

Ponderings

Seasonal newsletter of the Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek
Spring 2022 | Issue 76

advocate educate interpret participate rehabilitate revegetate









Spring has Sprung!

















Spring News

It's great to see so many lovely wattles and spring flowers along the creek, it feels like it's been a long, cold, lonely Winter!

In this issue, we have our usual range of council news, featuring a number of recent events, such as the opening of the new foot bridge at Vanberg Road and the launch of the Brosnan Crescent Naturalisation project.

We also feature an article on the ubiquitous cyclone fences along the creek, plus the latest news about Friends activities and the featured Friend this time is Nina. We also have the best Historical flood photos, plus our usual Sightings and Spring photos from along the Creek.

David Widdowson, Editor

Thanks to Anna Lanigan, Kaye Oddie, Rachel Lopes, Nina Franceschi, Milly Burke and Lori Arthur for their assistance with the production of this issue.

Cover images by Maurice Austin, Anna Lanigan, Nina Franceschi, Dennis Hocking and David Widdowson.

CONTENTS

(Click on page title)

Brosnan Crescent	<u>3</u>
Double Celebration	4
Vanberg Bridge opening	5
Chain of Ponds News	6
Moonee Valley News	7
Moreland News	8
Melbourne News	9
Planet Earth/ iNaturalist	10
Mountain Bike Damage	11
Between the Bridges	12
Galada at SNPS	13
Sightings	14
Cyclone Fences	15
Spring along the MPC	16
Friends: Nina Franceschi	17
MPC History Page	18
FoMPC News	19

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Project Update — Stage One

After working with you to plan and design the *Reimagining Your Moonee Ponds Creek* project, we are now starting on stage 1 — upgrading a section of the existing shared path along the Brosnan Crescent side of the Moonee Ponds Creek to build dedicated lanes for pedestrians and cyclists. This will create two separate paths and will significantly enhance pedestrian and cyclist safety by minimising collision risks.

We are excited to announce that Stage 1 works will begin the week commencing *Monday 22*nd *August* and are expected to finish in November 2022.

Works will be undertaken between:

- 7am to 6pm Monday to Friday
- 7am to 1pm Saturdays

On occasions we may need to undertake works out of hours. We will notify you in advance if these works are required. The timings of these works are weather dependant.

What's next? We will continue to keep the community updated on progress and upcoming works for further stages of the Reimagining Moonee Ponds Creek Project.

What to expect:

- For the safety of everyone, the pathway will be closed during the works.
- Pedestrians and cyclists will be temporarily detoured along Mascoma and Odin Streets.
- A small site compound will be established at the corner of Brosnan Crescent and Odin Street inside the Moonee Ponds Creek boundary and at Main Street, next to the Oak Park Reserve.
- To enable heavy vehicles to access the works area, there will be temporary parking changes including the removal of parking along the north side of Brosnan Crescent and Main Street at times. Parking will remain available on the south side of each street.
- Access to all local streets and their properties will be maintained and managed via traffic management as required.
- There will be an increase in large vehicle traffic in the surrounding areas as vehicles deliver plant and equipment and assist with the works.
- There will be short-term increase in noise and dust. We will use a range of measures to reduce these impacts including sound mats, gawk screens and dust compression mats.









Double Celebration for the Creek

A gathering took place on June 2nd at Ethel Reserve, Oak Park, to celebrate work beginning on the *Reimagining the Moonee Ponds Creek* Project.

Attendees included Federal Minister for Wills Peter Khalil, Member for Essendon Danny Pearson, Mayors Mark Riley and Samantha Byrne, CEO Helen Sui, together with Councillors and officers from Hume, Melbourne, Moreland and Moonee Valley, representatives from Melbourne Water, Greater Western Water and the Chain of Ponds collaboration, students of Strathmore North PS, FoMPC & residents.



The morning began with a Welcome to Country and Traditional Smoking Ceremony and was followed by wonderful speeches proving solidarity and support for the MPC at all levels of Government. Danny Pearson (representing Minister for Water Lisa Neville) officially began the works, turning the first sod of the project with senior students of Strathmore North Primary.





