



First Friends of Dandenong Creek

Annual Report 2018

COMMITTEE

We have operated successfully with an active committee of 9 throughout the year. Charlie Miller as President, Anthony Bigelow as Vice President, Lex Edmond as minutes secretary, Barb Richards as membership secretary, Vicky Pearse as treasurer and with Bill Jones, Matt McCabe, Lex Edmond and Sam Bigelow making up the general committee. We said farewell to Frank Sullivan, foundation and life member who decided to retire.

The MacFarlane family remain capably in charge of event catering. Many thanks to all for your hard work and enthusiasm this year.

MEMBERSHIP

FFDC currently has around 120 full and associate members. There have been 11 new memberships in the past year. We will continue to put an emphasis on allowing our volunteers to do the work they came to help with at our public events while committee members provide support, nourishment and canvass for new members. This approach seems to work well.

ENHANCING OUR DANDENONG CREEK PROJECT

After several years of consultation, planning and design the Daylighting Project construction stage is now complete. The creek, near HE Parker Reserve in Heathmont, is now flowing much like it would have before it was piped and straightened nearly 50 years ago. The Melbourne Water project team are to be commended and congratulated for such a fantastic outcome for the environment, the local community and the critters that live in the area. Also during the year we saw the addition of new seating, signage and drinking fountain along the shared pathway and the construction of several new billabongs along the banks of the creek.

NEWSLETTER, WEBSITE AND FACEBOOK PAGE

Three editions of Tanjenong Tales were published during the year. Over 80% of our newsletters are emailed these days which significantly reduces the administrative burden and cost. The newsletter is now compiled using Google Docs.

This year we launched our new website, which has a much friendlier look and feel, with thanks to the efforts of Anthony Bigelow.

Our Facebook page now has close to 2,000 followers and contributes significantly to increased awareness of our group and the great work we do in the wider community. We acknowledge the efforts of Anthony Bigelow in managing our Facebook presence with regular posts.

GRANTS

This year we received over \$1,600 in grant money. We acknowledge the continual funding support of Melbourne Water and Knox and Maroondah councils. Without this funding FFDC would struggle to operate as an incorporated body and undertake meaningful projects.

EQUIPMENT

Our equipment has proved useful at our events this year. We currently have a BBQ, a waterproof gazebo, four A-frame signboards, a banner, 2 Hamilton diggers and rubbish collection tools.

FINANCIAL POSITION

We have maintained a strong financial position throughout the year. For details refer to 2018 Treasurer's report on our website at www.ffdc.org.au.

EVENTS

Living Links Planting

On Sunday 10 September we had a hugely successful planting event sponsored by Living Links. With the help of 120+ volunteers and members we planted 3000 indigenous plants along the northern bank of the Dandenong Creek at HE Parker Reserve in Heathmont.

Clean Up Day

This year the committee decided not to participate in Clean Up Australia Day. Instead, we have incorporated clean ups into our other events. We gratefully acknowledge the ongoing litter collection of our members and volunteers in particular our Treasurer Vicky Pearse.

World Environment Day

We had a hugely successful planting event on World Environment Day on Saturday 2nd June at the recently created Mint Street Wetlands in Wantirna. Over 300 volunteers turned out on a cold but sunny morning to dig holes and plant over 3,000 indigenous shrubs and trees. The event was organised by Knox Council.

National Tree Day

We had an amazing turn out of volunteers on National Tree Day Sunday 29 July. 150 plus people turned up to plant 4,000+ indigenous plants at the end of The Greenway in Heathmont. This was by far the largest and most successful National Tree Day event in the history of FFDC.

POLLUTION MONITORING

In response to ongoing pollution events FFDC engaged Bio2Labs, a private firm specialising in pollution monitoring, to conduct water and sediment sampling in our area of the creek and upstream of Old Joes Creek in Bayswater. The engagement is funded by a grant of \$15,000 from the Lord Mayors Charitable Foundation. The grant will be held in trust by the Knox Environment Society on behalf of FFDC. Samples will be gathered from 5 locations along the creek over a 6 month period including the confluences of Heatherdale, Bungalook and Old Joes Creek with the Dandenong Creek. This will help identify the type of contaminants and which tributaries contribute the most pollution. The data collected will be made available via a web portal to local authorities and the general public.

Charlie Miller – President - First Friends of Dandenong Creek.