

BEECROFT — CHELTENHAM CIVIC TRUST

P.O. BOX 31, BEECROFT. N.S.W. 2119.

MITCHELL LIBRARY

BY Bulletin 2/72
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Make your Contribution to Resource Conservation

Under the heading in our Bulletin 4/71 November 1971 we discussed in detail the necessity to conserve the finite resources of earth by recycling as many materials as possible and thus assist in reducing the problem of waste disposal by Councils.

PAPER: Deliver papers only (no magazines of any sort) to Beecroft Sports Club Collection Centre, Cheltenham Oval, end of Castle Howard Road, any Saturday 8.00 am to noon.

GLASS: Collection centres are located at
Caltex Service Station, 97-99 Beecroft Road, Beecroft.
Ampol Service Station, Trebor Street and Pennant Hills Road, Pennant Hills.
BP Service Station, 155 Pennant Hills Road, Normanhurst.

Glass should be clean and should not include bottle tops and caps of any type, pyrex type glass or wire cast sheet glass.

Do not leave any other rubbish at the depots as has been done to one depot — a thoughtless and stupid act if ever there was one.

CANS: National Can Company, 12 Railway Road, Meadowbank; Gadsden-Hughes Limited, William Street and Kings Road, Five Dock; Containers Limited, 28 Smith Street, Chatswood.

All that is asked is that cans (aluminium or tin) be rinsed out and labels removed.

The Can People's advertisement in the Sun recently have given us a challenge in the statement: 'When it comes to the crunch, how many people REALLY DO ANYTHING to help make things better'.

We have been crying out for these things to be done, we are now being given the opportunity to prove that we mean it.

Tree Preservation and Lopping

Committee Members are frequently requested to give advice about the above and invariably are made aware of some malpractice which has been taking place — so much so, in fact, that the Trust wrote to Council requesting it to clarify the position and we are pleased to set out hereunder the information stated in reply:—

'Automatic approval is granted for the judicious lopping or removal of trees within 10' of the house foundations once the building plans have been approved by Council. Where trees are located within ten feet of an existing dwelling approval is similarly granted upon inspection.

The normal procedure for permission to lop or remove a tree or trees is generally applied for in writing. However, under some circumstances where a ratepayer requires an immediate decision, an inspection will be made on the basis of a phone call.

It is pointed out that where an inspecting officer cannot justify the application the matter is then referred to Council for consideration.

When approval is being considered for the lopping of a tree the following criterion are taken into account —

- (a) The type, age and size of the tree.
- (b) The degree of overhang over buildings.
- (c) The general condition of the tree embracing balance, shape, foliage, mechanical strength and evidence of damage or disease.

It is the policy of the inspecting officer to advise the owner as what degree the tree or trees should be lopped having regard to their future well being. However, owing to a large number of applications Council is not in a position to supervise the lopping procedure on each occasion.'

Beecroft Traffic Problems

Hornsby Council's closure of the Devlins Creek crossing, besides causing predictable chaos in the Epping area, showed up in the most dramatic way that the Department of Main Roads relies heavily on Sutherland Road to take the load off Epping bridge. It is clear that Sutherland Road cannot be closed while Epping bridge remains the only other rail crossing in the area. At the same time Council would be reluctant to spend a great deal on improving the conditions on Sutherland Road, because that is only letting the DMR further "off the hook". In the unlikely event of the DMR being persuaded to upgrade Sutherland Road at its expense, Sutherland Road could then, I understand, become open to unlimited traffic, i.e. heavy trucks etc.

Following the result of closing the crossing, the Traffic Survey Committee has recommended to council that the strongest possible pressure be put on the DMR to push ahead with the planning of an underpass at Kandy Avenue — an underpass that is already projected as part of the future Ryde Castlereagh Expressway.

The committee has also recommended that Council ask the Police to erect "no standing" signs on Beecroft Road from Chapman Avenue to Mary Street. On the eastern side of Beecroft Road 7-9 am, on the western side 4-6.30 pm. The committee hopes that this will alleviate the jams that occur on Beecroft Road - particularly bad on summer afternoons when children are being dropped at, and collected from, the Masonic Hall and the swimming school. In the interests of traffic flow, we mothers will have to try parking down the many side streets, and hope we will be helping the general problem by so doing.

Mrs. J. Stevenson

Privet

The plant (both types) continues to spread and prosper. We all appear to be aware of its menace, but few of us do not find an excuse to regard it as a problem for somebody else to worry about.

For the record two groups of keen "anti-priveteers" - members of Epping Rotary and of their Junior counterpart Rotracts - are generously giving their time to eradication of privet in the Epping-Cheltenham area near the Sutherland Road-Devlins Creek crossing. We look forward to the results of their work which should become increasingly evident in the near future.

John Noble will be pleased to hear from other interested people and to inform them of the method currently in use - Phone 84-4497.

Any who would like to help but feel they can't make physical effort can at least make sure that they don't aggravate the problem by allowing privet to seed (or even grow) in their gardens or on vacant lots near their homes.

