



Warringal
Conservation
Society

TRUE SPRING NEWSLETTER

Volume 49/six

Nov/Dec 2019

Warringal Conservation Society is a local, not-for-profit, community organisation caring for the environment in Banyule.

Formed in 1970, the Society is an active and productive steward of Banyule's environmental heritage.

Join us!!

Warringal Conservation Society is not just a local environment group: it is stimulating, fun and companionable and takes an active role in the wider community.

Single \$20
Family \$25
Pension/student/
unemployed \$15
Life \$200

Articles and photographs for the newsletter are welcome. We may edit for legal, space or other reasons. Opinions expressed in articles are not necessarily those of the Warringal Conservation Society.

Newsletter printed courtesy of Kate Thwaites MP, Member for Jagajaga

NOVEMBER SPEAKER

David Sykes, Victoria's Population Boom

David is from the Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning, and studies population changes. Victoria has added a million people to its population in the last decade. David will discuss patterns of population growth and what we can expect for our local area.

DECEMBER MEETING

Members' Night

WCS members will give short presentations. Anthea Fleming: Birding from Mt Isa to Mildura. Heather Smith: Earlier this year the Victorian Environmental Friends Network offered a short course on iPhone video making. See the results and judge for yourselves! James Deane: Remote lakes in the Tasmanian World Heritage area.

FEBRUARY 2020 SPEAKER

Jim Poulter – Mapping Aboriginal Land Use in Banyule

Jim is a local historian and member of Reconciliation Manningham. His forebears first settled in Wurundjeri country in 1840 and established close relationships with the local Aboriginal people. Jim has authored 25 books on Aboriginal history and cultural practices, and will speak about Aboriginal land use in Banyule.

**Meetings on first Thursday of the month* from 7.30 pm
at the Old Shire Offices, 60 Beverley Road.**

(*no meeting in January)

**Enter from Buckingham Drive near the Banyule Theatre
*All Welcome***

AT A GLANCE

November

Thurs 7th: General meeting at 7.30pm - Population

Sun 10th: End of year bus trip to Organ Pipes (See news & Events)

December

Thurs 5th: General meeting at 7.30pm - Members' Night

January - No meeting

February 2020

Thurs 6th: General meeting at 7.30pm - Aboriginal Land Use

Message from the President

The AGM is behind us and we start my third year as President. I thank all the committee for all our great endeavours during 2018 – 2019. The North East Link (NEL) project was definitely my biggest challenge yet. But we move on, though unfortunately without the guidance of Dianne Williamson, who retired as Secretary at the AGM. We applaud her contributions to WCS elsewhere in this newsletter, but I should like to express my personal thank you for the lone of her memory, organisation and research skills, her enthusiasm and dedication. Thank you Dianne.

The NEL is on hold while the government makes a decision around Christmas/New Year time. Time now to refocus on our foundation activities of caring for Warringal Parklands and Banyule Flats, so we were thrilled that Melbourne Water organised an entitlement of water from the Yarra for Banyule Billabong. The frogs were quickly croaking and ducks paddling around. WCS also greatly enjoyed welcoming all the Banyule friends' groups to a combined celebration and planting beside Banyule Swamp. Uncle Bill Nicholson's welcome to country made it very special and inspiring.

Happy Christmas, Happy New Year, happy holidays and safe travel from WCS!

Daphne Hards

News & Events

Only 3 seats left for the WCS November Field Trip to Organ Pipes National Park

Date: Sunday 10 November 2018

Times: Leave Heidelberg at 9.30 am SHARP - back about 4.30 pm

Our own local bat man - Robert Bender, will be joining us to tell us about his long running bat box project at the park. We will also meet members from the Friends of Organ Pipes who will give us some history and background to the revegetation work being done. A recent reconnaissance revealed the park to be green and flourishing, with plenty of flowering plants and water in the Jacksons Creek.

At the destination site: There are toilets, picnic tables and some seats

Bring: Picnic lunch, thermos, drinks, camera.
Dress for rain/sun as required.

There isn't much storage room on the bus so folding

chairs are a luxury item.

We have only 3 seats left so let me know ASAP if you'd like to come.

RSVP: Email elephantstamp@optusnet.com.au or phone 0423 191 977.

Report on WCS planting and working bees

Details of all monthly activities are in the newsletter, on the Facebook page and in the calendar on our website. If you would like to be notified by email contact Heather at elephantstamp@optusnet.com.au

August: Studleyensis site

With heavy rain and thunderstorms on the horizon – the Bush Crew made the call to cancel.

September: Frog Bog infill

With 21 starters, this was a more than usually well attended event as it had been advertised in the

Who we are and how to contact us

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Newsletter

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Compilation & Mailing: Heather Smith, Don Stokes

Planting Coordinator: Heather Smith

Committee: Anthea Fleming, Celia Smith, Daphne Hards, Doug McNaughton, James Deane, Heather Smith, Michelle Giovias.

