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Friends of Morwell National Park Inc.

Newsletter – September 2011

Website: <http://morwellnp.pangaean.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 Annual General Meeting and Committee Meetings and 2010/11 President's Report.

The President's Report makes very interesting reading and it makes you reflect that we have done a bit over the last year.

At the Annual General Meeting we received the sad news that Bronwyn was finishing up as our Park Ranger. She has moved onto another job which she will do wonderfully. She will be a huge loss to us. During her time with us she has been invaluable by taking on any problem thrown to her and finding a way to solve it. The Park has improved over the last year from Bronwyn's direct input and through her wonderful support of our work. It is sad to see Bronwyn go, but we wish her all the best in her new job.



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

President: Mike Beamish

Vice-President: Ken Harris

Secretary: Beryl Nelson

Treasurer: John Barker

Publicity: Peter McDonald

Public Officer: Beryl Nelson

Newsletter Editor: Darren Hodgson, 51222108, hodgson.darren.d@edumail.vic.gov.au

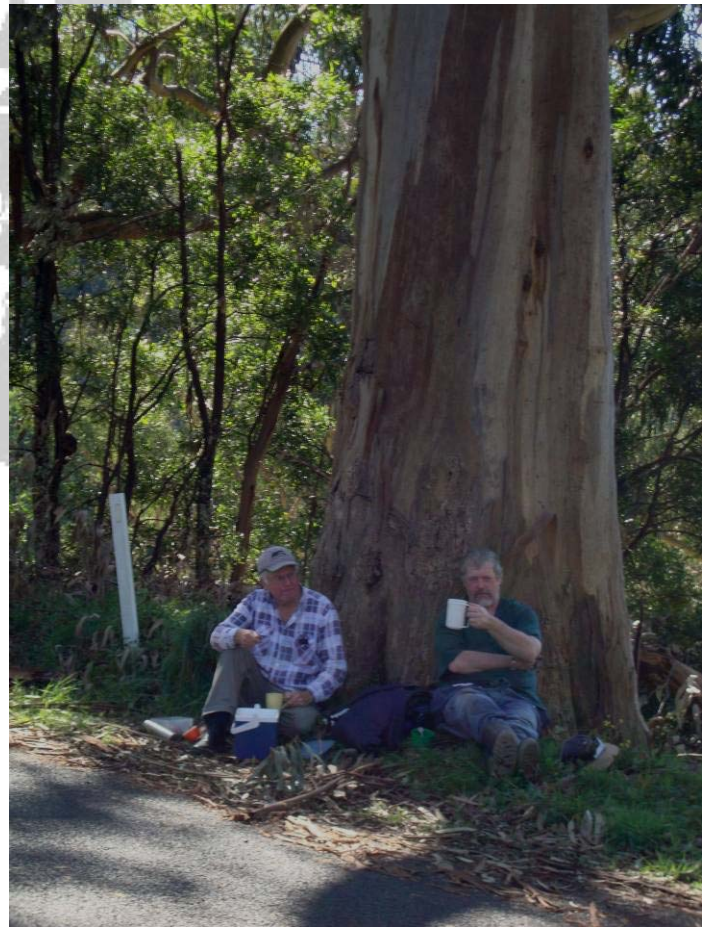
Other members: Mary Austin, Wendy Steenbergen, Margaret Barker, Cathy Beamish, Eulalie Brewster, Reg Felmingham, Tom Lawless, Wendy McDonald, Joan Sikkema, Kate Richardson, Hilmar Batza, Bronwyn Grass, Australian Plant Society (Latrobe Valley).

August Activity Report

For this month's activity we had John, Beryl, Wendy, Reg, Ken, Mike, Jhinfeng, I Mei and Darren in attendance. Great to see both Jhinfeng and I Mei back to help out again. Ranger Craig was there to help and had brought the trees and other planting equipment we needed.

We started the day by planting some Silver Wattles into the area near the car park. After this we moved to the area beside Jumbuk Road to add more trees into the areas near where we planted two months ago. Into this area we planted more Vanish Wattle, Blue Gum and Blackwoods. Over the day we added another 200 plants, leaving about 300 Blue Gums and a few Silver Wattles to plant next month. The planting was slow work since the terrain we were planting into was very rough with many tree stumps and fallen timber to work over and sometimes it was difficult to locate soil amongst the rubble and rocks.

The following photos show the planting of the seedlings and some of the scenery we enjoyed during the lunch break. At the end of the day we had the delight to see two wedge tail eagles in flight over where we were working. Soon after that a pair of crimson rosellas played above our heads.



Friends of Morwell National Park

Annual General Meeting Sunday 7th August 2011

Annual General Meeting declared open at 1.35pm

Attendance: - Beryl Nelson, Wendy Steenbergen, Darren Hodgson, Ken Harris, Bronwyn Grass (Ranger), Peter McDonald, Kate Richardson, John & Margaret Barker, Cathy & Mike Beamish.

Apologies: - No apologies.

Previous AGM minutes held on 25th July 2010 were read and accepted as a true account - by general acceptance of those present.

The **President's Report** was read and accepted - Moved Cathy, Seconded by Kate.

