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# Friends of Morwell National Park Inc.

## *Newsletter – April 2017*

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Hello everyone and welcome to this month's newsletter.

### John's Jottings

This snippet on the activities of the Friends of Morwell National Park was sourced and edited from early Newsletter files.

April 25<sup>th</sup> 1988

“Our wonderful summer finished with a somewhat dazzling display – perhaps it's the way of it in this bicentennial year!

The odds were high that there would be a fire, everything being so very dry, although by Anzac day we are usually relaxing our vigil. Whether it was good or bad depends on how the circumstances are viewed. The fire was contained to the Billy's Creek section of the National Park and part of the adjoining reserve forest, no private homes or property were endangered.

Luckily the wind remained very slight so the area of the burn was contained to approx. 40ha and ceased to be of concern after 12hrs, although it continued to smolder in underground roots for some days.

Fire is the natural way of things in our Australian bush, although as a regeneration burn it was too hot while it was an excellent fuel reduction burn. All the same, there were some "exciting" moments for the fire fighters.

The fire started at approx. 5pm near the weir and very quickly advanced up the northern ridge. The combined difficulties of terrain, access, visibility and gusts of wind made for some unpredictable conditions and we thank those people that tried to stem the fires advance. They included 16 CFL staff, 2 bulldozers, 6 CFA units and an SES unit.

The sight was quite impressive and I hope that some photos Brian took will be able to show it as it was. Morning of the 26th brought rain and a quieter time for all, most people had worked through the night so it was left to relief crews to mop up.”



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**President:** Matt Campbell

**Vice-President:** Ken Harris

**Secretary:** Beryl Nelson

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**Other members:** Margaret Barker, Mike and Cathy Beamish, Eulalie Brewster, Graeme Busch, Kerry Campbell, Tamara Leitch, Wendy McDonald, Rose Mildenhall, Grant Pengelly, Wayne Pengelly, Joan Sikkema, Wendy Steenbergen, Australian Plant Society (Latrobe Valley).

## March Activity Report

At this activity we had Matt, Grant, Wayne, Beryl, Rose, John, Mike, Cathy, Graeme, Darren and Ranger Shane. We were lucky enough to have Shane with us, after Parks Victoria have reorganized Rangers work arrangements up until the end of the financial year. Graeme was also back after a break of a few months.

The group met in the Kerry Road car park and gathered the news from the last month. After the vehicle incident from a few months, it have been confirmed that we are physically covered by accident insurance coming to, during and returning from each activity. Our vehicles are not covered when they are used on activities. The JSA for activity was completed.

In relation to when the Park started, the best that we can confirm at this stage was that it went to the Victorian Parliament in late 1966 and was passed between July and December 1967. We will have a dinner to celebrate Morwell National Park's 50 anniversary later this year with a dinner at Churchill Pub. The plan is for the dinner costs to be \$10 for members. More details will follow in the coming months.

The work for the first activity was to clear the Stringybark Track and the West Boundary Track. We all boarded our cars and drove around to the Kerry Road carpark while Matt and Rose collected the chainsaw and other gear from the shed. With all the equipment organized along with the borrowed chaps returned by Shane, the group travelled to the west boundary. Shane remained in the car park while the group dealt with a few large trees that had come down across these tracks along with a number wattles and sticks across the tracks. We zig-zagged between these tracks and the cross tracks removing the obstacles.



The group eventually met at the top of Stringybark track and travelled back via the return track to the car park. Lunch was had in the picnic area where we viewed distant koalas. After lunch we returned home with the promise of a BBQ and a mothing activity later that evening.

Later that evening the second activity was had for the day. We had a BBQ in the Kerry Road picnic area. Matt supplied a BBQ (since the Kerry Road BBQ was out of gas) while John supplied sausages, bread and salad for Mike, Cathy, Graeme, Tamara, Grant, Wayne and Darren.

Matt had brought in his mothing sheet, light and battery and set these up adjacent to the information booth in the picnic area. On twilight, bats were seen overhead and the koalas moved around in the nearby

gums. On dark the smaller moths came in first with a few bees and they were followed by the larger moth varieties. Over the next hour many different moths came to the light and the sheet. The following photos show some of the moths:



A few went on a spotlight walk to Linton's Landing. On this walk they had a fantastic discovery of Grey-headed Flying Foxes (*Pteropus poliocephalus*) in Fosters Gully. The flying foxes were feeding on Muttonwood berries. Muttonwood (*Myrsine howittiana*) is unusual in that it tends to set fruit only once every 4 or 5 years, but when it does it produces them in great abundance. The last time they fruited was about 4 years ago, when Satin Bowerbirds were found feeding on the berries and that was the first sighting of Satin Bowerbirds in Fosters Gully. It is amazing that the flying foxes, which are so rare in the area are able to find the Muttonwood trees, which are not widespread, when they are in fruit.

## **April Activity**

Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> April (Easter Sunday) 10.00am

We will meet in the Junction Road carpark to decide upon the either the track maintenance and/or weeding we will need to undertake.

You will need to bring your lunch and clothing and footwear suitable for the weather conditions on the day.

