

Raymond Island Matters

This edition is funded by the Raymond Island Ferry Operator, Ian Lewis

Edition No. 11
March 2010

Koala Count

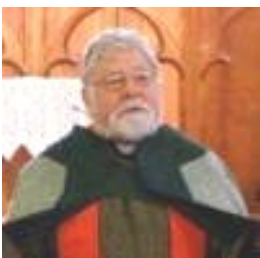
DSE and Parks Victoria are running another koala count for Raymond Island. The last count was conducted in 2008 with a total of 215 koalas. Since then some fertility control has been introduced and the movement of 66 adults and 15 back young last November.

Your help is sought on **Saturday March 13th** to do this year's count. Meet at the Community Hall at 8.30 where you'll be given a briefing from the rangers, and put in a team to count a block.

Don't forget to wear suitable footwear and clothes for a bushwalk. A barbecue lunch and refreshments will be provided.

Please register your interest by Thursday 11th March at the DSE office on 5152 0400 to assist with catering.

Farewell Laurie McIntyre



Many Islanders were saddened to hear that Laurie McIntyre, the Abbot of St Barnabas Abbey at A'Beckett Park, has resigned and returned to his home in the Blue Mountains.

Although Laurie only came to Raymond Island about six months ago, he has endeared himself to many people, and made a significant contribution to Island life.

Unfortunately, Laurie's vision for the establishment of St Barnabas Abbey was not always aligned with other members of the Anglican Church, and the conflict that resulted from this caused Laurie deep concern and distress.

Once he had decided to resign, Laurie left within a few days so that he could spend his seventy-ninth birthday at home with his family.

The Bishop of Gippsland, John McIntyre, has written a letter explaining the background to Laurie's resignation, and thanking Laurie for the wonderful contribution he has made in such a short time.

Both the Bishop's letter and Laurie's farewell letter to the Island community can be found on the Raymond Island website, www.raymondisland.net, and follow the links on the right hand side of the Contents page.

Editor's note: I would urge Islanders to read Bishop McIntyre's letter in its entirety, to clear up any misunderstandings about Laurie's departure. Our Island has lost an honourable man and a good friend.

When the Island was smaller

Chaff-bag Charlie

Overhearing two long time residents talking, a name came up that we had not heard before: Chaff-bag Charlie.

He was a chap who lived on our island in the 70's. One day he simply appeared with a chaff bag over his shoulder looking around for a place to live. He found a couple of old broken down car wrecks on Reg Medling's land opposite the old tip and made them his home (an Islander seems to remember that one car was an old Vanguard).

The only company he had was a black curly haired dog by the name of Cindy (as Garry Kenner remembers) who would not let him out of her sight.

No one knew where he came from. As he became known to some of the locals they realised that contrary to his appearance he was quite a well educated man. Andrew Bould remembers inviting him to dinner one night (the family was worried that he didn't get enough to eat) and found him enjoyable company. From talking to him they learned that he had decided to 'opt out of society' and felt our Island was a good place to do it.

Apparently he lived mainly on the fish he caught using a small wooden dinghy, or he fished off Reg

Medling's jetty. He also used to go over to the old ice works (where Fisherman's Wharf now is), and the fishermen would feel sorry for him and give him a fish or two just to make sure he had something to eat.

He had an unusual method of barbecuing fish. In those days the ferry park still had the old fashioned BBQ's, a few bricks with a plate across. Chaff-Bag would put the fish on a hot plate without having scaled or gutted it. When the fish was ready he would grab it by the head and peel off the skin. He would then cut open its belly and remove the shrivelled-up innards with a flick of a thumb.

After having lived on our Island for a few years he left and we never heard of him again. His dog was looked after by an islander until she died in 1986.

So, we had our very own swagman – but wait, there's more!

We are following up on a second swagman, Bill Lipscombe, and hope to bring you his story soon.

We would ask anyone who has information on either Chaffbag Charlie or Bill Lipscombe to get in touch with Peter Johannsen, on 5156 6851.

RICA Report

From the President:

Thank you to RICA members for granting me a second term as president. I have a great team to support me. Raymond Islanders are indeed fortunate to have so many people prepared to work behind the scenes for their community. In return we would appreciate your feedback and your attendance at public meetings and social activities in the future.

Updated details of committee and sub-committee members, and a copy of the President's report, can be found on the RICA pages of www.raymondisland.net.

Public Meeting

A meeting will be held in the Community Hall in late March or early April (date tba) to clarify the rules governing domestic animals, camping and camp fires on Raymond Island.