The **Ranger's Report** was an oral one, as Bronwyn Grass was leaving the area for the Yarra Ranges. Paperwork for 25th Anniversary grant has been lodged, when received, it will be available for training or whatever the Friends choose to spend it on.

Treasurer's Report was read and accepted - Moved by John, Seconded by Peter. The Treasurer reported that we have 16 financial members, for 2010-11.

Motion was moved by Wendy that Incorporation fees be paid for this financial year, seconded by Darren.

Election of Office Bearers:-

President – Mike Beamish (Moved - Wendy, Seconded - Margaret).

Vice President – Ken Harris (Moved - Cathy, Seconded - Peter).

Secretary/Public Officer - Beryl Nelson (Moved - Kate, Seconded - Ken).

Treasurer - John Barker (Moved - Wendy, Seconded - Kathy).

Newsletter - Darren Hodgson (Moved - Beryl, Seconded - Kate).

Publicity - Peter McDonald (Moved - Margaret, Seconded - Kate).

General Business: -

It was decided that membership fees will remain the same - \$10.00 per person, \$15.00 per family or group (moved by Peter, seconded by Ken) passed unanimously.

Replacement of toilet at Kerry Road was discussed, and the need for another one to be made available, as soon as possible – Friends are prepared to put some money towards the costs involved.

Annual General Meeting declared closed at 2.25pm

Friends of Morwell National Park
President's Report for 2010 to 2011

We have just completed an eventful year. We have had changes of Ranger during the year, Jenny Brown our temporary ranger completed her contract and we worked with her in the park for the last time in August. There was a short period with no ranger until Bronwyn Grass took up the position. We met her for the first time in October at our annual Koala count.

The big event of the year was the completion of the first 25 years of the Friends of Morwell National Park. The Friends held our inaugural meeting back on May 10th 1986 and we celebrated our 25th Anniversary on 4th June 2011 with two events. During the afternoon we gathered at the Junction Road car park, with an excellent turn out of over 40 Friends (past and present) and Parks staff, including past and present rangers, Rob Howell, Jenny Brown and Bronwyn Grass and Latrobe Ranger in Charge Andy Gillham. We walked together to the Weir, where a magnificent tea was laid on. In the evening a dinner was held in Traralgon for many of the same friends, and Rob Howell spoke on his memories of working with the Friends and I spoke on behalf of the Friends. A magnificent celebratory cake decorated with Australian flowers was provided by Cathy Beamish,. Thanks again for a wonderfully decorated cake, Cathy!

Back to the mundane activities of the year. July and August saw us removing old concrete posts, star pickets and barbed wire remnants from adjacent to Billys Creek

In September we planned a walk along the upper reaches of Billys Creek, to look at the route to be taken by the Grand Strzelecki Track. We found the actual route so overgrown with blackberries that we mostly followed the Coprosma Track, but Mike and Darren explored further along the proposed route, but higher on the hillside.

October as usual was our Koala count, with a disappointing small turnout, with only 3 friends, our new ranger Bronwyn and 3 visitors. We were only able to survey 2 tracks, but nevertheless recorded 7 koalas.

In November I conducted the annual Butterfly Orchid survey, helped by Bronwyn. The survey was limited because of my hip problems but showed encouraging flowering of the orchids on the more accessible plots. The rest of the group continued the tutsan removal in the lower reached of Billys Creek.

Also in November we were guests of Parks Victoria with other Friends Groups at the annual barbecue.

Throughout the year I have been continuing my survey of the moths that frequent the Park and on 27th November I turned this into a demonstration for the Latrobe Field Naturalists Club. It was a very wet night, but I still found 50 different sorts of moths. My survey has so far identified 320 different moths that live in Morwell National Park.

We applied successfully for a grant for the purchase of small hand tools and have been able to acquire a star picket remover, sharpening stone, secateurs, 2 prong hand hoes, wire cutters, loppers and gloves.

Our December outing was our end of year barbecue in Fosters Gully, but before that we started to again check all the nest boxes along Billys Creek. We checked 26 boxes and 3 or more Agile Antechinus, 6 Sugar Gliders and two bird's eggs were found. We were pleased that Rob Howell joined us for our end of year barbecue.

In January we commenced the design of our new brochure and after much modification to conform to a standard developed by Parks, we agreed a design and hopefully they will soon be printed and available

for distribution. Our January working bee, finished checking the remaining 14 nest boxes, finding 4 more Sugar Gliders, a Ring-tailed Possum and (on the ground) a large Copperhead Snake. We started planning the making of more nest boxes as those installed are proving so successful, especially for the arboreal mammals. We also took a short walk along the Coprosma Track, collected Varnish Wattle seed on the Lodge Track, gathered old tree guards and then sorted seed at the Park office.

February saw us back in Billys Creek removing Tutsan from Billys Creek above the weir and meeting the first leeches I have seen in the park. We learned of Wendy Steenbergen's achievement, being awarded the Churchill Lions Citizen of the Year 2010 at the Australia Day Ceremony. Wendy affectionately known as the Pocket Rocket has spent many decades, volunteering and helping others in her community. Congratulations Wendy!

