



Frankston Branch News

Official Newsletter of Frankston Field & Game A.B.N. 97 827 331 728

April 2010 - May 2010

2010 DUCK OPENING WRAP UP - DO YOU HAVE THE DUCK FEVER?

As advertised in the last newsletter, Frankston booked in our annual duck fever night on Saturday 13th March at our club rooms in Rossiter Road Carrum Downs.

Different in 2010, the branch did not run this event on a week-night, rather we ran it on a Saturday night so that members could attend guilt free without having to worry about getting up for work the next morning.

Also different we ran the night back to back with our March clay target competition. This competition was held for the benefit of Better Rentals who through their sales manager (and Frankston Committee member) Guy Pilkington, have donated the use of many thousands of dollars worth of earthmoving and other equipment to the branch in recent months.

Guy is a keen clay target shooter and hunter. Adding to the day he also brought along a forty foot scissor lift to enable the setting of a lovely long "Mountain Duck" crosser at stand one.

Part of the rationale for the schedule was to give members the opportunity to cross-over between the clay target and hunting aspects of the branch's activities. Many do both but some rarely attend both hunting and shooting events run by the club. It seemed to pay off with a number of hunters competing who had never shot clays at the branch before, or if so had only done so infrequently. The clay target event was also very well subscribed to with some 92 competitors attending, many whom then went on to attend the subsequent duck fever night or at least the start of it.

Setting up the rooms before and after the competition's conclusion and before the duck fever night's 6pm start, members and committee reorganised the tables, added trestle tables for the exhibitors, prepared food and wired up PA and audio visual equipment.

Exhibitors set up at various times. Our loyal supporters DKS Outdoor Promotions set their substantial stall up quite early and during the clay comp. Ian Head and World Class Wingshooting exhibitions later followed suit and then were joined by Aussie Disposals with the distributors of Ridgeline clothing.

Our night was to be started with a quick address by the President, then introduction and handover to the MC Graham "Dr Duck" Eames. Eamesy did a fantastic job, and had the audience in stitches all night!

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From the President . . .

As always, March has seen the branch busy. With it's membership of passionate hunters, range practice was well attended and the annual duck fever night was a great success! We didn't run a formal duck opening trip. We suggested it, but as in previous years members at branch events indicated they preferred to plan their own opening weekend. We instead made it known a group would be attending the opening at Dowds Morass in Gippsland and put out an open invitation.

Come Friday the 19th, my Uncle Pete and I headed to the bakery at Rosedale to meet our crew of Frankston FGA members. Ordering a coffee and pastie I was told by the owner something like a hundred people were waiting when they opened that morning. Most had Labradors, many had flat-bottomed boats and wetlands camo seemed to be the new Gippsland fashion trend. They had done a roaring trade and couldn't remember a duck season where more hunters had passed through town! We are told by the media from time to time that duck hunting is a dead sport and unpopular... Anyone who agrees with that particular viewpoint should visit a country town like Rosedale on duck opening weekend, find a bakery and prepare to eat a big serve of HUMBLE PIE!

Anyhow, we went on to set camp at Dowds with several Frankston colleagues joining us through the course of the day. We double checked our spot, set decoys then took it easy. We were visited by FGA's Rod Drew and Peter Rice as well as DSE delivering the simple messages to hunters that Laurie Levy was in town and secondly hunters were reminded to do the right thing in the morning, respect opening times and use restraint if confronted with protesters. We were asked to photograph them and call Police using a direct number (supplied) to their mobile operations centre.

Come Saturday morning and everyone was on best behavior. Shooting started at Dowds bang-on time at 07:10 and not a minute earlier. Only a single shot had rung out early, at about 7:00 and many miles away in the direction of Lake Wellington. It provoked audible swearing and comment from the hunters on Dowds, whom appreciated the need to respect opening day ethics.

It's a shame the protesters didn't take a page from the hunters book of ethics. A DSE officer stopping in camp Saturday afternoon told us his "bag" was some 12 summary infringement notices issued plus three criminal charges laid against protesters for allegedly vandalising hunter property and interfering with boats. We'll wait with interest to see the outcomes of these charges.

