



moonee ponds creek
co-ordination committee

Ponderings

Spring 2013 Issue 42

Seasonal Newsletter of the Moonee
Ponds Creek Coordination Committee Inc

Help mpccc make
a difference!

Tax-deductible
donations can be
made to the MPC
Environment Fund.

Go to mpccc.org
for information.

advocate educate interpret participate rehabilitate revegetate

National Tree Day is such a great day with so many children joining in ...

There were two sites along the Creek this year, one hosted by Moreland City Council under the trestle bridge at Gowanbrae and one hosted by Hume City Council at The Tarnuk.

Both drew good crowds.

At **The Tarnuk**, it was a multicultural affair, 52 people came along including local residents, the Friends of Upper Moonee Ponds Creek, representatives of a Samoan youth group, and members of the Shah Satnam Ji Green S Welfare Force Society. So much enthusiasm and hard work – nearly 1400 seedlings were planted, including a mix of trees, shrubs, grasses, groundcovers and wildflowers, to create wildlife habitat and beautify the area. This reserve is very popular, so it was nice for Melissa of Hume City Council, to be complimented by several people walking past about the work being done to improve it.

At **Gowanbrae** the slope under the trestle railway bridge, which was once covered in boxthorn, was the scene of great activity. It was wonderful to see so many children getting involved, including the 1st Strathmore Cubs and the 1st Oak Park Scout group.

Thank you to everyone who came along and contributed to an amazing 20 million seedlings planted since 1996, across Australia for National Tree Day!

In this issue:

- ◆ National Tree Day
- ◆ Jamena – LandCare planting
- ◆ Brunswick South-West Planters
- ◆ Damage to the upper reaches
- ◆ East-West Link impacts on the Creek
- ◆ Council activities
- ◆ RMIT Students take on the Creek
- ◆ Gems of the Creek



National Tree Day 2013 at The Tarnuk and Gowanbrae

Jemena-Landcare-Woodlands Planting Day

Kaye Oddie reports on a highly successful day.



Friday September 20th saw the second stage and completion of the 2013 Jemena-Landcare project at Woodlands Historic Park in Greenvale.

Following the big 'Live Grow Explore' community event held in March, the second event was the main 'action' phase of the project and involved revegetating two former farmland areas close to the Moonee Ponds Creek. The land comes under the jurisdiction of Melbourne Airport, so the indigenous plant selection met both Moonee Ponds Creek Revegetation Guidelines and Airport requirements.

Twenty plus Jemena staff members from the Broadmeadows branch spent the day working hard installing kangaroo- and rabbit-proof fencing, planting, guarding/staking, mulching and watering in the 260 plants. It was a most productive team effort and it has made a valuable contribution towards improving habitat and biodiversity along the Moonee Ponds Creek, as well as enhancing biolinks with the adjoining Woodlands Historic Park reserve.

Thanks are due to many people for the success of the day: To the Jemena staff and to Joanne Faggian, their community liaison officer; to Amy Gillett, Landcare's Partnerships Manager, both as the overall project organiser and organiser of the day; to Sue Wright and Jeff Triplett, Friends of Woodlands Historic Park, who prepared the site, grew plants and organised all the fencing and equipment and transported them to the site; to other members of the Woodlands Friends for providing the BBQ lunch, to Brendan Sullivan and other Parks Vic's staff and to Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek members: Bob Steadman, Kaye Oddie, Roger Exell and Julie Law, who assisted on the day.

A Great Team!



Planting inside the roo & rabbit-proof fence



Brunswick SW Planters

Brunswick SW Planters has been going a loooong time! The group started as the **Tullamarine Action Group** in 1994, an advocacy group that formed in response to talks of widening the Tullamarine Freeway. They campaigned to soften the sound walls and concreted areas with vegetation as well as encouraging CityLink to contribute to the surrounding open spaces as an off-set for the land taken by the freeway.

The group met on a regular basis and slowly changed barren spaces and weed scapes into areas of revegetation, along a stretch of the Creek from Holbrook Reserve to where the Creek emerges from under the freeway north of Hope Street. Moreland City Council was supportive of the group, contributing plants and mulch when requested.

In 2004 the group began working in partnership with MPCCC, holding two or three plantings per year.

