



FriendsNET

Number 50 February 2005

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50 up!

No – the Network is not 50 years old, but this is the 50th issue of the Network newsletter.

So we thought it would be a good excuse for a special enlarged edition, giving an opportunity to place on record something of the remarkable grassroots development of environmental Friends groups in Victoria.

The list of 'Best Friends' (on page 3) names

just a few of the thousands of dedicated volunteers who have made this happen.

And we've still got our regular news and information – something for everyone.

So to all the groups out there – keep up the good work, and please consider sharing your experiences with others through our Network's various channels – especially *FriendsNET* and the September Conference.

You're Invited to a Party – with a Conference included!



Sue Wright, Network Committee Convener

Twenty-one years ago the Grampians National Park was declared.

Twenty-two years ago the Friends of National Parks held their first Conference.

Times have moved along for both. The names have changed slightly but the spirit has endured. This year the Grampians Gariwerd National Park turns 21 and the Friends Network will hold its 11th Biennial Conference. What better way to celebrate both occasions than to bring the Conference and the Park together?

On September 16, 17 and 18 the Friends Network, in conjunction with the Friends of Grampians Gariwerd, will host the 11th Biennial Conference at Roses Gap Recreation Centre in the centre of the Grampians. We invite all Friends Groups to attend and share a weekend of celebration amidst this majestic mountain setting.

A program of workshops, presentations, excursions and relaxing get-together will make this a Conference and Birthday celebration to remember. Management issues, pest control, fire ecology, threatened species discussion, volunteer perspectives, flora and fauna walks, historical sites and a special involvement from the Brambuk Centre will be just some of the contributions to the weekend.

If you are committed to the idea of communities and conservation being linked together, if you have worked side by side with Friends to make a difference – then you have a great deal to celebrate and you have a place at Roses Gap in September. Registration forms will be included in our next *FriendsNET*.

Springtime in the Grampians is an unforgettable experience – so join the party and be part of the 11th Friends Network Conference. See you there!



Friends Groups ... a grassroots phenomenon!

'Grassroots' is defined as '...close to or emerging spontaneously from the people' and this certainly applies to the volunteer Friends groups in Victoria which support a conservation or historic reserve or species.



Friends of Chiltern
Box-Ironbark NP

Nobody knows how many Friends Groups there are because they are springing up all the time. And that is what they do – spring up out of community environmental consciousness.

The first 'Friends of' group was the Friends of Organ Pipes National Park, formed in 1972. The success of this group led to the National Parks Service (NPS) approving the Victorian National Parks Association (VNPA) sponsoring groups for other parks. But the idea spread beyond parks with the Friends of Coolart (managed by a Committee of Management) formed in 1979 and Friends of Sherbrooke Forest (managed by the then Forests Commission) formed in 1980.

The proliferation of groups has been phenomenal with many new groups emerging and only a few groups withering away. There are now groups for the various public land managers – Parks Victoria, DSE, Trust for Nature, water authorities and municipal councils – as well as groups for specific native species. Some groups

are a few people who occasionally tend their patch, others have a large membership and are highly organised with a varied program of activities; and there is everything in between. The Friends Network Committee has recorded over 700 support groups with 250 of them formally affiliated with the Network. Not all are known as 'Friends of', and some were formed before the Friends of Organ Pipes.

In 1983 the VNPA brought together 15 groups for a 'Friends of National Parks Conference' held at Woodlands Homestead. A second conference was held at Tidal River in 1985 when an 'Interim Friends Committee' was formed to organise a third conference. This was held at Howmans Gap in 1987 when the 'structure of the Friends Movement' was discussed and a Friends Committee was elected.

