

SOUTH TURRAMURRA ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION INCORPORATED.

PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT.

EIGHTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

1985-6 has been a year of achievements for STEP.

Noteworthy has been the completion of our first Community Employment Program (CEP) funded project at Browns Field, which won a Keep Australia Beautiful Award in advancing the Council's aims in its campaign for a better environment. This was a fitting reward for those who worked on the project under the expert guidance of Helen Petersen, Bush Regenerator extraordinaire. A successful application for a further 9 months and \$84,000 grant was gained for 1986. This has not only enabled a much greater area of valuable rainforest to be regenerated but has once again provided useful work opportunities for long-term unemployed people. The current project is due to finish in December.

During 1985, four inspections of the project were held for The Society for Growing Australian Plants, Ku-ring-gai Bushland and Environmental Society, Chatswood Probosc Club and our own members. This year an inspection for neighbours and STEP members was held in June.

Another achievement in the Bush Regeneration area has been the recognition by Ku-ring-gai Council of the need for a permanent team of Bush Regenerators on Staff. This will ensure that Helen Petersen and her team are retained and continue their excellent work on Council's bushland reserves.

John Burke, as chairman and Helen Petersen as a member of the Ku-ring-gai Council's Bushland Management Working Party have helped keep STEP in touch with Council concerning bushland management and have been successful in promoting the necessity for management of Council's bushland areas.

Reprinting of STEP's booklet "South Turramurra Bushland" was completed in August, 1985. Many months were spent by the Committee up-dating and expanding information contained in the booklet and in checking the printer's proofs. The original printing of 800 copies has sold out and the second edition of 300 is selling well.

The preparation of STEP's map of walking tracks in the Comenarra area is well under way, co-ordinated by Margaret Booth. The draft maps have been prepared by Graham Aplin of Macquarie University's Geography Department and the Tracks are currently being walked, checked and plotted. It is hoped that this project will be completed shortly.

Some other highlights of the year were--

- \* Two bushwalks--our 1985 Spring walk was postponed because of rain and held in November using the Union of Lane Cove Valley Conservationists' newly completed track from De Burgh's Bridge to Browns Waterhole and beyond. The track was constructed using Community Employment Program (CEP) funds.
- The 1986 Spring walk in the Howson Oval/Mitchell Crescent area was held in perfect weather with a good attendance.
- \* In April a walk was also arranged and led for the St. Andrew's Neighbourhood Program.
- \* A Stall was held in August, 1985 selling native plants, booklets and posters which raised over \$200 for STEP funds, and a number of new members were recruited. Lesley Berry, Helen Petersen, Margaret Booth and Elizabeth Dokulil all worked hard to achieve this good result.
- \* A Special General Meeting was held in April at which the inspiring film



"A Singular Woman" was shown and books and goods from the Australian Museum were on display and for sale.

- \* Five newsletters have been published and circulated during the year. Many thanks to John Burke who has helped with photogopying of this important means of keeping members informed.

Membership numbers have slightly increased during the year to 131 currently. The membership drive in August 1985 resulted in regaining some of our earlier members. It is essential to have strength of numbers for STEP to maintain its role as an active conservation group seeking to promote the value of our local environment. Thank you to Geoff Suggate, Treasurer, for the work involved in programming the membership list for easier access by computer and in producing address labels.

On the weed front, the small band of bush regenerators, assisted from time to time by members of the Venturer Scouts, have worked throughout the year in the bushland at the end of Vernon Street, South Turrumurra. Enormous quantities of weeds have been removed but without the help and co-operation of bushland neighbours the task is a daunting one.

Alan Catford has worked tirelessly in the Fire Hazard Reduction Department identifying areas in need of work and organising and leading this very essential service. Some deliberately lit fires occurred in the Vernon/Cove Street area in August, 1985 and Alan printed and circulated a letter to residents pointing out that the fire bug was local and dangerous and bushfire lighting incurred a fine of \$1000.

Alan also prepared and lodged on STEP's behalf a submission on the draft State Environmental Planning Policy concerning Urban Bushland. The policy will go a long way to help protect this valuable resource.

STEP has been involved in efforts to beautify the Turrumurra high School grounds and members have helped in selection and planting of indigenous trees and shrubs. Students from Ryde School of Horticulture are preparing overall landscape designs and STEP will continue to be involved in this worthwhile project.

One of STEP's present major concerns is the proposed F3 Freeway. This construction will have an immense impact on the whole Lane Cove River Valley and on our precious bushland of Fox Valley, South Turrumurra and West Pymble, as well as on the urban areas which it dissects. John Burke has been busy collecting information on all aspects of the Freeway and has produced a draft position paper and a submission to the Department of Main Roads "Roads 2000" Enquiry.

In April a Special General Meeting was held to endorse an application for the incorporation of STEP--a move made necessary and funded by our CEP grant. Production of a new set of Objects and Rules embodying STEP's original constitution was completed and approved and the application submitted to the Corporate Affairs Commission. This then required some minor amendments and was re-submitted in August. I am very pleased to announce the successful accomplishment of this move--our certificate of incorporation arrived last week!

The Committee has continued to meet monthly and attendances have been regular. We were sorry to lose Jim Boow who resigned in September, 1985 because of other pressures and commitments. My personal thanks to all the Committee for their help and support this year. Each and every one has contributed in many ways to the smooth functioning of STEP. In addition to members mentioned previously, Glenn Johnson, Lesley Berry, Fred Langshaw and Janet Catford have given advice, helped with bush regeneration, catering, drafting correspondence and letter-boxing. Margaret Booth has done a sterling job as Secretary.

Several 1985 Committee members are forced by personal circumstances to stand down at this A.G.M. And so I look to the continuing support of members to offer their help for 1987 as office bearers so our constructive community effort may be continued.