

Merricks Matters

Autumn 2023

Welcome to the first edition of Merricks Matters for 2023. I hope you enjoy reading it.

In addition to our regular reports from the various Merricks Beach organisations, there is news about recent activities and three new sections – On the MBRA Agenda, Merricks Memories, and Letters to the Editor. Thank you to Di Hall for sourcing the initial contributions to these latter two, and a call out to readers to please send in your own contributions for future editions! Send your contributions to the Editor at contact@mbra.com.au.

Thank you also to Tim Roberts, Lainie Larsson, Arte Kousis Sasha Taylor and Brad Vann for the photos, and to all our other contributors for their input.

Joyce Lawrence, Editor

MBRA Update

The MBRA's tennis court renovation project was finally declared completed at an event held at the courts and attended by Cr David Gill on 28 January 2023. The feedback on the courts has been very positive, both in terms of their appearance and by players. The Committee held a working bee to tidy up the court surrounds following the completion of the works. For the longer term, quotations for the regular maintenance of these areas, and the courts themselves, have been invited from local garden contractors. In addition, a proper path has now been constructed between the two sections of Surf Street.

Another area in Merricks Beach which will soon see something of a makeover is the Foam Street walkway. The Committee has been liaising with the Shire Council (which does not admit any direct responsibility for maintaining this 'paper road') resulting in an agreement that it will undertake clearing work and supply plants to rejuvenate the walkway. Look out for notice of a working bee in about June to get these plants in before the Spring.

Following the lengthy discussion about drainage issues in the village, a working group has been formed to develop a long-term strategy to mitigate the type of flash flooding which caused so many problems in late 2022. Thanks to the non-Committee members (in particular) who have agreed to get involved with this, for the ultimate benefit of all Merricks Beach residents. In the meantime, the MBRA's Infrastructure team – led by Bernard Barrett – is continuing to work with the Shire Council and its contractors to fix immediate problems and plan works for the coming year.

The Committee welcomes comments, suggestions and feedback from members. Just send them to contact@mbra.com.au.

Davies Cup 2022/23

The annual competition for Merricks Beach's own Davies Cup was held under a sunny sky on 30 December 2022. This was to have been the first 'tournament' using all mod-grass courts, but the delay in laying the new surface on the MBRA courts not only meant that they were still concrete, but the rolls of the new turf stored on one of them prevented that court from being (safely) used. As a result, matches were played on residents' private courts – many thanks to Bernard Barrett and Tom Sutherland for volunteering their use - as well as on the remaining MBRA court. A great day of tennis culminated in a thrilling final, won in a tie-breaker by James Roberts and Zac Roberts, over gallant runners-up, Chris Fulton and the indefatigable Ian Basser.



Peter Cash – MBRA President

On the MBRA Agenda

Our new committee has held 2 meetings since the AGM. We welcomed our two new members, Tim Roberts and Joyce Lawrence. Tim lives in Sydney but spent his childhood summers at Merrick, has won the Rose Bowl on several occasions and loves to return at every opportunity. Joyce is well known to many of our members as a long-standing resident. Joyce has taken on the role as Editor of Merricks Matters.

The major topics for discussion have been infrastructure, especially the drains, plans for a working party to undertake planting in the Foam St walkway and the possibility of undertaking dust suppression during the summer months.

Kathy Clarke – MBRA Secretary

Friends of Bill Carroll Reserve



Not to be missed is the Easter in the Park gathering at the Bill Carroll Reserve. It is held every year and can be relied upon to provide entertaining, egg-centric activities for the young and not so young. There will be an egg painting table and multi-generational egg and spoon races. And, most exciting of all, an easter egg hunt in our gorgeous Bill Carroll Reserve. April 9th from 3:00pm at the Bill Carroll Reserve B.Y.O food, drinks and hard boiled eggs.



Barbara Hogarth – President, FOBCR

Foreshore C'tee Planting Working Bee

10am Monday, 10 April 2023
Meet at the Tennis Courts, bottom of Foam St

The Foreshore Committee is conducting a planting working bee from 10.00am, Monday 10 April 2023, meet at the Tennis Courts at the bottom of Foam St. Residents and visitors are invited to join and assist with the planting.

