



FoCC Incorporated

Spikey News



Linking the community with Woookarung and the Canadian Corridor
November 2020 Issue Number 72

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1. Xmas at the Lookout

The 4th annual FoCC drinks and nibbles at the Lookout will be held at 7pm on Friday December 4th. Please bring nibbles, drinks and chairs. The FoCC is only providing the excuse for a get together. See the next page for information about the changed road access to the Lookout

2. PMP Trail construction begins

The long-awaited construction of the PMP trail from the Lookout to the Amphitheatre has begun with Parks Victoria contractors putting in earthworks and drains at wet spots along the trail.



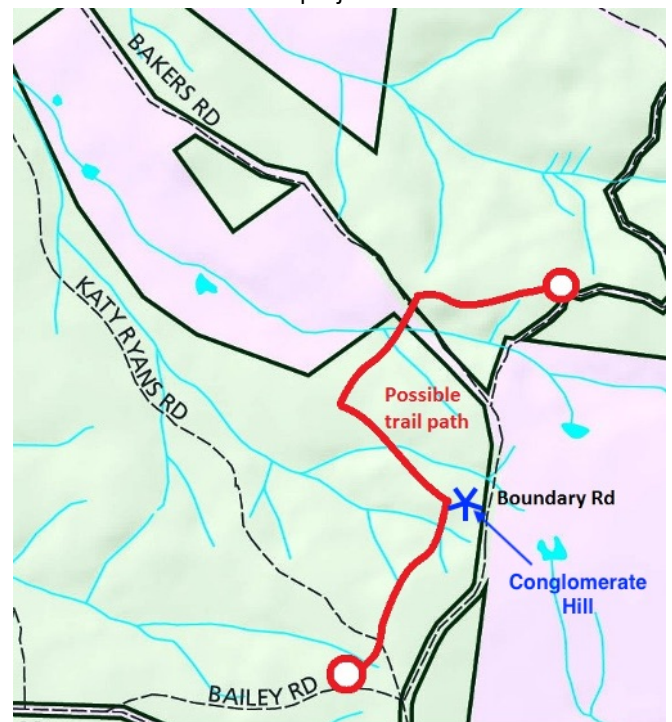
First day drainage works near Conglomerate Hill. Sunday November 22nd 2020



Third day. Spreading and compacting the track surface.

Image November 24th 2020

The works are expected to take 2 weeks to complete. The funding of \$78008 for the trail was won by the Friends in the Victorian Government's Pick My Project community vote held in September 2018. Hundreds of friends voted to win the funds to build this project.



Map of the possible trail path from PMP trail information circa August 2018

The actual trail path has been mapped by Parks Victoria, taking into account significant vegetation, cultural heritage

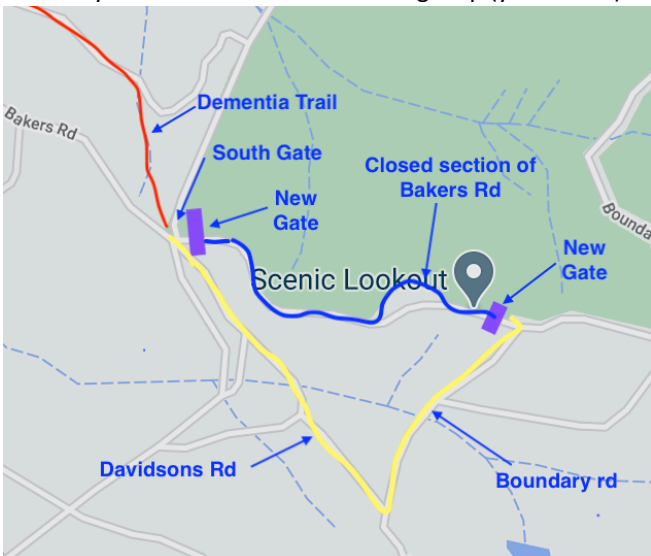
items, water courses and minimum disturbance. The planning and approval process is a template for other projects within the Park. Whilst construction is happening friends should avoid accessing the site.



