



August 12, 1996

1. The Friends of Katoomba Falls Creek Valley was formed at a public meeting on December 10, 1989. Eleven residents had got together three months earlier to talk about their concerns for the Valley. They letter-boxed all residents in the Valley to come to a meeting if they shared the same concerns. About 60 or 70 residents came to this meeting. This meeting of residents then decided to call a public meeting. The founding residents reckoned that the natural amenity of the valley was under extreme threat from development.
2. Just now about 50 people are members of the group.
3. The main work which has been done by the Friends, and which continues to be done, is to achieve the political goal of having the public lands in the Valley set aside by Zoning for only those uses compatible with conserving the natural bushland and with protecting the catchment of Katoomba Falls Creek Valley - this involves a lot of community politics. Also, the Friends have cleaned up parts of the valley and carried out bush regeneration in parts of the Valley. Also the Friends initiated and helped carry out an Environmental Study of the Valley. Recently, the Friends have opposed the proposed development of Katoomba Golf Course.
4. It's hard to say whether water quality has improved. Probably it's got a bit worse because of the run-off from streets and new developments. And the water flow has probably decreased.
5. The draft Management Plan puts forward plans for managing the Valley which we mostly agree with - or maybe the Management Plan sets out plans for managing the Valley which agree with our ideas, since we have argued long and forcefully for our viewpoint. However, there is nothing in the Management Plan which guarantees that the uses and management proposed are long-term. In other words, what is planned could be changed by Council administration or by Council itself very easily at any time. And the changes could be towards uses not compatible with the conservation of the Valley, since the focus of the Management Plan is on the Valley as a recreation resource, rather than as a catchment and environmentally sensitive lands.
6. The main threat comes from the valley not being valued as a catchment, not being valued as environmentally sensitive lands, not being managed as an ecological whole, and from not being set apart by protective zoning.

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7. I think the community is too complacent. Too many people think it's someone else's responsibility. Maybe some people think nothing can be done - things have gone too far already. Some people argue that (as a community or society) we can just keep pushing the limits of development.

8. We haven't done any work on the part of the Creek at the bottom of the Valley close to the Falls. But development on the steep slope on the eastern side of the Valley at the bottom of Neale St. has compromised that section of the Creek. I believe that section of the Creek is in danger of being turned into an enclosed concrete watercourse.

9. I believe we have to care for our part of the world, wherever that is. Katoomba Falls Creek Valley is my Valley - it's where I live. What happens in my backyard affects the Creek. The native plants I have grown in my place are part of the ecology of the Valley. I believe also the Australian bush, the plants, insects, birds, animals is very lovely

10. We don't yet know the outcome of the court case in the Supreme Court, sitting as a court of appeal. We had won the court case in which we argued that the rezoning of Katoomba Golf Course was invalid. The developer appealed against that judgment in the Supreme Court.

11. Yes, Katoomba Falls Creek is polluted. The water is not drinkable. However, the Creek is not so polluted that it doesn't support aquatic life, including amphibians. Reducing pollutants is an important goal. So also is the goal of maintaining stream flow.

Yes, I believe we have been effective. I believe that if we hadn't been around, doing what we've been doing for the last 7 years, then Katoomba Falls Creek Valley would be in a very sorry state.

Neil Stuart,
Chairperson.

(information leaflet attached)

KATOOMBA FALLS CREEK VALLEY

PROPOSAL BY RESIDENTS

Our proposal, which we place before this public meeting for endorsement, is that:

- a) the residents carry out a preliminary Environmental Study which shall include a detailed study of the Frank Walford Park section of the valley, including at least the topography, watercourses and hanging swamps, bird and animal life, plant life, an archeological survey of Aboriginal occupation, an archeological survey of former industrial uses;
- b) the residents seek funding from appropriate sources to carry out a full Environmental Study of the valley, completing the work carried out in the preliminary Study, the funding to be administered on behalf of the residents under the auspices of either CORE or the Upper Blue Mountains Conservation Society;
- c) both the preliminary Study and the final Study shall assess the impacts of the existing uses on the valley and shall assess the significance of the valley to the Blue Mountains community, with special reference to the residents of the valley and the people of Katoomba generally;
- d) the outcomes of the preliminary Study and of the final Study shall be reported to the residents of the valley who have formed themselves together to make this proposal;
- e) the public lands in the valley be given environmental protection zoning, especially the Frank Walford Park section, and the middle section known as Katoomba Falls Reserve, and be included in the Stage 1 Environmental Management Plan, as has been done with other environmentally sensitive lands;
- f) the preferred uses for the public lands in the valley be passive recreation uses which don't conflict with the environmental protection objective for the valley.

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- . agreed that this meeting of residents form itself as the Friends of Katoomba Falls Creek Valley.
- . agreed that the aims of the Friends of Katoomba Falls Creek Valley be:
 - to ensure that the natural environment of the Katoomba Falls Creek valley is protected from damaging development
 - to ensure that the public lands in the valley remain public lands in perpetuity and are managed in such a way that the natural environment of the valley is protected from damaging development
 - to ensure that the Katoomba Falls Creek, feeder creeks and associated hanging swamps and valley swamps be unpolluted
 - to ensure the public lands in the valley be given environmental protection zoning, especially the Frank Walford Park section, and the middle section known as Katoomba Falls Reserve, and be included in the Stage 1 Environmental Management Plan, as environmentally sensitive lands
 - to ensure the rehabilitation of scoured, eroded, and damaged areas, especially in the Frank Walford Park and middle sections of the valley, and especially the swamps, with special attention to to elimination of exotic weeds and plant pests and to revegetation.
- . agreed that the working group set up by the meeting of residents be authorised by this meeting, formed as Friends of Katoomba Falls Creek Valley, to take necessary action to implement the proposal adopted by this meeting and other decisions of the meeting and to further the aims of the Friends of Katoomba Falls Creek Valley.
- . agreed that the working group have the power to involve other residents and resource persons as needed.
- . agreed that the Friends of Katoomba Falls Creek Valley meet again on January 21, 1990, to receive progress reports and make further decisions.

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- . That this meeting of residents form itself as

Katoomba Falls Creek Valley Association

← Friends of Katoomba Falls Creek ~~Valley~~

Resident Action Group for Katoomba Falls Creek Valley

- . That the aims of the group be:
 - to ensure that the natural environment of the Katoomba Falls Creek Valley is protected from damaging development;
 - to ensure that the public lands in the valley remain public lands in perpetuity and are managed in such a way that the natural environment of the valley is protected from damaging development;
 - to ensure that the Katoomba Falls Creek, feeder creeks and associated hanging swamps and valley swamps remain unpolluted;
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- . That the Working Group set up by the meeting of residents be authorised by this meeting, formed as *Resident Act. Group*, to take necessary action to implement the proposal adopted by this meeting and to further the aims of the
- . That the working group have the power to involve other residents and resource persons as needed
- . That the meet again on to receive progress reports and make further decisions.

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