Activities: Planting seedlings and grasses to revegetate areas of the foreshore reserve including opposite the Tennis Courts and on sections of Surf St.

What to bring/wear:

- appropriate clothes, footwear and sunscreen
- gloves
- equipment for planting (small spades and trowels etc)
- mallet for driving stakes into the ground for tree guards.

James Wilson – MBFRCoM Secretary

CPR Training



Many readers will have contributed to the community defibrillators and/or attended the previous CPR training organised by community volunteer, Angela Richards. Angela has organised a further CPR training session to be run by Ambulance Victoria, on Thursday 13 April at 3pm at the Merricks Yacht Club.

The session is free and is called 'Call Push Shock'. It's for adults and will run through recognising a cardiac arrest, CPR, AED use and the GoodSam app. The whole session should run for approximately 1.5 hours.

Bookings are essential, to Angela Richards at angelarichardsrn@gmail.com or phone/text 0402 108 533.

Angela Richards – Merricks Beach Defibrillators and CPR Training

Merricks Beach Craft Group

This is our third year of operation. We can be found at MYC from 10.00 am – 1.00 pm on Tuesdays during school terms. We bring our individual projects to work on, share skills and enjoy our mornings with lively chat and a cuppa. Projects include knitting, crochet, patchwork, raffiawork, sashiko and cardmaking, to name a few. If you have a UFO in your cupboard, dust it off and come on down. One attendee recently finished some cross-stitch started over 30 years ago! If you are not crafty, feel free to bring your mending or simply drop in for a chat. There is no charge and you can just turn up. Everyone is welcome.

Penny B – Craft Group Convenor

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

9 th April, 3pm	Easter in the Park
	Bill Carroll Reserve
10 th April, 10am	Foreshore Committee
	Working Bee, Surf St
13 th April, 3pm	CPR Training, Yacht Club
Every Tuesday, 10am	Craft Group, Yacht Club
(Excl school holidays)	

Foreshore Committee Update

Greening our foreshore, the hard work does pay off!

The Merricks Beach Foreshore Reserve Committee of Management has undertaken countless working bees over the past decade. Many with the help of Yacht Club members and other local residents. Working bees to remove weeds and create space for more natives, and working bees to plant native grasses, bushes and trees for our native wildlife to find their home and visitors and residents to enjoy.

This gradual improvement to our foreshore can go unnoticed, but reflecting on what the impact of many years of working hands can achieve, the result is truly outstanding.

In 2007, the Foreshore Committee was able to return a relatively large portion of crown land to public use. The land, which can be seen in the photo below (looking west towards Coles Creek), was sparse with little environmental value.



At successive working bees the Foreshore Committee with the valuable help of the community removed farm fencing and blackberry thickets and planted hundreds of trees and shrubs.

Now the view along that corridor is very different, bursting with native trees and bushes. A few years after this, Swamp Wallabies began to move through this area and are now regularly seen on the foreshore east of Merricks Beach Road. Many native birds can be spotted and heard when walking along the Coles Creek walking track, their melody soothing those that seek retreat among our beautiful nature. Having dogs on lead helps protect these special locals.



The Committee has recently received a Mornington Peninsula Shire Biolink grant to continue weed control and planting that will further strengthen habitat connections.

There are many ways you can get involved in helping enhance our beautiful foreshore. Our next Planting Working Bee will occur on 10 April from 10am near the tennis courts. Come along to meet the Foreshore Committee members and be part of the reason that the foreshore of tomorrow will be greener and more lush than today.

Please follow us on Facebook and Instagram to keep updated on future events.

<https://www.facebook.com/merricksbeachforeshore>

Arte Kousis – MBFRCoM Committee Member

Yacht Club Update

If you looked at the MYC sailing and social programs over time you could get the impression that every season is the same. Sailing every Saturday, the inter club races, Saturday social events over Summer - but somehow every year is different.

