

AGM NOTICE - 9.10.2014



MEA stalwart workers at Red Bluff July 2014 with Jan Oliver, President of MEA (2nd from left)
(Left to Right: Jilly, Jan, Anna, Brian)

Mornington Environment Association Inc. is holding its AGM on Thursday evening, **9th October 2014** at 7.30 pm in the meeting room of the Mornington Library. We will present brief reports at 7.30 pm, then our guest speaker is Val Ford, the editor of *Birds Australia Peninsula Newsletter*. Her topic is "Just Visiting" and she will show pictures and talk about the birds that visit the Peninsula every year. This follows on our Friends' Groups working bees at Tanti Creek, Mills Beach, Fisherman's Beach and Red Bluff where volunteers have been restoring habitat for several years. Val is a keen photographer and bird watcher and edits an extensive newsletter. Another birdwatcher, Danny Vits, will be presenting details of the 80 species on Red Bluff and Tanti Creek estuary early in 2015. We are hoping to get funding to produce a brochure on the birds for all in 2015. Meanwhile, come and support us at the AGM— this is a year of celebration about the (lack of anything in) the harbour!

We do hope you can attend the AGM, enjoy our speaker, and our supper! (Contributions are welcome!)

HARBOUR STAKEHOLDER GROUP REPORT GOES TO SHIRE FOR APPROVAL

Mornington Pier renovations received a real test on a stormy day 31 July 2014 and survived! Once the pier is finished, the Stakeholder Group supported the report that no further infrastructure will be built in the harbour.

Further to the last meeting of the Harbour Stakeholder Group (MEA has 2 representatives) on 5 September 2014, Council officers are about to present the Working Group Report to Council. This item is currently scheduled for Council Meeting of 13 October 2014 (subject to confirmation). This meeting will be held in the Shire's Rosebud Office, Besgrove Street, Rosebud and will start at 7PM. This is a public meeting and you are welcome to attend. The officers' report will be available as part of the Agenda Papers for the above Council meeting on the Shire's web site (www.mornpen.vic.gov.au) from 8 October 2014.



Photo by Jan Oliver

The Working group Report will be an attachment to the officers' report and will be the Report supported at the 5 September meeting. The officers' report will have an attachment from MEA members, commenting on the 5 September meeting. The officers' report will include the detailed Functional Layout Plan for the Pier Forecourt (by Parks Vic). **MEA urges all MEA members to attend!**

The Victorian Coastal Strategy 2014 was gazetted on 1st September, 2014.

This Strategy provides a long-term vision for the planning, management and sustainable use of our coast. Established under the Coastal Management Act 1995, it provides the policies and actions Victorians will need to implement over the next five years to help achieve that vision.

The VCS 2014 also provides a framework to assist in the development and implementation of other locally and regionally specific strategies and plans such as coastal management plans.

A copy of this strategy can be downloaded from the Victorian Coastal Council webpage at the following link:

<http://www.vcc.vic.gov.au/page/victorian-coastal-strategy-2014>

OTHER SHIRE NEWS

The Southern Peninsula Aquatic Centre (SPA) Designs have been released on the Mornington Peninsula Shires website : Peninsula Wide (Shire news) published 3 alternative designs and these can be commented on.

http://www.mornpen.vic.gov.au/Services_For_You/Major_Projects/Southern_Peninsula_Aquatic_centre/Southern_Peninsula_Aquatic_centre_designs

The Shire also has a feedback site and welcomes community feedback

[:https://vote.townhallsocial.com/mornpenshire/idea-callout/29?web=1](https://vote.townhallsocial.com/mornpenshire/idea-callout/29?web=1)

OBJECTIONS TO PORT PROPOSALS AT WESTERNPORT

Environment and community groups from across Australia are calling on Federal Environmental Minister Greg Hunt to save the fragile environment of Westernport Bay amid ongoing concerns over the Coalition's One Stop Shop policy.

The massive Hastings port expansion plan and associated land transport corridors will not only devastate the internationally important Ramsar-listed wetlands of Westernport, but also impact on the liveability of Melbourne's south-eastern suburbs, the groups say.

"The Napthine Government wants to push through its expansion plans under the Major Transport Projects Facilitation Act 2009 – the same fast-track process that approved the East West Link project, which is about to face a Supreme Court challenge," said Ariane Wilkinson, lawyer at Environmental Justice Australia.

"The only way Victorians can prevent the destruction of this protected wetland, home to many threatened species, is by appealing for Greg Hunt to intervene under federal environmental laws. Yet even this avenue of last resort is under threat from the Federal Government's One Stop Shop policy. If the One Stop Shop policy is implemented, Minister Hunt can simply hand over his powers for this project to the Victorian Government. "The Victorian Government has a clear conflict of interest in this project as both the proponents and regulators. The One Stop Shop policy will remove the last vestiges of federal oversight.

