



The Croaker

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Celebrating Sandra Dempsey

What a splendid community Deans Marsh is with so many groups and events to be part of: The Festival, the Community Cottage, the Dog Trials, the Cricket and Tennis clubs, Table Tennis, Tai Chi, Yoga, the Annual Fun Run, Red Cross, all the local Arts and Crafts activities, Book Clubs, the Singing and Music groups, this Croaker newsletter, the Film Group, Youth Group, the School Parents' committee, Landcare, the CFA... Virtually all of them relying on local volunteers giving their time, skills and energy to help this town buzz. For a community of just a few hundred people - Amazing!

And there's *the Hall Committee*. The full name is a mouthful, *The Community Hall and Memorial Reserve Committee of Management*, but that pretty much describes what it does. The Hall and Reserve are Council facilities, the Hall Committee are the local volunteers who help keep it all in good shape and drive the improvements.

For well over a hundred years Deans Marsh locals have worked and lobbied to create better facilities in the district, places to play together, dance together, make music together, share ideas and recipes, hopes and dreams, fears and concerns. A place to *BE* a community. This needed constant hustling and fund-raising to build the great facilities we have today.

One very modest CHAMPION of Deans Marsh and our Hall Committee is Sandra Dempsey. Sandra joined the committee some time last century following the example of her parents, grandparents and the generations of locals who helped create this place we all enjoy: The sports ground, tennis courts, the club rooms, the BBQ and Pizza Oven, the kids playground and skate park, child-care facilities, the beautiful park environment, the art works, the picnic areas, and the Hall itself as a home for so many local activities. At fundraisers over the decades Sandra would have barbequ'd tens of thousands of sausages and hamburgers to help pay for all this.



Why focus on Sandra? And why now? Because after decades and decades of service to this town, Sandra has finally retired from the Hall Committee. So thank you Sandra, for all that work, all that lobbying, all those sausage sizzles, managing all those bookings, chairing all those meetings, and building that remarkable pictorial archive of life in Deans Marsh. You have been a treasure to this town, a jewel among the hundreds of volunteers who kept the show on the road and made our lives here such a pleasure. We can never replace you...

If there are folk out there with a little time to spare there's plenty more to do to keep our town buzzing. So why not join in the celebration of Deans Marsh? You won't be wasting your time.



East Otway Landcare Group - Fauna Survey Report

From the 6th - 10th March the East Otway Landcare Group had a fauna survey conducted by Trevor Pescott of the Geelong Field Naturalist Club. The Wetlands has been a project of the Group for the past 30 years, recovering it from a blackberry-infested swamp with very few surviving trees to a wonderful biodiverse sanctuary for a wide range of birds and other fauna.

The last survey conducted was in 2012, the animals found were; black rat, fox, swamp wallaby and feral cat. This year's fauna survey used Elliot trapping, harp nets for bats, surveillance cameras and general observations. Trevor, Jill Stewart, some Field Nat enthusiasts and some keen young land carers went out each morning to check on the traps that had been set the day before.



Antechinus's are small ground dwelling carnivorous marsupials that feed on invertebrates but will sometimes eat small lizards and berries. They live on the ground in fallen timber and hollows, their main predators are foxes and feral cats.

Bush rats are native and have rounded ears with quite a short tail, they are nocturnal and feed on fungi, grasses fruits and insects. They live in burrows. Both these animals are great finds as they show that the wetlands is providing good habitat for survival. They are also wonderful for turning over of the soil and nutrients.

The surveillance cameras caught two swamp wallabys, one with a joey in its pouch, a feral cat, ringtail possum and two house mice. On the Saturday day night Jill did a night walk and observed a boobook owl, two swamp wallabys, two ringtail possums, a brushtail possum and unfortunately a fox. The wetlands are alive at night and well worth a night walk if you are keen! Other fauna seen during collecting traps were; garden skinks and southern brown tree frogs.

These species found are a wonderful testament to the dedicated people in our Landcare Group, who have spent many hours planting weeding and maintaining the area over the years, congratulations to all those who have been involved. Also a huge thank you to the Geelong Field Naturalists and in particular Trevor Pescott for his time and expertise.

