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President:
5122 3137

Friends of Morwell National Park Inc.

Newsletter – October 2009

Website: <http://morwellnp.pangaean.net>
A0016319X

Hello everyone and welcome to this month's newsletter. Rainfall in the area has been good with 120mm in the water gauge since the last newsletter. Most of this rain has occurred in the last few days and has resulted around the creeks in the Park filling and running much higher than usual. This month's 'Where in the Park is this?' photo has been taken of one of the creeks and shows its increased water volume.

This is the second newsletter from me and still I am unable to attend an activity to report upon it. Some could be starting to form the opinion that since I have had to look after the newsletter I only wish to avoid any reporting on the activities. So Beryl and Rob have been good to me and have provided some details from the activity.

The minutes of the Friends of Morwell National Park - Annual General Meeting and Friends of Morwell National Park - Committee Meeting are included later in this newsletter.

September Activity report

12 people turned up to get into the creek including Rob. This will be last one with us, as has been seconded within Parks Victoria for 9 months. Advertising for a new Ranger is being done. The hope is that a new Ranger can be provided to help us out with our activities.

The dirty dozen battled through Billy's creek again on the search for Tutsan. A lot of Tutsan was located indicating that more work will need to be undertaken in **'the war on Tutsan'**. Some time during the November and December activities may need to be dedicated to continuing the war. The weather in these months should be warmer and when the weather is warmer we always seem to go for a dip in the creek.

Ken took a spill in the creek along with his camera. He went home early at lunchtime, as he was soaked. He would be annoyed about his camera.

Friends of Morwell National Park Inc: PO Box 19, Churchill, 3842, <http://morwellnp.pangaean.net>.

President: Ken Harris, 51223137

Vice-President: Peter McDonald

Secretary: Beryl Nelson

Treasurer: Wendy Steenbergen

Publicity: Denis Sultana

Public Officer: Jane Sultana

Newsletter Editor: Darren Hodgson, 90 Tebb Terrace Junction Junction 3840, 51222108, dhodgson@wideband.net.au

Members: Mary Austin, Mike & Cathy Beamish, Eulalie Brewster, Reg Felmingham, Tom Lawless, Peter & Wendy McDonald, John Pulis, Joan Sikkema, David Stickney, Australian Plant Society (Latrobe Valley).

October Activity

1.30pm Sunday 18th October

We will meet at the Kerry Road entrance to complete the Koala count. Bring family and friends to enjoy a pleasant walk in the park and discover many of the animals to be found in the park. This is great activity to bring the kids to since they are very good at locating the hiding Koalas. You will need clothing and footwear suitable for the terrain and weather conditions on the day.

Where in the park is this?

Your task is to identify where in the park this photo has been taken. The park has many wonderful views to see and here is an opportunity to share your prize pictures with others.

Where in the park has this photo been taken? To take part in the discussion of possible answers you can come along to this month's activity where we hope to count many koalas. For those who are really keen, you can even go on a search for the spot the photograph was taken from.

So if you have a photo of a special corner or an unusual event that has occurred in the park, please send in your photos. They could be of one of the wonderful vistas or a rarely seen part of the park.

Please send them to Darren via email at dhodgson@wideband.net.au or via mail to 90 Tebb Terrace, Jeeralang Junction 3840.



Friends of Morwell National Park

Annual general meeting held 2nd August 2009

Annual general meeting declared open 1.45pm.

Attendance: - Beryl Nelson, Wendy Steenbergen, Jane & Dennis Sultana, Darren Hodgson, Ken Harris, Peter McDonald, Laura Webber.

Apologies: - Kathy & Mike Beamish, Rob Howell, Tom Lawless, Reg Felmingham

Previous AGM Minutes held on 2nd August were read and accepted as a true account - by general acceptance.

The President's Report was read and accepted - moved Dennis Sultana seconded by Darren Hodgson. (Given below)

The Ranger's Report was read and accepted - moved Peter McDonald seconded by Wendy Steenbergen. (Given below)

Treasurer's Report was read and accepted - moved Wendy Steenbergen seconded by Darren Hodgson.

Motion was moved by Wendy Steenbergen that Incorporation fees be paid (\$40.90), seconded by Darren Hodgson.

Election of office bearers: -

President -	Ken Harris	(Nominated - Wendy, Seconded – Darren)
Vice President -	Peter McDonald	(Nominated - Jane, Seconded – Wendy)
Secretary -	Beryl Nelson	(Nominated - Wendy, Seconded – Jane)
Treasurer -	Wendy Steenbergen	(Nominated - Dennis, Seconded – Beryl)
Newsletter -	Darren Hodgson	(Nominated - Peter, Seconded – Laura)
Publicity -	Dennis Sultana	(Nominated - Jane, Seconded – Dennis)

Jane Sultana will continue to act as our Public Officer.

General Business: -

It was decided that membership fees, will remain the same - \$10.00 per person or \$15.00 per family or group. (Moved by Wendy Steenbergen seconded by Beryl Nelson) passed unanimously.