Banyule Council 'Spring Outdoors' booklet. Kylie and Megs were very pleased with our great mornings' work with 1029 plants going in! It was nice to see some new, interested folk and have a chat. We were also joined by new members, Robert and Chris Granter, who had been meaning to attend a working bee for a while. Thanks to all who came and made the morning such a success. Thanks to Kylie and Megs for getting it all organised.



Friends Group 'End of year' celebration

A glorious day – sun, light breeze, noisy birds – provided the perfect backdrop for the recent Friends Group's celebration. The event was generously organised by the Banyule Bushland Management Unit to thank the Friends Groups for their commitment to Banyule's bushland reserves. There was a lot to do – planting along the water's edge of the swamp, random bird watching or joining an informative guided walk [led by John Milkins and daughter Isabel] around Banyule Billabong (and it's refilling project by Melbourne Water).

Apart from the BBQ, the highlight was the wonderful opening ceremony by Uncle Bill Nicholson who gave the welcome to country, with a smoking ceremony. He invited 'elders' from the various Friends groups to speak about their areas and then explained the significance to Aboriginal people of those areas.

Since it was on our patch, WCS played host with President, Daphne Hards giving a bit of history of the Society and work done over the last 49 years in the area. We were delighted to meet and greet folk from Friends of Salt Creek, Andrew Yandell Reserve, Friends of Plenty River and Friends of Montmorency.

And did I mention the delicious barbecue lunch? It was delicious! With fresh fruit, cake and cuppas to

follow. It was a very successful day on many counts – including networking, welcoming, mutual appreciation of our and the Council's work. The Banyule Bushland Management crew deserve a huge thanks for all their work, especially Kylie and Megs for the idea and event organising. Thank you.

Heather Smith



Daphne Hards Speaks about the history of Banyule Flats and WCS



Smoking Ceremony



Planting along the edge of Banyule swamp

Planting with Friends of Yarra Valley Parks On August 25th WCS members joined an FYVP planting of trees and shrubs at an old river depression near the windmill on Parks Victoria land. The Powerful Owl pair were happily in attendance watching new wattles and gums being planted. It was very pleasant to join forces in adding habitat for our wildlife.



Banyule Billabong Rewatering

Melbourne Water (MW) invited Anthea Fleming and Daphne Hards to attend a smoking ceremony on September 20th to mark the start of rewatering of Banyule Billabong with a water allocation from the Victorian Environmental Water Holder. We and MW and Banyule Council staff gathered near the windmill beside the Yarra River where Uncle Bill Nicholson welcomed us to country, and spoke enthusiastically about the work being carried out to restore the ecology of the area. MW used two smaller more manoeuvrable pumps than in 2016, the pumps ran for three weeks and the water gauge reached 1metre. Zillions of weeds have been drowned but the ducks and frogs love it. We hope that some water will remain for a bit longer. Outcomes will be as interesting to see as last time.



Strike For Climate

September 20th was a very busy day! WCS members joined the thousands marching in Melbourne to protest about the lack of leadership by the federal government on the biggest global emergency. Go marchers!



Banyule Council's Climate Emergency

At their meeting on October 7th Banyule City Council declared a Climate Emergency. And they also released their draft Corporate Emissions Reduction Plan, which is up for public comment until November 7th via Shaping Banyule, <https://shaping.banyule.vic.gov.au/CorpEmissionsReduction> This is an ambitious plan to be carbon neutral by 2028.

Upcoming Events

How Nature was Nurtured in Manningham

Reconciliation Manningham proudly presents a talk by Jamie Simpson, author of: Bush Foods and Survival Plants of Southeast Australia.



Based on the continuing patterned presence of bush tucker in Manningham and the Yarra Valley, Jamie will explore traditional Aboriginal sustainable horticulture in his talk. Questions, comments and conversation will be invited after Jamie's talk. Friday November 15th, 7.30 to 9.30pm The Pines U3A, 2/520 Blackburn Rd, East Doncaster To book: ph. 9842 3598 or E: jimpoulter@bigpond.com

Environment Justice Australia Waterways Workshop

The second workshop in this series will be held on November 18th 2019, details to be announced. The content is likely to be around legislation.

News & Events cont.

Banyule City Council Community Forum on the North East Link

The council is planning an evening forum on Thursday November 21st 7pm at Ivanhoe Town Hall. This is for an update from Council and, we understand, to hear residents' concerns. Look out for more details.

Spring Outdoors Program

The annual Spring Outdoors Program has the best ever choice of interesting events, which can be viewed at <https://www.banyule.vic.gov.au/Events-activities/Major-events/Spring-Outdoors>. A couple of stand out events are 'Heide's Indigenous Landscapes' on Thursday November 14th at 11am - noon, and the Malahang Festival on Sunday

November 17th, 11am – 4pm.

