

WATERSHED Torbay

N E W S

No 3 News of Torbay Catchment Group & the Special Project: Watershed Torbay Dec 2002

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Catchment tour

Check out the Watershed Torbay website:
www.torbay.scric.org

Ring: 9842 5760
W&RC or 9845 1081
Torbay Catchment Group for project information

Catchment Chairman's Message- More Thoughts about Water!



Andrew Marshall with Naomi Arrowsmith Regional Manager of Water and Rivers Commission and Project Manager Watershed Torbay

The poor water quality caused by the algal blooms has a serious effect on all the people living in the catchment – farmers, residents, fishermen and tourist operators to name but a few.

For the residents living near to the waterways, the stench in summer is extremely unpleasant. It severely impacts on the resident's lifestyle and restricts domestic and outdoor recreational activities such as gardening, swimming and fishing.

Marbellup Brook has now been identified as the preferred next major public water supply source for the town of Albany. This brings new challenges to landholders in the district. Firstly, this is a cleared catchment, and while the stream zone is relatively uncleared, there remain risks to water supply quality from farming practices in the catchment. Secondly, there is potential conflict between the Water Corporation and other future users in the catchment for water availability, especially if the horticulture potential of the catchment is realised.

Essentially the farmers of the catchment will be providing a service to the Albany town community – assimilating the town's waste water through the tree farm opposite the airport, and protecting the future public water supplies for the town. These

services need to be recognised so that farmers in the catchment are not economically disadvantaged. This will be a big challenge over the next few years.

There is also concern about the impacts of water extraction from the Marbellup Brook and the need to maintain flows to protect the environment and lifestyle values of the Torbay catchment.

The growth of Albany will put further pressure on the demands of all suitable water sources within our catchment. We are working through the project Watershed Torbay to plan for the future of the catchment with all key players for the long-term prosperity of our environment and district as a whole. *Andrew Marshall*

John Simpson, Chair of Watershed Torbay Steering Committee, is currently overseas, we look forward to his continued input when he returns in the new year.

Funds secured for catchment work!

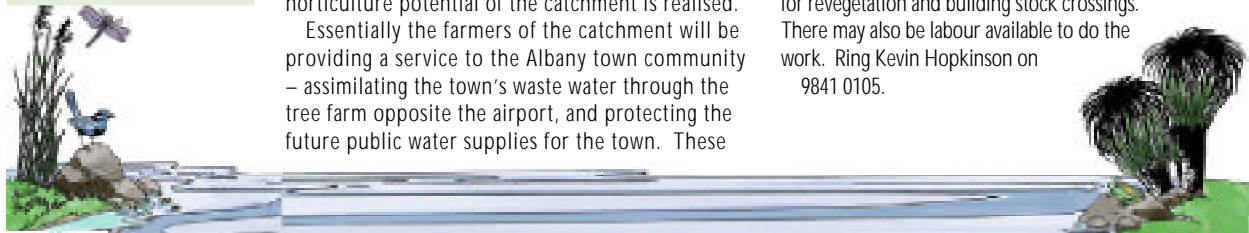
GREAT news! The Torbay Catchment Group has been successful with BOTH applications the group made through the Federal Government's Envirofunds. This is fantastic as it will assist with the Group's ongoing weed control program, and will kick-start the on-ground works program to parallel the Watershed Torbay River Restoration Plan! The two programs funded are:

- Catchment-Wide Implementation of Waterways Rehabilitation. \$28,182
- Watsonia and Woody Weed Control and Regeneration. \$2,841

Fencing, Revegetation and Stock Crossing Funding Support Now Available!

With the success of the Envirofund application there is further funding now available to assist with fencing off waterways and wetlands, purchasing seedlings for revegetation and building stock crossings.

There may also be labour available to do the work. Ring Kevin Hopkinson on 9841 0105.



Update on Recent Activities

Torbay Walk Trail Started

The Torbay community has already started on the walk trail near the Torbay Hall with funds recently secured from Trailswest/Lotteries. An enthusiastic group got together on Saturday 23 November to remove some of the invasive weeds, especially *Acacia longifolia* and *Pittosporum undulatum* before they seed up and spread further.

The trail is being developed as a botanic walk and bird trail with a bird hide included in the development work. Keith Smith, who works at Nindethana Seed Services, and local bird enthusiast, Robin Phillis, have a wealth of information about local species so any volunteers can learn as they work! The project is a great opportunity for locals to socialise and the first busy bee started with an enjoyable BBQ. Why not offer your assistance with the project. Contact Robin on 9845 1114.

Good Response to Catchment Survey

There has been a good response to the survey sent out in the last newsletter. More than a third of the 600 landholders in the Torbay catchment have returned their forms.

