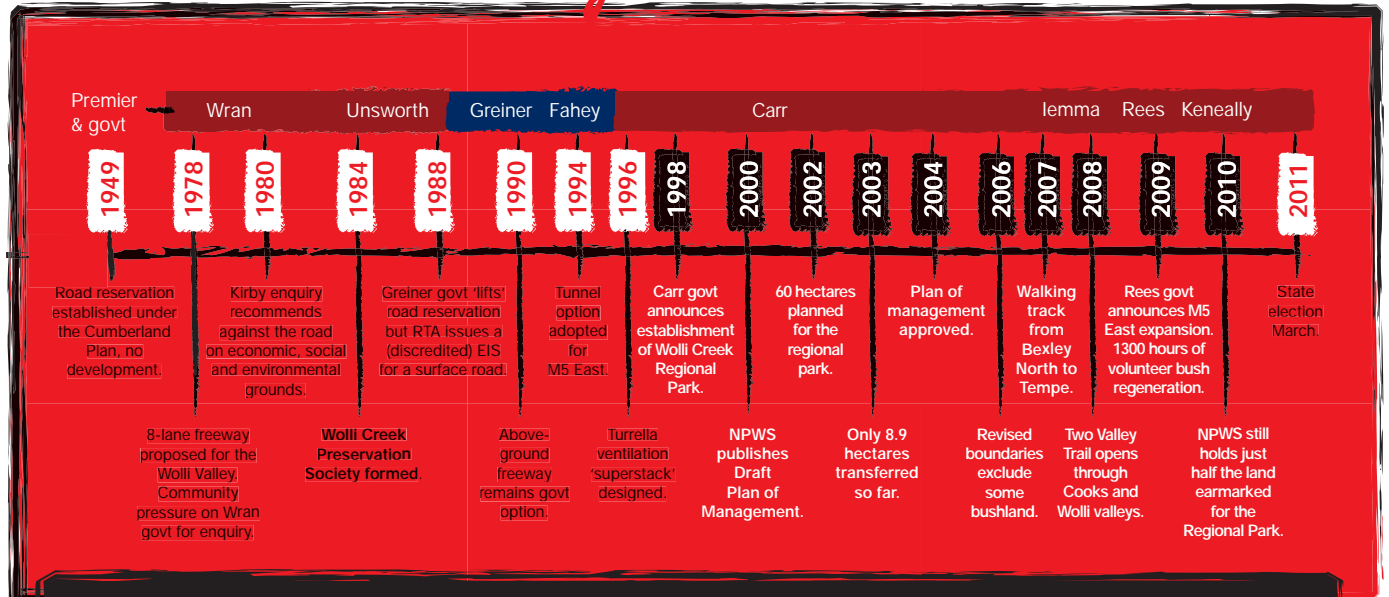
YOUR SUPPORT IS NEEDED

- Write to info@wollicreek.org.au and we will send you an action package.
- Sign the petition in the package, spread information to friends and family, write to your MP and write to the media. It's WAY past time.

No more delay! Sign the petition **today** at www.wollicreek.org.au



Wolli Valley timeline



STILL WAITING

We've been waiting twelve years for the 1998 promise to be fulfilled. At every step along the way there has been procrastination and delay despite continuing community agitation. Here we are in 2010 and still almost half of the lands, mainly in the hands of Canterbury Council and various State agencies, have not been transferred to the NPWS. The NSW Labour Right will be fighting to stay in office next year. Help us convince them that they will need to deliver on this old promise to get our vote.

No more delay! Sign the petition **today** at www.wollicreek.org.au

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Society's AGM will be held on Tuesday 26 October at 7pm at the Community Development Organization's offices at 11-13 Hartill-Law Avenue, Bardwell Park.

The outgoing committee will be seeking approval for the Annual Report to June 30 2009, and for the annual accounts. We will also be seeking nominations for the incoming committee. Nominations have to be with the Society two weeks ahead of the AGM i.e., by close of business on Tuesday 12 October. A nomination form is with this *Update*, but you might like to discuss what's involved with current committee members. Contact WCPS to be put in touch.

We are always keen to seek new members to help with the running of the Society.





