



Eucryphia

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Number 99 – November 2008

Robertson Environment Protection Society – to promote the protection and enhancement of the Robertson Environment
PO Box 45, Robertson NSW 2577 www.reps.org.au

REPS Meeting Friday 14th November 2008, 7.30pm Robertson Community Centre Caalong Street, Robertson

The Cosmic Context – ‘Our place in the universe’

A talk by David Ellyard

David Ellyard, award winning science communicator in radio, print and TV (including appearances as the weatherman!), has been fascinated by astronomy since he was 12 years old. David will share that enthusiasm with us as he presents his talk exploring the relationships between us and the universe.

Nothing stretches the mind like thinking about the universe. After all, it is the biggest thing there is. But we are all part of it and it of us. Cosmic events far away and long ago continue to shape our lives.

www.davidellyard.com

David’s knowledge has a broad scientific base with qualifications in physics, mathematics and education. He has extensive experience in research, education, government and the media.

David’s interest in astronomy inspired him to write a number of books about the planets and stars and also present the popular *Skywatch* program on ABC-TV. His *Southern Sky Guide* has just reached its third edition. David’s unique Starwheel star map sold more than 100, 000 copies over 20 years.

Spectacular photos of the cosmos will be included in David’s talk. In addition, we hope to be able to

venture outside at some stage during the presentation to observe the night sky - Robertson weather, daylight saving and full moon permitting!

REPS has asked David to bring along copies of the latest edition of the Southern Sky Guide and also his most recently published children’s book on inventions entitled ‘Whose idea was that?’ Either of these would make a great addition to a Christmas stocking (cash or personal cheque accepted).

David is a highly experienced and truly engaging speaker. Come along for an insightful and entertaining evening!



Upcoming Events

Tues 4th November – NPA CWA Hall, Moss Vale, 7.30pm, Talk by David Tranter, see page 4

Fri 7th November -- ‘Australia Pumping Empty’ Film, Robertson CTC 7pm screening, see page 5

Fri 14th November – REPS Public Meeting with talk, 7:30pm, Robertson Community Centre.(as above)

Fri 12th December – REPS Xmas party 6.30pm, Fitzroy Falls, see page 8.

REPS AGM

In advance of the REPS AGM (on Friday 14th November) office bearers' reports for 2008 are published in this volume of Eucryphia.

Presidents Report 2008 **Leon Hall, REPS President**

It was another year of excellent talks at our meetings, mainly due to David Tranter and recently Lynn Stevenson, and our speakers, of course. It is great to see that in this time of busy lifestyles and monetary concerns that speakers, (and others), give their time and expertise freely. The talks were well attended as usual with people being entertained and enlightened about many aspects of our environment. Monica Engel and Sheila McInnes have also done a great job producing very professional newsletters over the last year. It is greatly appreciated.

We are coming up to a few milestones with REPS as the next edition of Eucryphia will be the 100th edition! We are hoping to list all our talks (since 1990) - over 100.

One issue I have been involved with over the last few years is the Kangaloon Borefield Project. We have had a slight win involving this project, with the putting off or 'shelving' of the borefield, (see www.reps.org.au for previous submissions etc.). Hopefully the longer it takes to make a decision the more commonsense will prevail! The more people that empower themselves with rainwater tanks and solar energy collection the less there is a need for large scale and environmentally degrading projects such as this.

I would like to thank the committee for all the work they have done over the year and especially mention Anne Wilson our Treasurer who, over many years, has quietly and professionally kept our accounts. The working bees at Caalang Creek and the Nature Reserve need more people power. Please make yourselves available for these if you have the time or energy. REPS is also keen to find new members for the Committee and if anyone would like to suggest a future speaker for our meetings, that would also be greatly appreciated. Lastly I would like to thank the members for being members and we would appreciate your continued membership.

Agenda for AGM 2008

1. PRESENT
2. APOLOGIES
3. OPENING REMARKS / Announcements
4. MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS AGM held on 9th November 2007
5. REPORTS
 - 5.1 President's Report
 - 5.2 Treasurer's Report
6. ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS
 - President
 - Vice President
 - Secretary
 - Treasurer
 - Committee members

 - Editor of Eucryphia
 - Talks Convenor
 - Publicity Officer
 - Public Officer
 - Librarian
 - Supper Convenor
 - Caalang Creek Project Group

TALK – David Ellyard on Astronomy

NEXT MEETING : Christmas Meeting 12th December, 2008, (see page 8).

