



# FRIENDS OF WARRANDYTE STATE PARK Inc. NEWSLETTER

July 1994

## Editorial

There has been a history of neglect over many environmental issues since the arrival of the First Fleet in 1788. It was a long time before anyone gave a thought to land degradation. Early settlers imagined that the countryside would be greatly improved by the introduction of a great variety of animals and plants that were common to England and Europe. Some did not survive but the rabbit and the prickly pear were a huge success.

Land degradation in some areas proceeds to desertification. Over the last 200 years with an increasing population there was a need to provide food and housing. Thus began a long period of forest clearing, overgrazing and cultivation of croplands. In more recent years we have become concerned with soil erosion, salination, top-soil loss and the problems of irrigation farming.

In the early days of colonisation free settlers had access to large tracts of land at little cost. Some became exceedingly wealthy, and the discovery of gold in the 1850's attracted settlers in large numbers. Little or no thought was given to conservation or natural resource management.

If we go back to 1938, it was the first really formal call by a N.S.W. governor to form a Rural Reconstruction Commission. It provided many reports, but *none were acted upon*. The Australian economy had just started to recover from the Great Depression when World War 2 made heavy demands for manpower, food and materials. The boost of postwar immigration was also a period of marked economic growth. For the last fifty years little has been done about land degradation. There were three proposals for landcare policies in the 70's & 80's. Federal Government said they had no power to control the States. On the other hand the States wanted the Federal Government to develop programs. The result was that *nothing happened*. It was not until 1990 that a successful policy of Landcare was up and running.

There has been a strange silence from groups one would imagine to have an interest. Ecologists, well respected for research and teaching, have rarely entered the population debate. They don't criticise governments who provide their research funding.

Newspapers in Australia were surveyed in 1988 and a total of 1100 articles on conservation were found over twelve months. *Not one* was found on land degradation, landcare or erosion.

Australian churches are another group who are silent on matters environmental.

Perhaps all this non-involvement is a blessing considering a recent C.S.I.R.O. submission to the Federal Government ..... "*there was no need to have limits on population growth if we get rid of wasteful habits!*"

"Why should I worry about future generations :  
what have they ever done for me?"

Groucho Marx.

"Self preservation prompts men to move in line of least resistance."

Elbert Hubbard.

"There are only two classes of men who live in history:  
Those that crowd a thing to its extreme limit  
and those who then arise and cry "hold!"

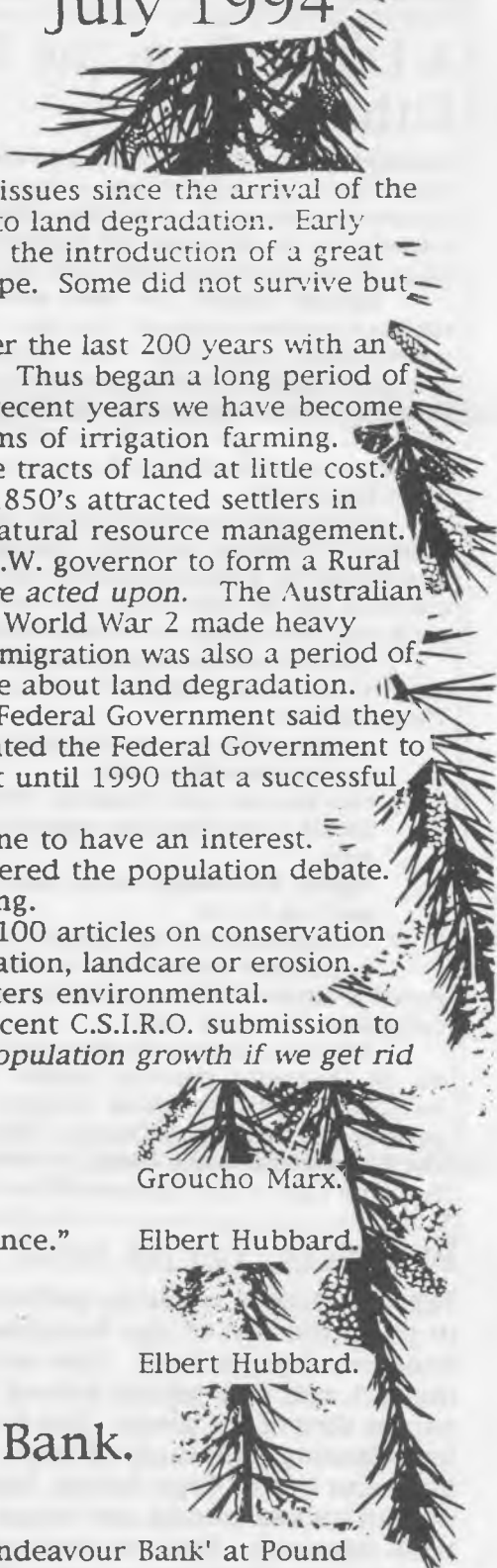
Elbert Hubbard.

