



Friends of Morwell National Park Inc.

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Incorporation number A0016319X

SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER 1997.

AUGUST ACTIVITY REPORT.

12-7-97 (Well it's not in August but July) A group of hardy Friends went out to the cold and windy hillside of the trial plot to finish off the fence and plant some seedlings. Six plots were finished off and measure two metres by six metres (that is six foot six inches by thirty-two foot and ten inches for the non-metric of us).

Plot 1 10 E. Globulus (Blue gum) 7 A. Verniciflua (Varnish wattle) 3 A. Verticillata (Prickly moses)	Plot 2 Control plot, no plants or seed to be Planted in this plot, to see if just fencing allows any plants to grow.
Plot 3 Not planted out yet.	Plot 4 Not planted out yet.
Plot 5 Weed control area.	Plot 6 Weed control area.

Plot one and two are situated on the up hill side of the hill and run lengthways along the hill side. All plots have two strands of barbed wire on top, sheep mesh going to the ground and finally rabbit wire laying on the ground which is pegged to the ground and going half way up the sheep mesh. This took two fencing sessions to complete, which was very labor intensive due to the fact that it had 98 metres of fencing set up in the one area.

17-8-97

The final tree planting session for 1997 was held at Billies Creek on the flats and 482 trees were planted by the nine people who attended the session. The trees planted are as follows:

E. Globulus	Blue gum	420	Page 26	of Ferns and
E. Ovata	Swamp gum	20	“ 26	Flowers of
A. Melanoxydon	Blackwood	15	“ 25	Morwell
Billardiera longiflora	Purple apple-berry	24	“ 27	National
Pelargonium australe	Austral stork's-bill	2	“ 23	Park.
Hardenbergia violacea	Purple coral-pea	1	“	21
TOTAL				<u>482</u>

The Hardenbergia violacea (purple coral-pea) was planted at the fire site near Brewster's Road (Peel's Block). Tom Lawless managed to get in and help with the tree planting while Helen and Anne planted on the steepest parts to be found in that area and were rumored to have been seen to be walking away with one leg shorter than the other due to the steepness of the terrain. Speaking of which the ground had a mind of its own and, at times, disappeared out from under Anne's feet which also answered her curiosity about why Prickly moses is called Prickly moses.

After all of the hard work was done, so I was told, but it seems to me that there was more fun had than work being done; Billy tea was made down at the weir. It seems that Wendy had forgotten to supply the marshmallows for toasting on the fire. After all the effort that Brian went to make a toasting fork he decided that he may as well toast his sandwiches instead of the marshmallows, I think that Wendy said that she wouldn't let it happen again and would supply double quantity of toastable marshmallows for our next activity.

Dianna decided that since it was Sunday that she may as well have a bath so a quick dip in the creek got bath time over and done for another month. So after Brian performed his walk on water trick which still needs a bit of refinement Rob offered a ride back to the cars in the 4WD.

31-8-97

Another day up at the top of the park this time to build a fence around a fallen branch of a gum tree (a Blue gum I think it is but it may not be, I will check up to make sure). It took us all day to throw up a fence of ten metres by ten metres of the same construction as the other fences.

Anne failed to show off her aerobics this time and managed to keep her feet firmly on the ground. But the Wedge tailed eagle was showing off, soared above us twice, we stopped work till it had disappeared from sight (a much appreciated break). The second time it came by it was chased away by some very aggressive magpies.

Some of the trees which were planted in the trial plot had died, this may have been due to the six or so inches of snow which fell the weekend before. Rob sprayed some weed killer onto plots no. 5 & 6, which only made it rain straight away; so after a word or two to the big fella up in the sky the spray was re-applied again after the sun came out and things cleared up. Just like Ipsy Wipsy spider the rain came down again and washed away the spray. Lets hope it was on for long enough the second time.

The first six plots have proved to be sturdy enough to keep out the sheep, rabbits and wombats so far, hopefully the snow will hold off long enough to allow these plants to establish themselves.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Well it seems that my directions were good enough to get to Robs house for the AGM even if the Creamery Rd direction was a little 'off hand'. All elections were held and the results are as follows:

President	Ed Steenbergen
Vice President	Dianna Alweyn
Secretary	Anne Bailey
Treasurer	Wendy Steenbergen
Newsletter Editor	Martin Gwynne
Other Committee Member	John Pulis

I won't include all of the treasurers report as it runs into four pages but here is a brief overview of it all.

Balance as at 30-6-96	\$949.94
Receipts (money in)	\$7,899.34
Payments (money out)	\$7,162.46
Balance as at 30-6-97	<u>\$1,686.82</u>

Publication of the book.

Income – Sponsorship	\$15,000.00	
– Loans	\$ 4,800.00	
Total income	<u>\$19,800.00</u>	
Expenses	<u>\$19,800.00</u>	(This covered all book costs)

Book sales	\$ 4,834.61
Loan repayments and costs	\$ 3,680.00

Balance	<u>\$ 1,154.61</u>	(This just about covers the loan repayment back to ourselves and from then on, profit for us)
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Total of books printed	3000
Total of books sold	650
Books remaining on hand	2350

There are still a lot of books to be sold at \$15 per copy for members and \$20 for others, slip a note to the Secretary and order some now if you have not done so already.

