



Welcome to our first Newsletter...

After 23 years as an active local group, we are proud to be offering a regular newsletter for members, future members and the local community. It will explain what we do, provide news about the issues we face, report on our "Friends' Groups" and notify dates of future events. Funding for this resource has been gratefully received from the Commonwealth, Coastcare and Melbourne Water.

We aim to publish quarterly and welcome your comments. The newsletter will complement our new look web page, (www.morningtonenviro.org.au) and our Gmail notes (morningtonea@gmail.com).

I invite you to be part of the group and hope to see you at our open meetings or working bees or just accessing our lovely foreshore!

Please share the newsletter with your family and friends.

Best wishes,

Jan Oliver
President.



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Volunteers sorting rubbish on Clean Up Australia Day.

M.E.A. — who are we?

We are a group of locals interested and committed to the protection and enhancement of Mornington region. This includes the natural flora, fauna, foreshore, public and private land, the seabed and planning issues. Our work began in 1990 when we raised our views on the proposed marina in Mornington Harbour. Since then, our activities and membership have expanded and we remain the leading environmental group in the Mornington region. We are a not-for-profit volunteer group, organised through an elected voluntary committee.

M.E.A. — what have we achieved?

In the past two years, we have:

1. Successfully presented the association's view against another proposed marina in the harbour.
2. Been a community rep on the stakeholder group which brings together all interested parties using the harbour (Shire, Yacht Club and other uses of the foreshore and Mothers, Scouts and Shire Hall beaches). We wish to use community consultation data to better utilise the foreshore precinct and create a safer water haven in time of storms.
3. Made submissions on numerous planning issues.
4. Contributed to the Shire Council's Structure Plan for Mornington, the Bike Trails Plan, the Draft Mills Beach Precinct Plan, Snapper Point Precinct plan and the Draft Mornington Coastal Management Plan.
5. Participated in heritage issues (Tanti Creek Friends won the Shire Heritage Award for restoring a natural heritage place in 2012, at the creek estuary).
6. Ran a display stall at the 150th Anniversary celebrations for Mornington.
7. Held Friends' working bees to restore habitat at Mills Beach, Tanti Creek and Fisherman's Beach.
8. M.E.A. contributes to networks on the Peninsula. Members work with Devil Bend Foundation Inc., Mornington Foreshore Committee, Peninsula Exchange email network, and the Port Phillip Conservation Council, and undertakes Water Watch to monitor Tanti Creek's water quality. (see photo above)





Volunteers weeding at the estuary car park.

Working Bees—just one of our activities

Friends of Fisherman's Beach meet on the first Sunday of the month with shire support to restore the area near the Bowls Club and foreshore. Contact Peter.

Friends of Mills Beach meet for 2 hours every 3rd Sunday morning at 9.30 am to restore Banksia Woodland around Mills Beach and Red Bluff Mornington. You can be placed on our email lists (contact morningtonea@gmail.com) Morning tea, gloves and tools are supplied. Children are welcome as long as they are under the charge of a parent or guardian. A big red flag shows where we start each time.

Friends of Tanti Creek work the last Sunday morning of every month at 9.30, meeting at the notice board next to the footbridge at the estuary of Tanti Creek, off The Esplanade. Ongoing weeding is necessary in the restored area there. Further upstream, planting of wet-tolerant species continues in the Green Paddock (on the creek at the end of Morrell Street) with Melbourne Water supervision.

Nest Boxes

M.E.A.'s current Coastcare grant for Red Bluff, included the building and installing of 10 nest boxes in large trees around the foreshore to provide artificial homes for small birds (especially the parrot family), small insect-eating bats, and gliders. These animals have all been recorded in and around Mills Beach in the past but nowadays probably can't find suitable hollows for nesting. If their numbers decline, we lose our biodiversity.

These boxes are now installed in the area. See if you can spot them! None are occupied so far but we keep watching. Tanti Creek friends are now working with Mornington Primary students to build and install more boxes around the school.



Harbour Precinct Stakeholder Workshop Report

Wednesday 1st May saw about 30 representatives of groups, including MEA, at the Council sponsored community workshop to discuss ideas about the harbour precinct (which includes the local beaches and foreshores). A full report will be available soon on the Shire's web page, some first impressions are: A cooperative process was present, there remains contentious issues to be resolved. Access to Mothers Beach requires parking and road solutions. What about making the whole land end of the pier a pedestrian forecourt? Should there be limited time parking? Suggestions to build a breakwater opposite the boat ramps, and even a long breakwater from the new end of the pier – are both likely to cause MEA concern. And, do we really want Mornington harbour to be a luxury type of waterfront? What about having petrol bowsers, (when they are already placed at Martha Cove)? If you wish to add what YOU value at this iconic site of Mornington, do get back to us.



May 19th Special get together – well known ecologist **Gidga Walker** will be leading a field research project into our Moonah clumps upon Red Bluff (where we have been working recently). She is a marvellous source of information and will help us look for animals, special plants, and set up a monitoring system. This will be a great morning, not to be missed. Family welcome too. So keep the date – starting at 10:00 am -till 1:00 pm.

June 16th working bee will **plant hundreds of plants** on Red Bluff in the big area cleared of weeds (and still getting sprayed to remove Bridal Creeper). Rain should have occurred by then and it will be cooler for the new plants to establish themselves.

Constitutional Changes M.E.A. is currently reviewing its constitution as required under the new Consumer Affairs legislation. We will advertise when a special meeting will be held to accept or alter resolutions. If you are interested in joining our working party, please contact Jan Oliver.

Invasive Species Survey Every year across Australia tens of thousands of people give up their time to battle weeds, feral animals and other invasive threats to the environment, often without payment. The Invasive Species Council wants to build a picture of the work these people carry out, and the organisations they work for, through a national survey. Information collected will be used to create an Australian database of groups working on these issues and will help them to better share information on current invasive species threats. If you are part of an organisation tackling invasive species in Australia, please take five minutes to fill in the survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/33TPF26>

Come and meet us

at our general meeting on the second Thursday of the month, Mornington Library Meeting Room at 7.30 pm. All members can have a say on what goes on, make submissions on projects and papers, and vote on issues as varied as should dogs be allowed in national parks? How should Mornington Harbour be changed? Is current development of multiple houses and retirement villages appropriate in Mornington? We also consider wider issues on the Peninsula. If you would like to join the Association, membership forms are available on the web site.