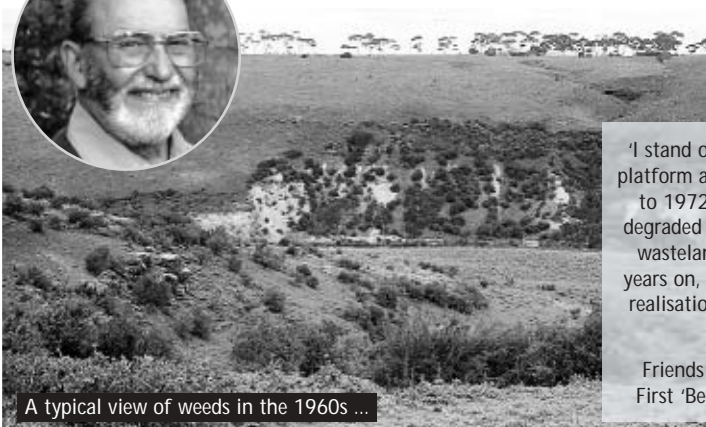
Subsequent conferences were at Roses Gap in 1989, Lady Northcote Camp in 1991, Rawson in 1993, Kangarooie in 1995, Somers in 1997, Tidal River in 2001 and Cape Bridgewater in 2003.

One-day Seminars have been held at the Herbarium in 1992 and 1994, Burnley Horticultural College in 1996, 1998, and 1999, Geelong in 2000, Organ Pipes in 2002, Melbourne in 2003 and Toorak in 2004 (2).

The Eleventh Friends Conference will be at the Grampians on 16–18 September this year.

It was not until the 1999 seminar that a Network constitution was adopted. The elected Friends Network Committee promotes Friends Groups, liaises with management authorities, administers the Best Friend Award, organises conferences and seminars, and publishes *FriendsNET*. Groups pay no fee to affiliate, but the Network has received assistance from the old National Parks Service, Parks Victoria, Melbourne City Council and the VNPA.

All this has been achieved by volunteers. Truly, it is a grassroots phenomenon unique to Victoria.



A typical view of weeds in the 1960s ...

'I stand on the viewing platform and reflect back to 1972, a view of a degraded weed-infested wasteland. Today, 33 years on, my view is the realisation of a dream.'

— Don Marsh
Friends of Organ Pipes
First 'Best Friend' 1991



... and of indigenous bush in 2001

A few snippets from past Network Newsletters ...

Occasional memos and circulars to Friends Groups commenced in July 1982. The first 'Friends Network News' was published following the 1991 Fifth Biennial Friends Conference at Bacchus Marsh. The objective was 'to provide information, to be a forum for the exchange of opinions and to be of assistance to Friends Groups.'

Of course there have been many longer articles on important matters, but here are a few snippets showing the diversity of content, including some in lighter vein.

No. 1, July 1991

David Thompson wrote: 'The highest priority of national parks, the conservation of their physical and biological features, is being threatened by the constraints of government funding.'

No. 5, September 1992

We have checked on what to do if you come across a marijuana plot in the bush:

- note its position etc.
 - report it immediately to the local police or the Drug Squad ...
 - don't go near it again.
- (Update: Phone 000)

No. 10, April 1994

Friends of the Macedon Ranges sent in their recipe for damper:

- 2 lb. wh'meal flour 1 tbsp. skim milk powder
- ½ pt hot water 1 tbsp. honey
- 1 tbsp. salt 1 stubby of beer

Method: Mix all ingredients, leave in bowl to rise and cover with wet cloth until ready to bake. Bake in a hot oven for approximately 30–40 minutes at 400°C. Delicious served with Golden Syrup.

No. 11, August 1994

Friends of Inverleigh Common Flora & Fauna Reserve followed up with their recipe:

- 1 cup SR flour
- 1 cup plain wholemeal flour
- 1 cup liquid (milk, water or mixture) No salt

Method: Mix well into dough. Roll into rolls. Wrap loosely in aluminium foil. Bake ¼ hour, turn and bake another ¼ hour in coals. Serve with butter/golden syrup/jam.

