



Braeside Park

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THE FRIENDS OF BRAESIDE PARK NEWSLETTER

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*The opinions expressed in this Newsletter are the authors' and
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President's Report

By Judith Sise

"Building a Better Tomorrow" - 2018 National Landcare Conference

I went to the National Landcare Conference in Brisbane to hear positive news about the environment, and to learn how to engage more volunteers in caring for their local environment. I certainly achieved these two goals, and I feel rejuvenated after two days of conversations with like-minded people and attending sessions given by amazing people.

Pip Courtney, ABC Landline presenter, was the Conference's MC but disappointingly for me did not wear her big hat!

Thursday's Keynote speech by Professor Mark Howden pulled no punches on climate change and its effect on Landcare. It was confronting, but he also stressed the opportunities for individuals, communities, Landcare groups, and governments "to ride the wave of change" as climate is intertwined with every action that we take. Change, as he sees it, can be incremental, systematic, or transformational. That last one is best, and it requires a different way of thinking and acting. Maybe today's leaders are not the ones we need to follow? One example that he presented was to look not at the weather-patterns for the last 50-100 years - but those of the last 10 years when the changes really began.

I attended 12 sessions, and listened to two presentations from finalists of the National Landcare Awards – Australian Individual Landcare, and Fairfax Media Landcare Group Awards. I was glad that I was not on the panel to choose the winners!

Choosing my sessions was difficult, but I went to those most relevant to my goals. Hence, most of my choices were about Community Action, Partnerships, or Environment streams. I did not attend any in the Sustainable Agriculture stream.

The Atlas of Living Australia – a national platform for biodiversity knowledge – is something which I need to download and to explore. Unfortunately, the CSIRO's speaker did not present this treasure well!

Aimee Linke, Mid-Murray Landcare, was rivetting. "Creating the River Murray Dark Sky Reserve" resonated with me. Aimee outlined many examples of how the impact upon night light is causing loss of insect populations and diversity: confusing Dung Beetles who are astral-navigators: shortening time for nocturnal animals to gather food: and interrupting breeding habits.

Research on light pollution stresses the importance of bringing the night sky back. I can remember growing up when the street lights went out at 11 pm – saving electricity and improving human sleep patterns - and probably giving the bats and possums a life!

I went to the session "Fire spirit comes back: a joint fire project" delivered by Ange Jeffery, Glenelg Hopkins CMA, and Tammy Gilson, Project Officer, Wathaurung Aboriginal Corporation, with some reservations on the value of firestick-farming in the twenty-first century but I was won over by their professionalism. Their film compared traditional methods, and the CMA's burning. They spoke of workshops for learning traditional burning methodology. I hope that Parks Victoria can explore this!

President's Report (cont.)

My goal of finding strategies to increase the number of volunteers was addressed by attending eight sessions, equally divided between the Community and Partnerships Streams. Did they have any ground-breaking ideas to getting more members, preferably under 50? I do not think I learnt anything new, but there were some nuggets amongst the tailings. Landcare has something called "Intrepid Landcare Youth Groups". Two strong speakers, Naomi Edwards and Martha Gounial, feel young people (youth now means 18 to 35) are dismissed as rebellious and lazy fun-seekers. They both reported success engaging this group through hands-on activities: such as hiking, planting, talking and working with Landcare groups on farms. They believed that this developed a sense of youth-citizenship, and possibly future agricultural employment. The Austcover Young Landcare Leader Award winner, Kathleen Brack from West Gippsland, expressed the same view. They all seemed to advocate that only a person under 35 could inspire such groups.

Two completely opposite ideas for engaging volunteers were also presented. One was to target people with disabilities and to remember the golden oldies: the retired, semi-retired environmentally-aware, socially-engaged cohort. Keith Bradby, Chief Executive Officer of Gondwana Link, formed partnerships and engaged volunteers through establishing key principles planned around identifying Targets, Threats, Capacity, Broad Objectives, Strategies and Actions. Many sessions on engaging volunteers touched on providing volunteers with skills, knowledge, fun and the satisfaction of a job well done.