The Rangers report and the out going Presidents report are both attached for your perusal.

We also received a resignation from Rob de Souza-Daw who has been a member of the friends group from

March 1988, I would like to take the opportunity to thank him for his contributions and help over the years.

Also raised during the AGM Rob raised the issue of the bottles and cans recycling which has been going on for some time. He noted that the revenue raised from the bottles was only about \$5.00 and required the most work in smashing and sorting all of the different glasses into their separate bins. It was suggested that the bottles were not really worth the effort but we should continue with recycling the aluminum cans. This was agreed to and we now collect aluminum cans which can be forwarded to the ranger on activities.

NEW MEMBERS.

We had an application from the Latrobe Valley Society for Growing Native Plants and they nominated two members to represent their society in the Friends of Morwell National Park group. This was accepted and passed at the last committee meeting and we hope to be able to swap ideas and information to the mutual benefit of both groups.

LYRE BIRD SPOTTED

One bird was seen between Lyndons Clearing and the no.8 marker post on the Fosters Gully Nature Walk.

Keep your eyes out for the wood ducks which frequent this area during spring.

BILLIES CREEK OR IS IT BILLY CREEK ?

Or is it Billys Creek ? It appeared in the Draft Management Plan as Billy Creek, but general consensus has determined that it should be called Billys Creek after the man who lived and died there. There has been some lobbying to get the name right by some members and I think that they have managed to get some success in keeping the name as it should be and not as a politically corrected type of version. Well done.

MORE TREES PLANTED ALONG BILLYS CREEK.

During July or early August Gippsland Education, Skills and Training planted 2000 trees along the flats of Billys Creek. This has doubled the amount of trees planted this year to 3923 trees. The trees we planted as a group this season were as follows:

<u>Scientific name.</u>	<u>Common name.</u>	<u>Number planted.</u>	<u>Page number in Ferns and Flowers of Morwell National Park book.</u>
Acacia dealbata	Silver wattle	262	25
“ melanoxyton	Blackwood	160	25
“ verniciflua	Varnish wattle	167	25
“ verticillata	Prickly moses	36	26
Billardiera longiflora	Purple apple-berry	24	27
Eucalyptus bridgesiana	But but	56	26
“ globulus	Blue gum	554	26
“ obliqua	Messmate	105	26
“ ovata	Swamp gum	225	26
“ viminalis	Manna gum	204	26
Hardenbergia violacea	Purple coral-pea	1	21
Hedycarya angustifolia	Austral mulberry	14	26
Olearia argophylla	Musk daisy-bush	145	16
Pelargonium australe	Austral stork's-bill	2	23
TOTAL		1923	

MEMBERSHIP FEES NOW DUE FOR THE 97/98 YEAR.

If you haven't already done so membership fees are now due, please take the time to fill out the form below and send it to the address as shown.

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TO : TREASURER, FMNP, PO BOX 19, CHURCHILL, 3842.

Please find enclosed an amount of \$_____ (\$10 single \$15 family) being for membership.

Name : Telephone:
.....

Address:
.....

Signed: Date:/...../.....

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SEPTEMBER ACTIVITY

Koala survey Sunday 21 September, at Fosters Gully car park 1:30 PM.

I hope to see all members there for this event and don't forget to grab some kids as well so they can spot the Koalas for us. You will need to dress accordingly for the weather and take a drink and snack along with you for the walk. This year I hope to be able to get some people to walk through Billys Creek section of the park and start off the surveying in that area of the park.

October activity 19 October 1:30 PM Braniffs Rd. Waterway Enhancement along Billys Creek.

THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Please send any information which you want included in the newsletter to me.

Martin Gwynne, 1 Townsend Street, Churchill, 3842.

Or phone 03 51223364.

Friends of Morwell National Park

President's Report 1996-7

The year just completed has been a very successful one for the Friends of Morwell National Park. We appear to have safely passed the large loss of key members who left the district last year and have been able to welcome a number of new members who have helped to keep the Friends moving forward.

The main highlights of the year have been:

- Our success in obtaining a grant for further tree planting along Billy Creek and for developing trial plots on the steep hillside above Billy Creek as a precursor to the enormous task of trying to revegetate the hillside.
- The successful publication of my book "Flowers and Ferns of Morwell National Park", for which I thank the Friends for their support.
- The long-awaited publication of the Morwell National Park Draught Management Plan. The Management Plan itself must now be very close indeed.

The 1996 tree plantings were successfully completed and were duly celebrated with our usual casserole evening, but was moved to my home, since the Aziz have now left the Valley.

At the time of writing, two tree plantings have already taken place along Billy Creek. We are gaining considerably in efficiency and at the last planting, 520 trees were planted in three hours by just nine workers. Once again all the trees and shrubs planted were propagated by the Friends from seed collected by us in the Park. Thanks to the vigilance of John Pulis and Rob Howell, the plants have mostly been in good condition, with less problems from fungal attack than last year. By the time you receive this report a third tree-planting will have been completed and hopefully almost all the years quota will have been planted.

