



Blue Swimmer

Newsletter of the Friends of Gulf St Vincent
Issue 21, April 2012



President's Message

This is the first newsletter since the AGM where I was elected as your President. I thank you for your confidence and will endeavour to continue the high ideals of the Friends of Gulf St Vincent, "To foster a unified community approach to the protection and wise use of the Gulf". I am aware of the valuable contributions that past Presidents have brought to this role and, as I said at the AGM I can only hope to fill their shoes.

My aim is to bring another dimension to the organisation that as can be seen from my profile on page 6 will be from an engineering background rather than a scientific one. I hope to complement the diverse experience of the committee members, and look forward to working closely with them.

Many of our environmental issues are connected by their cause and effect, and I believe that we should be seeking a holistic solution to coastal activities.

An example of this 'cause and effect' would be the Port Stanvac section of the coast where the future of the jetty, the remediation of the refinery site, the upgrade of SA Waters treatment plant, recommencement of dredging operation, access for the Adelaide Metropolitan Coastal Path, the opening of the desalination plant and the establishment of the marine parks and aquatic reserves are all inextricably linked.

Having said that with Angela and John we have finally got underway the Water Quality Monitoring (Secchi) Project. I see this project as being very important to FOGSV as it will involve us in gathering data that, over time, will build up a picture of the health of our coastal

waters. Secondly it will become a vehicle for us to get our message fully around the Gulf that we represent.

We have been blessed this year with a long and late summer and have escaped the bad weather experienced by the other states of our nation. This shows the Gulf at its best with spectacular sunrises, sparklingly seas and dramatic sunsets. This reminds me that these shores are also the home to the Kaurua People who have stories of their warrior Mullawuka Burka being the caretaker of the sea and the seafront. It is our role to continue this care so that future generations can enjoy what we often take for granted.

Rob Bosley

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Our new President, Rob Bosley has a great mix of interest and career experience in engineering and local government. In the past year he has been an active Coastal Ambassador, and has taken the lead in the Friends' Secchi project. We look forward to more stimulating and enjoyable Forums and meetings.

(See the profiles of new members on page 6)



Friends of Gulf St Vincent AGM

Our 2011-12 AGM was held on a glorious Adelaide autumn day at the Marine Discovery Centre at Henley Beach. It was great to see more than 30 Members and Friends avail themselves of the opportunity to have a guided tour of this wonderful facility.



But first there was an AGM to conduct!

Of particular note, there have been some changes to the Friends Committee membership, which merits some newsletter space.

Most significantly, we have had a change in President.

Jim Douglas has been fulfilling this role for the past two years, and we all know what a champion of the Gulf he is. Jim is a bit of a legend in the western Adelaide community – fearless, canny, challenging and tenacious. And a hugely generous person who finds it difficult to say no to anything that is asked of him! During the time he has been involved with the FoGSV, we have learned much from Jim the political animal and advocate. We wish him all the very best for his future activities.

At a recent Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges NRM Board workshop on community groups, run by Volunteers SA the importance of valuing the diversity, experience and skills that people bring to an organisation. At the AGM we were delighted to elect quite a few new people to the committee.



Outgoing President's report

Of Droughts and Flooding Rains - The weather patterns have brought massive rains in all eastern states that have not been experienced for over a decade or more. These rains - so much needed after 10 years of drought - have been devastating to many thousands of families who have lost precious possessions and must start their lives again in many instances. It has also brought new life-blood into the system rejuvenating the parched earth and providing much needed water for the environment and biodiversity.

Whilst massive volumes of water are flowing into the Murray Darling system, argument is still raging about water rights, creating divide between States, irrigators and environmentalists. For good reason the people appear to have lost trust in the Murray Darling Authority to resolve the problems created by decades of poor management and agreements that should never have seen the light of day.

During my recent trip along the Murray River it was a delight to experience the strength of the current moving south and the volumes of water spilling over the barrages however we know that these rains and floods will again dry up and once more we will face drought and hardship. There is absolutely no doubt in my mind that these rivers and systems belong to the lands and the people and must be managed in such a way that will provide a sustainable supply of water for our food bowl whilst supporting healthy ecosystems.

