

PLACnews

PATTERSON LAKES ADVISORY COMMITTEE WINTER 2011 EDITION



Tidal Gates – Three Gates to Go!

The project to replace the four sets of tidal gates in our community is well underway, and despite a few weather and engineering hiccups, remains on schedule.

The new gates at Whalers Cove west are fully operational, and the channel has been re-opened. Work is proceeding well at each of the other sites: Whalers Cove east, Runaway Bay and the Town Centre. Melbourne Water expects to have all gates open by the end of September, ahead of the snapper season!

Flood Protection Success

After a decade of drought, many of us could have been forgiven for thinking that we might not see substantial rain or flooding in the local area. However, as we know a major storm struck throughout the south east area in early February, resulting in significant floods.

During the February storm, in line with Melbourne Water policy, all tidal gates were closed. The tidal gate ensured that all at Patterson Lakes were not at risk of being flooded.

A considerable amount of debris nevertheless managed to accumulate in the canals before the tidal gates were closed. The worst-affected area was around Mariners Island in the Town Centre. While there was no physical damage to jetties, retaining walls or gates, the cleanup operation to remove the debris was extensive. Melbourne Water reported that removing the debris took around five days, and involved eight maintenance personnel and two boats.

The debris mainly consisted of plastic bottles, grass, alligator weed and tree branches although large segments of pine post-and-rail-fencing were also removed. Even though it was the extreme weather that caused this, it's a reminder to us all to look after waterways by disposing of our waste responsibly.

Storm Water Reminder

The accumulation of debris in the tidal canals after the February [and March] floods demonstrates how easily rubbish ends up in our lakes and canals.

But it's not just the visible pollutants like plastic bags and litter that cause water quality to drop after a storm or heavy rain. Many 'hidden nasties' also enter the lakes and canal in the form of stormwater run-off. These include nutrients (fertilisers), heavy metals and even animal excrement. As stormwater cannot be treated before it enters the lakes and canals, you are advised to avoid direct contact with the water in waterways after a storm or heavy rain.

This Issue

- 2 Jetty Replacement Program: Making Headway
- 2 New Member Profile
- 3 Staged Water Quality Management Plan – SolarBee®
- 3 How You Can Help Water Quality – Quiet Lakes
- 4 Did You Know...
- 4 PLAC June Meeting Summary

Support Local Marina Business

Many of us are not able to get out on the water until later this year when the tidal gate upgrade is completed, and this includes the local marina businesses near the Town Centre and Runaway Bay.

Please consider supporting our local businesses that continue to remain open during these upgrade works.

Next PLAC Committee Meetings

Wednesday 10 August

5.30 – 7.00pm Tidal Waterways

7.20 – 8.50pm Quiet Lakes

Wednesday 12 October

5.30 – 7.00pm Tidal Waterways

7.20 – 8.50pm Quiet Lakes

Wednesday 7 December

5.30 – 7.30pm Combined Meeting.

Jetty Replacement Program: Making Headway

The program to replace 268 timber jetties near the end of their lifespan in the Tidal Canals area began in January. Already, Melbourne Water has completed several floating pontoons which are being enjoyed by their new owners (see below).

While the consultation and design phase has proven quite time-consuming, construction of each new jetty once approved is occurring very quickly. Melbourne Water reported that designs for around 65% of the replacement jetties have been finalised, and applications for 20% have been submitted to Kingston City Council for approval. Information packs will continue to be sent out to residents over the next few months.

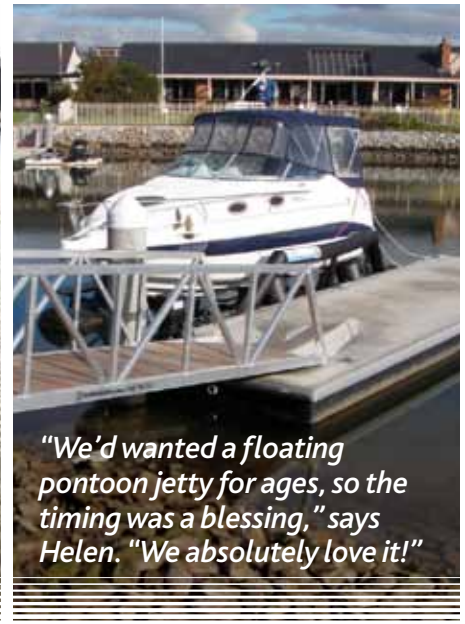
We absolutely love our new jetty!

