

Merricks Matters

Autumn /Winter 2011

Newsletter for the Merricks Beach Community

Happy Easter to All

| | | | | |
|--------------|-------------------|---------|-------------------------|--|
| April | Saturday | 23 | 7.00 pm | MYC-Curry and Crownies Night-enjoy |
| | Sunday | 24 | 9.00-10.00am 3.00 pm | Beach Clean up Friends of Bill Carroll Reserve Easter Sunday Family Day- Bring your own boiled eggs for egg painting!!! |
| | Monday | 25 | 9.30-11.00am | Foreshore Working Bee Beach Clean Up towards Pt Leo |
| May | Saturday | 1 | 10.00am | MYC End of Season Working Bee |
| | Sunday | 15 | 10.00-12 noon | Bill Carroll Reserve Community Planting Day |
| | Saturday | 28 | 3.00 pm 7.00pm | MYC AGM MYC Presentation Dinner |
| June | Saturday & Sunday | 12 & 13 | 10-12 noon | MBRA Indigenous Plant distribution at Tennis Courts |

Congratulations! Merricks Yacht Club wins the Westernport Challenge!

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Bill Carroll Reserve - takes some beating



The Reserve has had a hair cut - a little close cut in places, more open in other areas than we're used to.

It's the first step in a renovation. A group of us took out the weeds that had boomed with the rain, and the dead and dying wood that hadn't survived the drought – and in some places, had died from being too wet - and the non-native plants that had invaded the area.

Next the Reserve will be mulched, and will be ready for our Community Planting Day in May, to fill out the area with indigenous trees, shrubs and grasses.

We'll let you know when, so do come along, plant a shrub, grasses, trees, be part of the native feel there for years to come, and enjoy our morning tea. **And do come and join our Easter Party in the Reserve – on Sunday at 3pm. There'll be Easter egg painting, games and celebrations for the young and not so young amongst the rest of the wild-life in the Reserve.** *Kirsty Richards for FBCR.*

Please bring your own boiled eggs for egg painting. There is also a hat competition and kids may like to turn up in fancy dress. Any contributions for prizes would be appreciated as would grans and grandpas to help!

Contact Meg on **5983 5848** for more detail.

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Roads and Drains

Even with near completion of two significant once in a lifetime projects, gas and sewer nearing completion, there remain many challenges, I'll write about these later. This time it's roads and drains.



Over the past few years the Shire together with the MBRA has been changing to a new roads maintenance model. In the past the MBRA undertook and controlled roads maintenance activities around the village, led by Harvey Williams. Many of you know that Harvey has led the Roads and Drains sub-committee of the MBRA for many decades. Harvey and Kay have recently moved to Shoreham. Harvey has thus requested leave from the R&D (as we have come to know it) Bernard Barrett has kindly taken on the lead role. Harvey, thank you for your many decades of enthusiastic service, in all weather conditions to keep our roads and drains so well maintained. A sometimes thankless task, the Merricks community will truly miss your endeavours. I have fond memories of walking around Merricks in the pouring rain clearing drains and unblocking cross over pipes with you. Many of you will have similar stories. We wish you and Kay

a wonderful time in Shoreham and welcome you back to Merricks when you come and visit.

The Shire now maintains the roads through their contractors. This changes the way the MBRA is involved and remains our biggest challenge for years to come. The standard of service delivery may not be the same as we have come to expect, so we will more than likely need to fund the gap through purchase of gravel for our roads. There are a few things each person can do to assist in maintaining the roads. Firstly drive at a maximum speed of 25 kmph. This is our mandated speed limit in the village. We would like you to treat our roads like a long, special driveway. Driving at 25 kmph significantly reduces wear and tear on the roads and reduces dust. It also protects our children, cyclists and dogs who share our village roads. Cross-over pipes are used to gain access into your property. These need to be aligned with the spoon drains along your street, so that water can flow without curves. I encourage you to install or align your cross over pipes. This is an occupant responsibility, however the MBRA can assist with arranging a contractor. Call or email me to discuss details, or visit me at 1 Minto St. Good drainage assists road maintenance significantly. Please ensure you clean out your spoon drains, unblock your cross over pipes and ensure you have at least 300mm of gravel cover over your cross over pipes.



MBRA Committee Officers Work on Merricks Roads

Rosanne Pittard, Treasurer of MBRA for over a decade, and Bernard Barrett, MBRA President 2007-2009, have worked regularly on Harvey's Road Gang. Here you see them taking a well earned break. Good wishes to Bernard in taking over from Harvey.

So There is Nothing Left to Do !

Is that what I heard the other day! Bollocks and it cannot be done alone! The preservation of our little village will certainly be eroded were it not for community wide efforts to preserve and manage the magic of Merricks.

Whilst it has certainly been a cool summer, there have been some glorious days on the beach and around the village. It is pleasing to see young and old alike enjoying the magic

of Merricks. Bernard Barrett and John O'Neil have led the MBRA committee with enthusiasm and flair over the past years and we thank them for the great job they have done. Rosanne Pittard has been Treasurer of the MBRA for the past 10 years. This year she has handed over that role to Greg Sutherland. Rosanne's continuing counsel and stewardship on the committee are deeply appreciated.

Some major, once in a generation, projects are nearing completion. Reticulated gas has been installed throughout the village and the reticulated sewage project is almost finished. If you have not yet nominated to take up this offer you can contact [Gordon Burr at South-East Water on 1300 733 098](#). The average installation cost is about \$2000.

