

Merricks Matters

Spring 2017

Newsletter for the Merricks Beach Community

Spring rain and sunshine have arrived

October	Sunday	15 th	10am	Working bee Friends of Bill Carroll Reserve (see noticeboards)
November	Saturday	4 th	1pm, 6pm	Official opening of MYC sailing season, canapés & drinks
	Sunday	5 th	9.30am	AGM, Friends of Bill Carroll Reserve
December	Friday	29 th	All day	Davies Cup Tennis Tournament
January	Saturday	6 th	10am	Sand Modeling Competition
	Sunday	7 th	10am	MBRA AGM

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From the archives- about 50 years ago

The Merricks Beach Development Club’s biggest expenditure items in 1967 were the roads at \$866 and a contribution to the Foreshore Committee of Management of \$200 – quite significant sums in those days. The treasurer was D Kennedy, who had been treasurer for several years. In 1967/68, road signs showing “SPOON DRAINS” were purchased and installed. Some of our older members may recall these large drains that cut diagonally across some of the roads. Years later these were deemed inappropriate by the council and were filled in. The book of accounts for 1968/69 shows expenditure on partial re-construction, fencing and draining of the tennis courts totalling \$1063 – quite a large sum and the equivalent of about \$8000 in today’s money!

Rosanne Pittard MBRA



Thank you Jo Ferguson

You have probably seen the MBRA sign on the tennis courts, which is a smaller version of the MBRA’s banner that makes guest appearances at the sausage sizzle and other Merricks Beach events during the year. Both feature a drawing of the beach looking towards Point Leo, for which we all owe thanks to its creator, Jo Ferguson, a stalwart of our community.

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Friends of Bill Carroll Reserve

The reserve is looking pretty good at the moment, but the FBCR have plans to make it look even better. Originally, the eastern lawn was planted with Pattersonia, a lovely blue flowering local flower (pictured on page 1). Unfortunately, they have been lost over the years but the plan is to incorporate them with other grasses and woodland plants to make the area a pretty place to picnic, walk and play. Our next working bee will be at 10 am on Sunday 15 October. Please come along and help us plant and enjoy the company of a small dedicated group, followed by a delicious morning tea.

Jan Gilfillan Secretary



The MBRA plant giveaway was a popular event on the Queen's Birthday weekend.

Many thanks to Richard Anderson from Merricks Nursery for curating the plants and for his generous and valuable advice. Thanks also to the MBRA members who volunteered.

Good news from the Foreshore Committee

We have been successful in winning a Coastcare Victoria Community Grant that will finance weed control and revegetation on the slope below Cliff Road, widening an important wildlife corridor for swamp wallabies, echidnas and other fauna. It also aims to increase the community's capacity to undertake weed control on the foreshore, through training and the purchase of equipment. So please keep an eye out for weed identification and bush regeneration workshops in Spring and Summer. To register your interest please contact the committee via our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/merricksbeachforeshore/>

As kids, many of us enjoyed riding bikes, making cubbie houses and playing chases in the bush on the foreshore and want our children to be able to do the same. Indeed, as described in Richard Louv's best-selling book, *Last Child in the Woods*, there is mounting scientific evidence that it was probably very good for us - unsupervised childhood contact with nature promotes physical and mental health, an understanding of risk and a sense of wonder. So we do want to encourage kids to interact with the foreshore in lots of ways. However, recently the Foreshore Committee has had to remove a number of structures including a dugout with glass windows and a corrugated iron roof and a BMX track through the erosion sensitive gully near the tennis courts. These are clearly inappropriate due to the amount of disturbance involved and potential safety issues. So, by all means encourage your kids to get out and experience the Magic of Merricks, but please make sure they leave the tools, timber, old couches, roofing iron etc at home and just use natural materials from the bush for cubby houses.

Joyce Lawrence, Nick Scott Williams MB Foreshore Reserve Committee

Get ready for summer sailing

The summer sailing season officially opens at 1 pm on Saturday, 4 November with a Boat Christening Briefing, followed by the Mark Sefton Trophy Race at 2 pm. At 6.30pm, celebrate with canapés and an open bar for members. Our new lift has been a huge success and has allowed those in the community with mobility issues to enjoy all that the club has to offer. Thank you again to those who donated and worked to make it possible. Throughout the summer months there will be plenty of events both on the water and off, so check the MYC website. Remember our Try Sailing Day, which will be held straight after the Sand Modeling Competition on 6 January. You don't have to be a member and you'll get the opportunity to sail with an experienced sailor. See you soon!

Megan Bassler MYC

Merricks Meanderings

For our Spring edition Joyce Lawrence has kindly provided some memories from her aunt, Joy Wood, nee Lawrence. An edited selection follows.

