



O.F.F. NEWS



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THE AGM 4TH FEBRUARY

Congratulations to Julian Sheen who was re-elected as President. Congratulations, also, to the committee members for this year. Their names are listed in the enclosed 2008 Program of Events. Secretary Faye Coughlan delivered a detailed summary on the Society's activities for 2007. Julian thanked Leslie Cox and Yvonne Penn who were not seeking re-election to the committee. He paid special tribute to Leslie for her significant contribution to the Society over many years. He then spoke on the role and function of the Society, listing its objectives and the means used to achieve them in 2007. Those objectives are:

- To stimulate interest in Australian flora and fauna.
- To act to protect and foster an interest in the natural environment, particularly at the local level.
- To foster an understanding of the need to conserve the natural environment and resources.
- To cooperate with other groups to achieve these objectives at local, state, national and international level.

He called on members to consider both the stated objectives and their level of achievement in 2007.

MYLES DUNPHY RESERVE

Myles Dunphy (1891-1985) was a local resident, very well known for his commitment to conservation. As one of his many projects, he formulated the Greater Blue Mountains National Park scheme in the period 1922 to 1932 [Source: The Colong Foundation for Wilderness]. In 1992 Hurstville City Council agreed to name the Myles Dunphy Bushland Reserve as suggested by the Oatley Flora and Fauna Society. [Hurstville City Council Website 2008] The O.F.F. Committee is continuing to lobby Hurstville Council to protect this important reserve from the threats of incursion by developers.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

Have you paid your OFF subscription for 2008? If not, please post your cheque to the Secretary PO Box 52 Mortdale. It remains \$25 per person or per family living at the same address.

PLEASE PRESERVE OUR TREES!

For over 50 years O.F.F. has been protesting about the destruction of trees by councils, developers, and householders. Trees are still under threat. As older houses are demolished, the entire flora often goes with them, even when the trees/plants are beautiful, long standing and not in the way of the planned new building or the builders.

OFF members have reported recent damage to a number of magnificent trees, and particularly to two in the Oatley area. One tree was removed from a public area without any consultation; a second is dying, apparently because of excavation below its roots. Both of these incidents are being taken up by the OFF Committee with appropriate Council officers.

LONE PINE

The most historically significant exotic species growing in Oatley Park is a Lone Pine tree (*Pinus halepensis*), grown from a seed collected by Owen Jones Davies, from the original Lone Pine tree of the famous 1915 Gallipoli campaign, one of very few trees successfully propagated from the original. [Hurstville Council in its *Oatley Park Management Plan* Nov 2004]

CLIMATE CHANGE

This remains a debated subject with many still not convinced that our excessive production of green house gases and careless pollution contributes to temperature change. *Climate Campaign* suggests strategies to make politicians more aware of what is happening and encourage them to take effective steps to protect the planet [www.climatecampaign.info].

EARTH HOUR

Earth Hour 2008 is on 29 March at 8pm. It has become a global movement now involving Sydney, Chicago, Tel Aviv, Manila, Copenhagen, Melbourne, Brisbane and Toronto. All are turning off their lights for an hour as a gesture in fighting global warming. We suggest that when you are switching off, you light a lantern or fire-safe candle in a prominent place showing that the darkness is intentional, and not just because you are away from home on that evening.

Meetings of the Society are held at the Uniting Church Hall Fredrick St [cnr Letitia St] Oatley starting at 7.45pm, usually on the fourth Monday of the month.

Visitors and accompanied children are welcome to all meetings and excursions.

COMING EVENTS

- **25th February** (Monday), Oatley Presentation -, '*Biodiversity Conservation in a Sustainable University Campus*' on how to make a campus self-sufficient in water and stationary energy supplies, and to eliminate or recycle waste. **Speaker Fred Bell.**
- **1st March** (Saturday), Walk, *Sydney Harbour Shoreline - Cremorne Point - Taronga Park area.* Walkers will meet at Mortdale station in time to catch the 8.39 train to Town Hall and Circular Quay (third last carriage). From there we will catch the 9.55 ferry to Cremorne, arriving at 10.05. From the jetty we will explore Cremorne Point and the way to Taronga Zoo. It will be a day full of spectacular views, a bit of history and comfortable walking. Bring morning tea, lunch and a hat. Swimming is possible at Cremorne after the walk. **Leaders Annette and Julian Sheen** 0415428744.
- **2nd March** Clean Up Australia Day [see below]

The enclosed **2008 Program of Events** provides the list for the year.

CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA DAY

Clean Up Australia Day 2008 is on Sunday 2nd March. The site for O.F.F. members and other volunteers is Poulton Park, Hurstville Grove, concentrating on the mangroves and creek-line, so wear suitable footwear. Assemble at the park on corner of Morshead Drive and Kyle Parade beginning at 9am. Kogarah Council will provide a breakfast barbeque for participants from 8am to 11am. Coordinator is Liz Cameron.

FOXES IN THE PARK!

Five foxes have recently been seen together in the Oatley Pleasure Park and they did not appear troubled by several children scampering near them. Parents are warned that they may be a threat to children. The Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre reports that foxes are a huge problem, their environmental impact is greater than for any other introduced vertebrate, and our worst predator, taking 30% of lambs in some areas. <http://www.invasiveanimals.com>

FERAL RABBITS ON COURSE

Some local golfers have noticed heightened activity among the rabbit population in the area. National Parks and Wildlife report grazing and burrowing by rabbits can cause serious erosion problems, reduce seeding and growth of native plants, and change the landscape. Rabbits also threaten the survival of a number of native animal species, and attract predators such as foxes.

CANE TOADS

The Daily Telegraph [11Feb] reports that eight cane toads have been found in the Sutherland Shire over the past seven months. Council has moved quickly to kill the toads. "Cane toads are known to be highly adaptable so without the preventive action council is taking, there is potential for this environmental menace to spread," a Council spokeswoman said.

HEAT WAVE

It is noted that January was the hottest month on record in Australia. The median temperature across the country was 1.3° higher than average. [The Leader Feb 7]

SECRET CREEK SANCTUARY

The Australian Ecosystems Foundation Inc opened this wild life sanctuary for tours last December. It is home to Rock-wallabies, Swamp Wallabies, Potoroos, Pademelons and Eastern and Tiger Quolls with more animals to come. It is located in Lithgow and you can find out about their program on [02] 6351 4515 or <http://www.ausecosystems.org.au>

PULP MILL AND POISONS

Wilderness News writing on the Tamar Valley Pulp Mill states that there will be a resulting high level of dioxins and furans, significant components of Agent Orange, and environmentally very dangerous. It comments that regardless of whether we need a new pulp mill, Australia could have chosen 'first tier' pulp mill technology, without dioxins and already operating in a number of Scandinavian countries. [WN Summer 2008]

DID YOU KNOW?

You can dial 112 on your mobile for the world wide emergency number. If you have an emergency and 000 is out of range, try 112 for a connection.

WHALING IN THE ANTARCTIC

An organisation called Whales Revenge is trying to get a million people world wide to sign a petition to stop whaling [around 931,552 at last count] and is asking everyone they contact to publicise their petition as widely as possible [www.whalesrevenge.com].

OFF NOTE

"I was surprised when my son arriving home from the first day of school announced that the day before at school had been Stuffed Elephants' Day. Concerned at the possible environmental significance, I checked with the school. It was Staff Development Day"; (from a very authoritative parent).