Heidelberg Theatre Company Play for Nov 2019

The last play for 2019 is Tartuffe by Moliere on Wednesday 20th November. We would encourage you to purchase charity tickets for the date given, cost \$20 each, where \$10 comes to the Society, \$10 to HTC. Every little helps so please consider purchasing your tickets through us, either by seeing Doug McNaughton at a meeting or by emailing warringal3084@gmail.com

Welcome New Members

A warm welcome to new members Brian McKenzie and family

Committee Report - October 2018

Our Annual General Meeting was held prior to the October General Meeting. The President's and Financial Reports are attached to the newsletter. The following people were re-elected :

President/Treasurer Daphne Hards Vice-President
 James Deane
Committee Members: Anthea Fleming,
 Heather Smith, Michelle Giovas, Celia Smith, Doug McNaughton

Congratulations and good luck to all. The position of Secretary was not filled and remains vacant.

North East Link Always lurking, the latest news is given elsewhere in this newsletter.

Melbourne Water Support Grant The treasurer has again applied to Melbourne Water for a Support Grant to help us with administration costs. They have helped us consistently for many years and WCS is very grateful, as most grants are given for projects rather than postage stamps.

Visit to Kate Thwaites. On September 20th Daphne Hards, James Deane and Dianne Williamson visited our new federal member, Kate Thwaites. Our purpose was to introduce ourselves and inquire after her settling in to life in Canberra. We then updated Kate about the North East Link state of play and raised our concerns about Climate Action and the current review of the federal environment Protection Laws, the EPBC Act. Kate said keeping up the pressure about climate change with letters is key, and Labor's policy on the EPBC Act is to strengthen the act and form a new federal Environmental Protection Agency to police it.

Banyule Council Meeting October 7th Daphne Hards and Michelle Giovas attended this meeting to submit objections on street tree removal and a proposed outdoor activity in the tree canopy within Yarra Flats Park. Daphne's submission on the Tree Tops activity is attached to this newsletter along with her comments on the Council's North East Link update.

Environment Justice Australia (EJA) Waterways Workshops On October 8th EJA held the first of a series of workshops around wetland and waterways restoration and legislation. The audience was all Friends Group volunteers and we heard about the inspiring work being achieved by Nature Glenelg Trust in restoring previous wetlands, mainly in southern and western Victoria. Presenter Mark Bachmann, principal ecologist, described the processes of planning a project. So many swamps were drained many years ago but he showed amazing examples of how a swamp/wetland can be brought back to vibrant life using his adage "Just add Water". Banyule Swamp has water but historically was drained and it gives us encouragement that a more natural flow pattern can be achieved in the future. One of Mark's projects at Herne Swamp near Wallan should be good to keep an eye on.

Daphne Hards

President's Report from the Committee October 3rd 2019

A warm **Welcome** to everyone.

I should like to acknowledge that our meeting is being held on the land of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people, and I pay my respects to their elders past, present and emerging.

The Society has had a busy and successful year looking after local parklands, conducting our monthly meetings, maintaining our traditional activities, but dominated by massive advocacy around the North East Link Project, at Council, in the press, with NELP and the IAC Hearing.

Conservation Over the past 12 months we have continued to restore and maintain Banyule Flats and Warringal Parklands. Guided by Banyule Bush Crew, we have had 8 monthly Sunday morning plantings/weedings. We cleaned up Australia at the Grotty Pond in March and we had a well-attended event near the Possum Playground on National Tree Day in late July.

Excursions and Events In November 2018 the Sunday planters and WCS members were treated by the Bush Crew to an outing to Kurth Kiln in Gembrook, hosted very warmly by Ursula and Alfred Klink. On the return trip we called in at the Mullum Mullum Tunnel eastern ventilation stack to inform ourselves of its structure, noise levels etc. Perfect weather so this was a very successful and interesting day.

WCS successfully led a group of twelve on a twilight walk around Banyule Flats in February. Tawny Frogmouths and Ringtail Possums were seen plus a large wombat burrow.

The Banyule Kids Arty Farty Fest in March saw us once again manning a marquee and very many thanks again to all who contributed to this big commitment. Our North East Link map stand drew much attention and discussion; our animal masks and origami animals were a huge success with young and old. The weather was perfect.

Grants Melbourne Water once again generously awarded WCS a support grant of \$1100 to cover our insurance and postage costs.

In November 2018 WCS celebrated the installation of the two interpretive signs at Banyule Flats with Banyule Bush Crew and BCC environmental officers. It was a thoroughly rewarding event shared with some of the photographers who generously contributed their photographs. We are grateful to Banyule Council for the grant that enabled this project.

Membership Our membership has grown a little from 69 to 78 paid-up members, 28 life members, and 6 Honorary life members. We welcome the new members and hope they will enjoy their participation.

Donations We thank all members who have made financial donations throughout this last year.

Warringal Prize This year's \$500 prize for top marks in first year Bachelor of Science (Wildlife and Conservation Biology) at La Trobe was presented to Ziara Catania in July. Daphne Hards and James Deane attended the ceremony and enjoyed meeting Ziara and her parents. Thanks to everyone who has contributed through their donations to encouraging a young person towards a career in environmental science.

