

August 2015



# ***Biddip***



Newsletter of the Toodyay Friends of the River

Volume 9, Issue 2



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*The Toodyay Friends of the River are grateful to the Wheatbelt NRM for their support in producing the August 2015 newsletter*



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# Presidents Message by Robyn Taylor



THE FRIENDS have enjoyed a high profile this past year in particular because of our role in Toodyay's successful win in the National Tidy Towns award. Our environmental work, such as the creation and maintenance of the Bilya Walk Track, together with the Naturalists' Club's very successful bird hide, resulted in Toodyay being awarded the KAB Environment and Conservation category award. This helped Toodyay gain enough credit points to make it the outright winner. Congratulations in particular to members Greg and Beth, and the others, who worked so hard to achieve this honour for Toodyay.

## Revegetation of east bank of Millard's Pool

Before last year's AGM in August we did a mass planting of seedlings on the east bank of Millard's Pool. This was followed up in July this year with further preparation of the site, courtesy of Vernice, and a very successful planting day involving over 25 school children and their parents. This was part of Kristee's Inclusive School Holiday Program. Thanks to our Project Officer Greg for organising the site preparation, and Bethan for overseeing and coordinating the planting, and providing 350 seedlings from the Seed Orchard. Also thanks to member Laraine for giving her time assisting on the day.

In October 2014 we had another successful day at the Toodyay Agricultural Show with the Environment Matters tent. This year we are looking forward to an even bigger (if that's possible) and better day at this year's Show.

## Bauxite Alumina Joint Venture proposal to establish open-cut mines in the Morangup region.

TFOR has representation on the Community Advisory Group as we have concerns regarding the possible impacts of mining on ground water and ultimately the Avon River. Despite some community comment regarding this, we feel it is important to have a presence and input.

Last November we had another big clean up at the historic Nardie Cemetery. Each year the cemetery site is improving, though I have a big wish to plant bushes to screen the cemetery from the neighbouring industrial sites. As one of the end points of the Bilya Walk Track, and being Toodyay's earliest cemetery, the current surroundings are very unfortunate to say the least.

Also last December we celebrated our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary at Kerri and Wayne Fletcher's home overlooking Millard Pool and the Track. This is a wonderful achievement.

Last year we had a joint farewell with the Toodyay Historical Society for members Brian Shepherd and Richard Brouwer. Brian was a staunch supporter of TFOR and a major help with our Lloyd Reserve Strategic Development Plan 2011 – 2016. We have achieved a number of the goals set out in the Plan including:

- constructed a pathway through Lloyd Reserve as part of the longer Avon Valley Discovery Walkway, in conjunction with other interested groups (Bilya Walk Track)
- installation of seating and signage
- construction of an access over the Water Corp pipeline
- construction and installation of a picnic shelter (located at Millards Pool)
- made applications for grants and sponsorship
- this year we have been doing a major clean-up of the Seed Orchard within the reserve as part of fire management and to establish areas for revegetation
- production of an educational pamphlet (Bilya Walk Track) that includes Lloyd Reserve

Currently we are establishing a new section of the Bilya Walk Track as an alternative to the firebreak behind the industrial area.

The Millard's Pool Recovery Group continues to investigate the removal of sediment. With the assistance of Doug Blandford, who is experienced in stream sediment science, sampling and evaluation will take place this coming summer after the winter flows.

A major project for 2016, that will involve the community, is the re-vegetation project along the west bank of Millard's Pool. Approval to do this was granted by the Shire last month.

Special thanks to Greg our Project Officer, Desrae for her excellent work as editor of *Biddip*, and Wayne our dedicated Treasurer who probably has the most responsible job of all keeping track of grant applications and acquittals, maintaining our dedicated website, and much more besides.

I would like to thank Secretary Laraine, committee members, and all our members for their support over the past year.

Robyn

Cover Photo: 'avin' coffee on the Avon

Photo: Rebecca Meegan-Lowe

# STOP RUBBISHING THE AVON

by Rebecca Meegan-Lowe

WA ENVIRONMENT MINISTER Albert Jacob has taken the opportunity this **Keep Australia Beautiful Week** to announce that, “Out of the eight states and one territory, Western Australia has the highest litter volume in Australia...” (www.mediastatements.wa.gov.au).

