

TRINITER



Eucryphia

ISSN 1037 – 2032

Number 75 - November 2004

Robertson Environment Protection Society – to promote the protection and enhancement of the Robertson Environment

Next Meeting REPS Annual General Meeting Friday 12th November at 7:30pm at the Robertson Community Centre

The REPS AGM will be preceded by a 40-minute talk by Chris Woodroffe on Global Warming - Climate Change

Understanding the impact and assessing the degree of climate change throughout the world is something that requires detailed research and examination - something that the University of Wollongong's Associate Professor Colin Woodroffe is more than familiar with.

His expertise relating to the impact of sea-level changes on coastal environments has recently earned him an appointment as one of the lead authors in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) fourth assessment of climate change.

The IPCC is the principal organisation that assesses the degree of climate change around the world and the impact that climate change is likely to have. The panel, which consists of an international group of distinguished scientists, has produced three major assessment reports all widely used by policymakers, scientists and other experts. Professor Woodroffe's involvement in writing the fourth assessment, to be published in 2007, is supported by the Australian Greenhouse Office.

All are welcome – please bring friends and family.

A light supper will be provided.

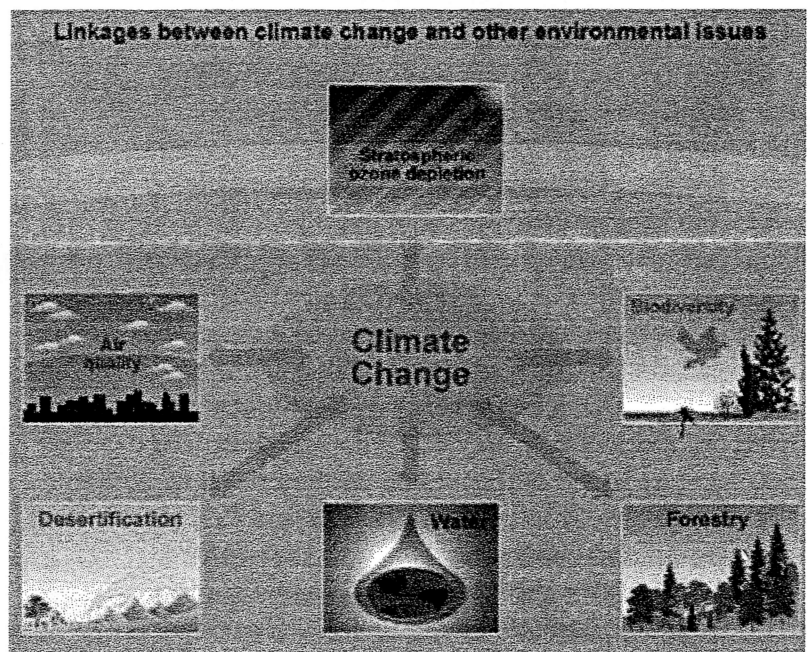
Entry with a gold coin donation.

Professor Woodroffe recently returned from Vienna, where he attended the initial meeting of the IPCC Working Group on Impacts, Adaptations and Vulnerability to Climate Change at the Vienna International Centre.

“The IPCC has reached a consensus view that the balance of evidence suggests there is a discernible human influence on global climate,” Professor Woodroffe said.

“Each assessment report of the evidence for human impact on the global climate is intended to be of the highest scientific integrity, reflecting the state of knowledge and scientific interpretation fairly and adequately.”

Professor Woodroffe said that the fourth assessment report of the IPCC would become the standard scientific reference for all those concerned with climate change and its consequences.



Upcoming Events

Fri. 12th November – REPS Annual General Meeting + Global Warming – Climate Change Talk
7:30pm, Robertson Community Centre

REPS AGM

In advance of the REPS AGM (on Friday 12th November) office bearers' reports for 2004 are published in this volume of *Eucryphia*.

President's Report by Leon Hall

2004 raced by with REPS continuing to improve its existing projects as well as starting new ones. Working bees at Caalang Creek Reserve, Robertson Nature Reserve and Pinkwood Park have helped maintain and improve these areas for the community and for environmental benefit.

