



McCrae Homestead Coastal Group Inc.

A0035176R ABN 84 215 491 899

Caring for the local environment

Newsletter Summer 2018

Welcome to the 2018 Summer issue of the newsletter, the last one for the year.

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PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT

Welcome to the 21st AGM of our Association, marking 21 years that we have been working to restore the McCrae foreshore from damage done over many years of camping in what is now, thanks to Parks Victoria, a Conservation Zone.

Since our last AGM, the new Marine and Coastal Act has been enacted, but as far as I can tell we are yet to see any changes to how government manages our coastal assets. In fact PPCC invited Environment Minister Lily D'Ambrosio to its recent AGM to explain the Act's benefits for our marine and coastal environments, however the invitation was not even acknowledged, let alone an apology provided.

While we have been working for 21 years to repair the damage of the past in the reserve, the 8 unsightly timber groynes built across the beach into the Bay were slowly rotting away. The groynes had been installed between 1988 & 1991 in a failed attempt to save a Lifesaving Clubhouse which had been built in the 1960s between the bay trail and the sand line. By the late 1980s the LSC was under wave attack and eventually collapsed into the sea despite the groynes and massive rock boulders dumped on the shoreline to "save" the building and car park.

The clubhouse remains were eventually removed in 1995 but the useless groynes remain across the McCrae beach as a hazard and eyesore to this day. In the early 2000s, I was advised by the then Rosebud Foreshore Committee and its successor Parks Victoria, that as the groynes were a failed experiment, they would not be maintained and

would eventually be removed. Parks Victoria by then was the manager of the entire Rosebud Foreshore Reserve.

As the groynes have decayed, the beach has naturally repaired itself, and has remained largely in dynamic equilibrium throughout the seasons and there is now a 27 metre wide stable beach at McCrae. In August this year PPCC wrote to DELWP, pointing out the decaying and useless state of the groynes and suggesting it was time to finally remove them.

A consultant's report obtained from DELWP confirms the groynes are not contributing to the wide and stable condition of the beach, however inexplicably the report attempts to justify spending \$200,000+ to make the beach 3 metres wider. So, we wrote to DELWP again October and November.

So it was a shock on the weekend to see DELWP signs erected at Anthonys Nose and in the McCrae beach car park announcing a program to replace 6 groynes, with works starting almost immediately for 2 months to replace the old groynes with ones that extend further into the sea, as per those now at Rosebud pier. Part of the foreshore reserve will also be closed to the public – presumably as a temporary works depot. Meanwhile the public will be inconvenienced and significant taxpayer funds will be spent to possibly widen the beach by another 3 metres. Surely there are numerous other locations around the Bay that DO need immediate attention where the money could be better spent – such as Pt. Nepean National Park, Safety Beach, Mt. Martha - rather than squandering it at McCrae with its stable beach and no immediate problems.

Perhaps this is a pre-election stunt by the Andrews government to look generous in an otherwise safe

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Liberal seat? So I'm hoping DELWP has been receiving lots of complaints since their signs went up, and will think again. If this project ever does start, we will need to keep a close eye on our environmental assets to ensure the reserve is not damaged by this industrial activity.

Working bees and other activities:

During 2018, works have been funded by a number of grants mostly applied for last year or early this year. Successful grants include: Bendigo Bank Sponsorship; Melbourne Water; Coast Care Grant and a small PPWCMA Support Grant.

Nature Links contract works and our working bees have focussed on the eastern end of the reserve, except for 10th June working bee where we planted 121 tubes from the rotunda towards the lighthouse, mostly along the path. This westerly section of the reserve was where we first started our works 21 years ago and it is now largely self-managing.

On 3rd June we planted 175 tubes at two sites near Anthony's Nose and on 1st July we planted 83 tubes between the rotunda and the beach car park. During those bees, we also spread at least 3 massive piles of mulch.

