

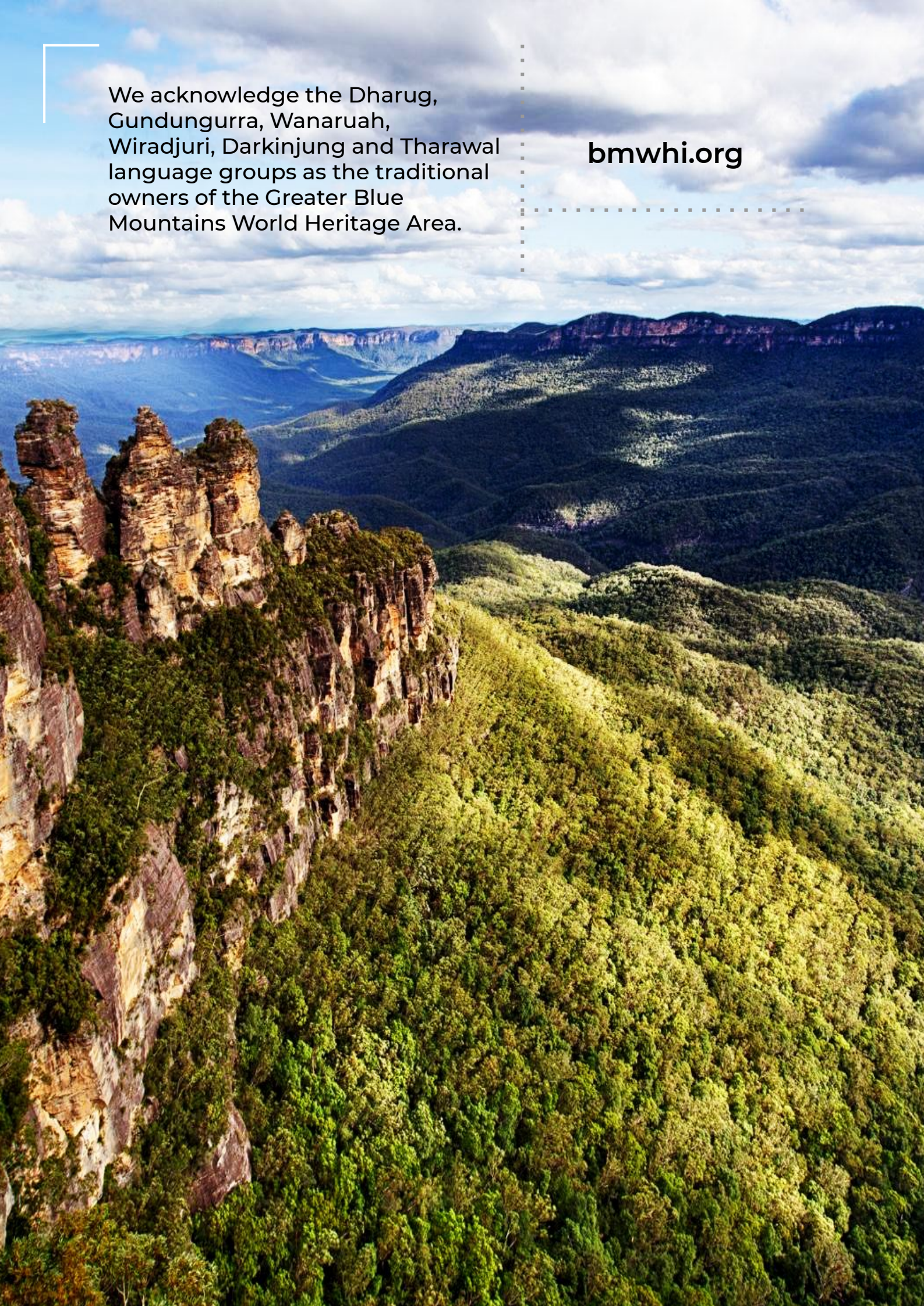


ACTIVITY REPORT

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2018 - 2019

We acknowledge the Dharug,
Gundungurra, Wanaruah,
Wiradjuri, Darkinjung and Tharawal
language groups as the traditional
owners of the Greater Blue
Mountains World Heritage Area.

