



NEWSLETTER

November 2017

Edition No 54

FFDC Inc. PO Box 5044, Heathwood Vic

Website : <https://www.landcarevic.org.au/groups/portphillipwesternport/ffdc/>

FIRST FRIENDS OF DANDENONG CREEK Inc. no A0039273V

TANJENONG TALES

THIS NEWSLETTER IS FUNDED BY MELBOURNE WATER AND KNOX AND MAROONDAH COUNCILS

President's Report

Welcome to the 54th edition of Tanjenong Tales.

Planting Events

I'm very pleased to report that we ran 3 very successful planting events in July, August and September. These plantings will greatly enhance habitat for native birds, animals and other critters in future years. Importantly, these plantings go a long way to replace vegetation that is lost through over development in surrounding areas. Details and photos can be found on page 3.

Annual General Meeting

I'm pleased to announce we have a committee of 9 people following the FFDC Annual General Meeting held in September. Anthony Bigelow was elected Vice President, Lex Edmond Minute Secretary replacing Vicky Pearse who has taken on the role as Treasurer. Together with Barbara Richards as Membership Secretary this forms the Executive Committee. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Vicky Pearse for her outstanding work as Minute Secretary over the past 5 years. We also welcomed John Cull as a new Committee member and we look forward to his contribution over the coming years.

Frank Sullivan Retires from the FFDC Committee

After 18 years as Treasurer Frank Sullivan decided to retire from the FFDC Committee at the 2017 AGM. Frank, a foundation and life member of FFDC, joined the group when it was formed way back in May 1999. Frank held the Treasurer's role from the beginning until he announced his retirement in September 2017. Frank was presented with a Service Award at the AGM for his outstanding service in his role as Treasurer for 18 years. We wish Frank well and we know he will still be active in the local community.

(Continued on page 2)



Frank Sullivan presented with his Service Award at the AGM

President's Report (continued)

Frog Census

Did you know you can record frogs and contribute to their conservation using your mobile phone? Download the free Melbourne Water Frog Census app and get involved in the Frog Census, a community frog monitoring program. The data collected through the program is used to help manage Melbourne's frog populations and raise awareness of waterway health issues. More information can be found on the Melbourne Water website <https://www.melbournewater.com.au/frogcensus>.

Public money invested in our area of the creek

Over the past 5 years there has been a significant amount of money spent in our area of the creek by the local authorities including Knox and Maroondah councils, Melbourne Water and Living Links. When you add up expenditure for projects including the restoration of the Bluff, the swales near Yarrabing Wetlands, Our Catchment, Our Communities habitat plantings, and signage, the total exceeds \$1 million. That figure excludes the Melbourne Water's Daylighting phase of the Enhancing Our Dandenong Creek project which would take the total to well over \$2 million. These projects will further enhance this wonderful area for the local community to enjoy for many years to come. Importantly, it will also improve habitat for local birds and animals and improve their chances of survival.

Thankyou

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the committee for their great work over the past year.

To the members, sponsors and volunteers thank you for your support of our tree planting and clean up events and other activities. To all, wishing you a Merry Christmas and a safe and prosperous 2018.

Charlie Miller—President



'Smoking Gun' evidence of the source of the major pollution incident from Old Joes Creek on 7 November

Native Bee Rescue Planting

Our 'Native Bee Rescue' planting event on Sunday 13 August in Manson's Reserve Wantirna, saw 25 eager people turn up in bee-autiful weather to plant out 30 different species (600 plants in total) of indigenous flora.

Dr Trevor Edwards, who has been advising the group for some time, gave a speech on the importance of the species of plants for feed sources for our bees, and the fact that many of our indigenous bees are becoming rare in Melbourne. We are looking to contribute more to our bees through similar events in the coming years. We especially wish to thank the Fintona Girls School, Croydon Conservation Society and Maroondah City Council for purchasing the plants (through CRISP and Candlebark nurseries) and to the volunteers who helped infill areas of JW Mansons' Reserve in just under 2 hours; the majority of whom were parents and students from Fintona Girls School. We were also thrilled to see how well last year's 'native bee' plants were doing. A heartfelt thank you to the Maroondah Photographic Society members for helping photograph this event. It was indeed a 'working bee' for many reasons.