I've read Laurie Levy attracted a hundred odd fanatics to protest at Dowds. I'm not sure how that all worked or if the head count was accurate. All I know is our immediate area was dread-lock free and totally devoid of Pink albums, lentils and cous-cous all weekend! We'd heard maybe twenty minutes of whistles and horns over the water after 07:10 Saturday, but then all we heard was enthusiastic shooting. Astoundingly too, we heard no protester noise whatsoever Saturday night or Sunday morning. Then again, I've never heard anyone accuse Levy and his mob of having a work ethic. Perhaps they were fatigued and retired to the caravan park for tofu and a snooze?

As to the quality of shooting on Dowds: unfortunately, as reported, it left much to be desired. This beautiful wetland was in tip-top condition and full of water. There were ample hunters to keep the birds moving too. The ducks just weren't there. Still, it's no matter, we had a ball, ate well, ate way too often and nearly split our sides joking and laughing around the fire each night.

Simultaneously our relatives to the north in Queensland and New South Wales are reported to be experiencing record numbers of visiting waterfowl, boosted recently by cyclones and flooding. This may well contribute to low bags in Victoria in 2010 but time will tell. Not all reports have been poor, particularly those coming from East Gippsland and the State's centre. There's plenty of water to go under the bridge and I hope like me, you're looking forward to many more days afield in 2010.

My uncle Pete related to some first timers in our camp, how in the seventies he once drove nine hours from Morabbin to Lake Cowal NSW only to bag one duck. Ours is a fickle business which is why a good day out captures our imaginations so vividly. The moral? **Hunt hard, hunt often!**

Steve Harris

WANTED - PHOTOS, STORIES & HUNTING REPORTS

WWW.FRANKSTONFGA.COM.AU IS YOUR WEBSITE AND THIS IS YOUR NEWSLETTER

WE WANT YOUR REPORTS, STORIES AND PHOTOS!

CONTRIBUTE BY EMAILING frankstonfga@gmail.com

Frankston Field & Game - Hunting

DUCK HUNTING SEASON - 2010

DUCK SEASON OPENING:

Moderate bags were reported in most regions despite improved conditions and recent rain. Victorian waterways can't compete with the immense flooding and cyclonic activity to our north and it seems many birds departed in late February and March to chase the weather.

Nonetheless hunters have reported great times away with family and friends and are planning more trips soon. The following are a smattering of their opening day reports. Keep em coming!

Delatite Arm, Lake Eildon - Party of 2 - Poor hunting with only 2 woodies shot per hunter on the Saturday. Fishing was much better and a good time was had. *L. Shaw*

East Gippsland - Party of 12 shot private property - numbers of birds down on 2009 but full bags shot by all (albeit after a lot of perseverance). Great weekend! *G. Lewien*

Gunbower Forest, Koondrook - Party of 4 shot four woodies, four blackies and a shoveller - Only two birds shot on the Sunday so the group packed up and shot a clay comp at Echuca FGA on way home. Had a fantastic time. It was great to get away from it all, camp and relax. Conditions hot. A few cold beers helped! *G. Pilkington*

Also at Gunbower - Party of 7 - Only five ducks taken by the group however a great time had by all. Hot conditions. *B. Hall*

Lake Eppalock - Party of 8 - After quick count on the Friday revealed only 80 birds present, hopes were not high. The group's expectations were exceeded on opening morning though with 40 birds taken by the group. All were woodies bar 6 grey teal. The mobs seemed to keep together and circled the lake nicely providing some great hunting to the party. *A. Carson*

Goulburn River, Nagambie - Party of 2 - Full bags taken but hunters worked hard. *M. Rogers*

Clydebank Morass, Sale region - Party of 6 - Moderate bags taken by all - Mostly grey teal and mounties were shot. Good fun but frustratingly slow at times. *A. Bussitini*

IN OTHER NEWS:

Duck opening protests - Levy and co were observed by FGA staff carefully avoiding the waterline, presumably for fear of prosecution. They were apparently okay about sending others, including kids, into the water to be charged by waiting DSE and Police.

