



Frankston Branch News

Official Newsletter of Frankston Field & Game

October - November 2009

WINTER FOXES, WINDY DAYS AND RICE HUNTING DAY-DREAMS

It's only been a few months since the end of the 2009 Victorian duck season and I'm already getting itchy feet! As much as I enjoyed it, this year's season was way too short!

Predictably this has driven me to day dream in recent times, reminiscing on the good old days of hot sunny evenings spent swatting mosquito's and watching out for brown snakes while hunting ducks in failing light on the rice bays of NSW farms near towns like Moulamein, Urana and Tocumwal.

Geez I miss rice hunting! In years gone by the customary Cup weekend trip to Tocumwal would be my focus right now. We'd be planning, strategising, accumulating gear, calling cockies. There seems to be none of that today...

I know die-hard's will say I'm wrong, there's plenty of rice hunting if you work for it! I grant you a hunter without kids or with a very generous wife and plenty of free time will prospect and find somewhere. I think it's fair to say though, drought has left the average punter short of rice hunting opportunities.

In my accounting practice my clients include (now) ex-rice farmers. I keep hearing there's been such a reduced water allocation that expansive rice crops are as rare as hens teeth and those that remain attract crowds of hunters jostling for position.

What ever happened to the days of driving up the Hume to camp in a remote paddock near the edge of rice bays that stretch as far as the eye could see? Where one could hunt as little or as much as you wanted knowing the ducks would still be there when you woke from a mid-day sleep, got tired of cod fishing or bored with shooting tin cans with the camp slug gun.

I miss standing ake deep in duck lice and feathers, forming part of a production line starting at the mechanical plucker by the Landcruiser and ending at an unusually ugly and oversized esky full of dry-ice; home-made by such'and'such's mate just for the purpose.

I miss sitting on the bank of a rice bay in old fashioned unsophisticated army disposal greens with an automatic shotgun loaded to capacity with lead sixes and fours! Chokes fixed open to bring down close birds as they set in at dusk just metres over your head.

Mine was a Remington, but I always drooled over the then state of the art Beretta gas-auto my Uncle's mate carried!

From the President . . .

Two months have passed since the AGM and I can report committee are finding their feet. You'll see in this newsletter we've not been shy to tackle big issues, apply fresh perspective and make decisions. I'd like to keep this newsletter entertaining but need to keep content informative to communicate recent developments. I make no apologies for that but promise a lighter December edition.

Firstly I'd like to introduce Guy Pilkington. Guy has been co-opted to committee and we appreciate his help. a Long-time FFGA supporter Guy's a family man, Manager of Better Rentals Cranbourne and brings a wealth of hunting and clay experience. Guy's also a person who can "get things done".

As reported in the last newsletter, significant admin issues exist. After many hours tackling a mountain of paperwork we're close to being up to date with Consumer Affairs Victoria, FGA head office, our creditors and insurers. I make particular mention of the Consumer Affairs Victoria paperwork because after the July election I contacted CAV and was informed 9 years of returns are outstanding leaving us in contravention of the Incorporated Associations Act and liable for penalties and prosecution.

Pleading clemency CAV agreed for us to lodge the last four returns only, with the five prior years forgiven. That paperwork is now in progress. In drafting the returns I've spent time reviewing prior year's accounts and noted errors which previous Treasurer Michael Kalidonis has kindly assisted with. Nothing untoward, but given amendments were made an abridged version is printed page 4.

Another topical issue is the poor attendance at hunter's hangouts. In August we organised a full agenda and speaker John Whitfort of Peninsula Taxidermy. Embarrassingly, only committee and four members turned up. An enjoyable night was had but it's clearly unsustainable with these numbers.

Feedback has been sought with only limited comment received related to content. Quality speakers are regarded as critical however I would counter that I can't and won't approach speakers without a reasonable audience expectation. These nights cost us time and money and without increased numbers the event will not continue! At least not in its current form.

