



Friends of the Box-Ironbark Forests (Mount Alexander Region) Inc.

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Dear Friend of the Box-Ironbark Forests,

The FOBIF committee hopes you are having a good start to 2024. The FOBIF 2024 monthly walks program is printed overleaf. The program is posted on www.fobif.org.au. Updates will be posted there if necessary. Conditions can change, so please check the website before every walk for possible last minute changes in walk arrangements.

FOBIF marked its 25th year with a successful exhibition at the Newstead Arts hub, and the publication of a set of reflections, *Responding to Country*, which has been selling widely. Highlights of the Newstead event were a FOBIF history display assembled by Alex Paneli and great speeches by Alison Pouliot and Phil Ingamells. We were saddened by Phil's sudden death late in the year. Phil was a founding member of FOBIF, and his death is the loss not just of a friend, but of an enormous fund of knowledge of our natural places.

2023 also marked the retirement of long time Parks ranger Noel Muller, a genial and positive presence for many years in the region. We wish him well, and hope for a good working relationship with his successor, Lachlan Callum.

We are as usual preoccupied with fire and fire management. On the whole our relationship with fire managers has been constructive, but we are baffled, as readers of our website will know, by many aspects of management. In spite of the feeling of banging our heads against a wall, however, we live in hope that at some point fire management and proper care for the forests can be combined.

Our publications are selling steadily. We have kept prices to a minimum, and sales are just covering the costs of reprints.

Remember: FOBIF committee meetings are open to all members. They're at the Community House building, 30 Templeton Street Castlemaine, on the second Monday of every month from February to November, at 6 pm.

Subscriptions are due now: Member subs—\$10 per individual, \$15 a family—are due now. There's a membership form with this letter. If you've paid your sub in the last three months you don't need to heed this notice....

See you on the track!

Marie Jones, Bernard Slattery, Bronwyn Silver [For the FOBIF committee]