This year, the stars aligned and New Year's Eve came on a Saturday - a perfect opportunity to see it in at the Yacht Club with a "Bling it On" theme. Other well attended events included the Indian Feast on perhaps the hottest night of the year – this was a new event and is sure to return based on feedback. That old favourite Pinot and Paella was a sell-out, and for the second year running we had a Quiz Night, a truly epic affair enjoyed by all who attended. We've had several very enthusiastically run Youngerset Merrickshire Tea mornings. These seem to be becoming one of the most popular events on the Yacht Club program. If you haven't yet come down for some tea and scones – look out for the advertising posters around the village.

On the sailing front, we've had a very good season. We've had few cancellations as favourable winds have been the order of our (racing) days. Our participation in the annual Westernport Challenge and Montalto Marathon is a rags to riches story. Our team tried hard but came fourth (out of four!) in the Westernport Challenge, but bounced back in fine style to take the win in the Montalto Marathon. Another very pleasing aspect of the summer season was the interest shown in sailing by our juniors and newer family members. All our junior sailing mornings were well attended and thoroughly enjoyed, with the season highlight an overnight cruise to Flinders in three Pacers – junior sailors only on board!

There are only a few weeks of sailing left until we stop to rest over winter, but activities at the Yacht Club continue. Non-members are welcome to attend the Craft Group on Tuesday mornings from 10am to 1pm, Pilates on Wednesday mornings and Thursday night drinks starting 5.00/5.30pm depending on the time of year.

If you're not a member, perhaps now's the time to become a member (sailing or social) of our thriving club.

All the best, Peter Balka, Commodore

Peter Balka – Commodore, MYC



Sand Modelling Competition

The annual Sand Modelling Competition was held on 27 December 2022. A very hot day unfolded for the annual sand modelling competition this year and unfortunately reduced our entries to an all time low of 61. Come on teenagers, where are you?

Nevertheless, competition was keen and we saw some very clever people at work. Congratulations to all the winners and losers for their artistic works of art

Best on the Beach – Rose Bowl Trophy – Awarded to Erin Gelly with “Starfish”

Most Original Prize – Awarded to Celeste with “Beach Spirit”

Rick Daly Trophy Junior Encouragement Award – Awarded to Hugo Thorpe with “Emu”.

Special thanks to all the organisers, participants and judges – enduring a hot day. I am sure we are all looking forward to next year’s event already!



MBRA Sand Modelling Competition Subcommittee

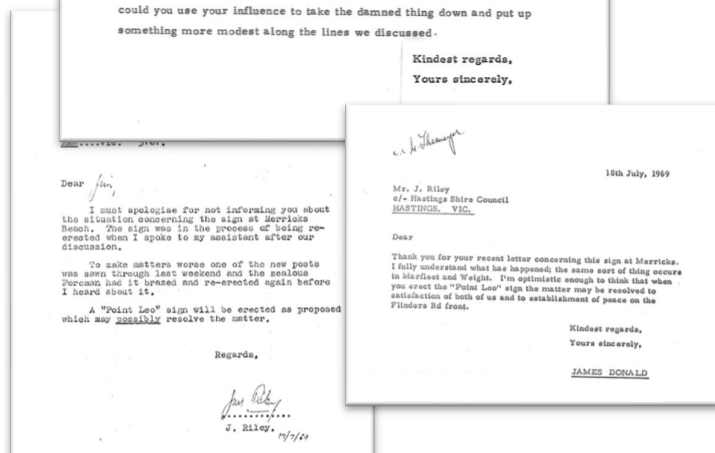
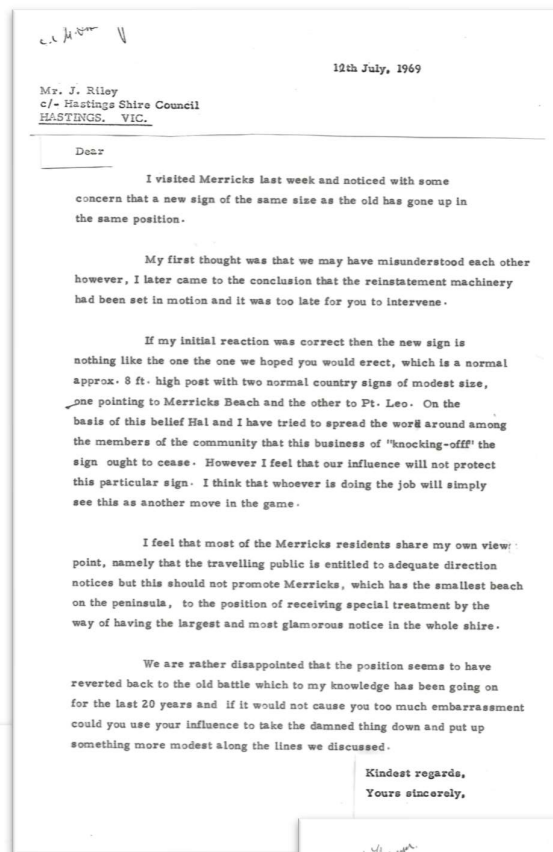
Merricks Memories