Another recent development, committee has received comments the old FFGA website is out of date and features misleading information. I've now had the FFGA website reference removed from FGA's useful link's page and we're decommissioning that site. Member Ben Drakely has kindly volunteered his time and skills to develop and maintain a new and jazzy site. Watch this box.

Another positive note, we promised you a broad hunting calendar for 2010 - Some plans:

- Flinders Island trip Feb 2010 - Cape Barren Geese, Turkeys and Wallabies. Cost \$1,200 to \$1,300 per person with deposit required Nov 09. Expressions of interest sought ASAP
- Duck season 2010 to include 2 branch hunts including Easter weekend
- Minyip quail trip June 2010. Attendees required to shoot Sunday clay-comp
- Fox drive weekend at Kerang with Bendigo FGA (date TBA)
- Additional Fox Drives (to be advised)
- Darwin trip Sept 2010 - Magpie Geese (private property). Expressions of interest sought

We also hope to invite Minyip FGA to visit us February 2010 for a weekend of clay shooting and saltwater fishing in the bay. If you have a boat and know you're stuff on the water keep it in mind.

You'll note a Rice Trip isn't included. Bendigo FGA have suggested resurrection of the rice hunt challenge previously cancelled in 2009. At this stage I've nothing to offer them as frankly we have little chance of finding a property. Also, despite calls for a FFGA hunting officer volunteer, we're still yet to fill the role and Committee are already flat-out without finding time to scout rice farms.

A final note, We hear talk members want to resume various long lost inter-branch events. Much knowledge has been lost over time so please don't assume we're aware of them. Raise your ideas.

Steve Harris
Branch President

NOTICE TO CLAY TARGET SHOOTERS!

**THE 2009 CARLSON CLASSIC HAS BEEN RESCHEDULED TO SAT 24TH OCTOBER (10AM NOMS)
COMMITTEE APOLOGISE FOR ANY INCONVENIENCE. THANKS TO OUR SPONSOR FOR THEIR SUPPORT!**

Frankston Field & Game - Hunting

FFGA MEMBERS TRAVEL TO KERANG - FOXES BEWARE

As reported in the last newsletter, the branch was contacted in late July by Bendigo FGA with regards a BIG vermin drive being planned for the weekend of August 15th and 16th.

Despite the short notice, we attempted to rustle up some interested hunters and advertised in the newsletter and at the hunters hangout.

Come Saturday the 15th August a small group of Frankston members including myself, Peter Kellett and Greg Harney headed for Kerang leaving well before day break, racing to get to the lake Bael Bael muster by 9:30 am. Meeting at Serpentine for a much needed coffee and bacon and egg roll, we arrived shortly thereafter right on time and raring for action.

There were some 80+ shooters in attendance at the muster. A great turnout by any measure. Shooters signed in, instructions were given and the days rules articulated. UHF channels were set and some DSE-donated fluro caps, ammunition and maps were also handed out.

We then drove out to commence our first hunt, to be conducted at the dry DSE controlled sancturary Yassom Swamp.

The first foxes of the day fell to the waiting guns in short time, along with a number of rabbits to keep them company.

Remarkably given the dry and generally poor conditions, these foxes looked healthy, fat and in full winter coat. It was also noted they

were all male, confirming suspicions many had voiced, that this late in the year the vixens were likely in dens with their cubs.

The group then went on to hunt the marshes over three drives and finally, a smaller property off McDonald Road. The Marshes were all predictably bone dry and full of bleached redgums, brush and tumble weed. Interestingly the Marshes were also littered with pig prints.

Packing up for the day; tired and dusty, we headed to our camp-site on the shores of lake Bael Bael where DSE had provided a semi-cleared area for camping along with a porta-loo.

There was plenty of firewood so naturally it wasn't long before drinks were flowing and camp chairs were set close around warm fires. The smell of numerous BBQ's began to fill the cool night air and we settled in for a pleasant night of tall tales and bad jokes.