In a second special occasion of the day, we celebrated the continuation of the Chain of Ponds Collaboration. The 13 partner organisations signed a new Memorandum of Understanding recommitting to another three years of working together "to identify, create and deliver projects that enhance the environmental, cultural and social values of the Moonee Ponds Creek".



The Chain of Pond organisations are: Melbourne Water, Greater Western Water, Hume City Council, Moonee Valley City Council, Moreland City Council, Melbourne City Council, Parks Victoria, Conservation Volunteers Australia, Yarra Valley Water, Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek, Moonee Bicycle Users Group, Living Colour Studio, and the Kensington Association.







Hopetoun / Vanberg Bridge Launch by Lori Arthur

The new bridge over the creek linking Hopetoun Avenue and Vanberg Road was officially opened on July 7th, celebrating the first Chain of Ponds project to be dreamed up, designed and delivered together.



Following a smoking ceremony, then official speeches, the community enjoyed pedal powered smoothies and participated in plantings on both sides of the creek.







The bridge connects the suburbs of Brunswick West and Essendon and provides a 1.4 km walking loop along the creek. It was made possible with funding from the Victorian Government and contributions from Moreland City Council and Moonee Valley Council and input from many of our collaboration members. Congratulations to the many partners involved!



Venta, Lori, Rachel, Alex and Milly

FoMPC would like to acknowledge the large contribution in particular by Lori Arthur and Alex English (Moreland Council) and Venta Slizys (Moonee Valley) in initiating and planning this project, and would like to thank the Council Officers and staff of Moreland and Moonee Valley for the enormous amount of work done behind the scenes in the planning and implementation of this project.





By Rachel Lopes



Interviews are underway for a *Litter Coordinator* role that was advertised recently. The two year, part -time role is being funded by a Melbourne Water *Liveable Communities Liveable Waterways* grant and the *Chain of Ponds Collaboration*. The Litter Coordinator will work with the Litter Working Group to reduce the incidence and impact of litter in the Moonee Ponds Creek by delivering on the recommendations in the Moonee Ponds Creek Litter Assessment (Alluvium 2021).

We can't wait to have a dedicated role to support progress on this important task!

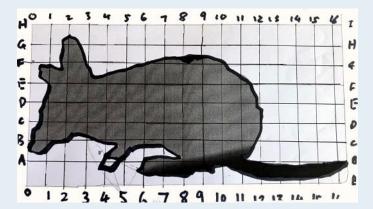


The Upper Moonee Ponds Creek Shared Trail was also a fortunate DELWP Waterways of the West grant recipient! A consultant / organisation is soon to be engaged to develop the detailed design of the trail including; 1.2 km of new trail, a destination point at Woodlands Historic Park, wayfinding and interpretative signage and art. This stage will also include a Cultural Heritage Management Plan. Our project team includes all key stakeholders; DELWP, Parks Victoria, Hume City Council, Melbourne Water and the Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek. They will select and oversee the work of the consultant over the next 12-18 months. It's wonderful to imagine a new section of path in the magical upper reaches of the Creek.

Conversations are well underway with *Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation* to hire a two year part-time resource to dramatically improve / uplift our cultural knowledge (and connection) to the Creek. This exciting role is funded by a DELWP Waterways of the West Grant and the Chain of Ponds Collaboration. One of the deliverables of this role will be audio-visual material including augmented reality (using your phone, the landscape will change to a historical setting) to support the cultural elements of the *Reimagining Moonee Ponds Creek* project.



Chain of Ponds Governance Group member and Artist Catherine van Wilgenburg orchestrated two fabulous sessions with students from Penleigh and Essendon Grammar over recent months to engage them on the *Bandicoots on the Flight Path* Project. Students were taught to upscale art and will be joining us on site at the Woodlands Historic Park on October 14th to paint! We are preparing the ground for two bandicoots to be planted over the coming years, protecting our grassland species and raising awareness of the plight of the Eastern Barred Bandicoot for anyone flying into and out of Melbourne Airport.



A giant thank you to all Chain of Ponds Partners and Supporters for helping make these projects happen!