One new project is the propagation of local rainforest plants in association with Robertson Public School students. Monica Engel took year 4 students to Caalang Creek Reserve to collect Pinkwood seeds (*Eucryphia moorei*) from trees planted years ago by REPS. These and other local rainforest seeds have been propagated at the school nursery with the aim being that the students will plant the trees back along Caalang Creek when the trees are ready. This is an excellent project on a number of levels and thanks to Monica for initiating and running with this great idea.

Another new project started this year has been the development of a web site for REPS. Beth Boughton, Jane Maxwell and Denis Wilson attended a web design course at the local CTC centre. Beth and Jane have started developing web pages for REPS and hopefully, with other interested members, can have the site up and running next year. This project has the potential to be of great benefit to the local and broader community where people can expand their knowledge of the local flora and fauna and the geography of the area as well as being informed about natural resource management issues and methods. We have 14 years of excellent articles from our newsletter 'Eucryphia' plus booklets produced by REPS that could be used on the web site. We also would like to use the site as a link to other useful and interesting sites.

Beth Boughton has also been our Talks Convenor this year bringing us a broad range of interesting and informative talks. This is quite a demanding job and all would agree she has excelled in this position. Denis Wilson has helped to record these talks by

writing about many of them for the *Eucryphia* newsletter. I would also like to give my appreciation for Denis' valued work and enthusiasm on the committee over the last two years. Lyndon Stanley has done a great job producing the newsletter, devoting his professionalism and time to this project. Thanks from REPS. Another great contribution has been from our treasurer Anne Wilson.

REPS has participated at a number of events this year having a display at World Environment Day and The Wingecarribee Environment Expo, both at Bowral, plus a recent stall at Handmade in the Highlands at Robertson. These have been useful venues to demonstrate the value of the Robertson Rainforest.

REPS was involved with the Robertson Public School's 'Yarrawa Brush Corridor Project' helping with planting and by donating some local rainforest plants. We have also been able to help some high school and university students with their projects about the Wingecarribee Swamp and the Yarrawa Brush.

Thanks to all our members for supporting this society.

REPS Membership Renewals now due

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

REPS
PO Box 45,
Robertson NSW 2577

Your ongoing membership and support of this organisation is really appreciated.

If you have any friends or neighbours interested in joining REPS, please photocopy the Application form and pass it on to them. Alternatively new forms can be obtained from the Secretary, or from Lyndon Stanley via email (lyndon@hinet.net.au).

Secretary's Report

by Denis Wilson

It is with regret that I report that the last year has been a difficult year for me, personally. As a result, I have not been able to do justice to the task of being Secretary of REPS in this last year. So, after 2 years in the job, I intend to stand down from this position.

I wish to thank Leon Hall and the other members of the Committee for the work that they have done. I wish to make special mention of Beth Boughton, who has demonstrated her remarkable enthusiasm for REPS, since she re-joined the Committee, and I have appreciated her support very much, in the last year. Steve Douglas and Monica Engel have also helped with the planning of REPS activities and events, which has been very greatly appreciated. Lyndon Stanley has done a great job as Editor of *Eucryphia*, despite his work commitments.

The idea of a website for REPS has been actively discussed by some of us, and I believe that this will be an important part of our future as an organization. Beth Boughton and Jane Maxwell and I attended an introductory course on Web design at the Robertson Community Technology Centre. Hopefully something more will come of this idea. I think we need to find an individual who can become the driving force behind the website. Preferably, that person ought be someone for whom computing and "web design" are closer to "second nature" than is the case with the three of us.

I still intend to be an active participant in REPS activities. I hope to continue to write occasional articles for *Eucryphia*, and to provide reports on the talks given by our Guest Speakers. However, I need to take time out from official involvement with REPS, so I will not be serving on the Committee next year.

Do you want to be REPS Secretary?

With Denis vacating this position, we are looking for a replacement for this position as REPS Secretary. It is your chance to help this very worthwhile organisation. If you want to volunteer, please come to the AGM on 12th November.

Hedgewise Letter

On September 21st 2004, REPS received a letter from Jan Hainke, Secretary for Hedgewise, a group "established to encourage community awareness and participation in the planting of appropriate vegetation in urban and rural areas". Hedgewise is particularly concerned with the planting of *Cupressocyparis leylandii* (Leighton Green) as windbreaks or privacy hedges in this area.