Helen Johnson and her partner, Nereo Castelli, didn't have to think twice when offered the option of a new timber jetty or a pontoon jetty as part of the jetty replacement program.

Safety was a primary factor in choosing the pontoon jetty. "I'm a non-swimmer, and we have both very young grandchildren and elderly parents using the jetty," she explains. "It's wider, and far easier to get on and off than a fixed timber jetty."



Recently replaced timber jetty



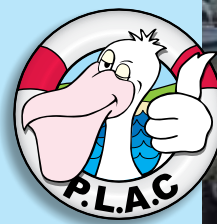
"We'd wanted a floating pontoon jetty for ages, so the timing was a blessing," says Helen. "We absolutely love it!"

Installing the new jetty (which included dismantling and removing the old timber jetty) took around three weeks. Helen says the process was simple, and hassle free. "It didn't inconvenience us at all. The time it took was minimal and the contractors were a pleasure to work with."

The new jetty has also added a new dimension to their social lives. "We can sit on it and fish with the grandchildren, or just relax and chat to the neighbours," says Helen. "I can't wait for the weather to get warmer and have some champagne out there!"

New Member Profile

Keen boatie David Jordan is one of the new members of PLAC's Tidal Waterways subcommittee.



David – who with wife Sue has lived at Whalers Cove for more than ten years – has a real passion for Patterson Lakes and its environs. He brings a wealth of senior management and budgeting experience to the committee, having been involved in executive management positions for much of his working life.

A sea scout from the age of eight, and a member of the Merchant Navy since he was sixteen, Portsmouth-born David has always had a strong affinity with the coast and boating. He is also a Justice of the Peace, and has been on the Whalers Cove Owners' Committee for several years.

It's not surprising then that David was drawn to Patterson Lakes as a place to settle. "I love the lifestyle of living on the water, and the beauty of the bay, the Patterson River and the canals," he says.

Like most of us, David would like to get out on the water more often than he manages. Favourite destinations include the Docklands (especially when he has overseas guests staying), Queenscliff and Sorrento.

He says it's pretty hard to go past a leisurely cruise up the river, or a day's fishing on the bay.

"Since they've stopped dredging, there seems to be so many more fish in the bay."

As well as boating, and "watching all the other boaties have a good time", David enjoys seeing the vast array of native birds and animals that breed, feed and live in the waterways.

His priorities while on PLAC include creating a sustainable environment for wildlife, and also to ensure that all boating facilities and infrastructure are safe and well-maintained.

David encourages residents to contact him or other Tidal Waterways subcommittee members. "We can help keep people in touch with what's being discussed and recommended at our meetings, and put you in touch with the right people at Melbourne Water."

Staged Water Quality Management Plan – Sustainably Moving Ahead – SolarBee®

Melbourne Water has installed a floating SolarBee® on Lake Illawong and will be monitoring its effects on water quality over the next 18 – 24 months.

The SolarBee uses solar energy to power a propeller located just below the water's surface. This may help to improve water quality in the Lake in several ways. One is that circulating the water helps to disperse the still, warm surface layer essential for the proliferation of nuisance algae. Another is that aerating the water increases the amount of dissolved oxygen essential for a healthy and balanced ecosystem.

Melbourne Water will report the results of the trial to the subcommittee later this year. In the meantime, Melbourne Water has asked that residents avoid contact with the SolarBee. While the SolarBee does not pose a risk to birds, pets or people, it is recommended that you not swim within ten metres of it, climb on it, or handle the anchor blocks or chains. Appropriate signage has been erected around the Lake.

SolarBee® is a registered trade mark of SolarBee, Inc. (USA)



How You Can Help Water Quality – Quiet Lakes

Few of us intentionally litter. Most of us, however, unwittingly contribute to stormwater pollution when we fertilise our gardens, use phosphate-based washing products or allow our pets to defecate near our waterways.

Some pollutants can carry diseases, such as *E.coli*, which are harmful to humans. Excessive nutrients can also cause algal blooms which, as well as being detrimental to wildlife, can be unsightly and odorous.

We can reduce the quantity of nutrients entering the lakes and canals by:

- ✓ using low-phosphorus cleaning products
- ✓ not applying fertilisers before rain
- ✓ always cleaning up after our dogs
- ✓ preventing cats from defecating on our beaches
- ✓ never hosing off driveways or paths
- ✓ creating raingardens to harvest and treat stormwater before it reaches our waterways (find out more at Melbourne Water's Raingardens Program website: raingardens.melbournewater.com.au).



