

BEND OF ISLANDS CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION INC NEWSLETTER

President: Carol Bonny 9712 0648, C/- PO Kangaroo Ground, Vic 3097 Editor: John McCallum 9712 0319

Number 72 August 2008

WHAT LOCAL PLANT IS FLOWERING?

Botanical name: *Wurmbea dioica* subsp. *dioica*

Common name: Common Early Nancy

Family: Liliaceae

Flowering Period July - September



A small lily or perennial herb, up to 10 cm high, with *spikes of white, honey-scented star shaped flowers. (*A spike is an elongated inflorescence of stalkless flowers along the stem.)

Early Nancy is one of the first lilies to flower. The flowers are about 1 cm across and consist of six segments, three sepals and three petals, which are all alike, each with a narrow purple band at the base. Some of the flowers are female with a deep purple ovary deeply divided in three lobes, others are male with six brown and white stamens. Female and male flowers mostly on separate plants though sometimes found on the same plant. A distinguishing feature of the flower is the dark purple ring surrounding the centre of the flower, contrasting sharply against the whiteness of the petals and sepals.

The slender stems have up to three narrow, bright green, grass-like leaves, up to 10 cm long, which expand at the base to sheath the flower-stem.

Plants are dormant during summer and re shoot annually from the underground corms as soon as rain falls in autumn. The small corms or underground swollen stems provided a valuable source of food for the aboriginal people.

Early Nancy can be found in a range of habitats from dry, valley and damp sclerophyll & grassy forests, preferring moist, well drained and heavy clay soils.

ERIC HENRY

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The first half of August brought us an extreme cold snap with some really good rain. Mid morning on the 10th I thought I was seeing things with snowflakes falling so I called on Alan to confirm. Some say sleet but I choose snow!! It was floating down. The temperature that day didn't get above nine degrees. Chilly indeed!

This last month also saw some spectacular patches of gold in the Bend. The Silver Wattle (*Acacia dealbata*) is the best I have seen for many years as is the Golden Wattle (*Acacia pycnantha*), Gold! Gold! Gold! Maybe it has something to do with that sporting event! Sadly our once brilliant display of Spreading Wattle (*Acacia genistifolia*) along Henley Road seems to have senesced. This may be a natural occurrence and I am interested to see what takes place along this stretch of roadside. Also flowering well at our place has been the Nodding Greenhood Orchid (*Pterostylis nutans*). Unfortunately one lovely patch disappeared overnight and my hope is that a wombat and not the dreaded rabbits pruned them. Whoever it was I wish that they had left a few for us to gaze upon and enjoy!

The panel hearings for Heritage Golf Club subdivision amendment C40 has been attended and various other duties have been addressed such as council meetings, tours given to different agencies, submissions, a general meeting, Cinema Pompier, Trivia night, wattle walk as well as all the usual monthly events. It's all go!

The sad news since the last edition was the loss of Sheila Dixon and Kerry Crouch. Both are sadly missed but they left us with lots of good memories.

More properties have changed hands over the months and I welcome all new owners and residents to our wonderful community and environment and invite you to join in and to become members of the Bend of Islands Conservation association.

See you 'round

CAROL BONNY

BLOOMING RED BOX!

Carol Bonny

Our very special Red Box (*Eucalyptus polyanthemus*) has been flowering profusely and is attracting lots of bees and a wonderful range of honeyeaters. The Yellow-faced honeyeater, White-naped honeyeater, White-eared honeyeater, Red Wattle bird and Eastern Spinebill have been joined by the Crescent honeyeater which is not a regular at our place. Their unfamiliar call alerted me that something different was visiting and it took a while to track down. The call was usually early morning when the sun is in a position that made sightings difficult but with a bit of persistence I was eventually able to identify them. We welcome them to our patch.