Friday's Keynote speaker, Professor Emeritus Bill Gammage, wrote "The Biggest Estate on Earth" which describes Aboriginal land management by the time that European settlers arrived. The Aborigines used fire and no-fire to ensure that every plant and animal had a habitat in which they could flourish. Firstly, they allowed natural debris to collect in creeks and rivers, thus slowing currents and allowing for overflowing into swamps and spreading across the land. They also used mud dams and bark levees to ensure swamps and adjacent land to rivers were constantly topped up. Swamps were sources of food and allowed water to slowly soak into the surrounding land making pastures for local animals. This is quite different to the present idea of fast flowing water confined to creek beds or diverted into drains until the water is delivered to the sea.

The Landcare Awards are all online: we in Victoria won two awards – The Austcover Young Landcare Leader, Kathleen Brack; and Australian Government Partnerships for Landcare, Wandoon Estate Aboriginal Corporation. Amazing people doing amazing things!

The food was delicious, especially the dinner, and for those who enjoy the odd glass there were plenty! The venue was wonderful and easily accessible for interstate travellers with a wide range of affordable accommodation. So, the Conference's steering committee are to be congratulated on a job well done.

Two observations that I would suggest to improve the Conference. Firstly, there was little to no time for questions at any forum. The Plenary Panels would have been a good occasion to allow some questions *from the floor*. A survey to complete after each session or even at the end of the conference was missing! Secondly, there was almost gender balance in the audience and speakers and there was a good spread of age groups (although obviously not many in the 10-18 year age group) but there were very few ethnic presenters or delegates. As I live in Melbourne, I really noticed the "white" ethnicity of the conference.

I did enjoy the Conference, and would highly recommend it to all community groups or environmentally aware individuals. I want to thank the Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment Management Authority for a grant to attend the Conference.

Park Activities

BRAESIDE PARK SPRING WALK

Sunday 24th of October was a fine day. A balmy 25C with clear blue skies, it was the perfect day for a walk along the beach, a visit to the ice-cream parlour or, for six intrepid adventurers, the annual Braeside Park Spring Walk. We converged at the visitor's centre, eager for what exciting fauna and flora the day would bring.

Our valiant guide Judith took us through the park and into the fenced off area that contains protected heathlands (if there's one thing that makes me feel important, it's getting into a restricted area. Like a backstage pass. But with more plants). She bestowed on us her local knowledge; it turns out those eerie looking stick tepees that have been popping up over the park are built by the bush kinder kids and not the Braeside Blair Witch. Our mission, should we choose to accept it, was to see how many plants we could match from our list from last year's spring walk. With all but one person an avowed novice in the realm of plant ID, this seemed like a gargantuan task.

We started off at a cracking pace – with native parsnip (*Trachymene composita*) and cherry ballart (*Exocarpos cupressiformis*) catching our attention. The bracken (*Pteridium composita*) was looking a little brown and worse for wear in patches, but that and the burghan (*Kunzea erioidea*) were there in abundance.

Unfortunately, the dry weather meant that the orchids and lilies that were spotted last year were a no-show to this party. But the wedding bush (*Ricinocarpos pinifolius*) had us entranced in all its delightfully smelly glory. Despite the wetlands being... not so wet, the birdlife was in abundance. We were greeted at the gate by purple swamp hens (*Porphyrio porphyrio*), coots (*Fulica atra*), and deciding he didn't want to miss out on all the fun a kookaburra (*Dacelo novaeguineae*) made a riotous entrance. Extreme commotion was caused (mostly by yours truly) when I nearly tripped over a spotted pardalote (*Pardalotus punctatus*) planted right in the middle of the fire break. He looked like he had lost some feathers from the back of his head, and being shrewd detectives we surmised he might have been attacked, perhaps by the common mynas (*Acridotheres tristis*) that were hanging around nearby.

