

Mornington Peninsula Schools Environment Week Annual Report 2011



**Connecting our children to their environment and
creating a sustainable future**

Thank you to the following organisations for their generous support and sponsorship of Environment Week 2011



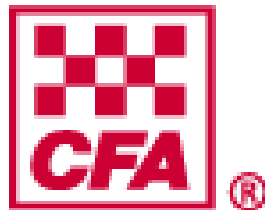
The Gippsland Basin Joint Venture



Rye & District and Dromana
Community Bank® branches



Grand Hotel Mornington



**MORNINGTON PENINSULA
ALPACA BREEDERS**



Penboc

BOCA Mornington Peninsula Branch



Mornington Peninsula Youth Enterprises

Oasis Horticulture

Merricks Native Nursery

S-P Tubes Pty Ltd

Diggers Club

Romantic Plants

Mornington Garden Supplies

Hermitage Nursery

Country Road Nursery

President's Report

Once again, another outstanding event was conducted for the Mornington Peninsula School's Environment Week (MPSEW) in 2011. The event seems to be going from strength to strength and augers well for our vision of, *'Connecting our children to their environment and creating a sustainable future'*. This is particularly pertinent in the current climate where 'environmental issues' dominate the political landscape. Without a doubt, the enhanced environmental awareness in our community is partly due to the important role schools have played in preparing our children for a responsible adult life that includes consideration and care for the environment. Our role continues to be one of supporting schools in their endeavours to develop greater understanding of the environment and the issues relating to it. This undertaking has been our focus since the first Environment Week in 1983 and will continue drive our purpose into the future.

MPSEW was, once again, held at the Briars Historical Park from Monday 28th May to Friday 1st April. Whilst to the number of students participating was reduced from last year's event: 2600 this year compared to 3250 in 2010, this is not an unusual fluctuation from year to year as some schools attend biennially. Almost the same number of schools participated: 32 compared to 35 in the previous year. The Briars program itself had 1429 students enrolled compared to the 1526 last year. Students participated in a broad range of activities in the four programs offered: Woodlands, Wetlands, Sustainability and our new program, Eco Living. This has been an excellent expansion of our program and the feedback from schools confirms that all four programs were highly regarded. Congratulations to the Briars team for their excellent work with these programs – Gerard, Jarrad and Josh – and, in particular Steve York for his coordination of the program. Also thanks to Natalie Peric and David Keystone for the Eco Living program. The sum of these programs gives children a greater understanding of their local environment and ways to live a more environmentally sustainable lifestyle – precisely the purpose of our event.

The Expo Paddock program offered many opportunities for children to 'connect' with a range of mainly hands-on activities. The activities included Horticulture; Environmental Craft and much more. Thanks to the many organisations that made this aspect of the program such a great success, including the students from Westernport Secondary College who helped out in many of the activities. The Expo paddock also received great accolades and is a great favourite of the children: *"Children did the voting for their favourite activities- Woolworths, Animal farm, Bunnings."* (An excerpt from our feedback notes)

Our sponsors are to be congratulated for their support of this event. Some have a long involvement with 'Environment Week' and their continued support is greatly appreciated. A full list of sponsors is tabled in this annual report. I thank all supporters of the program for their contributions in the form of direct funding, personnel and materials.

Thanks to all who contributed to making the week such a great success. In particular, I would like to recognise the outstanding contribution of Heather Tytler, Bruce Rayment, Bob Brady and John Pearson. Finally, I would like to thank the MPSEW Committee for their terrific work in bringing to fruition the stated vision and giving the children of the Mornington Peninsula the opportunity to learn more about their local environment and culture. Whilst the committee involves many people from various organisations, it's important to recognise the work of a number of key members. As Executive Officer, Heather Tytler continues to be a driving force in her coordinating role for the program. Her organisational and communication skills have been crucial to the on-going development and implementation of MPSEW in 2011. John Pearson, as treasurer, has ensured all financial matters were dealt with expeditiously and the committee was in a sound financial position. We continue to be in a relatively healthy financial position, due to the excellent work of Heather, John and other members of the committee. We thank the 30 schools

that took out affiliation with the MPSEW – some of these schools, particularly the secondary colleges, have little to do with this event but recognise its importance to the children of the Mornington Peninsula.