Marine Protected Areas - In July 2011 the FoGSV made a submission to the Select Committee supporting the introduction of Marine Protected Areas in SA waters. The State Government decision to delay the declaration of Marine Parks and Protected Zones has been met with mixed reactions. Strong lobbying from the Fishing Industry and recreational fishers has obviously had an effect on the Government's decision. Equally strong lobbying from the environment movement must continue to build because we cannot afford to wait another 30 years for protection reform.

The Adelaide Coastal Waters Study Report has been released by the EPA and although there appears to be nothing too much that we were not aware of, at least it is in front of Government for consideration for implementation.

Urban sprawl along the metropolitan coastline continues to damage the coastal/marine environment. The Government 30 year plan in many instances fails to address the urgent need for improved infrastructure to support this growth. Population growth also raises many key questions of just how many people can be sustained on this continent and all other continents of the world. Good planning based on sustainable outcomes is a most difficult task but one that must be placed high on all agendas.

Climate Change -and how best to manage this is an issue that ALL countries must address, it is here and we can't turn our back on what we are about to face. Yes there are consequences for introducing carbon reduction programs but we cannot continue to bury our heads in the sand and place the blame in the back yard of someone else. Looking at alternate carbon neutral projects such as the initiatives of the Conservation Council of SA to close down the Pt Augusta Power Station and convert it into a non carbon energy producing complex is a great initiative and one we should support fully.

The Torrens River -continues to grossly pollute the marine waters around the Henley Beach area and recent blooms of toxic bacteria [Blue/Green algae] are still a long way from being resolved. It must be as frustrating to the NRM as it is to us that many of the recommendations from the Torrens River Task Force are still not implemented due to a lack of will and a financial commitment from Government. The recent experiment of releasing water from Kangaroo Creek to create a gentle flow has not stopped the blooms and it was a "long shot" that was worth a try BUT is most unlikely to have a positive outcome unless much of the recommended works upstream are installed.

The recent *By Election in Port Adelaide* brought about some interesting negotiations on promises to 'adopt' suggestions to increase the size of the Conservation Park on Torrens Island. It does not go as far as stopping development on the Island and this could have major consequences for the ecosystem and biodiversity on the Island. The big challenge to Government will be introducing new and innovative infrastructure to prevent more pollution into the Port River while retaining its biodiversity.

The Secchi Disc Project - is about ready to kick start within the next few weeks much to the delight of the Committee who have put in a huge amount of work [especially Angela and Rob]. Testing stations have been identified and organisations on both sides of the Gulf have been contacted and some have accepted the invitation to be involved. We thank the NRM for their financial and expert support to get this project off and running. The results will be entered into a data base created by Alan Goldsmith as a gift to FoGSV and we thank him for his dedication and support. We are hopeful that we will have some preliminary results after the first 12 months and this information will be able to provide valuable information to the NRM and the Friends to enable us to pin point areas of turbidity and try and find their cause.

Shark Fishing - banned on Metropolitan Jetties for trial period of 12 months was like music to our ears. After almost three years of protest about this harmful "fishing sport" the Minister Gail Gago has taken action and we shall be encouraging the Government to enshrine this ban in Legislation.

This is my final report as your President as I have made the decision to stand down due to a large work load. I would like to thank in particular Angela who is our major contributor to the wonderful informative Blue Swimmer journal that continues to get rave reviews for its content. To Val Wales for being the principal organiser of the wonderful and informative Port River Cruise that attracted by far our largest ever collective of community. Many thanks to our meticulous and sometimes bossy Treasurer John Cugley who does a wonderful job of keeping our books and membership records. Many thanks to all other members of the Committee who give freely of their time to assist in making the Friends a successful organisation.

To all the members of the FoGSV who retain their interests in the organisation we thank you sincerely.

Jim Douglas.



Marine Discovery Centre

The FoGSV meeting was a great opportunity to highlight how the MDC has survived for almost 15 years. Our most important job is to educate our 7,000 visitors, but unfortunately this income generated is only 15% of what we need. Our MDC now has 2 full-time workers, 6 Contractors, 4 Sessional Staff and 43 Volunteers.



It was a fantastic day, as we believe there is a shared ethos with both groups wanting to care for our precious marine environment and to inspire others to adopt better environmental behaviours.

We were able to highlight the sand movement on our Coast and some new projects including the pipeline with 2 cells and seagrass rehabilitation.

Photographs showing the loss of seagrass over the past 50 years were also well received.



The most important aspect of the MDC, educating our visitors, was highlighted.

Our main projects including our website, interactive models, coastal signs, seminars/ workshops, consultancy and storybooks were also featured.