During my childhood at Merricks, in the late 50’s and 60’s I remember the on-going saga between the local residents and the Hastings Shire Council about erecting a sign at the end of Merricks Beach Road, formerly Coles Beach Lane. The Council felt it was their duty to erect a sign, and of course, the locals would rather have no sign at all and hope that the “day trippers” would continue along the main road toward Point Leo or Flinders.

Over the years a sign would be erected and almost overnight it would disappear, it became quite a sport for the young men in the area. This practice continued for many years until finally in 1969 it was resolved. The Council had erected a very large sign in the hope that it would not be taken down, but the youth of Merricks rose to the challenge and once again the sign was gone. Jim Donald took on the challenge and suggested that a small street sign would be more suitable and he would guarantee that it would stay safe, and it did! I’m sure that in some of the older houses in Merricks Beach there would be a sign or two under the house.

I have recently been archiving some historical documents and came across the following letters to and from one of our former residents Jim Donald to the Hastings Shire Council.

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I have also recently started to archive some historical documents for the Merricks Yacht Club after being given a donation of old material. I am hoping to obtain a complete set of MYC sailing programs which will be kept in the Clubhouse in folders and only need another 11 to complete the set!

I am looking for sailing programs for the following years: 1968-69, 1969-70, 1970-71, 1972-73, 1973-74, 1974-75, 1981-82, 1982-83, 1983-84, 1984-85 and 1985-86. Thanks to the families who have already made contributions. I also have a folder of early newsletters, dating back to 1966 and once again would be grateful for donations especially from the early years.

Di Hall
73 Merricks Beach Road
5983 1229 or 0427 947 662
diannehall3@bigpond.com

Di Hall – MB community member

Merricks Beach Feast for Freedom

A new event on the Merricks Beach Calendar?

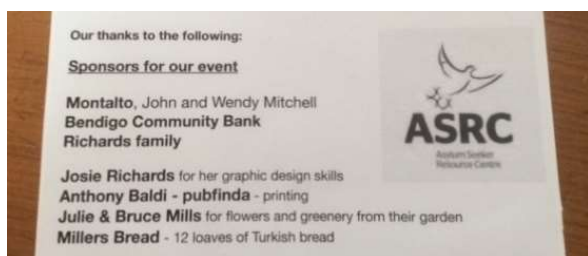


Feast for Freedom helps provide over 7,000 people seeking asylum with food, shelter and health services on their journey to freedom each year.



On Friday 24th March, a very successful dinner was held at the Yacht Club, to raise funds for the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre. Part of the ASRC's Feast for Freedom program, the Merricks Beach Feast for Freedom dinner was organised by a small group of Merricks Beach women and attended by 60 local residents, raising nearly \$5000 for this important cause.

In addition to ticket sales of over \$3500, more than \$1000 was raised on the night, thanks to the generous sponsorship and donations by many local businesses, families and individuals of food, wine and items for the raffle.