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Mr Peter Cochrane



It continues to be a great honour and a pleasure to chair the board of this small, independent, agile and innovative not-for-profit organisation.

The Institute's wide range of programmes, projects, and products draws on an extensive network of researchers and other professional and community expertise and contributes to improving awareness, understanding and response to critical environmental issues in the Blue Mountains.

The Institute's work helps to inform, support and promote the effective management of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area, and is increasingly relevant for other World Heritage properties and conserved areas.

Climate change is increasing the risk of more frequent, intense and hence more ecologically damaging bushfires and drought, and the work of the Institute is becoming increasingly timely and relevant. The past year has seen rapid growth for the Institute, in both the range and scale of its projects.

The success of *Fire Stories 2 - Living with Risk*, the second in our documentary film series, has led to work commencing on a third film *Fire Stories 3 - Managing Risk* to explore both the research and possible strategies for better managing the increasing risk of bushfires.

The Institute's Low Carbon Living (LCL) Programme and its sophisticated online tool provides guidance and advice to local businesses and households to lower their carbon footprint and costs. The Programme, initiated in the Blue Mountains and then, replicated in the Southern Tablelands, is being rolled out in Port Douglas Shire with Queensland government and local Council support, and is attracting growing interest from around Australia.

Our first Asia-Pacific training program in Adaptive Management for Conservation, supported by the international World Heritage Leadership Program and the Protected Area Learning and Research Collaboration (PALRC), attracted twenty Protected Area managers and students from Australia and the Asia-Pacific region. Demand for the program led to a second course in September 2019.

In July 2018 the Institute signed an MOU with Eco-Forum Global, a leading NGO in China, and worked with them on the successful nomination of the Yellow Sea and Bohai Seas to the World Heritage List.

As an active member of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the Institute learns from, contributes to and extends its influence on international conservation expertise.

The Institute would not be able to support the diversity, quality and extent of its work without the very significant sponsorship and generous support from the Blue Mountains' leading tourism business - Scenic World, and its philanthropic foundation – Scenic World Shared.

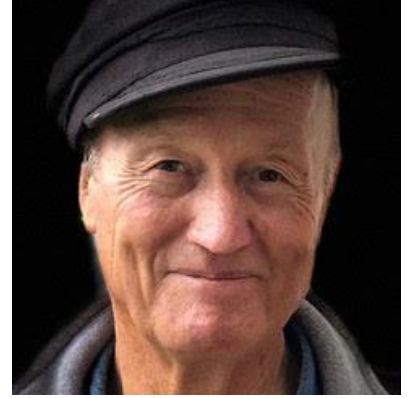
The continuing support of our two members, the Blue Mountains City Council and the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service and their staff is also gratefully acknowledged.

Finally I'd like to thank and acknowledge the invaluable and myriad contributions of our many research and other partners, contractors, employees, other supporters, volunteers and my fellow Board members, as we build the evidence base to help navigate through the increasing complexity of conservation and development challenges.

- Peter Cochrane
Chairman

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Dr John Merson



The past year has been one of rapid expansion and growth for the Institute, both in the range and scale of projects that we are undertaking. The impact of climate change on the World Heritage area has increased the risk of more ecologically damaging bushfires and drought. This coupled with rising public concerns about the environmental impacts of large scale urban developments in Western Sydney, along with the proposed raising of the Warragamba Dam Wall, makes the work of the Institute both timely and necessary.

In August we launched the second in our documentary film series *Fire Stories - Living with Risk*, to an audience of over a thousand at the Hub in Springwood. The positive response from both audiences, and the NPWS and RFS, has led to a call for a third film to explore both the research and possible strategies for better managing the increasing risk of bushfires. *Fires Stories 3 - Managing Risk* is presently in planning for the coming financial year.

In November we ran our first Asia-Pacific training program in Adaptive Management for Conservation. The program was supported with funding from the IUCN & ICROM's World Heritage Leadership Program, and the Protected Area Learning and Research Collaboration (PALRC). The course attracted twenty Protected Area managers and students from Australia and Asia Pacific region.

Its success and ongoing demand of the program has led to the course being rescheduled for September 2019.

