



FRIENDS OF WARRANDYTE STATE PARK Inc.

May 1995 NEWSLETTER

Editorial

There is no need to have a Nobel Prize to see the reason that most developed western style countries have developed an horrendous level of debt. The USA has the largest in the last fifty years, and Australia has an increasing level of debt relative to income. Money is borrowed from lenders overseas, to provide better social security, medicare, defence, capital, pensions and basic needs of parliament and several unfunded debts.

Politics complicates and modifies so much of basic economic theory that most people could be forgiven for not being able to understand the more important principles that govern their lives.

Yet debt driven economics does not exist entirely at a national level. It is reflected at state levels in both state and private instrumentalities and the monies necessary to provide our needs and collected from taxation.

Recently we have seen public utilities being sold off to overseas and local private interests, sometimes because of large debts that can't be repaid, but often to increase capital and make further borrowings. Most states in Australia have been told to reduce spending and we will slowly emerge from "the recession we had to have".

From all this austerity some areas appear to be a 'poor relation' in spite of their importance. We have seen severe cuts to education, and many public services, not least being the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. There has been a marked increase in contract labour that may turn out to prove costly and cause damage that is irreversible. One could suppose that there is much wasteful duplication of Federal and State control of natural resources. Maybe we could even find out why Victoria is subsidising the private logging industry for millions of dollars. Why do we export first grade oregon from western Victoria to Japan and then import the same from Canada and New Zealand? It has always been difficult to find answers to these questions. It is quite possible that large conservation areas in Victoria will be turned over to private enterprise. The government has a very great interest in the income that arises from eco tourism (but not ecology).

Things may have been different if we had James Madison's (U.S.A.'s fourth President) amendment to our constitution. This in part states "...the right of the people peaceably to assemble and to petition the government for a redress of grievances".

"The man who borrows takes things easier than the one who lends."

"Man's greatest blunder has been in trying to make peace with the skies, instead of making peace with his neighbour."

"An idea that is not dangerous is unworthy of being called an idea at all."

Elbert Hubbard.

KOALA COUNT - POUND BEND

1.00pm. Sunday 30th April 1995

We have built up considerable data by our various Koala Counts over the past five years. Our big Sunday count has always been held in October. By doing the count in April we hope to increase our knowledge. (We will however hold one on a Thursday afternoon in October as well.)

Come and join us in this very important task which helps us protect our koalas. There will be tracks, long and short, for all in the family to join in.

We will be meeting at the Rangers office at Pound Bend on Sunday 30th April at 1pm. Make sure you have good shoes for wet weather walking, and clothes suitable for the day. If anyone has binoculars, please bring them. There will be activities for the children and afternoon tea afterwards.

For any Enquiries ring me on 379 7375 or Warrandyte State Park on 844 2659.

Brenda Hunter.

PLANT AUCTION 4PM.

HOT HOUSE GOSSIP

Note that we have both a prose and poetic item from Keith Vagg this month. Keith is back from a long term work trip to Sydney. We welcome him and no doubt the Hundred steps will blossom.

Sales of 'Discover Warrandyte' will be a big help for the North Warrandyte C.F.A.'s campaign to fund a new Fire Truck. If you know of someone who would enjoy our book do point out the double benefit to the community.

The festival was another great weekend despite the wet beginning. Thank you all those marvellous helpers who gave time, enthusiasm and energy to the day. Betty Oke organised the roster with her usual amazing efficiency and everyone seemed to find it a worthwhile exercise.

Betty has decided that next year we will have an even better display. She feels we need to take a leaf out of the Festival Committee's book and begin planning for this very important part of our years activities NOW. If you are interested in helping Betty form the FOWSP Festival Organising Committee she would like to hear from you as soon as possible. Betty's number is 844 3763.

One thing we would like is to have a float next year. We have always had a float and have previously set a very high standard. Remember the year we won the big prize? The float gives children members from all over Melbourne a marvellous opportunity to take part in the Festival. Some of these members spend a large amount of time in W.S.P. Well if you are interested in coming up with some ideas Betty & Co would like to hear from you.

Marg B. caused a fuss - indeed, she ended up in the St. Johns ambulance. Trouble was that old hat she likes has too many 'large' air holes and a friendly wasp tried to negotiate her hair as well! Ouch! She lived.

