



News from PLAC

PATTERSON LAKES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Summer
2010 EDITION

PLAC has changed

After an independent review of PLAC, Melbourne Water has made a number of changes to the committee.

For those of you that may be unaware, the aim of PLAC is to:

- Make recommendations to Melbourne Water on precept rate charges, maintenance, works and priorities, and other key matters and issues. These recommendations will be taken into account by Melbourne Water when making its decisions regarding management of the waterway system
- Review information provided by Melbourne Water and provide feedback and advice as required
- Make efforts to find out and take into account community needs, concerns, suggestions and feedback. However, there is no expectation of the committee to undertake formal community consultation, as this remains the responsibility of Melbourne Water
- Provide contact details for community members to contact us with feedback or concerns (see back page of this newsletter)
- Take an active part in community forums and 'meet your PLAC members' community events held by Melbourne Water

- Develop and review strategic plans to help set and ensure continuity of the direction of the committee and provide a framework for long-term goals.

Please note that although the ultimate decisions are made by Melbourne Water, we do have a chance to have input so please contact us if you have anything you'd like to raise.

We will also communicate with you by talking to you when we're out and about in the community and via this newsletter, community notice boards and our website www.plac.com.au. You can contact us any time by using the contact details on the back of this newsletter.

Melbourne Water has engaged Joy Humphreys of thehumphreysgroup as the independent Chair of PLAC.

Remember that we're not your only link to Melbourne Water. You can contact Melbourne Water directly if you wish - see the back of this newsletter for their contact details. Melbourne Water will communicate with and seek feedback from residents though things like community bulletins, surveys, newsletters and open day sessions.

As PLAC members, we all volunteer our time to work on this committee and can assure you that we will do our best to work hard at representing you, our fellow residents. Thank you.

Keeping dogs on leash on beaches

Most dogs love nothing more than getting out for a run or walk, but if they're not on a leash this can cause problems.

It's possible to be a friend to man's best friend **and** the environment at the same time by keeping your pet properly restrained while they're in the Melbourne Water-managed Quiet Lakes reserve.

In simple, don't allow your dog to: enter the water, pollute the water or the reserve with their droppings, or be a nuisance to others.

There are also designated 'off leash' areas for dogs provided by Kingston City Council. The nearest are:

- Roy Dore Reserve, 7 Dyson Road, Carrum
- Bonbeach Sports Reserve, 103 Scotch Parade, Bonbeach
- Chelsea Bicentennial Park, 100 Thames Promenade, Chelsea
- Amaroo Drive Reserve, 21 Amaroo Drive, Chelsea Heights

Thanks for helping keep Patterson Lakes beautiful and a place that everyone can enjoy.

Summer Boating

A gentle reminder to all fellow boat owners and residents that the same boating regulations apply in the Tidal Waterways as in Patterson River.

The maximum speed for any boat or jet ski is five knots, or about eight kilometres an hour. At five knots, most boats will make little if any wash. On the other hand, speeding boats can produce considerable wash and wash action.

You can help protect our beaches and the safety of others by reporting any speeding boats or watercraft to the Victorian Water Police on 9399 7500 (this number operates 24 hours a day).

Also, remember that a traffic light system operates at the Whalers Cove tidal gates. The open gate is a two-way passage and you should only go through if you have a green light.

Quiet Lakes subcommittee meeting

Water Quality

Our first meeting as a new committee was held on Wednesday 20 October. Tim Seipolt from Melbourne Water (MW) gave a key presentation on improving water quality in the lakes.

Tim advised the committee that MW is currently working on a detailed water quality management plan, which is planned to be presented in more detail to the subcommittee and the broader community for feedback over the coming months.

A number of the actions in the plan have been considered and/or trialled before. The benefits of and learnings from these actions will need to be considered by MW, PLAC and the community. The costs and risks of these actions will also need to be considered carefully by everyone.

There was discussion about several actions that may be able to be implemented as part of the water quality management plan. They are:

- Trial the Solar Bee
- Install low flow outlet pipe to McLeod Road pump station from Lake Carramar
- Progress the application with Southern Rural Water to increase the groundwater pumping license
- Increase the frequency of the Carp fish removal program
- Restock all lakes with Estuary Perch fish
- Plant aquatic plants (Macrophytes)
- Review local council and MW drains in conjunction with City of Kingston

The Solar Bee was one of the options suggested at the recent community information sessions. It's a solar powered machine that floats on the surface of the water and helps circulate the water below and around it. Tim informed the committee that MW owns such a device and plans have been made to trial it from this summer in Lake Illawong. The cost for adapting and installing/removing the Solar Bee would be recovered through the precept rate.

