

Excerpts of articles from "Heathmont Recollections" - Ringwood Historical Society

Bessie Penn (Carmichael)

Wilfred and Sarah Penn settled on 14 acres on ground along the north side of Dandenong Creek (Heathmont) in 1919. At the time they had 8 children. We kids had a menagerie of animals and dad had fowls, a market garden and a small herd of cattle which grazed in bush land adjoining our property. This bush belonged to a family named Scott and was bordered by Marlborough, Cuthbert, Waterloo Street and the creek on the south side. In those days the creek was a clear running stream, which we drank, and was inhabited by black fish, trout, eels and a platypus family living in the bank opposite our house. This really was an idyllic place to live, especially us kids.

There were annual holiday houses along the creek toward Wantirna Road and during holiday time David and I ran wild through the bush with the visiting kids, and most other times as well. We never had to do chores as there was plenty of older siblings to cope with them.

One day we were yabbing with the holiday kids when one pointed to a yabby on the bank and another chopped his finger off. I can still see the white finger lying there.

Every so often the flooded and ran under the house, but on November 1934, when I was ten, we had a huge flood, and had to be rescued. Sam Brown, who owned a timber yard in Ringwood, arrived with a bid draft horse and dray to get us out of the house. He loaded all 8 of us in, but the current was so strong, horse, dray and us were being swept away, when a big log jammed in the wheel spokes and anchored us. Obviously, we were not meant to drown. Sam loaded 2 of us kids on the horse, undid the traces, hopped on himself and took us to dry land. He did this on several other occasions, then the police boat arrived and took my parents off the dray.

We never returned to live at the creek. My eldest brother Ernest build a house at the highest point of our land and my parents sold. The house is still in Waters Grove (Heathmont) opposite the high school.

Dates to mark on your calendar

Friday 25 April 10:00am to 1:00pm—Sausage Sizzle at Bunnings in Bayswater—please come along to support this important fund raising event for the group.

Sunday 27 July—National Tree Plant Day—flyers will be sent out to all members nearer the day with details on the group's activities.

Thursday 11 September—Annual General Meeting at the Ringwood room at the Ringwood Library—all members are invited to attend.

Saturday/Sunday—18-19 October—Knox Stringybark Festival at the Rowville Community Centre.

Sunday 9 November—Spring Clean up day—flyers will be sent out to all members near the day.

For more up to date information you can check details on our website.

FFDC Committee for 2007-2008

- President:** vacant
- Vice-President:** Jack Luke
- Secretary:** Vivien Holyoake
- Treasurer:** Frank Sullivan
- Barry Robinson (Past President and Life Member)
- Heidi Victoria MLA
- Barbara Richards
- Melanie Komisarczyk
- Bill Jones
- Tanya Haynes-Ford
- Charlie Miller

Committee meetings are held on the 2nd Thursday of each month starting at 7:30pm in the Ringwood room at the Ringwood Library. All members are most welcome to attend.



FIRST FRIENDS OF DANDENONG CREEK Inc. no A0039273V
TANJENONG TALES
THIS NEWSLETTER IS FUNDED BY MELBOURNE WATER AND KNOX AND MAROONDAH COUNCILS

NEWSLETTER

March, 2008

Edition No 25

FFDC Inc. PO Box 5044, Heathwood Vic

<http://ffdc.melbournewater.com.au>

Vice President's Report

Dear Members,

Welcome to our first newsletter for 2008.

Car Park:

As mentioned in our last report, the car park to be built near the creek on Wantirna Road, which was approved by Knox Council, is in their budget, awaiting approval to be built this year.

Maroondah Council has already recommitted their funds for this project.

We now look forward to a commencement date this year. This will provide a safe area for people to park and either walk or cycle along these great pathways.

Drain Pollution Signs:

You may have already seen the new double-sided signs which were installed just before Christmas. These signs clearly give the E.P.A. telephone number as well as the Melways map reference number, enabling anyone using the walking tracks to report any pollution in the creek.