Awards We were delighted that Robert Bender was awarded the Order of Australia Medal for his contributions to conservation and the environment. Dianne Williamson received a Jaga Jaga Community Australia Day Award from Jenny Macklin for her contributions to Warringal Conservation Society over many years.

Education We hope that all monthly attendees to meetings have enjoyed our expert speakers. We have had some splendid presentations this year: on Rakali or water rat, Powerful Owls, Grey-headed Flying Fox, the work of Wildlife Victoria, the detrimental effect of LED lights on our wildlife, Sugar Gliders, Middle Yarra billabong revitalisation, plus Climate Change and the work of Lighter Footprints. All fascinating talks and we thank all the speakers.

WCS had a two weeks Ivanhoe Library display in July/August showing some magnificent archival photographs taken by the late Christopher Bailey around Wilson's Reserve and Banyule. Daphne had great fun accessing the same locations and taking a comparable 'now' shot.

Advocacy This year we have continued to advocate on many fronts as well as the main game, the North East Link. This huge amount of work has kept us an acknowledged participant in all local conservation issues. Please excuse a list of the following:

- A Submission to a Senate Enquiry into Australia's Faunal Extinction crisis.
- A Submission on Draft Heritage Themes for Banyule
- A Submission on Banyule's Draft 'Towards Zero Waste Plan'
- Discussion with BCC Officers about the future vision for Banyule Flats
- Action for the ban of Recreational Duck Shooting – letters sent to state politicians in November and

Annual General Meeting 2019 cont.

January

- Development at 69 & 71 Banyule Road, Viewbank successfully opposed at VCAT.
- Comments on re-zoning of sections of Banyule Flats from residential to open space
- Opposed proposed Multi Use Trail through Banyule Flats at Council meeting
- Advocated for Fox control at Banyule Flats and Warringal Parklands at Council Meeting
- Advocated for the Future of Victorian Forests, Great Forest National Park and Regional Forest Agreements
- Advocated for the Yarra River by attending a roundtable discussion, Yarra Strategic Plan Roundtable; and commented on the Melbourne Water Healthy Waterways Strategy
- A Submission on BCC's Proposed Budget and Council Plan 2019-2022
- Advocated on behalf of BEAC terms of reference
- A submission on the Draft Yarra River – Bulleen Precinct Land Use Framework Plan
- A submission on the Draft Variation to the National Environment Protection (Ambient Air Quality) Measures for ozone (O₃), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and sulfur dioxide (SO₂)
- WCS successfully advocated for the registration of several trees at Banyule Flats to be placed on the BCC Significant Tree Register

As if that was not enough, we have continued through 2018-9 to advocate on behalf of citizens and the environment against the North East Link. All our work has been minuted in the monthly committee reports and the newsletter, and no one wants to listen here to a lengthy blow by blow account. In brief, the committee:

- worked hard prior to the Victorian State Election in November 2018 to showcase to the community the negative features of the project and push for improved public transport, to no avail
- we have continued to sit on Community Liaison groups
- attended a NELP environmental workshop
- liaised with other local friends groups, the Yarra River Keeper and environmental organisations
- had a marquee at the annual Kids Arty Farty Fest in March where many stopped with their NEL concerns.

All this led up to the release of the draft Public Environment Report (PER)(federal) and the draft Environment Effects Statement(EES)(state) in April-May, and we had 4 and 6 weeks to respond respectively. Committee members Daphne Hards,

Dianne Williamson, James Deane and Michelle Giovas worked furiously to digest each document and to make submissions of which I think we should be very proud.

In late July/August/Sept. an Inquiry and Advisory Committee of five state appointees held a 6.5 week Public Hearing at the Veneto Club at which all interested parties could make submissions, total 200+. Michelle Giovas represented Friends of Banyule while Daphne, Dianne and James gave an applauded one hour Powerpoint presentation on our concerns for the trees, plants and wildlife along the north-south section of the project, Greensborough to Bulleen; and for the best outcomes for our beautiful Banyule Flats and Warringal Parklands.

We thank our NELP sub-committee, and also thank John D'Aloia, James Deane, Dianne Williamson, Anthea Fleming and Daphne Hards for submitting personal submissions to the EES. And we should like particularly to thank Dennis O'Connell, Michelle Giovas and Friends of Banyule for their partnership in the NEL campaign.

We understand that the federal Minister for Environment and Energy is likely to report on his assessment of the PER in early 2020, and this feeds into the state response to the EES which will come later.

Community Presence Our website continues to get a lot of site traffic leading to approaches for membership and attendance at meetings and work-bees. A great reward for the site maintenance crew, thank you.

Facebook proves to be an ever-reliable communicator and we thank Heather Smith for her dedication.