The FFDC Living Links planting event

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.

Plants included eucalypts, acacias, sheoaks, tea trees, melaleucas and bursaria.

The event was funded by the PPWPCMA Living Links program in particular the Our Catchments Our Communities Project which seeks to re-vegetate 22 kms of the Dandenong Creek corridor (including our area) with \$1 million dollars of funding over the next four years.

We acknowledge the work of the Maroondah Bushland Management team for the preparation of the site and supervision on the day. Also great to see Maroondah Councillors Dib and McDonald in attendance and actually getting their hands dirty.

Finally, we acknowledge the efforts of our members and volunteers, in particular the Box Hill Buddhist Group who provided over 60 volunteers to enable us to plant so many plants.

New seats along the creek

Maroondah Council has installed new seats along the creek between HE Parker Reserve and Wantirna Rd, in Heathmont. The new seats have replaced older seats that were well past their use by date. Importantly, the seats are now spaced out at roughly 400 metre intervals. Hopefully these new seats will encourage and enable more elderly and disabled people in the local community to access and enjoy this wonderful natural asset.



Living Links Planting Event near HE Parker Reserve

Stop Press!!

Great news for our area of the creek, the State Government has announced the preferred route for the proposed North-East Link is Option A through Heidelberg and Bulleen. If Option D through Wantirna and Bayswater was chosen we would have lost significant bush reserves in our area including the pristine Bateman's Bush in Wantirna. In addition, the run off from the link would have resulted in higher pollution levels in the creek.

Major Pollution Incident

On 7 November we witnessed a severe pollution incident in the creek near HE Parker Reserve in Heathmont. The surface of the creek was covered in white soapy foam. The incident was reported to the EPA but their response was very disappointing. They almost immediately closed the incident with the comment "source unknown". Our Vice President Anthony Bigelow, conducted his own investigation and provided photographic evidence that the source was almost certainly from Old Joes Creek in Bayswater. (See photo on page 2). On the following Saturday, following adverse media coverage on the ABC and social media, which reported many dead fish and eels along 2km's of the creek, the EPA returned to take water samples. Hopefully, the results of these samples will point to possible polluters upstream but given the time lapse it is unlikely.

As a result of the news coverage, FFDC has been approached by a major charity who is willing to provide funds towards water testing using a qualified contractor when these incidents

happen in the future. We want the polluters to know that through scientific analysis we should be able to narrow pollution incidents down to particular industry types and hopefully this will act as a deterrent. Melbourne Water have verbally indicated their support for the idea.

Spotted!

Galahs nesting in trees along the creek. Photo courtesy of the Maroondah Photographic Society.



Dates to mark on your calendar

Clean Up Australia Day Event—Sunday 4 March
Committee to decide in February if a Clean Up event is to be conducted.

FFDC Planting events throughout 2018—dates and sites to be determined.

For more details and up to date information on the events above and more go to our website:
<https://www.landcarevic.org.au/groups/portphillipwesternport/ffdc/> or visit our Facebook site: @FirstFriendsofDandenongCreek

Next edition of the newsletter is in March 2018, please email me your ideas for articles or stories of interest by the end of February at :
ffdc1999@gmail.com

FFDC Committee for 2017-2018

President: Charlie Miller
Vice-President: Anthony Bigelow
Secretary: Lex Edmond(minutes)
Barbara Richards (membership)
Treasurer: Vicky Pearse

General Committee:

Bill Jones
Matt McCabe
Sam Bigelow
John Cull

Life Members:

Barry Robinson
Frank Sullivan
Vivien Holyoake

Committee meetings are held on the 2nd Thursday of each month (Feb to Nov) at 7:30pm in Room 4 at the Federation Estate, 32 Greenwood, Ave, Ringwood.