For the grand finale we visited George's tree. A whopping great red river gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*) it is estimated to be about 800 years old. An impressive feat to survive so long, especially as the land used for Braeside park has previous incarnations as pastureland, water treatment plant and racecourse. It was only opened as a park in 1989, with the hard work of many people restoring it to the native reserve you can enjoy today. We celebrated the longevity of George's tree the only way you can in 2018 – by taking a selfie with it.

Thanks to Judith for putting up with my incessant questions, and thanks to the Friends of Braeside Park for all your hard work in creating this beautiful natural reserve.

By Emma



ERNIE'S 'A TEAM' - WEDNESDAYS

By Bev Bancroft

Treasurer and Nursery Co-coordinator

ERNIE'S "A" TEAM - WEDNESDAYS:

Ernie is away on Carer's Leave – due back soon.

We have managed each week to do our usual maintenance/ chores.

PROPAGATION

Weeding of established forestry tubes continues.

Washing of pots – none to be seen (Hoorah).

Rabbit diggings still a problem.

Early finish took us out to see & photograph Tawny Frogmouth.

GRASSLANDS

Weeding continues – Inspection of Echidna diggings & fence checks.

Great News: Orchids in flower/ Pimelia numbers increasing but missed Choc

Lilies in flower.

MULCHING/ GUARDS & FRAMES

Favourite: removal of remaining tree guards has continued.

Another day spent at the Visitor Centre.

More Volunteers are needed.

Please come & join us.

Wednesdays 9 am - 12 noon

Meet at the lunch room - Park Office

Morning tea provided.



Tawny Frog Mouths - Des Lucas, Ranger Team Leader.

During the last month I have observed several people out searching for and photographing the Tawny Frog Mouths of the Park. I have approached a number of these people seeking information about their knowledge of the parks Frog Moths. Below and over leaf is information about a couple of those people, photos they have taken and a map detail information about frog moths throughout the park. Thanks for sharing.

Helen Forrester - As for my background, My husband and I have two children and live in Parkdale. I grew up in Black Rock, and except for living in the USA for several years, I have always lived in this area. I have a PhD in Medical Science and my current research involves finding ways to improve cancer treatment. I am also a casual lecturer at RMIT University.

Here are a few interesting notes on Tawny frogmouths with references to web sites below:

Tawny frogmouths can live for approximately 14 years and mate for life. They tend to nest in the same nest sites year after year. They eat invertebrates at night including moths, crickets, spiders, worms, snails and slugs. This makes them effective pest-controllers for gardens, but it also makes them vulnerable to insecticides and other chemical pesticides. Predators include birds of prey, rodents, tree climbing snakes, foxes, and house cats. They are also vulnerable to land clearing and forest fires as they rarely move to other areas. This is a good reason for you to keep an eye on where they are located.

The tawny frogmouths lay two to three eggs (August to November), incubate their eggs for approximately 30 days and the young fledge in approximately 30 days. The males usually sit on the nest during the days but they take turns at night.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tawny_frogmouth
<https://www.billabongsanctuary.com.au/tawny-frogmouth/>

I love to see them and it is wonderful to see the little chicks look down at me and my children also love to see them. I have attached a photo taken (on my phone) on Monday of the chicks with one of the parents located opposite gate with BSP501.



My name is Caroline Farrelly, and Helen and I met you last Thursday when you kindly showed us the tawnies on Ibis Drive. You also asked if I could send a few photos of some of the Tawny chicks that we had seen for the Braeside Newsletter?

I am an honorary research associate at Melbourne Museum, in the Department of Marine Invertebrates, where I specialize in the identification of Decapod Crustacea, but have a general interest in all wildlife, particularly birds.

I have attached a few photographs below for your interest.



