

# Merricks Matters

## Summer 2025

Welcome to the first edition of Merricks Matters for 2025. I hope you enjoy it.

Thank you to all our contributors for your articles and photos. In addition to the regular reports from the various Merricks Beach organisations, this edition features a story about another lovely Merricks Beach garden and its owner; and continues the Community Corner section.

Please send in your own contributions for future editions. Letters, photos and articles are all welcome. Send your contributions to the Editor at [contact@mbra.com.au](mailto:contact@mbra.com.au).

Hope you have had a wonderful Summer, and you enjoy looking back on it!

*Joyce Lawrence, Editor*

## MBRA Update

### Frankston-Flinders Road

Following the disappointing refusal of the Minister for Road Safety and her department to put double lines on Frankston-Flinders Road on each side of the Merricks Beach Road intersection, better news was received in January when the MBRA was advised by the Minister that the speed limit "could be reduced to 80km/h". However, she advised also that funding (to change the signs) "will need to be considered in a statewide context under a future program." Given the State government's well-known budgetary issues, this does not bode well, however the MBRA is currently liaising with the other Westernport residents' association with a view to a campaign for this expenditure to be prioritised. Please stay tuned in this regard.

### MBRA general meetings

A (second) special general meeting of the MBRA was held on 1 December 2024. At that meeting, members voted to approve a special resolution (by 75% majority) to amend various of the MBRA's Rules, primarily to provide for a more orderly process for elections and to permit members to participate fully at general meetings by electronic means.

The AGM was then held, with the benefit of these amendments, on 29 December 2024. Strong interest in contributing to the MBRA's agenda and work resulted in the need for an election for committee members, for the second year running. Those elected and re-elected were: Bernard Barrett, **Hilary Dixon**, Pam Drake, Peter Drake, David Guthrie, Di Hall, **Ian Johnson**, Joyce Lawrence, Sarah Lawrence, Tim Roberts, Sue Rutley and Brad Vann (new committee members in bold). We look forward to another productive year in the service of our wonderful community. And the MBRA committee notes with deepest gratitude the long service of Simon Jaski, of which there is more written in these pages.

## MBRA projects

The list of projects on which the MBRA has embarked, or has under discussion, is evolving and ambitious. Drainage remains a major issue, both in terms of current infrastructure and long-term storm water management. On the latter, please take the time to take a look at the working group's update (presented at the AGM) at [mbra.com.au](http://mbra.com.au). Also, a big thank you to Bendigo Bank (Balnarring), which is supporting the current external consultant's work with a community support grant.

Otherwise, we are currently investigating a community battery and possible revegetation work along Merricks Beach Road, amongst other projects. If there are other things that you think that the MBRA could and should be doing, please let us know, either through the residents' survey or by email to [secretary@mbra.com.au](mailto:secretary@mbra.com.au).

*Peter Cash – MBRA President*

## Davies Cup 2024/25

Having arrived with a vengeance on Boxing Day, Summer had just as swiftly departed by the following day when the highlight of the Merricks Beach non-nautical sporting calendar, the Davies Cup, was held on 27 December 2024. And so the tournament began in a slight drizzle, which built to rain steady enough to force players from the courts once or twice.

Undeterred by the inclemency, a strong roster of perennial Davies Cup contenders – combined with some ultimately decisive blow-ins – traded forehands and backhands, as well as some shots for which there can be no name, initially in a quick draw round robin format. Then, through the use of a grading system that was as unimpeachable as it was – to most of us – impenetrable, the four best-performed pairs: Mitch Campbell & Craig McAllister; Philip Fox & James Roberts; Tim Dickinson & Zac Roberts; and John Davies-Riand & Peter Cash, played off in sudden death, and hotly contested, semi-finals, resulting in a final match-up of Mitch & Craig v John & Peter.



In that final, the relentless determination of John - a Stewart-family visitor who was just off the plane from the UK - to chase down every ball was the difference and he and Peter got the chocolates, despite Mitch and Craig's very fine efforts on the other side of the net.

