



Ponderings

Seasonal newsletter of the
Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek
Autumn 2022 | Issue 74

advocate educate interpret participate rehabilitate revegetate



Exploring the Archives: How the Creek has Changed



Autumn News

Now that COVID-19 is but a distant memory (!) it's time for activities to resume along the creek, with clean-up events, meetings and plantings beginning to resume.

Clean up Australia Day features its normal range of activities along the creek, we have our usual range of council news, more nature shots from Nina, and I finally finish my series on Tributaries!

I've also been doing some works on the archives, and it's amazing to see some of the old pictures and how many fences used to keep us from enjoying our Creek! It's not only the extra vegetation that we can now enjoy, it's also the fact that we are actually allowed to access it at all....

We also feature the latest news about Friends activities and show the best Sightings photos from along the Creek.

David Widdowson, Editor

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

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A New Bridge

Funding for a new bridge has been jointly provided by Moreland City Council and Moonee Valley City Council, with construction to occur as part of the waterway works led by Melbourne Water. There are currently two bridges that cross the Moonee Ponds Creek in the project area. The bridge located between Strathmore North Primary School and Margaret Street in Oak Park will be replaced with a new bridge, as it is the older of the two and only 1.2 metres in width.

The new pedestrian and cyclist bridge will be approximately 26.5 metres in length, 3.0 metres wide and will be located immediately upstream of the existing bridge in order to minimise disruption impacts on the community during construction. The late inclusion of this new bridge has had an impact on the design development, as we extend our design to include the new paths and bridge connections prior to commencing construction.

State Planning Provision

The Minister for Planning is in the process of determining whether the Reimagining Moonee Ponds Creek project can be considered under the Clause 52.30 – State project planning provision in the Moonee Valley and Moreland Planning Schemes.

This planning provision provides a standardised planning process to facilitate the assessment of state projects to support Victoria’s economic recovery from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

This assessment process will include consideration of potential environmental, amenity and construction impacts of the project and a range of requirements must be met before works can commence.

Vegetation Management

To facilitate the works there will be impacts to both native and non-native vegetation. The project team have worked diligently to minimise and reduce the impact on existing vegetation wherever possible. The project will remove 0.32 ha of native vegetation including 34 trees, of which 12 are non-indigenous. Of the 34 trees, 12 of them will be removed from along Brosnan Crescent to allow the construction of a shared path and 15 will be removed at the location of the new pond. Between Brosnan Crescent and the waterway 114 trees will be kept. The project will plant a total of 31,000 native plants within the project area and at another suitable location to offset the vegetation removals of the project.



Updated Timeline

The inclusion of the new bridge and new planning requirements, have delayed the start of the project. We are anticipating construction will start in April 2022 and will take us through to June 2022. In the first phase, we will undertake construction of the shared user path on the Brosnan Crescent side of the creek. We will return in November 2022 to commence the in-channel and the remaining ground and landscaping works. The project is due for completion in mid-2023. Please send any feedback you have on these topics to mooneeponds.creek@melbournewater.com.au Consultation will close 13 March 2022.



CHAIN OF PONDS

Transforming the Moonee Ponds Creek

By Rachel Lopes



- The Re-Commitment Ceremony (10 March) was postponed and planned for either of the key Chain of Ponds Project Sites, the Reimagining Moonee Ponds Creek site or the Essendon / Brunswick West Improvement site. New site and date to be confirmed.
- After much discussion and deliberation, the new Chain of Ponds Prospectus is at the designer and out soon.
- Melbourne Water has 2 Artificial Intelligence pilot projects underway for litter on the Moonee Ponds Creek. One to assess when traps are full and need to be emptied, the other to identify the different types of litter flowing down the river.
- Upcoming meetings with Wurundjeri Woi wurrung to discuss their involvement in Chain of Ponds Collaboration and DELWP to discuss Planning Controls as part of Waterways of the West Action Plan.
- Bunjil and Bandicoots Project – tin is being collected at the end of March and cut in preparation for laying in April/May. Wurundjeri's Narrap Team and Penola Grammar interested in being involved.
- Litter Working Group update: Melbourne Water/RMIT/AQUEST's Litter Research Partnership is working to answer questions: *What's the condition rating for litter in Melbourne Water's catchments? and how can Melbourne Water prioritize management actions around litter?* It includes quarterly measurement of litter at five sites along the Moonee Ponds Creek, as shown on the map below:

1. Trinity Blvd

2. Clarke Dr

3. Talbot Rd

4. Flemington Rd

5. Arden St

Clean Up



Sunday March 6th, 2022



Boeing Reserve, March 6th, 9am

Now in its 8th year, come and join us to clean up Moonee Ponds creek at Boeing reserve, Strathmore Heights.