Apologies if you received a reminder when you had already sent in the form! Now the information is being entered into the database. A summary of responses will be provided in the next newsletter and posted on the website. If you have still not returned your survey form – it's not too late, send it in!

BALI 13.10.02

*Toll the bell slowly
for many are gone,
so joyous their last moments
and now all forlorn*

*Toll the bell slowly
to remember the dead
senselessly slaughtered
as they enjoyed life to the full*

*Toll the bell slowly
for the sick and the maimed
who live with the fear
of that moment in time*

*Toll the bell softly
and hope we remember
the day that our innocence
was lost forever*

Maurice. 14.10.02

Surveyors at work in Elleker-Torbay Area

Denmark Survey and Mapping have been contracted to collect detailed survey information of selected waterways, channels and land areas in the district. The work will be carried out between 11 November 2002 and 10 January 2003. This information will be used in the development of a computer based water balance and transfer model. The model will show how the current drainage system operates and will enable various alternative management options to be tested. There have been community concerns for many years about algal blooms in Lake Powell and potential flooding of potato crops and other farm land.

The model will be an essential tool to determine if the drainage system can be better managed to meet community and environmental needs.

The model will be developed by Dr Aditya Jha from the Water and Rivers Commission who will work with a group of local community members to ensure their concerns are addressed.

This is key research for the Watershed Torbay whole of catchment restoration project.

If you would like to find out more please contact Andrew Maughan at the Water and Rivers Commission on 9842 5760 or visit our website at:

www.torbay.scric.org/



Surveying of drains for the model of how the drains work to assist with improved drain management

Unauthorised Bar Opening Not On!

At a recent meeting of the Torbay Catchment Group, we were told that the latest opening of the Torbay Inlet which occurred in mid October, was not an authorised event. Water levels in all of the three lakes which are an integral part of the drainage system were not sufficiently high enough to afford any advantage by opening the Torbay Inlet sandbar. The implications of this incident may not be obvious. However, unless there are some significant rainfall between now and the end of this year, we may not get an opportunity to release any water from this system prior to the end of the coming summer.

I will tell you a story which hopefully illustrates exactly that we need to understand and appreciate the implications of our actions.

Years ago, my brother and I had a marvellous time making rivers, dams and creeks using the rain water from the tank by the milking shed. We put in miniature trees and shrubs, found rocks and other paraphernalia to make a beautiful landscape. We were thoroughly enjoying ourselves, until our father found us. All hell broke loose as we were happily squandering the summer's only supply of water for the milking shed and we didn't have a clue to the implications for my father in the coming months.

The opening of the Torbay Inlet is exactly the same scenario. The person/-persons who opened the bar obviously have no idea of how their actions may affect the others in the community.

So my message to these people is simply this. "Please, leave your shovels, spades etc either in the back of the truck or in the shed at home and let the people who are working for the good of the whole community, get on with their job without interference from others making their job extremely difficult".

Let's all work together on this one and give the catchment managers a fair Aussie go.

Pat Walker
Secretary Torbay Catchment Group

MEETING DATES 2003

7.30 pm at ELLEKER HALL

28 th January	Tuesday	Watershed Torbay Steering Group
19 th February	Wednesday	Torbay Catchment Group AGM and General Mtg
11 th March	Tuesday	Watershed Torbay Steering Group
2 nd April	Wednesday	Torbay Catchment Group
22 nd April	Tuesday	Watershed Torbay Steering Group
14 th May	Wednesday	Torbay Catchment Group
3 rd June	Tuesday	Watershed Torbay Steering Group
25 th June	Wednesday	Torbay Catchment Group

Birds of Torbay

Curious about the newly established Marshall Wetlands near Hennings Road, the Albany Birdwatching Group made the Torbay area the destination of their July outing. With a variety of habitats such as Lake Powell, Torbay Inlet and numerous patches of remnant bush along road verges, the area always offers a good chance to see many different birds.

Lake Powell offers refuge to many waterbirds such as ducks, swans, grebes and coots; even the endangered Australasian Bittern has been spotted! Registered as a wetland of national importance, the lake is a significant site for nomadic birds during times of drought. In excess of 1500 Red-necked Avocet have been recorded at one time with the highest numbers usually encountered during autumn.

The area is not easily accessible to the public. A dense fringe of Melaleucas and Agonis makes it difficult to see the birds on the lake. An elevated bird hide near the Old School Road site would provide access to the reserve.