No. 22, May 1997

Tetanus warning reprinted from the newsletter of the Boroondara Bushwalkers:

'Best Friend' awards – made annually since 1991 on the recommendation of an independent panel from nominations by groups – recognise 'outstanding contribution through exceptional dedication as a Friend'.



The first recipient of the Best Friend Award was Don Marsh, the founder of the first Friends Group – the Friends of Organ Pipes National Park.



'When in the bush it is almost inevitable that sooner or later you will have cuts and scratches. They might be quite minor, but you could be exposed to tetanus. ...The National Health and Medical Council recommends a course in *tetanus prophylaxis* with a booster every 10 years. If an injury occurs after five years, a booster may be given early.'

No. 25, February 1998

Friends of Merri Creek reported on a survey of 158 financial members. The most favoured activities were: (1) planting and hands-on activities; (2) litter clean-up activities; (3) walks, talks, tours and social.

No. 37, May 2001

'Recently a local lady confided to my husband that she had thought I was a Quaker as she had heard me say I belonged to a Friends Group. It was a misinterpretation that I had not even thought of, but it set me wondering how many people not associated with parks may be confusing membership of The Society of Friends (or Quakers) with membership of Friends (of parks) Groups.'

No. 38, August 2001

Some Friends of the Prom 'poked around in old cow pats along the Watkins' farm drive to collect dung beetles ... not for some private whim but to try to improve the workings of a couple of outstation toilets.'

No 44, August 2003

Change of name from *Friends Network News* to *FriendsNET*, and a new format. Network Committee Convener Bernie Fox wrote: 'It's your newsletter – we look forward to hearing from you!'

'Best Friends' 1991 – 2004		
1991	Don Marsh	Friends of Organ Pipes National Park
1993	Bill Golding	Friends of the Great South West Walk
	Barry Kemp	Friends of Organ Pipes National Park
1994	Margaret Witherspoon	Friends of Blackburn Lake
1995	Gerry McKay	Friends of Gellibrand Hill
1996	Tom Burchell	Friends of the Brisbane Ranges National Park
1997	Carl Rayner	Friends of Organ Pipes National Park
	Sam Bruton	Friends of the Great South West Walk
1998	Des Quinn	Friends of French Island
1999	Elizabeth Doery	Friends of Wyperfeld National Park
	Vivien Freshwater	Friends of Sherbrooke Forest
	Eddie Kleingeerts	Friends of Bogong & Friends of Mt Buffalo NP
2001	Marshall Baillieu	Friends of Royal Botanic Gardens, Cranbourne
	Nola Haines	Friends of Brisbane Ranges National Park
	Millie Howell	Friends of the Prom
2002	John Munday	Friends of Woodlands Historic Homestead
	Ian Pratchett	Friends of Woodlands Historic Homestead
	Gladys Sweetten	Friends of Woodlands Historic Homestead
	John Sweetten	Friends of Woodlands Historic Homestead
2003	Robert Bender	Friends of Organ Pipes National Park
	Jack Brooks	Friends of Mt Worth State Park
2004	Geoff Durham	Friends of Wyperfeld National Park
	Max Sargent	Friends of Merri Creek
	Marion Taylor	Friends of Coolart

Groups in action

Friends of Kings Billabong

Secretary Bernadette Chaplin explains how the group has used grants to develop facilities.

Box 1128
Irymple 3498
Ph. (03) 5024 7026

The Friends of Kings Billabong were successful last year with two grant applications – one valued at \$172,000, provided by the Federal Government, and another for \$5000 from Parks Victoria. The Friends are constructing an ‘all abilities access’ viewing platform at a lookout point over the broadest part of the billabong. This includes paving, car park, weather shelter, picnic settings, landscaping and mounted binoculars. The Federal grant is to further enhance the lookout area with walking tracks, bird hides, information shelters etc. The PV grant is for a History & Interpretation panel board on site.