Last year we completed, as Project Managers, a 2 year \$200K project to improve all MDC's across Australia, sponsored by FRDC (Fisheries Research Development Corporation) which included a new website, new models, high-quality science equipment, a dissection DVD and consultancy work.



We were thrilled to be able to show our Friends through the MDC and would particularly like to thank our Volunteers Marcia, Wayne, Nicole, Josie and our Artist-in-Residence, Alison Harvey. We received rave reviews about the experience and the calibre of our Team.

Tim Hoile

We are indebted to Tim and the Marine Discovery Centre volunteers who gave their time to open the Centre to the FoGSV following the AGM. We were treated to a lively and informative tour of the Centre's facilities and exhibits.



Congratulations!

OAM for Pat Harbison



In case any of our Friends missed the news earlier this year, Pat Harbison was the recipient of an Order of Australia medal, for her service to marine conservation, in the 2012 Australia Day honours.

Pat is one of the drivers behind the formation of the Friends of Gulf St Vincent, and was the President from 2004 - 2008. Pat and John continue to be staunch supporters of the Friends' activities.

Pat was an editor of the joint FoGSV-Royal Society of South Australia publication *Natural History of Gulf St Vincent* and is currently on the team working on the next volume - *The Natural History of Spencer Gulf*.

Pat intends to continue to be involved in raising and increasing awareness of both the natural and human history of our two wonderful SA gulfs, so that all users, including the commercial ones, are motivated to protect rather than just exploit them.

Tennyson Dunes Group wins award

The Tennyson Dunes group has won a 2011 Premier's Natural Resources Management award.

The group won this prestigious award for their community engagement with the local and south Australian community over the past 16 years. The award recognises their work in increasing awareness of the plant and animal species and the threats to the last original dune system on our metropolitan coastline.

The group's objective is to rehabilitate the extensive 11 hectare dune area extending north and south of Tennyson. Community engagement is a key aspect and primary activity in protecting the area.

Through education, the group has encouraged visitors to the site to gain an appreciation of its biodiversity value and to involve them in managing threats.

The group has installed interpretive information signage, created brochures on native plants that are suitable for coastal gardens, held annual open days and conducted workshops to help educate the community on how they might protect this precious coastal zone.

The group is presently working with City of Charles Sturt to have the dunes heritage listed and there are plans to develop the present car park into an educational gateway with an interpretive centre.



Tennyson Dunes group members accepting the award - clockwise from back: Nick Crouch, Christopher Naylor, Val Wales, Mel Rees, Jim Douglas

See page 10 for information about a new dune care project



FoGSV Committee Member Profiles

The Organising committee of the FoGSV meets roughly every couple of months, to plan and organise annual activities such as Community Forums and discuss how the Friends will respond to new and ongoing issues of concern. At the AGM in March there were a few changes to the committee, and it seemed like a good opportunity to provide a short profile on **all** of the committee members.

New President, **Rob Bosley's** working life began in the UK as an Aeronautical Engineer with Vickers Supermarine. He progressed through associated companies that led to emigration to Canada, first on the east coast, then the west coast, and getting into the oil & gas industry. This in turn led to a second emigration to Australia, as Senior Contracts Engineer with Santos Ltd.

Rob later moved into local government with 15 years spent at the City of Onkaparinga as Major Contracts Manager, specialising in coastal works including the rehabilitation of Onkaparinga's creeks and coastline and the construction of new clubrooms for Moana and Christies Beach Surf Life Saving Clubs. It was in this role that he became aware of the environmental issues these works have caused. Currently, although retired, Rob works as a consultant to the G6 Group of Councils.

With partner Lindy, Rob completed the Coastal Ambassadors program last year and annually coordinates Clean Up Australia for their local beaches. In his spare time Rob has built a new house and is now renovating a cottage - both overlooking the Gulf St Vincent.

Friends Treasurer **John Cugley** has extensive knowledge and experience in water quality and environmental protection gained over many years as Principal Water Quality Adviser, and later as Director, with the EPA. Prior to his retirement from the EPA in 2005 he was instrumental in developing the Australian Drinking Water

Guidelines that were published in 1996 and was closely involved in the development of the Australian Guidelines for Fresh and Marine Water Quality published in 2000.

He initiated and drove the Adelaide Coastal Waters Study and led the development of the South Australian Environment Protection (Water Quality) Policy 2003 which is subordinate legislation under the Environment Protection Act.