To quote from the aforementioned letter:

"We believe that leylandii hedges do not make the best windbreak as they cause turbulence and land deprivation. There are alternative solutions which are **much more environmentally sound**. Privacy can be obtained without planting a solid barrier with the potential to grow to 30m. What rights do landholders have to deprive residents and tourists of views and light on our roads, so that in a few years time we will be driving down dark green tunnels?"

This is a huge issue and we wish to raise public awareness before this "Sleeping Giant overwhelms us, as it did in the UK where legislation is now in place to control the growing of this tree. We wish to bring this subject to the attention of REPS. Will you support us in our campaign?"

End quotation.

REPS President Leon Hall will raise this issue for general discussion at the next REPS meeting.

Editor's Note:

Coincidentally at the REPS meeting in October, Steve Douglas', former REPS President, gave a very relevant talk entitled "Starting From Scratch". This talk covered the experiences of Steve and his wife Dennice as they attempted to plant a windbreak/woodlot largely using species of trees endemic to the area. Clearly a practical alternative needs to be available and accessible if the tradition of putting in a double row of pines is ever to be replaced.

Those present at this talk (as well as at the site visit the following morning) could not fail to be impressed at the success of this endeavour, not only for its efficiency as a windbreak and privacy screen, but also for the beauty of a regenerated rainforest. This achievement should be used as a fine example to those who claim it is not possible to create a windbreak or privacy screen from native species.

Treasurer's Report

by Anne Wilson

ROBERTSON ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION SOCIETY INC

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2004

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 2004

		\$
Current Assets		
Balance per Bank Passbook	General Account	3,051.37
	Grants Account	3,393.63
		<u>6,445.00</u>
Current liabilities		
	Unpresented cheque	4.90
	Net Assets	<u>6,440.10</u>

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FROM 01-10-03 TO 30-9-04

GENERAL ACCOUNT

INCOME	\$	EXPENDITURE	\$
Memberships	1,630.00	Dept of Fair Trading	40.00
Interest	2.90	PO Box Rental	55.00
Donations	931.25	Insurance	300.00
		Hall hire	66.00
		Audit fees	275.00
		Other meeting costs	602.28
		Printing	325.04
		Postage	358.10
		Stationery	56.17
		Transaction charges	43.50
TOTAL INCOME	<u>2,564.15</u>	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	<u>2,121.09</u>
		Excess Income to Expenditure	<u>443.06</u>
 Bank Reconciliation at 30-9-04			
Opening Balance per Cash Book	2,608.31	Balance per Bank Passbook	3,051.37
Plus Excess Income to Expend	443.06		
Closing Balance	<u>3,051.37</u>	Balance to cash book	<u>3,051.37</u>
 GRANTS ACCOUNT			
INCOME	\$	EXPENDITURE	\$
Interest	3.68	Australian Garden History	287.25
TOTAL INCOME	<u>3.68</u>	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	<u>287.25</u>
		Excess Expenditure to Income	<u>283.57</u>
 Bank Reconciliation at 30-9-04			
Opening Balance per Cash Book	3,672.30	Balance per Bank Passbook	3,393.63
Less Excess Expend to Income	283.57	Less o/s cheque	4.90
Closing Balance	<u>3,388.73</u>	Balance to cash book	<u>3,388.73</u>

Botanic Bushwalk

By Leon Hall, Steve Douglas, Bob McInnes,
and Allan Stiles

In September a botanic survey was made by the current president of REPS and three of his predecessors on a property off Mauger's Lane, Robertson, for which no plant list had been previously compiled. The long-term owner, recently deceased, was Mrs Gittoes and her seventy acres were reputed to include some of the least disturbed rainforest in the district so a visit had been of particular interest for many years.

The property is on the northeast side of Bell's Hill, much of it is steep, and there is a substantial ravine running more or less to the east and fed by smaller tributaries. The approximate elevation ranges from 750 to 600 metres. At the top is the red basalt-derived soil of the plateau grading to the underlying grey Wianamatta Shales at lower levels. While not usually the case elsewhere, in the Robertson district this shale supports rainforest because of its accumulation of nutrients from the red soil above. A small part of the property lies west of the lane and it has been observed that, while twenty years ago it had only a few well-spaced trees, it is rapidly returning to rainforest, a significant indication of the local rate of regrowth, albeit with only the common pioneer species. In the larger portion, areas of pasture exist within the northern boundary and to the east of the lane, with occasional trees and shrubs, mostly Blackwood, Lilly Pilly, Mock Olive, and Sassafras. It is predicted that, without interference, that land would eventually also revert to closed forest. The presently forested area occupies about forty acres and this forest continues into the adjoining property on the southeast.

