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# Friends of Morwell National Park Inc.

Newsletter – October 1999

President:  
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## September '99 Activity Report - Last Tree Planting for 1999

Wendy Steenbergen

Our workers were a bit lit on this month to try and plant a!! of the remaining few hundred trees for the year. But we stuck to the task at hand and put up with the odd bit of drizzle. It was therefor surprising to see how often Rob had to keep moving his truck and trailer to new planting locations.

With the help of visitors Peter and Colin and our regular members Dot, Danny, Ken and Wendy, we managed to plant 313 trees. These consisted of Swap and Manna gums, Messmate, Blackwood and Silverwattle. One native Hemp Bush, four Tea Tree and 50 Prickly Current bush were also planted.

We finished the day with a look at the areas planted out by the students from C.R.C. and noted that the wombats seem to have taken a liking to the new jute mats and have tried to remove them from under the tree guards. A little repair work was needed to get things back into order.

Thanks to all who have helped out with our tree planting sessions this year, as your input and time is important to our group.

## Newsletter Reviews

Newsletter Review from **Traralgon Railway Reservoir Conservation Reserve**

A tree planting session has been organized for the weekend of the election to plant around 2000 seedlings. These seedlings come from stock from Edison Mission Energy and were excess from the Mathieson Park planting.

A new committee has been elected for the year and is now in the process of opening a post box and account.

Projects undertaken include erection of entrance wall and name of reserve, measuring sediment build up across the lake, weed eradication will take place next year and signs have been installed warning people about the penalties for rubbish dumping and to keep dogs on leads.

## October Activity

Our annual koala survey will be carried out on Sunday 17th October 1.30pm, leaving from Fosters Gully. This is a great family day and a wonderful chance to explore areas of the Park that you may not have seen before.

Please bring along sturdy walking shoes, something to snack on along the way and a pair of binoculars if you have them.

Contact Ed for more information on 5664 8211.

## **Trees, Trees And More Trees , Years Later You Have A City Of Nature.**

Ten o'clock on a Sunday morning I entered the Junction Road car park of the Billy's Creek flat and saw there was not a soul in sight. Thought came to mind that everyone had absconded from the gloomy day. Letting no rain or anything stop me I parked my vehicle and prepared myself on a little expedition. Putting my gumboots on and carrying a backpack I left my locked car and went passed the informer military gate, into the park.

Walking through Billy's Creek I watched everything around me. Such a gloomy day I found the park intriguing and mysterious as the misty clouds blanket over the hills and trees. I didn't mind the misty rain, it was pleasant, the sounds were quiet. I could hear the small birds sing in the trees as they bathed in the mist.

Enjoying my walk I cut through the Billy's Creek flat surrounded by the thousand trees of all ages from the past tree planting activities. It reminded me of the million herds of Bison which once roamed the American prairies or the massive migration herds of Wildebeest on the African Serengeti. Coming to the more taller trees I met up with the forest locals - the famous mob of Grey Kangaroos. As they were always wary towards strangers especially the human kind I said good morning to settle our differences but they just hopped away and looked at me strange.

Leaving the kangaroos to own affairs I headed to where we last planted trees. Sneaking through the trees I could easily see a Parks Victoria four-wheel-drive Toyota with a trailer in the clearing. Prowling up closer I saw Ranger Rob all alone assembling those green guards. I thought to myself that poor man I had to break the solitude. Wanting to surprise him I crept from the trees and through the long grass. As I got closer I quickly changed my mind as I didn't want to give Rob a heart attack. The big reason was nothing could really go pass the mind of Rob, he had a mind of a blackbird but he never squabbled like a blackbird though.

Metres away Rob's ears pricked to hear the rustle in the grass and saw me from the corner of his eye. Happy to see him again I smiled and said good morning and helped him assemble the tree guards. I think he was relieved that someone had showed up. Making a conversation of what's been happening with our lives to settle in I noticed Rob wasn't himself. He said he had a crook gut from eating too much, dining on the town the night before. Thinking no man should suffer like this the only way for him to beat it was to keep his mind off it.

As Rob began to scatter the tree guards around the planting area I started the fossil prospecting. Being the first one to come it didn't take long to motivate the new arrivals to come. Happy to join in was a man and his little girl who were keen to plant the young trees. As the planting got more under way later to appear was Ken the mad botanist. then shortly after that were the regulars John and Dot. later on came a friendly couple, Wendy the treasurer. a woman and her two children. and another man.

Having a larger group the work became greater as we ban together a large number of trees were planted non stop till lunch. Everyone had their own task I did the digging. Rob measured the boundary. assembled and scattered the tree guards. placed weed mats and other supervision duties. Wendy did the planting. hammering stakes, Dot was in charge of the weed mats. Ken and John planted the trees. the friendly couple - the man dug and drilled holes with the planter and the lady served out the trees. The woman and her two children and the man were happy to plant the trees.

A rest from digging like a wombat, assembling tree guards, planting trees, serving out trees and weed mats, driving stakes etc. I wandered to the creek to wash the good dirt from my hands. Heading back to the camp I saw the new visitors had temporarily disappeared to their lunch break. Still present though were the regulars Rob, Wendy, Dot and Ken. Rob especially was contented to sit down to eat his lunch. Moment to chat Wendy showed me my article in the Churchill News which I had not seen. Behaving like a family at our lunch break did not take forever.

Getting back into swing of things Wendy and I returned to work. Digging for fossils at a very wet ditch this is where many trees were planted before but never survived. Giving it another go we hoped Native Hemp Bush and trees which like soggy ground would grow here. As the new vistiors returned and continued planting the trees. A change of task I decided assemble some tree guards which were getting low. Helping also was Wendy which we managed to give a good old chat and Dot carried on cutting slots in the weed mats.

The second half of the tree planting activity the weather began to change from a mixture cloudiness and a bit of sunshine. The tables have turned as it down poured everybody but other than that it didn't kill us, it was quite harmless. Mentioning to Rob how he is he said was okay which was good. End of the day we were getting low in tree guards, stakes and trees. Scraping the bottom of the barrel Rob foraged the park for old abandoned stakes to use which was conservative. Completion of the day's planting everyone called it a day.

Remaining behind I decided to help Rob clean up. Following him to the propagation shed I helped Rob clear the tools, old tree guards, the rubbish, the left over trees, pots and trays from the trailer. Rob appreciated to two pair of hands than one. Not only I wanted to help him store things away I also said happy birthday to him. It was his birthday the day before, he's not bad for an old rooster. As there's nothing else to be done I said good bye to Rob and went home.

Danny Barclay.