Friends of Braeside Park—Activity Calendar

Weekday Community Project-The A Team:

Every Wednesday with Ranger staff commencing at 9:00 - 12:00 from the Park Office. Activities can include weeding, mowing weeds, mulching, planting, fencing etc.

Nursery - Plant Propagation:

1st Saturday and 3rd Sunday from 10:00 am to 12:00 Noon and

Every Wednesday 1pm to 3pm

Undertaking a variety of propagation activities.

Committee Meeting:

2nd Thursday, monthly 7:00 to 9:00pm at the Park Office.

The Committee meets to make decisions about the running of the group.

Water Quality Monitoring:

3rd Tuesday, monthly 9:00 to 12:00 noon from the Park Office.

Water samples are taken and monitored from the Dingley Waterway and Wetland.

Bird Observations:

A set bird observation is completed monthly around the main wetland.

Call Ranger Janelle Cadd on (03) **8427 2027** to become part of this program.

Birds Australia Monitoring Program:

10 bird monitoring transects are monitored in this program with 5 completed one month and the other 5 the next month.

The sessions occur on the 4th Friday of each month from 8:00 am alternating between the following starting locations.

Park Office January, March, May, July, September, November

Robin Car Park February, April, June, August, October, December

Special Activities:

Night walks are offered from April through to September. Gold Coin Donation.

For details and bookings phone **0417 323 460**

Community Nursery is Open on the Third Sunday of the Month

10:00 am to 12:00 noon – Seedlings \$2.00 each.

Newsletter Contributions

Thank you to Judith Sise, Margaret Hunter, Bev Bancroft, Frank Russo, Rosemaree MacLean, David MacLean, Helen Forrester, Caroline Farrelly & Park Staff for contributions to this edition.

If you have an item to share in future editions or have any feedback in relation to the newsletter, please contact the editor at

braesideparkfriends@gmail.com

Seniors Walk 2018 By Margaret Hunter

The annual Seniors Walk in Braeside Park was once again led by Des Lucas with a myriad of information on most aspects of Braeside Park an important part of the walk in two parts with a break for morning tea at the visitor center. We had three guides, Judith Sise, Margaret Hunter and Jo Cody.

We started at the visitor center and spoke about the early history of the sewage works at Braeside before moving to the Howard Road trail with information on the flora and fauna of the area and rich tree planting history of the area. Some areas grow at differing rates, with discussion of the impact of the proposed Mordialloc Freeway on the environment of Braeside Park. A highlight here was the development and maintenance of the Federation Project which resulted in two walls of murals provided by community members – assisted by two artists – and the chess board, hop scotch area with unique flora and fauna. The work of the Dingley Village Men's Shed was acknowledged by Des with evidence of their work in the re-cycled tables from the timber from the Mordialloc Pier.

After a sumptuous morning tea, we toured the area along Lower Dandenong Road, with a visit to the site of the former Telford stables, and associated archaeology sites, with a need for Tony Robinson and his unique style to bring this area to life. For those of you not in the know, Tony Robinson is the host of the British version of Time Team with many interesting 'digs' and recreations of past environments. The pesky rabbit issue was discussed here with evidence of devastation by rabbits of tree plantings and some not so badly affected, and the recycling of tree guards to extend their life. We took the obligatory group photo here, with much rubbish collected along the way here.

Des's knowledge and over twenty years experience and more with Parks Victoria, was too much to include in this article, but needless to say there were many questions from the interested group who were able to see as Des said 'underneath' the playground 10% of Braeside Park and learn about the issues of park management and planning. The group was also told of the valuable and ongoing contribution of the Friends group to Braeside Park over many years, and the need for more members with a range of roles available. Also other opportunities to explore the environment (s) of Braeside Park, particularly the southern end – the wetlands area – which are worth exploring as well. We also explored the displays in the visitor center, and celebrated the birds, many rabbits, and man made environment of Braeside Park with the promise of more exploration with the seniors walk in 2019. This is a unique opportunity with a Parks Victoria ranger, Des Lucas, with an extensive knowledge, with more to come on the history and development of Braeside Park as more than an urban oasis, but a treasured environment with many aspects to its current, past and future developments.

