



Trouble reading this email? [click here](#)

November 2022

TO: Fellowship Members  
CC: DCCs, RCs, SCs

### Fellowship Newsletter: The Environment

Dear Scouting friends,

This edition of *Fellowship News* we focus on the environment, which is particularly pertinent given the ban in NSW on single-use plastics (starting from today, 1 November 2022).

We hear from our guest editor, Simone Haider – State Leader (Environment) - and also from Malcolm Wilson - State Commissioner (Fellowship) on Scouting's long history of protecting and respecting the environment. There are also insights into the Ingleside Environment Centre Scout Fellowship and details of their 2023 their program.

We hope you enjoy reading about the things we're doing in Scouts to protect and nurture Mother Nature. This is intrinsic to our Movement, right back to its earliest roots. As Lord Robert Baden-Powell himself said in *'Scouting For Boys: Campfire Yarn No. 16. Plants'*:

**"As a Scout, you are the guardian of the woods. A Scout never damages a tree by hacking it with his knife or axe. It does not take long to fell a tree, but it takes many years to grow one, so a Scout cuts down a tree for a good reason only – not just for the sake of using his axe. For every tree felled, two should be planted."**

#### Welcome from Simone Haider - State Leader (Environment)

**"I have always been passionate about taking sustainable action to make the world a better place."**

Simone joined Scouts as a Cub Scout until being booted as a Rover Scout, with an active and broad youth experience in the Movement. Simone has been a Leader in the Movement for a decade, with a range of roles, including Region Rover Scout Chair, District Leader (Environment) as well as being a Scout and Venturer Scout Leader. At a national level, Simone has played an important role in the National Sustainability Team and the Earth Tribe program.

"We are fortunate enough to live in a world with abundant natural beauty, and to many of us in Australia, we have some of the best natural surrounds in the world. Through Scouting, I have been fortunate enough to experience many of these environments over the past 25 years of my journey in the Movement, and I know most of my Scouting Friends have as well. We here in Scouting live much of our life in the Natural World, with elements of our Youth Program reflecting just this, with Environment now being reflected throughout. From Challenge Areas to Special Interest Areas, and even in our Outdoor Adventure Skills 'I' statements, environment has always been important, and will continue to be so.

Our world however is changing for the worse. The past few years have seen all kinds of records destroyed, from the 2019 fires, right up to the floods that have been impacting large parts of our State. Outside the country, large parts of the world are experiencing record breaking heat, and what's worse, places like Antarctica are heating up and losing large portions of ice sheets. We in Scouting need to act, and act now. Echoing the Words of our Chief Commissioner in his June Chief Chat, Scouts NSW sees climate change as 'one of the biggest issues facing young people and we support action to mitigate the impacts'.

Action on this front has already started. Our team was strongly involved in the development and approval process of the Scouts Australia Sustainability Strategy, as well as the implementation and mapping of the Earth Tribe Program - which replaced the World Scout Environment Program. We extended our commitment to change through the United Nation's Global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with the Scouts for SDGs Program - including the new Scouts Australia SDG Challenge, which we recently launched in NSW at the Special Interest Area camp in August.

Our Youth have taken the lead in this, showing us their voices, and how they are passionate around this topic. Many youth members have participated actively in the School Strikes for Climate Change- with a former Venturer actively involved in the organising team.

It is time for us embody the Scout Method as Adults in Scouting and fully support our Youth as they lead us into a sustainable future."

Yours in Scouting,  
**Simone Haider**  
*State Leader – Environment*



#### Call out to all Fellowships re proposed get-together

Are you interested in joining a Scout Fellowship weekend get-together?

Stacy Kempton from Hawkesbury Black Horse Scout Fellowship describes her members as a very social bunch of mostly retired Leaders. They are canvassing interest in meeting up and learning what other Fellowships are doing. The venue could potentially be Cataract Activity Centre assisted by the Cataract Fellowship with its great facilities - and might include a campfire organised by one or more of the Gang Show Fellowships. This would be a casual event to complement the three State Scout Fellowship Council meetings held over the space of each year.

Stacy would welcome any feedback and Malcolm (SSFC chair) is happy to coordinate ideas and offers of support from individual Fellowships. If you're interested, in the first instance please contact [malcolm.wilson@nsw.scouts.com.au](mailto:malcolm.wilson@nsw.scouts.com.au) (ph: 0414 810 708).

#### Reflections on the Environment – by Malcolm Wilson (State Commissioner Fellowship, & Chair - State Scout Fellowship Council)

Robert Baden-Powell, perhaps surprisingly for a military man, was an early environmentalist. In his parting letter as Chief Scout he emphasised 'Nature Study' as a path to personal enjoyment and, way back in the days of the ten Scout Laws, Law 6 was 'A Scout is a Friend to Animals' – unless you needed to kill them for food!

Nature study, as last century progressed, morphed into conservation, and ecology joined botany, zoology and geology as a natural science in its own right. In Australian Scouting we adopted the World Conservation Badge, a joint venture between the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM) and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), for Cub Scouts upwards, and we introduced the Australian Scout Environment Charter. The *Fieldbook for Australian Scouting*, first published in 1994, dedicated a full chapter to the environment.