In December, the second of our Climate Change focused Citizen Science Eco-monitoring sites was established at the Fairfax track in Blackheath, with the NPWS Visitor centre providing support and a base from which to operate. A third site, at Wentworth Falls, was established in March in the area surround the Conservation Hut. The data collected at these sites, along with that from Scenic World in Katoomba, has been regularly uploaded onto the CSIRO's BioCollect database for ongoing analysis. There are plans to expand this Monitoring program to the Wolgan Valley, and to sites at lower altitudes around Glenbrook, Springwood and Lawson in the coming financial year.

In May we launched our Low Carbon Living Australia program at an Expo in Sydney in conjunction with the Cooperative Research Centre for LCL. This was the first of a series of parallel Expo's run over the following month in both Adelaide and Perth. This coincided with our establishing an agreement and funding from the Qld Chamber of Commerce EcoBiz program to trial our LCL program in Far North Queensland. The trial will run for a year, and if successful, will lead to the expansion of the program to a number of the other regions across Qld.

The rapid growth of Low Carbon Living and its potential to scale has led the BMWHI Board to recommend the establishment of a separate 'not for profit' organisation to manage the LCL-Australia program.

Maintaining a consistent income stream is a constant challenge for 'not for profit' organisations such as BMWHI. In the early years of the Institute our traditional funding sources came primarily from Government and University research budgets, which have in the past decade significantly declined. This has led to an increasing reliance of competitive grants and philanthropic support. In this context Scenic World's support for the Institute over the past two years has proved to be extremely important. It has allowed for the growth and development of our programs, projects, and staffing, and has led to the development of a broader and more coherent fundraising strategy. It is anticipated that the consistent growth experienced over the past two years will also be reflected in the coming financial year.

- John Merson
Executive Director

ABOUT US



OUR STORY

We are an independent, not-for-profit Institute based in the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area of Australia. We research, collaborate worldwide and engage with communities to develop innovative strategies for conservation and sustainability.

Founded in 2004 in partnership with four government agencies and four universities, our establishment followed the listing in the year 2000 of the Blue Mountains as a World Heritage site, to meet the UNESCO requirement for independent research and community engagement in the conservation of this remarkable region.

We acknowledge the Dharug, Gundungurra, Wanaruah, Wiradjuri, Darkinjung and Tharawal language groups as the traditional owners of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area.

WHY WE EXIST

The Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area (GBMWhA) of Australia is an awe-inspiring natural and cultural landscape of over a million hectares. The exceptional biodiversity and ecosystems of the Blue Mountains provide clean air and water to the Greater Sydney region and a healthy escape into nature for over five million visitors a year.

Like most protected areas, the Blue Mountains region is threatened by climate change, development, wildfires, habitat loss and species extinction. We respond to these threats by sharing knowledge and developing practical solutions for a sustainable future.

As a member of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the Blue Mountains World Heritage Institute is part of a global community working to protect important natural areas around the world.