Kings Billabong is a beautiful wetland situated near Mildura, and is home to a diverse range of birds, animals and plants. The Friends group was formed in 1999 and so far has planted and watered trees at several sites, purchased a water cart, been involved in ‘Clean Up’ days, improved walking tracks and visitor facilities, installed picnic settings and constructed a bird hide. Historic Psyche Pumps and surrounds, on the river edge, provide interest for the very popular guided nature walks led by Friends. Members have mapped all raided and protected tortoise nests and scratchings flanking one side of the Billabong and funding is being sought to continue this research.

LaTrobe University Wildlife Reserves have ready-made boxes for sale – phone 9479 2871

Further reading

The Nestbox Book Gould League \$14.95. (Boxes for birds and mammals. Highly recommended.)

Tree Hollows and Wildlife Conservation in Australia by Phillip Gibbons and David Lindenmayer, CSIRO Publishing \$59.95. (‘A comprehensive account of the hollow-dependent fauna of Australia’)

Nest boxes for wildlife by Alan and Stacey Franks, Bloomings Books \$16.95. (A practical guide to the construction and use of nest boxes.)

Hollows for fauna

Hollows provide shelter and nesting places for animals, both native and feral. They also provide opportunities for Friends’ involvement. If you have otherwise suitable habitat that is lacking hollows because of past land use, should you provide artificial ‘hollows’? If you do, what animals will use them? Artificial hollows require regular monitoring as they can do more harm than good if they provide homes for introduced species. Two Friends Groups report.

Friends of Organ Pipes NP: Artificial Roost and Nest Boxes

Sugar Gliders trapped in Toolern Vale were released 1989, into hollow logs attached to trees – the first release into a park of wild-trapped animals. Later rectangular boxes were used, some with overhangs to discourage bees and Mynahs. The Gliders were artificially fed for a few weeks, then left to themselves. In the early 1990s they flourished, then lack of box maintenance, reduced funding, the senescence and death of the Black Wattles that provided their major winter food and a series of droughts led to a population decline. They have started to recover in the last few years and a regular monitoring program by Park staff (with occasional help from the Friends group) is now routine. The Gliders are breeding and surviving.

Ten boxes were installed for insectivorous bats in April ‘92; the number was increased to 34 since bats were found using them in ‘94, with various designs (internal volume, entrance slit, timber thickness). Six bat species have used the boxes, but over 90% of captures have been Gould’s Wattled Bats. We have monitored the boxes monthly, recorded 6,000 captures and studied a colony’s breeding and life histories, learned about the seasonal habits of our bats,



and about evaluating our box designs. Possibly 150 people have helped us – Friends, FNCV Mammal Survey, university students preparing for post-graduate field projects. Box maintenance has been a major problem, with trees growing, pushing boxes off their screws, timber deteriorating from exposure, bolts corroding. Ants have been a big issue in some boxes. In October we celebrated a decade of our project.

– Robert Bender (9499 2413)

Friends of Chiltern NP: Hollow Logs versus Nest Boxes

In the 1980s, Len Robinson had the idea that hollow logs appropriately sited may be more attractive to Turquoise parrots than artificial nest boxes. An initial trial of 14 logs in 1987 proved very promising with two Turquoise parrot nests.

Len was assisting Bruce Quinn who was doing research into the Turquoise parrots in Chiltern Park. Bruce had erected 52 nest boxes in 1986 which, following monitoring, seemed to be unattractive to the parrots and birds in general. Len salvaged 75 more hollow logs that he judged suitable for the project. Friends of Chiltern Park put metal bases on them, with drainage holes punched in the metal. We added wood dust before erecting them in 1993.

Following directions from Bruce, the Friends fixed the 75 logs onto trees. Monitoring was done three times a year for the first three years. The results were disappointing from the Turquoise parrot point of view, with little usage of the logs by the target species. This may have been due to a decline in abundance of Turquoise parrots.

However all was not in vain as our inspections of the logs revealed use by frogs, treecreepers, antechinus, phascogales, possums and gliders. The only vertebrate group to extensively use boxes was mammals. A single White-throated Treecreeper nest was recorded in one box. Invertebrates have used both logs and boxes.