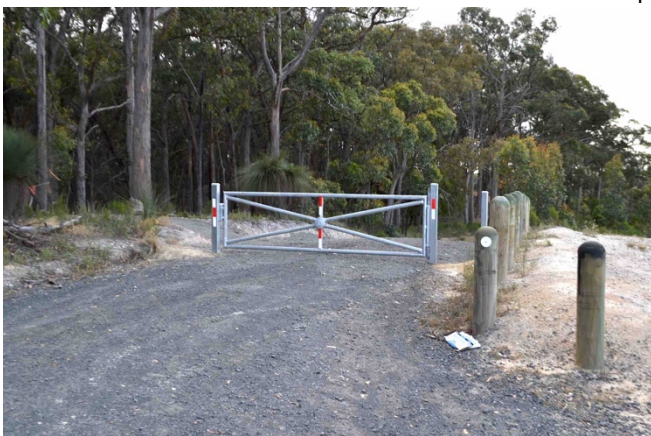
The trail head at the Lookout. Image November 28th 2020.

3. Park Works

Road closure Bakers Rd between the south gate and the Lookout is to be permanently closed to vehicle traffic. Walkers and cyclists will now have exclusive access to this track. The road closure allows a safe path from the soon to be built Dementia Trail up to the Lookout. Access to the Lookout is now via Davidsons Rd onto Boundary Rd as shown on the following map (yellow line).



Access to Lookout map



New gate at the Lookout: Image November 29th 2020

Rubbish Dumper surveillance

Parks Victoria are installing advisory signs in the Park in strategic areas.



New signs, corner Boundary Rd and Baileys Rd. Image: November 23 2020

4. Parks Litterers pursued

Parks litterers pursued

BY JOYON ATTWOOD

A LITTERER who illegally dumped soil in seven separate locations in Woowookarung Regional Park has been ordered to clear up his mess - and pay the costs out of his own pocket.

The offender, whom Parks Victoria has declined to name, put around 15 cubic metres of earth at different sites in the location to the south-east of central Ballarat.

The Courier understands the man was spotted driving a vehicle with the soil by a member of the public, who subsequently reported what they had seen to Parks Victoria.

The organisation, which has been responsible for administering the area since it became a regional park in 2016, were then able to track down the culprit.

He was interviewed with help from Victoria Police. Under the Environmental Protection Act, he was ordered to tidy up and dispose of the waste, which has now been removed.

A Parks Victoria spokesperson said there were a number of other ongoing investigations for littering and illegal wood collection offences.

It is confirmed that six further littering incidents as well as two reports of illegal timber harvesting were currently under investigation with two littering fines issued recently.

The organisation said both surveillance cameras and vigilant visitors were the key to cracking down on littering offences.

Littering and illegal dumping has long been an issue in the area.

The Courier understands the problem had decreased in 2012, allowing local advocates to push for the area to be returned to community use. The campaign was led by the Friends of Canadian Cascade, initiatives to boost the use of the park include the installation of a scenic lookout. A sensory trail aimed specifically at those suffering from dementia is also being installed, while work will shortly begin for another trail chosen using the Park My Project initiative.

A report from Parks Victoria on the successful anti-littering investigation was included in the most recent issue of the Friends of Canadian Cascade newsletter, Spooky News. In it, Parks Victoria said its rangers "would like to thank the many friends of the park for making the effort to report illegal activities" and described their response as "fastidious".

Parks Victoria said anyone who spots illegal littering or timber harvesting should report it in as much detail as possible to info@parks.vic.gov.au. Alternatively, call Parks Victoria on 13 1862 or the EPA on 1300 272 842.

BEAUTY SPOT: Parks Victoria has been clamping down on illegal dumping at the regional park on Ballarat's doorstep.

The area officially became a regional park in 2016 following a pre-election commitment by then leader of the opposition Dan Andrews in 2014.

A state government lease to a logging company ended

in the area since it gained regional park status and the number of people using the park increased. Regular Parks Victoria patrols also started to go through the area. However, dumping has spiked since the COVID-19 crisis began.

Stobhan Rogan, Parks Victoria chief ranger for the Ballarat area, said: "The Ballarat region has many beautiful parks and reserves that we should all help to keep healthy - not just for community enjoyment but for the plants and wildlife that these areas protect."

"Rubbish dumping is harmful to the environment and can be hazardous to humans and wildlife. Waste makes it into waterways through run-off, garden clippings spread invasive weeds, and animals and birds can ingest discarded waste material."

The area officially became a regional park in 2016 following a pre-election commitment by then leader of the opposition Dan Andrews in 2014.

