



# The Kiln

Published by the Friends of Kurth Kiln  
Caring for our Cultural Heritage and its Environment



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## President's Report

Well it is that time of year again and I would like to thank friends of Kurth Kiln and Parks Gembrook office for all the wishes on my speedy recovery.

The Friends of Kurth Kiln received nomination for the Parks Victoria Kookaburra Award. In a Presentation Ceremony at Newtown (Geelong) attended by Glen, Jan, Alfred, Ursula and Ralph (from the Gembrook Office) the Friends of Kurth Kiln finished runners-up in the Kookaburra Community Partnership section and accepted the Certificates and the Trophy, so well done to all the in friends group.

Over the last couple of months I have been looking at upgrading the Kurth Kiln PV Solar Panels and Storage Batteries to a 3000W system. My proposed new system will consist of 9 x 240W Bosch Solar Panels, a 3000W Selectronic Inverter/Charger and an Exide 24Volt DC Battery Bank, with 830Ampere hour storage capacity. The up-grade project should include rewiring of the existing 12Volt DC System of the Caretakers Hut.

The Friends of Kurth Kiln's application to the Cardinia Heritage Grant program 2010-11 for funding Interpretation Boards on the track was successful.

Of the water race, despite extensive search with my metal detector, no sign could be found of the 300 metre iron pipe Kurth used in 1942 to divert the water from the channel to the Charcoal Kiln.

The Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) is shifting 250 koalas from their home on French Island to Gembrook's Kurth Kiln.

Also a big welcome to the Sherbrooke Community Radio Club (VK3KID). The club was established between amateur radio operators and Sherbrooke Community School in 2007 to foster student and parent participation and advancement of the hobby within the community. We have had to move out of the school in 2011 to its new home at Gembrook's Kurth Kiln.

I presented Ralph with a signed copy of the **Amongst Friends** booklet, thanking him for his help over the years.

Well that's it for now, so to the friends group and Parks Gembrook for the year's work a big Thank You. Looking forward to next year. So Merry Christmas and Happy new year to all.

Gary Pendlebury.  
President.



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## Coming Events

The Friends of Kurth Kiln meet regularly on the second Saturday of the month for a meeting and maintenance Working Bee at Kurth Kiln, plus other days as required. Friends and Visitors are welcome.

January	14	Meeting & Working Bee	February	11	Meeting & Working Bee	March	10	Meeting & Working Bee
April	14	Meeting & Working Bee	May	12	Meeting & Working Bee	June	9	Meeting & Working Bee
	15	Kurth Kiln Festival						

## New Memberships

A warm welcome to John Bolitho and Orgee William who joined the group in 2011.

## Ranger's Report

Hi everyone, well it's Christmas upon us again. I am sure I say that every year. We have just finished our Friends Group end of year Xmas catch up. It was great to see everyone together and enjoying the Park we all love working in so much. Thank you again to all those people who helped supply food and assistance on the day.

We have had a busy 2011 at the Gembrook office and are looking forward to 2012. Our summer preparations are well under way again with 6 Project Fire fighters been employed this year. They have already jumped into some major projects including Fuel Break preparations and maintenance of water points and Fire access tracks. The crew has also been able to attack some of the heavy works on some of the local walking tracks.

Some of the other projects happening around the parks at the moment include:

- Chainsaw Fire Training
- Gate construction for Kurth Kiln Gates and Wrights Forest
- Flood Recovery Works including Culvert installation and Road up grades
- Burn Preparation Works
- Lawsons Falls Walking Track Re opening

Plenty of work to keep everyone busy still. As I mentioned at the Christmas break up, it great news that of the 3 Groups who submitted PV Grant applications, 2 have been fully funded (KK and BSP) and I partially funded (Labertouche). This is a great outcome for our groups and the effort in which was put into the application process. It also means we will have to move along with the process a bit as we will have to deliver the project in the financial year. No problems and looking forward to working with you on this one.

Thank you all again for your help over 2011 and on behalf of Parks Victoria and have a very safe and Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. See you then.