Commencing at the southern boundary, descending transects were made and the plants identified were listed. This list cannot, however, be claimed to be exhaustive as other transects would possibly have revealed more species. It was nevertheless possible to make some useful general observations. Contrary to expectations, it was concluded that most of the property had once been cleared and that much of the existing forest is far from pristine. There are numerous overgrown vehicular tracks, some cut into steep hillsides, and, in many places the closely spaced trees of generally similar girth and of limited variety are typical of regrowth. On some steeper



Photo: Allan Stiles with large remnant Pigeonberry Ash (*Elaeocarpus kirtonii*)

Of special interest were a large Pigeonberry Ash, one of only a few known above the escarpment, and a very old Scrub Beefwood, one of the few to have escaped felling for its rot-resistant timber in pioneer days. A number of seedlings and younger trees of that species are present but development is slow and the specimen seen may be hundreds of years old. Brown Beech, another tree of mature forest, was locally common. Most had been severely damaged by the weight of recent snow that had broken many a branch. Pinkwood was typically only seen on the south-facing slope of the ravine where some very old and coppiced examples are growing. Finding the Greenhood orchid was fascinating even though it was not in flower. This plant has only been seen in one other rainforest patch in the district and awaits identification. No epiphytic orchids or Black Oliveberry trees were seen. Visits such as this often raise questions about expected but absent species. Why is a plant not found in one place when it is nearby in an environment that appears to be the same? What unrecognised factors may be the cause? Could it be just a matter of chance?

In the forest the following eighteen trees, eight shrubs, thirteen vines, fifteen ferns, and eight other herbs were observed. Beside each name is C (common), O (occasional), or R (rare), indicating its observed frequency on the property but not necessarily its status in the district.

slopes and in ravines, however, older-growth forest was found, probably little disturbed because of the unsuitability of those places for cultivation or grazing. On such sites could be seen the greatest diversity of species, larger and more widely spaced trees, and enormous vines.

Gittoes Property Plant List

Trees

Blackwood or Sally Wattle	<i>Acacia melanoxylon</i>	C
Lilly Pilly	<i>Acmena smithii</i>	C
Coachwood	<i>Ceratopetalum apetalum</i>	C
Jackwood or Murrogun	<i>Cryptocarya glaucescens</i>	R
Black Plum	<i>Diospyros australis</i>	R
Sassafras	<i>Doryphora sassafras</i>	C
Pigeonberry Ash	<i>Elaeocarpus kirtonii</i>	R
Pinkwood	<i>Eucryphia moorei</i>	O
Veined or Smooth Mock Olive	<i>Notelaea venosa</i>	C
Brown Beech	<i>Pennantia cunninghamii</i>	O
Sweet Pittosporum	<i>Pittosporum undulatum</i>	C
Featherwood	<i>Polyosma cunninghamii</i>	R
Pencil Cedar, Umbrella Tree	<i>Polyscias murrayi</i>	R
Brown Possomwood	<i>Quintinia sieberi</i>	O
Brush Muttonwood	<i>Rapanea howittiana</i>	C
Scrub Beefwood	<i>Stenocarpus salignus</i>	C
Scentless Rosewood	<i>Synoum glandulosum</i>	O
Mountain Water Gum	<i>Tristaniopsis collina</i>	O

Shrubs

Three-veined Cassinia	<i>Cassinia trinerva</i>	O
Orange Thorn	<i>Citriobatus pauciflorus</i>	C
Prickly Currant Bush	<i>Coprosma quadrifida</i>	O
Native Mulberry	<i>Hedycarya angustifolia</i>	C
Tree Violet	<i>Hymenanthera dentata</i>	C
Tall Riceflower	<i>Pimelea ligustrina</i>	O
Yellow Elderberry	<i>Sambucus australasica</i>	O
Pepper Bush	<i>Tasmannia insipida</i>	O