## Family Sunday Work Day at Endeavour Bank.

Koala Week Celebrations - activities with Fay Valcanis.

We are having a day to join Anna Richtarik and Colin Bromley on 'Endeavour Bank' at Pound Bend. We will be planting special plants grown for this area now quite free of dreaded rabbits. A tour of the area will be conducted to show you all just what has happened to date. Perhaps some of you will be inspired to help in the revegetation of this beautiful strip of riparian Warrandyte. You will be able to add plants to help develop this habitat - currently home to our Koalas. Fay is planning activities for the youngsters (and oldsters!) as well. After the working bee we will go back to the Folly for afternoon tea and a gossip. So arrive at the Pound (Mel 23 C:10) at 1.00 pm, dressed to work and bring your gloves (some will be available). Tools supplied. Bring a plate of Afternoon Tea to share. (Koala Cookies?)

*Acacia verticillata 'Prickly Moses'*



**UNUSUAL GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY.** Ron Taylor has a need to find a travelling companion for his forthcoming trip to Nepal, trekking in the Himalayas. No, this is fair dinkum. He won the trip for two and would just like someone to "appreciate and enjoy it with", and he seems to find many soulmates amongst the Fowspian tribe. He would prefer a lady, and she would need to be fit (medicals are required). It is with a small group, complete with sherpas and will be three weeks from November 12th. Oh, there is a stop off in Bangkok for a couple of days as well. Now Ron, our Folly Manager, promises no 'folly' but hope one of you fills the bill, complete with passport, or he will simply be heartbroken (and Frogland needs him happy). Enquiries, and a chat about it all (please, only genuine) 844 4285.

## A Letter from the Shire of Eltham.

Residents and community groups will be aware that the State Govt. is undertaking a major review of Local Government throughout the State of Victoria. Their clear intention is to decrease the number of municipalities from 200 to something under 100 and increase their size.

Eltham Council has been advised that it will be subject to review in June of this year (along with 38 other metropolitan Councils). The Minister will announce changes to Local Government Boundaries in September/October. It is inevitable that by December this year, the Shire will no longer exist in its current form, but be part of a larger municipality, with a new name, and a different set of boundaries.

During the transition period, which is expected to be about 18 months, necessary management changes will be overseen by a State appointed commissioner. Council elections will be held when the new management is in place and new ridings have been determined.

Council has developed some principles on which to base its preferred option for municipal restructure. These include:

- \* creation of a new municipality based on an environmental corridor
- \* cost savings and financial viability
- \* specific consideration regarding the urban/rural mix
- \* logical boundaries using natural boundaries, such as rivers
- \* maintenance of high quality community services

A detailed submission to the Local Government Board is currently being prepared and is scheduled for completion by early July

Eltham's vision is for the creation and protection of an environment corridor under the control of an environmentally sensitive Council for the benefit of present and future generations. This would extend from the Yarra River to the Great Dividing Range (Kinglake) from the Yarra Valley Escarpment in the east to the Plenty

River in the west. A truly exciting vision.

Eltham's position is that the vision can best be achieved by a combination of Eltham and at least a substantial part of the Diamond Valley and probably a part of Whittlesea, Yea and Healesville. Hurstbridge should be consolidated and brought into the new municipality. The Bend of Isles area could, based on logical boundaries, be included in the new municipality. Warrandyte may be left as it is, being dissected by Melbourne's major waterway, i.e. the Yarra River.

It is clear that the vision can best be achieved by joining that part of Diamond Valley west of the Plenty River (Bundoora, Watsonia and Greensborough including the Greensborough District Centre) with the City of Heidelberg. The remainder of Diamond Valley would join with Eltham to become the heart of a new environmentally based municipality. Other options do exist i.e. Grimshaw Street or the Greensborough Hwy. could be used as a new municipal boundary between the enlarged Heidelberg and the environmental municipality.