Tim also informed the committee that another Carp fish cull was planned to take place in Lake Illawong and Lake Legana in March 2011, where the fish are typically in their greatest number.

A variety of questions were raised and feedback given at the meeting. Among the points made were that some residents may prefer not to have too many plants in the lakes; whether there would be detailed consultation with the community about the effects of weed spraying; planting around the lakes to control erosion; existing aquatic plants and the best types to use; more Carp fish control; whether de-silting was being considered; and whether chemical additives are being considered.

General Business

We raised a number of queries in general business including about communication costs, Carp fish culling, concern about the turbidity of Lake Legana, an update on pricing, mosquitoes (see article on page 4 for more information) and other queries relating to water quality.

A summary of the meeting minutes can be found on community noticeboards around the lakes, and a full copy can be downloaded from our website www.plac.com.au



2011 Boating Regatta



Lake Illawong Model Boats

Christmas may still be a few sleeps away, but attention is already turning to next year's Regatta Day.

This annual fun day for Lake Illawong residents is not to be missed and will be held in February. After more than seven years, Regatta Day just keeps getting better and better with plenty of fun assured for young and old.

Following on from the success of this year's event, the day will include a variety of activities on and off the water. There are running, surf ski and kayak races, while the main event is the Illawong Triathlon, a true test of endurance involving canoeing, running, swimming and surf skiing.

Keep an eye out in the new year for information about the date and how to get involved as either a spectator or competitor.

Tidal Waterways subcommittee meeting

Jetty Replacement Program

Jetty Replacement Program

Wednesday 20 October was also the first meeting for the new Tidal Waterways sub-committee. The presentation we think most Tidal Waterways residents will be interested in was from Matt Harris of Thiess Services, the contractor implementing Melbourne Water's Jetty Replacement Program.

Matt advised that after feedback from residents who are part of the first group to have their jetties replaced, a number of changes have been made. This includes capping the length of new jetties / pontoon designs at 5 metres over the existing jetties. This is to accommodate concerns about navigation and aesthetics. There are only a few minor exceptions to this.

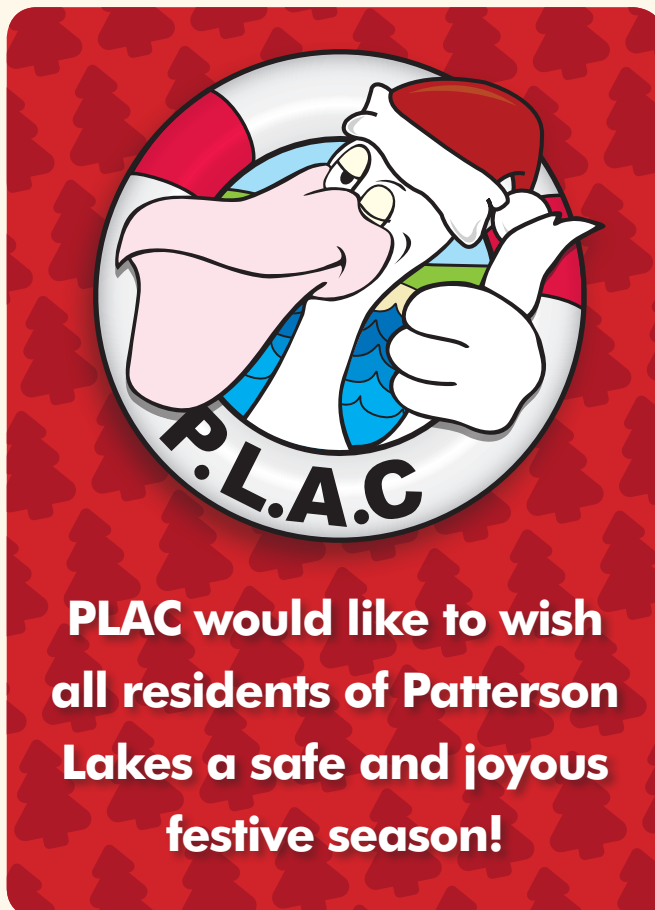
Matt also advised that the rebate for residents wishing to install a concrete pontoon will be the equivalent of replacing the existing jetty with a new timber one. For example, it would cost \$18,000 to replace an existing 2 berth jetty with a timber one, and \$32,000 to replace it with a concrete pontoon, so the cost to each resident to install a concrete pontoon would be:

$\$32,000 - \$18,000 = \$14,000 / 2 = \$7,000$ each
(rebate would be \$9,000 each)

An investigation into the feasibility of dredging in the tidal canals is also currently underway. The objective of dredging is to remove accumulated sand and sediment around jetties and pontoons to provide additional depth for moorings.