Representatives from the East Gippsland Shire Council, DSE and Parks Victoria will be present.

Questions are to be submitted in writing to enable the panel to address specific issues.

Written questions can be sent to Dennis Marsden by email rayisle@bigpond.net.au, or delivered to 87 Western Blvd. by Tues. 16 March 2010. Any enquiries to Dennis on 5156 0016 or 0418 360 907.

Please note: This meeting is NOT a debate about what people think the law *should* be. The purpose of the meeting is purely to clarify existing regulations.

Before the meeting closes, there will be an opportunity to register questions on other issues for future follow-up by the relevant authority.

By popular demand...

Commencing 5th March an additional Tai Chi class will be held at 9.30 am each Friday in the hall.

Social activities

Saturday 27 February saw motorists and pedestrians buzzing around the Island in search of bargains.



Twelve properties registered for the R.I. Progressive Garage Sale. People came from as far afield as

Orbost, undeterred by thunder and threatening skies.

After items were sought and bought a large group met at the Community Hall for a debrief and sausage sizzle. A greater than expected demand resulted in one of our organisers scurrying to the mainland for more supplies.

Thank you to Maggie and Cathy for the publicity and planning, and to the cooks and bottle washers at the hall for making this yet another successful venture.

What's on at the Hall?

Table Tennis Come along for a bit of fun at 7.30pm every Tuesday evening.

Carpet Bowls on Wednesdays at 2 pm. New members are welcome. Contact Jan on 5165 6738.

R I Landcare meets on the 2nd Thursday. The next meeting will be the AGM on 11 March at 7.30 pm. New members welcome. Contact Charlie on 5156 7414

Community Morning Tea is held on the 3rd Monday. The next one will be on 15th March at 10.15 am. All residents and friends are invited to attend.

Computer classes every fourth Friday afternoon of the month at 2 pm. Contact Michelle on 0408 950 203 or 5156 0723.

Tai Chi every Mon. & Wed 9.30am, and Tuesday (advanced class) at 9am ... AND ...

Commencing **5th March** an additional Tai Chi class will be held at 9.30 am each Friday in the hall.

Island Identities

Happy Birthday, Irene



Long time Raymond Island resident Irene Bould celebrated her 80th birthday at the Community Hall on February 28. Present were Irene's brother Dan, sister Dot,

her four children and grandchildren along with many friends. With around 150 people attending and tables groaning with food, the hall was bursting at the seams.

Eldest son Kelvin welcomed everyone and brother Andrew had displayed a photographic history of the Haylock-Bould families which created a great deal of interest. Andrew also gave a "fractured" speech (due to interjections from his mother and three siblings), outlining Irene's life and her involvement in teaching and community activities.

Direct from the Paynesville Music Festival, Irene's grandsons, members of the group 4 Heaped Teaspoons, performed a couple of her favourite tunes.

The Island salutes you Irene and we wish you many happy returns.

For a story and photos about Irene's life, go to our Island website, www.raymondisland.net and look for the link on the Contents page.

Ferry news

Ian Lewis has asked for Islanders' co-operation during unplanned ferry outages, such as the one that occurred during mid February.

It seems that many of us take our cars off the Island "just in case" whenever we hear of an outage, even though the ferry will be operational again by late afternoon, and even when we have no particular need to have a vehicle on the other side that day.

Ian points out that this causes long delays during the morning peak, which causes problems for people trying to get to work or to other important appointments.

It also delays the planned start time for maintenance and repair work, making it more difficult to have the ferry back by the advertised scheduled time.

Please keep this in mind next time!

SMS alert for unscheduled ferry outages?

In relation to the problems described above, the RICA Communication Sub-committee has received a number of enquiries as to whether an SMS alert service could be used to advise Islanders when there is an outage.

Most of these enquiries came from Islanders who work on the mainland.

We have broached the subject with the Shire, asking whether they would be willing to initiate and pay for such a service.

They are considering our request, but their 'off the cuff' reaction to financing the proposal was hesitant to say the least. They believe if the Shire offers us a free SMS service, other towns would also have reasons to ask for a similar service to address whatever their particular needs may be.

They were also concerned that mainland tradespeople may want to be alerted, and that Paynesville residents may ask for it for a variety of reasons, such as attending Island Tai Chi, or visiting friends.

Whatever the outcome to our talks with the Shire, we should be able to provide further information to Islanders within 6 to 8 weeks.