Meeting Point: Pagoda, at end of car park, between the community garden and the creek.

Melissa Street, March 6th, 10am

Help clean the Creek - meet at the Lebanon Reserve Playground, Melissa St, Strathmore.

Westbreen Creek, March 6th, 11am

Meet at Cole Reserve Playground and BBQ tables on Cumberland Road, opposite Warwick Road, Pascoe Vale. And after, grab a free coffee from St Derby café. BYO friends, family & gloves! Event link: <https://www.cleanupaustraliaday.org.au/fundraisers/rachelantonik/cole-reserve-playground>

Cross Keys, March 6th, 10am

Event by [Moonee Valley Sustainability](#)

We'll get active, meet some new people and help keep our neighbourhood beautiful.

WEAR - gloves, boots, pants & hat

BRING - bags, tongs, water & sunscreen

MEET - Totem Pole near corner of Cameron Rd and Bridge St, Essendon.

Some equipment will be provided.



Shiels Reserve, Brunswick West

Thursday 21 April, 10am-12noon

Come join MCMC and the Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek as we safely remove litter from creek banks and surrounding areas. Help us collect important citizen science litter data in order to reduce the amount of litter entering the creek. This event is suitable for the whole family!

Equipment supplied, but please wear long pants, sturdy covered shoes and BYO drink bottle and gloves - if you have them. We will supply everything else you need.

Limited parking on Duggan Street. Easy to cycle along the Moonee Ponds Creek trail or take the bus from Albion Street. Or Tram from Melville Road.

Bookings essential at www.mcmc.org.au

Organised by Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek, funded by Moreland City Council, and supported by the Merri Creek Management Committee.





City Nature Challenge 2022

As you spend time along the Moonee Ponds Creek, or even in your garden, there are plenty of opportunities to take photos of wild animals, plants, and fungi. People are encouraged to take part in the City Nature Challenge, 29 April to 2 May, 2022. Upload your observations to the iNaturalist platform for identification (3 to 8 May), using the phone app or the webpage.

This 4-day biodiversity blitz is a global effort, with 419 cities from 44 countries involved last year. As a friendly competition, cities aim to record as many species possible, and make the most observations by the biggest number of observers. [Hume City](#) is part of the [Greater Melbourne](#) umbrella project with numerous other local government areas.

Your observations will also be automatically added to [Moonee Ponds Creek Wildlife](#) project set-up by Anna Lanigan, which is an important, ongoing record of the species found across the catchment.

An online session about City Nature Challenge and using iNaturalist will be held on Wednesday 20 April, 7.30pm to 8.30pm. Check Council's Events Calendar for the community survey activities, to boost the numbers and kinds of species found.

Link to Eventbrite information session 20 April:

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/city-nature-challenge-2022-tickets-254217721047>

Links to iNaturalist projects:

[City Nature Challenge 2022: Hume City Council · iNaturalist](#)

[City Nature Challenge 2022: Greater Melbourne · iNaturalist](#)

[Moonee Ponds Creek Wildlife · iNaturalist](#)



Wright St Development by Kaye Oddie

As previously reported, MAB Corporation applied in 2021 to rezone and develop an industrial and residential estate on 26 hectares of what is now semi-rural land in Westmeadows. This is not just ordinary rural land, but a buffer site between the residential neighbourhood of Westmeadows and the toxic Tullamarine Landfill site. Importantly, the development site abuts the Moonee Ponds Creek along its northern boundary. And this is no ordinary section of the Creek, but an unaltered, natural section with a chain of ponds, embankments, old River Red Gums, boulders, grasslands and high biodiversity, habitat and landscape values, probably one of the most beautiful sections of the Moonee Ponds Creek. It links upstream with Woodlands Historic Park and downstream with The Tarnuk wetlands. Hume's planning scheme confirms the Creek as a site of 'particular Natural Heritage'.