Kids are now actively targeted on networking sites like facebook. Also disturbing if true, its reported teens were dropped off by parents on Sat to stand in semi-darkness among hunter's decoys, clad in shorts and t-shirts! As a family man I'm horrified a parent might enable children to illegally enter harms way like this! Thank goodness as usual no one was hurt because it's also reported gates were chained by vandals potentially impeding emergency access.

While DSE and Police struggled with the main body of protesters, others allegedly went further and used the diversion to vandalise hides, boats and other property! Thankfully some arrests were made. "Peaceful protest"... HA!

FGA reports no birds were retrieved by Levy and co, wounded or otherwise.

Hunters Hangout - Attend in April for planning of up-and-coming hunts including possible access by FFGA to property on the little Murray.

Minyip Quail trip & Fox Drives - In planning, watch newsletters and attend hunters hangouts!

RECAP OF SEASON ANNOUNCEMENTS (confirm in local state guides):

Vic Duck Season - 20th March - 30th May. Bag limit of five birds p/hunter p/day (inc max of one Shoveller) plus three extra wood ducks.

Vic Quail Season - 3rd April - 30 June. Bag limit of twenty stubble quail p/hunter p/day.

Tassie Duck Season - 6th March - 6th June. Bag limit of ten birds p/hunter p/day (inc max of four Mountain Ducks)

Tassie Quail Season - 1 May - 13th June. Bag limit of twenty brown quail p/hunter p/day.

South Aus Duck Season - 27th March - 27 June. Bag limit of six birds p/hunter p/day (inc max of two blackies)

South Aus Quail Season - 3rd April - 25th July. Bag limit of fifteen birds p/hunter p/day

Committee Contact Details

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Committee: Guy Pilkington

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Up Coming Events

APRIL

1st Hunters Hangout
10th 75 Targets - thanks to Wattmaster
15th Committee meeting
24th 75 Target sporting clays

MAY

8th 75 Targets - Combined Barry Howe and Brian Walker Memorial
22nd Committee meeting
27th 75 Target sporting clays

JUNE

3rd Hunters Hangout
12th 75 Target Sporting Clays
17th Committee meeting
26th 75 Target Sporting Clays

All members are welcome to attend committee meetings. Committee meetings are held 6:30 PM Thursdays Watch www.frankstonfga.com.au, future newsletters and attend Hunters Hangouts for date confirmation/changes.

Frankston Field & Game - Sporting Clays

Clay Target News

We have hosted some wonderful competitions in recent times and the trend has been pleasingly positive in terms of attendances and feedback.

Ground works:

Our earthworks are now substantially complete and the finishing touches are being put on a number of new sections of the grounds. This has involved the erection of several safety barriers and fences as well as the spreading and compacting of gravel over our new tracks and pathways in preparation for autumn rains.

There is certainly a long list of works yet to be done by the grounds crew and volunteers but it's fantastic to see things beginning to take shape!

Practice days:

With the lead up to duck season we experienced the usual increase in member and visitor attendance at our weekly Thursday practice days. Many new faces and some long lost mates took the chance to visit and dust off their field guns. With moderate bags shot in many parts of the state, I hope the practice helped hunters make the most of the opportunities that came their way!

2010 FGA National Carnival Destination Announced

It's been a long wait to hear the news of which FGA branch will host the 2010 Nationals on Cup Weekend in November. We can inform you now that branch will be Kingston, South Australia.

COMPETITION RESULTS:

23rd Jan 2010 - 100 Target Carlson Classic:

A great deal of planning and promotions as well as a substantial working bee in preparation, rewarded us with a fantastic turnout of 117 shooters on the day.

Our sponsor DKS Outdoor Promotions, importers of Carlson Chokes provided a generous prize pool worth \$3,695 consisting of choke tubes, camouflage backpacks, cleaning kits, boresnakes and outdoor suits.