We still monitor both logs and boxes and undertake maintenance. Fallen timber with suitable hollows is environmentally more pleasing than nest boxes and far easier to maintain. However placement and especially the angle and size of the entrance need to be carefully considered. These features influence the type of species that utilise the logs and boxes. Artificial nest logs and boxes can provide nest or refuge sites for hollow-using fauna in forest and woodland with an acute shortage of tree hollows. The 'temporary' use of artificial nest sites has continued for almost two decades for some species of fauna in Chiltern Park. Until more trees sufficiently mature to provide natural tree hollows, this method will go on indefinitely.

– Eileen Collins (5726 1484) & Bruce Quinn

And speaking of
'grassroots' ...

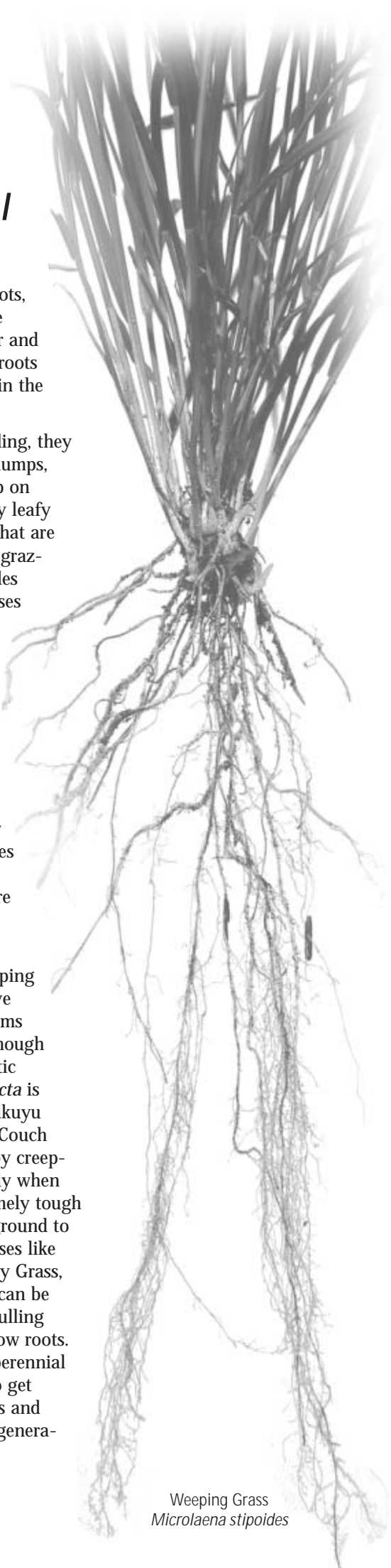
What do you know about *real* grass roots?

Gras roots, like all plant roots, are an essential part of the plant and provide it with water and minerals essential for growth; roots also serve to anchor the plant in the ground.

Grass roots are fine and spreading, they grow in fibrous masses or in clumps, and generally have a good grip on the ground. They support many leafy growing shoots, called tillers, that are usually below the bite level of grazing animals or the cutting blades of a lawn mower. In most grasses the tillers are at ground level, located above and supported by the grass roots. These tiller buds provide new growth after grazing or mowing. Even if some of the tillers pull out, overall they resist uprooting and a new crop of leaves grows. These abilities to hold onto the ground and to regrow after defoliation are why grasses are so valuable as lawn and pasture plants and why they are so difficult to eradicate.

Many long-lived perennial grasses such as the native Weeping Grass *Microlaena stipoides* have very dense and deep root systems which are hard to pull out, although the rather similar looking, exotic Panic Veldt-grass *Ehrharta erecta* is easier. Other grasses such as Kikuyu *Pennisetum clandestinum* and Couch Grass *Elytrigia repens* spread by creeping rhizomes which break easily when pulled, but the roots are extremely tough holding pieces of stem in the ground to regrow. Unwanted annual grasses like Briza (aka Blowfly Grass, Shelly Grass, Quaking Grass) *Briza maxima* can be effectively removed by hand pulling because they have rather shallow roots. Whether removing annual or perennial grasses it is really important to get them out before the seed ripens and falls to establish a whole new generation of new plants.