Our group now has 26 members, having welcomed 8 new members in 2018 – Rob and Jennie Stent, Vanessa Grayley and Tyler Miller, Tess Graham, Leon Rotstain, Ed Anderson and Maureen Gleeson.

We have worked 21 days totalling 388 hours worked (compared with 322 last year). Attendance numbers at working bees has increased substantially with the highest being 14 on two days and the lowest 6 on 4 days. There was only one day (3rd December 2017) when it rained heavily and we did not work - some of us attended an anti Adani Coal Mine rally at Rye instead.

Naturelinks continues to oversee our working bees under the meticulous guidance of Danielle Suffern. Danielle is also a wonderful support to us when we prepare our grant applications, preparing plant lists and estimated work hours etc. Tess Graham was our supervisor on alternate working bees, but has now been replaced by Emily Sharp who is also an enthusiastic and great personality to work with. However, Tess says she likes our group and the area so much that she has decided to become a member.

In April Jenny Warfe & Margaret Wilson met with Hannah Brown and Clayton Fenech from the Shire to discuss placement of bollards and rocks to deter and minimise car parking damage in inappropriate places along the foreshore. Several new and some missing bollards have now been installed along the path and some large rocks to block access to some of our works areas which were parked on over last summer. We are grateful to the Shire for its attention to this.

Margaret and Jenny also finalised a project that Len Evans had suggested some time ago, installing a QR scanner at the Rotunda to connect people, via their Smartphone, to our website and newsletters.

In September our club was presented with a recognition award in the regional Tidy Town event for 2018.

The award is a testament to the work done especially by Helen Ryan and Andrew Parkinson in collecting litter along our patch.

During the year Dee and Barry Robinson have provided post working bee lunch for us on 19 occasions at their home. As per last year's report, I have added 40 hours to our working bee hours for Dee's catering efforts, to make a total of 428 hours - a record.

Also a record in this club is the outstanding efforts of Barry and Dee right across the operations of our group, including maintaining membership records, grant application work, fund raising, attendance at meetings, and as valued committee colleagues – Barry also being our long standing Treasurer. All their contributions to this group have been done with aplomb, and good grace. However they have both decided to cut back on their activities and Barry will not be standing again as Treasurer. So, we have a vacancy to be filled.

So- on behalf of the club, I thank you both for the many years of help and companionship. It has been our pleasure and privilege to have enjoyed your hospitality, friendship and support.

Margaret Wilson as our secretary, with her usual meticulous efficiency, manages our grant applications, newsletter production, letter writing, pamphlets and website and the numerous responsibilities of a secretary. Thank you Margaret.

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Margaret and Jenny are currently working on another Melbourne Water grant for further works at Coburn Creek, (which is one of the first sites we worked on 20 years ago, so it is largely a maintenance project) and a new project to restore the banks of Eyrie Creek.

These applications are time consuming and not always successful and now require mastering new mapping techniques as well as onsite meetings with the various funding agencies, and many questions to answer. So thank you again to Margaret for managing this process – with some recent help from Jenny.

As always I thank all our committee members for your work and support, and I thank all the membership for your continued dedication to our special piece of the coastline.

Len Warfe
President

VALE: MATTHEW STAHMER



Matt at the networking day 2017

It was with great sadness that we learnt of the tragic death of Matthew Stahmer who was the Natural Systems Volunteer Co-ordinator for many years and more recently, the Natural Systems Operations Co-ordinator for the Shire.

His untimely death on Monday 19th November 2108, while doing what he loved, surfing at St. Andrews Beach, has been a shock to all who knew him. Matt was a wonderful, friendly, sincere and supportive colleague and friend, and a great environmentalist, always willing to share knowledge. Patient & diplomatic with us when we "wanted to do this or that" which he knew was not advisable or would not be possible. We owe much

to Matt for the capacity of the group to work on the foreshore and to expand 'our patch'.

For the McCrae group, Matt's memory will live on in all those beautiful photographs which appear on our website and in our brochure, which Matt took for us with his (then) new camera.

