



The Golden Gumtree Postal Run



"Bringing the Park to the People and the People to the Park"

(A 2009 initiative of the *Earth Journeys* project, The Bush Room is a long-term, enviro-cultural activity)

The Postal Run is actually a walk. Wyn Jones, as bush postie and bush-walker friends, will begin the journey in Penrith and spend the month of September walking to Lithgow. The Run will follow well-known and lesser-known tracks in the Blue Mountains National Park, with postal visits to schools along the way, hence "The Golden Gum Tree Postal Run".

Activities

1) Refer to the provided calendar as to the **date** and **time** the bush postie will **visit** your school.

2) Set up your Bush Room (refer to the provided Bush Room unit)

3) Diary recordings

Students record their observations from their Bush Room by means of drawings, paintings, photographs and creative writing.

4) Weather station recordings

A database will be set up at www.bmwhi.org.au to record findings. A log-in link will be sent.

5) "Sense of place" postcards

Students make postcards using images from their diaries. They are encouraged to include a message about the importance of looking after the natural environment / National Park.

For the stamp, students may draw their school's iconic gum tree (If a Bush Room is not set up for this year, students can refer to other environmental experiences such as Schools' Tree Day planting.)

6) Campfire and postal exchange

Once the bush postie and friends arrive, a **small ceremonial campfire** will provide a informal place to gather and talk about the importance of protecting our natural places. The postcards will be exchanged here before proceeding to the next school on the run.

Students may escort the postie and friends to the school gate if permitted.

Look after the postcards, perhaps display them in your library. They will be collected in late October (you will be notified) and exhibited during November and December (tba). **Preparation**) Teachers will need to designate a place outdoors for the campfire.

A wet weather (downpour) back-up plan should be made for indoors. If it is misty, the campfire can continue outdoors (if need be, under a tarpaulin set up by the support team).

ii) On your school's day, the support team will arrive prior to the walkers and help set up the campfire space.

The support coordinator, Bronwen Maxwell, shall check in the day before, to confirm arrangements.

7) Schools external notice board

Where possible, participating schools could place the following message on their notice board: (the biodiversity line is an optional extra if it fits)

Value: caring for / celebrating the Blue Mountains National Park's gazetted 50th birthday and recognising National Biodiversity Month.

8) Article for newsletter (if needed)

The Blue Mountains National Park turns 50 this year (gazetted 25th November 1959). In recognition, an educational and celebratory activity, within the *Earth Journeys* program, has been created, "The Golden Gum Tree Postal Run – Bringing the Park to the People and the People to the Park".

With the participation of the Blue Mountains Conservation Society, the Blue Mountains National Parks Service (NSW DECC), the Blue Mountains City Council and the Blue Mountains World Heritage Institute, the event honours the 100 Eucalypt species that occur in the World Heritage Area, and which distinguish the park worldwide. It also honours the Aboriginal people who, for thousands of years have walked and cared for this area.

In keeping with the *Earth Journeys* aims of using art to engender in children a positive relationship with the natural and cultural values of the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area, the Postal Run activity will include the creation of "sense of place" postcards.

During term 3, students and teachers (primary and secondary, public and private) with the support of work-unit resources, will be invited to set up a Bush Room where they will observe the natural world and monitor weather patterns. They will be encouraged to walk in National Park areas with Discovery Rangers and engage with Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal cultural heritage practitioners.

Their stories, experiences and bush studies will be recorded through data collection, creative writing and drawings in diaries and uploaded onto the internet. These recordings will, in turn, inspire artistic interpretations for the "sense of place" postcards. The bush postie, Wyn Jones and party, will conduct a postal run, walking from Penrith to Lithgow during September. Around a campfire at each school, the postcards will be exchanged and continue along the Postal Run.

We trust these notes will assist in our sharing a fun and educational celebration, the "Golden Gum Tree Postal Run".

For further information please contact:

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