Lastly, the WCS newsletter emerges regularly six times a year, and we thank James Deane for continuing as editor over many years; and Dianne Williamson, Gianna Romano, Heather Smith and Don Stokes for their help in production. WCS is most grateful to Jenny Macklin, Antony Carbines and Kate Thwaites for printing the newsletter in 2018-9.

Thanks Lastly, I express my enormous thanks to our committee who have worked so hard this year, and please join me in giving them a big applause. And I thank everyone again for their belief in me.

Daphne Hards

President

WCS Financials for AGM

S. E. OBLIUBEK
Chartered Accountant

93 New Road
Oak Park 3046

WARRINGAL CONSERVATION SOCIETY INC.
STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS
for the year ended 30th June 2019

INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF WARRINGAL CONSERVATION SOCIETY INC.

Scope

I have audited the attached Statement of Receipts and Payments for the year ended 30th June 2019 of the Warringal Conservation Society Inc.

The Society's Committee is responsible for the preparation and presentation of the financial reports and the information contained therein and has determined that the accounting policies used are consistent with the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act and are appropriate to meet the needs of the members.

I have conducted an independent audit of the financial report in order to express an opinion on it to the members of the Society. No opinion is expressed as to whether the accounting policies used are appropriate to the needs of the members.

The financial report has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act. I disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the financial report to which it relates to any person other than the members, or for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared.

The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

Qualification

As is common for organizations of this type, it is not practicable for the Committee to maintain an effective system of internal control over subscriptions, meetings income, donations and other fund-raising activities until their initial entry in the accounting records. Accordingly, my audit in relation to these items was limited to amounts recorded.

Qualified audit opinion

In my opinion, (except for the effects of such adjustments, if any, as might have been determined to be necessary had the limitation discussed in the qualification paragraph not existed) the financial report presents fairly the results of its operations for the year ended 30th June 2019.

S. Oblubek
S. E. OBLIUBEK
Chartered Accountant
Auditor

10th September 2019

	2,019	2,018
	\$	\$
Receipts		
Subscriptions		
Life membership	400	200
Annual subscriptions	720	940
Prior year	90	90
Donations	4,488	1,354
Sales of publications (Books and Cards)	20	196
Sale of No Freeway Corflutes	-	210
Bank interest	388	240
Grant-Melbourne Water (Insurance and Postage)	1,100	1,100
Bendigo Bank Community Grant	-	2,075
Heidelberg Theatre Tickets	70	
Sundries	225	
	<u>7,501</u>	<u>6,405</u>
Payments		
Newsletter costs	120	550
Meeting expenses(Hall Hire & Lectern)	264	526
OSO Office Rent	132	1,257
Insurance Premium	539	539
Administration Expenses(PO Box Rental)	130	184
Printing of Membership Leaflets	982	-
WCS Prize - Latrobe University	500	1,000
Subscriptions		
Australian Conservation Foundation	-	65
Environment Victoria(3yr)	140	55
Victorian National Parks Association	65	65
Victorian Environ. Friends Network	20	225
Donations		
Climate Council	50	-
Coalition Against Duck Shooting	50	-
Wildlife Victoria	50	-
Environment Justice Vic	-	50
Fds of Bats and Bushcare	50	200
Wood for KAFF stand, Film Course fee	119	643
Banyule Flats Map	-	988
Website Upgrade/Maintenance	275	2,105
Warringal Signs	-	5,000
Freeway Corflute Signs/Get on Board Flyers	817	300
	<u>4,304</u>	<u>13,328</u>
Surplus/Deficit for year	<u>3,197</u>	<u>(6,923)</u>

WARRINGAL CONSERVATION SOCIETY INC. BALANCE SHEET as of 30th June 2019

	2019	2018
	\$	\$
Current Assets		
Cash	3,530	5,051
Investments	15,378	10,989
	18,908	16,041
Less Unpresented cheques	143	330
	121	55
Total Assets	<u>18,853</u>	<u>15,656</u>
Membership Fund		
Balance Brought Forward	15,656	22,578
Surplus /Deficit for year	3,197	(6,923)
Balance Carried Forward	<u>18,853</u>	<u>15,656</u>

S. Oblubek
10/9/2019

North East Link Hearing Summary

The North East Link Project (NELP) Panel hearing finished on the 16th of September 2019 after 8 weeks of submissions and discussion. While it was very difficult to digest the sheer volume of information presented, Warringal Conservation Society (WCS) had at least one representative present nearly every day. Dianne Williamson, Daphne Hards, Michelle Giovas and James Deane were regular attendees. WCS concentrated on the environmental and sustainability themes where we felt our expertise and local knowledge would be most useful.

The hearing process

The hearing was a formal process conducted by a five member Inquiry and Advisory Committee (IAC) appointed by the Minister for Planning. The panel considered the North East Link Environmental Effects Statement (EES) and collected information required to make a recommendation to the Minister. All the major players engaged legal representation, with the NELP legal team being the largest by far. Expert witnesses presented on behalf of NELP, the councils, schools and some other groups, and were then cross-examined. Again, NELP had the largest contingent of expert witnesses. The EPA sent representatives to the hearing, but surprisingly The Department of Environment Land Water and Planning was not represented. Community groups and individuals without legal representation could submit questions for expert witnesses in advance, but were not directly involved in cross examination. This made it harder for groups like WCS to fully engage in the hearing process.