Regards

Andy

## Kurth Kiln Heritage Festival 15 April 2012

We are looking forward to another eventful Heritage Festival at Kurth Kiln, with numerous stalls, displays by other groups, historic machinery, kids' games, a mock bank robbery and pony rides. The food and drinks will be catered for by the Hoddles Creek Red and there will also be a theatre presentation telling the story of the Kurth Kiln, as it was planned, built and then retired. The Weathered Heads Bluegrass Band will entertain us again with their lovely music.



The Weathered Heads Bluegrass Band

## Editorial

We had a very busy six months at Kurth Kiln since the previous issue of the Kiln was published and although we want to publish an article of every event, it is just not possible with the limited space we have. We had visits from various school groups, scout groups, horse riding groups, bushwalking groups, bicycle groups, car clubs, the TAFE students from Mansfield, Cardinia Shire, Melbourne Water, Bendigo Bank and other social clubs. Parks Victoria replaced the solar panels on the shed, 250 koalas were released in the park and the interpretation boards for the Waterchannel track were erected. A warm welcome to Sherbrooke Community Radio Club (VK3KID) who will have their monthly meetings at Kurth Kiln. Thank you to everybody for all the support we received throughout the year. Merry Christmas and all the best for 2012. Henriette.

## Conservation Work

### Tall Astelia (*Astelia australiana*)

David Lockwood and Jasper Hails have been searching the gullies in the headwaters of the creeks around Gembrook, Beenak and Poweltown for the past couple of years to try and establish the condition of the known colonies of Tall Astelia and possibly find unlisted ones.

*"We have had only limited success so far as we have located only two colonies. Sadly we found the area where one listed colony is now no more".*

This plant is on the list of endangered plants (there are only 12 known populations) and the Kurth Kiln area had some colonies which have not been seen since 1939. These plants are susceptible to trampling damage so if anyone thinks they know the whereabouts of any of the plants it is important to report it to Parks Vic.

### Gully Grevillea (*Grevillea barklyana*)

On 9 October 2011 Andy Musgrove from Parks Victoria – Gembrook, saw the Gully Grevillea (*Grevillea barklyana*) in flower for the first time since the Black Saturday fires.

*"It has come back extremely well all around the Lawsons Falls Walk".*



Photo taken by Andy Musgrove

The species is listed as "threatened" in [Victoria](#) under the [Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988](#) and "Vulnerable in Victoria" on the Department of Sustainability and Environment's Advisory List of Rare Or Threatened Plants In Victoria.

## Bunyip Fire Ridge Bus tour- Saturday 25th June 2011

Three groups, the Friends of Kurth Kiln, Friends of Bunyip State Park and Friends of Hoddles Creek, were ready to board the mini bus at Gembrook Office at 9.00 on Saturday 25 June.

Andy Musgrove was our tour guide and driver. Before leaving Andy showed us a picture of the Bunyip Ridge Landscape - all black and desolate - after the Black Saturday Fire.



Our first stop was at Labertouche Public Hall, where the community erected a rock wall with a remembrance plaque of Black Saturday Fire, 7 February 2009. "The Bunyip Ridge fire roared out of the park to destroy 29 houses and a factory, and burn 2500 hectares of prime farm". This tragic event actually brought the community closer and a Community Centre and a Men's Shed was formed.



At the Boronia car Park in the Bunyip Forest we stopped and saw the re-growth of *Grevillea barklyana* and the Dusty Miller.

On Forest road, Alvina Smith, an expert in native flora, showed us the beautiful *Boronia muelleri* growing in the bush.

Reaching the Ridge, where we met Lex Wade, we were amazed to see how much the landscape had recovered. The re-growth looked green and vibrant.



At the Ridge Lex gave us an interesting and informative talk. His philosophy, that if we think we are in control of our environment we are mistaken, "It is mother nature who is controlling both us and our environment. Fire will be with us forever and more energy, resources into research and exploring better ways on how to cope with extreme weather conditions is necessary".