Pete, Greg and I sat up late into the night, debating all the important things in life. Footy, shooting, politics and why Toyota's leave Nissan's for dead. Poor Greg, a reformed smoker, sat through my smoking the last of my 2008 "Christmas-bonus" cuban cigars. He'd have the last laugh the next morning though...

Sunday morning was a horiffic shock to the system! I woke early with a terrific hang-over to remind me of just how many drinks and cigarettes I'd consumed the night before. My throat was also on fire and all I could taste is

stale beer and cigar smoke. A greasy camp-fire fry-up was in order along with plenty of coffee!

Just as I was beginning to feel human again the rain started - great! I'm sure the duck hunters reading this would be familiar with the way a teaspoon of rain turns the the mallee dust roads into greasy, muddy slip n' slides within minutes.

Anyhow, still pretending (unconvincingly) that I felt fresh as a daisy, I swallowed the last of the coffee and joined Pete and Greg packing up.

The group travelled to Hirds and Johnsons next but the cold and rain had well and truly set in and it soon became apparant the foxes were equally disinclined to be out of bed. It was no matter, the hunters had already put a significant dent in the vermin population.

The final tally: 24 foxes, numerous rabbits, hares and cats.

Interestingly the beaters also managed to put up a mob of pigs on Johnsons on Sunday. The Bendigo boys were keen to bag them for an upcoming game dinner but they unfortunately failed to push them into the waiting guns, the porkers managing to run parallel with the line to escape out the end.

A wholehearted thank-you and congratulations to Bendigo FGA and organiser Mark Daley. Mark tells me DSE are thrilled with the result of the 2009 weekend and Bendigo is welcome to host a similar event next year. Great work!

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Up Coming Events

OCTOBER

1st Hunters Hangout
15th Committee Meeting
24nd 75 Target Sporting Clays Competition

NOVEMBER

14th 75 Target Sporting Clays Competition
19th Committee Meeting
28th 75 Target Sporting Clays Competition

DECEMBER

3rd Hunters Hangout
12th 75 Target sporting clays Christmas shoot
17th Committee Meeting

All members are welcome to attend committee meetings.

Committee meetings are held 6:30 PM Thursdays

Please Note: Watch future issues of the newsletter and attend Hunters Hangouts for date changes.

Frankston Field & Game - Sporting Clays

In a short period of time there's been much change at the sporting clays ground with work done on both competition administration and improvements to the facilities.

The Competition office:

I'd like to single out our Secretary Jess Walker for special thanks. With the retirement of Margaret Howell, Jess volunteered to help run our office and has quickly put her stamp on the role.

The abilities of a shoot organiser are measured in the speed and smoothness of nominations and organising squad flow on and off the grounds. Jess has not only exceeded expectations in this regard but has taken on banking and record keeping duties with brilliant results! Her friendly demeanour has also been widely complimented!

Sponsors and the 2010 shoot calendar:

At our first official meeting committee divided up the sponsors list and later contacted each and every sponsor. As well as confirming sponsorships we seek ongoing talk on signage, advertising and whatever else we can do to provide "value" to our loyal supporters!

We weren't able to get a hold of everyone but the majority were engaged and committee are pleased to advise the 2010 calendar is finalised and in the hands of FGA for publishing in the 2010 shoot book. We hope you are pleased!

Casualty - The annual 100 target flush

Those who know me will appreciate I report this with a heavy heart. After much deliberation committee recently resolved the 2009 flush shoot will be our last for the foreseeable future.

Like my peers I love the event but we have to be realistic and attendances for three years running have been shabby to say the least. In good conscience we can't continue an event that despite advertising, word of mouth and publicity in the national magazine, draws only 29 shooters and loses money.

Unfortunately our more competitive shooters seem put off by the fact it's a novelty shoot. Our veterans steer clear also, but for different reasons commenting they don't like the speed of the event. It's a real shame! There's talk of running a flush on a practice day but without support this won't happen so it's over to you!