March saw us back at the tutsan again, but first we learned that the Grand Strzelecki Track had been started with an access route put in supposedly to beyond the Park boundary. We decided on a bit of exploring and ventured into the newly accessible area up to the thirteenth creek crossing and became very aware what a lot of blackberries needed spraying before the track could be properly formed. We knew we were well short of the park boundary, but decided we should return to the tutsan and save a fuller exploration to the following month. We then removed tutsan between the Weir and the foot of the Zigzag Track.

The toilets in Fosters Gully have come to a sad end. A scheduled clean out of the toilets showed that the pits underneath had collapsed and were deemed un-repairable. The toilets have therefore been removed and relandscaped. There appears to be no money for an immediate replacement, but this must be made a high priority for future work in the Park.

In April we changed our activity to an exploration of the route of the Grand Strzelecki Track, which we understood went past the Park Boundary. The walk was very well attended and it was good to have Rob Howell join us. We made our way again past 13 creek crossings and admired a spectacular waterfall, only to find that the track went no further than 200 metres beyond the point we reached previously. Bronwyn's GPS showed that the track is still a kilometre short of the Park boundary, far shorter than the track committee had believed. It will be great when the track is finally installed opening up access to this out of the way corner of the Park.

In May we erected 14 new nest-boxes for birds and small mammals and also 8 bat boxes, in the revegetated areas along Billys Creek. John Barker had done a magnificent job making the nest-boxes. We also received a gift of surplus nest boxes from the Mathison Park Committee and also from GippsTAFE. We have not yet erected these. They need some work before they can be used and John will prepare them for erecting on another working bee.

In June after our anniversary celebrations we spent our final working bee for the year planting trees. We were tree planting in the area alongside Jumbuk Road where the pines were removed. 400 trees, Blue Gums, Blackwood and Varnished Wattle were planted on uneven ground, often on a steepish slope.

Finally I must thank our rangers. We enjoyed working with Jenny Brown in the previous year and were sorry to see her move on, but wish her well in her new employment. Bronwyn Grass has been our ranger for most of this year and it has been great working with her in caring for the Park. Sadly Parks have no money to extend her contract and today is her last day working with us. We wish her every success in her new appointment in the Yarra Ranges. Thank you to all members of the Friends for their efforts over the last year,

Ken Harris

14th July 2011

Friends of Morwell National Park

Committee Meeting held 7th August 2011.

Committee Meeting declared open 2.30pm.

Attendance: - Cathy & Mike Beamish, Beryl Nelson, Darren Hodgson, Kate Richardson, Peter McDonald, Ken Harris, Wendy Steenbergen, John & Margaret Barker.

Apologies: - No apologies.

Minutes of previous meeting held on 25th July 2010 were read and accepted as true account.
Moved by Cathy, seconded by Wendy.

Business arising from Previous Meeting:-

No issues were raised from the previous minutes

Inwards Correspondence:-

Friends Net Newsletters No 72 August, No 73 November

Parks Victoria letter 16th Sept 2010 re application for Community Group Grant for the reprint of FMNP brochure was unsuccessful.

Parks Victoria letter 16th Sept 2010 re application for Hand Tools & Personal Protective Equipment (\$800) was successful.

Parks Victoria letter 24th Sept 2010 re advising that our application for a grant \$1,000 for the reprinting of FMNP brochure was successful under Bushfire Recovery Grant.

Friends of Tyers Park – Newsletter No 4 December 2010.

Parks Victoria letter 29th December 2010 regarding Occupational Health & Safety & volunteering.

VCOSS Training & Development Clearinghouse brochure on Regional & Rural Training.

Outwards Correspondence:-

No outwards correspondence was entered into.

General Business:-

Kathy Beamish suggested that FMNP should consider updating the logo on our Newsletter, to a colour photograph.

Members discussed the possible future use of concrete posts which were removed from an old fence line, earlier in the year.

Meeting voted to accept Bronwyn Grass, as a member, into the group.

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 15	Nesting boxes survey/Erecting bat boxes	Junction Rd, 10.00am
February 19	Weir Walk Weed Removal	Junction Rd, 10.00am
March 18	Weir Walk Weed Removal	Junction Rd, 10.00am
April 15	Grand Strzelecki Walk Track Maintenance	Junction Rd, 10.00am
May 20	Track Maintenance	Fosters Gully, 10.00am
June 17	Tree Planting	Junction Rd, 10.00am
July 15	Tree Planting	Junction Rd, 10.00am
August 5	AGM	To be advised, 1.30pm
August 19	Tree Planting	Junction Rd, 10.00am
September 16	Weed removal	Junction Rd, 10.00am
October 21	Koala Count	Kerry Road, 1.30pm
November 18	Orchid Survey/Odd jobs	Junction Rd, 10.00am
December 16	Nesting boxes survey/Christmas Function	Junction Rd, 10.00am

Meeting declared closed 4.00pm.

September Activity

10.00am Sunday 18th September

The group will meet at the Junction Road entrance to continue with the tree planting from last month. Note: This is a change from the calendar. The area to be planted out will be the hillside at the start of Blue Gum Hill. The ranger will need to bring the seedlings and planting gear.

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