THE M5E EXPANSION

REMEMBER THE FOOTPRINT OF CONSTRUCTION AT BEXLEY ROAD WHEN THE FIRST M5 TUNNEL WAS BEING CONSTRUCTED?

Imagine the footprint visible in this 1999 photograph transferred to the other side while new tunnels and likely new access ramps are built to the east. The two white lines indicate the width of the zone within which the new four-lane tunnel would be run. Anywhere between these lines could be affected by RTA works. While house demolition hasn't been ruled out, the bushland where WCPS has spent hundreds of volunteer hours is the more likely to be impacted.

WHAT WE KNOW AND *WHAT WE THINK*

In answer to a Question on Notice in August 2010, the NSW Premier wrote:

"The M5 East Expansion is a high priority road project and a key element of an integrated plan for the development of Sydney's transport network. In February 2010 we released the Metropolitan Transport Plan - Connecting the City of Cities. The plan included the M5 East Expansion on a list of projects identified as being beyond the 10 year funding guarantee, however it is able to be brought forward if additional funding becomes available.

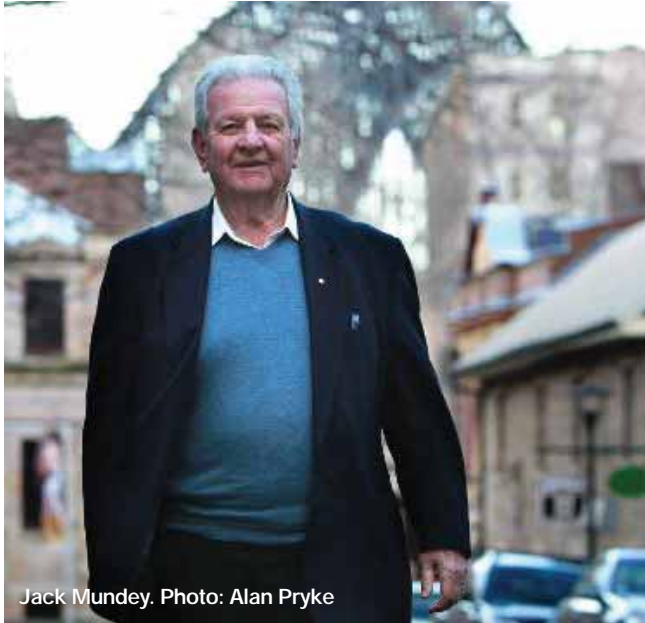
Some land near Wolli Creek may be required for any future M5 East Expansion. However, land held by the Government evaluated as surplus will be released as soon as possible."

Back in November 2009 the RTA issued an Overview of the overall M5 corridor expansion and began community consultations with submissions to close on 19 February 2010. West of King Georges Road, the M5 would be expanded to three lanes each way, with four lanes each way between King Georges Road and Bexley Road. *This would be another major ramp-up of hard surfaces in the Wolli Creek catchment leading to an increase in flash floods and to pressure both to upgrade the Bexley Road crossing over the Creek and to widen the creek downstream, probably in a concrete channel.*

In August 2010, Federal Infrastructure Minister Albanese announced that he was not willing for the Commonwealth to fund the Southern Sydney Arterial Road part of the project, leading to celebrations among Tempe 2020 activists. *Albanese's dropping of the Southern Sydney Arterial Road section is to be expected. Not only was it a poor idea, but community opposition threatened both his own federal seat and that of the NSW Deputy Premier, Carmel Tebbutt.*

Also in August, the RTA reported that: "As recently announced, this new access road will not go through Tempe Reserve. The preferred option [is] to provide a new four lane arterial road from the M5 East tunnels to the airport, the port and the industrial land to north of the airport.

Albanese remained silent on the rest of the M5 proposal. *This can be taken as a tacit commitment to it and we should wait for an announcement of funding for it between the two elections, no matter who is leading the Commonwealth Government.*



Jack Munday. Photo: Alan Pryke

Annual Dinner

**SPECIAL GUEST JACK MUNDEY
FRIDAY 22 OCTOBER 2010,
ST GEORGE ROWING CLUB,
LEVEY STREET, WOLLI CREEK
BOOK NOW!**

Our special guest for the Annual Dinner this year is the legendary Jack Munday. Jack became a national figure in the early 1970s when, as Secretary of the NSW Branch of the Builders' Labourers Federation (BLF), he led the union's famous 'green bans'. Since then he has been continuously active in efforts to save our natural and built environment. He has been an inspiration to environmental activists, including those involved in our long battle to save the Wolli Creek Valley.