A seminal event, which I attended over a week in Brisbane, was APECS 85 – the first Asia-Pacific Environmental Conservation Seminar. The focus was on environmental education within Scouting and Guiding, and the opening address was given by Alby Gamble who was then International Commissioner for Australia and a member of the Asia-Pacific Regional Scout Committee. Alby linked Scouting, with its focus on the great outdoors and the natural environment, with the social responsibility we all have to protect nature for our own wellbeing. Australia's entwined rates of mammalian extinction and habitat loss are just two examples of failure in the broader philosophical argument that all species have a right to exist. Climate change, now front and centre, reminds those of us in Scouting how important it is for Scouts collectively to help build a better world.

Many years after APECS 85 I walked up Mount Fuji at dawn with a Japanese friend whom I first met at the conference. As we looked down at distant Tokyo and Yokohama coming to life we reflected on the importance of environmental education for today's Scouts, and it is still something I think about often. The Scouts Australia Program Handbook nails it so succinctly: "Our relationship with the environment is about more than just spending time within it – we are committed to environmental education and living sustainably." The handbook continues: "Environmental education is an important aspect of the Scout program, and key to developing global citizens. Through the nature and the outdoors element of the Scout Method, Scouts are provided with opportunities to experience and connect with the natural world – with benefits to both the individual and the environment."

In 2018 Scouts Australia updated its Environment Charter to more closely align with the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals that Meg Cummins and Simone Haider routinely remind us about. Environment is one of the six Special Interest Areas that permeate the youth program.

Internationally, the World Scout Environment Programme developed by WOSM subtly expands our concept of plant and animal conservation to environmental issues more broadly – we now tend to use the word 'environment' more often than 'conservation'. The *World Conservation Badge* became the *World Scout Environment Badge* and then in turn the *Earth Tribe Framework* in the *WOSM Better World Framework*. Who knows, in time our thinking within Scouts may also embrace the built environment as well as the natural.

This Spring 2022 issue of *Fellowship News* introduces us to the Ingleside Environment Centre in Sydney, anchored by Rick Shires with its own Scout Fellowship chaired by Cameron Lathwell. Glenrock Scout Centre just south of Newcastle has morphed the site of an old coal mine festooned with bitou bush into an award-winning facility where the environmental message and potential for further enhancement are obvious.

And north of Wollongong in Corral we have the Korrahill Environment Centre managed by Alex McCarthy where the South Coast and Tablelands Scout Fellowship is based. Ingleside and Korrahill routinely run courses for Scouting members of all ages to gain hands-on experience in understanding and improving their own natural ecosystems and participating in citizen science. At Granville Activity Centre, home to Scout Fellowship in NSW, we have planted trees, ornamental gardens and a veggie patch as something of a showcase. A local mum and teacher operates a Bush School in the grounds.

In closing, we should never underestimate the power of a letter sent by a youth member to a politician. Bear in mind that a short, handwritten note from a Joey Scout or Cub Scout (with a nice drawing of a flower) to a Minister for the Environment about some important or contentious aspect of their portfolio carries far greater weight than a request for information for a Scout or Venturer Scout assignment!

Yours in Scouting,  
**Malcolm Wilson**  
*State Commissioner Fellowship, & Chair - State Scout Fellowship Council*



#### Certificates of Registration

New Certificates of Registration are being posted to all Scout Fellowships that have had their rules approved by the State Scout Fellowship Council. There has been a push this year for Fellowships to update their rules as part of an emphasis by Scouts NSW to improve risk management within the Branch. To be approved, a Fellowship's rules must state clearly what the Fellowship does. For the youth and young adult sections of Scouts Australia this is clearly set out in their Program Handbook, but for our 26 NSW Scout Fellowships there is a lot of variation and the specific strengths of each need to be recorded separately.

Fellowships that have not yet had their rules approved must pull out all the stops to have a draft available for Executive approval at next February's State Scout Fellowship Council meeting at the latest.

#### Ingleside Environment Centre Scout Fellowship

The Ingleside Environment Centre Scout Fellowship (IECSF) provides Environmental Education opportunities for members of the Scout Movement, as well as other organisations and members of the community. Most activities are held at Ingleside Scout Camp. The Fellowship can assist obtaining several badges including Earth Tribe:

- Champions for Nature Challenge
- Scout Solar Challenge
- Tide Turners Plastic Challenge.

They also have a thriving program of Activity Days and events – details are [here](#).



#### Keep in touch

Thank you for your ongoing support of Fellowship - and please let us know what you'd like to read about in future newsletters by emailing [communications@nsw.scouts.com.au](mailto:communications@nsw.scouts.com.au).

Don't forget to stay in touch with news via our [dedicated Fellowship webpage](#).

#### Youth Safety in Scouting

Scouts NSW is committed to operating as a youth safe organisation and implementing youth safe policies and practices in accordance with the elements of a child safe institution outlined by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse report entitled Creating Child Safe Institutions.

#### Remember

All suspicions, concerns or allegations about criminal matters or child protection matters should be reported directly to the Chief Commissioner, the Deputy Chief Commissioner (Youth Safety, Compliance and Support), the CEO or the Child Protection Officer at the Scouts NSW Service Centre. To make a report use the [online youth protection form](#), call 02 9735 9000 or email [youthprotection@nsw.scouts.com.au](mailto:youthprotection@nsw.scouts.com.au).

#### Imminent Danger

If someone is in danger NOW, the matter should be reported directly to NSW Police on 000. Where a report is made to the Police, you must also subsequently notify Scouts NSW Service Centre.

To stop receiving these emails [click here](#).



<https://www.nsw.scouts.com.au/>

© Scouts NSW

