



McCrae Homestead Coastal Group Inc.

A0035176R ABN 84 215 491 899

Caring for the local environment

Newsletter Autumn 2016

Welcome to the McCrae Homestead Coastal Group Newsletter; Autumn 2016.

Report of the President 2015

This report was presented to Members at the AGM on 25th November 2015.

Welcome to the 18th AGM of our Association. In re-reading my report to you last year I noted the list of worrying trends for our wildlife and our environment. However a few days after that, the one term Baillieu/Naphthine coalition government was purged from office in November 2014. The new ALP government, with its reliance on the increased number of Greens elected has given hopeful signs of a more thoughtful approach to environmental issues. And so far, the government does appear to be more considerate on some coastal issues.

For instance they moved quickly to reject the Coalition's vision for Pt. Nepean, and the hastily signed 99 year lease proposal – shamefully signed only days before the election, and have instead announced that the Park's management will revert to the former Parks Vic Master plan, which had been developed over a number of years and with significant community input.

So, the Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water, Lisa Neville, deserves our congratulations for that outcome. The list of new initiatives and conservation actions which have been committed to is impressive, in stark contrast to the policies of the former feudalistic Coalition government.

The reintroduction of Climate Change and Water as significant portfolio issues, removing cattle from the Alps, removal of large scale development in National Parks, revisiting the

Native Vegetation controls and a review of the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act are all welcome. As was the recent apology from the Department for the Lancefield bushfires resulting from a mismanaged, ill-timed, understaffed controlled burn which became uncontrolled, & accompanying announcement that the 5% target for public land to be burned every year would be scrapped in favour of a more strategic approach.

There is also a review and renewal of the previous Biodiversity White Paper to provide a sound basis for future actions, development of a new Marine and Coastal Act, and a strategy to repair riparian land and rivers (which we should keep an eye on as a future source of funding for our works on Coburn Creek.)

Turning to the local scene:

Rosebud Foreshore is again under attack from the Council. Behind the backs of the Friends of Rosebud Beach and Foreshore, Council workers recently removed mature vegetation - trees and understorey – that the group had planted and maintained for many years on what is now called Casuarina Park. It was very upsetting for the volunteers to see this act of public vandalism by Council. Even more recently, more mature She Oaks were removed from the Village Green toilet block area.

The other issue of concern is the Jetty Rd. precinct Master plan. Included in the Plan is a large “nature based” playground, a 3 metre wide timber boardwalk on top of the sandbags, a wide viewing deck on top of the large drain which extends into the Bay, a BMX track, sprint

Office Bearers:

President: Len Warfe 5987 2537
Secretary: Margaret Wilson 5986 4159

Treasurer: Barry Robinson 5981 2909

PO Box 29, McCrae Vic 3938 www.mccraecoastalgroup.org.au

track, events servicing station with 3 phase power, retaining walls, several large shade sails- but no trees.

The road section between Pt. Nepean Rd and the pier will be turned into a paved plaza with parking retained as well. Council has just received over \$4 million from the state government to implement this Plan. So there is always plenty of money it seems for hard development on the coast but not much for the protection of the environment – that's left to volunteers.

Council's policy of expanding camping on the foreshore will continue to degrade and destroy heritage banksias, many of which are being removed to make it safe for campers, or suffering from root damage from months of vehicles and foot traffic every year. No sooner has some small recovery occurred than the campers are back again. So, In February this year, we wrote to Council supporting the Friends of Rosebud Beach initiative requesting Council allocate at least 25% of camping fees revenue for the restoration and conservation of the Banksia woodland.

Contract work

As well as the regular Council funded *Naturelinks* works, the group has funded more work on the creek with planting and weed removal by Sue di Loiro.

Working Bees

We did not do any tree planting this year, but plan to next year.

We have worked 19 days of weeding, all east of the car park, and clocked up 260 hours. The highest attendance was 9 on three occasions and the lowest was 4 on two occasions. Naturelinks has provided a new person, Tess Graham, to replace Jade Hyde who resigned during the year. Danielle Suffern continues to be our guiding principle supervisor.

We gained three new members and lost one long term member- Gary Howard who died in February. Gary had been a member for a number of years and was particularly fond of the McCrae foreshore. We miss him.

We held our 2014 Christmas party at Barry and Dee's home on 14th December – as always a special thanks to them both- as the backbone of the group.

Dee has been our secretary for 2015, but won't be continuing due to health issues. We wish her all the very best for the future. Thanks are also

due to Margaret Wilson for production of our newsletters.

And, as always my thanks and congratulations to all of you for your dedication to keep on working to protect our special place on McCrae foreshore.