Our Maree Kirkpatrick was very evident around both our display and the Park's. In fact she spent every minute of her Friday & weekend helping. We say thanks especially, as she had been

'rostered off' for those days, but was simply too motivated to have that rest. Her dedication augers well for a long career in conservation.

Other faces we noted especially were Ian 'Mick' Roche with Carly and Danny (Gail was working!) They sat around for a very long spell with lots of old friends able to re-aquaint themselves.

One thing which was looked through all weekend was the FOWSP Photo Album. People really enjoy those old photo's. If you have any old photographs of FOWSP activities we would be delighted to add them.

Another photographic record we have is Pat Coupar's of all the plant species in W.S.P. This is a true delight and now with David Cameron helping Pat and Dave check the fine points of sub species nomenclature it will be an academic masterpiece. We are looking at the various forms of publishing we can consider besides the colour photocopied version for use of staff and Fowspians.

The sale of excess plant stock will raise a little money which will be put to related use. Graham Lorrimer, another well known Botanist, is going to prepare and lodge the specimens of plants discovered by Pat, David Van Bockel and Fowspians. This will mean that our plant list will be verified by the Herbarium.

Over the school holidays we have had groups of people of the Baha'i faith working on environmental projects with various sub groups. They have worked with such will and dedication and have helped us to achieve amazing progress. Areas where they have worked are Pigeon Bank Creek, Koornong and at Pound Bend, particularly in 'Frogland'. The groups have been 'family' style, with a couple of adults and young people under their supervision. We would like to congratulate them and we will enjoy their company each school holiday.

Green Task Forces are also working with the sub-groups. Amazing transformations take place when Wendy or Rowan and Sophie's groups are around. The Friends of the Koornong still find it amazing to look at the area

which was once hung with ivy so thick it gave them nightmares.

Osborne Peninsula Landcare (O.P.L.) had their A.G.M. on Sunday 23rd. The work task for the morning was to plant up the roadside verges. Gradually these are being transformed. Weeds are being replaced with plants grown from seed collected from the peninsula, including several significant species. The group have chosen *Acacia stricta* as their emblem. This species has only one plant in the Park and O.P.L. plan to add to the seventeen specimens on roadsides to form a long term viable population to safeguard the plants future. They also had another group of ATCV volunteers join them for the day. These folk will continue that long term battle with the Ivy and Smilax.

The Library continues to grow and to flourish. Librarian, Shirley Mandemaker, thanks those people who have been so helpful and reminds you that still more things need to be done, and invites you to have a look - especially of a Thursday.

Lots of work is being done in 'Frogland' and the fenced area adjacent. If you are interested in being involved with this revegetation and the development of an aboriginal food plant walk, plus a butterfly and moth plant zone please contact Pat C (844 1650) or Marg B (844 1060).

To make life more interesting (and warm!) of a Thursday the Soup Roster has been started. If you come to work of a Thursday a wondrous warm lunch will treat you. All of us take a turn or so over the winter to make a pot of soup and bring a loaf bread. This makes the Folly the place to be every Thursday.

We hope you all saw the 'Diary' article regarding Scotchman's Hill and threats for its long term survival. On 23rd April the Friends of Scotchman's Hill have their next working bee. They also plan a BBQ and rally, to join up more workers. This group has been going for the last two years. Their goal has been to manage the section of bushland which is in excellent condition AND, more difficult but underway, to restore the areas of bushland

GALA PLANT AUCTION FOLLOWING THE KOALA COUNT.

AUCTIONEER, Greg HILDEBRAND. 4.00 pm

Excess stock, large potted specimens and special 'wildflower gardens' will be sold off. Stock tubes will be in lots of 'mixed boxes' labelled dry or wet area. Hildebrand will make this an Auction with a difference! Bring something to share for afternoon tea afterwards.

Camping trip to Phillip Island in April.

This trip took place during one of the wettest, most miserable spells of weather we have ever had as part of Melbourne area's 'best season of the year'. About twelve families with a total of 30 odd people were booked and all had looked forward with great excitement to joining with the Roche family, 'Mick', Gail, Carly and Danny for the first week of the school holidays.

A few cancellations had rung in when Gay Harris and the Burkes set off. Gail greeted them with hot scones and lamingtons by the wood fire, and all three were fitted (with NO complaint on their part) into the lovely Roche cottage on Conservation Hill. Rain just kept falling.

Over the next week six more groups arrived. Not one of these were accommodated under canvas, but were somehow fitted in, until every nook and cranny of the Roche home was occupied by someone's sleeping bag or gear. Those who know Gail and Ian will of course be able to imagine the scenario.