Congratulations to all who played in what was yet another very enjoyable and vaguely competitive Davies Cup – a Merricks Beach event that is now in its fifth decade. Thanks to all who assisted on the day, and to Bernard Barrett and Christine O'Reilly for the use again of Stade de Bluff.

*Peter Cash – MBRA President (and tennis hack)*

## Merricks Beach Sand Modelling Competition

Sunday 5th January 2025, a hot sunny day, did not deter the 100 plus participants in the annual sand modelling day. The tide levels were perfect for the wonderful exhibits and the quality of the work was excellent in all age groups making it hard for the judges to choose the winners. Although it was hot, we had a large spectator audience supporting the day.

Numbers in the younger age groups were lower than normal, but increased in the older sections, which was great to see. Congratulations to all those involved, we hope to see you back next year.



The **Rosebowl Trophy** – Best model on the Beach was awarded to - Will Roberts – Sports Shoe



The new **Ken Rowe Perpetual Trophy** – Most Original model was awarded to- Richard Walls and the Foreshore Committee team - climate change  
The **Rick Daly – Junior Encouragement Trophy** was awarded to - Chelsea Garland - Sea Dog

Thanks to Tim Roberts and those who helped set up the event, also to all the judges who had some very difficult decisions to make. We look forward to seeing everyone back next year. The sausage sizzle that followed was enjoyed by everyone.



*Sue Rutley – MBRA Committee member*

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

20 <sup>th</sup> April, 3pm	Easter in the Park, Friends of Bill Carroll Reserve
Every Thursday, 5.30pm	Social drinks at the Yacht Club (5pm outside of daylight savings time)
Every Tuesday, 10am	Craft Group, Yacht Club (Excl school holidays)

## Update from MBRA Stormwater Working Group

As the MBRA has previously announced, we are working with Melbourne Water and Mornington Peninsula Shire Council to develop a long-term strategy for improving the management of stormwater and drainage at Merricks Beach.

The MBRA is extremely grateful to have received the monetary support of both Melbourne Water and the Community Bank Balnarring and District (Bendigo Bank) for this project. Wave Consulting has been engaged to develop the strategy over the next six months.

As part of the project, Wave is keen to hear from residents about any stormwater or drainage concerns and any ideas or opportunities for improvement. To assist this, Wave held a very useful community meeting at Merricks Beach on Friday 24 January, receiving input from around 30 residents. Wave has also developed an on-line survey to assist residents who weren't able to attend the meeting, to provide their input to the project. So far, nearly 50 residents have responded to the survey. The survey can be accessed at [Merricks Beach survey | Wave Consulting](#). Some additional information is in the [flyer accessible at this link](#).

We urge all residents to take the opportunity to provide their input to this important project. Please provide your responses to the survey by the end of February.

*Kriston Symons – MBRA Vice President*



## MBRA Residents Survey is open

The last MBRA survey was completed in 2015 and the current committee is looking to seek up-to-date feedback from the Merricks Beach community. This survey will assist the committee to focus on the areas that matter most over the coming years.

This survey is open to all residents of Merricks Beach, not just members of the MBRA, so we can elicit views from the whole community, including those who own or lease a property here. We welcome the views of all family members who regularly visit Merricks Beach, as we are seeking a range of views across all demographics.

You can access the survey until 31st March via the following link: <https://forms.office.com/r/mXNz6Zp4Jf> or by scanning the QR code.



*Sarah Lawrence - MBRA Committee member*

## Basketball Ring Feasibility

In relation to the feasibility of installing a basketball ring adjacent to the tennis courts, the MBRA wishes to advise residents that no decision has been made, that consultation is ongoing and in the coming weeks members of the MBRA Committee hope to meet with residents who have expressed concerns, to better understand their perspectives. And we will also be looking to share the information collected on the proposal with all members.

*Kriston Symons – MBRA Vice President*

## Friends of Bill Carroll Reserve



Easter in the Park @ The Bill Carroll Reserve is happening on **Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> April at 3pm**. Save the date; it is a family friendly day!

Starting with egg painting...so bring along hard boiled eggs, an egg carton to carry them in and wear old clothes.



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Then, the egg and spoon races for all ages, including one with dogs in tow.