More than 300 people celebrated Matt's life at the St Andrews Beach Recreational Hall on Sunday 2nd December 2018.

He is irreplaceable.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2018

The AGM was held on Wednesday 21st November 2018.

Complementing the President's report, members watched a slide-show on the works completed under the various grants which have been made to the group. Thank you to Jenny Warfe for putting together such a comprehensive look at the McCrae foreshore over the last 12 months or so. And congratulations to everyone who has contributed to the high standard of maintenance which is apparent as you walk or cycle along the Bay Trail.

As mentioned in the President's report, Barry Robinson did not seek election for 2019. Len paid tribute, and made a presentation, to Barry & Dee in appreciation of the tremendous work done for the group by both of them over many years.

The following people were elected to the committee for the ensuing year:

President	Len Warfe
Secretary	Margaret Wilson
Treasurer	Jenny Warfe
Committee Members	Dee Robinson & Graeme Rose

Congratulations to everyone.

Later over supper, again thanks to Jenny, we were entertained by a history slide show – some of the Rose Series of postcards of the Mornington Peninsula going back to the 1950's or even earlier. Fabulous!

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UPDATES

New grant opportunities 2019

We are still waiting on advice as to whether our applications to Melbourne Water for funds have been successful.

1. Enhance ecology and visual amenity of Eyrie Creek at a prominent viewpoint; and
2. Ongoing management of Coburn Creek riparian zone

CoastCare Victoria Community Grants 2018

The work related to this grant continues and will be completed early next year.

CoastCare Victoria Community Grants 2019

This grant opportunity has recently opened and we are in the process of drafting a submission to build on the work carried out under the 2018 grant and to establish some new plantings.

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POLICE POINT WORKING BEES

Everyone can participate

You are invited to come along and join the Bushland Team at a Police Point working bee under the ancient twisting moonahs.



Police Point is a hidden treasure on the Peninsula. It is a 17 hectare bushland reserve in Portsea abutting Point Nepean National Park, comprising of Coastal Moonah Woodland.

For the past 6 years the Shire has been implementing a substantial ecological restoration project helping to improve the depleted vegetation and protecting the population and habitat of the long-nosed bandicoots, white footed dunnarts and the many other critters that call this reserve home.

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An enormous amount of work was achieved at the first working bee in September, so it has been decided to hold more.

When:

- Friday 12th April 2019 1-3pm
- Friday 14th June 2019 1-3pm

Afternoon tea will follow.

Where: Meeting at the main car park off Point Nepean Road, Portsea.

Who: Everyone is invited

The Bushland Management Team will be onsite to assist with the working bee and to bring along tools and personal gear (gloves, hats, glasses etc.)

Put these dates in your diary now

and let Hannah & Danielle know you'll be there

DanielleSuffern@Naturelinks.com.au

Hannah.Brown@mornpen.vic.gov.au

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THE DELIVERY PLAN FOR THE PORT PHILLIP BAY ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

We have received further information from DELWP about this initiative.

Over the past 6 months work on developing the Delivery Plan has taken place, outlining how the Environment Management Plan (EMP) will be implemented. Captured so far are over 135 activities across the 21 EMP priority actions that will help maintain a healthy Bay including:

stewardship focused activities - Improve appreciation of Bay values, and improve collaboration

water quality focused activities - Nutrient and sediment loads levels maintained, reduce litter, minimising the risk of pathogens

marine biodiversity focused activities - Conserve & restore habitats, manage marine pest risks.

The first version of the Delivery Plan is expected to be published over the next few months, it will be a live document and adapted over time to ensure those who want to be involved can contribute and collaborate towards implementing the EMP.

A one-day forum will be held on Thursday 7 February 2019 (tentative) for all interested parties to find out

more about the activities across the Delivery Plan, including projects funded under DELWP's Port Phillip Bay Fund, and to summarise the reporting requirements over the 10-year period.

Jenny Warfe is the MHCG liaison with this group.