As previously stated, Eltham Council is talking to its neighbours about these options in an attempt to get consensus prior to preparing submissions for the Local Government Board. In the meantime, Council's aim is to keep the community up to date on this important issue, in as far as possible, and to seek comment from the local community and in this important issue, in as far as possible, and to seek comment from the local community and in this instance Advisory Committees prior to formalising Council's final position.

Members of the community and community groups are encouraged to make their views known to the council and (once formal submissions are invited through newspaper advertisements) to the Local Government Board. Richard Allen, Director Parks & Environment, SHIRE OF ELTHAM.

## PUBLIC MEETING JULY 21st. ELTHAM COMMUNITY CENTRE.

(Next Month: City of Doncaster & Templestowe article.)

## Friends, ferns and an emerging group.

The afternoon was winter perfection, blue sky, sun, balmy even for July. The sign was by the roadside to catch the eye of the Fowspians driving searching for that 'Hundreds and Thousands group along Kangaroo Ground Road. Four arrived on time, one person, "Greg" left his name on a card on a tree near the cars, and four people arrived later. One does not have to walk far off the road to appreciate this little known slice of the gorge. One is able to sit on a giant shelf only metres down from the road, and have a breathtaking panorama of bush, rocky cliff and meandering Yarra. We were of course surrounded by litter and lots of Cape Broom, English Broom and Pittosporum, Irish Strawberry. So inspired, we decided we had walked enough and began with the rubbish (found a Mixmaster, somewhat damaged, among other trash dumped). Then we were really excited by the discovery of *Stellaria pungens* one of our locally rare species as well as large clumps of Rock and Necklace Ferns. So we began pulling the weeds. Two hours and Keith Vagg's car was crammed with the fruits of our labour. Tired but very pleased that the group was off and running with a new plant sighting to excite David and Pat, we went back to the Vagg's for afternoon tea. Stop your car in the bay on the way up K-G rd and experience the special appeal the Hundred Steps has to offer (Pull a nice bunch of broom whist you are at it) The actual 'steps are on the 'bridge' side of the parking bay. Many thanks to Shire of Eltham for the Warning Sign. \$2000 fine if one is caught dumping rubbish. We hope soon to have a Warrandyte State Park sign on this part of our park as well. If you wish to join this group which works second Sundays, phone Keith Vagg 844 1457.

# HOT HOUSE GOSSIP.

A gradual program of purchase and upgrading of tools and equipment has been underway of late. The Minister's grant seems to be stretching a very long way somehow and we have produced a large number of exclusion plots, the equipment and materials to construct more and good tools do this with plus proper small tools for weeding and nursery use. Many of our tools have been 'special deals' and we have decided to purchase many second hand, renovated items. Ian is making each item very readily identifiable with bright yellow paint and his engraving of FOWSP in appropriate places.

Elsa thanks all those people who responded to her desire to have someone live in her little flat. She had four responses last month and says she found it very hard to choose between them. She thinks Fowspians are lovely people.

The soup roster has been going for quite some time now and lunch on Thursday has become a gourmets delight. Bread is even accompanied by variety of little tit bits. All regulars take a turn and after a hard mornings 'yakka' hot soup is simply marvellous.

Betty Oke has the market roster organised to a 'turn'. The few who did it all are very grateful to all those people who are helping. The next change will be a roster for displays. Each area, sub group or project will be able to show just what they have done, are up to etc. Betty will contact leaders. August will be 'Wattle Day'.

Back from her honeymoon, Fay is hard at work. Extended until September the Parkcare Program is not going to fizzle out. Put aside the dates for the seminars and workshops so that Fowspians will be well qualified to take a leading role in Parkcare at the grassroots level. Most F.O.W.S.P. sub groups are strong and well motivated. There is a need for learning the ropes of

how those lines of communication must keep flowing. Nursery, Rangers and Newsletter need to know and inform. By the way, Fay has joined in with the next Family Activity Day to support Koala Day. Lots to do for young Fowspians.

Support from Park staff has been really wonderful recently as Park staff all settle down after changes, secondments etc. are all 'normalised'. We now have a roster of staff for Thursday afternoon and the FOWSP program is being tailored to fit the talents, skills and interests of support person. On the Thursdays occasionally when no-one is available we have special visits and Pat leads. Staff has been reduced drastically on weekends as a 'cut back' but again Matt promises to do as much as possible to support our working bees, Family days etc on Sat., or Sunday. Teamwork like this is really appreciated and I am sure you all sympathise with budgetary restrictions.

