



**Berg**  
Mt Martha

Caring for the Balcombe Estuary Reserves

# THE CREEK

Volume 20 No 4, August 2016

## BE PREPARED!

A nasty stick injury, a spider bite, a stroke – the risk is always there, despite our best OHS efforts.

First aid expert (and ex-vet) Eric Allen left a roomful of BERGers much better prepared to deal with such emergencies after his engaging talk at Mt Martha House in late May. We learnt about burns and bleeding, abrasions and penetrating injuries, choking (see photo!), snake bite, concussion, fits and stroke.



Ian Gould, plucked from the audience, had his arm splinted and bandaged, then subjected to a rubbery red-back spider! (See photo below.) And Eric demonstrated CPR and showed us how straightforward it is to use a defibrillator (these are now placed in many public areas, including one at Mt Martha IGA).



Much of the material covered can be found online in a pamphlet Eric developed, at:

[golfnetworkadmin.gamznhosting.com/site/content/document/00026624-source.pdf](http://golfnetworkadmin.gamznhosting.com/site/content/document/00026624-source.pdf)

*Photos Angela Kirsner*

## FOR CHILDREN OF ALL AGES (AND THEIR PARENTS) EXPLORE BUSH MAGIC WITH GIDJA

### AND JOIN US FOR A SAUSAGE SIZZLE

Join local ecologist & dream weaver Gidja Walker for a magical kids' discovery walk through bushland.

**When:** Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> September – walks at 11am or 12.30pm, with a sausage sizzle (\$1) in between

**Where:** Meet at the Rotunda, Old Campground

**Numbers are limited – to book, email [info@berg.org.au](mailto:info@berg.org.au)**

### NOTICE OF MEETING AND CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

## 2016 BERG MT MARTHA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING SATURDAY 22<sup>ND</sup> OCTOBER Mt Martha House (Mtg Rm 5)

9.15am registration for the meeting at 9.30am sharp

Our speaker will be  
**Liz Barraclough**

With BERG Mt Martha turning 20 next year, Liz, our amazing Field Officer since Day 1, will talk about the huge amount we've achieved and how we've done it.

#### Meeting Agenda

- Welcome and apologies
- Minutes of 2015 AGM
- Committee reports:
  - President, Graham Hubbard
  - Treasurer, Richard Kirsner
  - Field Officer, Liz Barraclough
- Election: President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, & up to 10 ordinary committee members.
- Appointment of Auditor

#### Nominations for office bearers & committee

For nomination forms call 0447 160 208 or go to [www.berg.org.au](http://www.berg.org.au), under 'Resources'. Nominations in writing, signed by two BERG MM members & accompanied by the candidate's written consent, must be with the Secretary by Friday 14<sup>th</sup> October.

## KEITH'S SEAT

It must be one of the most used seats in the reserves, though it was the comorants who had taken possession in the early morning of Saturday June 18<sup>th</sup>. It needed some post-cormorant cleaning before we could dedicate it to the memory of BERG MM's past president Keith Wilson! He'd have been delighted.

About 30 people came to see Keith's granddaughter Eliza cut the ribbon after John Inchley, who succeeded Keith as President, had spoken with warmth about Keith's great contribution to BERG MM. Among those present were two early committee members, Tony Hyde and Andy McGuigan, Cr Anne Shaw, and four Mt Martha Rotarians involved in constructing the seat.



*Above: Keith's wife Bobbi, daughter Linda and granddaughter Eliza, on the seat. Below: John Inchley watches as Eliza cuts the ribbon*  
*Photos Angela Kirsner*



## THE PIED PIPER OF CENTURY DRIVE

*Angela Kirsner talked with Tony O'Connor, local Landcare and BERG MM member, on his 5-acre property beside Balcombe Creek, near Bentons Rd.*

**Angela:** Tony, you've done a great job revegetating your land, and now you've involved local schools in projects to create homes for wildlife along Balcombe Creek adjoining your place. What inspires you?

**Tony:** I want to give the kids a chance to feel the joy and sense of well-being that I've had through creating nature around me. It's a great feeling seeing a flock of thornbills or a blue-tongue lizard living in the habitat you've planted or put there. Even more so when I see kids working in groups to set up their frog ponds, or possum or bat boxes, bush-rat log complexes or lizard areas. I get even more inspired by their enthusiasm, their genuine teamwork, and 'wow-factor' creativity – it's infectious! You can't stop them once started!

**Angela:** Does this help everyone?

**Tony:** For sure. We owe it to kids to help them feel they can do something positive for the environment. Let's hope that as adults into the future they remain interested and can work together better than our generation to deal with our serious environmental issues.

**Angela:** You have other students too, doing farm and permaculture-related projects on your place. How does this work?

**Tony:** On Thursdays I have a home-schooled group of kids here, and some parents and community members such as the Mornington

Men's Shed, doing projects like making nesting boxes, wicking gardens, biochar, worm farming, spinning and weaving, hut making, bush tucker gardening and lots of other things. The synergy from joining up people and kids with the same passions or interests, working together on their projects, is exciting! It's my favourite morning of the week.

