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Biddip



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Newsletter of the Toodyay Friends of the River

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Inside this issue:

<i>President's Report - Outgoing</i>	2
<i>President's Report - Incoming</i>	3
<i>Website Upgrade 2020</i>	4
<i>Two Presidents for the Day</i>	5
<i>Pools that were in the Avon River</i>	6
<i>Photo Gallery</i>	7
<i>River Reserve Roundup</i>	8 - 10
<i>The Good Ship S.S.S.S.</i>	11
<i>The Back Page</i>	12

The Toodyay Friends of the River are grateful to the Wheatbelt NRM for their on-going support in producing the Biddip newsletter



wheatbelt
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management

President's message by Rev. Peggy Ludlow

AS PRESIDENT of TFOR I want to thank each one of you for your contributions this year. They have been extensive and varied. TFOR members have been involved in working bees, in the Seed Orchard, on the Management Committee, in production of BIDDIP and with the Pelham Brook Outlet project. I would also like to thank you for your support for the Committee and for your financial support as a member.

We had an interesting schedule of working parties this year, and even with COVID restrictions managed working bees in 6 of the months. 23 members participated during the year, logging 150 hours of work, spread relatively evenly between Sundays and Mondays. Activities included:

- painting the John Masters Bird Hide
- plantings at the Pelham Brook outlet, Foggathorpe and Boyagarring Brook;
- restoring access to the Bilya Walk Track from Newcastle Park (shut off when the vehicle barrier was erected);
- establishing an alternative way of accessing the Bilya Walk Track from Duidgee Park. Special thanks to Greg Warburton, Robyn Taylor and Sarah Dudley for making all of this happen. Greg, as Reserves Manager has been pivotal in keeping the Bilya Walk Track 'up to scratch'.
- Bethan Lloyd and five other TFOR members had a very successful year at the Seed Orchard, putting in 20-30 hours on a monthly basis. This year, as well as growing seedlings for sale and for TFOR's own revegetation projects they grew on rushes and sedges for planting as part of the Pelham Brook restoration project.

Monitoring teams have worked throughout the year, with Laraine Brindle, John Zawada and Dimity Boggs particularly active in this area. This has allowed recording of the state of the river, season by season.

We continue to develop our communication of the monthly session with emails and a notice at Drummond House. There is always room for improvement but we need to keep the schedule flexible so that we can best use the Sunday and Monday work parties. Particular jobs, weather and people available change where we can be most effective.

The recent RAC magazine article on the Avon River and the river trail in Toodyay have seen an increasing number of people walk the track. We celebrate this increased interest in the Avon River and it reflects the importance of this local environment and resource.

- Articles in the Toodyay Herald keep readers informed of our activities – thank you to Sarah Dudley for her research and writing.
- The web page is being revamped for 2021 – Wayne Clarke has been working with students from North Metropolitan TAFE, and they are also producing an APP to make monitoring easier.
- TFOR's Facebook page exists thanks to Liz Kington's work.
- A number of members had a useful meeting with the Toodyay Shire sharing with them the Pelham Outlet project and it was good to raise our profile. In 2020 the project received URBAQUA's concept design report, made possible by a grant of \$5000 through a Wheatbelt Natural Resource Management *Healthy soils healthy rivers* grant. It also received a grant from the Federal Communities Environment Program for \$20,000 and this is being used to undertake the necessary work at the outlet. The project is on-going and it has been great to see organisations working together. Thank you to everyone here for all the work that has been done, it is really making a difference to the Avon and its environment.
- The opening of the Redbank Noongar Interpretive signs at the Bird hide was a great event and wonderful to see the groups working together for the Avon River
- The committee does a lot behind the scenes to be an effective group in our community with our environmental hat on. This morning we celebrate so many who bring their talents to this important group.

I step down today from my role, but the work goes on. You have my best wishes for 2021.

Rev Peggy Ludlow

Presidents message by Robyn Taylor

HELLO Friends!

I had the honour of becoming your new President at the November AGM. Our delightful former President, the Reverend Peggy Ludlow, is returning to England with husband and TFOR member, Reverend Brian. We wish them well and a safe and trouble-free journey home. A card with a photo of Peggy and Jenny White braving the Avon River rapids in the 2018 recycling regatta was presented and signed by members.

The highlight at the end of the AGM was the awarding of Honorary Life Membership to Bethan Lloyd for her outstanding contribution to TFOR and the wider Toodyay community, in particular through her work with the Seed Orchard Group. It was a well-kept secret and you can tell by the photo that Bethan, who prefers not to be in the limelight, was happy to accept the award.