The popular chocolate Easter egg hunt to finish off (spoiler alert!)

*Lainie Larsson - FOBCR*

## Join the Fun at Merricks Yacht Club!

There's plenty to enjoy at Merricks Yacht Club for both sailors and social members. Our social calendar has been buzzing—highlights so far include great dinners with the Mexican Fiesta, and Paella and Pavlova, as well as the Quiz night, with more to come, like **Burger Night (now on Sunday, 9 March)** and a **Family BBQ on 19 April**. And don't forget our **weekly Thursday night drinks at 5:30 PM**—a perfect chance to take in the stunning bay views with great company and great-value drinks.



*John Hollander and Angela Richards enjoying the Mexican Fiesta, photos courtesy of Lainie Larsson*

This year, we launched **Salty Sisters**, offering women members a mix of on-water and land-based activities, including casual sailing, paddleboarding, beach walks, and even a Plunge Club for the adventurous! Our **craft mornings** are also back in full swing every **Tuesday at 10 AM** in the clubhouse.

For younger members, **movie nights** have been a hit, and our **junior sailing mornings** continue to get kids off their screens and onto the water. The clubhouse has also hosted valuable community activities, including **defibrillator training** run by Ange Richards.

On the racing front, we've had a fantastic season, including hosting the **Western Port Challenge** with 75 entrants—Merricks proudly took bronze! A new favourite tradition has been our Sailing Captain's weekly **Dad joke** at the pre-race briefing. The top contender so far?

*"A friend of mine is addicted to brake fluid... but he says he can stop anytime!"*

Thinking of joining? Whether you're a keen sailor or just love the social scene, we'd love to welcome you! Drop by the club or sign up at <https://merricksyachtclub.wildapricot.org>.

*Simon Corden – Commodore, MYC*

## Foreshore Committee Update

### Fire in the foreshore reserve - East of Bluff Road

On the afternoon of 26 January, there was a fire in the foreshore reserve. CFA volunteers from Balnarring, Somers and Bittern, including 4 large fire trucks and a number of smaller vehicles, attended and quickly put the fire out. Police from the Mornington police station also attended.

Thankfully no one was injured, no private property was damaged and the situation was very quickly and efficiently brought under control by the CFA volunteers. The fire was close to the cliff edge and burnt an area of approx. 15m X 25m. Some of the calls to '000' were able to provide directions to the site with the assistance of the emergency marker posts, and the recently widened gate and drain crossover at the bottom of Bluff Road enabled clear access for the trucks onto the fire track. The trucks also utilised the driveway of a neighbouring property. The CFA was able to access water to refill its trucks from hydrants on Merricks Beach Road.



Our understanding is that the Mornington Peninsula Police Crime Investigation Unit (CIU) are conducting an investigation, but no further information is available as yet.

Please stay alert and immediately report any signs of suspicious or careless activity, smoke or fire to '000'. All fires on the foreshore reserve, including on the beach, are prohibited at all times.

The Foreshore Committee will monitor the revegetation of the fire

impacted area and asks that people refrain from accessing the area until the revegetation has established. The Foreshore Committee will continue its annual inspection of the fire track with the Balnarring CFA, typically done before summer. During these inspections, the CFA clears potential obstructions on the fire track and checks that its trucks can have clear access. The CFA also identifies other obstacles that need to be removed, such as the large clump of agapanthus that were subsequently removed as part of a community working bee.

### Womin Djeka community festival 1st March 10am-5pm

The Foreshore Committee will have a stall at the upcoming Womin Djeka community festival, held at Emu Plains Reserve, Coolart Road Balnarring, details here: <https://www.balnarringfestival.com.au/> For those attending the festival, please drop in at our stall which we will be sharing with the Balnarring Foreshore Committee.

### Donations through the Container Deposit Scheme (CDS)

You can support the work of the Foreshore Committee by making a donation through the Victorian Government's CDS program. You simply select 'Merricks Beach Foreshore Committee' when returning cans and bottles via the state government Container Deposit Scheme (East Region), and you can make a donation to enhancing the foreshore using donation partner id: C200025939. You can also drop off your containers in the crate beside the public rubbish bin at the bottom of Merricks Beach Road. All funds received will be used for planting, weeding and other activities such as track maintenance.

