

PO Box 19
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Friends of Morwell National Park Inc.

Newsletter – September 2014

Website: <http://morwellnp.pangaeon.net>
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Hello everyone and welcome to this month's newsletter. This month we have a bit for you. Included is the report from the last activity, minutes from the recent Annual General Meeting (including 2013/14 President's Report and Ranger's Report) and Committee Meeting. The President's Report makes very interesting reading and it makes you reflect that we have done a bit over the last year.

Ken reported that the lichen brochure is ready for printing, with the cost of printing covered. A cheque for our part of the costs will need to be made and given to the LV Field Naturalists. Craig was been asked to follow up getting a firm quote for the task of placing a bridge across Billys Creek near the Baniff Road creek crossing (in the range of \$5,000-\$7,500) and organize the contractor to do the require work. The plan is to have timber footings built which will hold the old bridge which was recently replaced. This friends' group will pay for the construction job.

John's Jottings

John has continued with his historical collecting and this month his snippet is on the formation of the Park, which was lifted from an article: THE MORWELL NATIONAL PARK by Dr. L.H. Smith, M.Sc., D.Ph. (Oxon), F.R.A.C.I. Director of the National Parks Authority of Victoria.



"The circumstances surrounding the creation of Victoria's twentieth national park are as interesting as they are unusual. In fact, at the moment of writing, the area in question has not been declared, although on 29th. November 1966, H.E. the Governor of Victoria signed a Bill which had recently been passed by both Houses of Parliament, providing that the land should become the Morwell National Park after certain preliminary action had been taken."

"Early in July, 1964, the Morwell Shire Council brought to the attention of the Authority an area of land owned by Messrs. Quigley Bros., and suggested that it be acquired to ensure that it would be preserved for posterity as a national park. The adjoining land in the rapidly developing district of Churchill was being subdivided, but one of the owners, Mr. Ray Quigley, no doubt because of boyhood memories, sought to have this particular tract of land preserved. This was our second experience of a landowner striving to resist the pressure of development in order to preserve a favourite beauty spot; the other case was concerned with the Tarra Valley National Park, the Ranger of which, as the owner of an adjoining block of land, was anxious that her land should become part of the park. Eventually, through the generosity of the Bird Observers Club, Mrs Healy's wish was fulfilled."

To be continued next month

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

President: Ken Harris

Vice-President: Matt Campbell

Secretary: Beryl Nelson

Treasurer: John Barker

Publicity: Brenda Chetham

Public Officer: Beryl Nelson

Newsletter Editor: Darren Hodgson, hodgson.darren.d@edumail.vic.gov.au

Other members: Mary Austin, Margaret Barker, Mike and Cathy Beamish, Eulalie Brewster, Kerry Campbell, Wendy McDonald, Joan Sikkema, Neil Slater, Wendy Steenbergen, Australian Plant Society (Latrobe Valley).

August Activity Report

At this activity we had John, Matt, Tamara, Wendy, Beryl, Ken, Cathy, Mike, Darren and ranger Craig. The group met in the car park and discussed the month past. Over the last month we were told about the program Bushcare's Major Day Out planned for the week around 7th September (in Landcare Week). Bushcare's Major Day Out is a national day designed to encourage us all to take part in the restoration and maintenance of our remaining bushland. Bushcare's Major Day Out is a day specifically designed to give of us the opportunity to find out what is being done and what can be done in our own neighbourhood. It's a fun day where anyone, young and old can work alongside and learn from experts and experienced volunteers.

In the future we planned to complete a winter nesting box survey and this activity provided us a great opportunity to complete a nesting box survey this year. The community could be quite interested in the animals that make these boxes their homes. So we will use the pole mounted camera to show the community the cute animals in the boxes.