An itinerary planned by the Roches was a busy one and despite the weather we managed every item except the 'hard' Cape Woolamai walk. We added several others however and during one local walk we were all hit by a downpour which proved all but the best raincoats to be leaky. Arriving back at the ranch we turned it into what looked like the most amazing laundry imaginable!

Both Gail and Ian are really great guides and Gail had really 'boned' up on local history. Her tour of Churchill Island was informative and fun. We worked hard to ID the birds of prey and coastal birds. Gail explained that all the rabbits on Chls. are either black or white, being descendants of special English stock released last century. As she gave her spiel we amazed to see that a plain old 'mousy brown' feral one must have crossed the bridge with us as it took flight across our path.

Gail was tour guide and organiser of a trip to the State Coal Mine at Wonthaggi where we met one of the Friends of Wonthaggi Coal Mine who was our guide. Wallace was an old miner and clearly the mine was more than just an old work site. Suzette Hunter seemed to tickle Wal's fancy and she was singled out for all kinds of underground performances, including the 'taming of Wal's favourite rat' - fortunately Suzie survived it! We do recommend this tour if you are ever in the neighbourhood as it was quite unexpectedly fascinating. AND one other thing which made this tour was, whilst it was a long walk, it was all out of the driving rain and wind.

The rugged coastline on Phillip Island is extraordinarily beautiful and looking back from the 'Punchbowl' on the mainland along a new walk recently opened, we all marvelled at that rather little known part of the Gippsland coast.

Fowspian Koala Organiser, Brenda Hunter had an interesting experience organising us into the Friends of the Koala's April Koala Count. We all enjoyed meeting this very friendly and well organised group. Counting the Koala was something we should have been wonderful at - trouble is that all the 'tortured' stunted Manna, Blue Gum and Swamp Gums seemed to make it very easy for the Koalas to merge into the bush. So we really failed to uphold the Fowspian name! Ranger Steve Anderson had joined us for this part of the trip - hope he wasn't too ashamed of our performance.

Meals were unlike normal camping - we had Gail's kitchen and her generous nature to contend with. Every day she'd bring home bags of rolls and bread and we all pooled whatever we had. Dinner at night was a co-operative effort, though the night Marg Burke cooked spaghetti she was heard to more than mutter "Thank goodness Ian and I don't have sixteen children!" Several sausage sizzles and barbeques took the load off the stove (though not the dishwasher - we really did have it easy!) and one night we all went to Taylor's Restaurant where Gail waitresses for a little extra luxury.

We all thank Gail, Ian, Carly and Danny for the really splendid time we had. We have of course missed the Roches during the last 18 months and this was a marvellous way to catch up. (The photo album is almost worn out.) Those of you who chickened out because of the weather missed a very special experience.

COMMITTEE MEETING WEDNESDAY MAY 3rd

THE STORY OF STONY CREEK

In this day and age of ever increasing bureaucracy, where public institutions are forever changing their names and their shapes, it's easy to sometimes feel bewildered and helpless. It's easy to think, "What can I do? I'm only one. They won't listen to me." This is a little story about a group of locals who found that when they got together and presented their case, the powers that be WERE prepared to listen. In fact, in the end a working compromise was reached that I think left both sides feeling satisfied and pleasantly surprised.

Stony Creek is a little creek that begins somewhere in the wilds of Kangaroo Ground and flows through North Warrandyte to the Yarra. The actual creek itself belongs to Melbourne Water. The land either side of the creek between Research Road and the Yarra is part of Warrandyte State Park. Upstream from Research Road and the Yarra is Crown Land and so is the responsibility of the D.C.N.R. Our story concerns the Crown Land upstream from Research Road.

Stony Creek Road has been recently sealed and this has moved the North Warrandyte Fire Brigade to nominate the road as a new strategic firebreak, a place where fire-trucks can make a stand against a bushfire approaching Warrandyte from the North. The D.C.N.R. to enhance the new firebreak, planned to submit the area to a fuel reduction burn. When a group of local residents heard this they were concerned and hoped there might be other ways to manage the situation. It is true that fire has played a major part in the natural history of Australia for thousands of years, and many indigenous species need a fire before they can successfully propagate. However, fire is undoubtedly destructive to wildlife. And once the understorey of a bushland area is removed through fire that area is very vulnerable to erosion. Also the indigenous species that need a fire before they all germinate, need a fire of extreme temperatures, such as a real wild-fire. The lower temperatures reached in a controlled burn are of no benefit to them but will encourage the colonisation of some non-indigenous plants, such as the brooms, several of which are noxious weeds.