We raised a number of questions including:

- **What is happening with the Whalers Cove jetties?**
Matt advised he would be talking to the body corporate committee soon.
- **What is the mooring length? What is the depth?**
Matt advised the maximum mooring length is 9 metres, and Melbourne Water (MW) is trying to achieve a 1.2m depth at mean low tide, but the original depth of canals doesn't allow that in all cases.
- **How many stages is the program and how long will it take?**
Matt advised there were approximately 20 stages over 3 years.
- **If people are in agreement and ready to have their jetty replaced sooner than is scheduled, is this a possibility?**
Matt advised that the replacements had been scheduled according to need; however, there may still be a possibility depending on the capacity of the team at the time. People should contact MW to ask for updates.
- **What happens if the residents cannot agree with what type of jetty they require?**
MW offered to meet with the residents concerned and provide mediation. If it is still not possible to reach agreement a timber jetty will be installed.
- A general comment was also provided by one committee member who had previous experience of subsidising someone on their jetty who couldn't afford the pontoon, which worked out well for everyone.



**PLAC would like to wish
all residents of Patterson
Lakes a safe and joyous
festive season!**

- **How many jetties have been replaced to date as part of the program?**
Matt advised that no jetties had been replaced as part of this program, as changes were made to the design and costs after feedback from Stage 1 property owners. Works are planned to begin in the near future. A number of jetties have been replaced prior to this program.
- **Will there be retrospective rebates for people that got the previous \$5,000 flat rebate for jetty replacements prior to the program?**
Tim Seipolt from MW advised that this will not be possible as MW has to draw a line in the sand somewhere.

Other Business

A number of other discussions took place about the Tidal Gates Replacement Project including pricing, communication, maintenance, navigation in Patterson River and more.

A summary of the meeting minutes can be found on community notice boards at the shopping centre and around the lakes, and a full copy of the minutes can be downloaded from our website www.plac.com.au

Mosquitoes

Many areas around Melbourne are experiencing problems with a large number of mosquitoes this season. This has resulted in a number of queries, particularly on the Quiet Lakes.

Melbourne Water's senior aquatic scientists, one of them being a mosquito specialist, have been to inspect the three Quiet Lakes to assess the possibility of mosquito breeding. Happily they were able to report that no mosquito larvae were observed in the water of any of the lakes.

In fact, mosquito breeding in the lakes is highly unlikely due to:

- The open water habitat
- Constant ripple action drowning mosquito larvae
- Regular presence of large numbers of mosquito larvae predators, including backswimmers and fish.

In many cases, what look like mosquitoes at the lakes are non-biting midges swarming around a stationary object. A large number of midge moults (hatching) skins have been observed at the surface of the lakes. These midges from the Chironomidae family are an integral part of all freshwater habitats. Their larvae live in sediment and the adults may resemble mosquitoes, but they are in fact non-biting and completely benign. They often hatch en masse as a way to avoid predators and to swarm.

There are a number of things you can do to help prevent mossies breeding on your property, including keeping gutters clean and emptying any buckets or containers that may hold stagnant water. The Victorian Health Department website has more information on controlling mosquitoes. Visit <http://health.vic.gov.au/ideas/diseases/mosbites#around> for some helpful tips.



The midge skins are circled in green circles and juvenile backswimmers are circled in blue.

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
Phone (B): 5987 2649
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 - 9316 2800
EPA Victoria - 9695 2777
Victorian Water Police on 9399 7500

Management & Maintenance

Tim Seipolt

Program Leader - Land Management & Precept Areas
Phone: 9784 6467
tim.seipolt@melbournewater.com.au

Alan Clements Patterson Lakes Community & Works Coordinator

Phone: 9784 6514
Mobile: 0418 390 430
alan.clements@melbournewater.com.au



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