Extra Activity

Bushcare Major Day Out

When: Saturday 6th September starting at 10am

Where: Junction Road car park

What: Nesting box survey

Over the last month the Yinnar, Yinnar South Landcare group has contacted us to tell us about the work they are doing in propagation and tree planting. They are working with Yinnar South Primary School who is running a greenhouse for growing plants for revegetation projects. Their most recent project was upon Billys Creek's banks opposite the Junction Road car park. Latrobe City did the willow removal and it is hoped that they will be able to go downstream as far as Monash Way. The group has a Keep Australia Beautiful project, which they hope to add to with a re-veg project behind the road reserve. (They're not allowed to plant on the Road reserve.) The following pictures are from along Billys Creek downstream from the Junction Road car park.



In the activity the group drove in, in three vehicles along Billys Weir track. Along the track we encountered multiple trees down across the track. The first obstacle was a wattle tree which had taken out a gum on the way down. These trees blocked the track and stopped vehicle access. Craig used his chainsaw to cut up the trees which were moved away by the others. A few hundred meters down the track another large silver

wattle had come down across the track and this had taken a blackwood down with it. The large mass of branches cut the track. Craig started on the mass while Matt and Darren went to collect the Friends' chainsaw. With both chainsaws running it took the whole group a while to clear this mass.



After clearing the obstruction the group travelled along the rest of the Billys Weir track to check for other trees down. There were no obstructions as bad as the first two trees down across the track. A few smaller obstructions were removed and then the group returned to the car park and moved to Kerry Road for lunch.

The trees were down from a large storm with strong winds, a few weeks earlier. Since there were a number of trees down across the walking tracks, it was decided not to complete the planned fence removal and spend the rest of the day clearing the tracks. We will return to the fence removal next month.

After lunch the group completed the Foster Gully circuit where there a number of trees across the track. A number of trees had fallen and become hooked up in other trees making a danger to walkers if they fell. Matt and Tamara worked from Landon's Landing to the end of track clearing a number of fallen trees. The rest of the group cleared the start of the track, where there were a number of trees were down.

The last of the current scheduled Green Walks occurred on Sunday 24th August. From the friends group there was Matt, Beryl, John and Tamara along with five walkers. The day was a bit damp but the rain stopped after a while. Beryl reports that the group were greeted to songs from many lyrebirds.

Peter also mentioned a range of activities happening in October in Uralla Nature Reserve. The information about these activities is included on the next page.

SPRING INTO NATURE
WEST GIPPSLAND



Wildflowers, wildlife and wandering at Uralla Nature Reserve

Trust for Nature's Uralla Nature Reserve provides an experience of the varied forest habitats that once covered the Strzelecki Range foothills. Purchased with assistance from the RE Ross Trust, the Reserve is managed by Baw Baw Shire Council and Friends of Uralla Nature Reserve and supports endangered Shrubby Foothill Forest, Damp Forest, Strzelecki Warm Temperate Rainforest and a diverse range of flora and fauna.



Activities include:

- **10am:** Fauna survey display and discussion with wildlife ecologist Ann Williamson.
- **11am and 1:30pm:** Guided nature walks and bird watching with naturalists and wildlife artist, Nicolas Day.
- **Dusk until late:** Spotlighting for nocturnal fauna.

Come for part or all of the day and evening. Please let us know of your intentions when you RSVP.

Saturday, 11 October

9:30am until late

Where: 155 Giles Road, Trafalgar.

Distance from Melbourne: Approx. 1.5hrs (130km). Map: 97 D5

RSVP: By Wednesday, 8 October to John Hick, johnh@tfn.org.au or phone (03) 9754 7851 or 0437 589 317

Bring picnic meals, snacks, sturdy shoes and suitable clothing.

Guided walks will vary in length and difficulty.



September Activity 1
Saturday 6th September

The group will meet at 10.00am in the Junction Road car park. This activity is part of the Bush Care Major Day Out. This is a community event, advertised through the Bushcare Major Day Out website. We will complete a survey of the nesting boxes and observe how much use the boxes get during winter. You will need to bring your lunch along with clothing and footwear suitable for the weather conditions on the day.

September Activity 2
Sunday 21st September

The group will meet at 10.00am in the Junction Road car park. This month we continue to work upon removal of the fence adjacent to the Blue Gum Hill spur track. We will need the star picket remover, gloves and wire cutters. You will need to bring your lunch along with clothing and footwear suitable for the weather conditions on the day.

