



Photo: Kristy Carroll

Welcome

We would like to extend our praise and thanks to all fire fighters who have been on top of incidents this summer (especially regarding the fires in Main Ridge, Crib Point and Somerville). The fire fighters at the forefront have ensured disaster was minimised. We value your continued support to protect the residents and community assets.

Let's continue to show vigilance when it comes to fire safety, as the temperatures may continue to soar through March. It is imperative that all residents prepare and practice their personal fire plans.

Summer also brings about lots of community activity on the Peninsula including:

- Peninsula Summer Music Festival (<http://www.peninsulafestival.com.au/>)
- Peninsula Short Film Festival (<http://www.peninsulashortfilmfest.com.au/>)

Both events have been well patronised by locals and tourists, and have provided tremendously talented entertainment in both the music and film industries.

Peter Avery & Christine Haydon

Peninsula Speaks launches Significant Tree interactive mapping website

As you may be aware, Peninsula Speaks Inc has been building a register of Significant Trees of the Mornington Peninsula for some time now. We have received many nominations from the public as part of this initiative. The purpose of the Trees of Significance mapping is to record the location and other information about trees on the Mornington Peninsula that have significance for various reasons. Both indigenous and exotic trees are being recorded and the values can be many e.g. rarity, cultural, size, age, history, habitat. The register is intended to be incorporated into the Shire planning scheme for greater awareness, protection and preservation into the future.

Although various mapping processes have been developed before (Shire mapping and barcoding) for the first time members of the community are being consulted to gain nominations on both private property and Crown land. It is the communities' involvement in this project that makes it truly unique and powerful.



As the next stage in this initiative, Peninsula Speaks has developed an interactive website in order to make the community nomination process as simple and streamlined as possible. You can register on our trees website and once approved, can directly enter your tree into the mapping system. There are fields to include pictures and stories regarding the trees too.

Go to www.penspeakstrees.org to register. The valuable heritage aspect these significant trees and shrubs offer needs to be officially recorded and preserved for future generations.

HELP TO BE PART OF THIS IMPORTANT RECORDING FOR PRESERVATION.



www.peninsulaspeaks.org.au

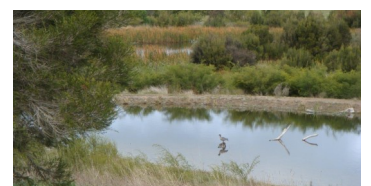
Call for Water Stewards

The Mornington Peninsula and Western Port Biosphere is putting out a call for landholders, businesses and organisations interested in becoming water stewards. Water Stewardship is a form of water management that helps us to better manage water - an increasingly scarce resource. It follows an international standard that assists participants to achieve sustainable water use, good water quality, a healthy ecosystem, and good water governance – and benefits us all.

The goal is to continually increase the number of water stewards across all catchments of the Biosphere, in order to improve water management in the region and to protect and enhance significant water-related assets such as our magnificent Ramsar wetlands.

The Biosphere provides water stewards with the assistance and training to develop a Site Water Stewardship Plan.

For more information, visit www.biosphere.org.au or email Lance Lloyd, Project Officer: lancel@biosphere.org.au.



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Paris World Environment Conference 2015

The United Nations 21st World Environment Conference of the Parties at Paris in December was all about dialogue, understanding, ideas exchange and the stunning realization that 190 nation states generating 98% of the world's greenhouse emissions could actually agree to accept responsibility for climate change, its mitigation and adaptation – and did so.

Invariably there was tension amongst these nation states in reaching this “top down” agreement. Despite a US contribution of \$860m to poorer nations to *adapt* to climate change, the US taxpayer continues subsidising the producer of 40% of all coal burnt in the US to the extent of \$3bn. Likewise falling oil prices render renewable energy less economic.

In India where 300 million people live without electricity, scarce carbon based electricity can be spread more equitably and widely by energy efficient LED lighting. India's order for tens of millions of LED fittings will create economies of scale in world LED production reducing the cost of LED fittings.

During COP21 China suffered profoundly under Red Smog alerts; yet unembarrassed, it goes about constructing 92 coal fired power stations in developing nations.

But these conundrums did not hold sway in their councils. As US Secretary of State Kerry opined - “The old partnership between energy costs, productivity and prosperity is cast aside in favour of a single matrix of carbon intensity; it is the most extraordinary market opportunity”, an opportunity readily grasped by German energy innovators.

So we have this “top down” Paris Agreement – 2 degrees (going for 1.5) limit on global warming above pre industrial levels; each nation state with a plan to address climate change, five year plan reviews; \$1bn to poorer countries to adapt, mitigate and switch from carbon. The complete 32 page text can be found at <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2015/cop21/eng/10.pdf>.

Driving these nations to this agreement were the sub-national local governments of cities and regions – all at the coal face so to speak – the *carbon* face of climate change - mitigation and adaptation: “Governments waffle: cities and regions lead” remarked the Mayor of Oakland on San Francisco Bay. That is why the Mornington Peninsula was at Paris, with its commitment to carbon neutrality, recently adopted carbon policy – to lead and to learn and to engage with other cities and regions and through its membership of ICLIE –Local Governments for Sustainability.