For more information on this or any of the above projects, go to www.chainofponds.org.





In Remembrance of our Swans

On a bitterly cold, moonless and blustery night in July we lost both of the beloved swans who had made their home in both Woodlands Park and the hearts of many. Thank you to all who helped that night; the locals, police, wildlife carers, neighbours and distressed driver who helped the injured swans get emergency vet care.

And thank you to all the wonderful community members who helped the two resident swans grow up. To all the park visitors, neighbours and volunteers who helped our swans have such a happy life. Thank you for giving space to the six grey cygnets of fluff, by being tolerant of the protective parents, and patient during our resident pair's teenage phase of hissing at picnic goers.

I will miss them nibbling on the phone in my hand. I will miss them 'supervising' me at work; during school education sessions, water testing visits and planting sessions. And I will miss their self-composed strut as they left in disgust to go and graze (other birds learn quickly that Rangers don't feed wildlife, but our swans seemed to live in hope my mobile would become bread).



In remembrance of our beautiful swans, here are some ideas to help make life easier for our local wildlife:

- Save the contact details of Wildlife Victoria in your phone–8400 7300 or go to their <u>website</u>.
- Add Wildlife Friendly Garden elements to your yard, balcony, work place or school. We have a quide here
- If you are feeling crafty check out the Rescue Craft Collective Hub of website at www.rcchub.org.



Upcoming Events

Moonee Valley City Council are teaming up with The Wilderness Society to host the **Nature Book Week Launch**, starting September 3rd, and will run three special Storytime Sessions in local parks. The week concludes with the Environment Award for Children's Literature and the inaugural Karajia Award. For more details and this year's short list visit <u>www.wilderness.org.au/nature-book-week</u>

Glenbervie Stationeers are hosting a planting day and celebration of Glenbervie Station's 100 year anniversary! Drop in for as long or as little as you please to lend a helping hand on Sunday 11th September. More details at:

www.mvcc.vic.gov.au/play/my-week/events/



Montague Street Boardwalk

The Montague Street Boardwalk forms part of the MPC Trail and is situated adjacent to Montague Street, Moonee Ponds. Upgrading the boardwalk is identified in Council's Walking and Cycling Strategy and aligns with various objectives to improve the safety and connectivity of the shared path network.

The existing 80m timber boardwalk has a number of safety issues and will need to be replaced in the near future. Accordingly, Council is in the process of developing a design to replace the boardwalk with a widened, cantilevered structure over the Creek. The new boardwalk maintains the existing alignment on the residential side of the boardwalk.

The new boardwalk is proposed to be a 3m wide steel structure, its surface will be a non-slip material and the shared path entrances will be upgraded to concrete. This will improve safety for path users.





Gavin Park Wetlands Opening

The Mayor and Councillors, in partnership with Melbourne Water, invite Friends and community members to the official opening of the new wetland at Gavin Park on Thursday 8th September, 10-11am.

Alongside the official proceedings will be FREE coffee, light entertainment and an art piece involving local school groups.



Citizen Science

Throughout October, Council will be encouraging community members to get involved in two key citizen science events, the *Great Aussie Bird*<u>Count</u> (October 17th-23rd) and <u>Great Southern</u>

<u>Bioblitz</u> (October 28th-31st).

Both these biological surveying events are a great way to get to know the plants and animals living in your own backyard (or local park) and contribute data that helps build an understanding of what's happening in our local environment and beyond. Follow the links for more information.



National Tree Day

Council's National Tree Day event took place at KW Joyce Reserve in Pascoe Vale this year on 31st July. Approximately 90 community members braved the windy conditions and joined us to plant over 1500 indigenous plants within the reserve.



Other activities on the day were a BBQ, bee-hotel making (above) and our Reading Rug with books and colouring activities for children. Council also partnered with Pascoe Vale Girls College for Schools National Tree Day, planting 600 plants along the creek.



MELBOURNE News

by Kaye Oddie



Rubbish Along the Creek

It is not only the Moonee Ponds Creek waterway that suffers from litter – these photographs show some of the rubbish left by itinerants camping along the lower Moonee Ponds Creek below Footscray Road, Docklands.