With the pressure of increased population and all that goes with it in the way of building and clearing, it is always creeks and rivers that suffer first and most. Stony Creek is pretty unique in being such a healthy and largely undisturbed waterway so close to Melbourne. It forms a wild-life corridor between Warrandyte State Park and two important reserves: the Chase Eagle Reserve and Professors Hill Reserve. Several local families have observed platypus there. For all these reasons, this group of local residents wanted to save Stony Creek from the proposed burn, if they could. They put a proposal to the C.F.A. and the D.C.N.R. - they would undertake to reduce fuel loadings by piking up and removing by hand, sticks, bark, twigs etc. The C.F.A. and the

D.C.N.R. agreed - with the proviso that if this were not achieved within a certain time the burn would have to go ahead.

Well it's amazing what a group of dedicated volunteers can achieve if they put their minds to it. We have had three working bees so far and huge amounts of loose litter, weed species and hard rubbish have all been laboriously removed. I think I can say that the C.F.A. and D.C.N.R. were slightly amazed at our efforts; there were some doubts that we could muster enough man and woman power to get the job done. We have been congratulated on our efforts and the burn will not go ahead. But we have also been reminded that because of Stony Creek's status as a strategic fire-break, the same has to be achieved every year.

And so has been born a new sub-group of the F.O.W.S.P. - the Friends of Stony Creek. We plan to have working bees regularly - every two months, the next one is on Sunday May 7th from 10am - 12. On alternate months we are planning to have nature walks although these details are not yet finalised.

There is a lot of work still to be done. Although parts of Stony Creek are pretty good with most of the weeds and a lot of litter removed, other parts, particularly the steeper banks, are badly infested with honeysuckle and blackberries. Our aim is of course through weeding and some planting, to restore all of Stony Creek to what in pockets it still is - a real example of a lovely bushland creek, a haven for plants and wildlife. We will also be keeping in mind however that Stony Creek is a strategic fire-break and fuel loadings must be kept at less than 8 tonnes per hectare.

And now I have to mention Mark Gardner, a.k.a. 'Gad'. Gad has been working away in the Warrandyte State Park part of Stony Creek for years, doing all those hard-yakka and valuable tasks such as weeding, planting and mulching. He has led a F.O.W.S.P. sub-group known as 'Gad's Gang'. But in fact there hasn't been much 'gang' to it, it's been mainly just Gad slogging away, as solitary as a polar bear in the wilderness. Now all of a sudden there are all these people interested in the upstream part of Stony Creek. And since Gad isn't a polar bear at all but a much more social animal, and since a larger group can get a lot more done, he has decided to leave Gad's Gang in a state of abeyance and become a part of the new F.O.S.C.

It was Gad who successfully applied to the Green Task Force. They will be working around Stony Creek for nine days. As well as doing some weeding they will also be monitoring the water quality and constructing a fish ladder beside the C.F.A. dam.

- FIA CLENDINNEN

Anyone wanting more information on Friends of Stony Creek should contact Fia Clendinnen on 844 3454 or Mark Gardner on 844 3799.

Fowspians On Location In Paradise.

There were five of us - Marg, Wayne, Mike, Ross and myself. We had come to experience the challenge of a three day hike around the rugged southern section of Wilsons Promontory National Park. The fact that we had chosen April 1st - April Fools Day, to embark on our expedition was purely coincidental.

So crowded was the Mt. Oberon car park at Telegraph Saddle, it was hard to find parking space. Stepping from the warmth of our vehicles, we were greeted by a gale force wind. But a few metres down the track the bone chilling blast and the car park chaos were left behind us. It was 11am. and the walk had begun.

Our feet crunched firmly over finely crushed granite as we strode along the broad management track. After a brief stop on a wooden bridge over a delightful ferny creek, we pressed on to the junction which marks the end of the vehicle track. There we came across several other groups who had chosen this convenient location for their lunch stop. After refuelling with food and drink we were eager to continue along the narrow walking track. Now in single file we crossed an open sandy heathland of dwarf she-oaks and stunted banksias. To our right menacing, steel-grey clouds billowed over curiously contoured granite boulders. Suddenly the track delved into an enclosed woodland of tall tea-trees and banksias, then, just as abruptly, emerged onto a boardwalk that dissected a swamp dominated by tall, sharp-edged sedges (*Gahnia* sp) and feathery-plumed cord-rush (*Restio* sp). Growing in the shallow peaty water we spotted a group of Fairies Aprons (*Utricularia* sp.) - a dainty carnivorous plant with an unusual mauve and yellow flower shaped like an apron.