Annual General Meeting declared closed at 2.25pm

**Friends of Morwell National Park
President's Report for 2008 to 2009**

The time has come round for me to report again on a busy year of work by the Friends of Morwell National Park.

We started quietly with a tree planting reduced to just 3 trees thanks to my failure to look after a batch of Muttonwood seedlings. We filled our time searching for and removing old tree guards. We also saw up to 30 feral sheep ranging through the Park.

I have to report that sadly we have lost two of our members during the year Les Reinkowsky who joined us recently and had been a very hard worker on our working bees, passed away in July. His mother Dorothy Reinkowsky who had been an active member of the Friends for many years, passed away in December, just after we had awarded her a life membership of the Friends.

Our quiet start to the year continued in August, when a walk in the park was reduced to just one friend. Cathy went ahead with the walk on her own on Stringybark Ridge, finding and photographing several orchids and fungi.

We learned during August of the approval for a grant of \$8450 to assist us in the continuing removal of weeds, particularly Tutsan, from the park and in September we recommenced our war on Tutsan helped this time by Craig Campbell while Rob was away. As well as destroying tutsan and other weeds, we also found two special plants. Forest Bitter-cress – *Rorippa dictyosperma* which was found by the weir has not been seen in the park since 1990. The Strap Water-fern – *Blechnum patersonii*, found by Craig on the creek bank upstream from the weir was on the early park list, but I had no definite record of it since the Friends started in 1986.

The annual Koala count in October was well attended by both people and koalas. We had 20 koala watchers, who managed to locate 11 (well 10½, one was a baby) koalas. Many orchids were also observed by those tired of looking up at the trees.

November was the annual Butterfly Orchid survey which I carried out aided by Darren while the rest went to Billys Creek to remove a large willow and other weeds (including Tutsan). The orchids were flowering well, but the number of plants continues to decline as our dry years continue.

Early December Parks Victoria again provided us and other Friends Groups with a barbecue in Traralgon to celebrate another year's work in various parks in the region.

Our December outing was to be a barbecue at Kerry road, but first we went to explore the nestboxes set up by Billys creek some 10 years earlier. Only 4 were found and two were not in use, but one and possibly both the others were occupied, not by birds, but families of Agile Antechinus - *Antechinus agilis*. We were delighted to find these little marsupials living and probably breeding in the park. The barbecue was a big success and we had as our guest Eulalie Brewster (with her daughters Jean and Alison). We presented Eulalie with a certificate celebrating her award of life membership of the Friends. Eulalie has been a member since we started and was actively involved in the original declaration of Morwell National Park. We had hoped to present a similar certificate to Dorothy Reinkowsky, but she wasn't able to come and we learned later that she was in hospital and sadly she passed away soon after. We did make a visit to her in hospital to present her certificate, but she was too ill to be aware of our visit.

The war on tutsan was continued in January and again in April.

In February the devastating bush fires led to the cancellation of our working bee. We were very lucky that no members were directly affected by the fires and the fire which started on the edge of Churchill just missed the park, coming within about 1 km up near the Reidy's Road entrance.

We were pleased to learn that the pines in the park on the edge of jumbuk Road have finally been removed thanks to Pentarch Forest Products Pty Ltd, and our bank balance has been inflated by \$3708.95 from the sale of the timber removed from the park, less the costs of cutting and cartage. We can now use these funds for assisting in the revegetation of the cleared area.

In March we did some track work, clearing the boundary track on Silvertop Hill and part of the Muttonwood Creek Track.

I was nominated by the Latrobe Valley Field Naturalists Club for one of the Parks Victoria Kookaburra Awards for the work I have done in Morwell National Park over the years. Mike, Cathy and Wendy accompanied me and two of my Field Naturalist friends to the awards, held on Mt. Dandenong on May 16th. I was very honoured to receive the 2009 Kookaburra Individual Environmental Award. I feel that this award brings credit on the Friends of Morwell National Park and wish to thank all who have helped in all we have achieved since we started in 1986.

Our May outing took us up to the pine clearance alongside Jumbuk Road. It was great to see the area clear of pines and we spent a constructive time removing a few smaller pines and other weeds. We also found the first Bat's Wing Fern – *Histiopteris incisa* seen in the park for a number of years. It will be good to see this area revegetated soon with native trees and shrubs replacing the pine plantation.

During June a contractor did a great job in removing all the semi-feral sheep that had been roaming the park. None have been sighted since so hopefully he got them all.

Also around June, Greenfleet revegetated the steep hillside of Blue Gum Hill with 7000 trees, mostly Blue Gums, but including some Blackwoods.

Our June activity saw us get back to tree planting. We planted 250 trees along Billys Creek, replanting an unsuccessful area at the foot of the Zigzag Track. Replacing some of the Manna Gums which came down in the storm around the Weir and filling in an area at the side of the Potato Flat. Mike entertained us at lunch by climbing a near vertical cliff to remove a willow on the other side of the weir.

During June the Latrobe Valley Field Naturalists Club paid two visits to the park. Their botany group explored Fosters gully for fungi and found several species not previously recorded in the park. Their birding group explored Billys Creek looking for birds and were able to confirm that the Red-browed Treecreeper can be found in the park.