Melbourne City Council contractors filled a waste truck cleaning it up. The Council has also been asked to address this through their Homeless Persons Support Services.





Melbourne Metro Intake Substation (ISS)

A bit of whimsy in the plans associated with Melbourne Metro Tunnel's new intake substation along the MPC south of Arden Street, North Melbourne—a pink fence is proposed between the new substation building and the existing shared Capital City Trail path!

The pink is to reflect the colour of the purple rounded noon flower Disphyma crassifolium that bloomed along the waterways and historically around the Blue Lagoon that existed in the area at the time of European settlement.

It will provide some colour and interest in the rather desolate industrial setting of rail lines, City Link and utility buildings. The FoMPC support the proposal and also call for the noon flower to actually be planted in the low creek embankment alongside the shared path.

In the meantime, on the opposite side of the Creek, the FoMPC is working with Metro Tunnel on the landscape design and revegetation. The FoMPC appreciates the continuing inclusive consultation with stakeholders and community organisations by the Metro Tunnel teams.

West Gate Tunnel Project Bridge 75/ Veloway

The plan to remove the fanciful 'U' from the Veloway and use the disused rail bridge (Bridge 75) over the MPC just north of Footscray Rd, that has been well supported and was supposedly awaiting Ministerial approval, has now been set back as apparently Transurban does not want to accept responsibility for maintaining the bridge.

WGTP Bridge 90 Revegetation Plan

The Bridge 90 works to install a new shared path on the southern side of the bridge (Footscray Rd, Docklands) required the removal of 55+ extra trees from an established area of vegetation along the lower Moonee Ponds Creek.

It was a less-than-satisfactory planning process with the end result being the use of a clause in the planning scheme that allowed the funder of the original planting (25 years ago) to authorise the removal of the trees. This was Melbourne Water. It was unfortunate that MW undertook no consultation as part of the process – that possibly could have seen a better outcome. The trees have now been removed. The FoMPC and Melbourne City Council are working with the landscape team on the revegetation plan.

Great News from Planet Earth III by Anna



I contacted Miraca Walker — David Attenborough's researcher — to let her know our MPC nesting season has started with the first two Tawny Frogmouth pairs shown to her last year not only back in the same trees but in the same nest site in the same trees. Her reply:

Thank you kindly for the update, this is so useful for my planning as it's looking likely to be similar timings to last year. I've also heard from another tawny watcher that the breeding season has started so I'm planning to be back in Melbourne during November.

This time around, we are focusing on slightly older chicks when they start to fly away from the tree. If anyone comes across a chick on the ground when I'm in Melbourne, it would be great to be notified as we want to document a healthy chick finding its way home/ back to a tree. As you may know, a lot of chicks get rescued unnecessarily and are usually strong enough to fly again under the cover of darkness. Marian Weaving said a lot of the time the chicks will just be waiting/hiding, which is what we witnessed last year too. Of course, if the chick is very young and too weak to get back up to safety then Wildlife Victoria would be the best to call. I am in contact with Wildlife Victoria as well who will also notify me of tawny chicks rescues.

I don't know the broadcast dates yet but the series should be airing in the UK during the Autumn next year. Then it will be broadcast globally so I suspect it will be early 2024 that it will show in Australia. I can try and find out closer to the time.

It will be really great if—when out on your walks—you can keep a look out for nesting sites for the Planet Earth Team and let us know either by a post on the MPC Facebook page, or by using the Contact Us tab on the MPC website.



Hume's Wildlife Links

Citizen science involves the public contributing to scientific research with an aim to increase scientific knowledge. You can contribute to a range of important citizen science projects by submitting your observations of nature, simply by using your smart phone.