We finished appropriately with a desire to explore the park in more areas, hopefully take part in friends activities, explore the park more, and to fully appreciate the treasure that is Braeside Park in the middle of suburbia and the challenges of environmental changes, climate change, future management, and the passionate dedication of Des Lucas and the ranger staff to Braeside Park. The Friends also run other activities which are on the activity calendar which is circulated in the newsletter and around the park.

Friends of Braeside Park Inc.

President: Judith Sise **Secretary:** Margaret Hunter

Assistant Secretary: Rosemarie MacLean **Treasurer:** Bev Bancroft

Newsletter Editor: David MacLean **Webmaster:** Frank Russo

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Current Facebook Members = 151

Friends of Braeside Park Activity Calendar 2018

| Activity | Time/Day | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|--|---|--|---------------------|---|---------------------|--|--|---|-------------------------------|---|--|---------------------|---|
| Committee Meeting | 7pm - 9pm 2nd Thursday at the Park Office | X | 8 | 8 | 12 | 10 | 14 | 12 | 9 | 13 | 11 | 8 | 13 |
| Community Projects Weekday - "The A Team" | 9am - 12pm Wednesday's at the Park Office | - | 7 14 21 28 | 7 14 21 28 | 4 11 18 25 | 2 9 16 23 30 | 6 13 20 27 | 4 11 18 25 | 1 8 15 22 29 | 5 12 19 26 | 3 10 17 24 31 | 7 14 21 28 | 5 12 |
| Nursery open for plant sales | 10am - 12pm 3rd Sunday | 21 | 18 | 18 | 15 | 20 | 17 | 15 | 19 | 16 | 21 | 18 | 16 |
| Plant Propagation Community Nursery | 10am - 12pm 1st Saturday & 3rd Sunday | 6 21 | 3 18 | 3 18 | 7 22 | 5 20 | 2 17 | 7 22 | 4 19 | 1 16 | 6 21 | 3 18 | 1 16 |
| Plant Propagation Community Nursery | Wednesday's 1pm- 3pm Bev 9551 4578 | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Water Quality Monitoring Meet at the Park Office | 9am - 12pm 3rd Tuesday | 16 | 20 | 20 | 17 | 15 | 19 | 17 | 21 | 18 | 16 | 20 | 18 |
| Bird Observations | 8am - 11am 4th Friday Park Office | 26 | * | 23 | * | 25 | * | 27 | * | 28 | * | 26 | * |
| Bird Observations | 8am - 11am 4th Friday Robin Car Park | * | 23 | * | 27 | * | 22 | * | 24 | * | 26 | * | 14 |
| Nightwalks | From Visitor's Centre 7pm | Nightwalks offered from April through to September. Gold Coin Donation per head Bookings Essential 0417323460 | | | | 6 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 7 | Nightwalks offered from April through to September. Gold Coin Donation per head Bookings Essential 0417323460 | | |
| Community Projects Weekends | 9am - 12pm, follow the signs | | | | | Community Nursery Day 10am - 12pm Sunday 20th | World Environment Day Tree Planting Sunday 3rd | National Tree Planting Day Saturday 28th | | | | | |
| Special Activities are held throughout the year at various times | | | | Clean Up Australia Day Sunday 4th Meet at Visitor Centre 10am - 12pm | | | Mystery Walk Sunday 24th 12:30 - 3:30 with afternoon tea | | AGM Sunday 12th 2pm-4pm | Breakfast with birds 23rd Meet at Red Gum Picnic Area 7am - 9:30am | Spring Walk - Heathland & Grasslands Sunday 14th 1pm - 3:30pm | | End of Year BBQ Wednesday 12th |