Recently John chaired the expert scientific panel looking at acid sulfate soil risks for the lower lakes in South Australia, has provided advice on water quality and salinity objectives and targets for the River Murray in SA to help inform the basin plan.

John has taken a lead role in the development of water quality guidelines for remote indigenous communities being developed by the National Water Commission.

Liz McLeay has taken on the role of Secretary. Liz retired at the end of March 2010 from a working life primarily as a Social Worker. She has always loved plants and the environment and plans to spend her retirement years involved in related issues. Liz is a member of The Wilderness Society and Bush Heritage Australia which have an Australia-wide focus.

While Liz doesn't have any particular environmental training or expertise, she loves the sea and has happy memories of childhood adventures in more pristine waters than we enjoy today. She believes that water is one of the most precious things on earth and was drawn to the activities of Friends of Gulf St Vincent, as water is part of the focus. Liz lives next door to First Creek and, in heavy rain is reminded of what washes out to sea and is pleased to be part of a group that lobbies in the interest of maintaining the best possible Gulf environment.

Liz has the time and energy to commit to Friends' activities. The Secretarial role will provide her with the incentive to consolidate and improve her computer skills!

Angela Gackle joined the FoGSV in 2006 and has been compiling the Blue Swimmer newsletter since 2007. Like many other Friends, she spent carefree, happy childhood days exploring our coastal places. During summer her family was a fixture at the southern end of Moana beach, and Angela snorkelled, swam and explored the rock pools, prying crabs and other animals out from under boulders.

She had notions of becoming a marine biologist, so completed a science degree at Adelaide Uni, got a job at the SA Museum, learned to scuba dive, and went on some great field trips. But her career was hijacked when she worked for a while in the Museum's Information Centre. After that she changed direction to focus on science communication.

She has worked in all tiers of government, and also for private industry. She was a comms manager in CSIRO for 13 years, and more recently in a water quality and treatment research organisation. Now experimentally semi-retired, she is working on achieving an ideal balance of work, leisure, volunteering and sailing. She likes to have as much information as possible about things that interest her!

Andrew Winkler is one of the founding members of FoGSV. Although his first qualification was in environmental geology (coastal processes, landforms, soils, etc.) his interests have since broadened to include environmental volunteering and education, and heritage issues.

Andrew is involved in a number of local groups - the Friends of Patawalonga Creek, and groups in the Port River estuary area (Port of Adelaide Branch of the National Trust of SA, Friends of Torrens Island); he is also a Board member of Friends of Parks Inc., and on the Conservation Council.

A recent interest has been in learning to contribute to *Wikipedia's* local content, to make it a better community resource for environmental and heritage education.

John Caldecott has lived on the coast of the Gulfs all of his life, growing up in Port Pirie and living at Henley Beach since 1970. John originally came to Adelaide to complete an Electrical Engineering degree at the SA Institute of Technology, now UniSA. A significant part of his career has been in electronics and software engineering working for a number of Defence companies that have operations in SA. These days he works as a consultant.

In the early 70's John joined a Spearfishing and Skin Diving Club. Once he learnt to scuba dive he took up underwater photography as the club was very active in this area, with a focus on Gulf waters and Kangaroo Island.

John joined the FGSV committee in 2007 and served as President between 2008 and 2010. As President John was instrumental in holding a Community Water Summit in early 2009 which

subsequently led to the formation of the Water Action Coalition (WAC) in July 2009. John is Convenor of the campaign committee of WAC, which focuses on strategic issues concerning marine and freshwater ecosystems and related water issues for South Australia.

John is passionate about the need to conserve and respect our Gulfs and the Lower Murray environment.

Val Wales and her husband Ray ran an engineering business in Kilkenny for 28 years until retiring 10 years ago. Val first became active in volunteering in the schools her children went to and was Vice President of the South Australian State Schools Association.

Moving to the Esplanade at Semaphore Park after retiring started a whole new career in volunteering in the dunes. Val was concerned about the awful state of the dunes and started up the Semaphore Park Coastcare Group 14 years ago. The group helps clean up and revegetate the dunes, a task which is still ongoing.

Val regards herself as somewhat of an Eco Warrior and keen conservationist who is passionate about our native plants and wildlife.