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Memories

In October 1926 our family, consisting of my grandparents (Joseph and Sarah Lawrence), my Uncle Bob Lawrence and his wife to be Ethel, my Dad (Bert), Honora (Mum), Jack, Joyce (me), Sylvia, Marjory and Bobby (who died age nearly 5) went to visit Mr Mulready and to picnic at Merricks Beach. We saw Manly Beach Estate for Auction in November – there was a small house at the end of Surf St, owned by a Mr Jim Hicks and family. Our family chose a block of land – from memory, as I was age 7, I can remember walking on it through long grass and bracken. Dad and Bob went to the auction and bought a block of land between them. It was No. 8 (now known as no. 20) Surf Street. They prefabricated the first part of the house and took it down so we could use it at Xmas.

During the November/December of 1926 the grass would have been very long but then as summer progressed one could see just plain green paddock for miles. No shrubs or trees. The sand in front of Surf Street came nearly up to the street, although we soon had three paths running down to the beach. They were mainly through bracken. The paths were named Hicks, Lawrence and Brooks. We had met the Brooks' children on top of a very large hill of sand which was then on the beach. The beach itself seemed very wide and for many years we had an old trunk of a tree standing in the middle – we used to hang our towels on it. As children we used to roam for miles around the area – bare feet, no hats – no wonder we used to all be sunburnt. We had a wonderful time as youngsters. A few years later Sid Brooks and my Dad, Bert, would go fishing – Sid had a boat and Dad had us all sewing long nets. They used to take these nets out to sea and then all the people who were there by then used to come and pull the nets in. There were very unusual fish (almost tropical) as well as the usual. It was the same with the shells on the rocks – they were beautiful – some very large and many nautilus – although always broken. In later years many of these shells vanished.

So many stories, but a little later we met quite a number of the families and we would do things like bonfires on the beach at night – we all became good card players and Mrs. Brooks was a fabulous piano player who would always play for us. It always amuses me that as we started in our teen years quite a few of us would sit down on the beach during the day chatting, knitting and doing needlework – just imagine the girls of today doing this??



During the new year, note the barbed wire on the beach. Left to right, Sylvia Lawrence (McPhee), Lois Brooks (Porter), Norma Brooks (Larsson) and Joyce Lawrence (Wood).

We swam a lot and played tennis. We had done our little bit in weeding the tennis court area. A Paddy Waite, wife and son Ken lived in a little shelter beside the Court – she originally thought of making tea-rooms there and sometimes she had a little box of lollies which she would sell to us. The camping ground became of use and some families came there regularly – pre World War 2 all the people used to know each other and everyone was very friendly. As we all grew older there was quite a big gang of young people – we were all very friendly and there were many parties.

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MBRA news

Victorian zoning law changes

The Victorian Government has introduced changes to the zoning rules for general residential areas. This encompasses the area of Merricks Beach Village. The changes allow for buildings of 3 stories and 11m in height. However, the village is also covered by a MPSC Design and Development overlay which stipulates limits of 2 stories and 9m height. It is not clear how protective the DDO overlay is, given the zoning changes. The MBRA has written to the local state member, the Minister for Planning in Vic, his chief of staff and the acting Secretary of the Dept of Land, Water and Environment supporting the DDO and the need to protect our village environment and, more generally, the Peninsula against inappropriate development.

Maintenance of the traffic calming chicanes

A number of residents have expressed concern to the MBRA (and MPSC) regarding maintenance of the traffic calming chicanes. There is no doubt that those in Palmers Hill Road and at the top of Bayview Road, in particular, have at times been badly potholed. The MBRA has been in frequent discussions with the Shire about this. The installation of chicanes on our unmade roads is completely unique in Australia. As a result, there was no prior experience regarding an optimal maintenance schedule and the Shire is therefore developing this experience as it goes. The Shire has advised that it will monitor the state of the roads within the chicanes and adjust their maintenance accordingly, but residents are encouraged to lodge a service request (at <https://mtsrv.mornpen.vic.gov.au/crmwebinput/home/new>) whenever they feel that work is required, and these requests will also be monitored (as well as being acted upon).

Merricks Matters

Production and mailing of *Merricks Matters* is funded entirely by the MBRA, primarily from the subscriptions paid by our members. These costs – particularly postage – are now such that it is no longer reasonable for members to pay for paper copies of *Merricks Matters* to be sent to non-members. Accordingly, the MBRA committee has decided that, as from 2018, paper copies will no longer be sent to non-members. Of course, the MBRA welcomes all Merricks Beach residents and invites those who are not currently members to pay a subscription when the notice comes out for our 2017/18 financial year.

Peter Cash, President MBRA

We welcome any items of interest and photos for future editions of Merricks Matters. Please email your copy to Gai Wilson, wilsong@iinet.net.au



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