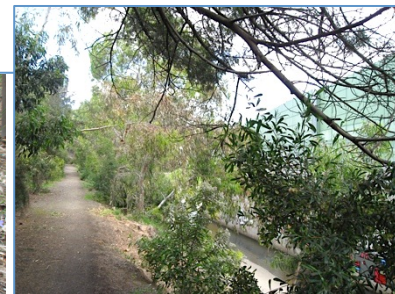


The Creek below Balfe St in May 2005, and October 2013



Between Dawson Street and CityLink in June 2006, and in October 2013

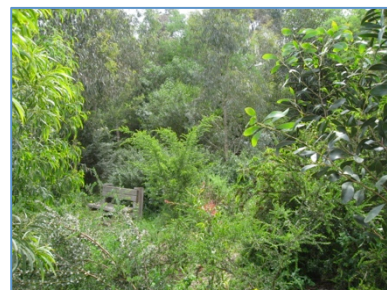
They have achieved amazing results, turning an inhospitable track next to the sound barrier of the freeway, into a favourite green walking place for people and dogs.



Site transformation...

At the end of Hope Street, where the Creek emerges from under the freeway, there is a pocket of land that was taken on by Michael and the Brunswick SW Planters. The pictures in the top row were taken in May 2007, July 2007 and July 2008. Those in the bottom row are the same views in October 2013.

Six years have transformed this pocket from grass to dense bush.



Motorbike and 4-wheel drive damage to the upper reaches

The stretch of the Creek to the East of the Airport and the Tullamarine landfill site, is still in a fairly natural state – apart from the weeds – it still has large trees and is able to wander at will, through pools and riffles, with Reed Warblers in the *Phragmites*. However, inconsiderate people driving 4-wheel drives and motorbikes see this area of neglected land as a perfect place to play. A lot of damage is being done. Several crossings have been forced across the Creek, destroying the banks and creek bed and causing erosion. The banks and riparian zone are being cut up by wheel tracks, and small trees and shrubs knocked over and killed. It is very sad to see this pretty section of the Creek treated like this.

Part of the problem is ownership – several different entities own land adjacent to the Creek here, including the Tullamarine Landfill, the Airport, the now defunct quarry and previously a private ownership. It is a neglected area, not open to the public so it doesn't get overseen by anyone who cares – except by Carolyn Layton and the Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek.

Three FoMPC members (Julie Law, Kaye Oddie & Stella Blay) recently took two Melbourne Water representatives Deborah Riley and Hannah Paxton to see the damage. They were very concerned and are going to follow up with the DEPI and the Airport and their internal maintenance team, looking into what can be done to



The Creek in its natural state

prevent further damage, and repair what has occurred.

It is going to be a hard battle to keep the vehicles out. We will keep you posted on progress. Contact Stella at Ponderings@MPCCC.org if you have any suggestions.

Some of the damage being done across and beside the Creek

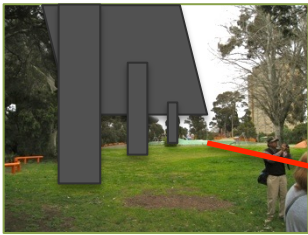


East West Link Impacts

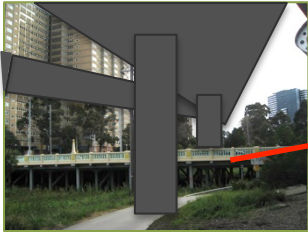
The effect of the proposed East West Link on the southern reaches of the Moonee Ponds Creek will be severe. The maps on the Linking Melbourne website show just how much impact there will be on the Creek, with the proposed freeway link road adding at least another four lanes, plus emergency lanes, on ramps and off ramps following the path of the Creek. Here, where there is no concrete channel the Creek has a degree of freedom to wander, but if this road is built it will have a concrete roof over it. These pictures tell the story.