Another happy event was the belated celebration of Desrae's milestone birthday with an ice cream cake. In late March Covid-19 caused this event to be postponed until restrictions lifted

At the AGM we discussed ideas for our 2012 calendar. The Management Committee has worked to produce what we hope will be an interesting and fulfilling year. There will be a mix of ongoing projects such as the Bilya Walk Track and Millards Pool, an excursion down the river and potential new projects. As the programme for working bees is at the mercy of the weather these may have to be adjusted at short notice. We always try to contact members in advance, and a notice is placed on our bulletin board outside Drummond House, next door to Bendigo Bank.

Our volunteer members come from diverse backgrounds but with a common interest in the welfare of the natural environment. If working bees aren't your scene, or the time isn't convenient, please talk with us, and especially our Project Officer Greg Warburton about other options that may be open to you. Some members have specialist skills or knowledge that can be invaluable.

Our Secretary Bridget Leggett will be emailing members with the calendar and a reminder of our first gathering in the New Year.

A sad note was the passing in December of Christeen Donegan, a former member and wife of Gaven Donegan whose TFOR memorial can be found near our picnic shelter at Millards Pool.

We look forward to seeing you on Sunday 14 February 2021 at a special event in the CWA Hall with guest speaker Derek, brother of Gaven. Derek will talk about their growing up on the Avon River.

Best wishes to all our Friends for the festive season.



Left: Who could forget the exuberance of Reverend Peggy Ludlow in all aspects of Shire life. Here (together with crew Jenny White) and aboard the SSSS, she battles the wild Avon River in the 2018 Recycled Regatta.

Photo: Beth Frayne

Footnote: You can read the exciting story of the event on Page 11.

(reproduced from Biddip Volume 12 Issue 3)

TOODYAY FRIENDS OF THE RIVER WEBSITE UPGRADE 2020

by Wayne Clarke

In April 2009 I designed and constructed the first Toodyay Friends of the River Inc. (TFOR) website. I had no experience whatsoever with web design or the technical aspects of operating a website. I had limited computing expertise, and when it came to working with code that would be a big challenge.

Our first website was a real adventure, and it did for some time achieve the goals we set for it. However, further enhancements were way beyond my technical skills. I embraced the fact that I was still only an amateur in a professional field, and recommended the TFOR obtain the services of a professional web designer.

In April 2012 a quote was received from Webs Creative Studios (WCS) for the design, development and on-going management of a Website for TFOR. Funding assistance was sought from the Toodyay and Districts Financial Services - Bendigo Bank[®] for the project and in May it agreed to provide \$1,500 towards this. TFOR then placed an order with WCS for the development and commissioning of a website with a considerable discount provided by WCS.

The site was designed in collaboration between WCS and TFOR. During development quite a bit of 'twigging' was required to make sure it fitted our ongoing needs. Both Guido Verschoor and Grant Scobie (WCS) were extremely accommodating in making changes requested and in November 2012 the website went live.

I have had full control of updating the site through a computer programme funded by Wheatbelt NRM, allowing me to add news, photographs, the '*Biddip*' newsletters and other data. This required learning additional skills to operate the programme.

In 2018 our Monitoring Project was added to the site and the menu changed to accommodate reporting of the monitoring sites.

In late February 2020 Guido contacted me to see if the TFOR was interested in a group of TAFE students undertaking an upgrade to our website and provision of an app – for free! This sounded like a great opportunity to become involved with education of these students while at the same time getting a '*makeover*' of our website; the app would be a bonus. I readily agreed and the project commenced on 4th March.

Over the months since then the students have been working on our project when time permitted. They have not been able to fully concentrate on our project due to Corona virus restrictions; however, I had two virtual meetings to look at the progress. Mock-up designs were sent and approved subject to checking them at TAFE.

This culminated in Desraé and me attending their Graduation Ceremony on 25th November. Prior to the ceremony we had the opportunity to meet the students to see the results of their hard work. We were invited to give a brief talk on TFOR at the ceremony.

On 30th November an 'Agreement to Accept Delivery', a formality as part of the project, was signed.

On behalf of TFOR I would like to sincerely thank Guido, Ivone Bennett, the other lecturers and students for their dedication to the task, and pass on our sincere wishes to all the graduates in securing employment.

TWO PRESIDENTS FOR A DAY



Outgoing President Rev Peggy (left) with incoming President Robyn, who is handing Peggy a photographic memento of her term as President. Secretary Bridget looks on.