Vines

Staff Vine	<i>Celastrus australis</i>	O
Old Man's Beard	<i>Clematis glycinoides</i>	O
Wombat Berry	<i>Eustrephus latifolius</i>	O
Scrambling Lily	<i>Geitonoplesium cymosum</i>	O
Climbing Guinea Flower	<i>Hibbertia scandens</i>	C
Common Milk Vine	<i>Marsdenia rostrata</i>	C
Anchor Vine	<i>Palmeria scandens</i>	C
Wonga Vine	<i>Pandorea pandorana</i>	O
Common Silkpod	<i>Parsonsia straminea</i>	O
Broad-leaf Bramble	<i>Rubus moluccanus var. trilobus</i>	R
Green-leaf Bramble	<i>Rubus nebulosus</i>	O
Austral Sarsaparilla	<i>Smilax australis</i>	O
Bearded Tylophora	<i>Tylophora barbata</i>	O

Ferns

Climbing Fishbone Fern	<i>Arthropteris tenella</i>	O
Birds Nest Fern	<i>Asplenium australasicum</i>	R
Necklace Fern	<i>Asplenium flabellifolium</i>	O
Strap Water-fern	<i>Blechnum patersonii</i>	O
Hard Water-fern	<i>Blechnum wattsii</i>	O
Rough Tree-fern	<i>Cyathea australis</i>	C
Prickly Tree-fern	<i>Cyathea leichhardtiana</i>	R
Soft Tree Fern	<i>Dicksonia antarctica</i>	O
Finger Fern	<i>Grammitis billardierei</i>	R
Creeping Shield Fern	<i>Lastreopsis microsora</i>	C
Fragrant Fern	<i>Microsorium scandens</i>	O
Sickle Fern	<i>Pellaea falcata</i>	O
Dwarf Sickle Fern	<i>Pellaea nana</i>	O
Jungle Brake	<i>Pteris umbrosa</i>	O
Rock Felt Fern	<i>Pyrrosia rupestris</i>	C

Herbs

Forest Hound's Tongue	<i>Austrocynoglossum latifolium</i>	O
Soft Nettle	<i>Elatostema reticulatum</i>	O
Cranesbill	<i>Geranium homeanum</i>	C
Settler's Flax	<i>Gymnostachys anceps</i>	R
A Greenwood Orchid	<i>Pterostylus sp.</i>	R
Jagged or Eastern Nightshade	<i>Solanum pungetium</i>	O
Scrub Nettle	<i>Urtica incisa</i>	C
Native Violet	<i>Viola hederacea</i>	O



Photo:

Pencil Cedar, Umbrella Tree
(*Polyscias murrayi*) from the Gittoes property.

Some of the introduced weedy plants noticed in the rainforest include *Cestrum*, Mistflower, and Pines.

It is increasingly evident that there is a growing awareness of the value of this special, beautiful, and scientifically significant feature of the Robertson district. That has long been a prime aim of REPS. It was heartening to learn that the new owners of this property have a keen interest in the preservation of their rainforest.

All That Sassafras Fluff

by Denis Wilson

You may recall the wonderful flowering of Sassafras trees in the spring of 2003. A prolific seeding followed, in autumn 2004. For several weeks, clouds of brown fluffy seeds blew around Robertson. They built up along fence lines, like brown mini-snowdrifts.

Around Robertson there are many mature Sassafras trees, but relatively few saplings. So I wondered if Sassafras seeds might be difficult to germinate. In view of the abundance of seed available in this season, I resolved to make an experiment.

In mid April, I gathered several plastic bags of the brown fluff, sorted out the large (viable) seeds and planted them into a tray of Cocoa Peat and Perlite. I kept the mix moist and cool, and out of direct sunlight. Late in August, after 5 months, a few of the seeds started to be lifted up above the surface of the soil on thin stems. This happens because the root emerges from the seed shell, before the leaves develop. It forms a stem that will support the leaves. In late September, many of these seeds opened to reveal 2 shiny green cotyledons. These are the “seed leaves” which emerge when a plant first starts to grow. It took 6 months for germination to occur. The germination co-incided with first real warmth of the spring season.

