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## President's Report Boole Poole Open Day

The attendance exceeded 45 (including Parks & FOGL) with not one cyclist (except Matt Holland).



The day had the following purposes;

1. Create awareness of the values and assets of the Coastal Park in the wider community.
2. Promote FOGL and its voluntary role in the parks and reserves.
3. Provide an example of the positive contribution made by Parks Victoria and its level of cooperation with FOGL.
4. Examine the feasibility of similar days being organised in the future as a regular event.

Visitors accessing the Coastal Park from the Metung end not only have to contend with crossing the lake but also the 2 kilometer walk to the main walking tracks. FOGL member Peter Johnstone donated his services to ferry passengers across from Metung with his craft the Lakes Explorer. The provision of the mini bus which was not in the initial plans made the walk more manageable for the range of walkers, although as it turned out many were quite happy to walk back. Thanks to Alex Hajkowicz who provided a great service as the bus driver.

All visitors opted to participate in the guided walk which headed east along Yellow Bay Track down Mahogany Track to Bunga Arm Tack and then back to the starting point.

The guided walk was a highlight of the day because of the interest level and presentation of information from highly competent guides. The group was welcomed by aboriginal elder Uncle Albert Mullet who enlightened the



group on the cultural assets of the park and his concerns for their recognition and preservation. Bill Peel provided a continuous commentary on the evolution of the natural features of the park, identifying major changes that have occurred since

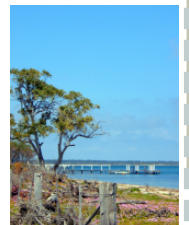
the artificial entrance was constructed and acknowledging more recent changes which are climate related. (So it is a bellwether after all). Uncle Albert and Bill were able to complement each other to provide a very full picture of the park environment and its condition. A good example of this was the importance and the timing of fire in propagating many plant species in the area.



The level of team work and effort meant the day was a great success. As well as Peter and Alex I would like to thank other FOGL members, Maurice Burns, Jo Hope, Ann Schmidli, Jenny Dalglish, Annie

Marshall and Margaret Reagan (who along with James Turner also acted as guides on the walk). This was a cooperative venture involving FOGL and Parks staff so my thanks also to Ranger in Charge Yasmin Ali and Nathan Browne. I would particularly like to thank Ranger Matt Holland (Boole Poole is one of his responsibilities) who worked closely with me in getting things organised.

The day went very smoothly and there has been plenty of positive feed back and some significant cash donations on the day. There is an opportunity to use and extend the format to introduce people to other areas within the coastal park. Numbers could be expanded and more choices made available. Although a variety of means were used to promote the event approaches could be enhanced to capture a wider audience.



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## Around the Edge with FOGL Concept

The East Gippsland Art Gallery and FOGL will invite East Gippsland artists, practicing in a range of media, to participate in a project whose outcome will be an exhibition of works based on the areas of interest to FOGL.

It is conceived as a partnership between FOGL and EGAG and funding has been provided by Parks Victoria.

### Project objectives

To present an opportunity for EG artists to develop professionally by;

- initiating an exhibition that encourages them to respond to and interpret specific environments in the context of developing a body of work for exhibition.
- showcase their work to a broad audience.
- To create an exhibition that will promote an understanding amongst the community of the values and assets of the Gippsland Lakes.
- To raise awareness of FOGL and educate the community to the challenges that confront the Gippsland Lakes.

### What has happened so far?

FOGL have identified 4 sites which they feel present varying ecosystems and issues within the Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park, the Mitchell River Silt Jetty Reserve,

Macleod Morass and the private and public land adjacent to the Lakes.

Three of the artists will be invited to produce an ephemeral sculpture at a site of their choosing. Parks Victoria will be involved in talking about the environmental and cultural values of these particular sites and will advise on regulations in regards to materials extracted or brought into these sites.

The first meeting with the invited artists took place on September 20th at Forestech. David described what FOGL does and gave out our pamphlet. Bill Peel gave an introductory talk about the Lakes and their ecosystems and put these into a world context. We then visited Kalimna Jetty rainforest and after lunch, Maringa Creek rainforest restoration at Nyerimilang Park.



The second meeting took place on September 27th.

Because of the weather, the boat trip to Bunga Arm had to be cancelled. However the hired minibus, driven by Maurice and with guest speaker Andrea Brumley, visited Macleod Morass, the Silt Jetties and the area near Waddy Point. The weather made for an unforgettable day!