LANDCARE

Carol Bonny

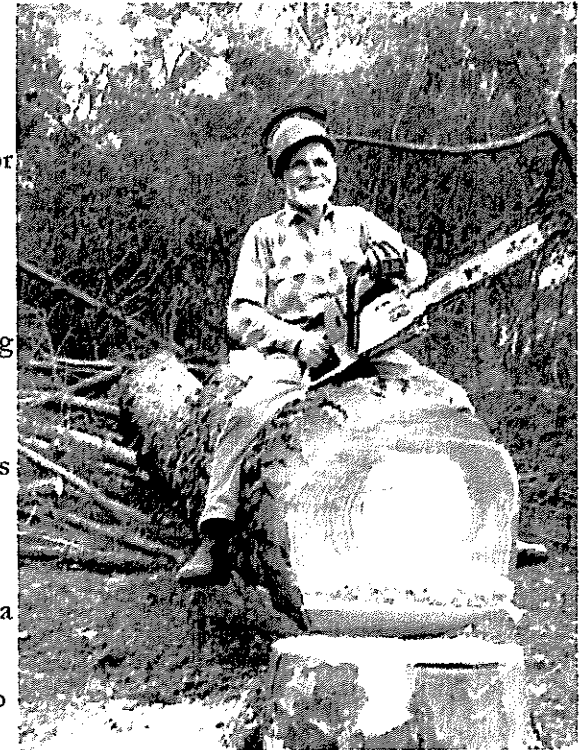
Midweek before the July working bee Alan and I were on hand to watch and help Wolfgang fell three large pines at Jo and Gerards. Sunday arvo saw all the branches disappear and logs were cut for people to remove for firewood. A BIG thank you must go to Wolfgang for his great effort both in the preparation and also with him being the only chainsaw operator on the Sunday so all the cutting was achieved by him. As usual he was first on site and last to leave. Well done.

At earlier Landcare days non-indigenous plants have been removed from three properties down Henley Road including a huge amount of Bluebell Creeper. Thanks to owners Vikki and Mick, Anna and Mark and Marion and Alwyn.

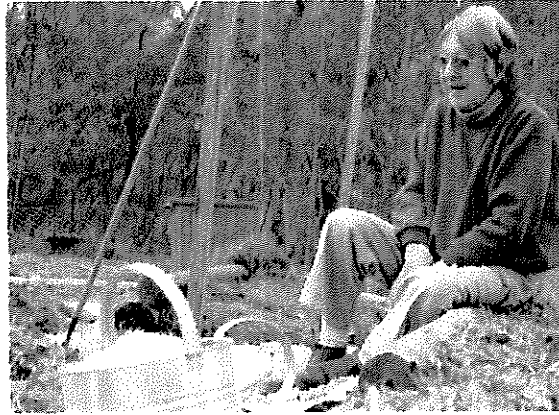
At our August gathering our task was to tackle the inherited *Agapanthus* at 100 Catani Boulevard. Plants that originally would have been a row either side of the drive have spread to cover a huge area in the front of the property. Russell and Gyanamala have been working on the *Agapanthus* forest and the fourteen enthusiastic workers with an assortment of tools finished with a huge pile of weeds.

Thank goodness for the soaking rain during the previous week which made this difficult job a lot easier. Morning tea was enjoyed by all thanks to our hosts and fellow workers, Russell and Gyanamala. Nice to have young Bender Arlo on hand to give us a diversion when we needed it.

The aim is to help other property owners after this one has been liberated. Do you need help or know of a weed problem that Landcare could address?. If so ring me. 9712 0648



SHEILA DIXON



Sheila Dixon knew the Bend of Islands all her life. In the 1920s her family bought land in the area and soon a number of houses were built including the one that her grandmother, Catherine Oxley, lived in at the end of what is now Oxley Road.

Sheil and her cousins spent their holidays here and we all remember her reminiscences of those happy days.

Sheil led a full life; she achieved much and made many friends, among them Philip Adams who paid tribute to her life on his program Late Night Live. When she retired she came back to the Bend of Islands to live permanently. She built her house on an old family property in Henley Road and moved here in 1985, next to her friend Barb. She set about establishing her vegie garden and the love of this little plot sustained Sheil right up until her death.

Sheil was an enthusiastic participant in all community events and supported the local fire brigade as well as BICA. Her warm friendship will be remembered by many.

During her retirement in the Bend of Islands Sheil settled in to her other love, writing and was ready to embrace the new technology of the computer. She was overjoyed when the ABC accepted a script for Country Viewpoint which is a five minute segment of the weekday program on Radio National, Bush Telegraph.

Country Viewpoint is read by the writer and Sheil's contributions over the years made good listening. Some of the transcripts have appeared in BICA News and many of them gave us a snapshot of what life was like for a child growing up in the 1930s and enjoying the delights of holidaying in the bush.

Sheil became close friends with the producer of the program, Michael McKenzie, and he was able to visit her to record programs when she was unable to travel in to the ABC offices. Here is a transcript of her last Country Viewpoint.