ABOUT US



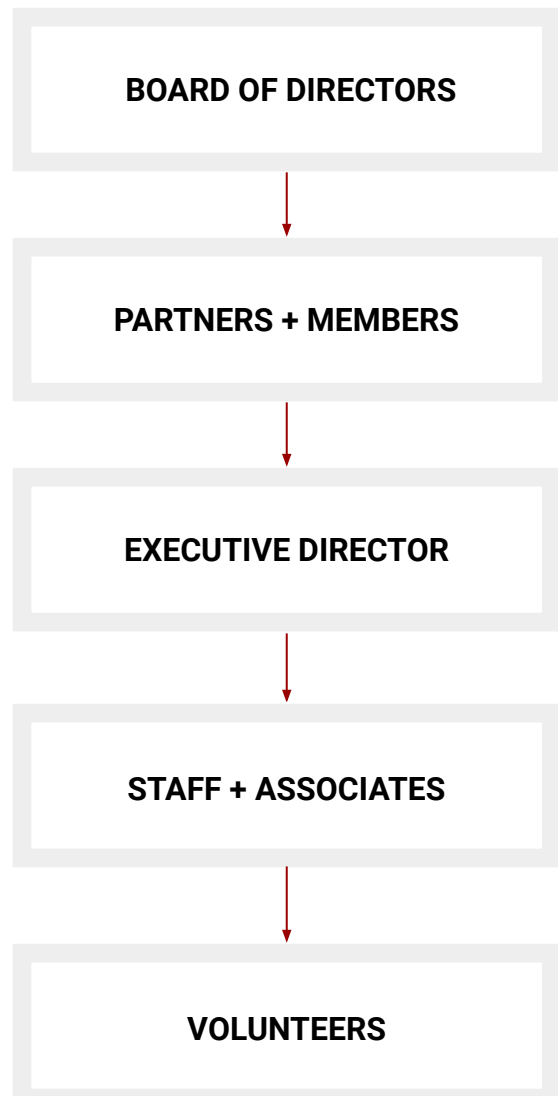
OUR VISION

Natural and Cultural Heritage is valued, well-managed and protected.

OUR MISSION

- Engage people and knowledge to advance World Heritage and protected area conservation.
- Conduct research and share knowledge to inform policy and management.
- Deliver experiential education and training programs to build capacity for adaptive management and conservation.
- Communicate, innovate and collaborate worldwide to share expertise and creative solutions for sustainable living.

OUR STRUCTURE



OUR PROGRAMS



Climate Change & Sustainability

This program aims to monitor impacts of climate change and find practical solutions for mitigation, adaptation and sustainable living. Current projects include *Low Carbon Living Australia* and our multi-site citizen science initiative, *Ecological monitoring for climate change*.



Education & Training

The focus of our education and training program is on capacity building for the conservation and management of protected areas. Courses include a short course on *Adaptive Management for Conservation in the Asia-Pacific* and a *World Heritage Tourism Training* package.



Natural & Cultural Heritage

Projects within this program focus on documenting and conserving the protected natural and cultural world heritage values of the GBMWA. Current projects include investigating the *Mining History of the Jamison Valley* and a study of *Indigenous Cultural Burning* practises.



Policy & Management

Our Policy and Management program is dedicated to research and sharing knowledge to inform environmental policy and management of the GBMWA. Current projects include the *Fire Stories* documentary series and monitoring impacts on *Upland Swamps*.

ACTIVITIES

PROGRAM: CLIMATE CHANGE & SUSTAINABILITY



LOW CARBON LIVING

July 2018: A technology partnership with Ecologic was established to integrate the powerful and detailed Ecologic carbon calculator into the LCL program.

August 2018: A Blue Mountains community fundraiser event raised over \$4000 in memberships and donations.

April 2019: New national Low Carbon Living Australia website was completed and launched, integrating the carbon calculator and an online shop selling memberships and carbon offsets.

May 2019: The LCL Australia national program was launched at CRCLCL Expos across Australia.

June 2019: A pilot program in Far North Queensland was confirmed with financial support from EcoBiz (a Chamber of Commerce and Industry program sponsored by the Qld State government), to be officially launched in July 2019.

ECOLOGICAL MONITORING

December 2018: A second monitoring site and team was established in Blackheath, covering the area around the Fairfax walking track, with support from the National Parks and Wildlife Service who also offered the use of their visitor centre as a base of operations.

March 2019: A third site and volunteer team was established in Wentworth Falls, covering the walking track area surrounding the Conservation Hut.

Weekly images recorded at these sites, along with images from the original site at Scenic World in Katoomba, have been regularly uploaded to the CSIRO's BioCollect database for ongoing analysis.

From early 2019: Discussions took place with associates and partners about expanding this program to the Wolgan Valley and to sites at lower altitudes around Glenbrook, Springwood and Lawson.

ACTIVITIES

PROGRAM: EDUCATION & TRAINING



ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT FOR CONSERVATION

November 2018: the first of our Asia Pacific centric short course training programs in *Adaptive Management for Conservation* was run in the Blue Mountains. This training program was supported with funding from the IUCN & ICROM's World Heritage Leadership Program, and student scholarships provided by the Protected Area Learning and Research Collaboration (PALRC). The course attracted 20 students from Australia and the Asia Pacific region.

April 2019: The success of the first course and unprecedented level of demand from students and potential PALRC scholarship recipients spurred an agreement to run a second training course in the Blue Mountains in September 2019. Organisation started for the second course in April 2019, with over 15 students enrolled or expressing interest by July 2019.