A recent innovation by Matt le Duc has been the Flora Management Team. Pat Coupar and Marg Burke are Fowspian reps. with Matt and David the staff members. All activities, programs and projects, especially those relating to Flora Management, will now be planned together. We hope to optimise just what F.O.W.S.P. and Park Staff can achieve in our role as support for Warrandyte State Park. Meetings are held for these planning sessions at least monthly, but as required.

Did you all see the article about Mt. Lofty in the Warrandyte Diary ('Out of towners' are able to see a copy in the Folly). We need to apply pressure to have this part of the Park officially OURS. Letters to the Minister Mark Birrell will remind him that this has not been done. His office is Cnr. Balwyn Rd. & Canterbury Rd. Balwyn if you wish to write or drop by to chat to staff. We will have a weekend visit at a future date for all those who would like to see this section of Warrandyte State Park.

What is the mystery of the Mystery reporter? Where has he gone? Where is his regular

piece? Who knows? What can he be up to? Is he a he? Oh dear! What can the matter be.....?

The Friends of Warrandyte State Park congratulate that OTHER Margaret Burke (Friends of the Lyrebird & F.O Kinglake) and her husband on the arrival of a second daughter. Again it was timed for the annual Lyrebird count at Kinglake but we believe mother and daughter did not count this year. Those of our members who attend know that this requires standing out in the wilds of Kinglake Nat. Park at 3am!

This Warrandyte Margaret Burke has a request of members. She is 'doing things of a rainbow nature' with wool/textiles and wonders if any of you have scraps of bright coloured mohairs, wools etc, any ply, no scrap too small. Ian Burke shudders when she goes near a wool shop as it keeps them impoverished. Any bits she doesn't use will go into a 'swap bag'. A large number of Fowspian ladies seem to be knitters.

The builders are currently needing more hands of a Thursday to work on renovation of the Nursery. They have a happy time creating Melbourne's most interesting Nursery but would love extra workers. Handyman skills are all you require, though any 'builders' will be well employed! Contact Ian or Don.

Neal and Elizabeth have every reason to be proud of the work they are doing in the Coupe. This area is now a model for revegetation process. The tool upgrade has meant purchase of lightweight wheelbarrows to make work easier. When you come to the Park on Thursday don't miss spending some time there for an interesting time which will teach you a technique very suitable for all local blocks.

Those environmentalists who are thinking about a move in human habitat might be interested in the news that three properties are for sale on the highly desirable Osborne Peninsula. All have State Park riverbank at the bottom of the garden and the Landcare group is very friendly. Recently FOWSP

## Hot House Gossip cont.

has been involved in activities with the Landcare group and Park remove blackberry, ivy and smilax and associated revegetation. All the properties are in the hands of John Spencer Real Estate so we will give John and Glen (Martin) a free plug!

We have recently had visits from several people interested in setting up programs to help achieve changes in public open space. Chris Mercier, ranger from Greenvale Reservoir met

Cathy Willis at the seminar she writes about in this issue. He had also recently approached our Koala Count organiser and long time friend Brenda Hunter with the idea of a Friends of Greenvale Reservoir. His visit was to check out what kinds of projects and people a Friends group would be likely to involve. He seemed to have a great day and to have gone off inspired to give direction, support and an exciting range of activities to his

locals and promises a cross town visit once they begin. Another visitor was teacher Craig from Mooroolbark who is hoping to have his secondary students turn a drain running into Brushy Creek into a frog habitat. The school hopes to grow its own plants for reveg and have a long term program of habitat rehabilitation. He enjoyed his visit and plans a follow up visit to see what the Friends of the Wandering Brogil have done with the 'drain' they inherited.

## HEARTBREAK HILL.

An area in need of special attention is a reserve many call 'Scotchman's Hill'. After two visits all this Fowspian can call it is *Heartbreak Hill*. A walk will reveal two sections. One is small, but the bush is in very good condition. It is reached as you walk up Magpie Lane turning left from Mitchell Ave. A quick assessment of this area showed that one well organised work day would get rid of most of the Pittosporum, Cotoneaster and English Broom.