In 1978 Val observed at first hand the seagrass die-off caused by breaks in the sludge pipe off Semaphore Park beach area at Recreation Parade. The beach which was then an accreting beach turned into a receding beach as a result, which the Coast Protection Board denied for years.

Val attended a FoGSV Forum at the Semaphore SLSC and learnt so much from the speakers that she went to a couple of other Forums, and decided to join. Val sees great value in the Seminars that we run for in informing people about coastal issues and providing the information necessary to do something about it if they wish.

And our new members are -

Sue Murray-Jones is currently a Marine Biologist within the Department for Environment and Natural Resources. She is responsible for providing expert advice on the environmental effects of coastal and marine development proposals, particularly those relating to aquaculture. Sue also contributes to the development and implementation of marine conservation policies and strategies, and sneaks in as much marine research as possible.

Sue completed her PhD on pipis (cockles to South Australians!) at the University of Wollongong before coming to Adelaide to take a



job at SARDI Aquatic Sciences. Sue has been on the Reef Watch steering committee for 10 years, took time out to run the Coastal Development Enquiry for the Environment Resources and Development Parliamentary Committee (extensively quoting the excellent FoGSV submission), and enjoys travelling, growing and cooking food, quilting, diving, and cycling.

Janine Baker has worked in marine research and conservation in South Australia for nearly 25 years, following graduation from University of Adelaide with a Science degree, and a Master's degree in environmental studies. She has worked in the fields of mathematical modelling, fish population dynamics, marine parks research, and benthic field studies. Janine has been an independent consultant, running projects on rare and endemic fishes and invertebrates in SA waters, including Gulf St Vincent, and trying to finish a long-standing PhD project on biodiversity of marine macroalgae in South Australia.

Janine was an active committee member of Australian Marine Conservation Society for 5+ years, campaigning for protection of SA waters from polluting impacts, and has been a member of Friends of GSV since 2007. She co-wrote 3 chapters for the *Natural History of Gulf St Vincent*.

In recent years Janine has spent time creating a range of resources on marine species and marine conservation in southern Australia, for schools and the general public. Janine hopes to build on that activity through a post-graduate teaching degree, and in her current volunteer role as the SA councillor for MESA (Marine Education Society of Australasia). Janine is hoping to further assist SA marine conservation and education efforts as a committee member for Friends of GSV.

Peter Shaughnessy has studied ecology of seals for 40+ years in Australia, southern Africa, Alaska, Macquarie Island, and on the Antarctic pack-ice. Research fields include distribution, abundance and trends, and fishery interactions.

In South Australia, he has demonstrated that populations of New Zealand fur seals have been increasing over the last 24 years, based on estimates of pup numbers at colonies on Kangaroo Island. He is also interested in the distribution and abundance of Australian sea lions on the west coast of Eyre Peninsula, and in reducing the by-catch of sea lions in the commercial shark fishery in SA.

In Gulf St Vincent, he is interested in the increase in numbers of both seal species, particularly at Rapid Head, Port Stanvac and on the ends of the breakwaters at Outer Harbor, and is keen to learn of other places where they haul out.



Water Quality Monitoring (Secchi) project finally off the ground!

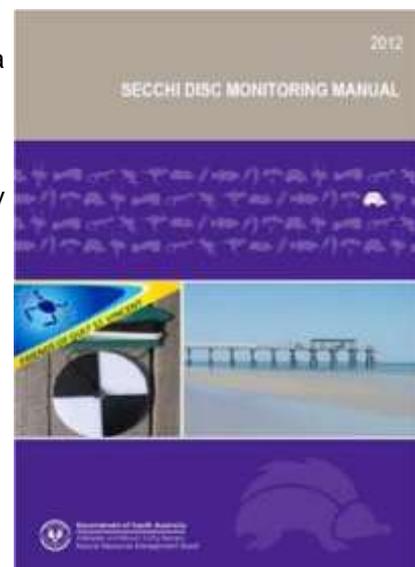
We are delighted to announce that the first Secchi project volunteers have started taking readings to enter into the water quality database.

The inaugural workshop was held at the Grange SLSC on April 1st. Our recruits, Ted Mark, Julie Elder, Anita Leak, Sheralee Cox and Jane Rees. They received a briefing on the purpose of the project, what we hope to achieve, and safety awareness. They were then given the elements of the kit, for later assembly!

A manual has been produced and we are most grateful to Kristian Peters, Kristy Manning and Tony Flaherty for their perseverance during the process of getting the project up and running.