Yes we are going to set some traps for the feral cat! If you live in the area or anywhere for that matter, if you have a cat PLEASE ensure you have it locked up at night. It is estimated cats kill 5-30 animals every day. We want to keep our little antechinus!

We will be doing another survey in spring, if you are keen to be involved please contact Jill Stewart .

Regional Roads Victoria Workshops on Road Safety Issues in and around Deans Marsh

The attendees at the workshops came well prepared with suggestions, and the discussions were animated and productive. It should be noted that the Surf Coast Shire felt it was not necessary to send a representative. However Colac Otway Shire sent someone to observe.

Three distinct categories were introduced, although some concerns in each category overlapped. Attendees were asked to nominate the 3 most important issues in each category, which I have outlined below.

RRV will be publishing a full report on the two workshops, including a timetable for their recommendations to government for funding.

1. Pedestrians

Background: Approximately 50 subdivisions have been approved by the Shire (along Birregurra-Deans Marsh Rd, and the 2 adjoining streets) in the last 10 years. No Shire infrastructure built to accommodate this development. Around half now have dwellings, resulting in over 100 new residents.

Attendees priority concerns: Pedestrian safety issues, walking to and from schools, including pram walkers, junior bike riders, dog walkers and disabled. Increased vehicle traffic and speeds.



Suggested Solutions: Extend 60kph limit and construct a shoulder along this stretch of road. Extend township signs. Lobby aggressively for Shire funding to build an all-weather pathway.

2. Intersection of Deans Marsh-Lorne Rd and Birregurra-Deans Marsh Rd

Background: Massive traffic increase through this intersection has not been addressed.

Attendees priority concerns: Left hand slipway into Birregurra-Deans Marsh. Illegal angle parking outside store obscures drivers' vision from the left. School Bus Stop location.

Suggested solutions: LH turn to be adequately sign posted so that all vehicles (especially trucks) slow right down before turning. Existing parallel parking signs to be enlarged and additional sign installed at RH of parking area. Parking area clearly marked on roadway. Immediate discussions to take place with responsible authorities to re-locate school Bus Stop.

3. Bicycles

Background: Since promotion by Amy Gran Fondo and Cadel Evans of cycling events, recreational cycling has increased tenfold.

Attendees Priority Concerns: Inadequate signs warning road users of cyclists regularly sharing the road. Very few opportunities to pass cyclists. Bicycle activated warning lights seem to have increased dangers to cyclists and other road users, rather than reduced them.

Suggested solutions: Replace bicycle active warning lights with multiple static warning signs in both directions. Construct well signposted dedicated cyclist turnouts. Reduce speed from Benwerrin to Lorne.

In conclusion it is very pleasing to note that Regional Roads Victoria are now seriously engaging with community! Now it's time to keep them actively working on our common issues that have been identified and get solutions sorted promptly. Watch this space for progress reports.

*Juliet Beatty
Deans Marsh*

Weed Busting! A Three-Pronged Attack

Why? Enhancing and protecting biodiversity values in the Otway Plains

Three Otway hinterland Landcare Networks have joined forces to tackle specific weeds identified as threats to biodiversity in the Otway Plains.

The Upper Barwon Landcare Network, Central Otway Landcare Network and Surf Coast and Inland Plains Network have received funding through the Victorian Government's Biodiversity Response Planning project and are offering financial incentives to assist landholders with on farm weed control. This is a coordinated and targeted landscape scale approach to address the same weeds at the same time with support from your local Landcare network.

The key focus is increasing productivity on-farms and enhancing biodiversity in the Otway hinterland. The project is specifically targeting Gorse, Blackberry, Broome Sp., Sweet pittosporum and Spanish heath.

Murray Johns from Surf Coast Inland Plain Network commented: "Sometimes these weeds can get ahead of us. It's joint projects like this that help landholders get back on track." Joint landholder projects will be looked at favourably. As will a commitment to ongoing weed control. In addition to incentives, advice on best practice for specific weed species will be offered.