– Jane & Malcolm Calder



Weeping Grass
Microlaena stipoides

Experience Exchange (your space)

Direct Seeding Experiments

Bob Reid, of Friends of Werribee Gorge & Long Forest Mallee, reports on an investigation by the group.

Bob can be contacted on 5367 2462.

Share your questions, experiences or ideas – contact a Committee member (see page 8)

Usually Friends of Werribee Gorge & Long Forest Mallee propagate seeds of local origin in trays. At a Project Day in November seedlings are 'pricked out' into 50 mm pots to be grown on for planting during winter months of the following year. Although this system works well, it requires dedication by 'tree growers', success in initial propagation and manual labour for 'pricking out' and winter planting.

While these activities are enjoyable, alternatives have recently been investigated.

Black Wattle seeds collected near Coimadai Creek were planted in Long Forest Nature Conservation Reserve directly into a 30 metre long scrape made with a mattock blade. Seeds had been soaked in hot water overnight prior to planting. Planting took about 10 minutes. Of 100 seeds planted on 18 September 2004, 18 germinated and were around 15 mm high by

5 January 2005. These are on an open hillside and unguarded. This investigation is incomplete but worthy of repeating with different species.

Individual seeds planted directly into 50 mm pots avoid the need for pricking out seedlings. An investigation with different species so far has resulted in germination rates of about 80% for Drooping She-oak (*Allocasuarina verticillata*) and Fragrant Saltbush (*Rhagodia parabolica*) and so far low germination rates down to 5–10% for other species. However as seeds were planted on 27 November 2004 and some are just now germinating it is too early to be conclusive. Further investigations will be made.

Other groups may already use direct seeding. It would be of interest to read a report on their methods and results. Please contact *FriendsNET*.

Sausages, the Law and Volunteer Groups

The author of this article, Geoff Durham, writes from a legal background as well as his many years' experience with volunteer groups

There is nothing as popular with Friends as a good sausage sizzle, but are you breaking the law? What are the requirements of the Victorian Food Act?

First, the good news. If you are not charging for the food (a sausage or anything else), common sense prevails and no permit is required. Of course, you are personally liable if you negligently poison someone!

Now for the bad news. Complications arise when there is a sale. 'Sale' means disposal for any valuable consideration, and this includes a donation or purchasing a raffle ticket. 'Sale' also includes giving away for the purpose of advertisement.

A sausage sizzle (or any provision of food) held no more than once in any month and less than 12 times a year is an 'event' and the place where the event is held are 'temporary food premises', even if in the open air! (Other laws apply to normal food premises and other food disposal.)

You are required to register your 'event' and 'temporary food premises' with the Health Department of your local Council. Application must be made more

then 14 days prior to the event. A fee may be payable - it varies from Council to Council. Some Councils do not charge community groups.

You must have an approved 'food safety program' and an 'Event Coordinator' (but not a qualified 'Food Safety Supervisor'). The Event Coordinator makes the application and is responsible for compliance with the food safety program. The Council will supply a 'Food Safety Program Template for Food Events' or this can be downloaded from the Food Safety Victoria website www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety. This gives details of food handling, storage and preparation requirements. Health officers can inspect the event to ensure compliance.

There is a Template Assistance Hotline on 1300 888 498.

Some councils will require a signed indemnity form. Also, and this is the killer, some will require the group to hold a Public and Products Liability Insurance policy for \$10,000,000, or other amount, in the joint names of the Group and the Council. Check with your management authority to see if its Public Liability and Products insurance covers your event, and with the relevant Council to see if it has any other insurance requirement. Parks Victoria's insurance covers Parks Victoria authorised sausage sizzles.

