



Wolli Creek Preservation Society

Update

February 2011

The big roll out

ON THURSDAY 16TH DECEMBER, 30 MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY CONVERGED ON GOVERNOR MACQUARIE TOWER IN THE CITY. WE UNROLLED A PETITION OF OVER 3,200 SIGNATURES CALLING ON THE STATE GOVERNMENT TO HONOUR ITS 1998 PRE-ELECTION COMMITMENT TO FINALISE THE WOLLI CREEK REGIONAL PARK.

A short burst of rain threatened to drench the roll out, but quickly passed before we got started. Peter Stevens wielded his megaphone to great effect to promote our cause to passers by and Gavin Gatenby explained some alternatives to the M5 Expansion. Our young secret weapons, Zoe & Ella Bassett, made sure that members of the public couldn't refuse their pamphlets. Interested public servants and passing workers also asked many questions about the Valley.

We had invited local MPs and Ministers to attend the unrolling of our 30 metre long petition, but not one of them showed up. The media didn't come either, apparently enticed by 500 people demonstrating for Egyptian rights around the corner in Macquarie Street. Clearly more newsworthy than us on the day!

Nevertheless, we got in the Valley Times in the January 13 issue. Have a look at www.torchpublishing.com.au/read/Valley_Times_13_January_2011.

Laura Zusters made our own video of the event and it's on our new Wolli Creek Valley Channel on YouTube at www.youtube.com/user/wollicreekvalley. Tell your friends to have a look at it and maybe we'll go viral!

Many thanks to the people who glued down sheets of signatures, came to the trial Roll Out or the Big Roll Out in the city, waved placards and handed out information. A big thanks also goes to Christine Miles for providing the inspiration – and for getting her sister Sylvie from England to give up part of her Australian holiday to help.

The State elections will be on March 26th. Talk to your local MP or write to them. Any suggestions on how to put more pressure on politicians before the election are very welcome.

Some of the 30 members at the roll-out
Photos: Laura Zusters



NEW WOLLI SITE COMING SOON



Web developer Margaret Redestowicz is giving our website a fresh new look and making it simpler to navigate. It will be easier to see what's happening and find what you're looking for.

You'll be able to keep up with news on the Regional Park Campaign and use the Events Calendar to see what's on. This website will be a wonderful resource for people wanting to learn more about the valley, with plenty of pictures and information on plants, wildlife, walks and activities for children.

We will have a launch of our new Website in early April.

We now also have a community Facebook page called *Protect Wolli Creek Valley* and you can follow *Wolli Possum* on Twitter. Please pass the links on to friends and family. You will also be able to link to these from the new website after the launch.

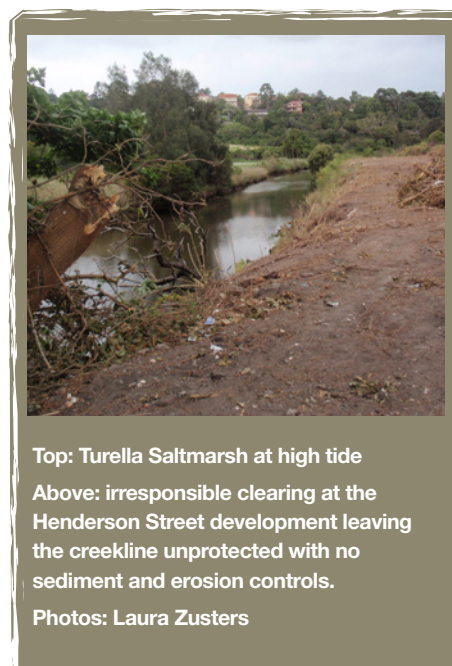


TURRELLA CREEK AND SALTMARSH

TURRELLA RESERVE HAS SEEN MORE DRAMATIC CHANGES IN THE LAST FEW MONTHS.

The re-shaping of Turrella Creek from ugly steep-sided stormwater drain to a pleasant watercourse with gentle slopes is complete and planting of thousands of native seedlings will start soon.

National Parks have also created a saltmarsh at the junction of Wolli and Turrella Creeks. Saltmarsh is an Endangered Ecological Community, that is important for fish-breeding and as a food source for other species. The saltmarsh is designed to be inundated with salt water only a few times a year, allowing a small band of salt tolerant plants to develop. The salt marsh is very important for the health of the creek.



Top: Turrella Saltmarsh at high tide
Above: irresponsible clearing at the Henderson Street development leaving the creekline unprotected with no sediment and erosion controls.

Photos: Laura Zusters

HENDERSON STREET DEVELOPMENT

Unfortunately, the opposite bank of Wolli Creek has recently been cleared for development, as anyone can see from Turrella Reserve. Just a couple of days' work has destroyed the green barrier that used to protect the bank and hide the factories. This development at 13 Henderson Street, Turrella has been approved by Rockdale Council. But questions are being asked about the absence of sediment fencing and other potential breaches of consent conditions.



Help us!

WE HAVE REGISTERED A SITE FOR CLEAN-UP AUSTRALIA DAY ON SUNDAY 6 MARCH. PLEASE JOIN US TO REMOVE RUBBISH FROM OUR UNIQUE BUSHLAND.

WHERE

Meet at the top end of Unwin Street at the eastern end of the valley near Wolli Bluff, Undercliff, just a short walk from Tempe Station. We will move along the track to remove rubbish from the bush, but won't go down to the creek itself.

WHEN

9am – 12 noon. Gloves and rubbish bags provided but if you bring your own bag and gloves it will ensure that we don't run out.

All volunteers need to be registered to participate.

REGISTER ONLINE

www.cleanupaustraliaday.org.au/Wolli+Creek+Regional+Park
Our site is named Wolli Creek Regional Park. If you don't register online you can fill in a registration form on the day, but it helps if we know about how many people will come.