REPS Positions for re-election

Consider joining our committee or taking on a job within REPS. The more people involved the more vibrant our organisation.

Welcome to New Members

A warm welcome to these members

Sylvia Muller
Bob and Ruth Dwyer
Julianne Sandison
Roger Clarke and Linda Spinaze

Treasurer's Report

Anne Wilson, REPS Treasurer

ROBERTSON ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION SOCIETY INC

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2008

These statements have been prepared in accordance with section 26(6) of the Associations Incorporation Act 1984 and Rule 17 of the Association's Rules.

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2008

		\$
Current Assets		
Balance per Bank Passbook	General Account	5,391.20
	Grants Account	605.55
		<u>5,996.75</u>
Current liabilities		
Unpresented cheques		<u>130.00</u>
Net Assets		<u>5,866.75</u>

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FROM 01-10-07 TO 30-9-08

GENERAL ACCOUNT

INCOME	\$	EXPENDITURE	\$
Memberships	1,745.00	Dept of Fair Trading	44.00
Interest	12.86	Hall hire	130.00
Donations	848.10	Audit fees	121.00
		Other meeting costs	150.00
		Printing/Postage/PO Box/Stationery	671.90
		Internet Web hosting	144.00
		Membership subscriptions/Conference fees	563.00
		Project (Park sign)	345.00
		Transaction charges	48.00
TOTAL INCOME	<u>2, 605.96</u>	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	<u>2,216.90</u>
		Excess Income to Expenditure	<u>389.06</u>

Bank Reconciliation at 30-9-08

Opening Balance per Cash Book	4,872.14	Balance per Bank Passbook	5,391.20
Plus Excess Income to Expend	389.06	Less unpresented cheques #17458760	130.00
Closing Balance	<u>5,261.20</u>	Balance to cash book	<u>5,261.2</u>

GRANTS ACCOUNT

INCOME	\$	EXPENDITURE	\$
Interest	1.12	Aust Garden History	195.97
		SCA Caalang Ck	175.00
		FACS grant (small equipment)	422.40
TOTAL INCOME	<u>1.12</u>	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	<u>793.37</u>
		Excess Income to Expenditure	<u>-792.25</u>

Bank Reconciliation at 30-9-08

Opening Balance per Cash Book	1,397.80	Balance per Bank Passbook	605.55
Plus Excess Income to Expend	-792.25		
Closing Balance	<u>605.55</u>	Balance to cash book	<u>605.55</u>

Anne Wilson, Hon. Treasurer

Note to the financial statements for the year ended 30 September 2008

The financial report is prepared, on a cash basis whereby items are brought into account as money is paid or received, from the records of the association.

Minutes from 2007 AGM

ROBERTSON ENVIRONMENT PREOTECTION SOCIETY INC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

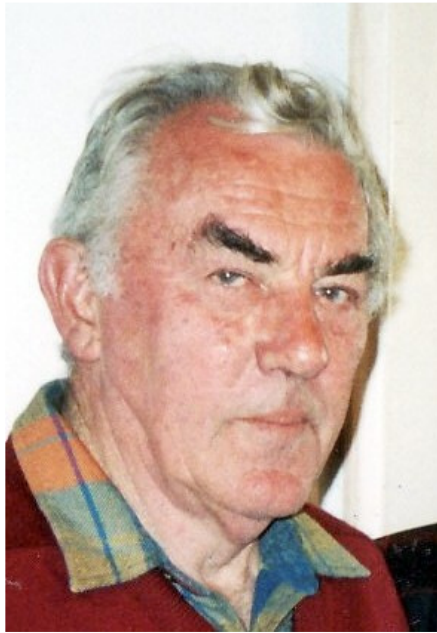
held on Friday 9th November, 2007 at 7 30pm