The North East Link Project make their case

The hearing began with opening submissions from the legal representatives for NELP and the affected Banyule, Boroondara, Whitehorse councils. The rest of the first three weeks was primarily presentations from the NELP legal team and expert witnesses arguing the case for the project, and explaining that impacts and risks were acceptable. Legal teams representing the council, the Yarra Riverkeeper and Schools cross-examined NELP expert witnesses. Assessments were based on a reference design that is likely to be different to the design put forward by the builder who is awarded the contract. Many alternative designs, including variations to interchanges and the tunnel, were presented by both NELP and submitters during the process. This resulted in a degree of uncertainty that sat uncomfortably with the councils and many interested parties, including WCS. For example, it was proposed that polluted road water runoff will be

managed by developing an appropriate plan once the road design is finalised. Thus it was not possible to properly scrutinise water sensitive urban design measures that would be employed.

Risk assessment was an aspect where NELP's Environmental Effects Statement deviated from standard practice in an effort to present the project in a more flattering light. Risk is typically considered based on the consequence of an event and its likelihood. Events that are very likely to occur and result in significant consequences are considered to have the highest risk. However, NELP introduced a "planned" designation to the likelihood category to capture almost certain events with major and severe consequences. These events would have normally have been deemed to carry an unacceptable level of risk (high or very high). NELP's new risk assessment protocol resulted in many serious risks being obscured or understated.

From an ecological point of view, several issues emerged during NELP's presentations. The Matted Flax-lily is an endangered species and cut and cover works through Simpson Barrack will destroy habitat supporting approximately 5% of the total known existing population. Impacted plants will be removed and replanted at other sites, a process that has delivered poor results in the past. Works in the Simpson Barracks will also destroy most of the last viable stand of the endangered hybrid eucalypt the Studley Park Gum. Forage trees for the critically endangered Swift Parrot may be damaged or removed. Hunting territory for the threatened Powerful Owl will be lost. NELP experts suggested that none of these issues represented a significant threat to the survival of the species concerned. Extensive loss of trees, bushland and canopy cover will be addressed by offsets (protection or enhancement of trees and bush elsewhere) or by planting new trees. Offsets will still result in a net loss of native trees and bushland. Tree planting will take decades to replace canopy and even longer to replace tree hollows used by wildlife.

Non-NELP expert witness provide a less optimistic outlook

Council expert witnesses followed the NELP team and provided critiques of some of the inadequacies of the EES and NELP expert witness evidence. The Yarra Riverkeeper, Friends of Banyule and affected private Schools also engaged expert witnesses to present on significant topics. Cross examination by the NELP legal team was rigorous and involved equal measures of inquiry and attempts to discredit

North East Link Hearing Summary cont.

witnesses. Some of the NELP cross-examinations involved PowerPoint slides and became presentations in themselves, with the expert witness being intermittently being asked to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed. Throughout the hearing, NELP released “technical notes” (57 in total) intended to provide supplementary information not included in the EES. NELP used these technical notes to present additional supporting expert opinion in a manner that was not subject to cross-examination.

Community groups and individuals

Community groups and individuals submitters got their opportunity to present in weeks seven and eight. They were not subject to cross examination, but were frequently asked questions by IAC panel members. WCS made a one hour presentation delivered by Daphne Hards, Dianne Williamson and James Deane. Our presentation covered water, climate change, ecology and threatened species. We were able to draw on observations by members over several decades, including sightings of the critically endangered Swift Parrot. Lyn Easton also provided many years of unpublished local field data on the Powerful Owl. This was a useful counterpoint to NELP surveys that did not specifically look for Swift Parrots, and failed to find Powerful Owls. Several questions followed from the IAC panel. WCS was asked whether we would like to be involved in revegetation and tree planting to address losses caused by the project. Dianne Williamson noted that, while we are actively involved in revegetation projects to repair damage incurred in a less enlightened era, community groups like WCS should not be expected to provide free labour to repair damage caused by the North East Link. A number of WCS members also made shorter individual presentations that provided useful additional information and personal insight.

Community members spoke about environmental concerns, potential health impacts, loss of amenity, loss of employment opportunities, and impacts on property prices. An overwhelming number of speakers expressed disappointment that the 500+ year old River Red Gum at the Caltex Service Station on Manningham Road would be lost.

