

Newsletter 221 September 2013

Description

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Dear Friends

The weather gods shone upon us for the launching of the Bartley Historic Plaque, giving us one perfect day between many wet ones. It was pleasing to welcome six relatives of the Bartley family who travelled from Sydney and Cootamundra for the event.

In his welcome address Neville gave an interesting speech reflecting on the tough conditions in Ireland and England when Bartley was a young man. It was the time of the potato famine in Ireland and the industrial revolution in England. Of the many people emigrating at this time Bartley was just one.

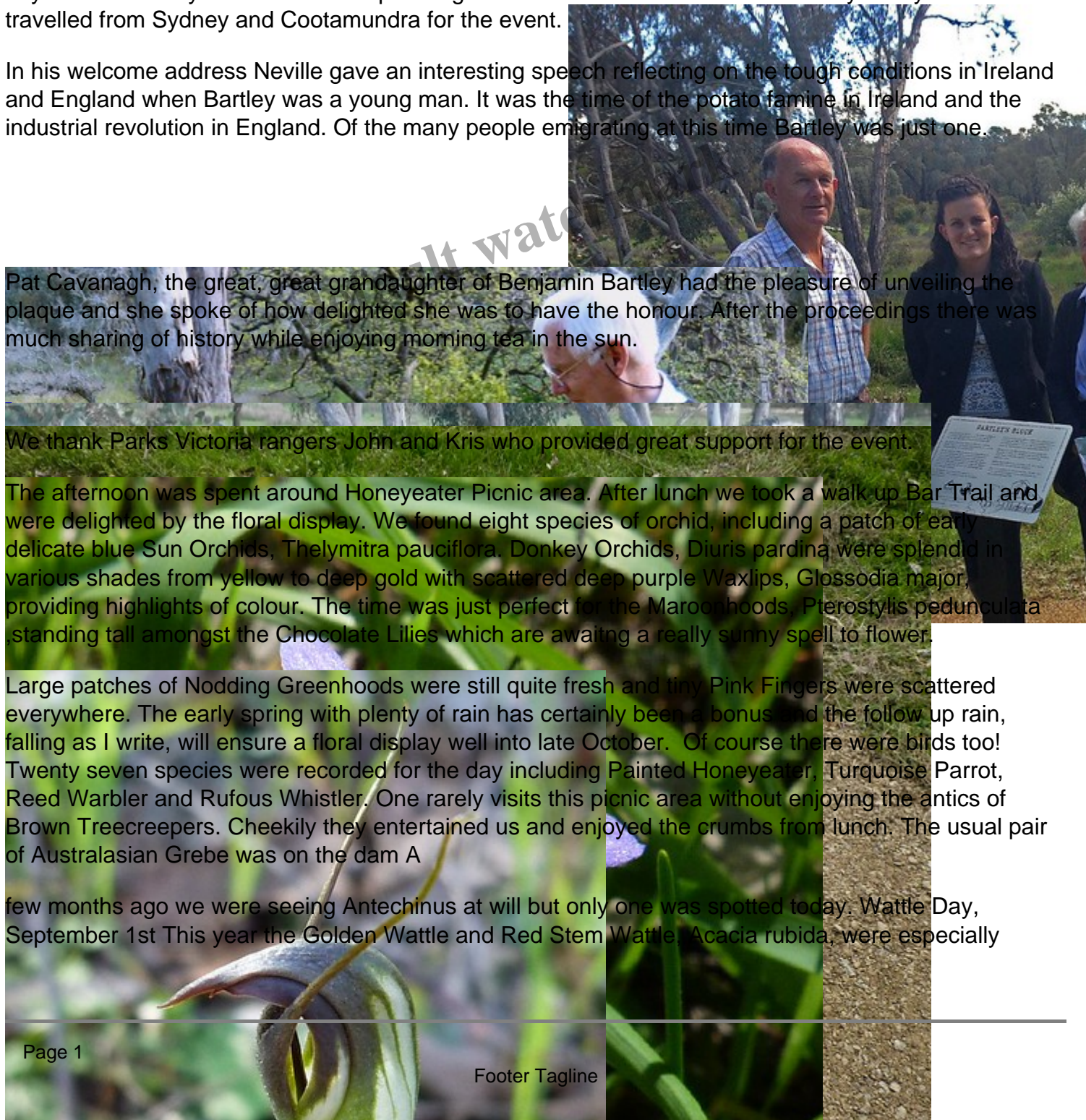
Pat Cavanagh, the great, great granddaughter of Benjamin Bartley had the pleasure of unveiling the plaque and she spoke of how delighted she was to have the honour. After the proceedings there was much sharing of history while enjoying morning tea in the sun.