"Working on these weeds at the same time as our neighbours can help lower rates of reinfestation while lowering treatment costs" says Andrea Montgomery from Upper Barwon Landcare Network.

Expressions of interest are being sort until **17th May 2019**. You can request an EOI form by emailing info@coln.org.au or arrange a postage pack by calling: (03) 52 32 9140

Andrew Gray from Central Otway Landcare Network shares: "We are working together to control specific weeds which harbor pests, out compete pasture and native vegetation, damage fences and have the potential to spread throughout the Otways in various ways."

This project was funded with the support of the Victorian Government

POLWARTH ATHLETICS 2019: Congratulations to all of our students for winning the 2019 Polwarth Athletics. This competition was again held at Alvie Consolidated School, with events including high jump, triple jump, long jump, discus, shotput, hurdles and various running events against our neighbouring schools. This is the second year running that we have brought home the perpetual shield due to our resilience, positive attitude and strong training regimes by teachers and parents.

As well as winning the overall points competition, we also had 8 year level champions this year: Layla C, Paddy G, Micah S, Taya F, Jessica F, Camryn S, Zach F and Alice S. Thank you to all our school families for their support on the day.

We now have 12 student representing us in the District Level of Competition in Colac: Blake A - 800m, 100m. Layla C - 800m, Long Jump. Lucas H - 80m hurdles. Rhys T - Discus. Len H - Shot Put. Jack M - 800m. Camryn S - 800m, Shot Put, Long Jump, Triple Jump. Lachie C - Discus. Raphael C - Shot Put. Luca D - Long Jump. Jemma M - 800m, 100m, 80m hurdles, Long Jump. Jack A - 80m hurdles.



Congratulations also to Jack M (freestyle and breaststroke) and Sophie M (backstroke and breaststroke) for their recent performances at the Regional Swimming Competition in Horsham. A fine achievement to make it to this level of competition. **Go Deans Marsh!**

April Events on the School Calendar:

Monday 22nd April - Students return from school holidays.

Tuesday 23rd April - **The Resilience Project - Community Session**, in Winchelsea. All welcome!

Wednesday 24th April - **The Resilience Project - Student Session**, in Winchelsea.

Monday 29th April - **Cyber Safety Student Session "Think U Know"** by Surf Coast Youth Resource Officer.

Tuesday 30th April - **Cyber Safety Community Session "Digital Tattoo"** by Barwon Adolescent Task Force. All welcome!

Please contact the school office for more information on any of these April events. Ph. 52 363 264

**DIGITAL TATTOO
PARENT/CARER INFORMATION SESSION 2019**

Date: Tuesday 30th April

Time: 6.30pm - 8.00pm

Venue: Deans Marsh Primary School - 30 Lorne Road, Deans Marsh

A light supper will be provided and child minding is available to families who book a place. Please RSVP to the school office. Phone 52 36 3264

Topics Include:

Screen time vs green time, YouTube to social media, gaming to SnapChat. We will talk about looking out for your mates, the importance of strong role modelling, conversation starters for home, monitoring gaming habits, gambling and all things online. This is a chance for parents and carers to come together and look at how Young People use their Digital Space and explore opportunities to support them whilst they navigate and build their skills online. The session runs for 90 minutes, is interactive and aims to build knowledge and skills for families.



WHAT'S ON: APRIL/MAY 2019

Deans Marsh Hall - Pop-up Cafe

Gosling Creek Winery - Connor Knight, Ethiene McLaughlin & Maggie Matthews

Gosling Creek Winery - Moonshine Blues

Deans Marsh Primary School - Digital Tattoo, Parent/Carer Info Session

Gosling Creek Winery - Mountain Grey

Gosling Creek Winery - Tanya Stewart, Jennifer Roache and Friends

Gosling Creek Winery - The Angus Duo

Gosling Creek Winery - Victoriana Gaye

Every Friday night, from 6pm

Sunday 14th April, 1pm

Easter Sunday 21st April, 1pm

Tuesday 30th April, 6.30pm - 8pm

Sunday afternoon, 5th May

Mothers Day, Sunday 12th May

Sunday afternoon, 19th May

Sunday afternoon, 26th May