A great day was had by all and we very much appreciate the contributions of all the ground

crew and office volunteers and particularly the support of the sponsor!

Overall: A. Panetta

AA – B. Mortenson, P. Mota, P. Maltezos

A – A. Backman, R. McDonald, J. Quinn

B – B. Murray, S. McDonald, J. Veloff

C – R. Libe, F. Piccolo, G. Smith

Vets - V. Ruddick, L. Box, B. Phillips

Ladies – M. McDonald, B. Farmer

Jun – G. Thomas, B. Spencer, C. Lenz

13th Feb 2010 - 75 Sporting Clays for DKS Outdoor Promotions

Backing up their support for the branch in January, DKS also sponsored our February shoot with a prize pool selection of various hunting and gun-care products.

Some 81 competitors braved hot, steamy conditions a day after torrential rain hit Melbourne. They were greeted with a slightly harder ground than usual; the grounds crew's "contribution" to ensuring the guys and gals would shoot well at the upcoming duck opening.

We also managed to get Brittany Walker out of the office and onto the range for the first time. Firing my Beretta she was able to dispatch a few targets on the skeet grounds after a crash course in shotgunning.

AA – P. Onley, N. Peart, E. Treadwell

A – J. Pannuzzo, M. Wright, P. Maltezos

B – B. Murray, G. Pilkington, A. Xenidis

C – P. Squires, B. Drakeley, M. Engin

Vets - C. Barker, L. Box, R. Carter

Ladies – M. McDonald, J. Murray

Jun – J. Paglia, M. Pannuzzo, D. McIntyre

27th February 2010 - 75 Sporting Clays

With expectations set for a cold, wet and windy day, a fair number of our regulars kept away this day. In the end the weather was mild and pretty much perfect for a day on the clays, however only forty competitors attended.

While it was a disappointing turnout, the competitors in attendance had a wonderful time and so did those of us running the day.

The targets were challenging, creative and varied. They were widely complimented

We managed to get Brittany out of the office

again this day. Only, this time we gave her something harder than skeet targets. She showed us up quite nicely, smashing a mix of incomers and rabbits. I think we may well be creating a monster here!

A - M. Borg, C. Busittil, G. Thomas

B - T. Tryp, L. Lambrou, S. Davidson

C - M. Exelby, R. Tonkin, I. Spiller

Vets - R. Carter, V. Ruddick, P. Dalbron

Jun - G. Thomas, N. Tiedemann

13th March 2010 - 75 Sporting Clays For Guy Pilkington and Better Rentals

A gorgeous sunny day greeted the 92 competitors who took to the field to thank Better Rentals for their support in recent times.

For those unaware, while Better Rentals do not provide the branch a conventional sponsorship, they have donated the use of many thousands of dollars worth of machinery rentals at our grounds in 2010. Committee decided running a shoot in their honor was the least we could do to thank them!

Guy even managed to bring along a forty foot scissor lift to place on the first stand with a target being thrown from atop, described by the grounds crew as a "mountain duck crosser"

AA - R. Hall, G. Eames, J. McWilliams

A - S. Smith, D. McLeod, A. Opie

B - B. Murray, A. Xenidis, G. Evans

C - R. Ferrino, A. Blandthorn, B. Rutherford

Vets - W. Robinson, R. Carter, D. Genovese

Ladies - M. Hogan, F. Paglia

Jun - M. Pannuzzo, J. Paglia, D. Pannuzzo

Thanks to the our volunteers in the office and on the grounds - great work!

In between newsletters see up-to-date results, photos and more at www.frankstonfga.com.au

Also - For other branch's results and various clay target articles, read Claybuster the new full-colour online clay target shooting newsletter provided monthly by Graham "Dr Duck" Eames and and Julie Eames of Feathers and Fur magazine.

Visit www.claybuster.com.au to register.

