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President's Report

Autumn 2014

It finally seems like autumn – there has been rain and the weather is starting to cool. Time to get planting.

We should all be aware that climate change is likely to impact on activities in future years as rainfall patterns change. We might be planting different species, we may see EVCs change, we may be planting at other times of the year besides autumn and spring. Change is a constant. The non-linear pattern of the world must always be remembered and acknowledged.

I am increasingly aware of the smallness of our organisation and committee and the workload shouldered on behalf of everybody by a few. This is no different from other organisations, but it does impose limitations on what we would like to/can do. An example of this was my interest in an App for mobile phones which was developed by Friends of the Bluff at Barwon Heads. I initially thought this might be a good idea for FoGL to follow up on, with a view to development of a similar application for the Gippsland Lakes. It has become apparent that lack of expertise and potential leadership in this area meant that a good idea had to be abandoned. Probably a good lesson at not biting off more than you can chew.



Our project on signage/brochures on the Silt Jetties, funded by GLMAC, has been completed. Our project on the north Silt Jetties, funded by PV, is also nearing

completion. Both have involved project management which has been difficult at times for many reasons, including communication within FoGL and the need for key personnel to be involved in firefighting duties.

Our Mission statement defines the purposes of our organisation. One of these is “to

support activities and projects that enhance the environment, amenity and facilities of the Gippsland Lakes Parks and Reserves and their immediate environs”.

This purpose can be attained via many different pathways, one not being superior to the other. I think we all need to keep this in mind as our differing opinions and viewpoints can often result in the questioning of the projects we undertake. Discussion is extremely important as there is no absolute ‘truth’ or right way to go about these projects.

What has arisen from discussion on the Silt Jetties projects, and should also now be applied to any future funding initiatives, is the question “What is the purpose of this project?” It has been suggested that asking this question allows the Committee to decide on whether to apply for funding in the first place, but then necessarily sets up a means of evaluation as to whether the purpose was attained or not. Evaluation can often be put into the ‘too hard’ basket, but especially when public money is being spent, is a necessary step in answering the question as to whether we have achieved the project’s purpose.

At a recent meeting with PV staff, Greening Australia, BirdLife East Gippsland members and a staff member from Field and Game, committee member Nancy McMurray and I were given an outline of a project which is being funded by Caring for our Country. The purpose of this project is to revegetate 30ha of degraded salt marsh at Jones Bay over a 5 year period. This will presume to restore the ecological character of the Jones Bay Wildlife Reserve which is part of the Gippsland Lakes Ramsar site. Part of the evaluation process will be the quarterly monitoring by photos from standardised sites. This will show any changes in vegetation cover.

continued...

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It struck me that this sort of monitoring should be an essential part of the evaluation of all our future plantings.

On that note, we are planning further planting at Mathiesons Paddock on May 31st. This will be the first time that we have a planting and Pizza theme. Come along and see if it will set a pattern for future planting events. It will help in the evaluation.

We are also planning a kayak trip at the Silt Jetties, in conjunction with some Landcare groups. This will enable participants to not only have an enjoyable time, but to also have a good look at this significant landform and be informed of the threats to its existence.



We will be mailing out a brochure on the Silt Jetties to all households in the Bairnsdale/Eagle Point/Paynesville/Metung and Lakes Entrance communities. The purpose of this is to reinforce the existence of this area in which we have been so active over the past years, inform people of the behaviour which threatens it, and to suggest that changes to behaviour will help to keep it in better condition than it is now.

Parks Victoria are still working on the design of their 2 year project, funded by GLMAC, on shoreline protection and enhancement of key areas of the Mitchell River silt jetties. As indicated in a previous newsletter, FoGL will have representation on this project, part of which will be a gathering together of all stakeholders to determine future management objectives.

Wendy Parker

Mathieson's Paddock:

Monitoring and Maintenance

Early on the morning of February 15th a small group of FoGL and Landcare members attended a working bee to water, weed and attend to fallen guards of the planting which took place last spring.

The grass surrounding the plants was long but sparse and Trevor Caldwell estimated that the survival rate, from a random sample, was around 73%, the northern end doing better than the southern.

The watering, after the hot days we'd had was timely indeed. Since then, there have been good falls of rain



and significant growth is anticipated. However, these expectations are somewhat tempered by evidence of damage by what seems to be large browsers, possibly Swamp Wallabies or deer.

Trevor Caldwell

Boole Poole Monitoring

On February 11, six members plus cycles, were ferried from Shaving Point to Silvershot Landing by David Ellard from where they rode to the monitoring sites on the far side of Boole Poole. This involved transportation of materials too; not an easy task for volunteers Trevor and Maurice!

The purpose of the trip was to check the cameras and to change batteries. To date there had been no success in identifying browsers of the plantings and adjustment was required to facilitate this.

Replacement alternative guards for two Black Wattles were also required, enabling browsers to eat fringe vegetation. It is this we want to photograph!



The outing itself was really worthwhile for those of us who had not previously explored the area. It was surprisingly hilly in places and particularly beautiful,

with changes in vegetation types and views of the stunning Bunga Arm.

It was particularly interesting that there are no longer any mature Black Wattles, which are indigenous to the vegetative class. Neither are there mature Sunshine Wattles, despite us identifying several young plants. We need to identify why they are not reaching maturity!