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STAND UP FOR OUR FORESTS

This item is drawn from a communication sent by Environmental Justice Australia seeking financial support for fighting in court to stop logging old growth forests.

In the ancient forests of East Gippsland, giant Eucalyptus trees tower above enchanting groves of ferns and fill the air with the nutmeg scent of sassafras.

These forests are some of the last remaining old-growth forests in Australia.

Their sturdy trunks clean our air by storing vast amounts of carbon. Their glossy, green leaves catch precious drinking water to sustain our communities. And their tall canopies and deep hollows provide a refuge for endangered owls, potoroos and gliding possums.

These forests are a lifeline. But vast tracts of these magnificent ecosystems are earmarked for logging. If we don't put a stop to this destruction permanently, our old-growth forests and the beautiful creatures that call them home could be lost forever.

A year ago, acting for the citizen science group, Flora and Fauna Research Collective, and supported by hundreds of donors, Environment Justice Australia obtained an urgent court injunction to keep the bulldozers out of the ancient Kuark forest.

Since the case began, it's grown to include over 30 areas of old-growth forest across East Gippsland threatened by logging. For the last 12 months, the towering giants of the Kuark have remained standing. But our old growth forests still remain at risk.

This court case is our best chance to stop logging in these old growth forests forever.

The trial will be heard in the Victorian Supreme Court, running for up to 7 days from 10 December 2018.

Environment Justice Australia states that donations received would allow them to:

- Provide legal support to the Fauna and Flora Research Collective including legal advice and representation in court.
- Advocate for the enforcement of our environment laws to protect our forests and wildlife.
- Grow community support and direct pressure at decision makers who have the power to influence legal protections for our forests and wildlife.

If you are interested in supporting this cause, go to their website <https://www.envirojustice.org.au>

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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	773.50mm
2017	673.00mm
2018	to end Nov 498mm

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BREAK-UP LUNCH 9th DECEMBER 2018

All members are invited to our break-up lunch on Sunday 9th December following our last working bee for the year, whether you will be working that day or not.

For catering purposes could you please let Dee Robinson know if you will be there – bazndaz7@bigpond.com or 59891 2909

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FUNDING SUPPORT

Thank you to our supporters for providing funds to enable MHCG to continue the vital work we do on the McCrae foreshore:



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REMINDER - PULL IT OUT!!



Sea Spurge - Euphorbia paralias

This invasive weed originated from Europe about 70 years ago, probably arriving in ship ballast water. First appearing in Western Australia and now found throughout south-eastern Australia, and is progressively working its way north.

Sea spurge can produce up to 5,000 salt-tolerant seeds which can survive for a number of years on ocean currents that spread them from beach to beach. Once established, a sea spurge colony can spread rapidly, displacing native vegetation and changing the structure of the beach. This disrupts the life of the endangered hooded plovers, little terns and oystercatchers that rely on open sand spits for nesting.

It is a small leafy shrub, pale green in colour and grows to about 70cm in height. It has multiple stems covered in small, soft, tightly packed leaves (small green/yellow

flowers appear at the end of the stems between September and May.

Look for them anywhere on the beach front, from the high water mark into the dunes. It colonises both bare sand (as above) and the native dune vegetation. It has also been found on rocky foreshores and rock shelves, on the steep back dunes and inside mouths of coastal lakes and estuaries – it's everywhere! We found it on McCrae beach and even understand that it has been seen in a pot outside a shop

If you find any sea spurge, please remove it. Seedlings and juveniles can be removed by hand – but please wear gloves to protect your hands from the sap, and ensure that you remove the entire taproot.

Plants may be left on the beach to decompose.

Please let someone know where you found the plant/s – you can leave a message on the McCrae email or contact the Shire Natural Systems Team. This is to ensure that follow up inspections are carried out.



WORKING BEES

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

Just turn up!

Volunteers do need to be a member of the group and 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 – and a light lunch to follow.



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

First working bee for 2019 will be 3rd February.

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