

BANJO BITES

Newsletter of the
Friends of the Marine Discovery Centre Inc
PO Box 127, Queenscliff 3225

WINTER 2010

MEETINGS

Monday, 21 June, 2010 at DPI, 4.30 pm

Open meeting

Monday, 19 July, 2010 at DPI, 4.30 pm

Open meeting

All members and potential members
welcome.

PLANNING DAY – Sunday 25 July, 2010

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – Sunday, 8
August, 2010 – 11.30 am.

JUNE/JULY SCHOOL HOLIDAY PROGRAM

The school holiday program will be held
between Monday 28 June - Friday 9 July,
2010. Activities will include craft, rock
pool rambles, mudflat meanders, boat
trips and fishing tips.

The MDC will be open between 10.00 am
– 4.00 pm during the school holiday
period.

EASTER SEAFOOD FESTIVAL, QUEENSCLIFF

The DPI, MDC and FOMDC were
represented with a site on the pier from

Good Friday, 2 April through to Tuesday, 6
April, 2010.



Staff Members Rinchen & Phil with the Outdoor
Education Display Trailer

The activities trailer was a highlight of the
site and the Friends of the MDC, along
with staff and volunteers, were kept very
busy answering questions and dispensing
handouts and information to the many
visitors.

The site was
well set up
with colourful
banners
depicting the
activities of the
Centre, which
attracted a
great deal of
interest.



FOMDC Treasurer, Marg Smith

GRANTS

The Friends were successful in acquiring a grant of **\$1,500** from the Queenscliff Point Lonsdale Community Enterprise Grant Scheme towards the “Junior Rangers Program”. \$1,000 will be spent on the cost of conducting the program and \$500 will be spent on equipment for the children participating in the program. This program is held bi-annually and covers children in Grades 5 and 6 from the three primary schools in the Borough of Queenscliffe. The object of the program is to promote the unique biodiversity of our local marine environment and to encourage safe swimming and aquatic pursuits for local school children. The children engage in a week long program practising water safety techniques in a local pool before snorkelling on the local reef on the final day. The aims of the program are to :

- ✓ Learn and practice some basic skills for sea safety
- ✓ Promote the local marine environment
- ✓ Become ambassadors for our unique local environment
- ✓ Engage in a healthy and fun physical activity.

A snorkel swim around the rocky reefs of Queenscliff and Point Lonsdale during low tide can reveal snapshots of the colourful world beneath the shores.

FOMDC members, Amanda Bianco, Mandy Tingay and Helen Mair, along with MDC staff member Alex Giannuzzi attended the presentation, outlined the project and accepted a cheque on behalf

of the FOMDC. The Junior Rangers is scheduled to be held in the last school term of 2010, prior to the grade 6 students finishing their primary school education and moving on to high school.



QPLCE representatives presenting FOMDC portion of the cheque to FOMDC Representatives and Staff Member.

Other recipients of grants from the **Queenscliff Point Lonsdale Community Enterprise** were -

Uniting Church Queenscliff – for a drinking fountain and bike space for public use (\$1500)

Point Lonsdale Board Riders Club – for boards (\$1300)

Queenscliff Bowls, Tennis & Croquet Club – for electronic locking mechanism (\$2000)

Queenscliff Primary School – Improvement to environment learning precinct Project (\$544)

Queenscliff Football & Netball Club – to purchase their own BBQ (\$676)

All recipients were very grateful for the assistance and thank the sponsors for their support.

The planning for the continuing **Sand Dune** Revegetation Project is well under way with 200 students already enrolled. This year the project will be conducted from 13 July to 6 August, 2010. This project is also funded by a successful grant.

ADVANCE NOTICE

The **SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD SUPPER AND AUCTION** is to be held on **FRIDAY, 29 OCTOBER, 2010**. This event is very popular and numbers are limited due to the venue capacity. The venue is the Swan Bay room at the DPI premises, Queenscliff, with a magnificent view over Swan Bay. Final details and booking arrangements will be circulated to members and in the September Newsletter. If any members would like to donate auction items, please contact the FOMDC Inc at PO Box 227 Queenscliff, 3225, or contact Anne by phoning 5258 2606 or a committee member.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – is scheduled for Sunday, 8 August, 2010 – 11.30 am meeting – 12.00 refreshments – 12.30 pm Guest Speaker.

All positions on the committee will be declared vacant and nomination forms will be distributed within the required time. Members and guests welcome.