Unfortunately due to setup problems the cameras are currently not transmitting images via their sim cards. The cards are accessible manually and will be retrieved in the near future, hopefully with interesting results.

Jenny Dalgleish

No Butts

No Butts is moving slowly. A new recycling project, TerraCycle.com, for previously non-recyclable goods, is now world wide and accessible on computer to all.

Useful products are made from this waste, e.g. garden seats and watering cans from cigarette butts. All parts are recycled.

This waste is collected and stored till a minimum of 2kg is obtained, placed in a sealed plastic bag, into a

recycled cardboard box and posted FREE to the nearest TerraCycle depot. (NSW at the moment, I think. The website updates changes, supplies free postage labels and helps with any problems.)

Other acceptable waste (not accepted in E.Gippsland) includes Oral Care products, brushes, toothpaste tubes, floss containers etc. Beauty care products are another. All this adds up to quite a bit of land fill.

I have a few Paynesville businesses collecting so far and a few flyers around. The main problem is the majority of people objecting to picking up other people's butts, even with gloves.

Scouts seemed interested. Under 18 year olds are prohibited from contact with butts. Only Rovers could do it, (18-21) but so far I have heard nothing.

It really seems the only way is help from local Government or those in the Ministerial Lakes Committee (who continually ask our help and/ or advice) to supply what other places have, either enough large butt containers or a Ban on Smoking signs near the lake or shopping area. Many shop keepers are vehemently in favour of a ban. It would certainly help protect the lake from dirty, lazy people.

What about a film night to raise money for butt containers? Does anyone have any other ideas?

Anne Schmidli

'Deadly in East Gippsland' Awards.

A three day, Shire supported event of Aboriginal Arts, held for the first time in East Gippsland.

Due to time and monetary constraints, John and I were only able to attend the well -patronized, 6pm opening of this interesting celebration, held at the very suitable former T.A.F.E. College campus, Forest Tech. The days had lessons in crafts and lectures.

There were about 50 entries in a variety of mediums from different fields; watercolour, acrylic, oil, woodburning with such unbelievable fineness as well as other crafts.

Stories from past experiences were evident in some works and a "different" way of perceiving subjects, a result of different life experience.

A few showed the "Past and Present" people and subjects in the same work. Quite moving. Shadowy watching figures in the (former) forest gives continuity to passing time and the results of our past actions.

The main feature was the award winning life-sized portrait of the artist's aged mother, for whom he is the carer, with obvious great love and pride. This striking work was naturally not for sale.

We were privileged to see snippets of his next entry for the National Aboriginal Art Awards. So impressive for us who appreciate but know so little.

The whole evening was very worthwhile, tasty snacks kept us going during normal dinnertime.

We were so glad to have seen the quality of art produced and hope many others attended the remaining days.

We have been told almost all the art was sold. (I would have liked the fine woodburning!)

Anne Schmidli

What's On

Saturday 17 May 11am. Regional Volunteer Recognition Event, Nyerimilang Heritage Park.

*

Saturday May 31st Planting at Mathieson's Paddock. 10am-2pm

check the FoGL website for further details. We will need at least 10 volunteers to make this planting a success so rope in your environmentally-minded pals and associates - the lure being free pizza and soft drink for lunch.

*

Date to be confirmed. Geoff Williams, Platypus Conservancy, Rakali talk organised by Eagle Point Landcare Coastcare. FoGL members to be invited.

*

Date to be confirmed. Kayaking on the Mitchell River at the silt jetties, in conjunction with Nungurner Landcare Group.

Invitation

extended by Bill Jackson, Chief

Executive, Parks Victoria
to all members of FoGL
to the

Regional Volunteer Recognition Event

Acknowledging outstanding voluntary contributions
to the Victorian parks system

When: Saturday 17 May at 11am

Where: Nyerimilang Heritage Park, Kalimna West Rd.,
Kalima

RSVP: 10 May 2014

Email: stephanie.mahon@parks.vic.gov.au

Mathieson's Paddock Update

I recently inspected all 400 plants from last year's planting and found that 80% of them are still alive. As previously reported the North end of the paddock appears to be doing better (close to 100%) than the South end (as low as 60%)

Unfortunately the majority of the plants have been grazed and deer seem the most likely culprit. Matt Holland has advised that either Sambar or Hog Deer could be present. At the time of the February working bee when plants were watered and some guard rehabilitation undertaken very few of the plants appeared to have been grazed.

The recent wet weather and subsequent new grass growth may well reduce grazing of the plants as alternatives are now available.

Many grazed plants and plants that may previously have appeared dead are re-shooting from the base. Some plants that have been grazed and where only a stalk remains are also re-shooting.

Thistles are encroaching on many plants.

Many guards have collapsed on to the plants - major cause may well be grazing animals but the 'milk carton' type guards do not appear to last long enough to provide adequate protection, particularly in damp conditions.

Parks Victoria have mown an adjacent area for planting out this year and actual planting 'spots' have been hand cleared of grass (given it is still some weeks until the working bee some judical spraying may be required).

Discussion with Matt Holland can be summarised thus:-

As soon as possible Matt intends spotlighting in the paddock to ascertain what is in fact eating the plants.

If deer are the culprit Matt will apply for a permit to shoot them.

Matt does not support fencing the area.

Matt believes a major focus of the forthcoming working bee should be on plant maintenance.

Trevor Caldwell

plant * protect * pizza

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 2013):

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