Much easier birding was available at Hennings Road. Hundreds of Straw-necked Ibis were congregating on the paddocks, together with dozens of Shelducks, White-faced Herons, and countless Pipits and White-fronted Chats. Whilst only a few birds were present on the Marshall Wetland, one of them was a rarely seen Pink-eared Duck. Once the shrubs have grown this area will no doubt be an excellent refuge for waterbirds. Two Black-fronted Dotterels have already taken up residence.

Not far from the Torbay Hall a White-necked Heron was spotted feeding on a paddock. Whilst not a rare species, this heron is only occasionally seen in the region. It is believed these birds migrate from the Eastern states during times of drought.

With water levels being fairly high, only a limited number of birds were sighted on Torbay Inlet. Apart from the common Little-pied Cormorant and Pacific Black Duck, a White-bellied Sea-Eagle was seen circling over the inlet. There were no signs of Hooded Plovers on the beach. These small waders have become quite rare as their habitat is coming under increasing pressure from human beach users. Hopefully the "Hoodies" will return to Torbay.

For more information about the birdlife in the Albany region, visit our website: http://www.albanygateway.com.au/Topic/Environment/Albany_Bird_Watching_Group/

Ann Bondin Albany Bird Watching Group

Place Names in Torbay Catchment

TORBAY

The townsite of Torbay is located 20 km west of Albany. In 1889 a railway line was constructed through this area by Millars Karri and Jarrah Forests Ltd to transport timber from Torbay. Millars also held the land around the railway, and in 1899 when the good timber had been removed the land was acquired by the government. It was subdivided and released for agriculture in 1900, but land near the old station was reserved for future subdivision as a townsite. This area was gazetted as the townsite of Torbay in 1910.

Torbay derives its name from the Bay of the same name located on the coast south of the townsite. The bay was named in 1831 by Governor Stirling whilst exploring the area with Surveyor General Roe. It is named after Tor Bay on the coast of Devon, England. A Tor is an isolated mass of rock, usually granite (DOLA, 2002).

REDMOND

Redmond is located 28 km north west of Albany. In 1912 the government opened a railway siding here named Mulikupp, but changed the name the same year to Redmond. The following year the District Surveyor for the region advised there was settler demand for blocks in the area, and proposed a scheme of subdivision. A school was soon built at the siding, and in 1916 the townsite of Redmond was gazetted. The reason for selection of the name Redmond, first for the station, and then the townsite, is not known, but it is believed to honour John Edward Redmond (1856-1918), Irish nationalist leader and the leader of Irish Home Rule in the British Parliament (DOLA, 2002).

Do You Know the Origins of the Following Names?

Kronkup, Manarup/Manurup Lagoon, Unndiup Creek, Hunwick, Currinup. Let the Newsletter editor know.



Redmond Store Photographer Wendy Lee - Waters

Woodbury Boston School History Project

More stories from long term locals recorded during oral history sessions with the Senior Class.

Maurice McCormick

Marice was in a family of 12 kids, his Dad was an Electrical Engineer. He remembers the first shop opening in 1926 in Torbay, the Torbay store. There was also a tomato sauce factory in Torbay, which had it's own name. There was a gold mine in Rutherford Road.

In 1880 timber started being milled in Torbay. 800 workers from Victoria came to help collect the timber. There were passenger trains as well as working trains, he remembers he went on one. In 1880 Millars had their own railways which just transported timber. *By Bessie*

Maurice 's Favourite Place

Maurice likes sitting on his hill, watching nature go by. He especially likes watching the little blue wrens and humming birds singing in the trees. He also likes watching his cattle grazing in the grass while drinking a nice cup of coffee. *By Metisse*

Pat Walker - The First Tractor!

My dad had to dig up potatoes by hand and put them in bags. He had to plough with a horse and plough until he got the first tractor in the area. Everyone came to have a look at it. After that it was away with the horse and plough! After that his job was a lot easier. *By Benjamin*

Bill North - The Shark!

It was a 14 foot dinghy and a 16 foot shark, it was near Two Peoples Bay and Coffin Island. Bill came back to get the net off the shore. Then he had to switch the motor on the other side of the boat and put it on full lock. The shark took him 5 miles out to sea doing loops in the boat! *By Sagi*

Letters to the Editor

Feedback on Watershed Torbay Website

What a terrific site. Very informative and professional. I only came upon it whilst searching for something else. I'm a local (well nearly - Denmark).

Roger Boyd

Greeting from the Travelling Smurfs!

Thanks to Pat Walker, Secretary of the Torbay Catchment Group, I have just received the No.1 edition of 'Watershed Torbay'.

As my wife (Marg) and I have been touring and discovering Australia for the past 22 months, Pat has endeavoured to keep us informed of the activity within the Torbay Catchment. We are probably as well informed as any stay at home resident of the catchment!