A state government lease to a logging company ended

Ballarat Courier Nov 18th 2020

The Courier article tells the story of a litterer who was spotted and reported by an observant park friend. The result was a very expensive clean-up of the Park. Other rubbish dumpers and wood thieves have been caught and fined also. Read the article at:

<https://www.thecourier.com.au/story/7016964/successful-investigation-into-woowookarung-park-litterbug/>



Litterers are still active. Dozed Rd Mt Clear November 23rd 2020

Rubbish dumpers, thieves and vandals

The FoCC encourages Park friends to report track and sign vandals, rubbish dumpers and wood thieves to Parks Victoria on 13 1963 or email: info@parks.vic.gov.au
If an offender is spotted, please note vehicle registration details as vehicle identification is most helpful, plus location and details.

5. Cassinia

The old plantation areas of the Park were bare in 2013 and the first plants in numbers were Cassinia bushes which have grown well on the most of the ex-plantation land. Recently much of the Cassinia has reached the end of life and has begun to die off.
In many places other species are taking its place. Some areas may need extra tree and shrub planting to be done.



Old Cassinia near Baileys Rd



Growing Cassinia, Baileys Rd Images November 12th 2020

*Cassinia “Chinese Shrub” was used on the Australian goldfields (in Victoria in the 1850s) by Chinese miners as roofing material for their huts, which gave rise to the common names Chinese Shrub or Chinese Scrub. Flowering branches are used in dried floral arrangements, and chopped stems are an effective filtering material in removing odours in some industrial processes
Chinese Shrub is a native species but it establishes readily when natural vegetation such as forest or woodland is cleared. It can form dense stands and become a weed colonising cleared or overgrazed land and disturbed soil on roadsides, abandoned mines and pastures: Source Wikipedia.*

6. Blue Gum Survivors

The 240-hectare Blue Gum Plantation was planted in the early 2000’s following earlier plantings of pine trees.



Trenched line and blue gums. Image: November 24th 2020

The blue gums failed to thrive in the Millennium Drought. In 2012 East Gippsland Plantations handed back the plantation lease to the Victorian Government. This handback was the catalyst for the establishment of the Park.

As part of the handback all blue gums were to be removed. However, this short row of nine blue gums growing in a trenched line on the north side of the recent wildflower walk missed the removal.

7. Revegetation area growing well

In August this year the FoCC organised for 500 trees to be planted in the old motor cycle track area. The trees are growing well. The late wet spring is a great help. The tree plantings take the FoCC tally of plantings since 2017 to 2100 trees.
The FoCC is planning to plant another 500 trees next year possibly adjacent to this year’s plantings.



August tree planting site. Image Nov 24th 2020

8. Hollywood (SBS) comes to Woowookarung

Gun shots, marauding horses and riders and a raid on a Chinese camp all featured in one days filming of an SBS Sovereign Hill movie. The Goldfields themed film set was all happening on the corner of Dozed Rd and Recreation Road on Saturday November 21 2020.

The Mt Clear Scout Hall was used as a staging centre for the actors and crew.

Dozed Rd was closed whilst Recreation Road was a speed restricted area for the duration of the film shoot.

Produced by Goalpost Television for SBS and Directed by Corrie Chen (Homecoming Queens, Wentworth), New Gold Mountain tells the untold story of the Australian gold rush from the perspective of Chinese miners who risked everything for a chance at unlikely fortune in a new land. Inspired by real life, the series follows a group of compelling characters brought together by a mysterious murder and takes an unprecedented look into the wild west era of the Australian gold rush.

Key scenes for the series are being filmed at Sovereign Hill in Ballarat with filming also taking place around Melbourne and regional Victoria.

Source: https://www.sbs.com.au/aboutus/sbs-s-most-ambitious-drama-yet-new-gold-mountain-starts-production_1

9. Xanthorrhoea minor blooms

Spotted beside the soon to be built Dementia Trail is a stand of Xanthorrhoea minor (grasstree) in bloom. Grasstree minor have no trunk and a very thin stem.



Xanthorrhoea minor right beside the Dementia Trail. just off Katy Ryans Rd, Image November 23rd 2020.

10. Koala Spotting x 6

One: "A large male walked across a grass clearing close to our house" Email from Dianne at Jones Avenue Mt Clear November 2nd 2020.

Two x 2

Fisken Road seems to be home to a Koala as **two** reports from Chris this month seems to indicate.



High up Koala, Fisken Rd Mt Helen, November 9th 2020
Image courtesy of Chris.

Three:



Mt Buninyong, November 23rd Image: courtesy of Chaser.

Four: Clay Rd and Boundary Rd. An “Elusive Koala Grunting” was recorded on a phone by Pat in this location. Though the Koala was noisy, it was unable to be spotted. This is one of the problems with Koalas. They are very hard to spot. Even when one is heard they can be elusive. Thanks Pat. November 23rd 2020.