Beginning in the mid-1970s and ending only in 1998, the struggle to save the Wolli Valley from the threat of an eight-lane surface freeway was Sydney's longest-running environmental dispute. Long-term member and former Society President, Gavin Gatenby, will present an illustrated account of the complex and often surprising campaign that saved the Wolli Valley, led to the construction of the Airport Rail Line and inspired other anti-motorway and pro-public transport campaigns.

This dinner is always popular and a great event to bring family, friends and neighbours along to. This year the dinner will be a great opportunity to learn some of the history of the first phase of the battle for the Wolli Valley. This has important messages for the present, because... **it's WAY past time!**

Cost will be an unchanged \$40 a head and we'd love to see you there. Bookings can be made on the form enclosed with this Update and should be done early on. Send payment to WCPS PO Box 270 Earlwood 2206, or make a direct deposit to Westpac BSB 032 067 WCPS Inc 288295 with surname and 'AD' in information line. Send an email to info@wollicreek.org.au to confirm.

WOLLI VISIT

National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS) Regional Manager for Metropolitan North East Region Gary Dunnett and Ranger Ben Khan with Peter Stevens on a site visit to the Wolli Creek Valley.



Photo: Laura Zusters



Contractor James Gill shows the concept plan that sets the context for the work. He's happy to answer community questions on 0411 614 111. Photo: Laura Zusters

TURRELLA CREEK TRANSFORMATION

ANYONE VISITING TURRELLA RESERVE LATELY CAN'T HELP BUT NOTICE THAT BIG CHANGES ARE AFOOT.

The large Gross Pollutant Trap (GPT) has been finished and work has started on re-establishing Turrella Creek.

Phase 1 includes building the GPT, re-establishing Turrella Creek and creating a constructed salt marsh on the side of Wolli Creek. Phase 2 will probably be the construction of toilets and other facilities. Phase 3 is still tentative. There are plans for the construction of a wetland to treat the low flows and remove the nutrients from Turrella Creek. The location is yet to be resolved.

You can download the plan from the Sydney Metropolitan Catchment Management Authority website. Search for Turrella Creek Concept Plan.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS FOR 2011

If you need to rejoin for 2011 you will be advised in the material accompanying this *Update*.

Many members now take advantage of multi-year membership and will already be financial for 2011. Renewing and new members from now until the end of 2010 will be financial until 31 December 2011. It's a great help to us if you renew now and we encourage you to sign up for three years. For new members, joining now gives a full 15 months membership for the same low annual fees - a good thought for gift givers and those recruiting new members! But it's also a good time of year to think of donations - we are in the middle of a campaign after all!

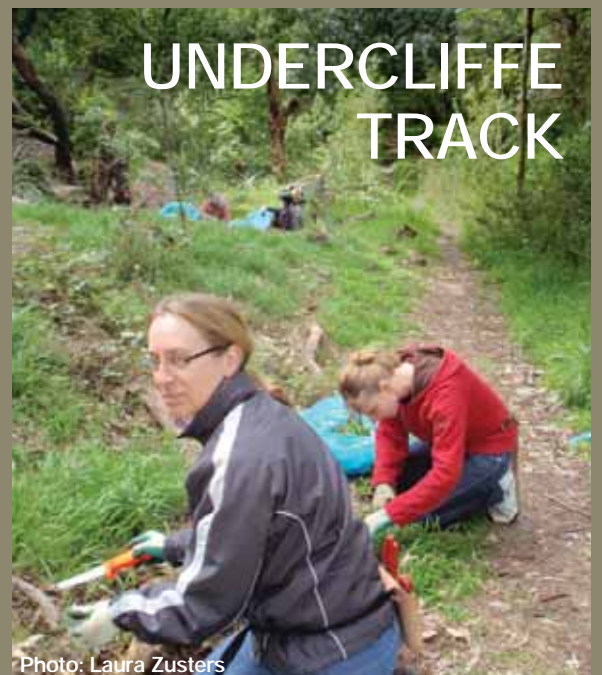


Photo: Laura Zusters

These volunteer WCPS Bush Regenerators are currently working hard on the Undercliffe Track, removing weed species to encourage native plant regeneration. If you enjoy being outdoors and getting close to nature and can spare some time why not volunteer for one of the regular bush regeneration sessions throughout the valley? See our Calendar on page 6 for more details.