UP AND COMING COMPETITIONS

75 Sporting Clays - Sat April 10th, 11am - Wattmaster

75 Sporting Clays - Sat April 24th, 11am - Anzac day weekend

75 Sporting Clays - Sat May 8th, 11am - Barry Howe and Brian Walker Memorial

75 Sporting Clays - Sat May 22th, 11am

Location: FRANKSTON FGA, Rossiters Road Carrum Downs

Contact Dave Jencke and refer FGA shoot-book

HUNTERS HANGOUT

Thursday, April 1st - Start 8:00 pm

Duck season trips discussed and planned Possible private property option on the Little Murray

Club Rooms - Rossiters Road, Carrum Downs

Sponsor's Honour Roll

**PULSE OFFICE SERVICES
WATTMASTER**

WHITEHORSE ARMS

BRANCA SAND & SOIL

CARLSON CHOKE TUBES

SCERRI BROS BILLIARDS

DKS OUTDOORS PROMOTIONS

AUSTRALASIAN SPORTS HUNTING ALLIANCE

BRIAN WALKER FAMILY

BARRY HOWE FAMILY & FRIENDS

Please support those who support your sport

**THANKS TOO FOR THE GENEROUS SUPPORT OF
BETTER RENTALS**

FRANKSTON FIELD AND GAME ARE ON THE WEB!

Having opened late December 2009, the committee proudly invite you to visit our all new website:

www.frankstonfga.com.au

Featuring:

**Latest events and competition calendar
Downloadable newsletters
Competition results
Branch info, history and contacts
Photo archives - Social, hunting and competition
Sponsor and supporter links**

All that and more...

Thanks to volunteer web-master Ben Drakeley and many contributing authors and photographers for providing content

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We'd organised a number of other speakers for the night who each contributed something to either the informative or entertainment quality of the night. Glenn Sharp from DSE did a tremendous job of explaining the rules and regulations for the season as well as very valiantly offering open question time to the audience who then grilled him on several issues and tested his responses to various hypothetical scenarios.

Also speaking was Russell Pearson of the Country Alliance political party who gave a great run down on the political landscape this election year. Neil Jenkins of Country Alliance later contacted me to offer to speak at one of our hunters hangouts.

FGA also took to the stage with newly appointed National Board Member Peter Hawker and FGA executive officer Peter Rice delivering a speech on bird counts, water levels and other issues affecting the upcoming season.

Eamesy kept all these speeches running, along with breaks for raffle draws with prizes kindly donated by DKS Outdoors Promotions, World Class Wingshooting Expeditions and FGA as well as a generous quantity of steel shells from Winchester Australia's Brian Mortenson. Eamesy's "funny T-Shirt" and duck calling contests were also a hit.

Head counts during the formalities indicated something like 115 people in attendance. We hadn't intended to make a big profit on the night, just to give members a great event. The night did pay for itself however, indeed it generated a tidy profit to be put back into other branch endeavours. Between the clay-comp earlier and the social night, we worked out some 207 members passed through our doors in a day which is great! No wonder committee slept soundly that night!

A big thank you to all those who organised, attended, exhibited or spoke at the clay comp and / or the duck fever night. Some worked on Thursday and Friday, others spent countless hours on the phone or computers well in advance. Many still put in more than 18 hours on the Saturday! Some helped set-up the rooms, man the bar, doors and office, cook the BBQ and there even were volunteers cleaning at 1am then again the day after, mopping floors at 7am Sunday morning.

In particular I'd like to single out Dave Jencke, Graham Lewien, Johnny Humphries, Laurie and Marg Howell, Jess and Brittany Walker, Mick Eddey, Guy Pilkington, Larry Lambrou, Peter Sullivan and my wife Raelene for their work on the range, in the rooms or in the office throughout,

It's not often volunteers running club nights receive appropriate thanks for their labours. I think they should all give themselves a pat on the back for a job well done and I'd suggest members do likewise when they see them .

It was a gamble to run the event on a Saturday night. Would we repeat it...? We think 2010 was a great success but for 2011 we'd appreciate comments. If members would be good enough to drop a line to frankstonfga@gmail.com all opinions will be discussed and considered.

RITCHIES
SUPERMARKETS AND LIQUOR STORES