At the lovely Lawsons Falls Picnic grounds we had our lunch and mingled with the other Friend's Groups.

On the trip we could see that Parks Victoria has been very busy in the area reconstructing the road and installing the numerous gates.

The Friends of Kurth Kiln sincerely thank Andy for the very interesting and educational tour, we learned a lot along the way.

## Bendigo Bank visit to Kurth Kiln on Saturday 13 August 2011

On Saturday 13 August 2011 Community Branch Director Garry Bryne from Bendigo Bank Wandin/Seville and his wife Pauline came to our meeting at Kurth Kiln to meet some of our members and make the official presentation with a plaque showing their recognition and support of the re-vegetation the Gembrook Primary School Students did on June 20. After the meeting Garry and Jasper erected the plaque on the fence at Soldiers Road in the Northern Picnic area near where re-vegetation took place. The Friends of Kurth Kiln are grateful to the Bendigo Bank for supporting our projects and activities.



Garry Bryne showing the plaque at the Friends of Kurth Kiln meeting.



Bendigo plaque erected at Soldiers road.

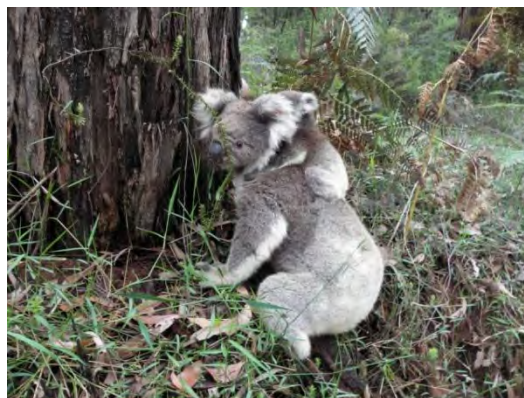
# Around the Kiln

## Koala Release in Kurth Kiln Regional Park

In October some 250 Koalas from French Island were released in Kurth Kiln Regional Park. One trailer full was released on Thursday 20 October on Scout Camp Track. Some of the Koalas stayed around the Kiln site whilst others looked for a new home further afield.



The Koalas seem to have favourite trees and on most days one has a good chance to see them sitting high up in them watching activities on the ground. Picnickers, campers, tourists, school and other groups love to spot them. When a Koala moves from one tree to another, word spreads around like magic at the kiln site and visitors hurry to the spot with their cameras.



Spying a mother and Joey is a special thrill, and often the sentiments have been heard: "This has made my day". A number of the Koalas found their way to our property and, to our amazement, seem to feel quite at home here and don't seem to worry about us moving around, just keenly watching us working in the garden and mowing the lawn. It is a joy to watch the males and females and their Joeys adjusting to their new environment. We hope that they will make a permanent home in the area. Ursula

## Ivanhoe Grammar School "survivor" at Kurth Kiln

The weekend of August 12, 2011 saw many year 10 students of Ivanhoe Grammar School thrown into various adventure style activities utilising the Kurth Kiln Park & Gembrook State Forest.

Ranging from Skiing to Mountain Bike riding and Kayaking, students were able to experience the expedition of their choice. My name is Jordan O'Neill and I was the staff member who along with a group of 22 students, was guided through a "survivor" themed Expedition by Halls Outdoor Education.

Drawing loosely on the format of the TV show *Survivor* students were divided into groups or "Tribes" which then prompted by clues competed in various challenges. The aim of this format was to provide a platform for the students to experience group problem solving, highlighting the importance of communication, leadership, tolerance, and other values that come out of working as a team.

Challenges included:

- Navigation
- Raft building
- First Aid
- Research
- Bridge Building
- Coordination/ balance challenges
- Time management



The nature of the challenges saw us utilise much of the Kurth Kiln Park, which provided a great environment for the experience. Kitted out in their tribal colours of Blue, Red, and Green student teams navigated their way through the challenges in what was a very successful weekend. My personal highlight was witnessing the raft building challenge where each team had to construct a raft out of barrels, tyres and ropes that would deliver 4 of its members to a canoe containing their next clue. This challenge confirmed that these students were not destined for carriers in the Navy, with raft parts and team members scattered across the lake.