This morning we say good-bye to one this program's great contributors, and personally a close friend. I first met Sheila Dixon some three years ago, when I traveled to her house in Kangaroo Ground north of Melbourne to record her Country Viewpoints.

Sheila died on Friday, aged 79, after many years of dialysis, which was only an irritating interruption to a life on the land where she first played as a child, and returned to in the last two decades of her life. The day before Sheila died we recorded this story together at her bedside. It's called Morning In The Garden...

It was late spring and I needed to go and stare at the garden just to get my fix. I only got outside to the deck and that was enough. It was one of those mornings with a humming silence preceding a lovely day. The sun was just coming up over the river, that part called The Bend of Islands, where a cloud of steam was rising. The Yarra was at it's best with some of the run-off from rain we had last week and the dusky moorhen was shrieking at her children when they got too near the rapids. They are quite at home bobbing down the little waterfalls but she gets so anxious about them.

At the top of the hill near my house the trees were casting their lovely morning shadows on the wet short grass and leaves and I went inside to get the camera to remember all this. We've had that heavy rain and humid weather and because it is Tuesday it was hose watering time which is pretty exciting. It's interesting what is exciting these days isn't it? As an elderly person I am allowed to water between 8.00 until 10.00. Of course after the rain a whole lot of interesting stuff is coming up out of the dug-in compost and as far as I am concerned if they have gone to that trouble I find a corner for them in an already crowded garden.

Before I started to work I sat down and just listened to the velvety silence all round me just broken by the sound of the river. A few metres from the garden were 4 kangaroos cropping the short drought grass. Two mums and two young ones. I know this group and one of the young ones was leaping about and crashing into its mother while the other is perpetually hungry and always has it's head in her pouch having another milkshake..

All that work I had done in autumn and winter has paid off but always at the back of my mind is that we might get to stage four next year and it will mean no watering of gardens. With the rain and humid weather everything in the garden was getting it's act together which bodes well for a future lush crop. Beans (both climbing and dwarf), lettuces, eggplants, corn, tomatoes(all Heritage) cucumbers, squash and zucchinis and things I am sure I have left out. We won't think about next year. This year will be the one. By the time I was finished I left the silence to be broken by the Pallid cuckoo which was doing it's best to earn a name it also had 'The Brain Fever Bird.'

KERRY CROUCH

(Extract "Distances" John Berger – "And Our Faces, My Heart, Brief as Photos")

Kerry you always seemed to have been part of the coop. It was a place you were committed to living in.

Kerry was an enigmatic character there was a complexity behind the boyish charm and easy going persona you were always presented with. He was a deceptively easy person to know, he rapidly made you feel at ease and he quickly established a close rapport. Deceptive because as you got to know more about him you discovered he had facets that were only slowly revealed if you were prepared to look. You could have a mathematical and science discussion with him but "the arts" would be reserved for someone else. Many people never knew he was a practising artist, a star hockey player or that he was the captain of a prestigious school. In part the ease of relating to people was due to his humble approach to other people, he was no braggart. He made carefully calculated links to the people he met, while you felt close to Kerry he always had something in reserve, something he held back.

His appeal stretched across the whole range of our society, the guys loved him, the girls loved him and everyone in between loved him. The kids loved him, teenagers loved him, the workers loved him and his employers loved him. Obviously being loved was not a problem for him and in no way did any lack of it contribute to his demise.

Kerry was an innovative thinker, one challenge he encountered was that the coop has more than its fair share of innovative thinkers. Kerry found himself in occasional conflict but while this proved a challenge he seemed to thrive on the fact that that's the way it was, he was a true democrat. As a factional group he could hold meetings in a phone booth, but he was never about factions and was always happy to stand alone. His achievements are considerable. Few people did more to bring the coop together. His contribution to spreading the good word has few rivals. Many new associates will remember his efforts fondly as will some of our recalcitrant debtors; he even made paying the bill a pleasurable thing to do. He had a commitment to honouring deceased members by having some sort of simple memorial. The development of a web site demonstrated his need to keep up with technology and spread the good word. His influence as a chair person, director and a member made him many firm friends and supporters. Even the

*In the silence behind
we no more hear the faraway
question of the summer house:
And tomorrow where
shall we go*



people who worried about some of his bright ideas always spoke of Kerry with affection and admiration for his independence.