Wouldn't it be great if he also announced the start of a container deposit scheme for WA, like the one that has been in operation in South Australia since 1977? The return rate of beverage containers in SA was 79.5% in 2014-15 and included glass and plastic bottles, aluminium cans and liquid paperboard containers, all subsequently recycled. Imagine receiving 10c for returning something as small as a 375ml flavoured milk carton! The scheme works on the principle of ‘the polluter pays’, so that the person who discards their can, bottle or carton loses the deposit they paid on it while the person who picks it up collects the refund instead. The scheme complements rather than competes with standard weekly kerbside recycling programs because it targets beverages typically consumed away from home. Community groups and charities benefit from the scheme (as does the environment!) and it is no surprise that beverage containers make up only 2.2% of litter in South Australia (www.epa.sa.gov.au).

Without such a scheme in WA, discarded beverage containers find their way from parks, roadsides and beaches into drains, rivers and oceans. I have been paddling on the Avon around Toodyay and collecting litter that I come across. Drink containers are relatively easy to grab but the rubbish is obviously more various than that. Larger items, such as furniture, tyres and shopping trolleys usually have to wait until the river starts to dry out, at which point a smelly and dirty job awaits! My ideal would be to enjoy a paddle without collecting unsightly litter. I paddle and remove rubbish (including discarded fishing line) in the Canning River and have been joined on occasion by TFOR patron, Viv Read. Viv recently removed a dumped bike from the Canning and paddled with it on his kayak 6km back to our cars. It was a heroic and praiseworthy effort.

WA, Victoria and Tasmania share the dubious honour of still resisting a beverage container deposit scheme. NSW (and then probably ACT) will introduce a scheme from 2017 and Queensland is likely to follow suit. The Northern Territory secured its scheme in 2013 after a fierce challenge in the Federal Court from beverages industries. More than 35 million containers are reported to have been returned for recycling in the first year of that scheme's operation.

Let's hope that a steady trickle of letters from folks like us to our WA Environment Minister can join a stream of letters from environment and other community groups state-wide. Just as the Avon erodes what stands in its way, may we erode resistance to the common sense of introducing a container deposit scheme in WA.



Photos: Rebecca Meegan-Lowe





# *The Inclusive Seed Orchard Session*

*by Bethan Lloyd*

EARLIER IN THE YEAR Vernice Pty Ltd, a great supporter of the Friends of the River, generously re-ripped a large area on the east bank of Millard Pool for revegetation.

The Toodyay Inclusive Community Program and the Toodyay Seed Orchard hosted the Session of Soft Tree Planting held on Monday 13 July and in the midst of school holidays. Over 30 children, together with parents and grandparents, attended to enthusiastically plant around 350 plants of a mixture of York gums and smaller species which included wattles and bottlebrush.

The plants were generously provided by Toodyay Seed Orchard and such was the enthusiasm that the planting finished earlier than anticipated.

It is expected the area needs another planting session at the site; the youngsters, and their family members, are keen to come back next year to see how the site of their planting has progressed.



*Photos above and right: K. Jolly, Shire of Toodyay*

# *GOODBYE TOODYAY LCDC*

*by Wayne Clarke*

THE TOODYAY Land Conservation District Committee (LCDC) has provided all the necessary documents to the Department of Agriculture and Food WA to *WIND-UP*.

Formed in 1989, the LCDC has attracted over \$300,000 of external funding into the Shire of Toodyay, including funding to employ a Community Landcare Coordinator. In latter years they lobbied to have this project continued through a landcare service charge.

Once the LCDC is formally wound up, an article on their history will be written for the Biddip. Meanwhile projects that will be a testament to their role include revegetation sites such as Chitty's (near Blinkbonny, on Toodyay Road), Wattening and Nunile; and with catchment groups at Phillips Brook, Jimperding Brook, Toodyay Brook and Boyagerring Brook. And they attracted a landcare coordinator that, although out of the role, is still providing landcare support to the Shire of Toodyay.

# MAY/JUNE LONG WEEKEND EXCURSION TO TALBOT BROOK *by Wayne Clarke*

TOODYAY FRIENDS of the River members were invited to join the Toodyay Nats Club for their Western Australia Day long weekend excursion to Talbot Brook, in the Shire of York. Included was a visit to the Boggs Family property on Saturday, and a tour of a number of the Talbot Brook Land Management Association (TBLMA) revegetation sites - led by Colin Cable - on Sunday. Colin is a member of CARE, representing the TBLMA.