### Regulations for dogs on beaches

A reminder that during the months of Dec, Jan and Feb, dogs are only allowed on the beach **before 10am** and **after 6pm**, and dogs are required to be on lead when on the beach. In other months (March – Nov) dogs are permitted on the beach if they are on a lead. These regulations align with neighbouring foreshore beaches. Council is continuing its program of patrols to inform the community to act within the regulations, with enforcement where considered necessary.

### Seed collection for revegetation

Many species of wildflower have disappeared from areas of the foreshore that were cleared and heavily grazed by sheep and cattle in the past, in some places right to the shoreline. However, we are lucky to have a few areas around Merricks where important stands of indigenous wildflowers remain, which are often on road reserves. Parts of Merricks Beach Road where mowing is not occurring are excellent locations to collect seeds from the rare Grassy Woodland community. We have been collecting these seeds in recent weeks to propagate native grasses and wildflowers for replanting in the foreshore. The seeds will be germinated and grown into seedlings, which when ready will be planted as part of a community working bee.

### (More) Wildlife in the foreshore reserve

We have had great responses to the wildlife photos, so have

included another of a Swamp Wallaby here. Eastern Grey Kangaroos were observed on Merricks Beach Road over summer so please drive carefully and at a safe speed. The kangaroos are expected to return to the foreshore and village in coming years, thanks to consistent revegetation work that is making the foreshore more attractive to native wildlife.



### Recent and upcoming works/events on the foreshore

Recent or upcoming works include replacement of the public toilet amenity block roof; replacement of handrails on the Bluff Rd access track; and safety works to remove dangerous branches on three large pine trees on the maintenance track west of the Merricks Beach Road car park. All of these works are being undertaken with funds from state government grants and will improve the amenity and safety for all who use the foreshore. The works do require (or have required) the temporary closure of access tracks and the toilet facilities. We thank everyone for their cooperation during the interruptions.

Follow us on Facebook or Instagram for details of events and working bees, and to see more wildlife photos  
<https://www.facebook.com/merricksbeachforeshore/>  
[https://instagram.com/merricksbeach\\_fc?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=](https://instagram.com/merricksbeach_fc?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=)

*Merricks Beach Foreshore Reserve Committee of Management*

### Thank you to Simon Jaski

I seem to recall that I first met Simon on a MBRA working bee some fifteen or so years ago.



Simon and Ann bought their house in the 1970's, so he was already well established in the Merricks Beach community, and a member of the MBRA committee. He was one of the small core group of volunteers who regularly showed up to working bees.

Simon's background was as a marine engineer, having graduated from Delft University in the Netherlands. His career took him to many parts of South-east Asia and ultimately

Australia where he settled in Melbourne in the 1960's. He was involved in numerous large scale power infrastructure projects, and his business in water treatment made him uniquely placed to provide input to anything thing to do with sewerage or water in the village.

His quiet and thoughtful demeanour was always appreciated. Over the years his involvement became less physical, but he was always willing to take things on such as the annual plant giveaway. And he became a fixture as a cook at the sausage sizzle, from which he remained undeterred even after I managed to spill a container of hot sausage fat down his trousers. Fortunately, no harm was done and the washing machine took care of the greasy stain.



On behalf of the MBRA committee I would like to thank Simon for his contribution to the Merricks Beach community over many years, and hope he will continue to enjoy Merricks Beach for many more.

Bernard Barrett  
 (Thanks to Simon Jaski Jr for the background notes)

*Bernard Barrett - MBRA Committee member*

### Merricks Beach Garden Focus

In this edition, Di Hall and Angela Richards continue their series of articles showcasing some well-established gardens at Merricks Beach and talking with their owner/s. Thank you to everyone involved for sharing your stories and photos. Please let Di or Angela know if you'd like your garden featured next time!