These are all encouraging signs that cities and regions, business and investors, are already running ahead of government to bring emissions down faster than officially planned.

Hugh Fraser, Councillor, Nepean Ward,
Mornington Peninsula Shire Council

Marine Biodiversity Hub—Clean Ocean Foundation

Fishers and surfers will become citizen scientists in a new science project to monitor the impact of sewage on Australia's marine biodiversity and ecosystems, including the Mornington Peninsula. Together with researchers, recreational water users will contribute to a National Outfall Database, to monitor outfall flows and gauge pollutant concentrations.

The project, which is being funded in the vicinity of \$400,000, will be led by the Wonthaggi-based Clean Ocean Foundation as part of research by the Marine Biodiversity Hub under the National Environmental Science Programme (NESP).





An update regarding Merricks Creek by Karri Giles

The estuary is going anoxic every warm season but the rest of the creek is mainly good to very good. When it flows every winter, fish swim up into Coolart and other dams and pools. Now at the end of summer they are existing in deep pools in the creek waiting for a flow so they can swim downstream again. The Creek flows into Westernport Bay, (which is healthy and abundant), and is one of the most important creeks that does. If anything is worth trying to improve it's this estuary. The water quality is appalling and efforts to improve it have focussed on reducing the amount of seagrass leaves which will help. This creek deserves its environmental flow and some efforts to fix water quality problems in the rural catchment and in the stormwater.

Malcolm Legg's Fauna Assessment of Balnarring Foreshore Final Report 2015: "Merricks Creek and estuary has many native fish and Decapod Crustacean species present. These include: Freshwater Shrimp, a small burrowing crab species, Short-finned Eel, Common Galaxias, Spotted Galaxias, Broad-finned Galaxias, Flat-headed Gudgeon, Tupong, Cobbler, Black Bream and Yellow-eyed Mullet."

If you would like more information about Merricks Creek, you can contact Karri Giles (who represents the Merricks Coolart Group) by visiting their page on www.wppcinc.org.



Photo: Karri Giles January 2016

Rye Tip Closure

Mornington Peninsula Shire is set to close the Rye tip in line with their five-year plan to become "carbon neutral". Reduction of the Shire's greenhouse gases, making it easier to gain carbon neutrality accreditation through the federal government's National Carbon Offset Standard, will be achieved through exporting waste from the municipality.

Some councillors oppose its closure, saying ratepayers will pay up to \$60 extra a year extra for waste removal; those in favour put the figure at closer to \$30.

The Mayor Cr Graham Pittock, Cr Hugh Fraser and the Shire's Jessica Wingad attended a United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris from last year with an invitation for the Shire to commit to an international Compact of Mayors to minimise climate change.

Ms Wingad's attendance was described as being to "learn the latest global trends and their potential application locally". Ms Wingad will now head a new climate change, energy and water unit within the Shire. The unit, according to a news release, "is responsible for leading the Shire towards carbon neutrality and long-term climate change resilience across the community and organisation".

Rye Tip is due to close in mid 2017.

Full articles on the Rye Tip closure can be read at <http://mpnews.com.au/2016/02/16/shires-five-year-plan-for-carbon-neutrality/> and <http://mpnews.com.au/2016/02/01/council-backflip-over-tip-future/>





SPIFFA Update

It has been a busy start to the year for Southern Peninsula Indigenous Flora & Fauna Association. The Shire Biodiversity Strategy is in the making and they've been submitting their ideas and encouraging others to do so.

The northern end of the Tootgarook Swamp is still threatened with infill development. A six year old remediation order is still to be resolved by a VCAT hearing in early March before later hearing a housing development application for the same land which has been refused by council, to which SPIFFA are a party.

On a more positive note ESO30, a new special overlay for Tootgarook Swamp has been passed by the Minister, adding further protection to the wetlands.

SPIFFA are preparing for their volunteer involvement in the Schools Environment Week at the Briars.

The popular SPIFFA habitat management course will not be held in 2016 due to one of the main presenters taking a sabbatical. They plan to run an updated PHMC 6 in 2017.

Submissions to the Pt Nepean Master Plan review and the Port Phillip Bay Management Plan are in hand and the first of their monthly meetings has been and gone.

For more information or to become a SPIFFA member visit their website <http://www.spiffa.org/>.

Port Phillip Baykeeper Rye Trash Event

Sorrento Watertowers Inc and Tangaroa Blue cleaned up Rye front beach in late January. Volunteers collected and traded trash for Styl'n secondhand clothes, to raise awareness about marine debris and plastic pollution through a creative and fun scavenger hunt.

The event was run by volunteers, and was supported by Port Phillip EcoCentre, Share The Word Design Studio, Dolphin Research Institute, Girls Who Surf, Dive2U, Polperro Dolphin Swims, Vins Bins, The Seaside Scavenge, Clean Coast Collective and The Mornington Peninsula Shire.

PenBus Update

Further to the report in our Spring newsletter, the State Government, Mornington Peninsula Shire and Monash University have struck a deal to fund another 12 month trial of the PenBus service, saving hundreds of students from being stranded on the Peninsula

The deal follows a different approach to funding between both State and Federal governments after cash for the previous trial service ran out.