Accommodation was at the Talbot Brook Hall, a corrugated iron building, originally the Talbot Brook School, from 1911 to 1921 and 1925 to 1944, when it closed due to lack of student numbers. Students then caught a bus into York. There were excellent facilities at the hall with caravan and camping areas around it.

At Rob and Eggy Boggs' property sensor cameras were set up, and although nothing (apart from two of the members) was recorded, Rob and Eggy were ecstatic at having us as visitors.

Saturday night Eggy and Despina arranged the meal while Rob did the BBQ and kept the home fire going throughout the evening. A brush-tailed possum was not concerned about all the extra company.

Sunday saw an early start, with a tour organised by Colin Cable. Colin is passionate about caring for the land, and he took us to some TBLMA sites, and some of the River Conservation Society projects.

Highlights were a visit to the Talbot Reserve, a 15 ha former Shire of York gravel pit now vested with the TBLMA. This was deep ripped to 60-80cm in 2008, and over 10,000 trees were planted. These included wandoo (*Eucalyptus wandoo*) and inland wandoo (*E. capillosa*).



Above & over: Talbot Reserve, with healthy seedlings starting to grow into trees. An amazing 15 hectares of revegetation.

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## LONG WEEKEND EXCURSION TO TALBOT BROOK *cont*



NEXT STOP WAS Sue and Alistair Trinidad's property, where over 100ha has been fenced and revegetated since 2010-2011 to counter the effects of salinity and acid sulphate soils. Fencing of the Boyanning Creek has taken a third of their farming area. Riffles have been installed, as in winter the creek can become a raging torrent. Rolls of hay and sheep manure have been added to counter the acidity.

A visit to the Edward's property was next, where since 2009 over 30,000 trees (along with sedges) have been planted and fenced. It was noted that the weeds were not sprayed prior to planting, as they kept the moisture in the soil and provided a cover to stop erosion.

The DELL RESERVE was our next stop. This 36.6ha reserve is vested with the Vale Of York Reserves Committee, with the Boggs Family as custodians. It has a range of habitats including paperbark thickets and sedges, with banksia, jarrah and wandoo woodlands and sandplain heath. Salinity is a threat to the reserve, which is traversed by Talbot West Road.

We went up Catchment Road (definitely 4WD), past a stand of Drummond's mallee, to the top of Mount Talbot, where we had lunch.



*Left: Lunch was enjoyed at Mount Talbot. It was quite a hot day, and our members were looking forward to a break. Here, Sarah Dudley is serving Vicki Warburton (centre), while Liz Kington (right) and Greg Warburton (hidden by Liz), Colin Cable (centre left), a local landowner (far left) and Robyn Taylor (far left) look on.*



## LONG WEEKEND EXCURSION TO TALBOT BROOK *cont.*



*Above: Colin explaining some of the works the TBLMA has undertaken*

*Photo: Wayne Clarke*



*Left: Colin tasting the water - an indication of the quality following years of restoration work.*

*Photo: Wayne Clarke*

After lunch we drove along Helena Road to the 13 Mile Creek, where 3 kilometres of revegetation (50,000 seedlings) were planted *by hand* from 2005 to 2010. This was a Lotterywest funded TBLMA project. The

## LONG WEEKEND EXCURSION TO TALBOT BROOK *cont.*



*Above: COLIN (left) has Rob Boggs (second right) and Greg (in the red cap) line dancing (or trying to). Colin's wife far right and another local line dancer enjoying the fun.  
Below: Vicki and a local showing Greg how to Line Dance*

*Photos: Wayne Clarke*





## Members Gallery



*Above: LAKE HINDS, between Wongan Hills and Dalwallinu, filled for the first time since 1999 on 6th August 2015.*

*The Lake's outflow is into the North Mortlock River*

*Photo: Lyn Phillips*

*Above and left: A Red-headed Mouse Spider (*Missulena occatoria*).*

*Found right across southern Australia, in almost all habitats, this spider is venomous. The females are about 25mm long and the males 10-12mm. They have a burrow about 55cm deep.*

*Photo: Viv Street*





# TFOR WATER TESTING PROJECT

*By Ric Lowe*

THE TWO relevant sampling sites used during previous Department of Water testing were near Newcastle Bridge (*Stirling Terrace, site 615026*) and at the Toodyay Brook beneath Slaughterhouse Bridge (*Toodyay West Road, site 6151001*). I have suggested that we design the proposed TFOR testing regime to be consistent with the now discontinued Department of Water program (see Avon River Monitoring Program reports).