Nomination fees effective December 2009:

In order to bring Frankston in line with other Melbourne branches, our pricing will be changed effective 1 December 2009, reducing open 75 target competition nominations from \$38 to \$35.

We don't doubt this will be well received by the many shooters who have complained about it over the years, particularly as times have become tougher in the context of the GFC.

Veterans nominations will remain \$25 a round (best value in Melbourne) and Juniors will continue to shoot to free. Shooters should also note our three dollar per shooter subsidised lunch on the fourth Saturday will not continue.

Prize pools:

All ammunition based prize pools will be fixed at a minimum of 5 boxes of shells for grade 1st place winners, 3 boxes for 2nd, 2 boxes for 3rd.

We would also report the branch is looking into bulk (discounted) shell suppliers to ensure we are getting the best "bang" for our prize "buck"!

FFGA member returns back to Minyip FGA:

Committee member Graham Lewien has high standards and can be a tough man to impress but at the branch's two day quail and clay trip to Minyip FGA in June he was so pleased with the targets, grounds and comradery, he made the long drive on 15th August to return for their 100 target competition. It was apparently another stellar day hosted by our Minyip friends!

November FGA National Carnival:

The annual FGA Nationals need little introduction. A number of FFGA members are planning to head to Albury Wodonga on Melbourne cup weekend to compete in this, the biggest FGA event of the calendar. We wish them luck and anyone interested in joining them should refer to Feathers and Fur for nomination info and forms.

COMPETITION RESULTS:

8th August 2009 - The Frankston FGA 100 Target three man team's flush shoot:

A cold day greeted us as the layout was set, safety cages positioned and traps aimed and

loaded. We had a new score-board, gallery of chairs and even cold beer for afterwards. However one thing was missing? shooters!

Well it didn't dampen the spirits of the 29 shooters and the organisers. We went on to have an absolute ball shooting this fast and very unique competition. A very social day, everyone had a great time before, during and after.

1st - Tony Lindsay, Brian and Troy Carson
2nd - Frank, Miguel, John
3rd - Terry, Steve, Sam (New Zealand visitors)
4th - Daryle, John, Craig

22nd August 2009 - 75 target sporting clays

A highly windy day, some 68 shooters visited the branch for a tremendous competition.

We were honoured to play host to a gathering of topnotch marksmen including Peter Hall, Brenton Irons, Brian Mortenson and Ed Treadwell. The crowd were in awe of an impressive shoot off between Peter and Brenton, not to mention Brian's perfect 25 break on a windy round one!

AA - Brian Mortenson, Ed Treadwell, B. Irons
A - Herc Thomas, Ian Shaw, Glen Farmer
B - Toby Sears, Julian Quinn, Geoff Evans
C - James Grech, Joe Rizzo, Greg Harney
Vets - W. Cumberland, R Evans, W. Robinson
Ladies - Katrina Clancy, M Hogan, M. Hall
Jun - J Paglila, G Thomas, D Pannuzzo

12th September 2009 - 75 Sporting Clays for Scerri Bro's Billiards (www.billiards.com.au)

Pleasant conditions greeted us in the morning but this was short lived for the 50 competitors with the weather giving way to yet another cold and windy day which all agreed made for an challenging (and rewarding) competition!

A 25 Pin was won despite all this which spoke volumes for the skills of Neil Peart - Well done!

AA - Neil Peart, G Morley, J McWilliam
A - Alan White, T Mitrakis, Peter Kellett
B - J Panagiotou, N Falconer, T Argyakakis
C - Ben Drakely, Larry Lambrou, C Papas
Vets - Bob Phillips, Rob Carter, T Preston
Ladies - Lauren Shaw
Jun - D McIntyre, M McWilliam, C McWilliam

As always a big thanks to all who contribute to our shoots, both on and off the grounds!