The concept of the Feast is that the ASRC provides the recipes, shared by refugees who have been helped by them in the past. This year, there was a focus on Middle Eastern recipes and a dozen keen Merricks Beach cooks made eleven different dishes, using ingredients funded by the generous donation of \$500 from the Balnarring branch of the Bendigo Bank.



It was a great night, with several guests commenting it was the best event they had ever been to at the yacht club.



But it had its serious side too. In introducing the Feast, speaker Charlotte Limb said, Merricks Beach Feast held this feast to support people who are seeking safety and freedom, and a chance to rebuild their lives.

And as Megan Clark, Head Chef for the ASRC's Feast for Freedom campaign has commented, here in Australia, everyone deserves a seat at the table. The ASRC's Feast for Freedom is a feast that makes a difference. It is a shared food experience in aid of people seeking asylum, and a delicious discovery and celebration of what unites us.



The organising group for the Merricks Beach Feast this year comprised Penny B, Charlotte Limb, Joyce Lawrence, Angela Richards, Sasha Taylor and Sue Varey. They were ably assisted by cooks Glythyn C, Caroline D-G, Pam D, Sally G, Di H, Linda M, Sharon M and Charmagne W, and many other helpers before, during and after the night.

Thank you to the Yacht Club for providing the venue and to everyone who participated. Hopefully, this will become an annual event, so if you are interested in helping next year, please contact one of us.

Merricks Beach ASRC Feast for Freedom Committee

MYC and MBRA Work Together

After a build-up of sand at part of the boat storage facilities at the Merricks Yacht Club, Commodore Peter Balka (with his trusty shovel) and MBRA Committee Member Brad Vann (with his trusty tractor) moved over 10 cubic meters of sand one Thursday afternoon in March (see photo of finished work).



Brad Vann – MBRA Committee Member

[Editor's note: many thanks to Brad for his continuing assistance to the community. This is at least the third occasion Brad and his tractor have proved invaluable, saving other volunteers hours of manual labour.]

Letters to the Editor

[Note: For this edition, the letters are taken from the yacht club's newsletter Merricks Moments, September 2006. Some readers may recall the irreverent mystery correspondent (or was there more than one?) whose unsolicited contributions on topical issues provoked outrage and laughter in equal measures. Thanks to Di Hall for sourcing them as part of her work on the yacht club archives. For future editions, please email your letters (or other contributions) to the Editor, Merricks Matters at contact@mbra.com.au. Continuing in the spirit of the past would be welcome 😊, but not essential.]

Dear Editor,

Is it true that the State Government is looking at introducing recreational whaling to Westernport Bay? If so, the club needs to look at ways to take advantage of this potential boon to revenue. I suggest an immediate upgrade of the club winches to assist fishermen/whalers in bringing their catch up the beach, what a sight that would be on those glorious Summer beach days! Also, I believe that future criteria for joining the club should include the ability to speak Japanese.

Signed Captain Ahab

Dear Editor

I was very excited to receive from council the plans for the proposed convenience store/petrol station development on Merricks Beach road.

Apart from the obvious convenience of not having to drive all the way to Balnarring for my morning newspaper I am thrilled about the obvious increase in traffic that will result. The more people to discover our wonderful little hamlet, the higher our property values will go!

Might I suggest the Merricks Yacht Club profit from the opportunity by retailing their mugs, jumpers and other merchandise through this outlet.

Yours truly

Con Syumer

Dear Editor

French Island is over-run by koalas and, understandably, has been taking measures to limit the population growth. I propose similar measures at Merricks Beach. As cuddly and sweet as these native animals are, they rival possums for their annoyance. Their noise, their droppings and the way they just wander across the road when I am trying to get somewhere in a hurry are all most inconvenient.

Perhaps we could discourage the little pests in a humane manner?

I have an air-rifle which could prove to be a suitable deterrent.

Yours truly, Paul T Trigger

'Breaking News' - Lost and Found

After a rescue of some boaters off Wilsons' Prom the Police towed the boat to Flinders. It broke free and was recently salvaged on Merricks Beach.



Brad Vann – MB community member