Although the limits of reporting from TFOR's testing would not be able to match those of the laboratory analysis carried out for the Department of Water, they should still enable useful comparisons to be made about changes in water parameters across the years. It would be practical for TFOR to make monthly measures during periods of river flow of Total Nitrogen, Total Phosphorus, Total Dissolved Solids, pH, and Temperature (as measured in the earlier testing).

However, because testing of dissolved oxygen would be difficult and prohibitively expensive, it is recommended that TFOR omit this measure from our program. As there is a good river flow, a start could be made on the testing. Because certain details of the sampling etc. are not included in the Department of Water reports, I would like to clarify such matters by discussions with Bernie Kelly and Viv Read before testing proper is commenced. It would also be useful to obtain any relevant river flow information being collected by the Department of Water.



*Above: Colin Cable being passionate*

*Photo: Wayne Clarke*



## *The HUMMING FROG by Rebecca Meegan-Lowe*



*Left:* A frog I found on our property in Toodyay. It had flattened itself out like this by the time I got up to it. Before that, I saw two large discs glowing in the torch light but it had hunkered down by the time I got to it and closed its eyes (I don't blame it!). The size of the frog and location (on clay) seem to match the Humming Frog.

I understand this species has a pale stripe (not always red) running from the tip of the snout to the rump. While this isn't distinct in the photo, there is clearly a pale stripe passing back from the snout.

The patterning is very different from what we see on the Spotted Burrowing Frog, which is a regular on our property

*Photo: Rebecca Meegan-Lowe*

## *TOODYAY TIDY TOWNS (TTT)* *by Beth Frayne*

TOODYAY HAS BEEN short-listed at the 2015 State Tidy Towns Sustainable Communities Awards in Perth on Friday, 11 September in three Award Categories: **Natural Environment Conservation**, Heritage and Culture, and Young Legends. On 16 June, Greg gave the environment presentation to the two TTSC Judges, Joanne Gray and Gail Dodd, then together with Vicki and I, participated in the Judges' tour ending with a walk along the Bilya to the Bird Hide.

The TTT Committee has regular discussion meetings, with the Group now numbering fifty five supporters, assisting the Shire and KAB National Office plan the Tidy Towns National Awards event to be held in Toodyay 17-18 March 2016, Adopt-A-Spot (AAS), signage and Red Hill issues.

AAS Program coordinator, Shelley Kingston, has created the new Toodyay Tidy Towns Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/TidyTownsToodyay>) with our local Bank agreeing to sponsor another two years of Toodyay AAS participants. The Big Northam-Toodyay Road Community Clean-up is next on the Bank's agenda.

The Committee hosted its first Inclusive Session in the Memorial Hall on 15 July, with its Recycled Art, a river theme of a 'Keen Kayaker on a Klean River', gaily decorated with plastic bottle tops and displayed for the Avon Descent weekend.

Greg, Vicki, and other TFOR members, continue to promote a litter-free and sustainable community attending a KABWA/Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council Workshop at which Greg was invited to speak on Toodyay initiatives; the recent Community Liaison meeting, 18 August, at the Red Hill Waste Management Facility, was also attended.

The Tidy Towns Awards lunch is to be held 11 September, in Perth.

## Newsletter of the Toodyay Friends of the River Inc.

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"Make Friends  
with our Avon  
River"

Established 1994

The objects of the *Toodyay Friends of the River* are to *work towards the conservation and rehabilitation of the Avon River and its environs. In the bigger picture of natural resource management, we are committed to implementing the Avon River Management Program and its associated River Recovery Plans for each of the four sections of river that pass through Toodyay.*

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### Merchandise for sale

Visit our website at  
[www.toodyayfor.org.au](http://www.toodyayfor.org.au)



For Sale - Toodyay Friends of the River Mugs and Logos

The Toodyay Friends of the River have high quality stoneware mugs, complete with the frog emblem, for sale to members. The mugs are made by the Sandalwood Company, Hope Valley, Western Australia, a family concern which has been in operation for many years. The gift boxed mugs are priced at \$10.00 each, an excellent price for a very sturdy mug. TFOR logos are also for sale at \$12.00 each. These can either be sewn on to a top or attached per a small piece of Velcro, whichever you prefer.

Contact President, Robyn, or Treasurer, Wayne, to make a purchase.

### OUR SPONSORS

The members of the Toodyay Friends of the River would like to acknowledge the continuous support of our sponsors:

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