We reached the coast of Waterloo Bay - a crescent of dazzling white sand. Stunning. A further 1.2kms and we had reached our overnight campsite. It was three and a half hours since leaving the car park at Telegraph Saddle and we had walked nearly 13 kms. The elation we all felt was the stimulus for our crazy (in retrospect) decision to plunge into the icy turquoise blue water of Little Waterloo Bay.

It rained heavily overnight, but the morning was cool and clear. We packed up and set off early. At once the track was rougher than anything we had encountered the previous day. From

the coarse golden sand of North Waterloo, Kersop Peak loomed ominously ahead. However, before the ascent three of the party took a diversion. Beside the track, partly concealed, was the narrow entrance to a cave. Ross, who had found the cave on a previous visit, led the way followed by Wayne and myself. After squeezing through the tiny gaps between the rocks we eventually dropped about two metres down to the floor of the cave. Taking the only torch, Ross went ahead to explore, leaving Wayne and I in pitch darkness. As we waited we listened to the crash of pounding waves echoing eerily around us. Ross shouted that he could see light and a way out. We followed him, wriggling flat on our tummies through narrow clefts in the rock until finally we emerged onto a large boulder at the base of the cliff barely a metre above the swirling sea. The round boulders were massive and it was no easy task to climb back up to the track and a much relieved Marg and Mike. Foolhardy? - perhaps, but what an experience!

The climb up Kersop Peak was hard and we celebrated our efforts with a refreshing cup of 'Earl Grey' tea on the summit as the mist rolled in from the ocean. A rain squall hit us as we left the peak, but the sun broke through in time for our first breath-taking view of Refuge Cove. Paradise. The rain returned after lunch as we made our weary way to Sealers Cove. For the first time the five of us were strung out along the track, walking separately each deep in our own thoughts. Finally after a day in which we walked 15.2 kms, we reached our second campsite. The rain had passed. Tiredness set. We ate early sharing our meal with robins and wrens.

The next day we said farewell to Marg and Wayne who had to leave early. Mike, Ross and myself were fortunate to have a couple of hours to spare in which to soak up the serenity of Sealers before we too had to leave. Long, somewhat slippery boardwalks over frog-filled swamps marked the first section of the walk back. After the aptly named Ferny Glade, the track ascended to a cleared grassy area known as Windy Saddle, from there it was only another 3kms to complete the 9.5km walk back to Telegraph Saddle.

It had been a great trip we all agreed. And many thanks to Warrandyte Ranger Stephen Anderson for his local knowledge and expert advice.

Pat Coupar

FOWSP THURSDAY PM ACTIVITIES..... by David Van Bockel.

- | | | | |
|----------|---|------------------|-------|
| April 27 | Construct exclusion fence at Koornong | General walk | Maree |
| May 4 | Extend exclusion fence at 'Elongata Gully at Jumping Creek. | General walk | Maree |
| May 11 | Special walk led by Pat Coupar "Fungi - Many and special" | Not to be missed | |
| May 18 | To be announced - see Folly noticeboard. | | |
| May 25 | To be announced - see Folly noticeboard. | | |

Forest Management Comment by Keith Vagg.

I feel a mixture of emotions - sadness, disgust and more, when I read statements in the newspaper such as that which appeared in the Age on Tuesday 21st March. I refer to the article by Norman Huon of the Victorian Association of Forest Industries, in which he states that "woodchips..... are produced from waste that used to be burnt in sawmills or from timber left in the forest after sawlogs have been extracted."

I can only describe this statement as misleading propaganda aimed at deception and short - term economic gain. The Public Accounts Committee of NSW recently reported that 90% of all trees logged in the Eden area includes much of East Gippsland, where the forests are being decimated.

First grade timber is constantly being downgraded and sent off to the Daishowa Mill to feed the monsters which belch out the gigantic scrap-heap of woodchips which are sent off to Japan.