*If you'd like to visit or join in these Thursdays, call Tony on 0404 951500*

## NATURED KIDS

Tony O'Connor's Thursday group of home-schooled kids (see previous article) have come through Narelle Debenham and her inspired program, 'Natured Kids'. A local teacher, Narelle is passionate about engaging young people in the natural environment, getting them to connect with and care for it. 'Natured Kids' has for ten years provided creative outdoor playgroups for children aged 0-6 years and their families.

The group at Tony's place is a more recent initiative, a Junior Landcare group that provides opportunities for children aged 4-16 years (mostly home-schooled) and their families to work on regenerative Landcare projects. As well as working with Men's Shed members, they have been involved with AWARE wildlife rescue, The Briars Nursery, environmentalists, local elders, artists and permaculture specialists.

Projects have included creating habitat for indigenous ground-dwelling fauna and birds, nesting boxes for birds and mammals that need tree hollows to roost and nest, and planting and eating bush tucker.

*For more on 'Natured Kids', go to [www.naturedkids.com](http://www.naturedkids.com) or visit them on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/NaturedKids/](https://www.facebook.com/NaturedKids/).*

## A PRESCHOOL GARDEN

The Mt Martha Preschool, nestled in the Balcombe Estuary reserves above the Bunyip, has constructed a wonderful indigenous garden beside its car park. The project, spearheaded by preschool teacher Naomi Grant, is the result of strong collaboration and donations from lots of locals, including BERG MM's Liz Barraclough and Jenny Selby.



*Mt Martha Preschool's new indigenous garden, just planted Photo courtesy Naomi Dart*

The garden was funded by a Shire Placemaking grant, to create a community space for everyone to enjoy. Its indigenous plants were selected and donated by the Shire Nursery, and signs identify the plant so everyone using the garden can learn about them. Naomi is hoping to be able to add a specially commissioned indigenous art work printed on a panel.

Not only the kinder kids but also their siblings have taken ownership of the space, which, Naomi reports, has been a real delight. When strong winds felled a large pine that blocked the kinder playground, the new garden provided a great outdoor classroom for story time.

And, said Naomi, 'I was excited to see the other day that the plants are showing signs of new growth after only a couple of weeks.'



*Penbank-Woodleigh School's Grade 4s in action at Tony O'Connors. Left: the Frog Frenzys Tom, Harry, Cody, Ollie & Will. Right: the Lizard Kings Jackson, William, Koby, Sash & Tabran Photos Tony O'Connor*

**BERG Mt Martha  
welcomes  
new members  
Stella Patience  
Danielle Suffern**

## FIELD NEWS

*Field Officer Liz Barraclough reports*

**It's PLANTING SEASON!!!**  
With great rain and perfect conditions, it's been a race to get as many plants in and established before the hot, dry weather sets in.

### Sunday working-bees

In June we planted over 270 cells and tubes of grasses, sedges, shrubs and trees along the west bank of Hopetoun Creek. And in July, we planted another 248 tubes as part of the restoration of indigenous diversity of the top of the Rabbit Paddock, just below Village Close. The transformation of this area over recent months has been amazing with the removal of the dense understorey of woody weeds, though it will need follow-up for some time to keep the regenerating weeds at bay and allow the indigenous plants to thrive.

Thanks to Helen Luxton (June) and Edwina McLean (July) for wonderful morning teas – no lunch needed after such great spreads!



*Guarding the new plantings at the July working bee. L-R, Alison Hazledine, Cameron Van Orsouw, Suzanne Ryan Photo Angela Kirsner*

### Friday morning group

We have been planting in the Jaw and stormwater pipe areas, near the Uralla Bridge, but bad weather and holidays (for some) have limited our activities over the past few weeks.

### Grants and projects

We have drawn up a works plan and timeline for the Maude St project, made possible by our grant from the **Sally Oatley Memorial Fund** together with almost \$3000 of targeted donations in response to Graham Hubbard's recent email – our thanks to these generous BERGers. With the help of the Green Army and BERG MM working-bees, we should be able to



*There were a few Earth Star fungi about at the July working bee. Related to Puffballs, these fungi appear first as firm balls round 20mm across, then the outer layer of the ball splits 'star wise' to expose the inner spore sac with the orifice through which the spores are discharged. Photo Angela Kirsner*

build on Naturelinks' work and make a noticeable difference to this area, which runs from Newton St to the Maude St burn site. It will be most interesting to compare the difference in habitat regeneration between these two adjacent sites, one burnt, the other to be managed by weed control. We shall keep you informed.

Our application for a Coastcare Victoria Community grant was successful, providing over \$6000 for follow-up weed control and habitat enhancement planting along foreshore from Coolangatta Rd to South Beach carpark.

### Balcombe Grammar

Once again, Grade 6 students are joining us for four Friday sessions as part of their Community Service Program. We will be working on revegetation along Hopetoun Creek upstream of the Bay Rd Bridge.