You could envy Kerry, he seemed so at ease with life, there appeared to be none of the usual complexities that create barriers and problems. He worked for himself; he had no trouble filling his work timetable. He saved for what he wanted by collecting gold coins in a jar, he always seemed to reach his target. He was a controlled gambler who had a ritual of making a carefully calculated \$5 bet on the horses. He was a never ending student always a part of the "campus scene" that the rest of us remember with fondness. His relationships always seemed to be stable and exciting. He appeared to come and go according to his own wishes. He was always doing something that was a bit off beat and interesting; projects he had decided to undertake, they were inspiring and well done. He loved the social scene and was a master of social interaction. He had an extraordinary general knowledge and an idealistic view of life. He approached the world scientifically and logically, always analysing problems with a powerful and open mind he was rational agnostic come atheist. There was a lot to envy.

In the end what appeared to be a perfect life slowly fell apart and a dark force overpowered all that was good and great. It was amazing to observe this in someone who seemed to have such an enthusiastic hold on life, such a spectacular appearance and such a wonderful mind. The force of course was not supernatural it is something many of us have already encountered, a deep depression. He wrestled with it for many years but it slowly wore him down.

We will always remember Kerry with a great deal of affection. His death has surprised many of us in the depth of its impact. We worry that we could have done more or helped in some other way. This of course is all nonsense; there is nothing anyone could have done really. Our only recourse now is to honour him in our memories. Let him pop into your head when you drive into "A" track, think of his involvement, his commitment and his love of this place. Remember the lobbying, the need to make improvements, the fun and the special place he lived in. We miss him and we will continue to miss him. In the end he obtained the peace he so grimly longed for. The act of suicide is always difficult for those left behind to understand. It is more evidence of Kerry's commitment to making his own decisions, being unbelievably brave and organised. You can admire his solution; he was in unbelievable pain and could see no way out. He tried conventional and unconventional treatments and got no satisfaction. In the end he took a path few of us could bear, despite a considerable amount of fear and the guilt for the heritage it left behind.

Farewell old friend you are an important memory!

Pierre and Alan

CHRISTMAS HILLS FIRE BRIGADE

Neill Kamminga (Captain)

Since its early history the home of the Christmas Hills Fire Brigade has been on the Eltham-Yarra Glen Rd. Starting out with an old Nissen hut and later incorporating an additional shed, this station has housed most of our fire-fighting vehicles over the years.

The 1980's saw the construction of the satellite station in the Bend of Islands. Much larger than the "North end" station and, having a meeting room, it became the default meeting place for the brigade's monthly meetings and the classroom style training.

All that is about to change.

A brand new main station has now been constructed on the corner of Ridge Road and Muir Road, about 1 km from the old location. The new station is equipped with a huge dual truck engine bay, dedicated workshop, office, turnout room and facilities for the use and cleaning of BA (breathing apparatus). Attached to the main shed is a purpose built meeting room with full kitchen facilities which the Brigade can use for training, presentations and functions.

In short, the facility is just fantastic! The brigade anticipates it will get the keys before the end of August and planning is under way for the official grand opening. It will be a big community event for the entire brigade area and we will advertise this event in the next month. The community has supported the Brigade in the past and now it's time for the community to reap the benefits. We are hoping that the new station will be embraced and used by the community in much the same way as the South station has been used.

With the opening of the new station we are also hoping to attract more new members. The old shed is going and, sadly, so are many of our ageing firefighters. They need a rest too. As a result it is becoming more and more difficult to get both tankers on the road when there is a turnout. As the membership dwindles, we have to rely more and more on fewer and fewer. As a community we should be looking to spread the load across as many people as possible. Community safety is a community responsibility and something to which we should all look to contribute as best we can.

When I joined this community over 15 years ago, the fire brigade was a place to meet the community and to invest something in that community. If your neighbour's house was on fire you'd go and help, just as you would expect them to help if it was your place. If your neighbouring area was on fire you'd help out to make sure it didn't get to your place. Just as you would expect neighbouring brigades to help at a fire in your area.

With a bit of training and a bit of commitment we can end up with a lot of help.

We'll be in the new station before summer, come and join us so we'll all be ready when Summer comes.

LOCALS ART SHOW

Neil Harvey

Many people in the Bend of Islands have cherished items of artwork produced by local artists. I am proposing that we get a collection together on loan for a day (or 2) and we create an exhibition as a fund raiser for B I C A and the Brigade.

I will be calling on local expertise to help set it up and it is intended to use the fire shed as the venue. (If Alan can make it look like a Cinema, then maybe we could make it look like a Gallery) We would like to connect it to the Open Studio time slot as an adjunct to that activity. We would charge admission, provide nibbles and sell a tippie or two.