The cancelled boat trip was



rescheduled for November 8th, and we headed out to Bunga Arm. We

were unable to land at the First Blowhole, going ashore instead at Steamer Landing.



The weather was perfect and we were again treated to a fascinating talk by Andrea Brumley (see some notes she was kind enough to submit to the

newsletter on page 4.)

The 2 of the 3 artists who will be producing the ephemeral sculptures have had a meeting with Matt Holland and the indigenous ranger, Manfred, so that some preliminary information could be presented. When the artists have decided where their sculptures are to be sited and if this is to be on PV managed land, there will be a site visit and further consultation with PV staff.

Wendy Parker

## News

### David Ellard takes mini-Sabbatical

David is taking a break from Presidential duties over the Summer as he pursues other interests and allows his FOGL batteries to recharge.

His Superhuman efforts and skills will be missed but luckily Nancy McMurray as Vice-President is equally able to perform the duties of President during his absence.

So if you do have any enquiries or are wishing to direct someone to FOGL please direct your communications to Nancy McMurray ph. 03 5156 6756, mob. 0402 580 788 and email drnancymcmurray@yahoo.com

### Sambar Deer seen on Boole Poole



Wildlife cameras placed on Boole Poole to monitor feral pig baiting

stations have recorded the presence of Sambar Deer. If Hog Deer don't do enough damage already!

Last newsletter to non-financial Members

Non-financial members will be removed from all lists in the New Year so check your financial status!

Merry Christmas

## Nicholson River Landcare Group

The Nicholson River Landcare Group covers an area from Sarsfield to the Lakes and from Stephenson's Rd to the east to the Nicholson/Sarsfield Road to the west. The main land uses are beef cattle, sheep for lambs and wool, grape growing and lifestyle living. The area attracts listed vulnerable fauna species including the Royal Spoonbill, White-Bellied Sea Eagle, Great Egret and Little Tern. A wetland adjoining the River is the only recorded colonial breeding site in the region for the Great, Little Black and Little Pied Cormorants.

The group was formed as a result

of concern for the River environment by the Nicholson River Angling Club. Their passion for fishing and the need for healthy water quality to maintain the resource led them to call a public meeting in April 2004 to encourage landowners adjoining the river to become involved in Landcare activities.

In the 5 years since then there have been several significant achievements, including stock exclusion fencing from the River (at last count on 8 properties), planting of thousands of trees, a rabbit control programme and donation by two members of large

areas of land for Government revegetation projects.

Future direction will see continuation of these projects and also include response and control of pest plants, encouragement of a greater understanding of the importance of waterway management and further development of community awareness and participation.

Of interest too is the fact that Nicholson River Angling Club, in a quest for a healthy river, is also involved in the Waterwatch programme, with monthly monitoring to assess emerging problems.

## Farming on the Edge



I met Jim Stephenson whilst researching information on the Nicholson River Landcare Group. Jim is President. He generously offered to show me around his farm, identifying how his practices take into account the waterside environment.

The farm is 200 hectares at the mouth of the Nicholson River, with about 2 kms of foreshore to Jones Bay. He is a dry country farmer with usually 1500 to 2000 sheep. The farm has been in his family for the past 100 years. Times are tough for all local farmers at present, with current dry conditions and low wool prices taking their toll.

Nevertheless, Jim is continuing revegetation projects and sees sustainable practices as crucial for the future of our farms. He consults with an agronomist for advice on the management of pasture.

Jim has been planting trees on the property for the past 20 odd years, and is the first to admit he made mistakes in the early days, including the use of inappropriate species. For example, many years previously, his grandfather had planted a

row of *Pinus radiata* as a windbreak, and as these were thought to be at the end of their days, another row was planted behind them. Not what would have happened today, perhaps, but the trees (including the tough old specimens that grandfather

grew!) provide much needed wind protection from the strong south westerlies.

Windbreaks of native species have been planted throughout the property, but of great significance is the work that has been carried out along the shoreline and wetland areas. The farm is pre-Torrens title and extends to the lake edge, but this has largely been fenced off stock as have 3 wetland areas. Natural regeneration has taken place but additional planting continues with boobiallas and swamp paperbarks being the main species.

Despite this, increased salinity in the lake system has resulted in dieback and reduction of some species including Black Tussock and Phragmites. These plants maintained the integrity at the lake edge and their inability to survive leads to erosion and loss of foreshore. Jim recalls dense areas of Swamp Paperbark in early years, now much reduced. Without the fencing, however, things could be even grimmer; there are plenty of examples that verify this!