Friends of Morwell National Park

Annual General Meeting Sunday 3rd August 2014

Annual General Meeting declared open at 1.30pm

Attendance : - Beryl Nelson, Wendy Steenbergen, Darren Hodgson, Ken Harris, John & Margaret Barker, Kathy & Mike Beamish, Peter McDonald, Matt Campbell and Brenda Cheetham

Apologies: - Craig Campbell (Ranger) & Neil Slater

Previous AGM minutes held on 28th July 2013 were read and accepted as a true account.

Moved by Mike Beamish, **Seconded** by Ken Harris

The President's Report was read and accepted (**Moved** by Peter McDonald, **Seconded** by Beryl Nelson)

Ranger's Report was read & accepted (**Moved** by Beryl Nelson, **Seconded** by Mike Beamish)

Treasurer's Report was read and accepted (**Moved** by Cathy Beamish, **Seconded** by John Barker)

The Treasurer reported that we have 19 financial members for 2013-2014.
Term Deposit was re-invested & expires 8th October 2014.

Motion was **Moved** by John Barker that Incorporation fees (\$53.00) be paid for this financial year,
Seconded by Beryl Nelson.

Election of Office Bearers:-

President – Ken Harris (Moved – Mike Beamish, **Seconded** – Peter McDonald).

Vice President – Matt Campbell (Moved – Ken Harris, **Seconded** – Cathy Beamish).

Secretary/Public Officer - Beryl Nelson (Moved – Wendy Steenbergen, **Seconded** - Darren Hodgson).

Treasurer - John Barker (Moved - Cathy Beamish, **Seconded** – Matt Campbell).

Newsletter - Darren Hodgson (Moved – Cathy Beamish, **Seconded** - Brenda Cheetham).

Publicity – Brenda Cheetham (Moved – Wendy Steenbergen, **Seconded** – Darren Hodgson).

General Business: -

It was decided that membership fees will remain the same - **\$10.00 per person, \$15.00 per family or group**
(Moved by John Barker, **Seconded** by Ken Harris - passed unanimously).

Our constitution will have to be looked at, so that the Friends MNP group becomes separate from the Model Rules introduced a couple of years ago.

Friends of Morwell National Park

President's Annual Report

July 31, 2014

Where does the time go? Perhaps the following synopsis of our year in the Park will prompt our recall:

August- Our AGM once again resulted in no change to the committee. Our activity a fortnight later saw six intrepids, not including the lazy boss holidaying in Queensland, climb up the Lodge Track and down the Clematis Track to clear a few obstacles off the tracks.

September- No luck with a grant to replant Blue Gum Hill. Facilities at Kerry Road were graffiti'd. A Flickr account was set up to allow sharing of photos and images featuring the Park. The crew, still lacking the slackers back from Queensland but otherwise committed, tidied up lower parts of the Coprosma Track, pulled out some weeds along the Grand Strzelecki Track and removed some tree guards at the base of the Zig Zag Track.

October- Most of the graffiti was able to be removed. The early starters walked Stringybark Hill looking for orchids before the Koala Count located 11 Koalas on 3 tracks, with 21 people attending.

November- A nestbox inspection camera was purchased. The Group commenced removal of an old fenceline from Billys Creek up the side of Blue Gum Hill. Several members attended the Parks Victoria Friends BBQ in Traralgon. The Butterfly Orchid survey noted a similar number of plants, but less flowers than last year.

December- Two motion detection cameras were purchased. The nestbox inspection camera was found to be faulty and was replaced by the manufacturer. The footbridge at Carpark Flat was replaced by contractors, due to flood damage over the previous winter. Nest box surveys were carried out along Billys Creek for 38 boxes. At least 35 Sugar Gliders and 2 Agile Antechinus were counted. The Xmas BBQ at Kerry Road was well-attended and thoroughly enjoyable.

January- The crew finished off the nest box survey and did some repairs to damaged boxes. 12 more Sugar Gliders and 2 more Antechinus were added to the list. Two eggs were also found in one box.