### A Lifetime at Merricks Beach: Ann McNulty's Story



For nearly a century, Ann McNulty (née Congdon) has been part of the Merricks Beach community. Now in her 90s, she carries with her the rich history of a place she has known since childhood.

Ann's connection to Merricks Beach began in 1923 when her father, Owen, purchased a block of land. He met Lillian (who was later to become his wife) at Merricks when she came down with one of the neighbours

whom she had befriended at pharmacy college. They married and

built what would become known affectionately as "the shack." Over time, this humble one-room retreat expanded, growing with the family. Though the shack was removed in the early 1990s, its original chimney and fireplace remain in the garden—today repurposed as a cherished BBQ spot.

In 1993, Ann and her husband Peter retired to Merricks Beach, embracing the tranquility of their coastal sanctuary.

### A Garden of Resilience and Beauty

A walk through Ann’s garden is a journey through time and nature’s resilience. The driveway, shaded by towering gums, hums with the chatter of morning birds. Callistemons, once in full bloom, now display fresh growth, while ornamental rosemary teems with busy bees. At the heart of the garden, roses in pink, yellow, and white add bursts of colour.

The entrance to Ann’s home is a vibrant display of flowering pots— petunias, salvias, hydrangeas, impatiens, and fuchsias— offering a kaleidoscope of pinks, whites, blues, and reds. With the ongoing challenges of watering, maintenance, and persistent rabbits, container gardening has become a necessity.



Large trees skirting the property make traditional garden beds difficult to sustain, but Ann has found beauty in adaptation.

At the rear of the property, lush 30-year-old stag horns provide shelter to self-sown tree ferns, creating a rich, green oasis. A particularly special feature of the garden is the original fireplace from the 1923 shack, standing strong as a tribute to the past.



### A Living Legacy

Near the garden gate stands an 80-year-old cypress tree, a self-sown tree that Ann remembers growing over the years. The back of the property abuts the area variously known to locals as Lover’s Lane, The Fairy Walk, Congdon’s Lane, or the fire track; this pathway holds memories of generations past. Ann’s garden, much like her life at Merricks Beach, is a testament to endurance and care. Through changing times and landscapes, she has nurtured a space of serenity and beauty – a true reflection of the spirit of the community.



### Fire Adapted Gardens

Readers might also be interested in exploring this website

[Fire Adapted Gardens — Sparking Conversations, Igniting Action](#)

*Di Hall and Angela Richards*

### Community Corner

Thanks to Di Hall for keeping us informed about some useful local community services, provided by the Mornington Peninsula Shire:

#### 30-minute One-to-One Tech Help - Hastings Library



Do you have questions about your phone, tablet, or laptop? Are you feeling overwhelmed or confused about all the features and need a little help but not sure who to ask? Join us for free one-to-one tech help sessions to get answers to all your burning questions.

Whether you need help setting up a new device, organising your photos, attaching a PDF or something entirely different, we’re here to help!

#### We can help with:

- settings on your devices
- downloading eBooks and eAudiobooks
- completing online forms

- sending and receiving emails (including attaching/downloading PDF's)
- photos
- making video calls
- downloading and using apps
- social media
- websites
- accessing Wi-Fi
- connecting to local and relevant services eg: MyGov

**Please note there: is a limit of 2 sessions per week per person. These tech-help sessions provide friendly trouble-shooting advice and not professional IT support, please keep this in mind when booking a session.**

Free, bookings essential. Note: If you can't make it on the day, please let us know, so that your tickets can be freed up for others to attend.

### When

- Monday, 03 March 2025 | 10:00 AM - 01:00 PM
- Monday, 17 March 2025 | 10:00 AM - 01:00 PM
- Monday, 31 March 2025 | 10:00 AM - 01:00 PM

### Location

Hastings Library, 7 High Street, Hastings, 3915

### Our Library Van



Whether you're in a busy township or a quieter residential area, Our Library Van (OLiV) will be within easy reach, offering something for everyone.

Launching in February 2025, you can browse, borrow, and return library items, as well as request and pick up holds at any one of our 16 stops, conveniently located across 14 unique locations on the Peninsula.