1. PRESENT: Helen Tranter, Lynette Skipper, Jack Skipper, Sandy Morse, Jill Keft, Len Hainke, Jan Hainke, David Mee, Judith Mee, Lynn Stevenson, Leon Hall, Denis Wilson, Roy Freere, Joan Freere, Peter Glass, Anne Wilson, Monica Engel, Tas Engel, Chris Stevenson.
2. APOLOGIES: Judy Benjamin, Jane Lemann, Beth Boughton, Joe Petre, Larry Whipper.
3. OPENING REMARKS: Leon thanked all committee members and welcomed all to meeting, especially Caroline Graham and Julie Sheppard our speakers for the evening. A reminder about the 'Walk Against Warming' to be held in Bowral on the 10th November.
4. MINUTES FROM PRVIOUS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING held on 10th November 2006 were accepted as a true record. Moved D. Tranter, 2nd S. Morse
5. REPORTS: 5.1 President's report as per November Eucryphia
5.2 Treasurer's report as per November Eucryphia, auditor's report.
Moved S Morse, 2nd D Wilson
6. ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS:
All positions declared vacant. Jack Skipper took the chair and the following members were elected
President – Leon Hall
Vice President – Lynn Stevenson
Secretary – Jill Keft
Treasurer – Anne Wilson
Committee Members – Denis Wilson, Joe Petre, Helen Tranter, David Mee, Beth Boughton

Editor of Eucryphia – Monica Engel and Sheila McInnes
Talks Convenor – David Tranter
Publicity Officer – Helen Tranter
Librarian -
Public Officer – Helen Tranter
Supper Converor – Jane Maxwell
Caalang Creek Project Group –

Meeting closed 8pm.

Tribute to Graham Carpenter



On October 10th, REPS lost a good friend; Graham Carpenter passed away after a long illness. He has lived for the past 15 years at the end of McGuinness Drive, Mount Murray, overlooking the Unanderra-Moss Vale Railway line. Perhaps that is why he responded so enthusiastically to REPS invitation about ten years ago to join a sub-committee to rehabilitate the abandoned, derelict Robertson Railway Station Precinct. The only member of the group with building experience, he was both architect and builder for what has become a popular passive recreation retreat in the heart of Robertson Village.

For what seemed years, the Railway Group supervised a moving feast of “Work for the Dole” youngsters several days a week, using the old Fettle’s Shed as its headquarters. It soon became filled with a miscellany of tools and heavy equipment that had been begged, borrowed or rented. I well remember Graham quietly and methodically going about his work with or without a bit of help from a recalcitrant volunteer. In this way, he managed to transform the old Fettle’s Shed, mainly with his own two hands, into what is now a popular Exhibition Gallery, extending the building from time to time to solve one problem or another. The shelter sheds, vehicle barrier and paths were constructed to his own design. When noted sculptor Bert Flugelman presented the group with a model of an outdoor sculpture, Graham transformed the concept into reality using railway

sleepers. It is now a fitting monument to the workers who built the Mountain Railway so many years ago.

Graham also spent many years on the railway committee continually proposing new ideas to improve the site even though he was more comfortable with practical things than with management. Without his involvement in the project it would not have become the attraction that it is today. That’s the true spirit of volunteering and the Robertson Heritage Railway Station Precinct is a concrete tribute to his craftsmanship and spirit. He will always be remembered.

NPA Talk

By David Tranter

“What are the forces that drive contemporary climate change?”

Venue: CWA Hall, Moss Vale, Tuesday, November 4, 7.30pm - Gold Coin Donation

This talk will be a cameo example of scientific enquiry. David will briefly describe natural and man-made forces that drive climate change on earth, identifying the reasons why climatologists believe contemporary global warming is almost certainly man-made. He will then challenge others to present evidence to the contrary. Finally, the audience will evaluate the risk of accepting or rejecting the scientific consensus.

David is a retired CSIRO scientist, whose research covered many aspects of marine productivity, food chains and plankton ecology in the Pacific, Indian and Southern Oceans. He is a long-time member of the National Parks Association and Australian Conservation Foundation and, since retirement, the Robertson Environment Protection Society and Canwin (Climate Action Now, Wingecarribee).

Film Screening by Transition Shire Wingecarribee at Robertson CTC

On Friday 7th November *Australia Pumping Empty* (2008) will screen at the Robertson Community Technology Centre. It explores the real reason behind rising energy, food and fuel prices. Join in the discussion after the screening.

