



Friends of Cornish Hill

NEWSLETTER - November 2019

Greetings all! It's been a while since we put a newsletter together and much has happened since April!

Firstly, thanks to all who came along to our AGM on 15th September. A warm welcome to **Andrew Pearson** who stepped into the role of Chairperson at our AGM on 15th September. **Anne Tamblyn** remains as Secretary and **Scott MacLean** as Treasurer. **Margie Thomas** stays on as a committee member and Immediate Past Chair. We are sure you will be impressed to read about our achievements this half year. Our committee of four is very hard working and we would dearly love some extra hands on board. Anne Tamblyn would be pleased to hear from anyone who would consider joining us.

Anne can be contacted at annetamblyn41@gmail.com or on 0411866643

SUCCESS WITH GRANTS

- **Hepburn Shire Small Equipment Grant** (\$2,000) enabled us to update the storage container which we share with the Committee of Management. Improved shelving, hanging hooks, a cradle for the augur and the installation of a Whirly Bird roof vent means that we now comply with Worksafe standards.
- **Hepburn Shire Biodiversity "Understanding the Natural World"** (\$3,872) covered the costs of removing woody weeds above the picnic table, with a follow up spot spray of regrowth planned in the near future. We have enjoyed having the **Aus Eco Solutions** on-site operator **Samantha** wielding the equipment with work mate **Lucy** and also to have **Verna Baker** and **Frances Cincotta** from **Newstead Natives** supplying plants.
- **Landcare Victoria's "Hands up for Habitat"** (\$14,175) covered costs for equipment, guards, stakes, mats and more weed eradication. Being able to apply for these grants at the same time really gave us the opportunity to confirm partnerships with Landcare Victoria, DCOS, Hepburn Shire and the Daylesford Community Bank.
- And we are waiting patiently to see how we fare in a Federal Government Community Environment Program opportunity. Fingers crossed for this one as success would take us through to the end of 2020.
- Lastly, **Daylesford Community Op Shop** (DCOS) committed a very generous \$5,000 towards our school programs this year, so we're in position to strengthen our relationships with both primary and secondary schools.

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Our latest school workshop funded by DCOS, **Rainbows in the Sky**, was held on 15th October, attended by students and staff from St Michael's, Bullarto Primary School and the Dharma School. The workshop focussed on our local birds and the habitat we are creating to ensure their survival.

There were four activities, including **Bird ID** conducted by environmental educator Nicole Howie with permission from Bugblitz Nature Trust. Students observed life-sized, laminated bird models placed around Cornish Hill, then using a simple field guide, they recorded their own bird identifications on a fact sheet.

Seed propagation and planting was covered by Friends member Andrew Pearson, with the students sowing seeds of trees and shrubs collected from the reserve, along with tube stock again supplied by Verna and Frances from **Newstead Natives**.



Jodie Goldring had the students making their own birds from pre-cut templates, with an installation of their finished birds displayed on Cornish Hill, before returning them to their schools.



The fourth and final activity was conducted at the community park by **Martin Scuffins** from **Leigh Valley Hawk and Owl**, who introduced the students to Kevi the Kestrel and Yarrum, the Wedge-tailed eagle.



QR CODES

Readers of this newsletter may soon notice QR codes affixed to various signage posts throughout the Cornish Hill area.

Some of these are designed to take users of the Cornish Hill Reserve direct to the web pages associated with the Daylesford Permanent Orienteering Course

<http://daylesfordorienteeringproject.home.blog/>

The FOCH committee are looking into the feasibility of a similar approach, to give users of the CH precinct easy and direct access to the FOCH web pages.

We are looking at installing some test QR codes affixed to some of the Interpretation signs installed already on the Reserve. The attached photo is an example of what we are talking about – We would be pleased if some of you would try it and let us know how this works.



BIOLOGICAL AND OTHER WEED CONTROL



Most of members are aware that we have reduced our reliance on herbicides and that we are interested in trying different means of weed control. With this in mind, **Margie Thomas** attended a Bio Workshop organised by **Brian Bainbridge**, Hepburn shire Biodiversity Officer.