Len Warfe
President

Office Bearers for 2016

At the AGM on 25th November 2015 the following Office Bearers were elected:

President:	Len Warfe
Secretary:	Margaret Wilson
Treasurer:	Barry Robinson
Committee:	Dee Robinson

Website & Contacts

The Group's website has undergone a minor update www.mccraecoastalgroup.org.au and you can now access copies of each newsletter since 2013, and a membership application form. In addition, we have a permanent email address: info.mcccoastalgrp@bigpond.com and arrangements have been made for ongoing access to a PO Box: *PO Box 29 McCrae 3938*. Contact telephone numbers are listed at the bottom of the page.

Morning Tea with the Natural Systems Team

Held at the Shire Nursery on 2nd March 2016, this was an opportunity for members of different groups to discuss with the Natural Systems Team about how we can better work together, and to meet each other (some for the first time) to share local knowledge and enthusiasm. Margaret Wilson represented the McCrae Group at this morning tea.

The following overview of the meeting was provided by Laura Crilly, the Natural Systems Community Project Officer.

"Mayor Cr Graham Pittock opened proceedings with an acknowledgement of the valuable work done by environmental volunteers across the peninsula. Thank you to Cr Antonella Celi and

Office Bearers:

President:	Len Warfe	5987 2537	Treasurer:	Barry Robinson	5981 2909
Secretary:	Margaret Wilson	5986 4159			

PO Box 29, McCrae Vic 3938 www.mccraecoastalgroup.org.au

Cr David Gibb for also attending.

Simon Thorning (Natural Systems Team Leader) and Matt Stahmer (Natural Systems Volunteer Coordinator) talked briefly about the importance of local provenance seed collection to maintain genetic diversity when growing plants for revegetation and that the Shire Nursery is committed to continuing this approach in its production of indigenous plants. It was highlighted that the seed scouting, collection, cleaning, labelling and maintenance of the seed bank take up a large part of the Nursery team's time.

Kate Skvor (Senior Nursery Officer) gave an excellent overview of the Nursery operation, giving an insight into how the team balances its commitment to produce over 100,000 high quality, locally indigenous plants per annum, in addition to a range of ornamental native plants, while providing an extensive range of community engagement opportunities. These include an ongoing volunteer program at the nursery, work experience placements, Green Army training, Work For the Dole, corporate volunteering, primary and secondary school activities and various trainee placements.

Discussion opened up to all those attending and a range of local issues were raised.

Strong interest was shown in increasing training and knowledge sharing opportunities for volunteers in friends and landcare groups."

In response to feedback received from attendees, the Shire Nursery will be holding workshops for friends and landcare volunteers on a seasonal basis this year. There will be around 15 places available for each workshop. Any members of the McCrae Group who would be interested in attending any of these workshops should contact Laura Crilly direct at: laura.crilly@mornpen.vic.gov.au

Propagation of Indigenous Plants by Cuttings – selecting cutting material, suitable growing mediums, cutting techniques

Thursday 28th July 2016 10am-12noon
Location: Shire Nursery
RSVP by 18th July 2016

General Propagation Tips and Techniques – tubing up, pricking out, seed sowing techniques and treatments

Thursday 29th September 2016 10am-12noon
Location: Shire Nursery
RSVP by 19th September 2016

Office Bearers:

President: Len Warfe 5987 2537
Secretary: Margaret Wilson 5986 4159

Seed Collection of Indigenous Plants

Thursday 1st December 2016 10am-12noon
Location: Briars Visitor's Center and Wildlife Sanctuary
RSVP by 14th November 2016

Shire Grants

A submission has been made to the Shire for a grant under their *Placemaker Grant Scheme*, for funds to assist us revegetate the area towards Anthonys Nose. We should know the outcome by the end of May.

Rainfall in McCrae:

Year	Annual
2005	640.50mm
2006	466.50mm
2007	756.50mm
2008	602.75mm
2009	614.00mm
2010	934.50mm
2011	843.00mm
2012	959.00mm
2013	854.50mm
2014	652.55mm
2015	631.50mm
2016	97.00mm (Jan to March)

McCrae Group Calendar 2016

Working Bees

First and second Sunday of the month except January - 10.00am at the Rotunda.

Just turn up!!

Volunteers do need to be registered with the Shire but this can be done on the day. You will be provided with gloves, safety glasses, sun hat, safety vest and tools.

Seasonal Plantings

Advised separately, but usually in June or July with a follow-up in August.

Annual General Meeting

Held in November each year.

More Information?

For any information about the Group contact the President or the Secretary on the numbers below.

Treasurer: Barry Robinson 5981 2909