A further 2000 seedlings, grown at Won Wron prison farm from seed from the Park will be planted by prisoners along the Billy Creek flats before the end of the winter.

This year's koala survey found more koalas than we have seen for several years. It is good to know that the koalas are still thriving in the Park.

Last years attempts to poison willows along Billy Creek seem to have been very successful, with all the large crack willows along that section of the creek now dead. We were less successful with the younger plants and with smaller common sallow or pussy willow. We intend to work on them next before moving downstream to get rid of more of the large willows. This year we had one Friends activity to clean out any newly rooted willows in the forested part of Billy Creek. This is a regular task as floods bring branches down from outside the Park and they root very easily in the silt. We succeeded in clearing out all the willows once again.

Plant propagation for this year's plantings was carried out over a number of occasions, either sowing seed or potting up seedlings. It was good to see so many people willing to come along on extra occasions to see that we had a good crop of seedlings for this winter's plantings.

March saw the Friends helping with the Yinnar Country Fair as usual and shortly after we also held a stall at the Churchill Community Fair on the Monash University Campus. On both occasions we were able to sell some copies of the newly published book.

The committee put in an application for a government grant to help with the expenses of this year's plantings along Billy Creek and to enable us to erect fences around a series of trial plots, high up on the hillside above Billy Creek. The fences are needed to keep out goats, sheep and rabbits which between them are preventing natural revegetation on the hillside. The plots will be used to compare different methods of preparing the ground for sowing seed with direct planting. We were successful in obtaining the grant we applied for and an extra outing in June this year saw the erection the fences commenced. Apparently the task is about half completed, and a second working bee in July will hopefully complete the task, together with plantings within one plot. Seed sowing in the other plots will take place in the Spring.

It is terrific to see the Draught Management Plan at long last. It has been promised for at least ten years now. The committee has studied the plan at length and will be putting in a submission. In general we are very pleased with the plan and congratulate the Parks Victoria. Let us hope that the final plan is very soon

I thank the Friends very much for their support and assistance in publishing the "Flowers and Ferns of Morwell National Park". We succeeded in obtaining grants to a total of \$15 000 towards the publication, the major provider being Monash University, with further contributions from Amcor Plantations Pty Ltd., Hazelwood Power Corporation, HRL Limited and La Trobe Shire. A loan of \$2400 from the School of Computing and Information Technology of Monash University and loans of \$1200 each from The Latrobe Valley Field Naturalists Club and from the Friends own funds, enabled publication of 3000 copies of the book to be completed.

The book was launched by Keith Hamilton MHR at the Fosters Gully picnic area on 21st March. The launch, hosted by the Friends was a great success, with about 70 people attending, including representatives of all but one of our sponsors.

We are not very experienced in marketing a product like this, but we have nevertheless sold a lot of books and are able to report that we have repaid our loans from Monash University and Latrobe Valley Field Nats and are now only about \$200 short of repaying the Friends funds. When we have sold another 20 books, we shall be making a profit from the publication of the book. All profit we make will be kept in a separate account and will in time be put towards projects to further improve public access to and awareness of Morwell National Park..

As usual I must thank our ranger Rob Howell for his continued dedication to the Park and the cooperative way he works with the Friends for the benefit of the Park. Although no longer living within the Park and having to spend a lot of time in the Traralgon office, he has continued to support the Friends and look after the Park with the enthusiasm we have become used to. Thank you Rob.

I must conclude by reporting that I shall not be around for the next year and must therefore resign my position as President. I have exchanged jobs and homes with a lecturer in Canada for a year and am departing on 16th July to live in Kelowna in British Columbia until July next year. Fay and I will then take 3 months long service leave and travel back via England, so I shall not be back in the Valley until about October 1998.

I shall resume my association with the Friends as soon as I return, and I wish you all well for the next 15 months and look forward to seeing what further progress the Friends make in my absence.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ken Harris". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Ken Harris, President
10th July 1997

RANGERS REPORT MORWELL NP 1996/97

An eventful year has seen the establishment of Parks Victoria, the inclusion of Morwell NP into the new Latrobe Parks District, the departure of our old RIC Tim Buttle and the arrival of our new RIC Peter Kershaw.

The two planned fuel reduction burns did not get done due to the abnormal weather conditions and will be rescheduled for next autumn. There were two wild fires in the Park which both resulted from burn-offs on adjoining private land.

50 steelmesh seedling trays were made by Gippsland Group Training and donated to the Friends for use in the nursery. Thanks to John Pulis for organising this.

In September a magnificent effort was made by a small group of Friends to remove all remaining plastic tubes from trees in Billy Crk. My heartfelt thanks go to those who put in many extra days to remove what turned out to be thousands of tubes.

In addition to this, a substantial number of wire tree guards were removed as part of the normal activities calendar. My thanks to those who participated in this and all other activities during the year.

Management Plan released in draft form. Thanks to those who have put in submissions, more would be welcome. Close date 14/8.

Robert Howell
Ranger