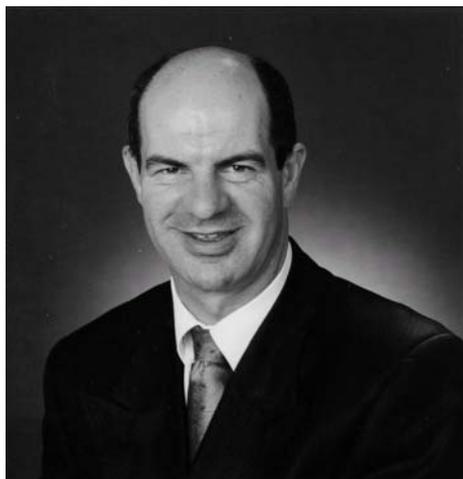


Moonee Ponds

Moonee Ponds Creek Co-ordination Committee Creek News

Newsletter of the Moonee Ponds Creek Co-ordination Committee, PO BOX 119 BROADMEADOWS, 3047. PH: 9205 2302

Message from the MPCCC President



Hello and welcome to the first newsletter of the Moonee Ponds Creek Co-ordination Committee.

The Moonee Ponds Creek is indeed a "Cinderella" among waterways. Infrastructure has severely compromised some of its lower reaches and this has in turn has marred public perception of the creek's true value as a significant environmental and recreational asset.

However, much work has been done by both the community and various agencies to ensure the restoration of the Moonee Ponds Creek. Every year more plants go in the ground, more consequence, the broader environmental challenges we all face.

Councils have banded together with community groups to form a Co-ordination Committee to ensure that a common vision is being implemented on the ground and that new projects are initiated. Whilst there is still a long way to go, I am encouraged by the progress I see.

I encourage anyone with an interest in the environment to get involved in restoring the Moonee ponds Creek. The newsletter contains many activities that may be of interest too you. I look forward to seeing you on the creek.

KELVIN THOMSON MP
PH: 9350 5777

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Points of Interest

- *Friends of Upper Moonee Ponds Creek*
- *Thank-you*
- *Season-by-season*
- *Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek*
- *Jacana Wetlands*

Upcoming Events:

Community Plantings:

- Thursday Nov 8th Cross Keys Reserve, Essendon (Mel 29 A1)
- Thursday Nov 22nd Kingsford Smith Ulm Reserve, Glenroy (Mel 16 D4)

Contact:
Brett Spicer 9450 5308,
E-mail bspicer@gavic.org.au

Once upon a time...

Have you ever wondered what the Moonee Ponds Creek used to look like – before the cars, roads and urban sprawl?

Although many people think of concrete drains and freeways when the Moonee Ponds Creek is mentioned, it was once very different with early accounts of the creeks abundant birdlife and beautiful chain of ponds. Fortunately you don't need a vivid imagination to paint the picture. A visit to Woodlands Historic Park near the creeks headwaters in Greenvale will take you back in time. Ancient redgums and greybox stand proudly, some bearing scars that hint at the areas rich aboriginal cultural heritage. The diverse vegetation also provides a hint of what the creek could look like as revegetation works mature.

For more information on Woodlands Historic Park ring Parks Victoria on 131963.



Ancient Redgums at Woodlands Historic Park.



Community Greening Program



Penola students revegetating the creek

The Moonee Ponds Creek Community Greening Program (MPCCGP) is restoring the distinctive character of the creek through revegetation with local native plants. Local community groups, schools, and residents are planting a variety of trees, shrubs, and grasses all along the creek's length. The ultimate vision is to create a continuous habitat corridor.

Since its inception in 1999, The Greening

Program has enabled 23,000 tubestock to be planted by enthusiastic volunteers who have donated over 4000 hours. This Spring, nine sites have been prepared and planted with 5000 tubes as part of an 'October Plant-a-thon'. The planting sites are located in Westmeadows, Oak Park, Essendon, Flemington, Glenroy, and Gladstone Park. Community response to the October Plant-a-thon has been overwhelming with numerous enquiries. Brett Spicer, Program Officer reports "there's been plenty of positive feedback from walkers and riders along the creek. They are really excited about the Greening Program and its contribution to bringing back birdlife to the creek. Local residents have commented that they while they have lived in the area for years, they can't remember seeing and hearing so many different birds". The Greening Program is proudly supported by the cities of Hume, Moreland and Moonee Valley and sponsored by Melbourne Port Corporation, Melbourne Water, Natural Heritage Trust, Transurban, Parks Victoria, SPI Powernet and the Ford Employees Charitable Contribution Scheme.