PLANNING DAY – a planning day to discuss the future direction of the FOMDC has been organised to discuss “Managing Growth”, “Membership Recruitment” and other strategies.

2010 VOLUNTEER INFORMATION DAY

The Marine Discovery Centre has a fully accredited Volunteer Program. The information day for all prospective volunteers is to be held on:

Sunday 18 July 2010 11 am – 1 pm

Enquiries to the MDC – Ph: 5258 3344.

See attached letter.

TOTALLY WILD

The MDC will be featured in the near future on the Totally Wild program. On Channel 10. Filming took place during the week of 17 – 21 May at Point Lonsdale (Rock pool) and Swan Bay (Banjo Shark).

Keep a keen eye out for when the program will be scheduled.

ENTERTAINMENT BOOKS

The 2010 Entertainment Books are now available and copies can be had by telephoning Anne on 5258 2606. These are very good value at \$55 each and a portion of the sale of each book goes to the FOMDC.

May 2010

Dear Prospective Volunteer,

2010 Volunteer Information Day

Thank you for your interest in the Marine Discovery Centre's Volunteer Program. We are holding an information day for all prospective volunteers on:

Sunday 18 July 2010 11 am – 1 pm

This day will provide you with details of our training program, volunteer expectations and volunteer duties. It is important that you attend this information session to have all of your questions answered and it is also a nice opportunity for everyone to meet each other.

For further information about the Marine Discovery Centre and what we offer please check out our website - www.dpi.vic.gov.au/mdc

The information day will begin at 11am sharp. The session will be held in the seminar room of The Department of Primary Industries (DPI), Queenscliff Centre, 2A Bellarine Hwy Queenscliff (Melways Map 500 D1). We will have signs up to help you find your way. If you have any friends or family that have expressed an interest in the volunteer program, feel free to bring them along. Please note that volunteers must be over 18 years old.

Please call the Marine Discovery Centre on 5258 3344 or email marine.discovery@dpi.vic.gov.au to confirm your attendance.

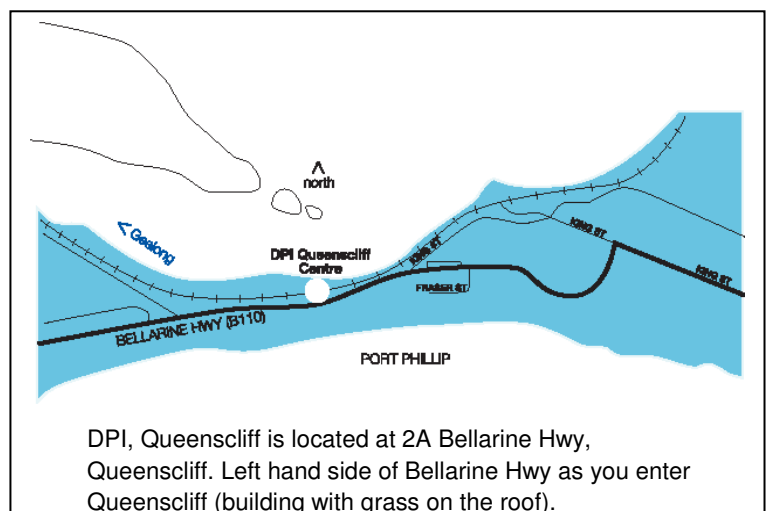
We look forward to meeting you.

Yours sincerely,



Alex Giannuzzi

Marine Education Officer



The staff at the MDC finds it very enriching to provide marine experiences to their clients, and it is also very encouraging to receive positive feedback from students who participated in the activities. Below is a report from a student who participated in the Siemens Science Experience at the Marine Science Laboratories in January 2010. The author is a Year 10 student named Adam Lipszyc.

My Summer Science Experience

On Tuesday 19 January I awoke early and, with my mother and younger sister, drove to the Queenscliff/Sorrento ferry. After taking the ferry over to Queenscliff, I got dropped at the Marine Discovery Centre and started my three-day program.

After registration and meeting everyone in the stylish and modern Swan Bay Room, we headed to the wharf to go on our cruise. Luckily we had some timing issues so we got to explore the Maritime Museum free of charge, which was an unexpected bonus. After perusing the museum we headed back to the wharf to find our Captain and Crew on the boat preparing for our cruise. We headed out, passing small motorboats and three story giants on our way to the Bay. About fifteen minutes into our voyage a 'dredge' was thrown overboard and we gathered plenty of marine life in buckets, from seagrass, crabs and seahorse to fish. While we were sorting through all that, we realised we had made it to Popes Eye. Seals frolicked and 'waved' to us, but we later found out they were just cooling down. How anything could be hot in that water is beyond me.