The bottom line is this: there are no health permit requirements if everything is BYO, and there are no health permit requirements if food is not 'sold'. And don't forget the tomato sauce!

Friends of Wanderslore



Parks Victoria Grants

The Parks Victoria Annual Report for 2003/4 indicates volunteer group grants totalled \$500,000 to 143 groups who received an average of \$3,500.

There has been a steady decline in these grants:

1999/2000	\$1,000,206
2000/1	\$738,570
2001/2	\$657,620
2002/3	\$652,416
2003/4	\$500,000

The Annual Report has a Chief Executive's Message in which Mark Stone says: 'I also thank the thousands of Friends group members and other volunteers who do so much to protect and enhance our parks. In total, volunteers dedicated 100,000 hours during the year to park projects. It's not all one way; the relationship between the community and the natural environment is mutually rewarding.'

Parks Victoria 2005 Grants

Parks Victoria annually provides Volunteer Group Grants to community groups who wish to undertake projects that relate to Parks Victoria managed areas. Groups will need to work in close conjunction with local Parks Victoria staff in order to develop and implement projects. Volunteer Group Grants are available to community-based groups/not for profit organisations such as (but not confined to):

- friends groups
- service clubs
- cultural groups
- migrant resource centres
- schools
- historical societies

There are five categories for Volunteer Group Grants: environment, recreation, heritage,

community awareness and multicultural support, with a focus this year on pest programs. Interested community groups can find out opening and closing dates for Volunteer Group Grants, and can obtain an Application Form, by calling the Parks Victoria Information Centre on 13 1963 after February 21st 2005.

Anthea Dee
Community Programs and Volunteer
Coordinator
Parks Victoria
Level 10, 535 Bourke St Melbourne 3000
ph. 8627 4717
mob. 0439 045 781
adee@parks.vic.gov.au

For more information on grants

The Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment Management Authority puts out a comprehensive 'Calendar of grants and incentives for individuals and groups caring for land water and wildlife'. It can be downloaded from www.pppwma.vic.gov.au or contact Greg Milne 9296 4627 greg.milne@dpi.vic.gov.au

The following list of 'Handy Websites' is extracted with permission:

www.grantslink.gov.au is a Federal Government website designed to offer direct links to existing information on Commonwealth Government grant programs.

[www.env.qld.gov.au/environment/environment/grants/Environment Assistance Grants - Links And Entry \(EAGLE\)](http://www.env.qld.gov.au/environment/environment/grants/Environment%20Assistance%20Grants%20-%20Links%20And%20Entry%20(EAGLE).htm) Brief overview of funding sources with links to relevant websites.

www.ourcommunity.com.au Newsletters to help groups succeed with grant applications.

www.environment.vic.gov.au Environment Gateway website. Victoria's environment and sustainability issues. Follow Get Involved/Grants & Funding Opportunities.

www.philanthropy.org.au Philanthropy Australia website. The national membership organisation for grant-making trusts and foundations.

Vale Jack Brooks

Jack Brooks passed away peacefully on the 1st of January 2005 at the West Gippsland Hospital in Warragul at age 94. Jack was awarded a Best Friend Award in 2003 after serving over thirty years as President of the Friends of Mt Worth State Park, which he and wife Nancy founded in 1970.

Parks Victoria staff and all of the West Gippsland Friends Groups would like to recognise Jack's decades of enthusiastic support and tireless work in the Park and for the environment in general. Thank you Jack, well done, you will be sadly missed by all who have known you.

Rob Howell, Ranger
Mt Worth State Park



Jack receiving his 2003 Best Friend Award from Network Convener Bernie Fox

Geoff's Group Grapevine

Many groups concluded 2004 with a BBQ or some other get-together and most had a few weeks' rest before commencing their 2005 activities.