- Join Hume's <u>wildlife project on iNaturalist</u>.
- Record frog calls for <u>Melbourne Water's</u> <u>frog census.</u>
- Birds sightings for National Bird Week in October using the <u>Birds in Backyards app.</u>
- Platypus sightings to <u>Platypus Spot</u>
- Echidna sightings using the <u>Echidna</u>
 <u>Conservation Science Initiative</u> app.
- Wombats: Wombat Sightings
- How nature is responding to climate change with <u>Climate Watch.</u>



iNaturalist Update

The Moonee Ponds Creek/iNaturalist now has over 15,000 observations, covering all natural flora and fauna (no pets or people!). There are some issues with casual non-wildlife observations that we will find out how to best manage. https://www.inaturalist.org/projects/moonee-ponds-creek-wildlife

Mountain Bike Damage at Kingsford Smith Ulm Reserve





There has been extensive mountain bike track building, cutting down of trees and damage at the Kingsford Smith Ulm Reserve. FoMPC reported it through Snap Send Solve and we also attempted to report it to the police (they said unfortunately they couldn't take our report as it's not private property that's affected, but that Moreland Council could report it to them if they wanted to). FoMPC also contacted Moreland Council, who confirmed they knew about the vandalism and were waiting on machinery to become available to remove the debris and jumps.

The council has been monitoring the area for some years now, as it is used by bikers — often over the holiday periods. We'd noticed this too, but as far as we could tell past use had been acceptable, in that people were riding downhill through the trees and this was creating natural tracks, in a similar way that walkers continually walking over an area eventually create a track.

This sort of vandalism and destruction of our valued open space needs greater calling out and prosecution, so that whoever caused it, doesn't get away with it again.





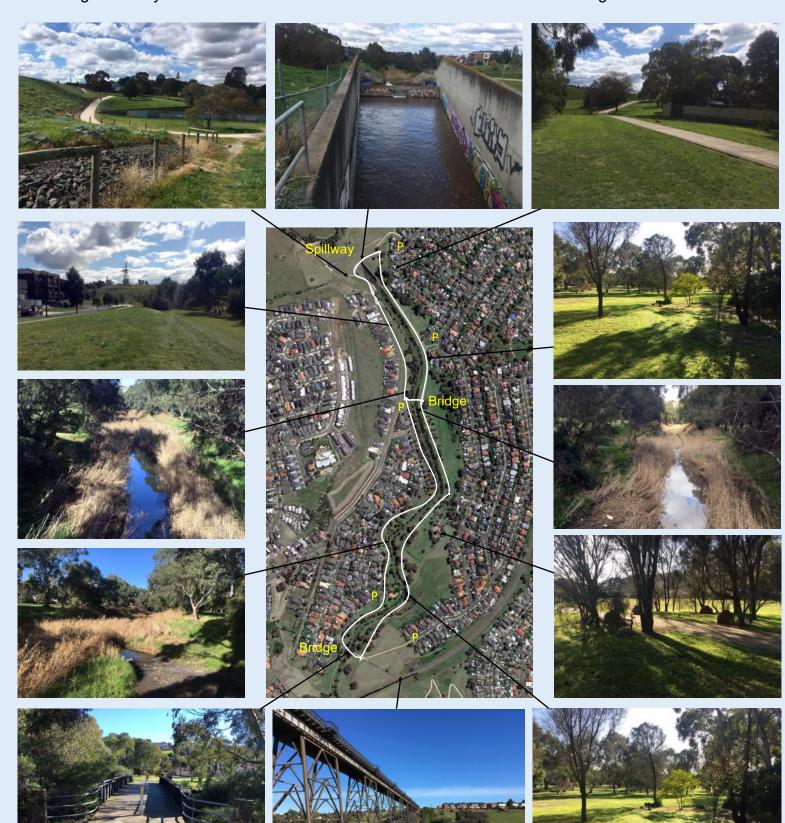




Between the Bridges — Circuit Walking the MPC by David

Part 5 — Glenroy/ Gowanbrae Valley— Spillway to Trestle Bridge

This walk takes you from the Jacana Spillway in the north, to the Trestle Bridge in the south. Most of the tracks — on both sides of the Creek — are rather straight and open, but there are some areas with more vegetation. Also prominent are the old bridge at the southern end and the brick sculptures. There is a bridge half way down which can break the walk into two sections. P - Parking.