Thanks to Halls Outdoor Education and Friends of Kurth Kiln Group. Jordan O'Neill

## Seniors Walk at Kurth Kiln on 5 October 2011

Although rain was forecasted, the heavens smiled on us and we had lovely warm weather.

The event to celebrate Seniors Week, promote walking, promote Friends of Kurth Kiln and increase community strengthening was organized by the Cardinia Council Health Promotion team and Henriëtte and Bev from Friends of Kurth Kiln. Thirty five cheerful and happy participants joined in, Margie from the Cardinia Council Health Promotion team welcomed them and invited everyone to morning tea.



Replenished, three different groups went on their walk lead by members of the Friends of Kurth Kiln. The visitors enjoyed the wild flowers, tall gums, beautiful tree ferns and even the Kookaburras seemed to join in the pleasant atmosphere.

Before lunch, Alfred gave a talk about the history of Kurth Kiln. When he mentioned that the Friends of Kurth Kiln are still looking for a missing fire door at the Kiln one gentleman immediately offered to assist in locating one. It always amazes us how kind and helpful visitors are. Margie, Terry, Lauren, Sarah and Julia from the Cardinia Council Health Promotion team had organized a delicious lunch which everyone enjoyed.



After lunch some of the Seniors went on a second walk whilst the rest checked out the Kiln Site and were interested to learn more about the Kiln and Gas Producers. All too soon it was time to go home, Margie thanked everyone for coming and those who helped organize the day. Alfred then thanked the Cardinia Council Health Promotion team for their input, for providing transport and lunch. It was a lovely day and we had a feeling that everyone had a good time. We look forward to such an event again next year.

The Friends of Kurth Kiln are grateful to the Cardinia Council for supporting the Seniors Week Community walk at Kurth Kiln.

## Waterchannel Track

The Friends of Kurth Kiln were successful in their funding application to the Cardinia Shire Council Heritage Grant Program 2010– 11, for the creation and installation of two Interpretation Boards on the historic Waterchannel Track. The two Interpretation Boards are intended to provide background information to the casual visitors on the way the ancient water race had been used by Dr Kurth to supply the necessary water to his charcoal kiln. Roger Strickland, Senior Instructor with the CFA and Gembrook resident, came and showed us the last 100m route of the Water Race from where it crosses Beenak Road down to the holding Dam. In two sessions, Kurth Kiln members Rick, Lisa and Ursula traced the water race with GPS from the dam up to Beenak Road, then past Kurth Kiln to Camp Track, crossing Wood Duck Track and over a small creek to Soldiers Road. From Soldiers Road it continued past a dam along the Waterchannel Track. The Water Race often went through dense bush and the three finished up with scratches and covered in leeches. At times the channel was a metre deep, at other times only the greener shading of undergrowth hinted at the wetter area.

Along the 230m contour line the old water race was traced all the way back to the start at a small tributary of Tomahawk Creek east of Gembrook Launching Place Road. The Water Channel Track runs part of the way alongside the channel. Despite extensive search with Gary's Metal Detector no sign of the 300m Iron Pipe, supposed to have run between the existing reservoir on Soldiers Road and the kiln, could be located.

The Interpretation Boards were installed (one at the start of the Waterchannel Track near Scout Camp Track the other near Gembrook-Launching Place Road) at the October working bee by Glen Binstead, Dean Binstead (Parks Victoria) and Alfred Klink.