Royal Park has a new group – **Friends of Royal Park**. The Park is managed for the Melbourne City Council by Serco Services, and their Royal Park Officer, Charles Pinnock, reports that 'all the people interested seem to be friendly locals who know the park extremely well and want to get their hands dirty doing something to help'. The coordinator is Anne Finkelde 9347 1072

Our recently affiliated group, **Friends of Wilson Botanic Park, Berwick**, are responsible for the publication of *From Village Quarry to Botanic Park – A short history of Wilson Botanic Park*. This attractive booklet is available at the park for \$15.00.

Friends of Glenfern Valley Bushland have four corporate sponsors who pay \$50 to sponsor an edition of their newsletter.

At the tenth Anniversary celebration of the **Friends of Tarra Bulga National Park**, Cr Darren McCubbin (representing the Mayor of the Shire of Wellington)

presented 12 Foundation Member certificates, eight Service Badges to members who had completed 30 days service in the park, and a Gold medal to **Kath Bye** for 100 days service.

And we welcome ...

Friends of Cook Street Bushland Reserve
The Mornington Peninsula Shire set aside approximately 2276 sq. metres in Cook Street, McCrae, and facilitated formation of the group, but should the group 'become inactive or dissolve' the Council will approve the sale of the land. The reserve is hand-weeded and large patches of annual grasses are flame treated, mown and sprayed as appropriate. Contact Joy Fox – 5986 4769

Friends of Wilson Botanic Park
A 39 ha park is being created by the City of Casey out of an old quarry at Berwick. The Friends Group is involved with working bees, guided tours, visitor information, special events and development. Phone (BH) 9707 5818.



*Geoff Durham
is the Network's
Group Liaison Officer*

REMINDER

FriendsNET can be e-mailed to you as a pdf, or downloaded from the Network's website home.vicnet.net.au/~friends

THE VICTORIAN FRIENDS NETWORK

The Friends Network provides a means of communication between the hundreds of Victorian community groups which support conservation reserves, natural areas, historic places and indigenous flora and fauna species. Affiliation involves no financial or other obligation.

Through a biennially-elected committee, the Network –

- promotes Friends Groups and assists in the formation of new groups
- facilitates networking between groups and provides supportive information
- liaises with management authorities and other relevant organisations
- distributes *FriendsNET* quarterly (February, May, August, November)
- holds a weekend conference or a one-day seminar for Friends every year
- produces a Friends Kit in conjunction with Parks Victoria
- provides Model Rules for incorporation of a Friends Group
- administers the Best Friend Awards
- maintains a Web page – home.vicnet.net.au/~friends. This lists all affiliated groups and has an Application for Affiliation form as well as other information useful to groups.

Committee Convener: Sue Wright – 9306 8124 – suewri@tpg.com.au

Group Liaison: Geoff Durham – 9523 5559 – gadurham@bigpond.com

Newsletter: Margaret Boyd – 9560 8084 – mmboyd@ozemail.com.au

Group contact database: Bernie Fox – 9741 9859 – hayburn@bigpond.com.au

MAIL ADDRESS: Friends Network Committee, c/- VNPA, 60 Leicester St, CARLTON 3053

The 2005 Best Friend Award(s)

These awards will be announced at the Eleventh Friends Conference at the Grampians on 16–18 September. The closing date for nominations from Friends Groups has been extended to 1 April. Nomination forms are available from the VNPA office (60 Leicester St. Carlton 3053) or from the Awards Secretary, Margaret Boyd, phone 9560 8084, e-mail: mmboyd@ozemail.com.au

Friends Network Tours

The Friends Network Committee has organised two one-day coach tours of Friends Groups on Saturday 9 April to give Friends the opportunity to see at first hand how other groups operate. Details are given in the supplement included with this issue. Bookings are essential.

Deadline for May issue: 15 April 2005

If undelivered, return to:
Friends Network Committee
c/- VNPA, 60 Leicester Street
CARLTON 3053

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FriendsNET

FEBRUARY 2005

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