We headed back to the wharf and inspected our findings in calmer waters. We found things like seahorses, wrapping their tails around seagrass, to decorator crabs, cleverly disguised to match their surroundings.

After lunch we had a look at the labs and had a lecture about "Hidden Animals" by Dr Warren Davies. His lecture was intriguing and surprising, and got all of our attention and broadened our minds about what really is under the surface.

Then it was all over, one big day, so much achieved and discovered. I could only wonder what tomorrow held.

Thankfully, Mum, my sister and I stayed in Queenscliff that night so as to not have to make driving in the morning a habit. I once again arrived at the Marine Centre, this time a little more confident about the people there and the place itself. We started by getting 'stuck in'. We got 'stuck into' analysing fish guts with Tim Smith. This was very interesting after having done a session on plankton we could dissect and remove the stomach, then look under a microscope and figure out what our fish had been eating, or not eating.; Following the dissection we went to "Filter Feeders" by Tes Toop, who said things like chunks of coral you's fin on pier pillars come to life. We inspected them under the 'scopes' and found many things; colourful creatures squirming about, small feather-like tentacles that filter food, whole eco-systems in the size of a fist.

And then before we knew it, it was morning tea time. We didn't move anything because after morning tea in the Swan Bay room, we had a series of lectures. I have to admit, I thought they were going to be boring lectures on sand. However, even though the lecturers were doing something to do with Marine Science, they broadened their speeches so that they related to what we were doing and what we wanted to achieve. Ben Wegener told us about

how he thought he was really interested in this type of ant, when really he was interested in why they did what they did and this led him to studying squid. The other couple of lectures, “Sexual Selection in the Sea” and “My Journey Through the Marine World” really didn’t stick out to me as much as Ben’s did. He really expressed the correct approach to all aspects of interest mostly in science, and a clear and simple way.

And then lunch. Following lunch we went down to the Queenscliff Wharf and looked at different seaweeds, kelp and other washed up things on the beach that people take for granted. We even found some squid eggs that started hatching in our bare hands! We departed the beach for the labs and inspected the seaweed/grass and kelp further under the ‘scopes’ finding what makes them ‘tick’. After the ‘scope session’ we headed into another lab in which we had the joy of making seaweed ‘presses’. This was a great, relaxing way to end the day.

On the last day I unfortunately was back at home. This is great but it means an early morning to the ferry. Catching the ferry by myself was very relaxing and a great way to start the morning. I had a very cruisey, relaxing bike ride, through the marina and past the oki train to the Marine Centre. Today I was excited for it was a day truly out in the field. With my confidence boosted and energy levels high, I entered the Centre. We started with the only thing indoors all day, a fish dissection with Dr John Donal, who is an Associate Professor. I respectfully opened and explored my fish, while excitedly spotting and naming different parts of it. Gill covers (Operculum), swim bladder, heart, kidney, etc. It felt great to have an understanding of what at least one of the local fish in my area looks like inside and how it works.

Then the fun stuff started. We drove down to the Queenscliff wharf where we scoured the beach the day before in search of seaweed/grass and kelp. We geared up and hit the water for a snorkel. We saw so many things! Plenty of stingrays, a blown up puffer fish, flathead, cow fish, starfish and sea stars. After quickly getting dry, we bussed our way to the Swan Bay boat launch ramp in which we launched our sea kayaks and went for a paddle in search of Banjo Sharks. We saw several swim under us but they never hung around for a closer inspection. We beached our craft and went for a walk along the road which led to the Defence Area over the Bay. Someone claimed to have seen a blue-ringed octopus but unfortunately no-one else saw it.

Then we relaunched, paddled back and arrived back at the boat ramp, the girls somewhat wetter than the boys! On the bus and back at to the centre for a debrief session and presentation. After several prizes were handed out, and we all received a certificate and a clap, it was time to go. Sadly I found myself shaking people’s hands and getting Facebook addresses before I hopped on my bike and rode off to make sure I caught the ferry.

On the ferry home I thought of all the things I had accomplished and learnt over just three days! Operculum, seaweed, inside fishes, seahorses, Popes Eye, snorkelling, seaweed presses, inspirational speeches, kayaking – it was a very surprising and rewarding experience for myself. I would recommend soing any of the Siemens science courses, however, I am going to highly recommend doing it at Queenscliff if you like the ocean or want to learn more.