Across a track, (for some reason as well maintained a dirt road as one finds in Warrandyte - though not a public road!), a different picture presents itself. A slope, criss crossed by 'homemade' tracks is a miserable slope with a fine array of weeds. This 'other side' of the reserve is the reason the area was not incorporated into Warrandyte State Park when it was originally declared. The weeds need a really serious group to arrange revegetation to bring it up to State Park standard. An energetic group of locals are prepared to do just that! And the Friends will be delighted to support their need for revegetation plants of impeccable provenance, to repair the mess. Currently Grant Watkinson from the Department of Crown Lands and Assets, is looking into the status of the land and is happy to look at a Friends 'Management Plan'. The Doncaster/ Templestowe Council endorse support for local effort.

Now we need keen members to join the group begun by Theo Buskes and Maarten Vanetie. They have a keen nucleus of 'Friends of Scotchman's Hill', but welcome more hands. Fay Valcanis will help them to get support, but if you would like to help with the loving restoration of the saddest piece of Warrandyte, please contact Maarten (844 4093), Theo (844 1338), or Marg Burke (844 1060). Action is the only thing which will save this area. If you live in the area (or out of it) take a walk round this sadly neglected reserve, then visit some of the other restoration projects and see what can be achieved. The Friends are pledging to do a plant survey during the spring flowering season and will keenly support this project.

## The spider

I was stopped in my tracks by a spider,  
Powerless, with no retreat.  
Not one so great and hairy,  
With fangs and fast moving feet.  
This one was a tiny black speck,  
As small as the head of a pin.  
It was weaving a beautiful art-work,  
So delicate, fragile and thin.  
Tiny clear droplets of glue were glistening bright in the sun,  
Then after a long, involved labour,  
The miniature art-work was done.

It perched itself in the centre,  
Awaiting its first meal, but then  
A wasp flew through it and smashed it to shreds,  
So it started all over again.

Keith Vagg

# Plant of the Month

Keith Vagg

## ACACIAS

PART 1

JULY 1994.

Many Acacias, which belong to the family *Mimosaceae* may be seen around Warrandyte as the winter days begin to lengthen. Un-noticed shrubs and trees suddenly blossom into glorious colour amongst the darkness of the bush.

*Acacia* species in Australia usually develop phyllodes, which are flattened, enlarged leaf stalks and function as leaves. All, however, grow true leaves in the seedling stage. There is a marked variation in form between many *Acacia*, however they vary from small, compact shrubs to large trees, and may be propagated from seeds or cuttings.

Most species have glands on the edge of phyllodes or the rachis of bipinnate leaves, which are important for identification, along with the other features such as phyllode veins, the type of flower-head and the shape of seeds and seed pods.

The following selection are some of the earlier flowering *Acacia*. Golden Wattle - *Acacia pycnantha* is a small tree with broad, pendulous, curved phyllodes and reddish branchlets. It has masses of brilliant, fragrant golden balls of flowers in stout racemes from late winter to spring. Pods are long and slightly constricted between seeds.

Prickly Moses - *Acacia verticillata* grows to a medium or large open shrub with fine, prickly phyllodes in whorls around the stem. Branchlets are ribbed and often hairy. It provides a bird shelter along the river bank and in drier bush areas. Flowers are mid - yellow spikes from winter to summer. Pods are dark brown, straight or curved, slightly, if at all, constricted between seeds.

Juniper Wattle - *Acacia ulicifolia* is also referred to as Prickly Moses. It is a small, open, rounded shrub with scattered, sharp, tapering phyllodes, wider at the base. Flowers are dense cream to yellow balls on long slender stalks, from late autumn to spring. Pods are usually curved and evenly constricted between seeds.

Hop Wattle - *Acacia stricta* is erect and upright, with erect, dull green phyllodes and pale to lemon yellow ball flowers, usually in pairs, from winter to spring. Pods are light brown with little constriction between seeds.

Thin-leaf Wattle - *Acacia aculeatissima*, sometimes is a low growing, open shrub, usually to 50cm. and has fine, frequently backward facing, prickly phyllodes, with small stipules at the base. It has yellow ball flowers on slender stalks, usually singly, from winter to summer. It is often known locally also as Snake Wattle. A hybrid between this and *Acacia verticillata* grows more upright and taller.

Woolly Wattle - *Acacia lanigera* is a rounded shrub with stiff phyllodes which have multiple veins (nerves) and taper to a curved point. New growth is covered with fine hairs. Flowers are bright, showy balls on short stalks from winter to late spring. Pods are brown, hairy and curled, with little constriction between seeds.