I expect to successfully germinate over 100 seedlings from one tray. But as I may have planted more than 1000 seeds, I would gauge the “germination rate” of Sassafras seeds to be low. Sassafras are prolific seeders, but they need to be, to compensate for the random dispersal of their seeds by the wind, and the relatively low germination rate of the seeds.

Now that I know what a Sassafras seedling looks like, at the 2-leaf stage, I can recognise a large number of wild Sassafras seedlings emerging around my fence line and on a friend’s property. Clearly, when the conditions are right, Sassafras seeds germinate well. But they do not like heavy grass cover or heavy leaf litter (unless it is almost constantly moist, as in the Nature Reserve). Where the seeds are able to be in contact with disturbed soil, they germinate quite freely, but it takes a full 6 months.

If you have Sassafras trees near your property, or if you recall the clouds of fluffy seeds blowing around, back in March and April, then have a look for your own Sassafras seedlings.



Photo: *Doryphora sassafras* seedlings germinated naturally.

Check for seedling Sassafras coming up in shaded areas of your garden, and near fences. If you do not realise what they are, or that they are there at all, many will be lost by being mowed over. If allowed to come up in an uncontrolled manner, they will suffer greatly from overcrowding. Consider moving them to parts of your garden or property where they will grow successfully, and help re-vegetate the district. I understand that young Sassafras plants survive transplanting quite well. The usual rules apply – move the seedling with minimal disturbance, and replant it as soon as possible. Then water it well. If you wish to plant one out in the open, it might be necessary to provide short-term protection for the seedling. A “nurse plant” such as a Kangaroo Apple is ideal.

I hope to have plenty of tiny Sassafras seedlings to share with REPS members next year, for those who do not find their own wild seedlings.

Editor’s Note

Many thanks to Denis Wilson for his numerous interesting essays and reports on REPS speakers to Eucryphia throughout 2004.



Railway Station Events

Robertson Heritage Railway Station Sunday 7th November

3801 Steam Engine will be visiting Robertson on a "Round-Trip" from Sydney via Moss Vale, stopping for lunch in Robertson and returning via Macquarie Pass. The train will be standing at Robertson from about 1-3pm.

Sunday 16th Nov. and on Sunday 11th Dec.

Loop train to Moss Vale and return from Robertson will be running on Sunday 16th November and on Sunday 11th December - The vintage diesel Cockatoo Run will pick up from Robertson around 1pm for the trip to Moss Vale, returning at around 3.30pm.

Tickets available at Robertson Station - \$10 adults, \$5 concession, and \$25 family.

Thursday 11th November

The Robertson History group meets at the Fettle's Shed from 10am on the 2nd Thursday of the month - next meeting November 11th.

Fettle's Shed Gallery Robertson Heritage Railway Station

Sat 6th & Sun 7th November and Sat 13th & Sun 14th November 10am-4pm

Exhibition "Works on Paper" by Jennifer Kenny

"Voice of Youth" – 2 weekends Sat 20th & Sun 21st November and Sat 27th & Sun 28th November 10am - 4pm all days.

An Art Exhibition and Competition for 11-21 year olds. Prizes donated by Wingecarribee Community Health and Wingecarribee Community Foundation.

Welcome to new REPS members

A warm welcome to new REPS member Julian Knights.

REPS is always on the look out for enthusiastic and energetic new members who are keen to make a contribution to the community and to help us with our various REPS projects.

REPS Website

A group of people has been formed to design and put up on the Internet a website for REPS.

Suggested inclusions so far are –

- Information about REPS
- Information about the Robertson Environment
- Aids to identifying local native vegetation,
- Links to other useful sites such as National Parks, Royal Botanic Gardens etc,
- Archive of past Eucryphia editions

Anyone interested in participating in the project please contact Beth Boughton (email Beth.Boughton@npws.nsw.gov.au). If you would like to design a webpage or have suggestions for content we would welcome your input.

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.

Please contact:

The Secretary

PO Box 45, Robertson NSW 2577

or President – Leon Hall on 4888 2222

Also, we are always looking for new contributions to Eucryphia. If you have an essay, article, poem or photograph that you want to share with other REPS members please contact Lyndon Stanley.

Telephone: 4885 1322

Or email: lyndon@hinet.net.au

All contributions will be most welcome.