



First Friends of Dandenong Creek

Annual Report 2019

COMMITTEE

We have operated successfully with an active committee of 11 throughout the year. Charlie Miller as President, Anthony Bigelow as Vice President, Lex Edmond as minute secretary, Barb Richards as membership secretary, Chris McFarlane as treasurer and with Bill Jones, Matt McCabe, Sam Bigelow, Jude Dwight, Bruna Iotti and Jesse Oehm making up the general committee. We said farewell to Vicky Pearse and John Cull and gratefully acknowledge their contribution to the committee.

MEMBERSHIP

FFDC currently has 150+ full and associate members and growing. There have been around 20 new memberships in the past year.

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 of publishing the newsletters.

Our Facebook page now has close to 2,500 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 \$30,000 in grant money. We acknowledge the continual funding support of Melbourne Water, Living Links and Knox and Maroondah councils. Without this funding FFDC would struggle to operate as an incorporated body and undertake meaningful projects. We also received \$1,690 from the Ross Barber memorial fund.

EQUIPMENT

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

FINANCIAL POSITION

We have maintained a strong financial position throughout the year with a bank balance around \$25,000 at 30 June. For details refer to the 2019 Treasurer's report on our website at www.ffdc.org.au.

EVENTS

Clean Up Day

This year the committee again 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.

20th Anniversary Event

This year we celebrated our 20th anniversary on Sunday 5th May with a planting event in Manson's Reserve in Wantirna. The celebration was sponsored by [Living Links](#) and supported by Knox and Maroondah Council Bushland teams. Around 1000 indigenous trees, shrubs and grasses were planted by around 80 volunteers.

World Environment Day

We had a hugely successful planting event on World Environment Day on Saturday 1st June on the creek near the end of Armstrong Rd in Bayswater. Over 300 volunteers turned out on a cold morning to dig holes and plant over 3,500 indigenous grasses, shrubs and trees. The event was organised by FFDC and funded by Knox Council.

National Tree Day

We had an amazing turn out of volunteers on National Tree Day Sunday 28 July. 300 plus people turned up to plant 4,000+ indigenous plants along the creek near Abbey Walk in Vermont. The event was sponsored by Living Links and Maroondah Council.

PROJECTS

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 is held in trust by the Knox Environment Society on behalf of FFDC. Samples were 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 identified the type of contaminants and which tributaries contribute the most pollution. A copy of the final report is available on our website at www.ffdc.org.au.

Save our Skinks

FFDC is conducting a Skink census, re-vegetation and education project around our area of Dandenong Creek. The Glossy Grass Skink and the Swamp Skink are little lizards indigenous to the outer Eastern suburbs of Melbourne. They are threatened by: Climate change, rapid urbanisation/ loss of habitat, and feral animals. We ran a successful crowd funding campaign during October raising \$9,950 to finance the project. \$5,959 raised via crowd funding and \$4,000 from the Victorian Government.

Charlie Miller – President - First Friends of Dandenong Creek.