February- A series of Heart Foundation Green Walks, in conjunction with Latrobe City, commenced in the Park, with several members volunteering to act as guides. Tupong (Freshwater Flathead) were recorded in Billys Creek for the first time. Creek crossings on the Grand Strzelecki Track were improved. The Group cleared some fallen trees from Billys Creek Track and began weed removal along the lower stretches of Billys Creek.

March- A nice article on Morwell NP was published in Park Watch magazine. The Group cleared more trees from tracks around Stringybark Ridge and Muttonwood Creek, pulled out more weeds along Billys Creek and commenced surveys of bat boxes prior to modifications designed to increase their usage.

April- More weeding along Billys Creek and more bat box investigations.

May- Plans are afoot for more nestboxes, via Men's Shed and Conservation Volunteers Australia, and for a brochure on lichens, in conjunction with SENA and LV Field Naturalists. More weeding was done along Billys Creek and some track maintenance undertaken on the Blue Gum Hill loop.

June- An extra set of keys has been provided by Parks, to enable the Group to access equipment when a Ranger or Ken is not present. Billys Creek has now been weeded from Junction Road to the third footbridge.

July- A good turnout on a dreary day for a run to the top of Blue Gum Hill to commence the removal of some barbed wire fencing. A letter of objection was sent to Latrobe City Council against a proposal to remove significant vegetation along Junction Road.

Thank you to all members and visitors, each of you has contributed in your own way to the success of our Group and the betterment of Morwell NP. The committee members: Ken as VP, Beryl as Secretary, John as Treasurer, Peter as Publicity Officer and Darren as Newsletter Editor; thanks for all the time and energy you put into your roles, as well as the extras that you contribute. To the active members, thanks for fronting up to activities each month and volunteering your time to the cause. And to the not-so-active members, thanks for your continuing support and interest in the wellbeing of the Group and the Park, and remember that you are always welcome to become more active any time circumstances permit. Last, but not least, thank you to the Parks Victoria staff, Andy, Craig, Rob, Mark and Shane for your efforts and conscientiousness.

Mike Beamish

President, Friends of Morwell National Park Inc. 2013/2014.

Friends of Morwell National Park AGM 2014

Rangers report

Another good year for the Park with plenty of visitors coming and some more improvements to facilities. Parks Victoria staff spent time clearing fallen trees off tracks and trimming and brush-cutting Fosters Gully Track. The Project Fire Fighters (Summer crew) were again able to be used to do mowing and other track maintenance work although a very busy fire season reduced their availability.

Items of significance:-

- The steps on the west side of the bridge at the start of the Stringybark Ridge Track were replaced.
- The damaged end of the culvert at the start of Billy's Creek Track was replaced.
- Cattle have been accessing the Park in two places and the owners contacted and steps taken to stop this occurring.
- The shed has had a major clean out following a work place safety inspection and a couple of minor adjustments made.
- A significant graffiti attack in the Kerry Rd picnic area was dealt with by cleaning and repainting.
- The fencing around the Kerry Rd picnic area was damaged by a falling limb and a section of the fence was required to be rebuilt.
- Contractors sprayed ivy and other weeds along the Billy's Creek banks and track.
- Six cubic meters of crushed rock has been spread on the Fosters Gully Track in holes and muddy patches particularly at the one significant muddy section.

My sincere thanks to the members of the Friends group who put so much time and effort in to assisting Parks Victoria with management and maintenance of the Park. We would not be able to keep the Park to as high a standard as it is without you. Checking our records I see that the Friends have contributed 450 hours (including the Koala count) of voluntary labour to the management of Morwell National Park which is a great effort.

Calendar of Activities:-

Activities are scheduled for the third Sunday of each month, with extra days scheduled as required.

