

Swan Bay Environment Association Inc.



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NEWSLETTER NO. 69– May 2015

Newsletter No 69 is the first edition of our newsletter since our very successful AGM in March, and thus most of this newsletter is devoted to a report of that meeting. This should be of particular interest to members who were unable to attend.

President's Report (*Roel Wasterval*)

Community Environment Alliance

SBEA is now a member of this alliance and has registered its interest in the purchase of solar panels for the nursery. Progress for obtaining quotations has been slowed down due to a capacity check of transformers by Powercor. Currently, 52 residents are interested. Feed-in rate to be set at 6.2 cents /kwh.

Constitutional changes

Several committee meetings have been held to decide on changes to the Constitution. These changes were put to the meeting: Life Membership - an additional membership category recognising valuable and outstanding service to SBEA. Patrons - an additional membership category providing for members to sign up for 20 years membership of SBEA. Nursery - changes to the Constitution covering the role of the Queenscliffe Community Indigenous Plant Nursery within SBEA. Copies of the working structure of the Nursery were available at the AGM and can be provided on request to the SBEA committee.

Queenscliff Public Cemetery

A letter of support has been sent to the new manager of the Lonsdale cemetery. Through the Nursery, we are providing indigenous plants for the Cemetery and collecting seed for the preservation of our special local flora.

Victorian Indigenous Flora and Fauna Association: SBEA has become a member of the Flora & Fauna Association following last year's talk by Brian Bainbridge

Friends of Edwards Point: Contact was made with Friends of Edwards Point with the aim of working together to protect Swan Bay

Gardens for Wildlife: (Bob Fuller)

At the AGM, the Gardens for Wildlife scheme which SBEA is proposing was introduced. There was a brief discussion Since the AGM, another meeting with Council has occurred and strong support was given to the initiative by Phil Josopovic, the General Manager of Planning and Infrastructure.

Progress report on The Point (Moremac) (Report by Greg Perry) - see later in the newsletter.

Geelong Environment Council: SBEA supported the proposal of GEC to protect the Wetlands on the Bellarine

Insurance: Applications for grants highlighted the need for SBEA and

QCIPN to have public liability insurance cover. After detailed comparison of policies it was decided to follow the cover taken out by Bellarine Catchment Network, join the umbrella organisation Farm Tree and Landcare Association, and have insurance within their policies.

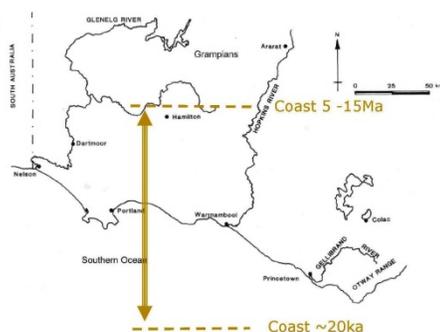
AGM Guest Speaker

The speaker at the 2015 AGM was Dr John Sherwood from Deakin University. The title of his talk was “Sea Level and Climate Change”. Below is a brief summary of his address to the meeting.

Dr Sherwood began by speaking of Australia as a ‘raft’. He showed how interesting the topography of our coastline was if the surrounding oceans were not there. Maps of Gondwana and the Indo-Australian plates were contrasted with the Australia and surrounding Southern Ocean of today.

Dr Sherwood then showed us the location of the coastlines of today and 5-10 million years ago. Hamilton was on the coastline in the latter era.

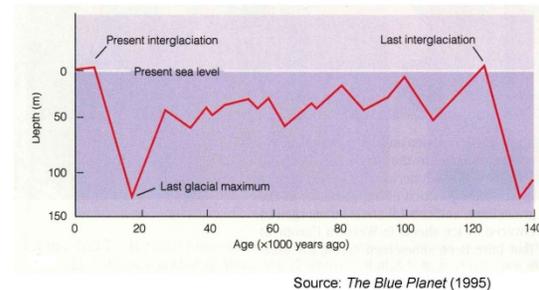
2. Past Coasts and Climate Change



The marked variations in sea level between today and intervals over the last 140 thousand years was particularly striking. Images of the cliffs along the southern coastline reveal these past sea levels. Fossil emu footprints are among

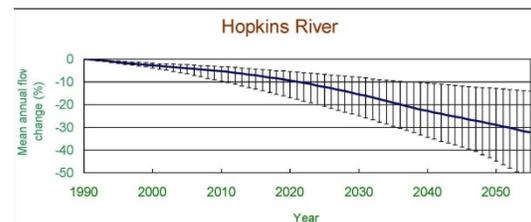
the ‘secrets’. These images of changing sea levels and coastlines reminded us that what appears to us as such relatively fixed and unchanging scenery is in fact far from reality when ‘recent’ history is considered.