Five:



Mt Clear. Image courtesy of Brett. Nov 2020

Six:



The Gorge: Image courtesy of Valmai Nov 30 2020

11. Powerful owls, pardalotes and sugar gliders

The Park and its surrounds are host to an amazing lot of birds and animals. The powerful owls were first spotted in the Park in January. Now the owls have hatched a family as the image below captures.



Two juvenile powerful owls spotted at Mt Helen. Image: Nov 13th 2020, courtesy of Rob



Pardalote Image Oct 30 2020 courtesy of a young contributor



A sugar glider on a nest box Mt Helen, near the Park. Image Oct 24 2020 courtesy of a young contributor

12. Friends of Yarrowee hard at work in Specimen Vale



Friends of Yarrowee hard at work in Specimen Vale. Image: Courtesy of Neil, Nov 2020

The Friends of Yarrowee group hosts small regular work crews composed of dedicated people who want to complement council efforts, and support the natural environment along their local stretch of the Yarrowee

River. Our groups hand weed inside tree guards and under low bushes, tighten and remove tree guards as needed, and plant and mulch new vegetation. Sometimes we are planting completely new areas but often we are filling in, planting understory species and groundcovers beneath existing trees.

If you are interested please contact Kath Chapman on 0431599250 or kathmchapman@outlook.com.

13. Victorian Parliament Environment Inquiry

The Victorian Government in May 2019 set up:

“An inquiry into the current and future arrangements to secure environmental infrastructure, particularly parks and open space, for a growing population in Melbourne and across regional centres to the Environment and Planning Committee for consideration and report no later than 31 December 2020.”

The Committee’s reporting date has since been extended to 30 June 2021.

The FoCC committee developed a 26-page submission to the inquiry seeking important recreation infrastructure and the addition of land to the parks and reserves in the Corridor as follows:

That resources be provided for Municipalities, Government Agencies and community groups to construct infrastructure within the identified Parks, Reserves, public land and associated connecting creeks.

Infrastructure such as visitor nodes and facilities, access parking facilities, accessible shared walk and cycle trails including such items as bridges and creek crossings between existing trail heads and identified loops be provided for. Our specific requests for infrastructure funding are for:

- a) Woookarung Regional Park Visitor Centre construction.
- b) The Gorge Bridge construction.
- c) Goldfields Track construction of trail and creek crossings
- d) City of Ballarat to Woookarung Regional Park associated creeks and parklands connecting trails construction.

That a property purchase or transfer system for adding land with recreational amenity opportunities to existing Parks and Reserves be set up.

The FoCC has identified a number of properties that should be added to existing Parks and Reserves if the properties come onto the market. All the land identified has significant biodiversity values and would add substantially to the sustainability of the Wildlife or Bio Link Corridor that is centred through Woookarung Regional Park on Ballarat’s eastern side.

The properties are:

- Rifle Range
- Sandy Banks
- Inlier Bakers Rd properties

- Inlier Lavery Av property
- Inlier Recreation Rd properties
- 55 Recreation Rd property
- Sailors Gully ex Ballarat to Buninyong Railway
- Woodward Lane unused road
- Mount Xavier Golf Course (Keep as is)
- Central Highlands Water lots.

Public hearings of the committee are expected soon and the FoCC will be a willing participant.

14. Covid 19 and Park visitors

Over the years more and more people have been visiting the Park. With the first wave in March friends noticed a very large increase in the number of visitors and the anecdotal experience is that the numbers have kept growing.

During the middle of the year FoCC committee members undertook a round of spot counts across the Park. The results show many walkers with and without dogs were observed in every corner of the Park. Walking groups and family groups have been out and about since the end of lockdown.

Vehicle visitor traffic is large. Parking sites such as the Lookout, Katy Ryans Rd, North and South Gate are top spots for vehicle visitors. The Lookout is busiest of all. Cyclists, horses and even big wheeled off-road prams all make use of the trails and tracks.

One interesting count was the numbers of commercial vehicles using the Park for through traffic purposes. Ballarat’s best kept secret is being enjoyed by a lot of people in many different ways.