*Acacia lanigera*  
Woolly Wattle

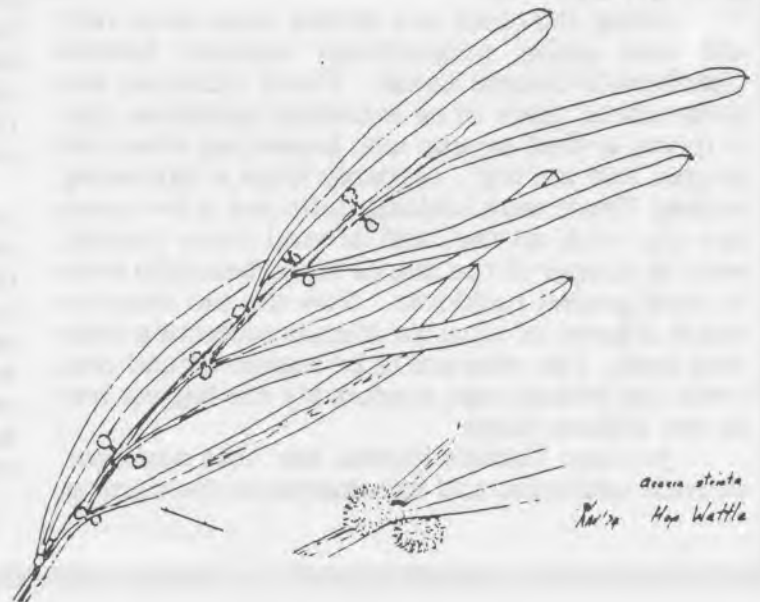


*Acacia ulicifolia*  
Juniper Wattle

*Acacia verticillata*  
Prickly Moses



KAV '94



*Acacia stricta*  
Hop Wattle

# June Sunday at Normans Reserve.

Last month we had a wonderful Sunday down at Norman's Reserve in Bradleys Lane. A mountain of English Ivy was removed then two of the rare species from this area were replanted in area's we have recreated. *Dianella tasmanica* will gradually form large clumps like those found elsewhere in this part of the Park. The other plant reintroduced was the Rough Tree Fern (*Cyathea australis*). Three large specimens had been uncovered as the ivy had been cleared. The work was followed up the next Thursday afternoon. A very large group of workers, with Head Ranger Matt le Duc as support, (and giving a fine demonstration of the 'rolling' technique of ivy removal) managed to clear a large area of the hidden billabong. Joan MacMahon will continue with work on this area and welcomes any help for the Friends of Bradley's Bush. Enq 844 3213

## *The Friends of the Wandering Brogil.*

by Margaret Burke

Joy Hildebrand, Co-ordinator of this amazingly enthusiastic sub Group took Margaret Burke on a tour of the revegetation projects recently undertaken. Margaret could hardly believe the transformation which has taken place around this very ordinary 'drain' site. Last year the plantings were all at the end of the 'creek' where it joined Stony Creek. In 1994 however the plantings were along the whole length of the public land. As for the 'drain' - any person to visit this area would find as attractive a creek as one would like to have trickling through bushland.

Twenty adults and eleven children took part in the revegetation activities of May 15th, and 846 trees, shrubs, grasses, sedges, and ground covers were planted, rabbit guarded and mulched. This was a special day and everyone turned up but it is obvious that at least a few come out every week to join Joy in this task. There is an impressive level of enthusiasm and commitment in this informal, family centred transformation. For example, one of the participating families have just purchased the land on which they plan to build their home. This family showed up early in the morning and worked solidly until lunchtime, learning so much about their new environment during the process. It is rumoured that some people were still working after darkness fell!

Along the creek are dotted some rare, very old and quite magnificent natural hybrid Candlebark/Swamp Gums. David Cameron has pronounced them to be extremely precious. (Joy is trying to find anyone who knows just when the largest lost its 'top', probably from a lightning strike.) These were looking quite sad a few years ago and with all the land around them cleared, were in danger of the fate of many beautiful trees in bare grazed paddocks. Now the old beauties shade a forest of riparian friends protecting their drip lines. The trees are to be registered and one, (with the broken top) is probably the biggest tree in the Eltham Shire.

Joy and Debbie Howse, her able assistant, provide education and information to their group,

developing whole attitudes to both Brogil Creek and it's environment. Each resident of this tiny street must have the feeling that they are changing, in the most positive way, what was just a weed infested slope with a tired rubbishy drain, into an environmental wonderland. But best of all every participant is learning 'just what it is all about' and how to apply that knowledge to their home sites.