It only takes a short walk in from Day Road, Castle Howard Road or others to Devlin's Creek for anyone to realise what a huge problem this is and one that only voluntary work together with a strong Council determination to step-up eradication programmes will defeat.

Hornsby Shire is a vast area and in all fairness to Council we residents can't expect it to do everything.

Restriction of Hours for using Mechanical Plant

The Trust was pleased to note that Hornsby Shire Council recently decided to limit the use of mechanical plant and equipment within the Shire to the following times:-

MONDAY TO FRIDAY:

7.00 am - 6.00 pm

SATURDAY

7.00 am - 1.00 pm

NO WORK IS PERMITTED ON SUNDAYS

We are grateful that Council saw fit to impose these restrictions as action along these lines was desirable for the public health, safety and convenience of residents, as well as the general amenity of the area.

Any non-compliance of the above hours should be immediately reported directly to Council or Councillors.

The Beecroft Community Centre

During 1971, arrangements were made to transfer ownership of the Beecroft School of Arts property from the former trustees to the Hornsby Shire Council. Under the terms of the relevant deed, the Council undertook to renovate the property as soon as practicable with the object of converting it into a modern community centre with an up-to-date hall-theatre and suitable amenities.

At a public meeting convened on 14th September, 1971, and chaired by the Shire President, Councillor Curby, eight members of a provisional management committee of the re-named Beecroft Community Centre were elected by the approximately hundred people present. The Civic Trust, along with other local organisations, is represented on this committee. The Hornsby Council also has two representatives on the committee, namely Councillor Evans and the Shire Clerk.

The purpose of establishing the provisional committee was to cooperate with the Council in effecting a smooth changeover from the School of Arts Committee to the Beecroft Community Centre organisation. In particular the committee was charged with the responsibility of ratifying an agreement with the Council and preparing a constitution for the regulation and management of the Beecroft Community Centre when established.

Final governmental approval of the transfer was not reported until March of this year. The provisional committee has subsequently met on two occasions. At the first meeting the interim office-bearers were elected, Councillor D.R. Evans being elected chairman, Mr. D.C. Hudson secretary and Mr. F.B. Westbrook treasurer. The committee is now engaged in drafting a constitution and considering an agreement with the Council along the lines of those pertaining to other community centres in the Hornsby Shire.

Another public meeting of residents will be called later this year for the purpose of ratifying the constitution and electing the committee, which will be responsible for the operation of the community centre for the ensuing twelve months.

The Civic Trust is most anxious that the residents of the district should have a modern community centre of a standard befitting the Beecroft-Cheltenham area. It earnestly hopes that the Hornsby Shire Council will not be dilatory in implementing at least the modernisation programme, which it undertook to carry out under the terms of the deed of transfer.

Making Friends with Birds

A small flock of rainbow lorikeets was eagerly feeding from a dish of food prepared and set out for them. From time to time they paused in their eating to utter piercing screeches to nobody in particular and wisps of misted breath drifted from their open beaks, for the morning was cold and damp. For company they had brought along the scaly-breasted lorikeet who was equally unconcerned that the dish around, over and about which they clambered was held by friendly human hands. There was nothing unusual in this little scene except that it marked the resumption of an association which had been interrupted some weeks before by Nature herself.

As if wishing to participate in the festive season, the first pair of rainbow lorikeets appeared at the feeding tray on Christmas Day a couple of years ago. Encouraged by the provision of sweet food suited to nectar-feeders the pioneer pair remained in the vicinity. By what means they communicated to all their kind that easy living was to be had for the slight effort of dropping down for it will never be known, but in a few days their number had increased tenfold; and increased. A normal flock became thirty or more, was frequently over forty, and on one occasion over fifty birds were milling around the food dishes, bullying and being bullied, screeching and being disorderly in the enjoyment of life to the full.

Throughout the summer they followed a simple routine: early morning arrival, a noisy acrimonious breakfast liberally interspersed with sudden departures and breakneck flight through the thick bush nearby, leisurely returns throughout the morning as they slipped into a more relaxed mood: a quick period in the afternoon, particularly if the day were hot, when they perched in the trees for long periods without disclosing their presence by a single screech, a late evening supper and sudden departure for – who knows where?

It was by chance that the lorikeets' love of water was discovered. A garden spray had been so placed that it happened to slowly wave a fan of water over a small leafy wattle. The birds flocked to the tree and were soon romping in its branches, rubbing fluffed-out feathers and spread wings against the soaking foliage. They hung by their beaks, they hung upside down by one foot, they hung any way, all the while screeching loud parrot calls in an ecstasy of enjoyment. When it appeared they were too soaked to fly, they fluttered one by one to a nearby tree there to dry and re-arrange their plumage. Some had had enough and moved away but others, liking what they had just experienced, flew back for more.

Early in autumn bees discovered the food intended for the lorikeets. At first the birds found them a minor annoyance but as their numbers increased to a small swarm the competition was too unequal. The persistence of the bees prevailed and the birds ceased to visit the tray. When the bees found food was no longer being put out they took the hint and went back to their proper job of looking after the ecology.