WORLD HERITAGE TOURISM TRAINING PACKAGE

July 2018: The Institute began developing a World Heritage training package for tourism operators in partnership with the New South Wales National Parks & Wildlife Service (NPWS), and with the support of the GBMWA Advisory Committee. The purpose of this training program is to build tourism industry knowledge of the World Heritage Area and its values and to enhance visitor experiences with extension of knowledge about the natural and cultural world heritage values of the area.

September 2018: A pilot training program was delivered for key local tourism businesses including a two-hour indoor training session and a two-hour outdoor interpretive session (pictured, above).

June 2019: A comprehensive report on the recommendations and experiences of participants in the training program pilot was prepared and published on the BMWHI website.

ACTIVITIES

PROGRAM: NATURAL & CULTURAL HERITAGE



MINING HISTORY

July 2018: Following the preliminary archaeological survey conducted by a team from Macquarie university of the late 19th century mining village at the Ruined Castle site in early 2018, an online repository of images and data was set up and made freely available: github.com/FAIMS/bmwhi-survey-2018

November 2018: The project team, writing under the leadership of the research team at Macquarie University, submitted their survey report for consideration as a paper for publication in Volume 36 of Australian Historical Archaeology. Volume 36 is due for publication in late 2019.

December 2018: The project team submitted an application to the Australian Research Council for a Linkage grant. The application was submitted under the auspices of the project team at Macquarie University. As of June 2019, the results of that application were still pending.

CULTURAL BURNING

November 2018: The idea for an Indigenous cultural burning project was formed. The second project in our Natural and Cultural Heritage program will evaluate the ecological impacts of low intensity burning traditionally used by Aboriginal communities to manage fire-dependent eucalypt ecosystems.

This project will be undertaken in conjunction with the National Parks and Wildlife cultural burning program, the Yellomundee Firesticks team, GBMWA Aboriginal communities, and the Bushfire Risk Management Centre at the University of Wollongong.

It will assess the ecological impact of low intensity burning, and its possible use along with more traditional and intense hazard reduction burns. This low intensity mosaic burning approach might also help reduce the risk of more intense and ecologically destructive fires predicted for the World Heritage area under conditional of climate change.

ACTIVITIES

PROGRAM: POLICY & MANAGEMENT



FIRE STORIES

August 2018: Production of the second Fire Stories documentary, *Fire Stories 2 - Living with Risk* was completed and it was released to the public. Over a thousand people attended the premiere of Fire Stories 2 at the Springwood Hub Theatre.

September 2018: DVD copies of the documentary were made available for sale at various stores in the Blue Mountains and from our website.

November 2018: The video of the second documentary was uploaded to YouTube, for free distribution to the public.

June 2019: Views of the first Fire Stories documentary, *Fire Stories: A Lesson in Time*, reached 14,000 on Youtube by the end of June.

June 2019: Views of the second documentary, *Fire Stories 2: Living with Risk* reached over 2,000 on Youtube by the end of June.

UPLAND SWAMPS

November 2018: The first workshop addressing the Blue Mountains Uplands Swamps program objectives was held at BMWHI in Katoomba. Partners from UNSW, UWS, Macquarie University and Blue Mountains City Council attended, and a paper outlining the proposed scope of the project was presented. The paper was then made available on the BMWHI website.

January 2019: From January to June, research and analysis work on water and carbon volume at a site in Wolgan Valley was carried out by Scott Mooney's UNSW research team.

June 2019: The Institute was invited to submit a second round application for funding for this project by the Ian Potter Foundation. The application for \$423,000 to cover three years of funding (total project values at \$824,587) was submitted on the 4th June, with notification of success or failure to be received some time early in the next financial year.