Photo: Desraé Clarke

POOLS THAT WERE IN THE AVON RIVER

by Colin Liddle

MILLARDS (Toodyay Swimming Pool); LLOYDS (In the old days); RED BANK; WOODS; LITTLE KIRK; BIG KIRK; GEARIES; GREEDIES; SALT; DEMASSONS (at Keysham); BULLS (at Avondale); HASSONS; McKNIGHTS; MATHEWS; OLD BARRACK (below West Toodyay Oval gathering place for locals; SCHOOL (where West Toodyay school kids swam); WEATHERALL; DEEPDALE (below Deepdale Homestead); DAVIES (opposite Folewood – River Road junction); ROCK POOL; CROOKED; JUMPERDINE (Jimperding Brook flows into the river); STRAHANS; MARKEYS; LONG POOL (at Leatherhead); DUCK; COBBLER (overnight camp Avon Descent); GRANDFATHER; ROCKY (near where Morangup Brook flows into the river); CUT THROAT (near Western Quarries); TRAP (Julimar Brook flows into the river); WHIRL; DELANEY MARE; MIDDLE STATION; BALD HILL; EMU SPRING BROOK; RED GUM SPRING (HORSE); MOONDYNE (Red Swamp Brook runs into the river).

*Per Spec Sinclair and Gaven Donegan
Sunday 5th March 1995. Colin Liddle*

Note: The Noongar names for these pools are preferable, and were being prepared by Gaven. A marked map was drawn up but this has not been located to date (December 2020).

Colin Liddle lived in Keating Road and was a member of the steering committee for the River Recovery Plans (Section 3 - Toodyay). He was also a member of the Avon River Management Authority (ARMA) and supported the establishment of TFOR.

Colin started out as a cadet in Buka Patrol Post (Bougainville). He served his Cadetship there until 1951; he then went to the Australian School Of Pacific Administration (ASOPA) on a two year Course which he passed without repeating exams.

He married Eileen Nestor and they were stationed in Finschafen (east of Lae) until October when Colin was transferred to Rabaul to begin his career in the Local Government Training Centre at Vunadadir, about 17 miles from Rabaul (over a very rough road). He built the trainees' quarters as well as the Training Centre while carrying out the duties of Aid-De-Camp (ADC) in the Vunadadir/Toma/NangaNanga Sub District.

After long service leave, Colin was posted to Mt Hagen where he was the Local Government Officer for the Highlands Region. He inaugurated the Mt Hagen, Goroka and Mendi Councils as well as several smaller Councils.

He spent some more time in Bougainville, on Buka Island, where he was sent to control the Hahalis Welfare Society and to establish the Buka Council. Colin was sent to Rabaul to deal with the Mataungans many of whom were his friends. He was then posted to Port Moresby and became Town Clerk.

After Independence in 1975, he resigned and returned to Australia where he became Secretary (CEO) of the Western Australian Waterways Commission and Swan River Management Authority, retiring in 1990. He passed away on 27 May 2010, aged 82.

Photo Gallery



Above: Eurasian Coot nesting at Millards Pool Photo: Robyn Taylor

Below: The Kayak launching ramp at Weatherall Reserve Photo: Jennifer White



RIVER RESERVE ROUNDUP

Article and photographs: by Greg Warburton

THREE extra picnic tables (two new and one recycled) have recently been installed along the Bilya Walk Track. This includes one that was requested by a Glen Coe resident to be positioned half way between the picnic shelter and Nardie Cemetery. The addition makes this popular walk alongside Millard's Pool even more appealing. Now we have no less than seven rest stations between Lloyd Reserve and Nardie Cemetery!



Left: New DFES gate into Lloyd Reserve.

The original gate has been relocated (see below)

The Toodyay Friends of the River (TFOR) gate from Lloyd Reserve was removed to allow for the placement of a Department Fire and Emergency Services (DEFS) steel gate. The gate was then relocated to Extracts Weir to prevent vehicle access as recent inappropriate activity there has seen the theft of a bench seat, lighting of fires and the leaving of rubbish. Due to the dry conditions this year vehicles have been driven through normally inaccessible riparian areas at various locations along the river. The new DFES gates will help protect these vulnerable environments and reduce the risk of fire.

The entire Millard's Pool Reserve, including the re-vegetation site, has been slashed and whippersnipping/pruning completed along the entire 6.6km of the Bilya and John Pyle Walk Tracks.

The Nardie Cemetery clean-up campaign has been completed with the removal of fallen branches and dead timber and high grass slashed. Shire Reserve Management is working with the Toodyay Historical Society to finalise words for an interpretive sign board that will be installed next year. With the new picnic table visitor experience at this important site will be further enhanced.

Slashing work has been completed in the Lloyd Reserve Seed Orchard area and at the time of writing the extensive DFES funded slashing program along the river, from the light industrial area to West Toodyay, is underway. This compliments the grading of fire breaks and access ways completed in November.