Member Profile



With a strong environmental background, including a Bachelor of Earth Science and a Bachelor of Environmental Science, Quiet Lakes subcommittee member, Jeff Welsh, has much to offer the community.

Jeff – a school teacher, who is Head of Science – has been a member of the Quiet Lakes subcommittee for almost four years. He and his wife Trina have lived at Patterson Lakes for more than a decade.

"I love the lifestyle of living on the water, and having access to the beach," says Jeff who has three young children.

"It's also got a great community feel – it's a nice safe environment for bringing up kids."

A qualified gardener, Jeff takes a keen interest in the environment both in and around Patterson Lakes. As well as PLAC, he is a member of the Yammerbook Committee, which is responsible for the Yammerbook Nature Reserve in Mordialloc.

Jeff's priorities while on the Quiet Lakes subcommittee are to maintain the aesthetics of the area, and to continue the work that is being done regarding water quality. "My aim is to achieve water quality levels that will ensure that the Lakes remain at a safe, usable level, for generations to come."



Did You Know... ...that Patterson River is not actually a river?

It was originally part of the large Carrum Carrum Swamp that ran from Mordialloc to Frankston, and was separated from the sea by a broad coastal sand ridge. In the 1870s, it was decided to drain the swamp for use as farmland.

This was achieved by cutting a drain through the sand ridge. The cut was named Patterson's Drain after the then

Minister of Public Works, and later became known as Patterson River.

The artificial banks of the river were raised following the floods of 1934, when more than 900 houses and farms were inundated by floodwaters.

The river mouth is regularly inspected by Parks Victoria and dredged when necessary to maintain a safe depth.

PLAC June meeting summary

A combined PLAC meeting of both the Quiet Lakes and Tidal Waterways Groups was held on Wednesday 8 June. Here are the topics that were discussed by the committee at the meeting.

- Access Easements and Their Usage.
- Dredging of the Tidal Canals.
- Implementation of New Beaches.
- Community Survey and Feedback.

If you'd like more information on any of the topics, or have any questions, please contact one of your PLAC representatives (below). The minutes will also be available on the community notice boards and the PLAC website (www.plac.com.au)

Contact Details

Tidal Waterways subcommittee

Neil James

Phone (H): 9773 8251
Phone (B): 9703 6147
Mobile: 0412 441 736
Neil_James@racv.com.au

David Jordan

Phone (H): 9773 2840
Mobile: 0413 458 521
dsjordan@bigpond.net.au

Andrew Meehan

Phone (H): 9776 2052
Mobile: 0416 174 567
andrew@meehan.org

Claude Picinali

Phone (H): 9772 4902
Phone (B): 9243 3415
Mobile: 0438 889 294
claudepicinali@bigpond.com

Judy Wilks

Phone (H): 9772 5373
aandjwilks@optusnet.com.au

Mark Woodland

Phone (H): 9772 0187
Phone (B): 9775 0712
Mobile: 0418 319 418
agwoodland@bigpond.com

Quiet Lakes subcommittee

Rolf Daniel

Phone (H): 9773 1949
danielbr@bigpond.net.au

Nanne Stubbs

Illawong Retirement Village
Phone (H): 9772 1260
nannette.stubbs@bigpond.com

John Thomson

Phone (B): 9587 9443
Mobile: 0419 032 597
john@pipesolutions.com.au

Jeff Welsh

Phone (H): 9776 2570
Phone (B): 9788 7862
Mobile: 0409 504 130
jwelsh@tps.vic.edu.au

Patterson Lakes Quiet Lakes Owners & Residents (PLQLOR)

Anthony Moffatt, President

Phone (H): 8774 7415
Phone (B): 8682 9357
Mobile: 0423 065 751
anthony.moffatt@optusnet.com.au

Melbourne Water

General Patterson Lakes

PO Box 125
Chelsea VIC 3196
Phone: 1800 035 245
(toll free)
pattersonlakes@melbournewater.com.au

After hours/incident contact details:

Melbourne Water
Phone 9316 2800
EPA Victoria
Pollution Watch Line
(24 hours)
Phone 9695 2777

Victorian Water Police
(24 hours)
Phone 9399 7500

Management & Maintenance

Tim Seipolt

**Program Leader –
Land Management &
Precept Areas**
Phone: 8770 8786
tim.seipolt@melbournewater.com.au

Alan Clements

**Patterson Lakes Community
& Works Coordinator**
Phone: 8770 8782
Mobile: 0418 390 430
alan.clements@melbournewater.com.au