Galada—New Library at Strathmore North Primary by Anna Lanigan



The new Strathmore North Primary School building — replacing the old Library and Art Room — has been named Galada (meaning Creek in the local Woiwurrung language and used with permission). By coincidence, the architects K2LD chose "Chain of Ponds" to create a theme for the building that reflects the proximity and nature of the nearby Moonee Ponds Creek. Architect Ian Davidson knew the connection to Hoddle's description of the Creek but was unaware that the words were in the title of the Site Office Masterplan and in naming the *Chain of Ponds* Collaboration.



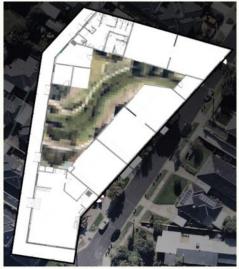
With exquisite attention to detail, the Moonee Ponds Creek winds its way through the Library with carefully chosen carpet squares creating the imagery.

Large windows open to bring the outside in and skylights and clouds painted on a blue sky ceiling complete the scene. Outside the beautiful timber veranda supports mimic the nearby eucalypts. The students love it!











Matching the floor to a map of the creek.... then pixelating the image to create the tiles.... and the carpet tiles that are the final result.



Australasian Grebe by Anna



Horsfield Bronze Cuckoo by Dennis



Chestnut Teal by Anna



Sightings

by Anna Lanigan and Dennis Hocking



Rainbow Lorikeet by Anna



Golden-headed Cisticola by Dennis



Pacific Black Duck by Anna



Southern Boobook by Dennis



Black Shouldered Kite by Dennis



Silvereye by Anna



Superb Fairywren by Anna



Australian Wood Duck by Anna

The Case Against the Fences by David



If you look closely, you'll see lots of fences like this along both sides of the creek — 8 foot (2.4m) high cyclone wire mesh fences. But where did they come from, why were they built and why are they still here?



The image above from the archives, showing the foot bridge near Gaffney Street in the 1990s, shows that they were built in order to prevent access to the creek! So this would put their construction back to when the concrete was being installed in the 1960s and 1970s. It seems a strange thing to us, when the creek is now so open to visitors.



If the aim was to stop people accessing the Creek, they didn't do a very good job! They never stopped us riding our bikes along the concrete in the 1970s, nor did they stop me walking to school along the creek every day (it was simply a matter of swinging round the end of a fence!). It seems that completely fencing off the creek, while still allowing access for maintenance vehicles etc, was an impossible task!



Looking through the FoMPC archives, it is surprising to see so many fences that were built along the west side (where the shared track now runs). Of course when the track was put in during the 1980s, a lot of them had to come straight down again! Above, Brosnan Crescent in the 1970s, below Talbot Road, 1980s.





So, why do so many of the fences still exist (besides the fact councils can't be bothered removing them?). Quite a few of them border sports grounds, so they serve to stop balls going into the creek. Others border businesses, industries, housing estates etc, and here they serve a security function, hence the lack of motivation to remove them. It seems we will have to put up with these fences for a while yet!





People of the FoMPC — Nina Franceschi



The above photo of Nina with her sons from the archives is a rarity—it shows her natural hair colour! She is now well known for her dyed red hair!

As a child, Nina's home backed onto the Moonee Ponds Creek in Strathmore, directly adjacent to Horseshoe Bend. Nina was there until she was 12 years old and then at 26, she and her husband purchased their current home fronting the creek.

When they decided to purchase, it was important for her to be as close to the creek as possible - as Nina had such good memories of it as a child - and she also loved the idea of no neighbours across the road!



Nina has constantly been involved with Moonee Ponds Creek projects since she moved back here. Living across the road from a concreted section, Nina heard people describing it as bare, others said it was an "eyesore" and called it a drain.

However, that soon changed when Nina started advocating to Council park rangers and officers to improve the waterway. She worked with the Moonee Ponds Creek Coordination Committee (MPCCC) and independently, to encourage improvements along the creek, particularly in the stretch from Strathnaver to Lebanon Reserve.

Ponderings was originally funded by the MPCCC, however, when funds ran out, Nina and Anna Lanigan felt the newsletter was too good to stop altogether and offered to continue editing the publication voluntarily, which they did for four years.