If you or your group would like to become involved in the Greening Program or would like more information please contact Brett Spicer on 9450 5308 or via e-mail bspicer@gavic.org.au

Moonee Ponds Creek Public Arts Strategy

The MPC Public Arts Strategy is an exciting initiative that uses public art to enhance the creek environment. The Strategy acts as a guiding framework and catalyst for future public art along the creek. A key component of the strategy is to involve the local community in reclaiming the creek through participation in public art projects. The Strategy has been funded by the Australia Council for the Arts and the cities of Melbourne, Moonee Valley, Moreland and Hume.

"Public art adds interest to areas that can't be the subject of greening programs because they're dominated by infrastructure."

Extensive community consultation was undertaken and has been a vital aspect in developing ideas as to ways in which art can be developed along the creek. The Strategy proposes the use of a range of art forms to enrich the creek corridor including:

environmental sculptures, historical trails, interpretive signage, artwork on bridges and park entrances. One of the first projects to be developed will be a public gallery space on the Citylink sound walls. The project is a collaboration between Transurban, Moonee Valley City Council and the Moonee Ponds Creek Co-ordination Committee. The work will be facilitated by a professional artist working with local students to produce a unique artwork over 20 square meters in size. **For more information contact Trish Keenan on 9243 8840.**



Thank-You, Thank-You, Thank-You, Thank-You, Thank-You, Thank-You, Thank-You

The MPCCC (as well as the birds, reptiles, and insects, amongst others) would like to take a moment to give a most sincere THANKS to all the wonderful people involved in projects and works along the creek. A special thanks goes out to individual volunteers and 'friends groups' who make the creek a special place to visit and recreate along.



Moonee Ponds Creek Re-alignment

The Melbourne Port Corporation is developing a new international terminal at Victoria Dock, involving the realignment of the Moonee Ponds Creek. The MPCCC regard the environs surrounding the confluence of the Moonee Ponds Creek as being extremely significant in the context of the whole catchment. Although the estuary area is man made, it retains many remnant species and offers habitat to a range of species.

The re-alignment will have a range of impacts, including:

- Destruction of environmental values associated with the creek estuary and the vision for a quality estuarine environment
- Destruction of Dry Saltmarsh (local significance) and Damp Saltmarsh (local to regional significance) and reed bed vegetation
- Destruction of habitat for wading birds and the Eastern Water Rat

The MPCCC opposed the development on the basis that the impact upon the creeks flora and fauna were unacceptable. These concerns were raised in numerous submissions and presentations during the assessment process. Unfortunately the project gained the approval of the state government. The MPCCC however successfully lobbied for changes to proposal that will help to offset the of the estuary. These changes included:

- Increased allocation of open space to the Moonee Ponds Creek Parklands
- Increased landscaping (including wetland treatments and buffer zones to creek
- Increased public access to a previously "hidden" section of the Moonee Ponds Creek via a shared use trail that will extend the Moonee Ponds Creek Trail from Footscray Road to the Yarra River.
- Provision of seating and pedestrian paths.

McDonnell Dowell have been awarded the contract for the re-alignment works which are due to be completed by the end of the year.

Moonee Ponds Creek Spring Clean

On Sunday October 14 local residents were invited to lend a hand to clean-up the creek as part of the Moonee Ponds Creek Spring Clean. The Spring Clean was the beginning of the \$2.7 million 'Moonee Ponds Creek - Keep it Clean' project which focuses on initiatives to improve water quality and reduce litter.

The project focuses on the construction of litter traps and wetlands to improve the environment and health of the Moonee Ponds Creek. It also focuses on 'source control programs' aimed at stopping litter before it reaches the stream. Activities for the day included the cleaning up the creek at four different locations. A celebratory BBQ and tree planting at Boeing Reserve completed a great day where the crowd was entertained by speakers including: John Landy, A.C., M.B.E, Governor of Victoria who also launched National Water Week; Ms Cheryl Garbutt, Minister for Environment & Conservation; Kelvin Thomson MP and marathon swimmer Tammy Van Wisse. Over 50 volunteers registered for the event collecting 28 large bags of rubbish from the Hume, Melbourne and Moreland sites combined. A full truck load of rubbish was collected at the central site at Boeing Reserve, Strathmore Heights. Of the rubbish collected an estimated 50% was recyclable. The 'Moonee Ponds Creek - Keep it Clean' project will run until mid-2002 and is supported by: Environment Australia; Melbourne Water; Victorian Stormwater Action Program; Eco-Recycle Victoria; Melbourne Port Corporation; Hume, Melbourne, Moonee Valley and Moreland City Councils; EPA Victoria; and, the Moonee Ponds Creek Co-ordination Committee.



For more information on the "Moonee Ponds Creek - Keep it Clean" Project Contact Jackie White on 9235 2210.