Thanks also to Andrew Marshall for his kind words in the inaugural edition of 'Watershed'. It is rewarding to see the level of community involvement now happening and especially pleasing to see young people having a say about the catchment and what they perceive as problems.

It has taken a long time (I think it was some time in 1989 that we held our first public meeting in the Elleker Hall) to reach the commitment that the community and government departments now have. There were times when we thought "Bugger this! I've had enough!" Times when government departments fobbed us off; times when politicians and councillors didn't want to know us except at voting time. The few who hung in there and can now see a light at the end of the tunnel, are to be congratulated.

I would trust that the 'Grass Roots' decisions and recommendations from the community are listened to by the respective government departments and bureaucracy does not assume control of the catchment group! Kind regards to all, especially the clan in towntown Elleker.

John Blaney-Murphy

Green Corps Proposal Submitted

Green Corps is a program where teams of 10 young people between 15 and 20 years of age work for 6 months on community environmental and heritage projects.

An application has been prepared by Green Skills for a Watershed Torbay project from March to September 2003. If successful, the team will help with fencing waterways, planting local species, building waterways stock crossings, weed control, work on community halls, building a bird hide at Lake Powell and undertaking some fauna monitoring. We will know the outcome early in the new year.

Update on Recent Activities!

Soils Workshop Popular!

The Torbay Catchment Group soils workshop organised with Ron Master Department of Agriculture was greatly appreciated by the 35 participants. All agreed that the day was very thorough covering soil and tissue testing, the value of lime, dolomite and gypsum, alternative fertilisers and ameliorates and how to get the best returns from soil additives for crops and animal health. Further soils workshops are planned for 2003.



Waterways Rehabilitation Grants

Kevin Hopkinson is now employed one day per week through Green Skills, as a catchment support officer for Torbay. He is the contact for enquiries about the waterways rehabilitation grants available through the Torbay Catchment Group.

Kevin is full bottle on revegetating waterways and wetlands with local native species and has wide experience in managing projects fencing creeklines to exclude stock, developing offstream watering points, and constructing stock crossings. The funding assistance available covers up to:

\$600/km for fencing

\$600/ha for seedlings

\$700/stock crossing

\$300/offstream watering point.

Ring Kevin to talk about the work you would like to do - 9841 0105.

Coming Up in the Catchment

Torbay Catchment Group AGM: Local Skills Sought!

Why not offer your services on the committee of the Torbay Catchment Group. The Annual General Meeting will be held 19 February 2003.

We particularly need to fill the positions of **Secretary and Treasurer**. The work is not arduous and the rewards are many.

If you do not want to receive this newsletter

ring Louise Duxbury, newsletter editor on 9848 1019. Articles, poems, photos, and other contributions welcomed - mail to: Green Skills PO Box 577 Denmark WA 6333 • louiseduxbury@greenskills.green.net.au

Help bring about local positive change! Ring Catchment Group Chair Andrew Marshall on 9845 1081 with your expressions of interest!

CATCHMENT TOUR

Sunday 16 Feb 2003

Meet at TORBAY HALL at 8.30 am.

Bring your own lunch, morning tea provided. Site visits likely to include:

- * Lunch stop at Torbay Hall, where Bob Gretton (Green Skills Inc) will present findings of the Torbay Inlet waterways survey.
- * Visit properties in Torbay Inlet sub-catchment to look at waterways condition
- * Potato farming at Chris Westcott's property on Elleker-Grasmere Road
- * Manarup Lagoon
- * Watsonia control along selected roads in Torbay Catchment
- * Marshall's constructed wetland
- * Martin's stream restoration site

Making Fox Baiting More Effective

In October 8 people from the Torbay Catchment Group took fox baiting training provided by the Dept of Agriculture. At the November meeting people who laid the baits on their properties reported an average take up rate of 90%. October is the most effective time of year for fox baiting.

The October 2003 fox baiting program and training will be advertised well in advance to expand the number of landowners taking part in the program.

Free Herbicide for Blackberry Control

Community action is needed to take control of Blackberry before it is too late. The Bushcarers, Department of Agriculture and CALM have won some National Heritage Trust (NHT) funding to give free herbicide and advice to landholders in an effort to eradicate and reduce areas of infestation, and provide proven methods of control for the future.

If you have blackberry on your property and would like to take advantage of this offer, please contact John Bruce at the Department of Agriculture on 9892 8444.

Next Envirofund Round Early 2003

Put your thinking caps on to come up with other projects! The next round of the Australian Government Envirofund applications for the year 2003-2004 is expected to open in early 2003. Let members of the Torbay Catchment Group know your brilliant ideas.