A high number of submissions were made that did not support the proposed rezoning and amendment — a limited number did. Before deciding the next step for the amendment, Hume Council set up a special session so councillors could directly hear submitters' objections. This was held on February 16. Presenters covered many issues: loss of the buffer zone between existing residential area and the Tullamarine Landfill site; substandard contamination assessments and health risks; traffic and misinterpretation of traffic data; over-development with small lot sizes, no planning controls on number of units on a lot, a DDO (Design and Development Overlay) that would lock out Council and residents from development decisions; provision of insufficient open space buffer zone to the Creek that the FoMPC and other presenters said would 'imperil' 'sacrifice' and 'destroy' the significant natural features of the Creek, including its flora and fauna and biodiversity; and the underlying and spreading toxic contamination of groundwater and land. The final presenter was the proponent from MAB who stated that they were taking submitters' concerns into account in discussions with Council officers and that their development would "create a fantastic design entrance to the City".

Council will now consider whether to:

- (i) made changes to the amendment as requested by submitters.
- (ii) refer the amendment to an independent panel (Planning Panels Victoria).
- (iii) abandon the amendment.



Flemington Hub Art Project by Anna

Artist Rosa Mar Tel Ortega has been commissioned by the Moonee Valley City Council to produce a series of visual pieces that will be transformed into perforated screens to form part of the architecture of the new Flemington Community Hub beside the Moonee Ponds Creek.

Friends Groups including the FoMPC were invited to participate in Rosa’s investigations into what connects the Community to the area. Images of wildlife were given to Rosa and I hope we will see one panel celebrating the birds that frequent the creek’s lower reaches.

Nursery Corner Update by Julia Gigliotti, Senior Landscape Architect (City Design)

The project team are currently underway with a variety of different tasks for this site, including:

- engaging a tree specialist to commence with delicate tree pruning and tree management works
- engaging a company to do a comprehensive fauna study
- working with Jemena to abolish the power connection.

From there, they will work towards removing the buildings, clearing up the site and removing the perimeter fencing.

Dates for the clean-up are yet to be confirmed, pending the completion of those first steps noted above.

Our team are always available through the Park Improvements, if anyone needs any further information: ParkImprovements@mvcc.vic.gov.au



Risk of Losing Parkland by Nina

Since the education department has expanded Strathmore North Primary School onto the current staff carpark, the Moonee Ponds Creek is at risk of losing parkland space for a proposed hammerhead turn outside the school entrance on Brosnan Crescent. The parkland space required for the hammerhead turn is approximately three to four car spaces from what we understand.

As the staff carpark is no longer available for trucks and cars to turn their vehicle, Moonee Valley City Council are proposing to build the hammerhead turn on creek parkland regardless of residents being advised by Council, the education department and school that the discontinuance and sale of Brosnan Crescent (only within the school boundary) to the education department, would not affect Moonee Ponds Creek parkland. Here we are again advocating to protect our parkland!



Bunjils Marroun Healing Ceremony by Anna

Woodlands Park, Essendon was a lovely setting for the Bunjils Marroun Healing Ceremony on January 26th. The event was well attended by Moonee Valley Councillors and the wider community. A compelling Acknowledgment of History was given by Wurundjeri Elder Aunty Di Kerr and it was a treat to see the participation of younger generations in poetry and dance. Afterwards, a performance by the Nhanbu Togip Dance Company was joined by the crowd. Finally a wonderful Reflection by Uncle Jack Charles was filled with wise words and gentle humour as he reminded the crowd to keep a look out for his next book!

By Lori Arthur



John Street Land Purchase

An exciting announcement in January as Council revealed it has purchased land at 2A John Street in Oak Park to protect important open space along the Moonee Ponds Creek. Parts of the creek’s informal walking track and native vegetation that are within the land’s boundaries will now be protected as public land. We’re currently investigating opportunities to determine the future use of the land and will be back to talk to community about these soon.