The Friends of Kurth Kiln thank the Cardinia Council for their support of our activities and Neil Keighley from EKTAVO for the attractive design of the boards. AK



Rick tracing the water race



Glen - & Dean Binstead

# Letters from Friends

## Green corps visit to Kurth Kiln

*Hello friends of Kurth Kiln! On behalf of my Green corps team and myself I would like to thank you for your tireless efforts to provide us with such a wonderful place to appreciate a special place in Victoria that has a great combination of an important landmark in our history and stunning natural beauty.*

*The program I team lead is the National Green Jobs Corp, a program to help young adults aged 17 to 24 to gain valuable experience and training in the basics of land management and conservation.*

*We work in conjunction with Parks Victoria and local Landcare groups on a wide range of activities and locations in the Dandenong Ranges area. The course offers hands on experience with weeding, planting, trail construction and restoring public facilities; this is coupled with a Certificate Two in Land Management, first aid training, chemical certificates and much more.*

*The program has been running for a little while now but we are still recruiting. So if you have a family member or relative who you think might find this right up their alley please don't hesitate to call Julian on 0428533053.*

*Our thanks go out to Ursula for our impromptu tour, and to all of you.. keep up the good work!*

*Cheers, Julian Thompson*

*OM FRIENDS*

## Camping at Kurth Kiln.

*My experiences at Kurth Kiln Park were great!*

*My group and I were the first to go camping so with our giant backpack we left from the bus and started on our hike. During our hike we got lost twice making our hike 3 kilometers long.*

*We finally made our way to the campsite and put up the tent as it started to rain. The rain was very uncomfortable.*

*After putting the tent up it was time for dinner. Dinner had to be cooked in a Trangia Stove. We had pasta.*

*It was time for bed by now and it was raining heavily. Sleeping in a tent wasn't one of my most favourite things but it was manageable.*

*Day Two started with an okay breakfast of cereal and powdered milk and after that we packed up our things. We kept the heavy bags in our tents and got ready for our next activity MOUNTAIN BIKING.*

*When we started the rain was very light and wasn't too uncomfortable we made it about a kilometer and it started to POUR!! There were giant puddles in the middle of the track. There were so many leeches!*

*We finished our bike ride under a pavilion for lunch. After a fantastic lunch we moved to our new campsite where tents were already pitched for us. We unpacked and started to make a fire and it worked. The fire was so nice to have after our big day. We made dinner which very nice nachos and made stewed apples and custard for a little treat.*

*We slowly made our way to bed after the apples and had another night sleep in our tents.*

*Overall my experiences at Kurth Kiln Park were a lot of fun.*

*From Sinead Kershaw-Ryan*

*Ivanhoe Grammar School*

## Early Memories of Belgrave

*I was born in Tasmania and moved to Belgrave at the age of two years at the very start of World War Two. We lived on Terry Ave, the steep part opposite the Alexander Car Park. My grandfather, CT Alexander owned a large house where the car park and Catholic Church are located. He had a large garden, a tennis court, an orchard and a horse paddock. My mother with three small children lived opposite. We did not have a car and she could not drive so we walked all over Belgrave. The two little ones refused to climb Terry's hill as we called it, so she had to push the pram up with them in it while holding my hand. I think she must have been very fit.*

*I went to school at Belgrave Primary School, in Tecoma and walked down there along Wattle Ave. Quite a long walk for a six year old, I did it alone or with my little brother, born in 1940. Although the war was on it was an unspoilt and peaceful existence.*

*Friends of my grandfather, the Richardsons lived further up Terry Ave. Mr. Richardson had a brass factory in North Melbourne. I don't think he could drive nor could my grandfather, they depended on their sons to drive them about or had a pony and cart. Peter Richardson who was about twenty or so used to drive his father to work almost every working day, so they could not do that on the petrol ration. Peter had a large black car with a gas cylinder on the back so he probably obtained his charcoal via Kurth Kiln. I remember it spewed out lots of smoke and made a vile smell.*

*Luckily we all survived the dangers of the coal gas (carbon monoxide) and lived to tell the tale. The same type of dangerous gas was used for all gas appliances for many years.*

*It had something added to make it stink as carbon monoxide is completely odourless.*

*I vaguely remember the end of WW Two. The war memorial, then at the bottom of our hill was all decorated with ribbons and balloons. Everyone danced and sang in the main street. I expect we had a day off school but I can't remember that.*

*Rosalie Cooper.*



Photo taken by John Cooper at the Australian War Memorial

## Platypus - an enigma (Josh Griffiths Wildlife Ecologist – cesar.)

Since it's (European) discovery by early Australian explorers, the platypus has fascinated and confounded biologists. Preserved specimens shipped back to Europe were initially regarded as a hoax and famously attacked with scissors to determine how the miscellaneous parts had been stitched together! It then took almost another 100 years to confirm the platypus reproduced by laying eggs. The platypus and several species of echidnas are the only mammals to reproduce in this way.