July saw us tree-planting again, this time up near the Reidy's Road entrance. 100 Blue Gums and 25 Blackwoods were planted in the morning. We then moved down to the weir for lunch, some of us walking down via Blue Gum Hill, and after lunch we finished our tree planting by adding 25 Silver Wattles to the next flat beyond the weir.

Also in July, I guided a group from the Sale Field Naturalists around Fosters Gully.

Finally I wish to again thank Rob Howell and other Parks staff for their help and support throughout the year and a big thank you to all of you who have helped us make further progress in developing the park,

Ken Harris
24th July 2009

Ranger's Report – Morwell National Park 2008/09

22 July 2009

What a year it was, with the fires in January and February impacting many of our Parks and totally burning some Reserves such as Traralgon Sth Flora & Fauna Reserve and Jeeralang Education Area. Luckily, Morwell NP was spared this time with the fire being stopped only one kilometre to the east of the Billys Creek section. Needless to say, the workload for Parks Staff has been enormous since then and many projects were put on the backburner. The ongoing rainfall deficit, followed by the last six months being the driest half year period ever recorded, indicate that the coming summer will probably produce another challenging fire season with likelihood of more horrific fire events to come.

On a lighter note, direct management of Morwell NP has been returned to me and I am still the contact Ranger for the Friends Group. As such I am glad to report a number of significant achievements in the Park over the last 12 months.

- The long awaited removal of the Pine Plantation on Jumbuk Road: We still need to work with HVP to clean up some trees and logs on their land at the southern end then finalise the plans for revegetation of the site and establishment of a permanent green firebreak parallel to the road.
- The removal of forty vagrant sheep from the Billys Creek area: The new neighbours to the east of the Park on Reidys Rd are currently improving their fences to ensure the problem doesn't re-occur. If anyone sights sheep in the Park, please let me know as soon as possible.
- Greenfleet have planted 7,000 trees (Blue Gum and Blackwood) on the steep hill above the weir and intend to do more nearby areas in the next few years. Instead of tree guards they have used a product called Sen Tree to deter browsing animals. This method has been very effective at Mt Worth so, provided we get sufficient rain this spring, we should soon see a good tree cover on that bald hillside.
- The sealing of the carpark and installation of three new picnic tables at Kerry Rd has improved the appearance of the place and we are still working on the traffic barriers and information shelter to the same end.
- Congratulations to Ken Harris on being awarded the prestigious Kookaburra Award for his contributions to the environment late last year and thanks to him for organising innovative new activities such as the moth surveying exercise in the Park in April.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the committee for their efforts through the past year and wish the incoming committee members all the best for the 2009/10 year to come. Special thanks to all the Friends who come along to the activities and work so hard to contribute to the development and protection of the Park. Your efforts are appreciated very much and the contribution you make to the Park's management is highly valued.

Rob Howell
Ranger
Morwell NP

Friends of Morwell National Park

Committee meeting held 2nd August 2009

Committee meeting declared open 2.30pm.

Attendance: - Beryl Nelson, Wendy Steenbergen, Jane & Dennis Sultana, Darren Hodgson, Ken Harris, Peter McDonald, Laura Webber.

Apologies: - Kathy & Mike Beamish, Rob Howell, Tom Lawless, Reg Felmingham

Minutes of the previous meeting held on 2nd August 2008 were read and accepted as a true account.

Moved by Peter McDonald

Seconded by Denis Sultana

Business arising from previous meeting: -

Participation in the Churchill Festival was discussed and it was decided to take part, in the next one in 2010.

Inward correspondence: -

- Thank you card from the Reinkowsky family
- Thank you card from Eulalie Brewster for Honorary Membership.
- Letter from Parks Victoria dated 28th August 2008, regarding our successful application for weed control in Billy's Creek.
- Friends Net Numbers 64 - August, Number 65 - November 2008, Number 66 February and Number 67 - May 2009.
- Friends of Coolart Newsletters.
- Friends of Tyers Park General Meeting held 25th Feb 2009.
- Nomination information for Regional Achievement & Community Awards.
- Parks Victoria Volunteering Bulletin 10th January 2009.
- Under Control – July 2008 from Department of Primary Industries.
- Invitation from Latrobe City Business Tourism Association celebration launch of network with likeminded business and tourism operators.

Outward correspondence: -

- Letters to Eulalie Brewster & Dorothy Reinkowsky – regarding their Honorary Membership to FMNP.
- Letters to Eulalie Brewster & Dorothy Reinkowsky - inviting both to our Christmas function at Kerry Road on 21st December 2008.
- Thank you letter to Pent arch Forest Products.
- Sympathy card to the Reinkowsky family.

General Business: -

The following members were unanimously voted into the group: -

David Stickney Moved by Ken Harris and seconded by Jane Sultana.

Laura Webber Moved by Jane Sultana and seconded by Wendy Steenbergen.

Discussion occurred in relation to 2010 calendar of activities.

Meeting declared closed at 3.30pm