2009 OCTOBER/NOVEMBER SPORTING CLAYS EVENTS

100 Sporting Clays - The Carlson Classic - Sat October 24th, 10am

75 Sporting Clays - Saturday Nov 14th, 11am

75 Sporting Clays - Saturday Nov 28th, 11am

Location: FRANKSTON FGA, Rossiters Road Carrum Downs

Contact Steve Harris or Dave Jencke and refer FGA shoot-book

Hunter's Hang Out

Thursday, October 1st start 8.00 pm

Frankston Australia CTC 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

G AGRESTA CONSTRUCTIONS

DKS OUTDOORS PROMOTIONS

AUSTRALASIAN SPORTS HUNTING ALLIANCE

BRIAN WALKER FAMILY

BARRY HOWE FAMILY & FRIENDS

Please support those who support your sport

Frankston Field and Game Income and Expenditure Statement (summarised) Year ended 30 June 2009

	2009 \$	2008 \$
Income		
- Bank interest	768	835
- Competition proceeds	11,280	9,687
- Competition Sponsorships	5,300	7,001
- FGA membership	7,823	10,151
- Raffles and social events	2,789	505
- Sundry income	347	325
Less: Expenses		
- Catering and drinks	2,266	1,798
- Clay targets, prizes	10,574	11,821
- Donations (Bushfire appeal)	4,148	0
- Equipment purchases / hire	2,114	233
- FGA Anniversary Dinner	1,800	0
- Insurance	0	973
- Life members	368	266
- Printing and postage	3,510	3,171
- Rental (club-rooms)	1,800	600
- Sundry	836	502
Equals Surplus for year	891	9,140
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Members funds Represented by cash and deposits	59,013	58,122

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Wouldn't it be fantastic to have another year like that. Replayed just as you remembered it from youth! It's a nice day-dream but the reality is it's "grass is always greener" talk.

We all like to reminisce but the reality is we make our own opportunities in the here and now. We have plenty available to us if only we'd grab life by the scruff of the neck and keep an open mind.

As much as I'd love to be heading to Tocumwal on Melbourne Cup weekend I'll be having a ball in a different way. Spending a few days shooting shotguns at some of the best laid targets money can buy at the FGA Nationals in Albury Wodonga!

A BBQ and cold drinks with mates will surely follow as will a fishing session at some stage after daily events are done. Not at all unlike rice hunting, just without the plucking, gutting and with a shower at the end of the day to wash away sweat and dust.

An acquaintance; also a hunter, just isn't a target shooting kinda' guy. He thinks it's fake and BS and will instead fish Cod on the Loddon River on Cup Weekend with likeminded hunting buddies. No doubt they'll have a ball and good on them! We all have a different take on things and while I disagree I don't begrudge him his views for a second.

Point is, we could both easily spend Cup weekend sitting at home on our arses lamenting the drought and the poor hunting opportunities. Complaining the world is unfair and contemplating whether politics are at least partially behind it.

You won't see us doing that though because **the grass is green right now!**

Think about it - Despite drought, John Howard, RCV, Laurie Levy, wanker Greens and all those out to get us, we still have our guns, somewhere to camp, hunt, and fish and we can still get there in a big-arse 4x4!

I couldn't care less personally if my Cup Weekend is all about ducks, fish or clays, I'll be spending it with the people I've always spent Cup weekend with, and I'll love each and every minute of it.

To those who won't try target shooting because it's "not real". To those who didn't hunt ducks in 2009 because restricted bag limits didn't fill the freezer, get off your bums, get out there and make the most of the hand we're dealt. You're really missing out!

The Glass is half full and with a positive outlook the current time will indeed be "green grass".

A parting thought, right now we are living an era that our children will eventually consider the "good old days" just as we view the era of our own fathers youth based on their passed-down stories.

Reading a 1957 Outdoors Australia magazine recently I noted the author complained and reminisced of the "gold old days" of the late 1940's...

Food for thought

RITCHIES
SUPERMARKETS AND LIQUOR STORES