The unique mixture of mammalian, reptilian and avian features makes the platypus one of the most recognisable creatures in the world.



Josh Griffiths with a captured platypus.

Despite being one of the most widely recognised creatures on the planet, the platypus remains as somewhat of an enigma. Much of the platypus's ecology and behaviour is still unknown. The semi-aquatic and nocturnal nature of the platypus means it is rarely sighted and is a difficult species to study. Platypuses (yes platypuses is correct, not platypi) are generally solitary and primarily nocturnal although it is not unusual to see one active during the day. They can spend up to 16 hours a day foraging for the aquatic invertebrates that constitute their diet. While underwater, the eyes and ears are shut and prey is located by sensitive receptors in the bill which detect tiny electrical impulses generated by muscular contractions of their prey (electroreception). In Victoria, mating occurs from August to October and the female lays 1-3 small eggs in a long maternal burrow. The tiny young hatch only 10 days later and remain dependent on their mother for approximately 4 months until they emerge from the burrow in February to April.

Platypuses are widely distributed within Australia, ranging from northern Queensland along the east coast to western Victoria and throughout Tasmania. Although this distribution has not changed since European settlement (unlike many Australian mammals which have suffered drastic declines), there is no reliable way to estimate population size and there is some evidence of localised extinctions and fragmentation. Due to their reliance on aquatic ecosystems, platypuses are vulnerable a number of direct and indirect threats. The basic requirements for platypuses are permanent water, abundant invertebrate food supply, and stable earthen banks in which to construct burrows. Native vegetation along stream banks also provides a number of benefits to platypuses.

The recent long term drought had severe impacts on aquatic environments and their fauna and declining platypus catch rates around Melbourne appear to be strongly linked to prolonged below average rainfall. Urbanisation and agriculture has caused widespread habitat destruction and degradation and led to fragmentation of platypus populations. Modification of waterways such as dams and weirs further fragment and isolate populations, as well as changing the nature of waterways. Direct mortality from introduced predators, entanglement in litter, and drowning in opera house style yabby nets (illegal in public Victorian waters) are additional threats faced by platypuses.

A long term population monitoring project conducted by **cesar**, in collaboration with Melbourne Water, is providing invaluable information on the status of platypus populations throughout the greater Melbourne region.

## Fallen trees at Kurth Kiln

After heavy rain and wind in August, many tree branches were broken off and some trees were uprooted in Kurth Kiln Park. Because the Senior's walk was just around the corner, we ask Andy from Parks Victoria (Gembrook) to help us clear the paths, as they were inaccessible and dangerous. Andy did a fantastic job and on behalf of the Friends of Kurth Kiln, we say thank you. A job well done!



Henriëtte at fallen tree.



Andy clearing the path.

## Wombat Watch - Treating Mange in Wombats

Mange is an infestation of the mange mite, it is not a disease. The mites tunnel under the skin where they deposit eggs, this causes intense discomfort. Overtime thick plaques that look like scabs form over the wombat's body. These cracks become dry and split open, then the wounds become infected and flyblown.

Mange is an animal cruelty issue, unless treated the infestation progresses and eventually the wombat is so severely compromised it dies a slow and agonizing death. It is not known exactly where mange came from. It may have been introduced by early settlers as scabies or during settlement with the introduction of foxes and domestic dogs.



What we do know is, it has spread throughout our wombat population, affecting the bare nosed wombat in particular.

There has been no funding and no undertaking by any government department to try to eradicate mange or even humanely euthanise these animals.

