



O.F.F. NEWS



Published by
**OATLEY-FLORA-&-FAUNA
CONSERVATION-SOCIETY-INC.**

Print-Post-App. No. PP-255003/03239

Since 1955

OFF website: <http://off.oatleypark.com/>

Issue 10/10

Oct/Nov 2010

OATLEY BOWLING CLUB SITE

Hurstville Council records show that on 22nd Sept it agreed to a four-part resolution summarised here.

1. Council as landowner, submit an application to rezone to Residential and reclassify to Operational Land the former Oatley Bowling Club site to permit seniors' housing.
2. Council as landowner ensure that any seniors' housing on the site includes a community meeting facility and community garden for general public use.
3. Funds from the lease go towards the upgrading of Jubilee Park, Mortdale.
4. Council consult with Kogarah Council, engage an access consultant to report on grades and pathway widths, and to investigate and report on ways to overcome excessive grades and narrow pathway widths and to prepare a specific plan of management for the *Myles Dunphy Reserve*.

Seven Councillors, Sansom, Badalati, Wong, Liu, Pickering, Perry, and McMahon voted in favour and five Councillors, Wagstaff, Hindi, Istephan, Jacovou, and Giegerl voted against the resolution.

On the positive side, Council has at last agreed to address a specific Plan of Management for the Myles Dunphy Reserve, some public use of the area in question and the significant issue of steep grade access.

These positives steps, however, do not compensate for the number of alarming problems arising from this resolution.

1. Council's primary concern still appears to be the raising of money, not the conservation of a significant part of the iconic *Myles Dunphy Reserve*.
2. The seniors housing objective could be misleading. If it is, as it appears, in the "over 55" category, this simply provides an opening for developers. The houses would be expensive to lease or buy, and could not be accurately described as meeting a social need.
3. The proposed reclassification to "operational land" means that Council can then sell the land.
4. Finally, there was no restriction of "low rise building" mentioned in the resolution.

THE DUNPHY WILDERNESS FUND

The Dunphy Wilderness Fund was set up by the NSW Government in 1996, to honour the contribution made by the Dunphy family to the conservation of NSW. The Government started the fund by committing \$5.5 million over five years. The Program aims to acquire private land to consolidate and protect wilderness areas. It has purchased 32 properties totalling 38,000 hectares in eight wilderness areas. The Colong Bulletin of September notes that less than half of the lands acquired by the Fund have so far been declared under the Wilderness Act. <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/>

TASMANIAN FORESTS

The Florentine Protection Soc reports that despite recent announcement by the forest industry that it will no longer log Tasmania's ancient forests, it still is logging. Meanwhile, radiocarbon dating tests carried out on wood from Styx Valley trees reveal tree ages between 500 and 600 years. www.stillwildstillthreatened.org/

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS COAL THREAT

The Environmental Defenders Office [NSW] reports that Korean steel maker POSCO, in partnership with local coal miner Cockatoo Coal, are purchasing a 115sq km coal lease in Sutton Forest from Anglo American, and that Boral has recently been granted a new coal exploration lease over 63sq km in the Berrima area. If allowed, serious coal mining is coming to the Southern Highlands.

QUEENSLAND WILD RIVERS

The Wilderness Society notes that the Queensland Wild Rivers Act, passed five years ago and now being debated at federal level, was aimed at protecting free-flowing rivers. Ten spectacular river systems are now protected Wild Rivers and 40 Indigenous Wild River Rangers work across Far North Queensland. While there was clear Indigenous support for Act at the time, some now see it as a threat to Indigenous development. The mining lobby has also spoken out forcefully against it. Supporters of the legislation say it is an environmental regulation designed to work with landholders and Traditional Owners to help maintain the wildlife, natural resources, and productivity of the river basin. They argue that it restricts highly destructive development, like mining, from sensitive waterways and wetlands, and that it regulates the impact of development in the river catchments. <http://www.wilderness.org.au/>

THE OFF ANNUAL DINNER

The 2010 Annual Dinner will be held on Friday 12th November, 7 pm at South Hurstville R.S.L. Club, 72 Connells Point Rd, South Hurstville (near the corner of King Georges Rd) in the South Lounge.

Cost is \$35 per person for a Buffet including pre dinner platters, a selection of hot dishes, salads, dessert, bread rolls and tea or coffee with mints. Drinks can be purchased at the bar. Singers are expected.

Prior booking is essential. Alison Gilroy and Robin Dickson will be taking bookings and payment at the October meeting. Otherwise, they can be contacted on 9580 5557 or 9580 5663.

Each guest is asked to wear a hat (conservative or zany/frivolous). The donation of suitable raffle items would be warmly welcomed.