Our direct connection to schools continues to be a work in progress and I thank Natalie Peric for her role in linking our group to the 'sustainability teams' established in schools.

Further efforts need to be made to ensure local schools are 'connected' to the work of the MPSEW Committee.

I thank all the presenters and helpers who ensured the event was such a success. I look forward to another fabulous 'environment week' in 2012.

Silvio Vitale

Treasurer's Report

I am pleased to report a sound financial position this year, essentially due to our Executive Officer's efforts in pursuing sponsorship and the willingness of our Network schools to contribute an affiliation fee. Meeting costs were reduced and school fees kept as low as possible.

Entertainment at lunchtime now focuses on tapping into local school talent and voluntary organizations which have also reduced expenses.

Thanks to all our generous sponsors who have made it possible to stage the 2011 event:

PENBOC, The Grand Hotel, Bluescope Steel, Mornington Peninsula Shire, Esso BHP and Bendigo Bank all contributed cash donations whilst Bunnings, BIS and Nepean Waste donated goods and/or services.

Many presenters this year also provided services free of charge - a fantastic commitment.

Mornington Shire's Sustainability group reduced our exposure by covering the full costs of two programs (Envirocom & CERES - \$7000).

Note that the Shire will be reimbursing the cost of the CERES invoice (\$3910) paid in error by our organization.

So, despite the many savings made and the extraordinary efforts of sponsors and volunteers, keeping Environment Week financially viable presents an ongoing challenge, not to mention the recruitment of active committee members.

Byron Groves has once again audited the books on an honorary basis - thank you, Byron.

John Pearson

Expo Paddock Report

The Expo Paddock provided a broad range of activities that engaged, informed and inspired students and promoted active dialogue about sustainable practices. There were also many opportunities for students and teachers to engage with organizations from the local community.

There were many varied activities and displays on offer in the Expo Paddock this year. Many of our popular activities returned and some new ones were added. Andrew Wegener Wildlife was very well received with children having the opportunity to learn more about our native animals and handle some of the reptiles Andrew brought along. Children were also keen to learn more about the animals from the Rain Hayne and Shine farm, Mornington Peninsula Alpacas and Deep Blue Sea Marine.

Children were engaged in propagating and potting activities in the horticulture tent, gumnut art in the Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne marquee and art activities using recycled materials in the Bunnings tent. Bunnings bags were also keenly sort after to carry all the treasures the students collected.

Westernport Bluescope Steel gave children an insight into the water cycle and saving water as did the South East Water quiz. The EPA was welcomed back this year with puzzles for the children to do about waste management. Parks Victoria, WHOMP wildlife rescue, CFA and Fishcare provided a better

understanding of these organizations, how they help the environment and what each individual can do to make a difference.

Children also enjoyed the Woolworths tent where they were given the opportunity to try many types of fruit and encouraged to eat fruit as part of a healthy diet.

Friends of the Hooded Plover was a new activity this year. The activities provided by this group in conjunction with Birds Australia were a big hit. We also welcomed Busy Bees Honey who showed their bee keeping skills and the honey making process.

Mayor Graham Pittock officially opened the week at lunchtime on the Monday and then presented the Mayoral Awards to local schools for their environmental projects. Lunchtime entertainment was then provided by Zucchini Band. On the other days Peninsula School Stage Band, Flinders College Thump Band and Frankston Police Band 3199 performed over the lunch break and had the children up dancing and tapping their feet.

Evaluation by teachers and students indicated that they had an enjoyable day and were satisfied with all activities. The only issue seemed to be that they would have liked to stay longer to get to all activities. Thanks to all the organizations, presenters and volunteers who helped to make the week a success. A special thank you to the support received from the secondary schools – Western Port, Rosebud, Dromana and Mt Eliza. Each day we had about 40 students to assist with activities and setting up.

Heather Tytler

Briars Report

The three Briars programs of Wetlands, Woodlands and Sustainability had some minor changes this year and all worked well. Once again we appreciated the help from Chisholm TAFE Rosebud Students and the Clean Ocean Foundation Green Jobs - the extra help always makes things go more smoothly.

The Woodland program saw a new presentation of indigenous culture by Uncle Lionel with the help of Loyola Zagorska. Special thanks go to both presenters for their efforts and we would like to see them return for future E-weeks.