An interesting idea has been the development of an allied group 'The Brogil Creek Kids' with junior residents having their own 'patch' to be responsible for. This is in a central 'safe' area. There are special activities for the Junior Brogillians as Joy and Debbie are aiming to enthuse the next generation.

This area is actually council property and the Shire of Eltham have given the Wandering Brogillians wonderful support. F.O.W.S.P. is keen to help where possible as this creek has such a direct effect on Stony Creek and adjoining Parkland. The proximity of Professors Hill Wildflower Reserve also makes the area environmentally critical.

Recently Greening Australia's 'Green Task Force' held a 3 day training exercise in the Brogil Valley, as part of their course in Environmental Horticulture and Restoration. Joy, Debbie and the Brogil residents played grateful hosts to such an informed and skilled group who have made a fine added contribution to the miracle of Brogil's re-emergence. They were responsible for much heavy weed removal, especially honeysuckle and legions of Japanese Iris clogging up the flow. I am sure they gained much during the experience (Joy seemed to have spent an age photocopying notes etc!)

Margaret Burke commends you all to visit Joy and Debbie (Melway 123 D:8) and find out all about what has happened. You will be inspired by this group with its positive and sensible approach to solving an environmental disaster. Saturday morning at 9.00am is when you will see it all in action, (indeed you are even able to join in) and see why the 'Friends of the Wandering Brogil' have be awarded the FOWSP roadside verge revegetation prize for 1994.

Enquiries: Joy Hildebrand 844 2638.

## Cathy's view.....

Greening Australia Vic. Seminar "Supporting and Motivating Groups - a land manager's perspective. 26/5/94.

As I drove out of Warrandyte this Thursday morning the big question in my mind was "...why am I going to an all day seminar instead of the Nursery today?" But I kept driving and ended up gaining some interesting perspectives from the "other side of the fence". About 35 people attended, mainly council conservation officers and DCNR and Melb. Parks and Waterways staff ie. the land managers.

Anyone interested in borrowing the notes provided is most welcome, this is just a brief outline of the speakers and their subjects.

Marion Taylor of the Friends Network and leader of the Friends of Coolart spoke on What Do Friends Need? She very succinctly answered the question, putting into words much that we Friends probably know but don't think about very much. She spoke of what we need from the land managers - acceptance, direction, support, trust, loyalty, encouragement, meaningful tasks etc. And from ourselves - leadership, commitment, self reliance, organisation, communication, a home. She also talked about how there must be a balance between autonomy and independence, and being a support group to the management body. If this is not balanced something is wrong....either the group is out of control or they are being treated as slaves.

Our own (well sort of) Val Polley from the office of the Environment was next up. She spoke about volunteers in general and the Volunteers Strategy she has been working on that recognises the contributions of volunteers and is to address the need to promote and coordinate their work. Just deciding who *is* a volunteer is a big enough question! Are work experience students or those under corrective services order volunteers? The majority of the community are volunteers in some form and have many different needs. She reinforced a comment of Marion's that volunteers work for FREE but not for NOTHING, and also pointed out that volunteers don't come free, they require time, training, support etc. Much food for thought.

David Young's (from GAV) topic was Diverse Opportunities for Broader Involvement. David opened by relating an incident at the recent conference of The River Basin Management Society. A past president dared to question the capacity of 'the Community' to participate in land management. He was of course howled down but raised the question "do you trust volunteers?" David suggested that as the community as a whole had caused environmental degradation then we all must be involved in correcting it. He went on to talk about possible outcomes of community participation and how supporting groups could lead to the best possible outcomes (among other things).

Question time 'blew' my cover when Val in

particular pointed to FOWSP as being a model of what a Friends group can be and asked me to elaborate on some of our strengths. Our fearless leader was referred to several times to highlight how important good leadership and communication is. Lunchtime saw me interrogated by a few land managers wishing they worked at Warrandyte. I was wishing I'd worn my other hat as a part time Community Educator in Knox.

Sarah Ewing from the Geography Dept. at Melb. Uni started the afternoon session. For several years she has been closely following the progress and development of landcare groups in West. Vic. so was well qualified to speak on 'Stages of Group Development - Lessons from Landcare'. She highlighted four main stages:- formation, establishment, consolidation and maturity, stressing that these didn't always follow in a regular pattern. Sarah had valuable insights to offer. I especially liked her overhead of Winnie the Pooh climbing the honey tree. It's a good idea to stop and view the world and the group's progress from a different perspective now and then.