If you would like to assist or have a painting, sculpture or print you think we would all enjoy viewing, please e mail me on nharvey@bi-wize.com or ring 97120462.

BIRD ALERT

Mike Pelling

A light hearted report of an albino Blackbird

The effect of climate change is upon us. Proof positive has been located in the King Valley wine area of Victoria by the author of this contribution. Known for the adventurous range of Italian varietals, long lunches and the nearby Wangaratta jazz festival, the area has become as well known as the Hunter and Yarra valleys.

On a recent visit I was told about a certain blackbird that had genetically engineered itself in a unique way. At first we were uncertain as to the reason but when we noted recent rainfall deficits and dry pasture, plus reported lower grape yields, we realized that it was nature at work creating a solution for this bird, loved by all, particularly for its glorious song. Although an introduced species, the stimulus to native species such as the Magpie, to maintain the standard of its carolling through this bird globalization, should not be underestimated. So armed with all this knowledge we realized why this Blackbird was in fact almost white, particularly at the back of its body. The reason is that the bird can now lower its heat absorption from ultra violet or infra red radiation. A black body absorbs more heat than a white one. I have consulted Birds Australia and it appears that a new sub species can now be created. I have photographs of this genetically engineered bird and have stalked it in the garden it frequents. Interestingly, the scientific name for the blackbird is *Turdus merula*, whilst that for a starling is *Sturnus vulgaris*, and as both birds are introduced and essentially a very dark colour, a new species name could be some exciting pied variation of these.

Thanks to Barb Snell, Bonnys, Caroline Kardachi for supplying photos, Graham for the goanna pic (still waiting for the photo!), Cric (as ever) for the cover pic and notes.

THE JOY OF WILDLIFE!

Rosemary West

The wildlife here is a constant joy. Mind you, I am not keen on the feral creatures though I have not been too troubled by them. I've seen a fox coming up from the river where he was having a drink, but the rabbits rarely bother about my place as I have so little grass. I have spotted a deer on the road (though quite a distance from my place) but mercifully I've not seen any cats. I have mixed feelings about the wallabies; nice to have them around I guess but I would prefer them to allow me to do a bit of revegetation. The roos don't venture down my hill; again no grass to graze.

I love my wombats & have got to know them well. In spring it was great to see mother wombat with her very small baby at foot. She hastily shepherded her baby down a hole as I came into view, but unfortunately, because mum is very obese, she was unable to follow him. So she stood guard at the hole & growled softly at me as I quietly made my way past. A few weeks later I saw mum lying in the sun, with her offspring, much bigger now, cradled between her front legs. It is hard not to get sentimental over seeing something like this.

Koalas & echidnas are relatively rare on my place though I have had both. One day an echidna made his way down my driveway but obviously did not find anything to his liking. Possums eat everything (or whatever the wallabies leave). I have seen a platypus in the river in the early morning, though only once.

However my really big thrill occurred a few days ago. I saw a movement out of the corner of my eye and there, on my deck, was a brushtailed phascogale. I now feel I can die happy! He bounced about with great enthusiasm, then poked his snout between the timber slats. He sussed out my woodpile, then shinned up one of my poles, then down again, head first (very clever that!). He then took off to one of my trees where he repeated his explorations.

I love the birds (again I am untroubled by ferals as a rule), the reptiles and indeed all the creatures. I once saw a stick insect that I swear was a foot long. The occasional rat (domestic, not bush), mouse (ditto) & cockroach don't impress but all in all this is the most magical place & let's hope it stays this way.



WOODY ISSUES

In the Diamond Valley Leader recently there were two items about council action regarding timber collecting and tree removal. Please take note that our zoning requires a permit for ANY vegetation removal, living or dead. It's all habitat!. Don't get yourself into trouble with the council!

Fined over firewood

A Tynong North man has been fined \$200 for collecting firewood from the side of the road in Bend of Islands. Nillumbik Council said the man had breached local laws in a bid to keep his winter fire burning last month.