"We have no confidence that Victoria's major projects legislation will provide adequate protection for the nationally important environment in Westernport. And just like with the East West Link project, the road and rail connections to an expanded port will be assessed by this major projects legislation, which will be a real concern to communities along the transport corridor," Ms Wilkinson concluded.

"The port expansion will not only impact the home of our iconic fairy penguins, but also the homes and lives of residents in Melbourne's south-eastern suburbs," said Simon Branigan, Marine and Coastal Projects Officer at Victorian National Parks Association.

"According to the State Government's Victorian Freight and Logistics Plan, a rail transport corridor will need to be built from Dandenong and run through the middle of suburbs such as Caulfield, Toorak and Richmond, potentially requiring compulsory acquisitions. All this for a project that is an environmental disaster in waiting.

NEW CHAIR FOR FRIENDS OF TANTI CREEK

Martin Lenard is the new chair of Friends of Tanti Creek, following Judith Martin's move to Sydney. Marty has just retired as a geologist and mining manager and he and Jenny hope to now spend more time here. Both are active and regular attendees at our working bees for both Mills Beach and Tanti. Marty is hoping to meet up with officers of the Shire, Melbourne Water and government departments linked to Tanti Creek. He can be contacted by email to mlenard@bigpond.net.au

We gather that Judith is still trying to unpack and settle into her renovated stable and has battled the 'flu and home sickness for Mornington! We look forward to hearing she has started up a new group near her local creek!



Marty, focussed on the job at the Mills Beach Working Bee - Easter 2014

BEAUMARIS MARINA PROPOSAL—HAVE YOUR SAY!

Many members have already put their names to an online petition to help save Beaumaris Bay from the large marina that Beaumaris Motor Yacht Squadron Ltd. is proposing there.

Others that might wish to add their voice can access the petition at www.bcs.asn.au/m8_bmys_.htm#2014_petition

Geoffrey Goode, Webmaster Beaumaris Conservation Society Inc.

Formerly Beaumaris Tree Preservation Society 1953-70

WATER RISK ASSESSMENT STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP



Dumping dredged material on Mothers Beach
January 2011 Photos Jan Oliver

A meeting was held on the 14th August 2014 to present the risk assessment findings into water quality along Mornington beaches and prioritise further actions. It was attended by representatives from Mornington Peninsula Shire (Environmental Health, Drainage and Engineering), EPA, Melbourne Water, SE Water, Melbourne University (who carried out the experiments), MEA (Martin Lenard representing Jan Oliver) and the Mornington Yacht Club. Pollution sources in the Mothers Beach to Mills Beach waters were investigated over the past year because EPA water quality monitoring had shown unsafe bacterial levels six times in recent summers. Mothers Beach had also



Digging up sand on Mothers Beach
August 2013 still indicates dark sediments, possibly old dredged material.

been closed for three days in February 2013 due to an algal bloom. Tanti estuary also had a less severe bloom in February 2013. Tanti Creek Friends at a working bee in 2013 found equipment to assess potential pollution in Tanti Creek. The pollution investigation identified a sewage leak from behind Mornington Central Shopping Centre into the Cook Street stormwater drain (flowing into Shire Hall Beach: See photo below).

This leak was repaired by SE Water. Recommendations for further actions discussed at the meeting included (in priority order): a stormwater sand filter and gross pollutant trap at Dr Morell Reserve in Cook Street; a boat dump facility; litter traps on stormwater drains; and maintenance dredging at Mothers Beach to improve water circulation.

Note: MEA and Tanti Creek Friends have pushed the Shire for pollution traps on major stormwater drains but so far, the Shire has stated that cleaning these is an expensive and non-budgeted item. We also will monitor the Mothers Beach area and adjacent harbour if any dredging is undertaken, as dredging near the boat ramps stirred up old sediments in November 2010-January 2011; the Shire has stated that dredged material will never again be dumped on Mothers Beach following a public outcry.

(see photo opposite)

MEA is also monitoring potential oily pollution entering the harbour from the Yacht Club boat storage yard (reported to EPA in 2012)



15.2.2014 Shire Hall Stormwater outflow
(not flowing onto Beach at the time);
Sewage pumping station behind.



SUPPORT DOLPHIN RESEARCH

The Dolphin Research Institute is looking for volunteers to assist with their 2014 Community Dolphin Monitoring Project.

Dolphin Monitoring day is the second Sunday of each month for about 3 hours. They have land-based sites between Mt Eliza to Mt Martha and need volunteers who want to make a regular commitment to get involved.

Call the office on 1300 130 949 or email research@dolphinresearch.org.au to get involved.

BACKYARD TWITCHING COUNT IN OCTOBER

We've got just the thing to get you into the great outdoors this spring. From 20-26 October 2014, during National Bird Week, BirdLife Australia is encouraging every Australian to head out into their 'backyard', favourite outdoor space, local park, beach, forest or paddock and take part in the very first Aussie Backyard Bird Count.