"Wombat Watch" is a group of dedicated and concerned individuals from varying backgrounds intent on treating and reducing the impact of mange on our "Free Living Wombats". There is a simple method of treating wombats with mange and preventing its spread. The Burrow Flap Method: The burrow flap can be placed and monitored by unskilled wombat handlers and without disturbing the wombat. This can all be done during daylight hours. Weekly treatments of Cydectin pour on solution @ dosage of 1 ml per 10 kg body weight. Assuming an adult sick wombat with mange will be approximately 25kgs. The dosage recommended would be 3ml. Based on the mite life cycle, free living wombats need to be treated weekly for 8 weeks, then fortnightly for eight weeks. Making a total of 12 treatments.

The flap device can be made from an ice cream container lid and a bottle top. The lid holds the Cydectin and the wombat self medicates when it leaves or returns to the burrow. Wombat Watch are able to supply the wire frame, flaps and the Cydectin solution used to treat the mange mite.



Burrow flap.



Wire frame pushed into ground in front of burrow.



Wire frame pushed into top of burrow.

The future of the Bare Nosed Wombat is in our hands. Wombat Watch is hoping to develop a research program to address the problems associated with managing and treating mange. By doing nothing we ensure that not only will any wombat getting mange die, but we promote it's spread amongst all wombats. Just by listening and learning about the plight of our wombats and telling others will help raise awareness in the attack against mange. If you would like more information about mange in wombats and how you can help, contact "The Wombat Watch Group". Phone: 59 428 518 or Email: [maryknoll@aapt.net.au](mailto:maryknoll@aapt.net.au). We can arrange for someone to come and speak to your group. Jenny.



# Amongst Friends

## 2011 Kookaburra Awards

Saturday 5 November 2011, at the Barwon Edge Boathouse, Newtown Geelong.

Ralph Angelico, Parks Victoria Gembrook Office, who has been the Friends of Kurth Kiln Contact Ranger for ten years, nominated the Group for the "Kookaburra Community Partnership Award".

- The Kookaburra Awards recognise and honour individuals and groups who have made an outstanding voluntary contribution to the Victorian park system.
- Raise awareness of the extent and importance of community involvement in the Victorian park system.
- Encourage community involvement in the future development and conservation and use of the park system.

Noel Harvey, OAM, MAICD, Board of Directors Parks Victoria MC introduced Auntie Marilyn, Balyang Aborigine Elder, who welcomed everyone to the Balyang Land.

Donna Petrovich MLC, Parliamentary Secretary for Sustainability and Environment gave an address praising the role volunteers play in nourishing the Parks and of the connection volunteers have to the land and each other.

Ian Walker, Director Healthy Parks at Parks Victoria, in his address mentioned, that the "Healthy Parks, Healthy People" motto has been accepted worldwide. Ian also said that the many volunteer hours, over 190,000 in the past year, are invaluable in maintaining and improving the Parks.

Noel Harvey said, that Parks Victoria recognise and value the contributions of 97 Friends Groups in Parks Victoria. He mentioned the kindred spirit amongst volunteers and its motivation in "inspiring the volunteer in you and inspire others".

Numerous individuals and groups had been nominated in the four sections, each one received a certificate. The runners up and the winners in the four sections received another certificate, the Friends of Kurth Kiln certificate reads: *2011 Kookaburra Community Partnership Award Runner Up, for conservation, preservation and educational activities at Kurth Kiln Regional Park and a trophy.*



Ralph, Glen, Jan, Alfred and Ursula.

The ceremony was followed by a photo session, a delicious lunch and opportunities to speak amongst the various groups. The Friends of Kurth Kiln sincerely thank Ralph Angelico for nominating our group and Parks Victoria for including the Friends of Kurth Kiln in their considerations.