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The Sand Modelling

This was again a great success this January. This year saw the transition from past organiser Rick Daley to Sue Rutley. Rick continues his involvement with a special new award he judged and presented. Thank you Rick for your decades of involvement in establishing what is now an iconic event in our community. Thanks to all the many helpers who assisted Sue. Following on from the sand modelling competition, the MBRA held the annual sausage sizzle on the tennis court. Would you believe that over 500 sausages were consumed by the hungry sand modellers in less than an hour?! Robyn O'Brien and a team organised this event, assisted by the MBRA committee. Thanks Robyn.

I encourage you to use the Shire Telephone: 1300 850 600. This operates 24 hrs, 7 days a week. You can alert the Shire of any matter you consider important, such as fallen trees, dead trees, pot holes, rubbish bin not collected, etc. Keep the number handy.

Look out for our new noticeboard as it delivers messages at the entrance to our village. Thanks Ken Rowe for making it. (Use white board markers only). Enjoy the Magic of Merricks.

Roy Wiedemeyer – 1 Minto Street, 0418 148 123, roywied@vic.chariot.net.au

News from the Foreshore

The exceptionally rainy summer has delivered both benefits and problems to the Foreshore. Indigenous plants such as bracken and kangaroo apple has flourished but, adversely, the growth of weeds has been exceptional. With the help of the Yacht Club the Melianthus has been eliminated from the Foreshore. Work has been started on the regeneration of the Pine Slide. This has been hindered by the vandalisation of new plants. Why does every community have a spoiler or two?

Over the next few months the path at the Fern Gully will be improved and the onslaught against blackberries, boneseed, pittosporum and ragwort, to name just a few weeds, will continue.

The Garage Sale raised over \$2000 and the work on the regeneration of the sand dunes has begun. Members of the Committee are trying to propagate spinifex seeds as well as planting cuttings. Thank you to all members of the Merricks Community who gave/bought goods from the sale.

Problems with rubbish left by recreational fishers have increased, as has the number of dog owners who are not clearing up after their animals. This makes life unpleasant for other using our beach and pollutes the sea.

It's that time again – time to deadhead your agapanthus. Put the heads in a plastic bag and then into your rubbish tin. The Committee wishes you all a happy break over Easter.

Meg Paul for the Merricks Beach Foreshore COM.

Our Dolphin Visitors are most Welcome (but don't tell anyone)

This summer Merricks has been delighted to again host some of Westernport's bottlenose dolphin population.

Jeff Weir is the Director of the Dolphin Research Institute located at the Hastings Marina. The Institute has been operating for 20 years. Research Director Sue Mason is a dolphin specialist and spends much of her time identifying the dolphins in Westernport and Port Phillip Bay. Dolphins are identified by the marks and notches on their fins. Sue would like to hear of any sightings around Merricks and can be contacted at the Institute on 1300 130 949.

The major population of dolphins is in Port Phillip Bay, though more frequent sightings are occurring in Westernport. The Westernport dolphins have to compete with 35,000 seals in the Seal Rocks area, and also avoid the predation that occurs in the vicinity. To encourage more visits to Merricks we all should ensure that the "Wildlife Regulations" are adhered to

"You must not deliberately approach dolphins within the prescribed distances –

- 100m for recreational vessels and personal watercraft.
- 50m if using a surfboard
- 30m if swimming or diving

It is illegal under any circumstances to touch or feed dolphins." Unfortunately a couple of youngsters on surf boards have chased dolphins and may need a reminder of the regulations!

Penalties apply for breaches of these Regulations and these can be reported to the DSE Call Centre on 136 186, or the Dolphin Research Institute. It is not an offence if dolphins approach you – and lately our visitors have been happy to do so, to everyone's delight. Let's not harass them in any way and hopefully we will see more of them.

For a week or so in February the pod of 5 dolphins was at Merricks every second day – happily swimming amongst those standing in the water. On one occasion the pod put on a "Sea World" performance, repeatedly leaping out of the water. It seemed to enjoy entertaining everyone and even received a standing ovation from the crowd. *Ken Rowe*

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Proposed New Edition of "The Magic of Merricks"

It is now 18 years since The Merricks Beach Residents Association published "The Magic of Merricks". During this period much has changed yet much has stayed the same. Jenny Ferguson and Meg Paul are to put together a new edition and would very much like your input. Stories, opinions, hopes and feelings, drawings and photographs would be much appreciated. All originals will be returned. Please drop hard copy to Jenny at 124 Bayview Road or email Meg at bruce@melbpc.org.au. Your contribution will be valued.

Meg & Jenny

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Phil Johnson operates Phil's Lock Service. He is an active member of the Merricks Yacht Club. Andrew Satchwell's Real Estate firm has serviced Merricks for many years. Pat Reid is their property manager. Peter Tickell manages Coolart Plumbing and knows Merricks backyards backwards! Rob Barber owns Rosebud Liquid Waste from Hastings- have your septic pumped out this year and you may never need to do it again! Chris Hall our local electrician comes highly recommended and Merricks Herbalist Karina Hilterman will look after your health.

Please support them.

Ken Rowe

Plant Give Away – Queens Birthday Weekend

The next MBRA community event is the annual indigenous plant give away on the Queen's Birthday Weekend. Each household can collect 5 plants from the stall located at the tennis court usually on the Saturday and Sunday morning from 10 – 12 noon. This year the focus will be around planting the nature strip and the order for plants is mainly for shrubs and grasses. Planting instructions and rabbit barriers are provided. We hope to see you there.