Nina also got involved in plantings, connecting schools and other groups to the creek, rubbish management, installation of a playground, protecting and rescuing wildlife, shared path improvements, advocating against destruction by freeways and following Council meetings to ensure the creek and its flora are safe and protected.



Nina's successful involvements have included:

- Rescuing a section of Strathnaver Reserve,
 Strathmore, from becoming a 30 space carpark.
 The site will soon be planted out.
- Converting Nursery Corner from a Council owned private tenancy to public parkland.
- Greening the space from Strathnaver to
 Lebanon Reserve, working together with Council
 for many years to encourage plantings along this
 stretch, and pushing to have this area protected
 with bollards and planted out. Her goal is to have
 all this section planted with native grasses, trees
 and shrubs, and a natural goat trail to walk along.
 It will look amazing!
- Nina met with politicians to request funding to have the concrete removed from the creek for the Brosnan Crescent Naturalisation Project. She has consulted with Melbourne Water and Councils to ensure trees and reserves are protected as much as possible, and had input in the shared path decisions on the masterplan.

All in all, a great job advocating for our Creek!

MPC History Page—the Creek in Flood

Photos: Maurice, Nina & Archives







End of Bell St, 1963

Both: Herbert St, 1930s







Gowanbrae, 2005

Attwood, 2005

Westmeadows 2005







All from Jacana, 2005







Moonee Valley, 1963

Pascoe Vale Rd, 2005

Oak Park 2011







All from Gaffney St foot bridge, 2005







Freeway entrance, 1995

West Brunswick, 1963

City Link



Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek Inc

PO Box 54, ESSENDON 3040 www.mooneepondscreek.org.au friends@mooneepondscreek.org.au

FoMPC News

Secretary and Treasurer Needed

We are searching for a new Treasurer and Secretary, with both Vince (Treasurer) and Alison (Secretary) standing down at the forthcoming AGM. Please contact us at the above email address if you are interested in either of these positions.

Lionsville Update

Darryn provided a brief history of the proposed redevelopment of the Lionsville site in Moreland Road by Ryman Healthcare for a retirement village and updated us to the planning process. It has been difficult to obtain information about the plans for the two hectare site, which backs onto both Five Mile and Moonee Ponds Creeks.

One permit has been issued, with a second application (MV-269-2022) submitted, but not yet publicly advertised. FoMPC have concerns about the acquisition of crown land for the development, additional to the freehold land holding, and impacts on the creek interfaces.

Further Naturalisation of the Creek

The Federal election saw \$7.5m promised to undertake further naturalisation of the Creek. The Chain of Ponds Collaboration is starting to investigate proposals; one of which is to drill cores into the concrete side walls of the Creek channel and insert plants that would remove contaminants.



Laneways in Oak Park

A development planned for 7 Sylvester St, Oak Park with three double garages opening onto an Oak Park laneway has sent the local community into a spin. Headed by MPC friends Carolyn and Greg, a campaign resulted in more than 100 objections, forcing Moreland City Council to hold a Planning and Discussion meeting via zoom 7.30 pm September 19th — RSVP by September 6th — details on the Council Website. The Laneways should have been formally closed to vehicular traffic years ago and moves are now afoot to make this happen following a unanimous vote by Council on August 10th. See this website.



Annual General Meeting

All Welcome - Come support your active local Creek advocacy organisation (established in 1989).

Monday 17th October, 6:30pm, Sam Merrifield Library 762 Mt Alexander Rd. Moonee Ponds.

Join the Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek for \$20 per year

Help protect and enhance the Moonee Ponds Creek's natural environment. For information and to join, go to mooneepondscreek.org.au and complete the membership form, or write to PO Box 54, Essendon VIC

CALENDAR	Event and Location:	Contact/ Link
Monday, October 17 th , 6.30pm	FoMPC meeting, at Sam Merrifield Library	mooneepondscreek.org.au

Your Contributions to Ponderings are welcome! Please send your images and stories to fompc.ponderings@gmail.com