There is, however, a new bus route which will only extend as far as the Monash Peninsula campus (in Frankston). Students will need to board an inter-campus shuttle bus to reach Clayton.

The new Route 887 began on 22 February, 2016, and will follow the same route as PenBus.

For timetables and more information, visit ptv.vic.gov.au, download the PTV App or phone 1800 800 007.





Young Environmentalists

Somerville Secondary College Kitchen Garden Program

Marlene Hoff, Chef/Owner of 100 Mile Foodie Kitchen Garden program started in August 2015 at Somerville Secondary College. The program is similar to the Stephanie Alexander kitchen garden program where students spend time in the school kitchen. The students learn how to make fresh, healthy meals using donated fresh local produce.

Marlene wanted to incorporate her passion of using local, sustainable and ethical food with the students by approaching local businesses & producers for donations. To date Jane Radcliffe from Ruby Doo Patisserie & Bakery, Bibi from Bulk Wholefoods, Coles Somerville & Woolworths Somerville have generously provided donations.



If you would like to donate to the program please contact Marlene Hoff on mobile 0432 274 907.

Mt Eliza Secondary School Garden & Mural Project

A group of Mt Eliza Secondary students pitched an idea/plans for an Indigenous outdoor classroom, including a bush tucker garden and mural artwork. Some of the students identify as Indigenous Australian peoples of Aboriginal descent, Wurundjeri, Gunditjmarra, YortaYorta and Toogee. Students contacted local community, government groups and organisations for cultural guidance and donations.

Local Boonwurrung Elder Aunty Carolyn Briggs helped name the students' project 'garden of reciprocity'. Students artistically expressed their important connection to heritage in contemporary life through their relationship with land, waterways, animals and plants, as well as relationships with other people.

Surviving on this land for more than 60,000 years, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders established effective ways to use and sustain resources, their cultures, laws, ceremonies and connection. They don't see themselves as 'owning' land, animals, plants or nature, but rather belonging with them as equal parts of creation. The young people involved in this project aimed to recognise this impressive history, highlighting the continuing responsibility we all have to care for our country. Students intend to utilise bush tucker into the school food technology and cooking programs.

If anyone wishes to gain inspiration for building a similar outdoor space in their school or workplace, you can organise a guided tour by contacting Narelle via oaks@bigpond.net.au

In the spirit of respect, MESC teachers and students acknowledge the people of the Boonwurrung/Bunurong, members of the Kulin nation, who have traditional connections and responsibilities for the land on which we meet, live, learn, and play.





Australia Day Honours

Mornington Peninsula Shire announced its 2016 Australia Day Award winners:

- Citizen of the Year: Aline Burgess
 - Young Citizen of the Year: Tia McLean
 - Event of the Year: Balnarring Community Sustainability Fair
- Mornington Peninsula Shire Mayor Councillor Graham Pittock congratulated the winners and all nominees..

Peninsula Speaks newsletter

If you would like a hard copy of our newsletter, visit one of the following supporters:

Stringers IGA, Sorrento
 2821 @ Blairgowrie
 Flinders General Store
 Red Hill Bakery, Balnarring
 Blue Bay Café, McCrae
 La Casa Nostra Delicatessen, Rosebud



Membership/Donations

Peninsula Speaks has Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status, meaning any donation over \$2 is tax deductible. Your donation will allow Peninsula Speaks to fulfill its charter to protect and enhance the Mornington Peninsula’s environment, including Green Wedge and other scenic areas under pressure from development. Peninsula Speaks strives to become a powerful voice in the intensifying discussion about the Peninsula’s environmental future – your support will make this happen.

Donations can be made by cheque or direct payment to:

Bank Details: Bendigo Bank
BSB: 633-000
Acc: 145 191 961

For contributions to the Autumn edition

Contact: info@peninsulaspeaks.org.au
Attention: Kerry Keys



- 1 Mar Business Clean Up Day
- 3 Mar World Wildlife Day
- 4 Mar Schools Clean Up Day
- 5 Mar Let’s Go Surfing Day for People with Disabilities, 10am-3pm
- 6 Mar Clean Up Australia Day
- 9 Mar Earth Hour, 8.30pm
- 13 Mar Rosebud Foreshore Kite Festival
- 15 Mar Rosebud Council Meeting, 7pm
- 17 Mar Briars Ward Community Meeting, 6pm
- 22 Mar World Water Day
- 26 Mar Red Hill Show, 8.30am-5pm
- 29 Mar Agriculture—biofertiliser course, 8am-5pm
- 11 Apr Rosebud Council Meeting, 7pm
- 13 Apr Council Audit Committee Meeting, Mornington, 4.30pm
- 22 Apr Earth Day
- 22 Apr Let’s Talk about Mental Health, 10am-2pm
- 26 Apr Council Dinner with the Community, Flinders, 5.00pm
- 9 May Rosebud Council Meeting, 7pm
- 1-7 May International Composting Awareness Week
- 14 May World Migratory Bird Day
- 21 May World Fish Migration Day
- 22 May International Day for Biological Diversity Day