By the time the lorikeets had recovered sufficient confidence to resume feeding, their number had declined. No doubt many had sought a warmer climate and more abundant feeding areas, but as the days lengthened through spring into another summer, the birds returned to establish a routine just like the previous years.

As is to be desired in agreeable situations, the rainbow lorikeets brought along their friends from time to time. The first to be introduced were the scaly-breasted lorikeets who themselves became fairly regular feeders at the food tray. There appeared to be better advantage for the guests in this association in which the rainbows treated their slightly smaller cousins very much as their inferiors.

Who can say on whose invitation a pair of musk lorikeets joined the flock, but they quickly availed themselves of all the benefits enjoyed by the others. Not for them the status of second-class: no gaudy rainbow bird was going to shoulder them away from the feed dish. They may retreat at first before the well-directed pecks of the bigger birds and skulk at the fringe of the flock feigning defeat. But suddenly as if a signal had been passed between them, the pair would attack all and sundry, nipping at the feet of their would-be oppressors (there is often merit in being the smaller party), all the while uttering a peculiar zeet-zeet war cry. The flock would retire leaving the two little warriors in possession.

The musks remained in the area and became as accustomed to the presence of humans as were the other birds. They raised a handsome pair of youngsters, trained them to be as aggressive as themselves then drove them away to find territories of their own.

On two separate occasions the lorikeets brought along quite different companions for fleeting visits. The first was a West Australian "28" parrot, large and ornamental amongst the smaller birds. A few weeks later the visitor was a "Superb" parrot also much larger than its fellows. No doubt these were lone birds attracted by the activity of the local group.

Despite their tendency to squabble the lorikeets are delightful birds to make friends with. It is a source of great pleasure to have occasionally the three varieties feeding at the hand at one time. And how fortunate we in Sydney are to be still able to do this.

Of Birds and Other Things

Have you noticed the marked decline or complete disappearance of small birds generally in the district? Could it be the price that is being paid for the achievement of a desire for an aesthetically pleasing garden free from the irritating cuts and holes formed by some of the many - mainly harmless - insects that used to frequent the plants in our gardens?

The use by gardeners of pesticides containing such chemicals as dieldrin, chlordane, aldrin, D.D.T., endrin, parathion and malathion, to name a few, could by knowingly or unknowingly spraying their shrubs, lawns, trees, etc. - often several times a year - concentrate the poisons in the plant and in the ground. The birds were not told, they enjoy the worms and may well have died for their trouble, since the contaminated leaves fall to the ground, are eaten by the worms which store the poison and so to the bird.

Thus one of the delicate webs of life can become a web of death. Could we perhaps consider the leaf-worm-bird life cycle and reflect on it as one of the many life webs in the ecological sense and - who knows - could it be in the human sense also?

Spiders, another example, are among the most valuable friends of man, Oh yes, they crawl on 8 legs, they build webs, and you don't like the look of them - aesthetics again?

Do you know, that apart from being a form of life wonderful in their variety of shape, colour and skill, they are the foremost predators on insect pests, without which our food would become scarce and epidemics of flies would be a common event? Countless winged and other insects are kept in check by the hundreds of different kinds of spiders most of which are quite harmless and seldom seen.

And yet; the pest exterminators will encourage you to have them exterminated as "killers", although only 2 or 3 very occasionally come in that category, and they thereby justify the extermination of all the rest. Compare this to the "killer" achievements of the motor car!

Is man to observe nature as it was created, with an awareness that he is dealing with that irreplaceable mystery of LIFE, or is he to decree how nature shall be, at his peril?

Who would have thought that a pile of leaves could equate to a colourful pile of feathers and bones?

EDITOR'S COMMENT: One at first may feel that the articles "Making Friends with Birds" and "Of Birds and Other Things" are a little contradictory, but the former describes those which mostly feed on nectar of native trees and therefore are generally above the blast of man's chemical sprays - the latter refers to the absence of small birds - mostly low level feeders which is the acute danger area.

This latter is a conscience-stirring article for gardeners and I am sure the reading of it will make them more guarded in their use of sprays.

The Department of Agriculture now provides helpful brochures on the subject of chemical sprays and recommendations for their safe usage.

Beecroft Primary School - 75th Anniversary

Can you help?

It is at present hoped to hold a small historical exhibition as part of Education Week. The parents & Citizens Association would be interested to hear from any members of the Civic Trust or public who may have any knowledge of the school's history, any photos of the school or its pupils from earlier years, or examples of school or educational equipment. If you can help in any way please contact

- MR. L. BLAKEY 84-4350
- DR. R. PERKINS 86-1910
- MRS. M. REEVE 84-3161

Motorcycles and Minibikes in Reserves Forbidden

If you are worried by the above please contact one of our local Councillors, all of whom are concerned about this matter.

Macquarie Municipality Association

Recently the Civic Trust with the aid of some of its members (to whom the committee is very grateful) carried out a survey in conjunction with other local organisations in the Epping, Beecroft, Cheltenham area to ascertain the public feeling to the formation of a new municipality. It is too early yet to know the results of this survey, but if sufficient interest is shown no doubt a much more comprehensive exercise will be carried out.

Results will be published in the local press and will also appear on the Trust Notice Board.