Yuroke Creek Revegetation

The MPCCC recently met with Melbourne Water's Environment Officer Greg Bain, the "Friends of the Grass Trigger Plant" (FGTP), and Hume City Council to discuss revegetation works on the Yuroke Creek north of Johnstone St. Recent bank stabilisation works undertaken by Melbourne Water are to be revegetated in autumn and the group discussed opportunities for this work to be complimented by Councils 'greening program' and community involvement. The site is adjacent to the beautiful "Grass Trigger Plant" remnant site that the FGTP and Hume City Councils "Bush Crew" is actively restoring. Opportunities discussed included the creation of a small wetland, consolidation and extension of several small revegetation beds and fencing to exclude trail-bikes from the ecologically sensitive area.

The works will build on the extensive revegetation already undertaken in the area with some of the wetland planting to begin as soon as November. Depending on funding, other works may begin in autumn of next year so keep an eye out for lots of activity soon.



What is the MPCCC ?

The Moonee Ponds Creek Co-ordination Committee (MPCCC), founded in February 1998, brings together in a spirit of cooperation representatives from each of the four councils (one councillor and one council officer) that front the Moonee Ponds Creek (Hume, Moreland, Moonee Valley and Melbourne), the Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek and Melbourne Water.

The MPCCC undertakes such roles as:

- Monitoring planning controls and activities along the Moonee Ponds Creek to ensure environmental protection and ecologically sensitive development of the Moonee Ponds Creek.
- Engaging direct community participation in creek restoration activities, public education programs, resource sharing and information exchange.
- Preserving and restoring the creek and adjoining catchment areas through the Moonee Ponds Creek Community Greening Program and related initiatives.
- Ensuring public ownership of natural assets and appropriate uses of parklands.
- Facilitating the development of guidelines and policies aimed at protecting and en-

MPCCC - Contacts

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Jacana Wetlands Project

As part of the "Moonee Ponds Creek – Keep It Clean Project" Melbourne Water will be creating approximately 11ha of Wetlands in the Jacana retarding basin. The wetlands will stretch from south of the Western Ring Road in Glenroy to Johnstone Street Broadmeadows. These will be set-up as two systems with three stages of water quality treatment. The wetlands will focus on removal of, litter, coarse sediment, fine sediment, & nutrients from the creek and will significantly improve water quality. The wetlands will also provide important habitat with earthworks to be complimented by extensive aquatic plantings. Preliminary work is due to commence in January 2002 with the majority of the works to follow over the next two years.

For more information contact Robin Allison of Melbourne Water on 9235 2112

Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek

The Moonee Ponds Creek Association has changed its name to the **Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek**, a happy consequence of the groups success in securing resources for the creek. Having successfully lobbied Councils to create the Moonee Ponds Creek Co-ordination Committee (**MPCCC**) and secure funding for a full time Co-ordinator, there was some confusion between the role of the two groups. The name change will serve to remove the confusion, with the "Friends" able to focus their efforts on building community support and increasing involvement in creek restoration activities. The groups next meeting is on Thursday November 29th, 8pm at Kelvin Thomson MP's Office, 3 Monroe Street, Coburg. The Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek are always looking for new members and there are many ways you can help out so why not come along and get involved!

In Westmeadows, "**Friends of Upper Moonee Ponds Creek**" convenors Julie Law and Kim Westcombe report that the group has been extremely busy. Kim said, "we participated in the 'Clean Up Australia Day' in March where approximately 11 bags of rubbish were collected along the banks of the Moonee Ponds Creek from Koala Crescent Reserve to the Bluestone Bridge. The four plantings undertaken by the group this year saw 1200 local natives plants go in the ground as well as lots of weeding and restaking of older plantings. "During one of our Autumn plantings a lot of special time was spent in the conservation zone just off the Koala Crescent Reserve, where we planted bulbine and chocolate lilies together with 2 to 3 species of grasses to add further diversity and to restore the well worn track. The recent spring rain has been a welcome relief to the sites and will no doubt encourage the plants to flourish" Julie reported.

If you would like to become a member of the Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek, become involved in planting days, or simply find out more ring the Secretary, An-

Season-by-Season – Spring Along the Creek

Arguably this is the best time of year to be taking a stroll or ride along the creek. With many of the trees, shrubs, and grasses bursting into showy flower displays. Also be sure to take notice of the abundant bird life, as many species are getting ready to mate the males are brightening up their plumage in their bid to attract as many females as possible. Take particular notice of:

Dianella longifolia, Graceful Dianella is displaying its small yet, amazing flowers, *Stylidium sp.* Grass-leaf Trigger Plants, *Stackhousia sp.* Creamy Candles *Chrysocephalum apiculatum*, Common Everlasting, *Indigofera australis*, Austral Indigo, *Kennedia prostrata*, Running Postman, and *Anthropodium strictum*, Chocolate Lilly, so...



The beautiful Chocolate Lilly (Anthropodium strictum)

ENJOY!