The methods employed to harvest these logs are devastating. Once- lush forest is converted to bare, compacted soil, over vast areas, with perhaps a few token trees left standing. All other vegetation is destroyed, -then burnt, for good measure. Any animals which dare to return to try to find their home, are subjected to a bait of 1080 poison.

The soil is then eroded by rain and washed into the creeks. What soil that remains is sun-baked, so very few of the original species will regenerate. Such vacant areas within the forest are then planted with a weed which is familiar to most of us - *Pinus radiata*.

The bank of carbon in all this vegetation now gone, has been released into the atmosphere to feed the global - warming problem. Rainfall drops markedly in heavily - logged areas, and once-pure water becomes dirty and degraded.

When will we ever learn?

Green

Green, green, green,
What does that mean?
Green means different, although,
I long for a time when this is not so.
Green means not just caring,
But doing, showing, sharing
A feeling for a tiny life
Which isn't ours,
But which enhances ours
In a manner so subtle
That not even we
Can understand.

The complete environment
Of this rich Earth,
A super brain - amemory
Which records our presence
As we register its own.
We scar it, we smear it,
We cement it, and yet
We are but a transient spec,
So vain, yet so vulnerable.
The Earth will recover
With or without us - likely without,
For that is the will of this organism
Which created us, understands us,
And withstands us, yet will absorb us,
As we, in a moment
Disappear from its endless time
And Earth returns,
Silently, slowly, but surely, forever
Green, green, green.



Keith Vagg.

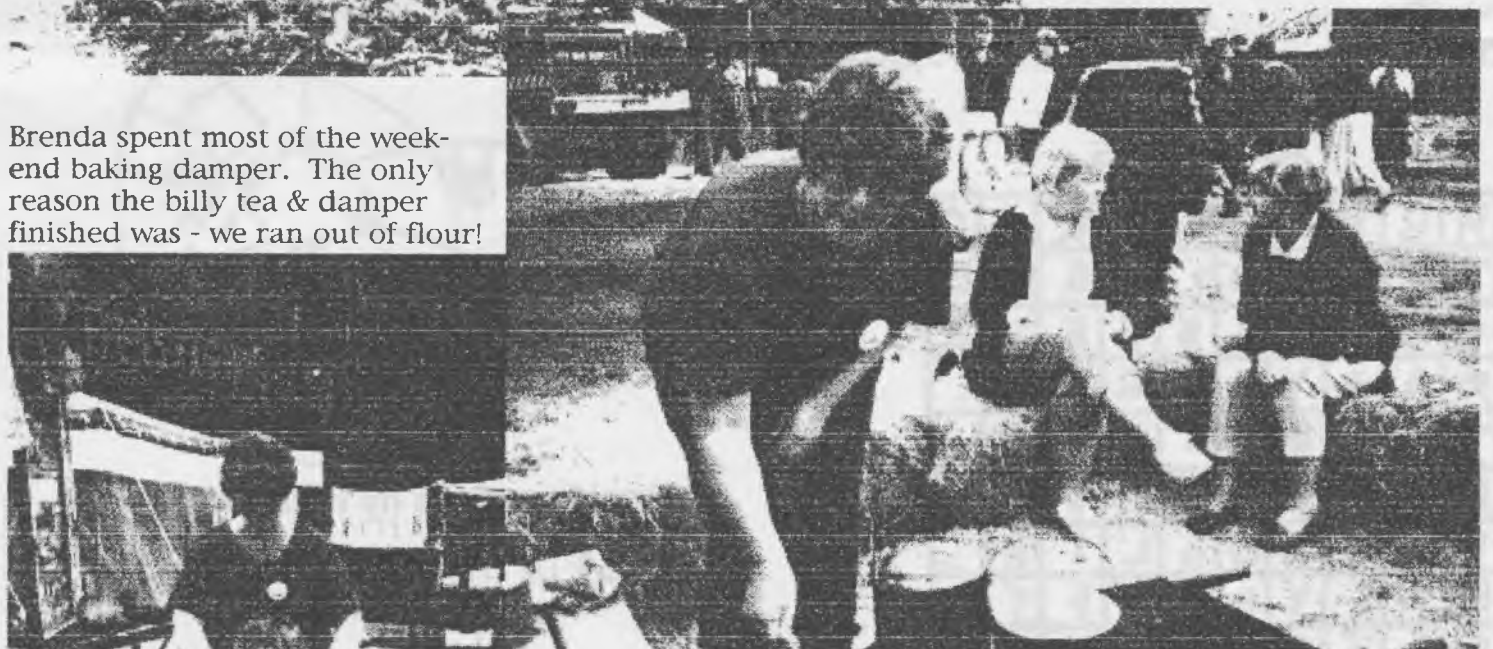
Warrandyte Festival 1995



Pat and Ron sign Theo's petition near the Wetland and Nestbox display. These displays were really excellent and many 'how to' leaflets were handed out.