THERE'S AN APP FOR THAT

We have specially designed an Aussie Bird Count app, featuring a Field Guide with almost 400 Australian birds to help you identify what you are seeing, do your 20-minute count on the spot in your favourite patch, and submit your checklist immediately. Once the event has finished, the app will still be a handy tool as a fully functional field guide. The app (Aussie Bird Count) is now freely available in app stores.

Our website is now live too, www.aussiebirdcount.org.au, head on over, check it out, download the app and check out events in your area.

COUNT YOURSELF IN FOR OUR CHALLENGE

We are setting a national community challenge for Australian's to spot 100,000 birds and we would like to count you in. Not only will you get to know your feathered friends, but you'll be contributing to a vital pool of information from across the country that will help us see how Australian birds are faring. Birds are unique indicators of environmental health. If they are doing well, then so are we. **So get your friends and family together, head outdoors and start counting!** If members are interested please download the app. Matt Stahmer, Conservation Officer, Mornington Peninsula Shire, P: 5950 1274



WORKING BEE UPDATE

Tanti Creek Friends

The last Sunday of each month sees a group of between 3 and 8 working around Tanti Creek in the Green Paddock area at the end of Morrell Street Mornington. Plantings of local indigenous species, including swamp gums, poa grasses and goodenia are also surviving. Earlier plants of wattles and melaleucas are growing really well, despite occasional inundations from the creek flooding. Many plants are in full flower and I do encourage you to walk along the track from the pipes under Esplanade upstream. We weed, pick up rubbish, and clear flood debris. Some of the local neighbours have been approached to help, or have provided with help about their garden plantings and removal of weeds or tree branches.



Marty and Jenny Lenard at September working bee

Mills Beach Friends

A dedicated group are working on Red Bluff, overlooking Mills Beach. Current working bees are focussed on weeding around plantings of 2013 and the replacement plants (especially banksia) of 2014. Regretfully, we have to remove the yellow flowering onion weed, but leave some for the local Swamp rat population, who love the bulbs and burrow underneath them. In September, we considered the possible wording and photographs for the two interpretative signs which are to go up along the tracks and hope these will explain to local walkers and runners about the Bluff.

We have very pleased to see that our original grass seed plantings have grown well and fill in some of the glades. We are still waiting for gliders, bats and birds to take up their nest boxes on various trees on the bluff. Watch for them – they are very disguised! Readers



Workers weeding on the Bluff, September 2014



Ann Robb checks Swamp Rat burrows near the track on Red Bluff

are encouraged to join us any time – spring sees lots of weeds – but they easy to remove. In January, we do stop unless it is cool!

Contact Us:

- www.morningtonenviro.org.au
- morningtonea@gmail.com
- **PO Box 580 Mornington 3931**
- **Monthly Meetings**

7:30PM 2nd Thursdays Feb. –Dec.

Mornington Library Meeting Room.

President: Jan Oliver
0417986077

Vice Pres.: Christine Stewart
59756687

Secretary: Franz Bjerkhamn
0407572089

Tanti Creek Friends: Sec. Judy Seager
seager2@bigpond.com

Mills Beach Friends: Jan 0417986077,
morningtonea@gmail.com

Fisherman's Beach: Peter Deerson:
pdeerson@netscape.net

WEBSITES OF INTEREST

www.cleanupourwater.com.au
[www.info@peninsulaspeaks.org.au](mailto:info@peninsulaspeaks.org.au)
www.marineconservation.org.au
www.ppwcmma.org.au
www.landcareonline.com.au
www.nattrust.com.au

WORKING BEES

Volunteers meet to work and care for the following areas: see page 1 for contacts

Mills Beach - 3rd Sunday of the month
9:30—11:30

Tanti Creek - Last Sunday of the month
9:30—11:30

We need you!



You can be involved

If you would like to join in, membership forms are available on the web site.

Fees are: Family \$15; Single \$10; Concession \$7

You can write to Mornington Environment Association Inc. P.O.Box 580 Mornington 3931 or

email morningtonea@gmail.com

Please include name, address, phone and email address.

Working bee volunteers are contacted by email or phone.

AGM GUEST SPEAKER

Val Ford, will have plenty of news to share with you.

Val Ford has been a member of BirdLife Australia since 1987, and became a 'serious birdwatcher' after moving to Sorrento 20 years ago. Retiring two years later she started a long term involvement with Friends of the Hooded Plover and the Mornington Peninsula branch of BirdLife Australia.

Val is actively involved with bird surveying and monitoring which is important citizen science that produces data to support the efforts of BirdLife in saving habitat and hence native bird species.

Val also encourages and mentors new birdwatchers and since 2008 has been editing and producing BirdLife Mornington Peninsula and Friends of the Hooded Plover newsletters.

Come and join us for a evening amongst friends