We thank Parks Victoria rangers John and Kris who provided great support for the event.

The afternoon was spent around Honeyeater Picnic area. After lunch we took a walk up Bar Trail and were delighted by the floral display. We found eight species of orchid, including a patch of early delicate blue Sun Orchids, *Thelymitra pauciflora*. Donkey Orchids, *Diuris pardina* were splendid in various shades from yellow to deep gold with scattered deep purple Waxlips, *Glossodia major*, providing highlights of colour. The time was just perfect for the Maroonhoods, *Pterostylis pedunculata*, standing tall amongst the Chocolate Lilies which are awaiting a really sunny spell to flower.

Large patches of Nodding Greenhoods were still quite fresh and tiny Pink Fingers were scattered everywhere. The early spring with plenty of rain has certainly been a bonus and the follow up rain, falling as I write, will ensure a floral display well into late October. Of course there were birds too! Twenty seven species were recorded for the day including Painted Honeyeater, Turquoise Parrot, Reed Warbler and Rufous Whistler. One rarely visits this picnic area without enjoying the antics of Brown Treecreepers. Cheekily they entertained us and enjoyed the crumbs from lunch. The usual pair of Australasian Grebe was on the dam A

few months ago we were seeing Antechinus at will but only one was spotted today. Wattle Day, September 1st This year the Golden Wattle and Red Stem Wattle, *Acacia rubida*, were especially



showy. Rain shortened the Varnish Wattle flowering and of course the feral Cootamundra Wattles were easily spotted and removed. Hedge Wattle, *Acacia paradoxa* is still sporting its very deep gold flowers.

AGM

After an enjoyable day we retreated to the Senior Citizens Hall for dinner, the meeting and our guest speaker. A delicious array of food was presented and enjoyed by all amid conversation and drinks. At the AGM members adopted the new constitution rules Office bearers and committee members were elected and are as follows. President E Collins, Vice-president Jennifer Davidson Secretary Neville Bartlett, Treasurer Peter Gotham. Committee members: J Gotham, J Birkhead, M Webster, J Hawker, M Smith, R Jerome. To everyone who has worked hard over the past year thank you, well done and keep up the good work. Our guest Martin O'Brien presented an interesting overview of French Island, where he is a volunteer. An excellent array of photos illustrated the diverse habitats of the island, from salt marsh, mangrove to dry forest. Sounds like a good spot for a visit.

Around the park

A patch of the dainty blue Bearded Caladenia, *C deformis*, uncommon in the Chiltern section of the park, was found by Neil. Needless to say all the dams and waterholes are full. The warm spell early in the month saw the decline of fungi but this should change following the latest rain, over 60mm has fallen in the last week with more to come! There is plenty to enjoy in the park so do not miss this spring, take your binoculars, camera, chair and lunch and enjoy! If you feel like a good walk Tuan Track Walk and White Box Walk are spectacular at this time. Alarming news is that Sambar Deer are in the Donchi Hill block.

Bird news:

Perhaps the best news is that the Hooded Robins have been seen again on Lomandra track, found by those avid birdos Martin O'Brien and Kaye Trainor. Also on the track was a "gang" of Grey Fantails and a Hobby, always a good bird to see. Painted Honeyeaters are at Bartley's Block. Chiltern Valley No 2 is the best spot for Diamond Firetails, Shovelers and Little Grassbird. Birds are breeding, Red Wattlebirds have young, as do some waterbirds. A Square-tailed Kite was seen over Lomandra Track and some weeks ago Dean Ingwersen had one over Donchi Hill not too far from that site.

Projects

An application has been lodged for a Government Small Grant of up to \$10,000. The project proposes to improve the Natural Features Reserve and Great Southern and United Mine precinct. Treeplanting, weed control, fencing and rubbish removal are the target tasks. We will know the outcome in November.

Calendars

are next on the agenda. If you have a photo you would like to submit for consideration please forward it as soon as possible. This is a last call.

Regent Honeyeater Release

We are still seeking volunteers for ongoing searching. If you are able to assist with this project please contact Glen Johnson glen.johnson@dse.vic.gov.au The challenge is still on! To find and photograph a wild bird! Half of this challenge has been met, just need the photo!

Rainfall: August 99.3 mm over 9 days. Year to date: 458.3 mm over 41 days. Indeed a wet spring!

NEXT MEETING

SUNDAY OCTOBER 6TH Meet at Chiltern Post Office at 9.00 am Byo lunch, binocs, sunscreen, hat, water We will be monitoring nest boxes and taking in all that spring has to offer. Contact in the field : Eileen 0407 486 480

Membership

Thankyou to everyone who has supported the group by renewing their membership. Membership stands at 80.

Category

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