Fined for downing tree

A Landowner who tried to use a wild windstorm as cover to remove a protected Red Box eucalypt has been slugged with a \$4000 penalty. Nillumbik Council officers were called to a Diamond Creek property on April 2 following a complaint a tree was being pulled over by a four-wheel-drive. The landowner was convicted in the Heidelberg Magistrates' Court last month and ordered to pay a \$2000 fine and \$2000 in court costs. The court heard the owner had initially tried to blame the wind for the loss of the tree, which was protected under a Section 173 agreement. The council also successfully prosecuted a developer who removed two trees — one of which was also a healthy red box eucalypt - from another Diamond Creek property in March. The developer was fined \$7000 and ordered to pay \$3500 in costs. Mayor Warwick Leeson said the council took tree removal seriously and people should get in contact (before removing vegetation).

SOLAR NEWS

Alan Bonny

Since the presentation on Solar Photovoltaic Installation earlier this year at the Fire Station our solar group have pursued the Solar Neighborhood concept. Thanks to Rudi Pauli, Ross Henry and the Mildenhalls for their work. Nillumbik have also hosted a presentation at Edendale Farm for the broader community. It has been a bit tedious getting underway with web page problems including limited web access for most Benders. Most residents who have expressed an interest have had their houses inspected with varying outcomes. Tree shadow is a major problem with a lot of houses and many applicants have been rejected because of this. The solar system must perform at a prescribed level to qualify for the rebate and the system supplier is responsible for ensuring that this is achieved. I have been accepted as the co-ordinator for our group and would be happy to address any questions regarding our Solar Neighborhood. 9712 0648

PLANNING ISSUES

Alan Bonny

One of our BICA working groups is the Planning Sub-committee. Its role is to look at planning issues and activities that impact on the Bend of Islands. BICA has made submissions to many State and Local Government initiatives relating to environment and planning. For the Melbourne Water lands that were transferred to DSE/Parks and private ownership BICA worked with council and MW to try to achieve the optimum environmental outcome.

On a more local level BICA liaises with Nillumbik and reviews and makes submissions as required on any planning application that we are aware of.

Planning applications made to Nillumbik Council are advertised on the Nillumbik web-site under "Planning Registers". These registers show applications received, applications advertised and applications under consideration. BICA monitors these registers. Depending on the application council sometimes notifies BICA and/or neighbors that may be impacted on by a proposal. Residents often advise BICA of any proposal that they know of. When you have a few minutes have a look at the Nillumbik web site and go to the planning registers. (While you are on-line, have a look at the BICA web page as well.)

The BICA Planning Sub-committee assesses any proposal with respect to conformance with SUZ2 compliance and environmental impacts. This may require a site visit or a trip to Shire Office to view the full application detail.

The SUZ2 provisions include requirements on such things as boundary setbacks, development containment, single dwelling only, visual amenity and colours. If a submission is required, BICA requests that council considers the proposal accordingly.

All submissions made to council are called 'objections'. It's confrontational language but public input is part of the planning process and BICA believes that our association and residents should take an active role in ensuring that our zoning provisions are applied to protect the values and lifestyle we enjoy.

CINEMA POMPIER

Another cold night for Saturday night at the movies but I'm sure all who attended enjoyed the features. For the first film the young at heart were catered for with 'Meet The Robinsons', an animated adventure about a young inventor.

The main feature was Lantana. I first saw this film a long time ago and I enjoyed it again. I actually had forgotten "who did it".

Thanks again to Alan Barb and Neil for a great night including chocolates and ice creams and coffee and cake. Decadence!

August 2008

MY FRIEND SHEILA

Carol Bonny

I guess we all remember people in different ways. I first met Sheila at a working bee along Skyline road back in 1992. BICA had undertaken the roadside clearing task with the consent of the then Healsville shire and our job was stacking branches that had been trimmed from the roadside trees. This older lady wandered up to me and in the manner that was unique to Sheila she demanded, "Who are you? From that abrupt meeting a wonderful friendship was formed.

Her sense of humor was always wonderful and we enjoyed a few laughs over the years. Sheila was a regular attendee at BICA events, always contributing as best she could. A few years ago at a Clean up Australia Day our volunteers were assembled in front of the fire shed in anticipation of filling the skip with rubbish that others had thoughtlessly disposed of. Gloves were handed out to all and as we proceeded to remove them from the packaging. I happened to look over at Sheila as she ripped open her bag and with a twinkle in her eye threw it on the ground behind her. Our eyes met and we burst into laughter.

Only hours before she died she still managed to crack a joke. We were visiting her in hospital and Alan sneezed, quick as a flash she said "Careful, you'll give me germs"! We shared a laugh for the last time.

Each day as I dig my compost in our vegetable gardens I think of Sheila.