The hearing wraps up

The final days of the hearing involved summing up statements from the major parties, and discussion of Environmental Performance Requirements (EPR). EPRs define environmental targets that the project must achieve, but do not prescribe exactly how they will be met. Theoretically this provides flexibility to find the most effective and efficient way to achieve targets. Councils, the Yarra Riverkeeper, WCS and Friends of Banyule contended that a project of this size and complexity requires specific and detailed EPRs to ensure acceptable environmental outcomes. NELP disagreed with nearly all new EPRs and modifications proposed by other parties, arguing for fewer and more general EPRs that leave much to discretion of the winning building contractor.

What happens now?

At the time of writing (29th Oct 2019) the IAC will be close to finalising their report to the Minister for Planning (Richard Wynne). This report is not a public document, but is normally released after the Minister has made a decision. We are mindful that the panel had been appointed by a Minister whose party is committed to delivering the North East Link. However, the panel appeared to be taking their job very seriously and we can only hope that our input leads to concessions that result in better environmental outcomes.

James Deane

Duck Shooting in Victoria

Update on the Bill to end recreational duck shooting in Victoria.

The Wildlife Amendment (Protection of Birds) Bill 2019 has been read a second time in the Victorian Parliament, and followed by a vigorous debate from various political points of view. WCS members are urged to keep lobbying our Labour Politicians by emails, phone calls, visits. Please urge our Politicians to support this Bill and end recreational duck shooting in Victoria. A suggested letter is

provided as an email attachment with the electronic version of this newsletter. If you receive a hardcopy newsletter, email warringal3084@gmail.com to be sent a copy. This letter can be copied/amended/changed and sent with your signature(s) and address to one or more of the email addresses given. Thank you for your very valuable help.

Celia Smith

September Speaker Report - Carolyn Ingvarson - Climate Change

Carolyn founded 'Lighter Footprints' in 2006. It is a climate change action group based in Kooyong. The group describes itself as "...a committed local climate group, aims to influence Australians (including local, state and national decision makers) to take the necessary action to halt global warming as a matter of urgency."

She explained how this community group has grown to a significant size and is building a local base to press all levels of government to take action on climate change. She gave an inspiring presentation on the work of Lighter Footprints.

The group works to both educate the community on the reality of climate change and to promote adoption of climate change policies by local politicians. Their activities include street and festival booths, monthly meetings, an impressive number of letters to and meetings with MPs and industry. The most visible activities of the group are large public town-hall forums with speakers on climate change and pre-election panels of local candidates. In addition to this public interaction group members share information at their monthly meetings on

matters including household energy efficiency, solar panels and ways of reducing carbon footprint in everyday lives.

Her talk then moved onto more sobering discussion of the real impacts of climate change which we are already experiencing, and she gave some horrifying examples of:

- Loss of habitat
- Insect populations dropping
- Tasmanian and Victorian fires
- Cyclones
- Water loss
- Agricultural impacts

Australia is a signatory to the Paris Agreement which aims is to keep temperatures under a 2°C rise, preferably under 1.5°C. Carolyn explained how we are not on track - our ambition is far too low and anyway our emissions are still going up!

You can find out more about the group and their seminars, and sign up for their Newsletters, on their Facebook page and website <https://lighterfootprints.org/>

Heather Smith

October Speaker Report - Graham Thorley - History of Heidelberg

Graham Thorley from the Heidelberg Historical Society gave us an account of some of the events that have shaped the Heidelberg area.

The history of indigenous Australians in the Heidelberg area of course goes back much longer than that of Europeans. Indigenous people travelled extensively to use the land efficiently and also for social gatherings. Central Melbourne, Merri Creek and Yarra Parklands were some of the sites used for corroborees. Physical evidence of indigenous people is found in the form of tools, camp sites and scar trees. Fire was used as a tool to manage the land and create a patch work of woodland and open grasslands that was conducive to hunting and food gathering. The name Banyule is derived from the indigenous word Banool meaning hill.

Early European settlers of Banyule were sheep farmers from Tasmania, such as John Batman, looking for new areas to graze. Batman's 1835 treaty with the indigenous Wurundjeri people, according to Batman, gave him rights to 600,000 acres. The indigenous people involved clearly had a different idea of what the exchange meant. The treaty was declared void by Governor Bourke.

The first land sales occurred between 1838 and 1840 with early purchasers being speculators who

subdivided and resold. Warringal was originally a village reserve on the edge of town. Banyule Homestead was completed in 1846 by Joseph Hawdon. At some point during early land sales the name Warringal was changed Heidelberg, apparently in reference to the German city.

Heidelberg Road was the first major road out of Melbourne and was subject to tolls to fund its upkeep. The trust that maintained the road became a shire council then a city council.

Land use in Heidelberg/Warringal was predominantly agricultural until after the Second World War, and included: Chinese market gardens, dairy on the river flats, and crops further from the river. Many of these agricultural uses were at the mercy of flooding by the unregulated Yarra River. Big floods occurred in 1860, 1918 and 1934.

Railways were completed to Heidelberg in 1888, providing access for the Heidelberg School of artists who famously documented the then rural landscape.

Graham briefly touched on some local buildings of note including the Old England Hotel, the Orient Theatre, and the Austin and Repat Hospitals. There are many additional interesting details that Graham will have to cover in another talk down the track.