Wolli Wildlife report

GREY-HEADED FLYING-FOXES

The Wolli Valley's Grey-Headed Flying-Fox (GHFF) camp at Turrella has remained occupied throughout winter, for the first time since they arrived in June 2007.

In other parts of Sydney, GHFF have also remained, when the usual pattern has been for them to head to northern NSW and Southern QLD at this time of year. As reported in the last *Update*, it's thought that storms and flooding in these northern areas removed a lot of natural food sources - pollen and nectar - from trees. Food in Sydney, too, has been in short supply and many GHFFs taken into care have been reported as malnourished. The Sydney Botanic Gardens had to suspend its eviction process, due to the underweight condition of so many captured GHFF that were to be fitted with tracking radio collars. The eviction has been postponed to May 2011.

Dr Peggy Eby gave a great talk on June 9th about the biology and ecology of GHFF to a very engaged audience. She provided good background information regarding the current problems being faced by this now 'vulnerable' species. Peggy is also involved in tracking some of the Gardens FFs that were able to be fitted with radio collars. In July, she has reported finding 4 FFs from the Botanic Gardens in the Wolli camp, 3 of which were Black Flying Foxes. Once uncommon in NSW, they are extending their range to the south.

The fly-out counts each month continue this year. More volunteers are always welcome. Contact info@wollicreek.org.au to go on the email list for notification of dates and times.

CALENDAR

Bush regeneration: October 2, 10, 13 16, 17; November 7, 10, 13, 19, 20; December 4, 8, 12, 17, 18. February 5, 9, 12, 18, 19. Details of locations from WCPS.

Bat counting: Third Friday of each month, just after sunset. Come along to see the fly-out or join in the counting. For detailed times and other bat news contact WCPS and join the bat group email.

Bird surveys: Nine teams are doing regular monthly surveys of bird species and numbers present. They work to their own timetable, but we can get you involved on a team if you contact WCPS.

Streamwatch: We are monitoring water quality monthly at six sites in Wolli and Bardwell Valleys. We'd love more volunteers to join this. If interested contact WCPS.

Committee Meetings: September 28, October 26, November 23. No meeting in December. All members are welcome to attend the meetings, but notification to WCPS is essential because of security at the building.

Sunday 3 October – 9.30am onwards – *Community Planting Day at Illoura Reserve*, Earlwood. We'll be planting out a strip in front of our new bush regen site in the Reserve. Come along and put a plant or two into the ground. Let WCPS know you are coming so that we have enough tools.

Saturday 9 October – am (allow 4 hours) – *A Walk up Wolli*. From Wolli Bluff to Bexley North. Approx 5km walk in Wolli Regional Park along a good track. Wear comfortable walking shoes and bring your camera. Free to members. Full details on registration with the WCPS.

Sunday 10 October – 10am–2pm. *Cooks River EcoFestival*. Ewen Park, Hurlstone Park. Always good to visit, and why not combine with an hour or so staffing the WCPS stall? Contact WCPS if you want to help out.

Friday 22 October – 6pm onwards – *WCPS Annual Dinner*. Jack Munday, Gavin Gatenby to speak.

Sunday 24 October – 9am to 12pm. *Wolli Bird Walk*. Introductory bird observation walk from Bardwell Park to Turrella with experienced birdwatcher and bander, Alan Leishman. Pre-registration essential. Free to members (limited numbers) – Register with WCPS.

Tuesday October 26 – 7pm – *Annual General Meeting*. See notice elsewhere in this *Update*.

Saturday 6 November – am. *Wolli from Creek to Crest*. Our very popular kayak trip up Wolli Creek with River Canoe Club kayaks Includes training, commentary, and light lunch. Cost \$40. To register and for more details contact WCPS.

Wolli Creek Preservation Society
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