### Green Army

We are delighted to have another Green Army team working with us this year for three separate weeks in August and September. Their work will include planting along Hopetoun Creek, woody weeding in the Damp Sands Herb-rich Woodland between the creek and Maude St, control of Winter Cherry along the creek banks downstream of Uralla Bridge, weed control along the Henley Ave drainage line, and work with the Coastal Group along the foreshore

### Old toilet block gone

The Shire recently removed the dilapidated and vandalized old campground toilet block in the bush at the end of Henley St (including the asbestos it contained). It has left

an open area waiting for revegetation, which we shall start very soon.

## COASTAL GROUP

*Suzanne Ryan reports*

This new group has now had two monthly (3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday) working bees – June and July – and it is thriving! Both months, we worked around the Watson Road beach track south of the Yacht Club, and between the Life Saving Club and the creek; and at both working bees, we mended fencing to protect the vegetation, and we filled a number of bags with rubbish.

In June, seven of us, including two boys aged 10 and 12, and Tamara from Naturelinks, continued the planting we started with the Yacht Club and Life Saving Club in May. In July, in perfect winter sunny weather, we uncovered and guarded the June plantings, as many had been buried by sand in the recent wild weather, and we weeded. We saw plenty of fox footprints around the den near the Life Saving Club.

Six French teenagers joined us in July – four boys and three girls. Just arrived in Australia, they had a few days to fill in before starting a 6-week conservation work program at The Briars. They were a fun group, excited to be here and see Australia's 'weird' and interesting animals. After a morning helping us and learning about what we are doing, Sue Betheras took them on a guided walk from the beach as far as the old quarry and back.

And to complete July's team, we had Barney, a guide dog in training!



*Stanislas (Stan), 15, from Normandy, Romain, 14, from the west of France, and Antoine, 15, from Paris, with bags of rubbish collected at the July Coastal Group working bee Photo Suzanne Ryan*

**INTRODUCING JULIE ZAMMIT**

At its July meeting, the BERG Mt Martha Committee co-opted Julie Zammit, who is taking on the role of Assistant Treasurer.

Julie and her husband moved Mt Martha only a year ago, having owned a house here for about four years. They love the area's mix of rural and coastal living within easy reach of Melbourne, where Julie works as a Strategic Projects Manager, currently on contract to Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand.

She joined BERG Mt Martha only in February this year, at the Family Day, having seen our notice board and deciding it might, sometime in the future, be a good way to get involved with the local community.

She let slip, however, that she is a qualified accountant. And she lives in the same street as our talent-spotting Secretary, Di Lewis. The rest, as they say, is history.



BERG MM Treasurer Richard Kirsner with new Assistant Treasurer Julie Zammit Photo Angela Kirsner

BERG Mt M Working Bees	Other BERG Mt M Activities	Other Groups
<p>❖ <b>Sunday working bee:</b> monthly, 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday, between 9am &amp; 12noon. Next are <b>14<sup>th</sup> August</b> and <b>11<sup>th</sup> September</b>. Details emailed a few days ahead, or call Liz Barraclough 0408 388 430.</p> <p>❖ <b>Tuesday working bee:</b> monthly, 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday, between 9am &amp; 12 noon, meet end of Latrobe Dve. Call Jenny Selby 0432 719 288.</p> <p>❖ <b>Friday working bee:</b> weekly between 9.30 &amp; 12 noon. Call Sue Betheras 0408 808 201.</p> <p>❖ <b>Coast Group:</b> monthly, 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday, between 9am &amp; 12 noon, meet in car park by the Yacht Club. Call Suzanne Ryan 0418 387 604.</p>	<p>❖ <b>Waterwatch testing:</b> 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday 9.15, starting at Augusta St Bridge. Call John Inchley, 5974 1095.</p> <p>❖ <b>BERG Mt Martha Committee</b> meets monthly at Mt Martha House, 9.00am, usually the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday. Next are <b>13<sup>th</sup> August &amp; 10<sup>th</sup> September</b>. All members welcome.</p>	<p>❖ <b>BirdLife Mornington Peninsula</b> bird-watching 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday. Enquiries to Max Burrows 9789 0224, mornington@birdlife.org.au or www.birdlife.org.au/locations/birdlife-mornington-peninsula.</p> <p>❖ <b>SPIFFA</b> 1<sup>st</sup> Monday, 7.30 pm, at Parks Vic, Hinton St, Rosebud. Enquiries 5988 6529, or www.spiffa.org.</p> <p>❖ <b>Sunshine Reserve</b> working bee 9.30am, last Thursday of month. Call Pia Spreen, 5974 1096</p>
<p><b>BERG MT MARTHA COMMITTEE</b>                  PRESIDENT GRAHAM HUBBARD • VICE PRESIDENT JOHN INCHLEY • SECRETARY DI LEWIS • TREASURER RICHARD KIRSNER                  • FIELD OFFICER LIZ BARRACLOUGH • ASSISTANT TREASURER JULIE ZAMMIT • NEWSLETTER ANGELA KIRSNER • SCHOOLS LIAISON JENNY SELBY                  • ROTARY CLUB LIAISON JOHN TREVILLIAN • COMMUNITY AWARENESS BARBARA THRIVES • BRONWYN STREET</p>		
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