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

***Oct 25th (Monday)** 7.45pm: Regular monthly meeting with **Robyn Stacey**, speaking on Flora and Fauna That Shaped Australia's Science and Culture. Robyn, a noteworthy Sydney based photographer will refer to the Herbarium Project at the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney and the Macleay Museum collection, noting our bizarre plants and animals attracting so many 19th century visitors to make the long sea voyage to see them.

***Oct 30th (Saturday)** Field day to Cockatoo Island. Meet at the Oatley Station to catch the 9.13 am train [4th carriage from the front], cross platform at Town Hall to Circular Quay. Catch the 10.13am ferry to Cockatoo Island. The leaders of the tour will have an audio machine to provide interesting details of the place and its history. The walk is reasonably level; the upper part of the island is approached by a good road with a sensible incline. Bring water, hat, sunscreen, and comfortable shoes. Drinks, food available, or BYO. **Leaders: John Davoren ph 9029 4869, and Graham Austin ph 9579 2375.**

Nov 12th (Friday) 7 pm: Annual Dinner at South Hurstville R.S.L. Club, [details on page 1 above].

Nov 22nd (Monday) 7.45pm: Regular monthly meeting with **Graham Fry and Liz Cameron** speaking on Wildlife of Namibia and Northern Botswana.

Nov 26th (Friday evening) Field day spotlighting in Oatley Park. **Leader: Debbie Andrew**

Dec 6th (Monday afternoon) OFF Christmas Picnic. [Details next OFF News]

[*Please note several changes from the published program]

FIELD DAY JIBBON HEAD, 10TH OCTOBER

After a somewhat bumpy ride on the ferry to Bundeena, eleven walkers set off around Jibbon Head. The day was fine with a stiff wind near the coast. We saw some spring flowers and heard many New Holland honeyeaters. After a morning tea stop, we continued along the cliff track with views over Port Hacking to see the Aboriginal rock carvings. There were about ten engravings of marine and land animals, some quite large. After a leisurely lunch, we walked along Jibbon B each and through the streets of Bundeena to the ferry. [Report by walk leader: Janet Austin.]

BANDICOOTS, FIRE HAZARD REDUCTION

Ben Hope, technical officer with the National Parks and Wildlife Service spoke at the last meeting. He described the current studies of bandicoots, looking at the effect that fire hazard reduction may have on them. It seems clear that they are in danger from the back burning intended to reduce the number and severity of bush fires. However, the movement of the bandicoots, in and out of the area in question, and the apparent influence that nearby fires have on them make it difficult to assess just how endangered they are in the areas under surveillance.

LOWER GEORGES RIVER SUSTAINABILITY

Oatley Flora & Fauna has been successful in obtaining a *getting greener* grant from Lower Georges River Sustainability Initiative. In 2011, we will be sponsoring Birds in Backyards workshops run by Birds Australia. The workshops will be used to educate people on the importance of attracting smaller birds into their gardens as insect predators; this should reduce reliance on pesticides and make their gardens more sustainable. Workshop participants will receive a selection of plants and are eligible for a garden visit if they wish to learn more about landscaping for bird habitat. Bird walks in local bushland will also be offered, to demonstrate the kind of habitat that small birds like.

The *getting greener* grant partnerships link a number of groups interested in sustainability. They include Oatley West Primary School, St George Migrant Resource Centre, Carss Park Community Gardens, Permaculture Sydney South, and the Menai Wildflower Group (which will be propagating plants for the project). Anyone interested in helping with the propagation or any other aspect of the project can contact Jason Cockayne ph. 9570 8559; <mailto:jay.shaz@hotmail.com> or Liz Cameron ph. 9580 6621; <mailto:lizc@pacific.net.au>.

OFF WEBSITE

Oatley Flora and Fauna Society (O.F.F) was formed in 1955 by local residents concerned about the vandalism of the flora and fauna in Oatley Park. Over the years, its area of interest has expanded and the Society aims to stimulate interest in Australian flora and fauna; foster an understanding of the need to conserve and protect the natural environment and to cooperate with other organisations in doing this. The OFF website is an important vessel in carrying out its objectives and, in its recently revamped form is especially worth visiting at <http://off.oatleypark.com/>. There are new sections on Myles Dunphy Reserve, Stream Watch, Flying Foxes and photos and reports on OFF activities. The site is getting many "hits" from students doing environmental projects. OFF News will now be published on the website, so the e-mail message to those who used to receive an e-mail copy will just remind them to open the website to get their copy.

Briefly

OFF Committee OFF would like to hear from members who would be interested in standing for the committee.

Membership fees For 2011 members can opt to pay their membership fee by direct bank transfer - [more details when the renewal notice is sent out]. The fee for 2011 will remain at \$25 per family.

Elizabeth Farm Sunday 31st Oct 9am to 11.30am \$55 Includes breakfast and tour

OFF Christmas Picnic on 6th December at the Steamroller Park

