

Friends of Black Mountain Oral History Project 2021-23



Interviewee: Rosemary Blemings

Timed summary: Rosemary Blemings interviewed by Mary Hutchison

Session #1: 28/01/2022

Time	Subjects	Key subject words including names of people and organisations
00:00:00	Introduction. Membership of Friends of Black Mountain Co-ordinating Committee from 2012. When and where born. Farm life. Early connection with wild environment.	Second World War, London, evacuation, dairy cattle, wildflowers, hedgerows, habitats
00:04:32	Schooling. Interest in geography, botany zoology and outdoor activities. Relevance of rural experience to these interests. Early familiarity with farm chores, animals and plants. Decision to train as Physical Education teacher (P.E.)	Gardening
00:06:38	Completed teacher training in 1963 and started job as teacher in Kent. Chose marriage rather than work to dismay of Teachers' College. Went to Hong Kong for husband's work 1963-5. On return to England worked as a teacher until birth of son 1968. Move to Australia 1970 when husband took opportunity to train as air traffic controller in Melbourne.	Women's education, Merchant Navy, Gravesend, travel, Australian post-war immigration policy, Flight Service Officer, secondary airports.
00:09:27	Experience of coming to Australia. Moving around for husband's work. Daughter born 1971. Exploring the Australian bush with children. Similarity to own childhood.	Sandringham, Meekatharra, Lilydale, The Dandenong Ranges, Old Lilydale Railway line, 'Stay-at-home Mum'
00:12:39	Decision to move permanently to Canberra in 1978	Maritime Safety Organisation, Department of Civil Aviation, Public Service moves to Canberra, The Honourable Barnaby Joyce MP
00:14:15	End of session	

Session #2: 28/01/2022

00:00:00	[Interview continues after pause]. Arriving in Canberra and settling into new suburb of Flynn. Getting to know	Charnwood
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	neighbourhood and local Australian plants.	
00: 03:57	Joining Canberra nature groups. Studying Librarianship at Canberra College of Advanced Education (CCAЕ) 1980. subjects. Teacher Librarian Scullin Primary School 1984-2001. Introducing students to ecology in natural environment around the school library	Australian Native Plant Society, Canberra Ornithologists Group, Field Naturalists Association, 'Mum the chauffeur', Canberra College of Advanced Education, mulberry trees.
00:05: 52	Learning about Canberra places and conservation through field trips and group activities. Participation in Friends of ANBG propagating group. Decision to get involved in Landcare.	Australian National Botanic Gardens, Banks Building, Black Mountain, Mount Rogers, Umbagog District Park, Latham
00:09:21	Special qualities of Black Mountain. Propagating sessions in ANBG nursery shed at the Black Mountain fence where the Summit Walk was developed (2001). ANBG weekly walking leaflets 'In Flower This Week' inspire Leon Horsnell's idea for self-guided spring 'Wildflower Walks' on Black Mountain in the late 1990s. Rosemary's Involvement with members of other groups in organising, writing, illustrating and designing the Wildflower Walks leaflets.	Rosemary Purdie, Barbara Daly, Field Naturalists Association, Native Plants Society, Winifred Mumford, Janet Twigg-Patterson, networking, volunteers, community education
00: 13:07	People and organisations involved in self-guided Wildflower Walks. Details of organisation, production and distribution of leaflets Rosemary's role as facilitator and author. Interpretive and experiential difference between guided and self-guided walks.	Leon Horsnell, 'Native Nooks', Australian Native Plants Society, Rosemary Metcalf, Patricia Gresham, Audrey Jones, Margaret Ning, Friends of Grasslands, Geoff Clarke, Gwyn Clarke, Winifred Mumford, Telstra, Burbidge-Chippendale Wildflower Rambles, Jean Geue, Dianella
00:18:03	Self-guided walks as way of expanding on regular walks provided by various groups. expanded by activities. Highlights of own experience of Black Mountain in 1990s include learning about its different habitats and ecosystems. Development of conservation management for nature reserves. Role of individuals, community groups and academics. Sharing knowledge.	Wildflower Rambles, Native Plants Society, Canberra Ornithologists Group, grasslands, Glenloch Interchange, Rani Road, invasive weeds, threats, entomology, botany, Rosemary Purdie, Murray Fagg, photographers, botanical artists
00:21:43	Difference between ParkCare and Urban Landcare Care. Rosemary's participation in initial ParkCare on Black Mountain and longer involvement in the Pinnacle Group. New groups interested in caring for the environment currently emerging.	Iconic places, Hills and Ridges, Urban Open Space, land-caring, Field Naturalists Association of Canberra.