Four-lane highway and on-ramp march over the new adventure playground in Debnays Park

Looking south down Debnays Park, towards the new playground



Looking north over Racecourse Road bridge



Four-lane highway and on-ramp squeeze in between the Flemingington public housing towers and CityLink

Looking north up Bent Street



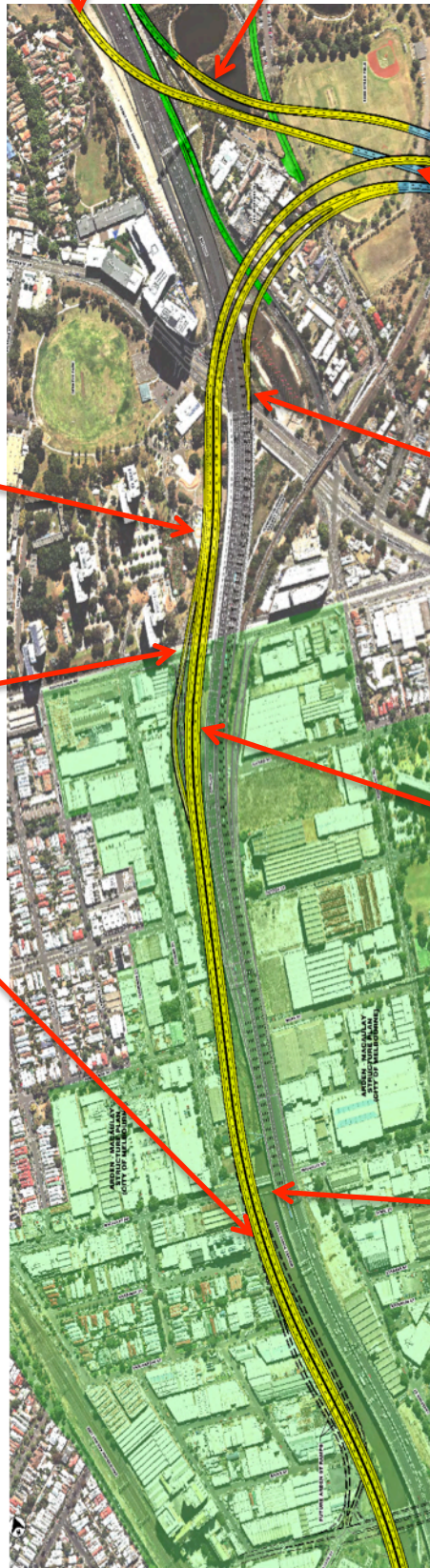
Four-lane highway only the width of the road from the front of the block of units

If you think this damage to the Creek, its environs and Royal Park is justified, then do nothing – if not – **GET INVOLVED!**

- Leave comments on the Linking Melbourne website LinkingMelbourne.vic.gov.au
- Make a submission to the Comprehensive Impact Statement process in November
- Have your say on Moonee Valley Council's website – see next page
- Talk to people in other parts of the city and state, about how it will drain resources from other needed infrastructure
- Lobby politicians
- Speak out!

After crossing over CityLink, the northbound exit runs over Travencore Park next to CityLink.

On the east side, the on-ramp starts just north of Royal Park, and stomps over the wetlands and the Ross Straw Fields



Proposed route of the East West Link connection with CityLink to the south (NOTE: NOT TO SCALE)

Source: LinkingMelbourne.Vic.Gov.au

North of this section the concept map shows the northbound connection to CityLink, crossing above the freeway, then running along the Creek over Travencore Park, Ormond Park and Holbrook Reserve – at least two lanes wide, with the on-ramp joining it, north from Ormond Street. It finally becomes part of CityLink at Victoria Street.



Looking west across the Ross Straw Field – imagine four flyovers rising up from the foreground and curving north and south

Tunnels exit in open cut gullies out of the bank of remnant vegetation in Royal Park



Where CityLink crosses Mt Alexander Road

Southbound ramp joins at the sound tunnel. Two northbound viaducts cross CityLink 10-12 metres above it, and curve round to the east, north of the Red Sticks



Looking south from the Capital City Trail shared path

At least four-lane highway goes south down the Creek over the existing exit ramp



Looking south from the Macaulay Road bridge

Four-lane highway on one side of the Creek, CityLink on the other

It is not just the Creek that will suffer if this monster is built. Kensington will experience massive impacts – have a look at the Kensington Association's website for just how much the area will be affected. KensingtonAssociation.org.au.