Gidja Walker's walks were very dynamic this year with groups able to watch cup moth caterpillars form themselves into cocoons.

For the first time the Wetland program was overseen by the Peninsula Branch of the Bird Observers Club. Members talked about birds and involved students in art activities which fitted in well with a nice wet summer, wetlands full to brimming and good numbers of waterbirds. Melbourne Water and Balcombe Estuary Research Group volunteers undertook the Waterwatch program with a few bugs that were uncommon during drought turning up this year.

The Sustainability program was a bit separated this year with the planting site being at the wetland entrance but students managed to do a wonderful job with the walk to the wetland now looking fantastic. The CERES energy trailer and waste activities were also well received.

A special mention must go to Gary Fox who although retired had passed on enough experience to staff and volunteers and ensured that others would take up the reigns when he left. So I can happily say he set us up well, with everything running smoothly.

Eco Living Program

The Eco Living Program was a new addition to Schools Environment Week this year. This program was run at the Eco Living Display Centre and comprised of the Kitchen Gardens; Let's Get Composting; and Carbon Footprints Activities. A number of different facilitators were involved in running each of the activities throughout the week. This worked out well and enabled us to have a greater level of volunteer involvement and diversity in the presentations being delivered.

Kitchen Garden: This session introduced students to growing your own food in your home or school garden, including heritage varieties. Students got their hands dirty planting out the raised garden beds at the eco centre and also planted their own seed or seedling to take home. This activity was facilitated by Chisholm TAFE students, Cameron from SEEDS Bushland Restoration and Mornington Community Garden members.

Composting: Students learnt all about how worm farms and compost systems work and how to maintain them. This activity was facilitated by Chisholm TAFE students and Mornington Community Gardens members. David Keystone facilitated activities on two days and provided microscopes for students to get a close look at the diverse critters found in the worm farm.

Carbon Footprints: Students learnt all about energy use, production and alternative energy sources. Based on their own daily activities students identified their carbon footprint and learnt about ways to be more sustainable. Nicci from the Shire and Eco Living Centre volunteers facilitated this activity.

There was some confusion in regards to the buses coming back after the session before lunch. This was overcome by teachers and students happy to walk straight down for lunch after the morning session, if their bus did not arrive.

Overall we received positive feedback from teachers about the program and the three activities were well received.

Thank you to everyone who was involved in the program. All of the facilitators brought much enthusiasm and knowledge to the sessions and created valuable on-hands learning experiences for students. We hope to have them involved again next year.

Natalie Peric

Facilities Report

Probably our best weather – ever- contributed to a comparatively smooth operational week. The well cut (Thank you Kevin, again) luxuriant paddock grass proved an excellent walking surface for the duration – no mud, no dust!!

In the absence of Steve York, Jarrodand Gerard ... proved more than capable replacements and, together with Briars volunteer staff frequently anticipated our requirements, e.g. Modifying the 'executive' toilets provided by BIS with raised flooring and ensuring that appropriate power leads and barriers were installed. Overall, the co-operation between the staff and our volunteers was exemplary.

Coulsons responded to the request for door coverings in their customary efficient manner and this year saw marquees erected efficiently and with appropriate trestles and chairs.

Heather Tytler's initiative to secure the Community Caravan as Environment Week HQ was most worthwhile and, if inclement weather had occurred, would have been invaluable!

The outdoor seating for lunchtimes was refurbished by Briars Staff and the new arrangement for barbecue location and the catering tents worked well.

The Shire Sound Shell proved to be a good facility despite some initial communication problems regarding the setting up of the stage. Audio Spectrum PA Hire was engaged for the first time and, being a local supplier, perhaps should have first option next year.

Rubbish bins, provided gratis by Nepean Waste, were well utilised and the grounds were generally litter free at the end of each day. Congratulations to teachers, parents and students for 'doing the right thing'. Paul Josephson (Coffee cart) provided an excellent service to the many adults requiring their caffeine fix to get through the day.

The electricity and water infrastructure installed in 2007 continues to make supply of these essentials a simple matter for presenters who require them.

The storage of items in the Container was rationalised and access should be easier in subsequent years. Thanks to Jenny Selby and Tyabb PS for facilitating the tagging of power leads.

John Pearson

Free Trees

This year's free trees issue started in a somewhat confused state with uncertainty on funding and administration.