Date:	Activity:	Venue and Time:
January 18	Nesting box survey	Junction Rd, 10.00am
February 15	Weed Removal	Junction Rd, 10.00am
March 15	Weed Removal	Junction Rd, 10.00am
April 19	BBQ & Spot light walk/Moth survey	Kerry Road, 6.00pm
May 17	Weed Removal	Junction Rd, 10.00am
June 21	Track Maintenance	Kerry Road, 10.00am
July 19	Nesting box survey	Junction Rd, 10.00am
August 2	AGM	To be advised, 1.30pm
August 16	Track Maintenance	Junction Rd, 10.00am
September 20	Track Maintenance	Kerry Road, 10.00am
October 18	Orchid Walk	Kerry Road, 10.00am
	Koala Count	& Kerry Road, 1.30pm
November 15	Orchid Survey/Odd jobs	Junction Rd, 10.00am
December 20	Nesting box survey/ Christmas Function	Junction Rd, 10.00am & Kerry Road 1.00pm

Friends of Morwell National Park

General Meeting held Sunday 3rd August 2014

General Meeting declared open 2.05pm.

Attendance: - Kathy & Mike Beamish, Beryl Nelson, Darren Hodgson, Ken Harris, Wendy Steenberg, John & Margaret Barker, Matt Campbell, Peter McDonald, Brenda Cheetham

Apologies: Craig Campbell (Ranger), Neil Slater.

Minutes of previous meeting held on 28th July 2013 were read and accepted as true account.

Moved by Cathy Beamish, **Seconded** by Beryl Nelson.

Business arising from Previous Meeting:-

Motion camera usage discussed, Matt Campbell indicated that he could put them in for Friends of MNP. More monitoring of nest boxes, as an extra activity to gauge usage & inhabitants.

FMNP is the only group that monitors their nest boxes.

Nesting boxes for Braniff Road need to be followed up with Morwell Men's Shed, Matt Campbell said that he would follow up, to see where the construction was at.

Cathy asked Ken to take the Camera files home, so that photos from our extension camera could be put on our website and for the manufacturer of the camera to promote.

Discussion regarding which FMNP tracks need maintenance, & the need to have portable signs to alert visitors that chainsaws etc. are being used in the vicinity. The Friends group have five members with chainsaw tickets.

Inwards Correspondence:-

FriendsNet No 84 August 2013

FriendsNet No 86 dated Feb 2014

FriendsNet No 87 dated May 2014

Email from Latrobe City Council regarding "Green Walks" in MNP dated 16th Jan 2014

Reminder letter from Dept of Justice regarding Incorporation Fees - No Date.

Letter from Dept of Environment & Primary Industry advising that MNP application for Nature Grant was unsuccessful – no date.

Letter from Parks Victoria regarding Protocol for use of Chainsaws by Volunteers dated 10th Sept 2013.

Outwards Correspondence:-

Payment & associated documents submitted to Dept. Of Justice dated 3rd August 2013

Thank you letter to L/V Magistrates Court for a donation of \$250. Dated 16th June 2014

General Business:-

- Term Deposit will be re-invested for 4 months till November, after which we may need to withdraw some funds.
- Discussion regarding logo for LV Field Naturalists/FMNP Morwell National Park Fungi brochure, Ken Harris put forward a sample. The brochure is fully funded with \$2,000 grant, \$500 from LV Field Naturalists & \$500 from Friends of MNP. Brochure purchases will be by gold coin – 2,000 copies will be printed. Proceeds will be shared between LV Field Naturalists and FMNP.
- Green Walks (sponsored by Latrobe City & Heart Foundation) have been conducted with the FMNP over the past four months – public response was been positive, finance has been obtained for Green Walks next financial year.
- Foster's Gully brochure is still in the planning stage with Latrobe City Council.

- A suggestion was raised that the old Billy's Creek foot bridge, be moved to Braniff Road crossing, before too much longer as the bridge was deteriorating with exposure to the weather.
- Craig Campbell (Ranger) has arranged for contractor to have a look at the bridge and prepare a quote.
- John Barker asked about feasibility of the Friends group getting a small GPS – separate from the Parks GPS. Cathy suggested that trailing a few members GPS to get an idea of the best type to purchase.
- Cathy suggested that the Braniff Road notice board could be improved - general agreement for something to be done, John Barker said that he would have a look into it.
- General discussion regarding the purchase of wire cutting equipment, meeting decided that it wasn't necessary.

Meeting declared closed at 3.50pm