The green shaded area is covered by the Arden-Macaulay Structural Plan; consideration of which has had to be suspended until the issue of available green space is resolved. The proposed road will occupy areas that had been set aside as open space in the Plan

Creek Activities

Moreland City Council update by Vince Adreana



Several **Community planting days** were held along the Moonee Ponds Creek over the last few months. This has resulted in over 2000 locally native plants being established with the assistance of Friends groups, community groups, schools and local residents. I have recently visited the sites and all are doing well with the relative wet conditions over the last few weeks.

Thanks to all the people who assisted at the planting days as they can be a little hectic at times. A reminder that for more information on the indigenous plants used at the community planting days you can pick up a copy of the Moreland City Council booklets (Sustainable Gardening in Moreland and Home Harvest) at Council offices or from the Council website (www.moreland.vic.gov.au).

Council has developed a draft **Gowanbrae Open Space Development and Management Plan**, which aims to provide a 10 year plan to develop and maintain open space through the Gowanbrae area. Community consultation will begin shortly.

For any further information please don't hesitate to contact me on 8311 4386 or email vandreana@moreland.vic.gov.au

Michelle Gooding from City of Moonee Valley



wants to encourage readers to Have Their Say on three issues.

The Council has been very active in protesting about the proposed East-West Link. The Council's website provides the opportunity to contribute to the discussion, get information about the proposed road and attend information sessions. Visit: mvcc.vic.gov.au/planning-and-building/major-developments/proposed-major-developments/proposed-east-west-link.aspx, to find out more.

The other major development with potential to affect the Creek, is the proposal to rezone parts of the Moonee Valley Racecourse and build residential blocks on the site. Visit: mvcc.vic.gov.au/planning-and-building/major-developments/proposed-major-developments/draft-master-plan-and-rezoning-proposal-from-moonee-valley-racecourse.aspx for more information and have your say about the proposal.

Essendon Airport is also calling for submissions on their draft Master Plan. Although the Environmental Strategy does not specifically mention impacts on the Creek, the site slopes down to the Creek and run-off will eventually flow into Steele and Moonee Ponds Creeks. Visit: essendonairport.com.au/23/community-info/master-plan/default.aspx to read the Environmental Strategy and find out how to contribute.

Sightings

Have you seen any interesting flora or fauna along the Creek? Please tell us about it. Contact Stella, at ponderings@mpccc.org.

Louise Whiting from the Friends of Five Mile Creek wrote to us about some exciting sightings her family had had at the junction of Five Mile and the Moonee Ponds Creeks, Pascoe Vale, in July this year:



Photo: Andre Braakhuis

"When I got home my son told me that on his way home from the school production rehearsal at 5.45pm on Sunday, he saw a large water rat on the bank and in the water under the bridge where we picked up rubbish last time.

He knows his rats and it was definitely a water rat.

We have seen an eel in there recently too so despite feeling like it is all hopeless with the rubbish and crap in the creek, it is really good to know the native animals are able to survive in it."

Gems of the Creek

What is your favourite bit of the Creek – natural or man-made? Send your ideas to Stella, at ponderings@mpccc.org - I look forward to hearing about them.

Here is a beautiful bit of the Creek – the Billabongs at Woodlands – how sad there aren't more sections like this – well worth a visit.

This picture was taken in March 2004.



Designs on the Creek

Six groups of students doing Masters of Landscape Architecture at RMIT are focusing on the Moonee Ponds Creek for a research-based project. Each group is doing one or more activity or installation on the Creek, which look like fun. One group describes the purpose of their activity as: *"...to bring the members of the community and government together to create a sense of interaction between them at a more personal level and in a friendly environment. This is a great chance to know the thoughts of different people and to co-operate with them to achieve something greater as a whole."*

One event is happening on **Saturday 26 October from 2.00pm at the Melbourne Gateway sites (Reflective Pool / Red sticks / Cheese stick)**. Here, you can paint your imagined perfect creek on the concrete.

If you feel inspired to build something, on **Sunday 3rd November, from 1.00pm, near the Arden Street bridge**, another group will be getting participants to construct and deploy a rubbish trap in the Creek, made out of recyclable materials.

For more information go to: <http://rmitstudio.wix.com/upstream>

Can we send *Ponderings* straight to your inbox?

This may be the last printed *Ponderings*. We have no more money for printing and posting.

If you would like to receive it electronically, please send your email address to ponderings@mpccc.org

We, and the environment, thank you!