'Dealing With Groups With Strong Opinions' was given to Jennifer Lilburn of MP&W. They've had to deal with a few lately. (Albert Park, Brimbank etc.) She covered 'Why do people get fired up over Parks?', 'Who are we dealing with?', 'How should we deal with these groups?' and 'Dealing with individuals'. Jennifer stressed the need for land managers to try to align the position of their agency with the public's position and to use communication skills to sort out differences.

Michael Fendley, Conservation Officer with the Shire of Bulla tackled 'Setting Up and Letting Go'. This was obviously a problem topic for many present. It appears that many land managers either want to get groups going and can't or having helped groups form find them unable to carry on without excessive direction and support. (Not us!!!) Michael saw the land manager as a focal point for the three key components - A. the people B. the site/issue, C. the organisation (ie. that manages the land). The manager has responsibilities to each. Often both the manager and the group get caught up in site issues, neglecting the other components. Some interesting comments were that land managers often don't think about what makes a good group until things go wrong. That agencies are often not confident or comfortable with dealing with the public. He stressed that a good land manager must be able to offer empathy, experience and most important, motivation, support and encouragement.

I had to leave at the start of question time so can't report on the responses to these last three speakers.

While a lot of the day was not directly relevant to us I felt that I'd gained some insight into

1. What and why we are, and how to continue to pursue our aims and
2. How agencies view Friends.

Cathy Willis.

**Fossicking Ross is having a wonderful holiday, sends his love!**

## **PARKCARE NEWS**

### **Latest on ParkCare**

From Fay Valcanis (Mon & Tues 846 4499,  
Wed, Thur, Fri 844 2659)

Funds have become available to see the ParkCare Officer position (that's me) extended until the end of September. I will be using this time to work with rangers and friends groups so that by the end of September, ParkCare will be fully adopted by rangers who will then continue the program at Warrandyte State Park. Up until then we will be looking at the program to see what parts of the program will be maintained and looking at ways of how best to support and maintain the energy of people involved in ParkCare.

### *So until then, what's happening?*

**Wed. 20th July**

**Rabbit control seminar and launch of Brochure.** 8pm - 9.30 pm Warrandyte Community Centre. For more information on the seminar contact Tim Rowe 840 9300. Brochure are available from the park office.

**Sun. 31st July**

This marks the finale of National Koala Week (National Koalas Day is Friday 29th of July). To celebrate and support this, the Friends together with park staff are holding a party for the koalas at our park. People of course are invited to come along and provide food & drinks (that is participate in a planting of koala food and shelter plants).

The event will take place at Pound Bend "Endeavour Bank" near the rangers office. Come along at 1pm to help out with the planting and join in for a walk afterwards to spot koalas around the park

Koala sun-visors will be available for \$2.00 each, with the money going to the Australian Koala Foundation. Kids (and adults too) join in during afternoon tea when we make koala gift tags and participate in the Koala Colouring in

competition. BYO : Binoculars, gum boots and a plate to share for afternoon tea.  
Enquires: Fay (844 2659) or Marg (844 1060)



### **AUGUST**

**Wed 3rd.** Friends of Koornong monthly meeting. After more than 2 years of activity at the Koornong, much has changed. Come along and see for yourselves! 10am. meet at the carpark on Koornong Cres.

**Sun 7th.** Join the Friends of Fourth Hill on their monthly meeting as they "get to know" Fourth Hill. Activities vary monthly. David 844 2659

**Sat 13th.** Friends of Timber monthly get together. Join Timber friends as they forge on this month in an attempt to rid the reserve of Sallow Wattle. Hear Brian's best (or possibly worst jokes) Contact Brian P. 844 2659. Meet at park gate Webb St.

### **Coming Up.....**

ParkCare workshops are scheduled for September. More information and venues in next months newsletter (watch this space for details)

**Sat 3rd.** Volunteer Herbicide workshop

**Sun 4th.** Flora identification walk

**Sun 11th.** Flora identification walk.

One walk will focus on the upper storey vegetation whilst the other will focus on under storey and wetland plants.

**Sun 18th.** Making your backyard bush friendly

### **And more.....**

#### **Spring Planting Festival**

Sunday 25th September at Pound Bend and  
Sunday 2nd October at Fourth Hill More details next month