FINANCIALS

PROFIT AND LOSS

1 July 2018 - 30 June 2019

INCOME	
BMWHI General Income (Untied)	
Donations income	\$100,004.55
Interest Income	\$215.73
Member Contributions	\$20,000.00
Total BMWHI General Income (Untied)	\$120,220.28
Program Income	
Fire Stories Program - Income (Various projects)	\$21,057.07
Education Program - Income (Various projects)	\$101,619.52
Low Carbon Living Program - Income (Various projects)	\$94,444.44
Total Program Income	\$217,121.03
TOTAL INCOME	\$337,341.31
GROSS PROFIT	\$337,341.31
LESS OPERATING EXPENSES	
Fundraising Expenses	\$2,881.82
Project Costs expected where funding already received	\$21,500.00
Core Operating Costs	
Accounting, Bookkeeping & Audit	\$3,803.28
Bank and credit card charges	\$269.07
Board and Client meeting expenses	\$641.59
Insurance (WComp, Pub liab, PI)	\$1,655.25
Memberships/Subscriptions	\$801.42
Office Expenses (General/Variou s)	\$3,841.58
Website expenses (BMWHI generic)	\$1,298.40
Total Core Operating Costs	\$12,310.59
Contractors - Core	
Core - Operations & Finances	\$31,780.00
Core - Communications and Marketing	\$37,722.19
Core - Executive Director	\$23,681.82
Total Contractors - Core	\$93,184.01
Program Expenses	
Core Program - Various Projects	\$20,873.58
Education Program - Various Projects	\$56,604.88
Fire Stories Program - Various Projects	\$38,074.97
LCL Program - Various Projects	\$88,605.55
Total Program Expenses	\$204,158.98
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$334,035.40
NET PROFIT	\$3,305.91

FINANCIALS

BALANCE SHEET

At 30 June 2019

ASSETS	
Bank	
LCL Program	\$12,892.18
Public Fund	\$20,353.28
Savings Account	\$15,189.39
Transaction Account	\$12,177.02
Total Bank	\$60,611.87
Current Assets	
Debtors net of provision	
Doubtful debt provision	-\$2,000.00
Trade Debtors	\$34,754.00
Total Debtors net of provision	\$32,754.00
Total Current Assets	\$32,754.00
Non-current Assets	
Loan to LCL-Southern Highlands	\$5,000.00
Total Non-current Assets	\$5,000.00
TOTAL ASSETS	\$98,365.87
LIABILITIES	
Current Liabilities	
Contractor Invoices (Accrued)	\$5,000.00
Credit card payable (NAB-ED)	\$774.72
GST Collected	\$2,745.91
Expenses expected on projects where funding already received	
Costs to come re funding received (Program: Core - Various Projects)	\$5,000.00
Costs to come re funding received (Program: ED National)	\$2,500.00
Costs to come re funding received (Program: Education)	\$25,000.00
Costs to come re funding received (Program: LCL National)	\$15,000.00
Costs to come re funding received (Program: LCL-BM)	\$10,000.00
Costs to come re funding received (Program: LCL-SH)	\$5,000.00
Total Expenses expected on projects where funding already received	\$62,500.00
Total Current Liabilities	\$71,020.63
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$71,020.63
NET ASSETS	\$27,345.24
EQUITY	
Current Year Earnings	\$3,305.91
Retained Earnings	\$24,039.33
TOTAL EQUITY	\$27,345.24

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



OUR PARTNERS



SCENIC WORLD
BLUE MOUNTAINS AUSTRALIA



OUR PEOPLE

Special thanks to our members, partners, associates and volunteers who contribute their time, expertise and energy to our work, who attend our events, participate in workshops and who make our work not only possible, but enjoyable.

Scenic World: Phil Hammon, Anthea Hammon, Amanda Byrne, Alana Silk and their wonderful, engaged team.

Members and Partners: National Parks and Wildlife Service, NSW Rural Fire Service, Blue Mountains City Council and EcoBiz.

Associates: Doug Humann, Chris Tobin, David King, Winston Jones, Stuart Cowell, Phillipa Walsh, Carly May, Claire Ellis, Jacqueline Reid, Glenn Meade, Nick Rigby, Grant Purcell, Will Batson, Michael Henson, David Noble, Ricky Spencer, Rob Mann, Alicia Harb-Larkins, Aaron Greenville, Bill Dixon, Rob Smith and David Hull.

Citizen Scientists and Volunteers: Paul Vale, Keith Brister, Lorraine Brister, Leona Kieran, Jane Ulman, Monica Nugent, Tamara Brooks-Venables, Richard Lawson, Ken Chan, Emily Koch and Vic Giniunas.



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