Early in December there were two separate fire incidents in the Avon Valley, southern part of the Shire. One was at Grandfather Pool where a caravan solar panel started a fire that burnt several acres of river bank. Fortunately, the caravan was not badly damaged.

River Reserve Roundup (cont)

Then, a few days later a grader sparked a fire just opposite the same location that tore through extremely rugged terrain and required air support to bring under control. At the same time a train driver reported a major dump of rubbish at Cobbler Pool. Reserve Management was involved in all three incidents with the rubbish clean-up task proving to be almost as challenging as the fire suppression!

These recent incidents have highlighted the need for increased management with advisory signage and regular patrols urgently required. Due to Wiki Camps and other similar web sites more people than ever are visiting these locations especially the iconic Cobbler Pool with multiple camp fire sites and damage to vegetation in evidence. An opportunity now exists for the Shire, and TFOR, as the tenure of the location has changed allowing the Shire to bring the site under its own management. Already, directional signage has been placed, with rubbish and campfire remains removal and hazard reduction work done.

It is anticipated that the Avon Descent will run next year and agreement between the Avon Descent Committee, the Shire and TFOR about the various river sites impacted by the event will need to be discussed.



Left: Callistemon phoeniceus (Bottlebrush) along the Bilya Walk Track at Millards Pool in bloom. Note the area has been slashed.

Right: New picnic table setting alongside Millards Pool, half way between Nardie Cemetery and the Millards Pool car park



River Reserve Roundup (cont)



Above: Nardie Cemetery Picnic Table

Below: Extracts Weir Picnic Table



The Good Ship SSSS

by Jennifer White

FROM the (wobbly) deck of the good ship 'St Stephen's Sink or Swim' (SSSS) on the occasion of the 2018 Recycled Regatta.

The river was running well, the sky was blue, the air was crisp, the sun was shining, and the water was bloomin' cold - all fine conditions for hardy competitors and onlookers for the race down river.

The Fleet's participants were blessed before the launch. Unfortunately, with the same effect as last year; one vessel immediately sank!

All the competitors slid onto our highly varied craft. Peggy and I on S.S.S.S. – in pole position, floated off first. Sadly, the second boat was the one that didn't actually manage a floating start because, true to its name, Titanic 2, foundered in the first few seconds. Not deterred, its tenacious young crew of 2 managed to float the bow (the pointy end) and one of the two acted as human outboard cum rudder. They eventually crossed the finish line to hearty cheers from the gallery.

We on the S.S.S.S. made a good start but were soon pressed from behind by the more experienced crew on the sleek, well appointed, foam-bottomed TFOR boat, and the 'party boat' with cycle-powered paddle-wheel.

Our sturdily-built, buoyant boat moved fine in deeper waters but, with its hull of recycled water containers, it unfortunately bottomed out on the rapids, allowing shallow-draught craft to zoom past.

But, with a brief and elegant pirouette, we continued on our way, cheered on by our first officer Peggy's daughter Joy, who had flown in from the UK especially for the event – well, not really, but it was her good fortune to be here for the race.

Truth be told, the scenic beauty of the river banks attracted our gaze and made us both desire the ability to gently paddle and slowly glide downstream, whilst taking in the views. However, the roar of the crowd eventually recalled our competitive spirit. Frenzied paddling ensued.

We were not alone in having problems with our craft: the party boat's paddle-wheel had to be hand-operated after the cycle power failed, and Peggy and I were content to find some boats well behind us. The winning TFOR boat was already in dry-dock and the crew starting on congratulatory cordials, when we were still halfway home. Their poly-styrene boat drew about 2 inches, I reckon, so they floated over every obstacle and the crew, in their comfortable, recycled stacker chairs, seemed hardly to have raised a sweat in effortlessly bringing the boat across the line in style.

In more sweaty style, and with gratefully accepted assistance under the bridge, the SSSS glided gracefully to the bank; two totally dry – un-dunked - sailors stepped ashore to the tumultuous praise of their supporters. Triumphant in third place!

At this late stage we declare authors' conflict of interest, for both Peggy and Jenny are members both of TFOR as well as St Stephen's Church.

2019 participants beware! In the best 'Arnie' style – WE WILL BE BACK!

(n.b. This article first appeared in Biddip Volume 11 Issue 3 (December 2018))

**Newsletter of the
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**WORKING FOR THE HEALTH OF THE
AVON RIVER**



Toodyay & Districts
Community Bank Branch



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The Back Page

Volume 14, Issue 3

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Above: Motorbike Frog (*Ranoidea moorei* - formerly *Litoria moorei*) Photo: Rebecca Megan-Lowe
Another name change! One wonders if the scientists who make these changes understand the cost to the community (with changes to publications, etc).