Jim initially joined the Landcare movement as a member of the Broadlands group, but when the Nicholson River group started he joined that. He feels it is difficult to change attitudes and therefore practices within the farming community, but having said that, acknowledges the Landcare Group has had several significant achievements since its inception and estimates that up to 50% of farms fronting the Nicholson between its mouth and Sarsfield are fenced off from stock.

Jenny Dalgleish

### Lakes History



The Gippsland Lakes have changed over time with the influences of both rivers and ocean and the mix of water and sediments they bring. The dominant formation is a series of barriers, with lots of shoreline, but there are some subtle clues about how each were formed.

Imagine you are in a boat in Lake Victoria so that you can see Ocean Grange to the south and back to Raymond Island. As you look to the north the horizon highlights the hills that have provided the sediment into the lake. They are all over 2-5 million years old and composed of gravel and sand. No volcanic mountains in sight. The ocean once met the land up around Mitchell River and cut in to the escarpment which itself is marine sediments. At that time the first

sand barrier built up and made a line in the same shape as our ninety mile beach. The evidence we see now is the land of Blond Bay State Game Reserve and Raymond Island. They are made of ocean sands 2 million years old.

The second barrier was a big one again in the same shape. This built up from the south west and enclosed the Latrobe River and Avon Rivers and formed the large barrier we now see to Boole Poole. It is now called the inner barrier and formed over a long time to form such a solid mass.

There is a big gap now though in this second barrier. Sperm Whale Head juts out and we can take our boat to Ocean Grange. What would cut that break? There is another observation with the straights at Paynesville separating Raymond Island. What cut through there?

Well it seems that the sea level dropped about one million years ago and the "lakes" area was a very big wetland. Like the plug was pulled out. Lots of sediment would have come down from the hills. Also the rivers carried more silt and nutrients as the vegetation grew on the hills.

The Mitchell River had a big catchment then and, joined with the Nicholson River (and maybe Tambo), it is likely that this river flow cut through the McMillan Straights. From west "Gippsland" those rivers flowed along and cut the McLennan Straights. It seems that they all flowed out and made a large opening leaving Sperm Whale Head. This would have been a large outflow to the ocean.

The sea rose again about 18,000 years ago and marine waters would have flowed back into the "lakes". Again another third sand barrier built up. By about 6,000 years ago the sea was at its present level and the outer barrier had formed. There seems to have been consistent wind and currents from the south west bring sands to form the same shape barrier. The Ninety Mile beach existed as a narrow ocean sand strip. Much of this is the same sediment from 2-5 million years ago that had previously washed onto the Continental Shelf and provided abundant supply of sand.

This part of the coast is unique as it has had this continuous rapid shoreward movement to build the barriers. The area shows evidence of a long history of marine deposition extending back to the Middle Pleistocene which is up to 2 million years ago.

This main outer sand barrier is relatively "new". It is marine sand and yet vegetation has grown; albeit in early succession with tea-tree being the largest tree. The second "inner" barrier is much more established. That one is at least 2 millions years old and has also accumulated sediment brought down from the rivers. The vegetation is a climax of the succession and has itself contributed organic matter to the soil over at least a million years.

As for the Mitchell River? As you probably know after the last outer barrier formed and the Gippsland Lakes sealed to become fresh again it was a time of sediment deposition and the silt jetties formed; all that within the last 10,000 years.

Andrea Brumley

## Membership Application

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP of FRIENDS OF GIPPSLAND LAKES PARKS & RESERVES INC.

.....(name of Applicant(s))

of .....(address)

Ph. .... Mb. .... E-mail(s).....

desire to become a (state category of membership - see below).....

member of the Friends of the Gippsland Lakes Parks and Reserves Inc.

In the event of my admission as a member, I agree to be bound by the rules of the Association for the time being in force

(can be viewed at <http://fogl.org.au/forms/rules.pdf>).

.....Signature of Applicant

Date .....

Membership fees (to 30 June 2010):

Adult \$20, Family \$35, Organisation \$10, Concession \$10 (Healthcare, Pension, Student)

Please complete Membership Form and enclose membership fee (cheque or money order only) then post to:

The Secretary,

Friends of the Gippsland Lakes Parks and Reserves Inc.

P.O. Box 354

Metung VIC 3904