Once the number of plants was reduced to match the new funding formula and we decided to go ahead and run it the same way as the last 15 years, we had a very successful Free Tree Issue.

The success was helped by having two new distribution centres:

- Western Port – Rae's Mitre 10 in Hastings

The central location proved very popular with residents with over 500 attending on the first day.

Almost all the plants were taken and the mitre 10 store is very keen to continue as the distribution centre.

- Southern Peninsula – Konnections

They moved distribution to Rosebud Parade near the shops and cinemas and had their busiest week ever. They too are keen to keep on distributing the free plants to residents in the area.

The third centre Youth Enterprises Nursery in Mornington also had a very busy week with 90% clearance rate. Youth Enterprises are very keen to continue as grower of plants for the Free Trees issue

Bob Brady (Coordinator)

Horticulture

This was a very successful program with children taking part in 6 propagation activities. Special thanks to the following for providing all the materials for these activities:

Oasis Horticulture, Amgrow, Bunnings, Merricks Nursery, Country Road Nursery, S-P Tubes, Romantic Plants, Diggers Seeds, Mornington Youth Enterprises and Mornington Garden Supplies

Thanks also to the many volunteers from the community, Bunnings and secondary college students for their able assistance.

Bob Brady

2010-2011 Committee

President: Silvio Vitale
Executive Officer/Secretary: Heather Tytler
Briars Rep: Steve Yorke
Jenny Selby
Megan Luxmoore
Bruce Rayment
Laura Quigley

Vice President: Claire Nagengast
Treasurer: John Pearson
Shire Rep: Garrique Pergl
David Keystone
Terry Langley
Natalie Peric

Participating Schools

Primary Schools

Balnarring	Frankston East	Mt Martha	Sorrento
Benton	Hastings	Osborne	Tootgarook
Bittern	Karingal Heights	Red Hill	Tyabb
Boneo	Kunyang	Somers	Tyabb Railway
Crib Point	Moorooduc	Somerville Rise	
Dromana	Mt Eliza		

Pre Schools

Beleura Hill	Mt Eliza	Mornington Park	Sorrento
Cricklewood			

Independent & Catholic

Woodleigh	Home School Group
-----------	-------------------

Special Development Schools

Mornington	Naranga	Nepean
------------	---------	--------

Affiliated Schools

Baxter PS	Benton Junior College	Bittern PS	Boneo PS
Dromana PS	Dromana SC	Eastbourne PS	Elizabeth Murdoch SC
Karingal Heights PS	Kunyang PS	Langwarrin PS	McClelland SC
Moorooduc PS	Mornington PS	Mornington SDS	Mornington SC
Mornington Park PS	Mt Eliza SC	Mt Erin SC	Mt Martha PS
Pearcedale PS	Peninsula SDS	Red Hill CS	Rye PS
Somers Camp	Somerville Rise	Tyabb PS	Tyabb Railway PS
Western Port SC			

Catering Staff:

Carol Rayment	Ann Daunton	Lorraine Hutsby
---------------	-------------	-----------------

Facilities:

John Pearson	Heather Tytler	Jarrod Ruch	Gerard Cook
--------------	----------------	-------------	-------------

Sponsorship Board: <http://www.century21.com.au/>



Volunteers

**Thanks to all the volunteers from the following organisations who helped
to make this year so successful**

Chisholm Institute Rosebud Students

Dromana Secondary College Students

Mount Eliza Secondary College Students

Western Port Secondary College Students

Rosebud Secondary College Students

Birds Australia

Mornington Community Gardens

Bunnings Mornington

Cranbourne Botanical Gardens

Woolworths

Bluescope Westernport

PENBOC (Peninsula Bird Observers)

Environment Protection Authority

CFA Mt Martha

The Peninsula School Stage Band

Zucchini Band

Briars Staff & Volunteers

Shire Nursery & Trainees

Community Helpers in Horticulture Tent

SPIFFA (Gidja Walker)

Balcombe Estuary Group (BERG):

Friends of the Hooded Plover

Eco House

Busy Bees Honey

Mornington Peninsula Alpaca Breeders:

Whomp

South East Water

Parks Victoria

SEEDS

Frankston Police Band 3199

Flinders College Carrum Downs Thump Band