OLiV offers a range of rotating titles for all ages and interests including:

- Fiction
- Non-Fiction
- DVDs
- Large Print Books
- Talking Books
- Children's Stories

**Please note:** Our new fortnightly timetable is currently on a trial basis and is subject to change. OLiV does not operate on public holidays or during extreme climate events such as days of total fire ban, flooding, or heatwaves to keep both our staff and the community safe.

### OLiV Timetable

#### Week One: Mornings 10am – 12pm

**Monday:** Balnarring Community Hall – 3035 Frankston Flinders Road, Balnarring  
 3<sup>rd</sup> March  
 17<sup>th</sup> March  
 31<sup>st</sup> March  
 4<sup>th</sup> April  
 29<sup>th</sup> April

[Di Hall \(diannehall73@icloud.com\)](mailto:diannehall73@icloud.com) – MBRA Committee member

### How your community bank helps you

Since the Merricks Beach Resident Association's relationship started with Community Bank Balnarring & District, the bank has invested \$17,500 in helping the group better serve its community. Our latest investment of \$12,500 to assist with the cost of producing a Stormwater Strategy for the Merricks Village is a further commitment.

By banking with Community Bank Balnarring & District, our customers have enabled us to invest \$3.7m in the community since opening 16 years ago. Over one hundred community groups have received our support.

### Imagine what we could achieve if you all moved your banking to us!

We are often asked what a Community Bank branch is and how it works, so here is an explanation at its most simplistic.

Basically, it is a locally-owned bank branch, members of the community bought shares in the company to fund the establishment of the branch, a cost of \$840,000 in our case. Bendigo and Adelaide Bank provide the banking licence and all banking services. The margin on these banking services is then shared between the two parties.

The branch share of revenue covers the running costs of the branch and any profit is shared, approximately 80%-20%, between the community and our local shareholders.

So why do so many locals trust us with their banking? We offer all the banking services of the other major banks, but unlike them, you can trust us to stay located in Balnarring village, you can trust us to keep investing in our community, and you can trust our staff to provide excellent personal customer service.

Community Bank  
Balnarring & District

So, if you are not a customer, come in tomorrow and help us build our community.



[Chris Gurney, Director Balnarring & District Community Services Limited](#)

### Shire Dog and Cat Regulations

The MBRA Committee has been contacted by several residents concerned about the behaviour of some pets, particularly over the Summer holiday period. So, we'd like to take the opportunity to remind residents about the Shire regulations around the need to minimise the nuisance from barking dogs and to keep cats contained to the owner's property at all times.

Relevant information is available at [Barking dogs - Mornington Peninsula Shire](#)  
[Wandering Cats - Mornington Peninsula Shire](#)

## Other Local Initiatives/Events

### Womin Djeka Balnarring Ngargee – Sat 1 March



The Balnarring community would like to invite all of our wider community to join us for the 8<sup>th</sup> annual Womin Djeka Balnarring Ngargee. The Ngargee is a community run festival that welcomes everyone to share, begin conversations and walk with First Peoples through an impressive day of musical and dance performances, cultural workshops and market presented by First Peoples along with children's activities, a Caring for Country area and food.

Our stage artists will include the incredible Mitch Tambo who will perform his newest release, Naomi Diane, Wala Connections, Culture Evolves, Wren Arkose, Crooked TP and Shelly Ware.

**Join this day of cultural celebration on Saturday the 1st of March from 10am to 5pm amongst the wonderful messmate trees and natural beauty of Emu Plains Reserve in Balnarring.**

Presented by Balnarring Preschool, organised under the guidance of Boon Wurrung Senior elder N'arwee't Professor Carolyn Briggs AM and proudly supported by the Mornington Peninsula Shire Council, Vic Health, Ross Trust, Bendigo Bank, Prestige InHome Care and others. Entry is by donation and the event is accessible for all abilities.

## Merricks Memories and Letters to the Editor

Sadly, we didn't receive anything to include in these sections for this edition. But we look forward to receiving your contributions to future editions! Please send them to the Editor, Merricks Matters at [contact@mbra.com.au](mailto:contact@mbra.com.au)

*Joyce Lawrence – Editor*

