



*"Check-in Chicks" — May and Kerry*

**95** visitors attended the MPG ten year milestone weekend at the Stirling Range Retreat. Highlights over the weekend included acknowledgement of our founding committee, the launch of the malleefowl costume and evening entertainment from Ross and Stephen.

At 81 "years young" Kaye Vaux did a remarkable job making the malleefowl costume and here is her story:-



*Beth Thomas from Ongerup*



Asked to actually make a malleefowl—with mixed feelings I said, "yes". Little did I know the next six weeks of my life would literally revolve around this bird. Each room of the house was taken over. At night some unknown voice would tell me helpful things like, "make the wings separate", "do the head first".

Now that was an excellent bit of advice as I realised I could get the proportions right by the number of head sizes to the body. After a visit to the upholsterers, I came home with more ideas and materials but the actual size needed was still hard to visualise.

After several unsuccessful trials, I realized that my house was not big enough to cut it out so the Ongerup Craft room came in handy. My next challenge was how could I keep the tail from dragging on the ground? Alan came to the rescue by improvising a rucksack frame with a series of pvc pipes to give it a backbone.

The name Megapode means "big feet". We spent a whole day creating large feet and attaching them to the trouser legs. I notice that I still have several "spare feet" around the house that didn't work!

The fitting—once on, if they turned too quickly the tail would wipe all the things off my kitchen bench. The day eventually came when it was paraded down Carpenter Street to the "Chook House" sending the Ongerup dogs into a frantic barking panic.

To the Stirling Ranges celebration—Mal Graham kept the fowl on the move with a royal welcome pecking at car bonnets as they drove in and scratching leaves into a mound. The kids (big and small) loved it.

A big thank you to all those who helped and encouraged me to make the costume, and congratulations Malleefowl Preservation Group on your 10 year achievements.



*Star of the show with costume and new MPG Chairperson*



*Early bird walkers*



*Peter and Ruth Speldevinde, Georgia Ryan*



Committee member Don Sclater cooking breakfast Sunday morning



Costume designer Kaye Vaux (right) and person Susanne Dennings



Paul Galloway during evening dinner

## Entertainment

Words to Stephen Murray's latest Malleefowl Song

### Something that Matters

A tangle of bushland in the sun shimmers  
Then building cloud its load delivers.

In a short while sun and rain shimmer  
And something is moving among the leaf litter.

*(Chorus)*

*Malleefowl*

*Getting round,*

*Up and down,*

*On the ground*

A shifting breeze makes the leaves whisper.  
Branches exchange shadows with each other.  
Listen carefully and you will hear the patter  
As megapode feet build something that matters.

*(Chorus)*

*Malleefowl*

*Getting round,*

*Up and down,*

*On the ground*

A force in those feet makes the earth scatter.  
Dirt meets sky as the litter is gathered  
Into a pile, cradling a life there.



Afternoon facilitator, Barbara Morrell, with MPG Founder John Davis being presented with first committee honour photo by inaugural member Bob Millard

Nurtured through time, something's going right there.

*(Chorus)*

*Malleefowl*

*Getting round,*

*Up and down,*

*On the ground*

So if you want to do some thing  
About this bird and other important things,  
Take some time in your life to help give  
Back some space for this bird to build its cradle again.

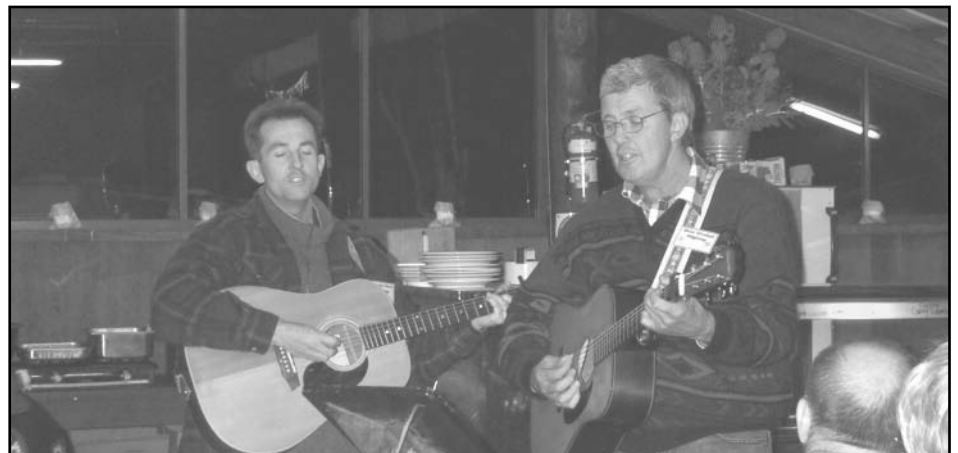
*(Chorus)*

*Malleefowl*

*Getting round,*

*Up and down,*

*On the ground.*



Evening entertainment from Stephen Murray and Ross Strahan