Sea level change in the last 140ka



Our present coasts are only 6000 years old. This is a very short time frame when compared to the age of our planet. In fact, Warrnambool’s Hopkins River Estuary is in fact a drowned river valley. The predicted changes to the Hopkins river as a result of climate change were also shown – perhaps 30% less flow by 2050.

Climate change is predicted to reduce available water (Jones and Durack 2005)



Other predicted impacts include: increased severity and intensity of storm events, increased evaporation rates, drier soils, more frequent and longer droughts and higher bushfire risks. Estuaries like the Hopkins are vulnerable to hypersalinity and alga blooms. Anyone wishing to receive a copy of Dr Sherwood’s lecture should contact SBEA.

Swan Bay Monitoring (*Greg Parry*)

The development of stages 4-14 of 'The Point' at Point Lonsdale (400+ houses) cannot proceed until further monitoring and modelling of impacts of nutrients on Swan Bay are completed. Some 13 months of monitoring was completed in 2010, but this was inadequate for the quite sophisticated modelling required to assess the effects of nutrients on Swan Bay. For example, the initial monitoring did not measure flows into Lakers Cutting (or elsewhere) making the large changes observed in salinity in Lakers Cutting uninterpretable. In March 2013 Stocklands negotiated the following 4 stage approach with the (Federal) Department of Environment (DoE). Stocklands would:

- develop a monitoring plan, approved by the Department
- monitoring would be undertaken and results forwarded to the DoE
- a modelling plan would be developed by Stocklands and approved by DoE
- modelling results would be approved by DoE.

There was also a requirement in the original Minister's approval of the project (August 2009) for peer review of the modelling, and for "baseline data and modelling results must be made publicly available on a monthly basis". In the last two years the project was purchased by Moremac and further monitoring and modelling have been proceeding. Unfortunately Moremac are unwilling to share any information from their monitoring or modelling until all this work is complete. This seems at odds with the original Minister's requirements that "baseline data...must be publicly available on a monthly basis". Despite requests Moremac have been unwilling to provide information on their

monitoring. Requests for information on where monitoring samples are being taken, and parameters being measured have been met with blunt refusal.

We recognise that the modelling task set by the Minister is difficult, but the secrecy that surrounds the current monitoring does nothing to reassure the SBEA or the wider community. SBEA has now contacted the Federal Department of Environment to seek information on results of current monitoring.

Nursery Report (*Jill Warneke*)

The Nursery continues to do well. So far this year around 6000 plants have been purchased, donated or put aside to fill orders which have come in. Our workers have been kept busy transferring over 1000 of the plants ordered by the Cemetery into 5" pots to encourage their growth - the Cemetery paid for the potting mix for this job. Their total order is for 1650 plants. A visit to the Cemetery will show they have been laying out the paths in the Moonah Woodland - part of their overall development design for the area. On 10th April, 19 of our volunteers visited Steve and Elizabeth Lee's property on Burnt Point. Many of the plants on their property were grown at our Nursery. Seven Nursery volunteers (and Roel Wasterval) have booked for the Council's volunteers evening on Thursday 14th May.

Life Member

At the AGM, recognition for all Jill Warneke's hard and inspiring work at the Nursery was recognised with a Life Membership of SBEA. Jill is the first recipient of this membership category.

Subscriptions

Annual subscriptions can still be renewed after the AGM. We appreciate your past support as it is important that we continue to have a strong membership base. Please complete and send the attached form and cheque or cash. The AGM approved the addition of a 20 year membership. You may wish to consider long term membership – 20 years at the cost of 16 years subscription.

Another method of payment is direct bank transfer. Please transfer the funds and send the attached Membership Form, circling DBT. The details are:

BSB: 633000
Account Number: 136521358
Account Name: SWAN BAY ENVIRONMENT ASS INC
Your reference: enter your name and postcode

Please do not send cash by mail, ring Greg Parry 0400455009 or Rob Hurley (52581564) to arrange payment in person in Queenscliff.

Yours Sincerely,
Greg Parry
Treasurer

.....Cut Here.....

**Swan Bay Environment Association Inc.
PO Box 143, Queenscliff, 3225**

I/We enclose cheque/cash/DBT for the current membership fee

\$10.00 (full) 20 year \$160.00
\$15.00 (family)
\$5.00 (concession) 20 year \$80.00

Total \$ _____

Name/s		
Address	Street:	
	Town:	Postcode:
Email		