P.S. Theo ended up with over 300 signatures.

Brenda spent most of the weekend baking damper. The only reason the billy tea & damper finished was - we ran out of flour!



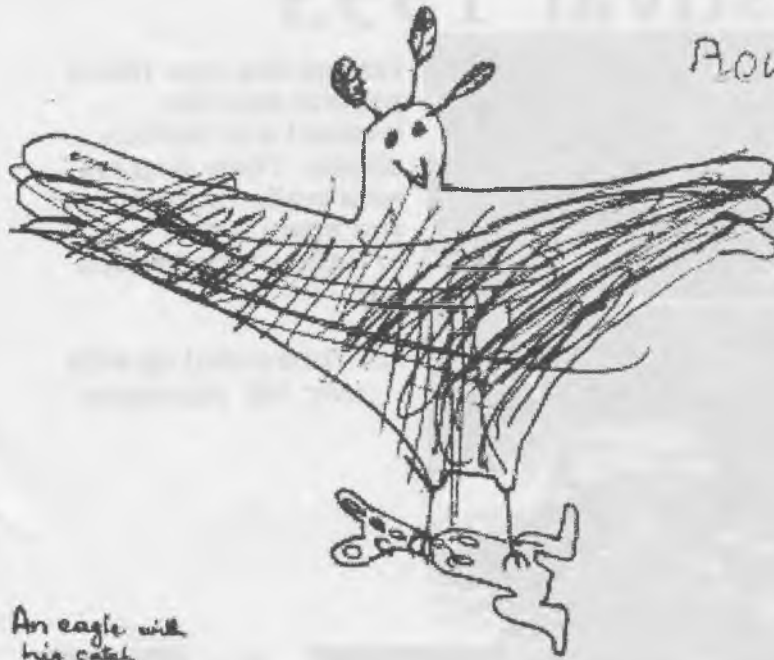
The Wattle Fairy needed that well earned massage!



Many thanks to all helpers.

Couldn't catch Maree facing camera

Fossicking Ross & friends



An eagle with his cat.

Do you think this eagle is moulting? - Ross.

Row H. age 7



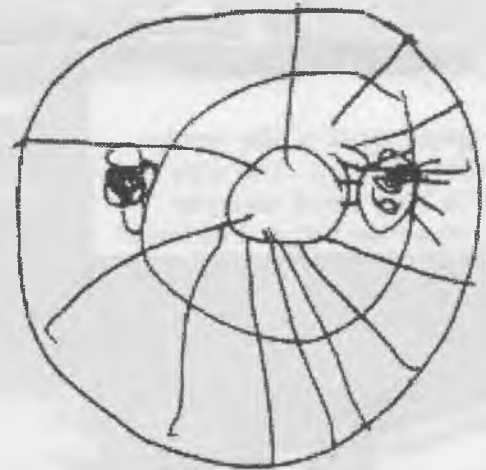
A possum asleep in a tree.

ANIMALS

H	B	K	A	N	G	A	R	O	O
T	P	Q	O	W	L	F	R	O	G
O	L	S	N	A	K	E	E	L	E
M	A	R	Y	E	L	E	N	A	
T	T	A	A	S	I	A	H	Y	
A	Y	B	B	U	Z	G	S	B	
B	P	B	B	O	A	L	I	A	
M	U	I	Y	M	R	E	F	T	
O	S	T	A	R	O	U	C	K	
W	O	P	O	S	S	U	M	P	L

Kangaroo	Snake	Possum
Koala	Eel	Fish
Lizard	Frog	Bat
Duck	Eagle	Rat
Platypus	Owl	Wombat
Echidna	Rabbit	Moth
	Yabby	

Get some paper and draw all these creatures.
Post me the pictures.



A spider with a fly in the web.

Michelle Holmes age 5



This lizard is a s _____.
Join the dots.

Thank you for the lovely pictures.

I love to hear from you. Do you know any jokes or riddles? Post them to me at -
Post Office Box 220, WARRANDYTE 3113. - ROSS.