If you have any suggestions or questions please get in touch with either Kate McKinnon on 5156 6480 or Peter Johannsen 5156 6851

Ferry gossip (as told to us by an Islander)

This is a story about one of the ferry drivers. No names, no pack drill. His partner drives a Mercedes Sports Convertible. Recently the ferry driver took it into town to deposit ferry money in the bank. (Obviously a fast car was needed in case of attempted robbery.)

He met our informant on the ferry. "*Hi, see you've got the hood down. Looks like rain, maybe you should put it up.*"

"*No worries*" was the confident reply. "*It takes all of 20 seconds to close it water tight.*" The wonders of modern technology!

Our informant goes off first and heads for Bairnsdale as a very light drizzle starts. The Ferry driver (who still remains nameless) overtakes our Islander near the cemetery. Suddenly, the heavens open and the rain POURS down.

As our Islander drives down the hill approaching the morass, there on the left hand shoulder of the road is our ferry driver in his partner's car, desperately trying to get the roof closed.

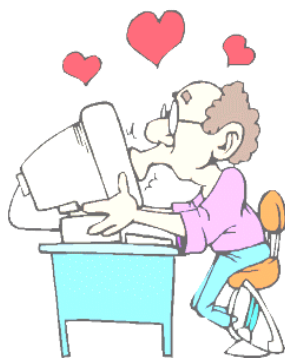
Our informant drives past and gives our friend a gentle wave. His first thought was that the inside of the car would have enough water in it to resemble a swimming pool. His second thought was "his partner ain't going to like the smell of wet leather."

PS: We're not sure what welcome he got at home, but he is still working the ferry. So he did survive.

Contributions

Contributions to Raymond Island Matters are always welcome, and can either be emailed to rismatters@netspace.net.au or sent to Kate McKinnon, 13 Sixth Avenue or Peter Johannsen, 40 Sixth Avenue.

The Michelle Baird Computer Show.



Eighteen people assembled at the hall last week, eager for Michelle to enhance their computer skills.

Michelle started by carefully showing us how to assemble all the bits and pieces, and to make the computer 'talk' to us.

After she made sure that we understood exactly what to do, she pulled out all the plugs and said "Now you put it together"..... a lot of laughter and frustration later we were finally ready for our LESSON number ONE !

We opened folders and sub-folders, and dragged photos into their right folders. That took a while. Then we were shown a poem written by Michelle's mum Helena. Michelle then mixed up the lines of the poem and we learned to cut and paste it in order.

At some stage we had a cuppa and our lesson finished about 4 pm.

Thank you Michelle. We are looking forward to your words of wisdom on Friday 26th of March at 2pm.

Newcomers are very welcome. Just stroll up. If you have a lap-top, bring it, if not, there are plenty of computers at the hall (you can even take one home to practice).

Special Advertising Feature

Raymond Island Adventure Tours

Hey, thrill seekers! Why not enjoy some of the excitement-packed activities available on Raymond Island.

This month's special offers:

- Climb Mount Raymond by the sheer North face and after a quick six pots at the summit bar you can base-jump from the dizzying heights of the summit to get back down (don't forget the parachute hire at the Summit kiosk).
- Scare yourself silly by white-water rafting down Raymond Gorge and try to be the first to successfully negotiate Bastard Raymond Falls – think of how famous you will be if you get through alive.
- Get lost in the wilds of the banksia forest and, if you're lucky, be able to tell your mates you came face to face with a New Holland Humaneater (if you still have a face).
- Go in search of the famous Hidden Lake Raymond and see if you can spoil everybody else's fun by telling them where it is.
- Brave the Raymond Island Everglades in search of our famous Naked Mud Wrestling Arena - you won't spoil anybody's fun by letting them know where that is!

* All Raymond Island adventures are undertaken at your own risk and the publishers of this information take no responsibility for any injury, disease, poisoning, loss of face or bite marks you may suffer in the pursuit of adventure.

** All the fauna and flora on Raymond island should be treated with respect and a great deal of fear. Be especially wary of Drop Bears!

Other suggestions?

Send your ideas for other Raymond Island Adventures to rismatters@netspace.net.au. There may even be prizes for the most original or outrageous contributions.

A special thank-you...

To all the foot-weary volunteers, led by Bernadette Pianaro-Williams, who hand deliver Raymond Island Matters, through rain, hail and shine!

If you know of someone who thinks they may have missed out on a newsletter delivery, please get in touch with Bernadette on 5156 1348.

This newsletter is a RICA initiative.