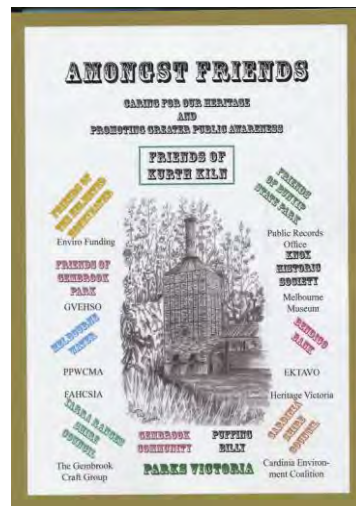
Andy and Ralph.

## Amongst Friends Booklet

In June 2009 the Friends of Kurth Kiln celebrated their tenth anniversary. Looking back over the activities during those ten years we decided it would be a good idea to document the group's endeavours over that time, on hand of the many pictures collected: a decade of tentative steps in our common aim to conserve the historic heritage of Kurth Kiln and promote greater public awareness of its cultural significance.

Many hours were spent looking up events, projects and activities in our archives and slowly the form of the booklet took shape. The first chapter introduces the reader to the group's formation, to Professor Kurth, the Kiln site and charcoal production in general. The other nine chapters are about the people, historic projects, artefacts and environmental projects, Parks Victoria activities, talks and presentations, festivals, visiting and visitors and bush walks.

The booklet was well under way when the title suddenly revealed itself, "Amongst Friends". So many of the people, the groups and the organisations are Friends to us. The title reflects the creative community feeling amongst volunteer groups everywhere - a driving force that makes us accept hardship and the occasional failure as a small price to pay for the potential we have to achieve. No matter what our individual chosen field of activity may be, working for what we believe in is the common bond that unites us with other volunteers.



Cover of booklet.

The book is dedicated to Ralph Angelico, our Parks Victoria Liaison Ranger, who in September this year had looked after our group for ten years. Without him our friends group would not be what it is today. It is hard to imagine our activities and all our achievements without his steadfast support and encouragement.



Gary thanking Ralph for his support of the last 10 years.

# Reflections

Another Beenak Tragedy.  
*Ted Gramlich remembers*



Ted at his District Hire Shop in Woori Yallock

What ever happened to Jim Hunter? You might remember from our previous story that Jim was the Post Master at Beenak at the time of the Basans Corner tragedy back in 1951. Jim also employed Pearl Dodds as his house keeper.

With the post office being in close proximity to the Beenak Cemetery, Jim became very involved in the day to day running of the Cemetery and the records have shown me that he was in fact a member of the Cemetery Trust for 51 consecutive years, many of those years as the sole member and also as Chairman. For the reader's background information, the cemetery had its first burials in 1886, they being a Miss Barber and Mrs. Ann Sharp.

Within the cemetery, in graves C16, 17, 18 are buried Jim's Father (1936), Mother (1942) and Brother (1935). Until recently the two graves of Jim's parents had Egyptian Cypress trees planted at the head and the foot; they were removed due to storm damage.

To the best of my knowledge, (and as yet I can't verify) Jim died approximately 1970-1971. During his time at Beenak I can only assume that for many years he would have tended to his family's graves as well as carrying out the administrative duties of a Trust member. People that I have spoken to who knew Jim have told me that although Jim's education was limited, he became an avid reader and was able to talk with great authority on a vast number of subjects he had studied.

To satisfy my curiosity and to perhaps close a chapter of local history, a couple of questions need to be asked and the answers need to be found. Firstly, what happened to Jim after his death? Was he buried, and if so where, or were his remains cremated? Secondly, if he was buried, after 51 years of caring, why was he not buried with his family members? I may never find the answers and perhaps Jim's story can't be finished, but somebody may read this and have information that could help to solve the puzzle.

Footnote. Egyptian cypress became known as the tree of mourning and was associated with death and eternity and the underworld. In Roman funerals, cypress branches adorned the body while lying in state and were carried by mourners as a sign of grief and respect. To this day when a Pope of the Roman Catholic Church dies, he is buried in a casket made from Cypress Wood.

Friends of Kurth Kiln  
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## Friends of Kurth Kiln

a part of the Friends Groups of *Parks Victoria*  
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First Name Last Name

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Signature ..... Date ... / ... / 20.....

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