Review

Ian and Annette Stevens' talk last month

By Jane Maxwell

On the 10th of October REPS members and friends were intrigued, educated and entertained when Annette and Ian Stevens took us on a tour of four environmental hotspots selected from their extensive travels. While Annette kept the pace moving with a dazzling array of photos, Ian explained why they had chosen these destinations and gave us some insights into the massive forces at work on our planet; the fragility of the animals whose lives are shaped by these forces, the tenacity with which they hold on to survival in the face of degrading and diminishing habitats and the difference that an enlightened and decisive government can make.

Our first stop involved breaking through the pack ice to the shores of Antarctica. The vast scale of this continent was illustrated with a description and history of the largest iceberg ever documented. "B15" was calved from the Ross ice shelf in 2000 and had a land area of approx. 3,100 sq km. Its subsequent journey along the coast of Antarctica from 2000 to 2005 caused environmental changes that were catastrophic for nearby penguin populations. After eight years it remains enormous with an area of approx. 2,260 sq km. Ian pointed out that the ice in "B15" was old in geological terms and studying it gave us a window back through time - 100,000 years and more.

Second stop was, as Ian put it, "poles apart". The 191 volcanic islands of the Russian archipelago, Franz Josef Land, in the arctic circle, home to kittiwakes, puffins, walrus and the inimitable polar bear. It is the northernmost Eurasian land mass only 1000 km from the North Pole and is locked in sea ice for all but the brief summer. Unlike the South Pole where a vast continent is surrounded by the freezing waters of the Southern ocean, the Arctic is a frozen ocean surrounded by the enormous land masses of Eurasia and North America, a situation that makes it far more vulnerable to the impacts of global warming. Ian and Annette visited these islands in the belief that they are on the brink of catastrophic change with sea-ice decreasing to the tune of 3 million sq km over the last 7 years and the year-round opening of the N.W. passage leaving a previously remote wilderness exposed to the dangers of a major shipping increase.

Thirdly Annette and Ian took us to a series of islands within an island. Madagascar in the Indian Ocean contains a staggering variety of plants and animals found nowhere else in the world. Despite this rich heritage the majority of people in Madagascar remain poverty stricken and as the population of the island

escalates, the unique plant and animal populations struggle to remain viable in degraded and fragmented habitats. Ian and Annette showed us the small island of Nosy Mangabe in the gulf of Antongil where in the 1960's a number of weird and wonderful long-fingered Aye Ayes, members of the fantastic lemur family for which Madagascar is famed, were relocated in an effort to stave off their extinction. Next we went to Perinet, a tiny 25 sq km park in the midst of slash and burn agriculture. This park and its surrounding forests are the last refuge of the largest surviving lemur, the Indri or Koala Lemur, which Ian tells us is able to make impressive leaps from tree to tree but is loath to descend, and is increasingly at risk due to habitat fragmentation and the bush meat trade.

Our last stop in Madagascar was Berenty, a small privately owned wildlife park in the southern semi-arid spiny forest ecosystem. Here surrounded by sisal plantations the last remnants of cactus forest provide a home to the White footed Lemur.

To finish our tour, Ian and Annette cheered us all up with a visit to the 'Last Eden' and a tale of hope for the tropical forests of Gabon. The story of how President Bongo set aside 26,000 sq km, or 10% of his country, in a series of thirteen national parks that safe-guard pristine ecosystems from the centre to the coast amazed and delighted us. As conservationists we were entranced with the idea that simply by showing the president photos and videos of the wealth of wildlife documented by Michael Fay during his 15 month, 3200 km, mega transect, the competing interests of loggers and miners were swept aside without a second thought. The idea that there was somewhere in the world where hippos went surfing and shy forest elephants could be watched as they came out of the jungle, where the rate of tourist development was governed by the disruption to wildlife rather than the making of a quick buck, was most encouraging.

The effort that Ian and Annette put into selecting their photos and recounting their journeys transformed a series of holiday shots into an educational adventure that whet quite a few appetites for travel and reminded us of the fragility of our wonderful planet.

Poetry Corner

Edited by Jonathan Persse

Mankind and the land – a relationship in Australia that goes back tens of thousands of years. Living and working on a given piece of land, a property, a farm, is a recent development, but deep in our historical experience nonetheless.