She loved her garden and this was a tip she passed on to me. "The worms love it," she would say.

Thanks for the memories.

GENERAL MEETING

Carol Bonny

Thanks to Russell and Gyanamala for hosting the meeting and our Guest speaker Alan Webster from DSE who spoke on Victorian Bio-regions. Reports from committee covered activities, updates and issues from the Bend.

There were new and old faces in attendance with a special treat of mulled wine to start the day and chai tea to complement the very pleasant arvo tea.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

John McCallum

At a recent Landcare working bee, the question was asked "Is Agapanthus a plural or a singular word?" Good question, but when you see it written it is a little more obvious that it is not a plural word (not many words end in "u"!). Agapanthus is indeed the scientific name for the genus of the well-know plant we all love to hate; it is rendered here in italics because that's the rule.

The next question was of course, "OK, what is the plural of Agapanthus?" Well that probably depends on your taste. In English we generally make a plural from a singular word by adding "s" or "es" depending on the whether the word ends in a vowel or a consonant. So we would get Agapanthuses (no italics here because it is no longer part of a scientific name). Less clumsy might be to adopt the same convention as is used when forming plurals of the names of many animals (sheep, deer, dish are some examples). So we could say "There are a lot of Agapanthus on that block of land". If you were speaking Latin you might use the plural form Agapanthi. We are not speaking Latin and such a form could be seen as pedantic although there are examples of words in common use which use that convention.

Three common Latin noun endings and their respective plurals are exemplified here:

Fungus and fungi

Alga and algae

Bacterium and bacteria

These plural forms are in common use as names for groups of organisms. Other examples in everyday language are the forms "radi" and "termini" that are favoured by some people. "Fora" as a plural for "forum" is also sometimes used. This pretty much comes down to taste.

Leading on from the previous issue, the next question was "Is it a Latin word?" Again, there is no straightforward answer to that! We now have to delve into the complicated area of the rules governing the scientific names of organisms.

As we know, plants, animals and microbes all have a scientific name made up of two words. The first is the name of the genus and many such are straight out Latin words. Mus means mouse in Latin and that is the name used for the genus to which a number of mice belong. Even if they are derived from other sources, the genus name might take the approximate form of a Latin word. An example of this is the name for the tea-trees, *Leptospermum*. This word is derived from the Ancient Greek words for "wing" and "seed" but looks like a Latin word.

Sometimes the genus name is simply a Latinised version of a common name for the

organism for example the Swamp Wallaby that inhabits our area belongs to the genus *Wallabia* and the wombat is *Vombatus ursinus*.

Different members of a genus have their own specific name. This can be a word that describes the plant or animal in some way, and the wombat's specific name means "bear-like". A species name may commemorate someone (never the author of the name) or it may reflect the distribution of the organism (where it is found).

A nice example of an animal where the genus name is a straight lift from a language other than Latin and the species name commemorates a person is the Pilbara Ningau (*Ningani timealey*). The small marsupial is named, of course, after former Bend of Islands resident and member of the Round the Bend Co-op, Tim Ealy.

By the way the name Agapanthus is derived from the Greek agape, meaning love, and anthos, meaning flower. Agapanthus is therefore the flower of love!



Dead Aggies!

TRIVIA

Alan Bonny

On the 12 July we gathered at the Millo's for the annual Trivia Challenge. This time three large tables were formed to see who were the most trivial. I am pleased to announce that our table took the dubious honour proving that we knew more about nothing important than anyone else! A close result with only 6 points between the scores of the three tables after eight grueling rounds. Thanks again to Trish & Bob for their trivial input and their hospitality and to our trivial team members, Jeff, Gareth and his girl friend, Pamela Tina and Rudi. And next year we might have the Kammingas back unless they are snowing again!



If undelivered please return to:
Bend of Islands Conservation Association Inc
C/- PO Kangaroo Ground, Vic. 3097

Calendar Update

Oct 12 Neil Douglas Environmental Reserve Event
Oct 5 Orchid Field Day
Oct 26 Pub Walk
Nov 8 Night Event
Nov 30 BICA AGM
December 20 Café Benders Xmas evening

If undelivered please return to:
Bend of Islands Conservation Association Inc
C/- PO Kangaroo Ground, Vic. 3097

BICA Newsletter

Print Post Approved
PP 335468/0001

**PRINT
POST
PP335468/0001**

**POSTAGE
PAID
AUSTRALIA**