BUSHCARE ROUNDUP

There's good news and bad news. The good is that we have gained another \$20,000 under the Commonwealth Government's 'Caring for our Country' program. This will enable us to expand our work on the northwest corner of Illoura Reserve during 2011.

The bad news is that we were unsuccessful in gaining a three-year grant from the NSW Government's Environmental Trusts to maintain and expand our work below Bray Avenue. This means we will have to put the wetland area onto a maintenance-only regime and even that will require some funding, which we are now looking for.

But there is plenty of other good news. We had a very good Community Planting day at Illoura Reserve in October and volunteer numbers have been good, though quite variable. Our 2010 total of 1425 hours was up by exactly 100 hours on 2009, though it doesn't look as though we will run out of work any time soon!

The installation of a bio-retention basin at Johnston St and the re-lining of the sewer heading east from Jackson Place represent major improvements for the valley over the long-term, but in the shorter term there is the potential for collateral damage to bushcare sites and work afterwards to deal with the clearing and planting. A good turnout of volunteers recently installed several stretches of pickets and 'crime scene' tape around the revegetation sites that need protection during upcoming construction. *Thanks to all those who turned up.*



Photo: Barry Porter

The theme of this year's National Trust Heritage Festival is 'Amazing Stories' and as part of it we are putting together an exhibition and guided walks to promote the Wolli Creek Valley.

Judy Finlason and Damon Bassett have been researching and designing a 16 panel display of different aspects of the valley. The launch is at CECAL Hall, Earlwood on April 4, before the exhibition opens for two weeks at Earlwood Library.

Special guided walks through the Valley will highlight the amazing stories that have been uncovered.

See our calendar for dates.



Juvenile Striated Heron (*Butorides striatus*)
Photo: Gavin Gatenby

Wolli Wildlife report

SUMMER BIRD SPOTTING

In October, Alan Leishman hosted a bird-watching morning at Turrella Reserve. A small group of stalwarts turned up for the event in torrential weather that wasn't conducive to seeing birdlife. We escaped the deluge for a nice cup of tea indoors and chatting about birds instead.

As the wet spring set in, it was hard to miss the dozens of Ibis that settled in Turrella Reserve and the calls of Koels and Channel-Billed Cuckoos through the Valley.

The beginning of summer brought some unusual sightings. A rare Scarlet Honeyeater was seen by bushwalkers on the Jackson Track. Chris Bartlett spotted Variegated Wrens and a Crimson Rosella at Girrahween.

January 13th was the night of the Inaugural Wolli Birdos Social Evening, hosted by Mary Foley. Eight Birdos showed up to share stories and sightings.

When kayaking up Wolli Creek, Gavin Gatenby has been keeping an eye on several Striated (Mangrove) Herons. Secluded mangroves are a great place for spotting these birds and in January he spotted a nest up in a tree and several juveniles by the water.

LAST KAYAK TRIP

Our last Wolli Creek kayak trip for some time is set for 19 February. We have run this successful venture in conjunction with the River Canoe Club and have introduced a lot of members and others to the joys of kayaking and the Wolli Valley.

With works going on at Turrella Reserve and the saltmarsh, our usual landing place is no longer viable. We are hoping to see a new landing closer to the weir and will be working with the Canoe Club and authorities to see how it might be funded. We'd love to have interested members involved in this. *Any takers?*

CALENDAR

Bush regeneration: March 5, 10, 13, 18,19; Apr 2, 10, 13, 15, 16; May 7, 8, 11, 20, 21; Jun 4, 8, 12, 17, 18. 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: Feb 22, Mar 22, Apr 26, May 24, Jun 28. All members are welcome to attend the meetings, but notification to WCPS is essential because of security at the building.

Wednesday 23 February – from 7pm – *John Martin*. Wildlife Officer with the Royal Botanic Gardens will report on research and work being done in preparation for the planned displacement of Flying-foxes from historic trees there. Questions and discussion to follow. CECAL Hall, Earlwood.

Sunday 13 March – 10 am start. *Two Valley Trail*. Once each season we will have a gentle bushwalk along the Wolli section of the Two Valley Trail. If you enjoy a short bushwalk (5km) at a leisurely pace (takes about 2 ½ hours), then this is for you! The walks are free for members, but numbers are limited and it is essential to book in: email wolliwalks@gmail.com or ring 9554 3176, with your name, and your home or mobile number. Confirmation will follow within 3 days, with walk details.

Wednesday 23 March – from 7pm – *'Rocking the Foundations.'* Pat Fiske's 1986 film covers a critical period in the history of the NSW Builders Labourers' Federation and the famous Green Bans. Segments of it were shown at the 2010 Annual Dinner and were received with spontaneous applause. We thought such an important piece of NSW and environmental history is well worth a full screening and a discussion session. CECAL Hall, Earlwood .

Wednesday 30 March – from 7pm – *Gavin Gatenby*. Gavin gave a presentation on the history of motorways at last year's Annual Dinner. For this extended version, we're asking Gavin to also cover the current issues and the EcoTransit alternative. Very pertinent to our current campaigns. CECAL Hall, Earlwood.

Monday 4 April – 6pm–7.30pm – *Amazing Wolli Creek Valley exhibition launch*. Prepared for the National Trust Heritage Festival. CECAL Hall, Earlwood. The exhibition will then be on display from 5–19 April in the Earlwood Library, at the corner of William and Homer Streets, Earlwood. *There will be associated guided walks* – 10 and 16 April, 9.30am. Bexley Nth to Tempe. \$10 to non members, free to members. Book with info@wollicreek.org.au.

CECAL, the Canterbury-Earlwood Caring Association Ltd, has its hall entrance in Lewin's St, Earlwood, just opposite the car park behind Coles.

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