15. Is this Ballarat’s worst intersection?

The intersection at Boundary Road and Recreation Road is a mess. The road is administered by the City of Ballarat. Recreation Road has a “supposed” speed limit of 80kph but observations by many friends is that it is regularly ignored. In winter the area becomes a wet bog hole and a hoon magnet. Adjacent to the intersection is the Ausnet Powerline gorse plantation. Gorse has been growing here for many years without control by the Powerline company. This whole area could do with some love and restoration by the Council and Ausnet.



View across Recreation Road Nov 21st 2020



Aerial image from Google.

16. Indigenous Wildlife of Southern Ballarat.

FoCC in collaboration with the “Leigh Catchment Group” (Landcare) have developed and produced an “Indigenous Wildlife of Southern Ballarat” brochure.



The brochure is printed on glossy cardboard and is a six-fold. It identifies 115 native species in the South Ballarat region. The Brochure was edited by Joel Ellis and supported by a many wonderful photographers and contributors. All 2021 FoCC members will receive a copy upon receipt of the membership payment. (Note: Early payers will receive their copy soon). Extra copies can be purchased from FoCC for \$3 per copy. Send email to focinfo@gmail.com.

2021 FoCC Membership

Membership of FoCC runs from January to December 31st each year. Membership for 2021 is now open. Members will receive an email invite to renew their membership in a couple of weeks. Members renewing are asked to put their name on bank payment transfers. Any friends who wish to become a member can use the new membership form below. Memberships received after August 1st are credited to the next year. To those wonderful people who have paid early

thank you and soon your “Indigenous Wildlife” brochure will arrive.

FoCC facebook and webpage

Joel is now overseeing the FoCC Facebook page. www.facebook.com/friendsofcanadiancorridor/ Rob is overseeing the webpage webmaster@focc.asn.au Currently we have just over ~~686~~ 698 friends following us on facebook and growing. Welcome to all new friends. Feel free to add and pass on to other friends and press the like button.

2021 calendar

Dec 4th 2020	Xmas drinks and nibbles at the Lookout.
Feb 17 2021	General Meeting: Covid permitting. Speaker; TBC
Feb	Bunny walk/ride trail. Date TBA
Mar 7	Clean Up Australia
April 21	General Meeting – Topic Wildlife Mgt. Possibly Fed Uni and Ballarat Wildlife Park.
May	Tree planting maintenance and Tree guard and stake recycling working bee
May 30	Mining Heritage Walk
June 16	Forum: Birds Possibly Sean Dooley
July	Tree planting x 500 trees
Aug 18	General Meeting; Birds of Prey
Sept	FoCC visit to Clarksdale. Bird ID. Date TBA
Oct	Woovookarung Wildflower Walk. TBA
Oct	Great Aussie Backyard bird count. TBA
Oct 20	Annual Meeting
Dec 3	Drinks at the Lookout

The FoCC Spikey News is published on behalf of the Friends of Canadian Corridor Incorporated, Registered No A0097535B.

The purpose of “Spikey News” is to link the community to Woovookarung Regional Park and the Canadian Corridor.

Circulation this issue is ~~691~~ 701. Welcome to all new friends.

The update is generally published monthly. Friends wishing to add articles to the FoCC update may do so by emailing focinfo@gmail.com

Feel free to circulate widely including doctor’s waiting rooms, work offices, friends and neighbours.

We are proud to walk this land with the Wadawurrung people and all other First Nations people.

Any opinions expressed in the publications are those of the editors and do not officially represent Parks Victoria or the FoCC.

Web - www.focc.asn.au Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/friendsofcanadiancorridor/>

Unsubscribe by emailing the editor

Friends of Canadian Corridor Incorporated

Registered number A0097535



Membership Application 2021

Individual membership of the FoCC runs from January 1st to December 31st each year at a cost of \$20 per year Community groups may be represented by individual members.

First Name:	
Last Name:	
Name of Group represented: (if applicable)	
Address first line:	
Address second line:	
Town/City:	
State:	Post Code:
Home Phone:	
Mobile phone:	
Email address:	
I agree to the rules of association and abide by the FoCC committee of Management decisions	
Applicants signature:	
Date:	
Applications may be sent by email to focinfo@gmail.com or by mail to the Treasurer (address below)	

Payment may be made by
1. Bank transfer to details: BSB 06 3502 Account No 10955630. Note: Please add your name to the bank transfer and email focinfo@gmail.com a copy of this application form or your name and the date of the transaction.
2. Payment to the Treasurer at a FoCC meeting
3. Cheques to made out to "FoCC Incorporated" and addressed to:
FoCC Treasurer PO Box 83, Mt Clear Vic, 3350.

Date Received:
\$
Receipt No