David Campbell (1915-1979), one of our great lyric poets, farmed near Canberra and Bungendore. Here is one poem, and three parts from his Cocky's Calendar sequence.

Night Sowing

O gentle, gentle land
Where the green ear shall grow,
Now you are edged with light:
The moon has crisped the fallow,
The furrows run with night.

This is the season's hour;
While couples are in bed,
I sow the paddocks late,
Scatter like sparks the seed
And see the dark ignite.

O gentle land, I sow
The heart's living grain.
Stars draw their harrows over,
Dews send their melting rain:
I meet you as a lover.

Cocky's Calendar

I Hawk and Hill

When from the still crystal of thought
My eyes look out and make report
Of hill and hovering hawk, I find
They do but give me back my mind.

The hawk, the hill, the loping hare,
The blue tree and the blue air,
O all the coloured world I see
And walk upon, are made by me.

First I would praise the world of sense;
Then praise that sweet Intelligence,
The hovering far-sighted love
That sees me and in whom I live.

III Prayer for Rain

Sweet rain, bless our windy farm,
Stepping round in skirts of storm
While these marble acres lie
Open to an empty sky.

Sown deep, the oaten grain
Awaits, as words wait in the brain,
Your release that out of dew
It may make the world anew.

Sweet rain, bless our windy farm,
Stepping round in skirts of storm:
Amongst the broken clods the hare
Folds his ears like hands in prayer.

VII On Frosty Days

On frosty days, when I was young,
I rode out early with the men
And mustered cattle till their long
Blue shadows covered half the plain;

And when we turned our horses round,
Only the homestead's point of light,
Men's voices, and the bridles' sound,
Were left in the enormous night.

And now again the sun has set
All yellow and a greening sky
Sucks up the colour from the wheat –
And here's my horse, my dog and I.



Caalang Creek Working Bees

Caalang Creek Working Bees are held on the last Saturday of each month from 9:00 am onwards subject to the weather. Please come and join us for as long as you are able.

The next Working Bee will be on the 29th November

Meet at the Community Centre. If in doubt due to inclement weather or for more details, please contact Leon Hall on telephone 4888 2222. Please bring along a hat, gloves, shovels, watering cans etc.

Help Care for Our Nature Reserve 1st Wednesday of each month 10:00am to noon

All welcome. Please bring garden gloves. For further information, phone Helen: 4885-1394

REPS Christmas Party Friday 12 th December 2008 at Fitzroy Falls from 6:30 pm

It may be a new REPS tradition! Bring a picnic meal to share and enjoy in the shelter shed at Fitzroy Falls from 6.30pm on. Stay on until it gets dark and then join a spotlight walk with a National Parks Discovery Ranger. Who knows what we will see!

For further information contact Sandy Morse on 4885-1905.

REPS Membership Renewals now due

It is that time of year again when REPS Membership renewals are due. Please find the 2008-09 Annual Membership Renewal/Application form with this edition of Eucryphia. Please complete this form as soon as possible and return it with your membership fees to:

REPS
P.O. Box 3045,
Robertson NSW 2577

Your ongoing membership and support is appreciated.

If you have any friends or neighbours interested in joining REPS pass a copy of the application form on to them. Alternatively new forms can be obtained from the Secretary, or via email monicaengel@robertsonctc.org.au.

Contact REPS

All those who are interested in supporting our aim are welcome to join REPS. Our aim is to promote the preservation and enhancement of the Robertson environment. We welcome contact with individuals and other community groups. For further information and subscriptions please contact: The Secretary – Jill Keft

PO Box 3045,
Robertson NSW 2577
or President – Leon Hall on 4888 2222

We are always looking for contributions to Eucryphia. If you have an essay, article, poem or photograph that you would like to share with other REPS members please contact Monica Engel or Sheila McInnes.

4885 2665 or: monicaengel@robertsonctc.org.au

All contributions will be most welcome.

REPS Meetings for 2009

The dates for next year's public meetings are as listed below. Each meeting will include a talk that will be publicised in the Eucryphia prior to each meeting.

Friday 13th February

Friday 10th April

Friday 12th June

Friday 14^h August

Friday 9th October

Friday 13th November (Annual General Meeting)

Visit the REPS website

www.reps.org.au