Extremely experienced Senior Research Scientist **Greg LeFoe** from Agriculture Victoria Research shared his knowledge about controlling weeds using biological methods. English or Scotch broom is a common weed, flowering in abundance on CH at the moment and gall mite is the biological control insect which feeds off the broom, sucking nutrients till eventually the plant dies.

The workshop also involved a walk to Lake Daylesford where we collected samples of galls which were secured to broom bushes at our working bee on Sunday 27th October. At that working bee, when securing the samples, we also discovered that gall mites had found their way to broom onto the Hill. The area has been fenced off with a plan to wait and see how this gall mite spreads. The advantages of biological control are that it is environmentally friendly, self-dispersing, effective in the longer term and also cost effective. But this method needs time to achieve a lasting effect.

There are occasions when we need to employ professional contractors to eradicate large infestations of weeds. Our preferred method is to brush cut first then to spot spray the regrowth. **Aus Eco solutions** from Ballan are assisting us with weed eradication. Their qualified team of dedicated, fully insured employees also have significant experience in plant identification, particularly weeds.

The large infestation above the creek has been brush cut, with the gorse piled ready to rot down.



BIRDLIFE AUSTRALIA AND FRIENDS OF CORNISH HILL

Up on the Hill, on Saturday 12th October, we enjoyed a fun, informative bird walk hosted by **Lindall Kidd** joined by **Tanya Loos**. Lindall is Birdlife Australia's Migratory Shorebird Program Officer, and Tanya now also works for BLA. Identifying birds by their calls required great skill and we were treated to some fine tag teaming by both these experts.



We were off to a flying start for the Aussie Backyard Bird Count (21-27 October). Partnered with **Gardens for Wildlife**, we had a display in the Info Centre, and also in Daylesford Library. Thanks to **Liam** and **Mary** from the Info centre for their enthusiasm. And thanks also to **Alison** and the **Library staff** who added bird colouring sheets and bird books for the youngsters.

OUR APPROACH TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, LAND, WATER AND PLANNING (DELWP)

A requirement for writing grants requires permission from the Land Manager and at times, it has been difficult to receive a response from the Committee of Management.

On-site in August we met **Grant Hull** (DELWP Regional Manager, Land and Built Environment - Grampians Region) and **Danial McMahon** (DELWP Program Manager, Land & Built Environment - Grampians Region) to discuss being a Natural Resources Manager in our own right. Whilst this is not a possibility for us, it was a great opportunity to show-case the improved environment along Smiths creek.

OUR VOLUNTEERS

We rely on our volunteers to help out in many ways, and working bees have been very well supported by our members. Tasks include brush cutting, hand pulling, cutting and painting weeds, and preparing sites for tree planting days. School events are well-attended too - our members support presenters, take photographs, help install marquees and tents and make sure that refreshments are delivered.

Many thanks to **Anne, Ivon, Miriam, Pam, Judy, Liz, Jan, Jackie** and **Michael, Susan, Anthony, Alex, Jane, Andrew, Lee Anne, Rosemary, Scott** and **Di**. Between them, they have clocked up over 300 hours of volunteer time. Special Mention goes to the indefatigable **Ivon**, who alone has recorded over 100 hours brush-cutting the Smith's Creek corridor. Then let's consider our educational workshop attendees - the students and staff from **Wesley College, Bullarto Primary School, St Michael's** and the **Dharma School**.

We are forever grateful for Daylesford Secondary staff member **Tania Dunn** and the Hands on Learning team, and for the Gettin' Dirty team - with youth worker **Maddy Taggart** and Leading Senior Constable **Jim Ross** from Moorabool police. During these events we get most of our trees and shrubs planted. It's a startling realisation that this year, over 1100 hours of student time has been spent on the Hill!!



WASP TRAPS

European wasp traps were made and installed on the Hill by the team from Gettin' Dirty. More recently, Friends members **Jan** and **Alex** have installed more traps, as well as topping up those made by the students.

For those of you keen to try making your own, click on the link here: [How To Make A Wasp Trap](#)

WEBSITE & FACEBOOK

Our website has been updated by **Phaedra Morris** of www.lovelycheapwebsites.com.au

Check it out at www.cornishhilldaylesford.com.au

Our Facebook page is at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/fochgroup/>

"A small group of thoughtful people could change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

Margaret Mead