The signs are manufactured from recycled plastic. There are six of these signs on the Knox Council side of the creek between Bayswater Road and Boronia Road, which cost \$460.00 each.

We would like to thank Knox Council for installing these signs free of charge. (Continued on page 2)



Pollution in the creek. Please help us fight pollution by reporting it to the EPA using the information on our signs adjacent to the creek.

Vice President's Report (Continued from front page)

Our other projects for 2008 are listed later in the Newsletter.

You are most welcome to attend our monthly meetings which are held at the Ringwood library on the 2nd Thursday of each month commencing at 7.30pm.

Jack Luke
Acting President

Identification of indigenous plants and weeds

The group is compiling a list of indigenous plants that can be found along the creek and its environs between Bayswater and Boronia Roads. This list will be used as the basis for our future plantings.

Indigenous plants include:

- Bursaria spinosa (Native Box),
- Eucalyptus viminalis (Ribbon Gum)
- Carex appressa (Tall Sedge)
- Dianella longifolia (Pale Flax-Lily)
- Dianella tasmanica (Tasman Flax-Lily)
- Goodenia ovata
- Lomandra longifolia
- Olearia lirata (snowy Daisy Bush)
- Polyscias sambucifolius (Elderberry Panax)
- Pomaderris aspera (Hazel Pomaderris)
- Poa ensiformis (Purple-Sheath Tussock Grass)
- Spyridium parvifolium (Austral Dusty Miller)

In addition we will compile a list of the many invasive weeds that can also be found along the creek including ivy, wandering dew and veldt grass. The weed list will be used for developing strategies for the control/eradication of these weeds in co-operation with both Knox and Maroondah councils.

Thanks to Melanie Komisarczyk, one of our committee members, for her technical skills in plant identification and for compiling the lists.

Strategy for Scott's Street Reserve in Heathmont

Several committee members met with Brad Curtis from Maroondah Council in late January to discuss ways that we can work co-operatively to improve the environment of Scott's Street Reserve at the end of Marlborough Rd in Heathmont. The council will provide weed control, through spraying and mulching, and indigenous plants. FFDC will provide the labor for planting to council specifications. The committee is developing a 3 to 5 year strategy plan that will divide the reserve into small sections for annual planting.

Report from Clean-Up Australia Day

On Sunday 2nd March we had an excellent turnout of 25 members and volunteers for our clean-up along the creek.

The clean-up area stretched from H.E. Parker Reserve all the way to Winton Wetlands. We managed to clean-up the equivalent of 20 large clean-up bags of all sorts of rubbish mostly plastic bags and bottles.

One volunteer, out on a morning stroll with her children, was so keen to assist she tossed her toddler out of the pram and proceeded to fill it with rubbish.

Thanks to all the members and volunteers who helped on the day to make our annual clean-up a success once again.

Special thanks goes to Kent Hortle for his great work in removing 2 shopping trolleys, 2 bicycles and a pathway sign from the creek.

Water Testing Report for Summer

FFDC in conjunction with K.E.S. test at 11 sites along Dandenong and Old Joe's creek on the third Sunday of each month

Readings for summer 07/08 are:

| Site | Test | Dec | Jan | Feb |
|------|--------------|------|------|------|
| 1 | % Oxygen | 37 | 14.5 | 29 |
| 2 | Phosphate | 0.06 | 0.08 | 0.07 |
| 3 | P.H. | 7.7 | 6.6 | 7.4 |
| 4 | Conductivity | 261 | 647 | 423 |
| 5 | Temperature | 19 | 21.6 | 21.6 |
| 6 | Turbidity | 34.5 | 27 | 22.6 |

The above results are averages for 6 of the sites during the period.

Rating guidelines for the tests are:

- % Oxygen < 40 degraded
- Phosphates < 0.10 poor
- P.H. < 8 good
- Conductivity > 200 fair to poor
- Turbidity > 20 poor to degraded



Kent Hortle with his bounty fished out of the creek on Clean-up day.