While we have volunteers collecting data on the the eastern side of the Gulf we are still looking for people to take readings on the Yorke Peninsula jetties!

If you know of anyone that lives or regularly visits YP, and who might be interested in helping out, please give them our contact details.





News from Yorke Peninsula

Launch of nautical guides

Three new guides looking water based activities in the region were launched at the Edithburgh jetty on Easter Saturday.

The guides are aimed at recreational boat owners, divers and those who just like to snorkel around local jetties.

Jetties are a prominent feature of the coastal landscape in the Yorke Peninsula region, and whilst jetty habitats are the focus of the **Underwater Explorer's Jetty Guide**, the knowledge that people will gain from using it can be applied across other marine ecosystems.

The underwater guide is a waterproof plastic slate that can be taken into the water by divers and snorkelers, and includes images of local fish, invertebrate, algae and seagrass species that can be found on and under jetties.

The **Boat Owners Guide** Yorke Peninsula stems from a generic publication developed by the Conservation Council of South Australia that has been customised for the Barunga West, Copper Coast and Yorke Peninsula councils to help improve boating behaviours and reduce the impact on coastal and marine ecosystems.

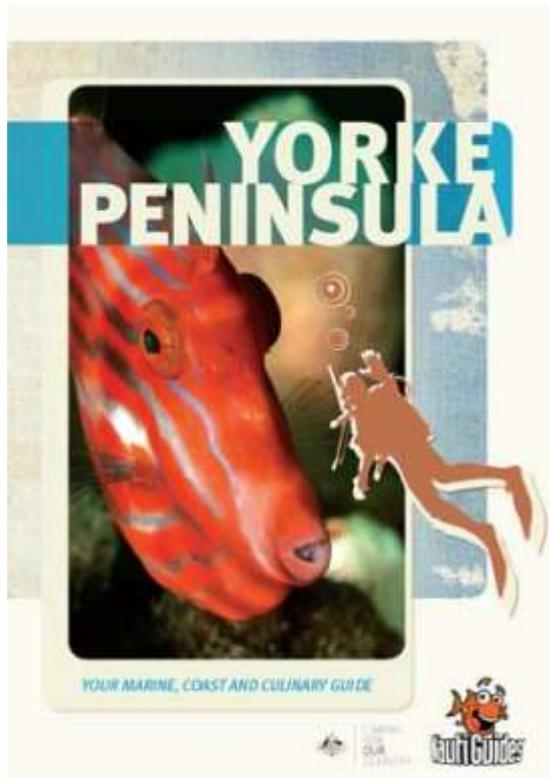
The guide includes information on introduced species, native species of conservation concern, whale and dolphin regulations, marine debris, grey and black water disposal and beach launching.

The fragile and unique marine habitats of the Edithburgh and Port Hughes jetties are very popular for divers and snorkelers, and aim of the Yorke Peninsula NautiGuide is to increase visitor's knowledge and understanding of the habitats and species these jetties support.

The third guide by Will Scapens, **Yorke Peninsula – Your marine, Coast and Culinary Guide** covers popular dive sites, jetties and

shipwrecks, and the creatures that call these areas home, and even include several Nauti-Recipes!

For more information about the guides, contact Coastcare officer Deb Allen on 8821 1555 or deborah.allen@sa.gov.au



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S NIPPE T S



Flags for sale

We still have some Friends of Gulf St Vincent flags available for sale.

They are about 600w x 300h mm flags printed and consist of 1 ply printed polyester on both sides with a white polyester insert to separate both prints.

----- \$118.80 each

The flag is double sided - and is intended for use as a pennant suitable for boats, cars or at home.

Please contact Angela Gackle if you wish to order a flag (0410 585 038).

Visit to the Desalination Plant

We are contemplating organising a visit to the Port Stanvac Desalination Plant later this year, and would like to know how many of our members are likely to participate.

The visitor centre can accommodate up to 25 people at a time, and would take about 1 & 1/2 hours. If they know what kinds of questions we will be asking, they can make sure staff with the relevant expertise are on hand to answer them. The tours are normally during office hours, but we could try for late in the day (15.30 start) if this enables more people to come along.

At this stage we are gauging interest from our members - please email Angela on angela.gackle@bigpond.com.