James Deane

Thank you Dianne!

At the October AGM Dianne Williamson stood down from her position of Secretary of WCS. We cannot pretend that this is not an enormous blow for the committee. Dianne's ideas, skills and enthusiasm have been a huge benefit to both the committee and the Society as a whole.

A member for nearly 30 years, Dianne has been on the Committee for three separate terms, under three Presidents, Vic Marks, John D'Aloia and Daphne Hards. Since 2006, she has held positions including Committee member, Minute Secretary, Grants Officer, Vice President and Secretary. Dianne brought order to the structure of both the Committee and general meetings, where she was a welcoming presence to all members.

Her personal commitment has been incredibly generous and significantly helped WCS achieve its goals of restoring and enhancing indigenous vegetation in the Banyule Flats environs. She has encouraged the local community to be active in conservation by being an outstanding role model herself.

She has worked tirelessly – attending numerous Council meetings, developing strong working relationships with BCC Officers, Councillors, and other community organisations including Yarra Riverkeepers, Victorian Environmental Friends Network, BEAC and neighbouring Friends groups.

She has written multiple grant applications and submissions, attended and presented at countless workshops, sub-committees and community environment-related forums. Dianne came up with creative ideas to keep us busy – like the Banyule Flats signs and video, and WCS web re-design.

On many occasions she has been a passionate advocate to all levels of Government, to keep them accountable for environmental decision making. On behalf of WCS, she raised issues of local, State or Federal concern with many MPs, including Anthony Carbines, Jenny Macklin, Kate Thwaites, Josh Frydenberg, Samantha Dunn, Andrew Conley, and other electoral candidates.

Dianne presented as a formidable presence supporting or attending VCAT hearings including for the Banyule House and the Banyule Road developments, and as part of the WCS/FoB team against the North East Link. She spent many hundreds of hours writing letters, attending meetings, community information sessions, demonstrations and preparing the 'case against' material for the many hours of NELP hearings.

We love her enthusiasm and adaptability and say thank you and well done. Congratulations Dianne.



Photos: On Australia Day 2019 Dianne received a Jagajaga Community Australia Day Award from Jenny Macklin MP for her huge contribution to Warringal Conservation Society (above left) . She was a welcoming presence to all members at the general meetings (above right) and an enthusiastic working bee attendee, seen here at the 35th anniversary planting next to the Old Shire Offices in October 2005 (next page, left) and more recently at the 2019 National Tree Day planting morning (next page, right).

Thank you Dianne cont.



WCS Annual Subscriptions

WCS subscriptions were due July 2019

WCS membership subscriptions for 2019/2020 are due in July. These are used for the costs of running the Society that include hall hire, insurance, and postage. Subscriptions can be paid to the Treasurer Daphne Hards at a meeting or planting, or a cheque can be sent by mail using the form below. Subscriptions can also be paid electronically directly into the

Society's bank account using the following information:

Account Name: Warrinal Conservation Society

BSB: 633108 Account No: 143918613

Be sure to identify yourself as the depositor. To be certain, you can email warrinal3084@gmail.com that your deposit has been made.

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Membership application/renewal (for July 2019-June 2020)

Donations always welcome

Please send this form and subscription (cheque or money order) to:

Warrinal Conservation Society PO Box 64 Rosanna 3084 VIC

Nature Notes

October 2019

Anthea Fleming – Attended smoking ceremony to mark the filling of Banyule Swamp. Gresswell Forest: Maroon Greenhood Orchid, other Greenhoods, Earthstar fungi, *Pimelia*, *Drosera*, *Wisteria*. Ravens raiding rubbish bins in Ivanhoe. Rock formations at Organpipes, yellowgum. Little bittern at Gresswell Grange lake. Eastern Rosella in garden.

Daphne Hards – Eastern Rosella

Robert Bender – Tiger snake at Wilson Reserve, Dartar with a juvenile, Pair of White-faced Herons on the golf course, Yellow-tailed Black cockatoo Flock. At the Ivanhoe cutting: Bridal creeper, Blue periwinkle. Boulevard carpark: Tree Tobacco stand of over 500 plants, Banana Passionfruit, Box Elder and Winter Cherry. Muttonwoods were under Tree Tobacco. Egg Yolk fungus. Kayak rubbish collection – mainly bottles, tennis ball, spray cans

Robert Deane – Spotted Pardalotes nesting in an earth bank near Bogong Village

Maureen McNaughton – 2 Tawny Frogmouths and a Kookaburra

Jane Crone – Tawny Frogmouth pair

Liz Evans- Tawny Frogmouth pair in garden

Anne – Magpie in WaterMarc café

Gianna Romano, Nicholas Deane and James Deane - Sambar deer at Banyule Swamp on the morning of 10th of October. Jumped the fence at the southern side of the swamp, fell over, got up and headed off at speed towards the Yarra

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