	Suburban pocket parks coming into Landcare scenario.	
00:24:26	Connections between people in different groups and societies. Landcare and ParkCare groups located within catchment areas. Administrative role of ACT Government Catchment Groups for Park and Landcare groups. Terrain and ecosystems in the context of land administration, suburb design and roads.	Jean Geue, Native Plants Society, Canberra Ornithologists Group (COG), Field Naturalists Association of Canberra, Friends of Aranda Bushland, Ginninderra Catchment Group, Belconnen, Mulligans Flat, Ginninderra Falls, The Pinnacle, Mount Painter, Hawker, Cook, Weetangera, Aranda, Molonglo Catchment Group, Linda Beveridge, funding management, Sullivans Creek, Lake Burley Griffin, volunteer insurance
00:28:38	Gungahlin Drive Extension (GDE) issues involve contest between suburban land in Aranda and Black Mountain Reserve (2001). Jean Geue's role in GDE issues for Black Mountain and Aranda Bushland. Regeneration of bushland through continual management of weed species.	Orchids, conservation politics, submissions, Aranda Snow Gums, Rosemary Purdie, Linda Beveridge, Jean Geue, weeding.
00:33:09	Supporter of GDE protest activities early 2000s. Became member of Friends of Black Mountain Co-ordination Group on basis of previous experience with Black Mountain walks and brochures. Importance of Convenor's role. Membership of FoBM alongside active volunteering in own area of Belconnen. Value of Black Mountain as an inner city reserve.	Jean Geue, Linda Beveridge, 'ginger group', public ecological education.
00:37:59	Role of nature reserves and walking trails in teaching people about the natural landscape. Interest in activities to encourage public connection with and understanding of local environments. Documentation of own experience of walks and land caring. Genesis of Canberra Nature Map.	Land Care, volunteering, Hall Museum, Centennial Trail, Mt Rogers, Ginninderra Creek, Interpretation, bush etiquette, safety, information sheets, Aaron Clausen, citizen science, Black Mountain, spider orchids, photobooks.
00:42:16	Potential trail Black Mountain to Arboretum . Changing forms of interpretation of landscape and habitat. Value of multiple ways of learning and links to answer questions.	Centennial Trail, Parkes Way, QR codes, Catchment Group projects, Mulligans Flat
00:45:54	Enjoyment of guiding walks because opportunity to share knowledge. Naming places on basis of experiences associated with them. Mud map of Mt Rogers showing local residents' names for of	Community education, 'Buster's Corner', Wally Bell, Tyrone Bell, Indigenous elders, Lake Ginninderra, Lawson

	places. Learning from walks with members of Indigenous groups.	
00:49:57	Desire to connect people with their places and facilitate learning about them. Idea of accessible 'portraits' of each local bushland place based on people's experience of them, information about conservation, habitats, seasons and impact of non-Indigenous lifestyles	Biography of place, changing landscapes
00:52:13	Enjoyment of land care work and observing the natural world. Desire to share these experiences. Documentation of Landcare work days in groups' newsletters. The capacity of photographs to prompt questions and lead to answers. Sharing our world with other species.	Learning, conservation, information-sharing
00:56:39	Significant experiences as part of land caring. Meeting people and encouraging participation. Frogmouth conversations on Mt Rogers. Photograph of a water rat (rakali) at Umbagog. Facilitating the journey from learning to caring to advocacy for places. Love of the outdoors.	Volunteering, riverine, <i>Rakali</i> , identification of species, Fassifern Ponds
01:02:57	End of session	