MDC Volunteers for dune care project

The Marine Discovery Centre has recently obtained a **Caring for our Country Grant**, and part of this is to improve an area of dunes between Marlborough St and Grange Rd.

Please consider joining in this worthwhile and enjoyable activity. You will learn to identify common weeds and native coastal plants. The Marine Discovery Centre (MDC) is very proud to For this year we will meet each month on a Monday, for 2 hours, planting native plants provided by Council and weeding the area. Dates will be provided.

Next year, we may try to meet fortnightly depending on the progress of our Dune area. We are also hoping, with Council approval, that some members may do some weeding outside of the meeting times.

If you would like to join this group, contact:

UQuack-Weatherley@star.adl.catholic.edu.au

or phone 8356 8943



Article contributions are welcome.
Please email to the editor of the Blue Swimmer:
angela.gackle@bigpond.com

The Friends of Gulf St Vincent recently sent the letter below, expressing concern about unsatisfactory dredging procedures in the Port Stanvac, O'Sullivan's Beach area, to Minister Paul Caica and the Chief Executive of the EPA.



Contacts
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Treasurer: John Cugley john.cugley@njspind.com 08 8289 0279

Dredging guidelines review and update

Dear Minister,

The Friends of Gulf St Vincent is a voluntary organisation, with more than 90 individual and group members. Our principal objective is to foster a unified community approach to the protection and wise use of Gulf St Vincent. Enclosed with this letter is a booklet produced by the Friends that articulates our commitment to playing a positive role in championing the Gulf in the face of new and ongoing challenges.

One of our members recently alerted us to the fact that the licence for the dredging maintenance of the O'Sullivan's Beach boat launch facility is shortly to be renewed. The terms of this licence have been a cause for previous correspondence with the EPA in relation to dredge spoil being dumped on the nearby reef at O'Sullivan's Beach, resulting in significant damage to the reef flora and fauna.

We understand that the EPA is currently reviewing the dredging guidelines, and on checking the EPA website we find that this review was expected to be completed in 2011.

Since 2009 – when the Friends raised similar concerns about the inadequacy of current dredging guidelines – and now, there have been some significant developments regarding Adelaide Coastal Waters and improving their quality. The EPA, in its Adelaide Coastal Waters Quality Improvement Program (ACWGIP), clearly acknowledges the importance of 1) coastal water quality 2) its aesthetic and recreational value and 3) healthy marine habitats and their biota to the state and its residents.

Along with seagrasses, reefs are an important feature of our coastal regions and the added benefit of close-to-shore and intertidal reefs is that they provide safe opportunity for children and non-swimmers to observe and learn about marine ecosystems at close range. The reef to the north of O'Sullivan's Beach is one such resource.

A 2008 report by Angela Dutton and Kirsten Benkendorff to the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Natural Resource Management Board states "Habitat surveys revealed that the Port Stanvac and O'Sullivan's Beach intertidal reefs are characterised by a relatively high percent cover of boulders and pebbles compared to other sites in the Adelaide Metropolitan region. Dominance of these complex microhabitats is also characteristic of other invertebrate rich hotspots found further south along the Fleurieu Peninsula (Benkendorff and Thomas, 2008) and along the urbanised NSW Coast (Benkendorff and Davis, 2002). A large number of intertidal species are restricted to the protected habitat underneath boulders and/or lay their eggs on the underside of boulders (Benkendorff and Davis, 2004; Liversage, 2007; Benkendorff et al., 2008), suggesting that intertidal reefs with significant boulder fields should be prioritised for conservation."

http://www.aqlmrm.sa.gov.au/Portals/2/Coast/pt_stanvac-biodiversity%20report%20Flinders%20Uni.pdf

In recent times this "invertebrate rich hotspot" been smothered by dredging spoils. While the reef slowly recovers, try to imagine what it would be if this periodic and significant setback is stopped.

We believe that environmental harm is being caused, and that there needs to be a cost benefit analysis of alternative solutions including exploring the need for fill in other nearby locations e.g. the remediation of the Pt Stanvac Refinery site.

Dredging is unfortunately necessary, however this does not excuse either the relevant authorities or the dredging contractors for adopting the easiest and cheapest solution. We challenge those responsible for the EPA dredging review to demonstrate that the ACWGIP is not just rhetoric. Help us to safeguard all reefs by prohibiting the dumping of dredge spoil onto them.

Yours sincerely,

Rob Bosley
President, Friends of Gulf St Vincent