Gavin Park Wetland

The wetland at Gavin Park on the Westbreen Creek is really taking shape. Civil works should be completed within the next month, with revegetation works to take place in the cooler months.



Gavin Park Gravel Path

Also in Gavin Park, a 230 metre section of gravel walking path was constructed alongside the Westbreen Creek in December as part of the continued implementation of the Westbreen Creek Conservation and Development Plan.

This section completes a 1.2 kilometre walking loop around the open channel sections of the creek and helps keep recreational walking areas separate to the shared/ commuter path which was raised by community as a concern during the consultation phase of the Plan.



Vanberg Road Footbridge

The new bridge at Brunswick West/ Essendon was installed in January with connecting path works currently underway. It’s progressing slower than anticipated due to the big demands on construction contractors, but it is anticipated to be open in April. As well as providing a great pedestrian/cycling link, the bridge provides a new viewing aspect along the creek. Photo by Zoe.

Nature Play

Our Early Years and Natural Resource Management teams are working together on some exciting new programs aimed at getting kids outdoors and into nature. Keep an eye out on Council’s socials for more information on activities as part of Nature Play Week in April.



Re-landscaping of the western embankment, downstream of Arden Street

Kaye provided an update on this urban renewal project that abuts the Moonee Ponds Creek in North Melbourne. The Victorian Planning Authority and City of Melbourne’s plan is for mid-rise commercial, retail, residential and institutional development around the new Arden Metro Station. A Standing Advisory Committee (SAC) is currently holding hearings and round table discussions on the Structure Plan and Amendment.

The FoMPC made a presentation to the SAC about its concerns: that the proposed built form controls will result in increased development density, impacting on the quantity, quality and functionality of the proposed open space in Arden. Open space is proposed to be part of integrated water management (IWM) - necessary to address flood and drainage issues because Arden is on a flood plain. Open space also encompasses the Creek corridor and the FoMPC also submitted concerns about proposed measures that could detrimentally impact on the existing planted Kensington embankment. The SAC is expected to finalise its report later this year.



Locals left in the dark over path closure

by Spencer Fowler Steen, Docklands News, Feb 2022

Local residents and community groups are demanding answers about the long-standing closure of the shared path along the Moonee Ponds Creek in Docklands, despite previous confirmation from the Victorian Government that it would remain accessible to the public. Where once locals could stroll along the Moonee Ponds Creek trail from Ron Barassi Snr Park to Footscray Rd, people now have to divert along Pearl River Rd – a bitumen footpath alongside heavy traffic.

Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek’s (FoMPC) former secretary Kaye Oddie said the group was “angered” by Development Victoria’s (DV) decision to permanently close the shared path for the construction of a new sound stage at the Docklands Film Studio site. “And not only to close off the path, but to excise the land the path was on, giving it to the sound stage development for car parking – ensuring that a path could not be reinstated,” she said.

Local resident John Langton-Bunker said one of the “delights” he had when he moved to Docklands was the Moonee Ponds Creek trail from Ron Barassi Snr park to Footscray Rd. “The sound studio works are complete, but we are not allowed to use the trail anymore,” he said. “Walking along Pearl River Rd is not a park but a bitumen footpath and is dangerous. Is the trail to be opened again or is the studio allowed to build whatever it likes next to the creek?”





By Julia Cirillo

MCMC Waterwatch has some exciting free events coming up for local residents. We are busily trying to recruit new members into the existing Waterwatch groups, as some groups have lower numbers due to repeated lockdowns. Thank you to the Cities of Darebin, Moreland and Yarra, and Melbourne Water for funding these events.

Waterwatch Waterbug Community Sampling

Saturday 27 March, 10am-1pm

Meeting point: De Chene Reserve, Coburg

Join the Merri Creek Management Committee Waterwatch Coordinators on the Merri Creek in Coburg to collect data on waterbug diversity for City of Moreland project priorities. The session will cover sampling and collecting of live aquatic macroinvertebrates, and identifying live macroinvertebrates to family level in order to determine the water quality of the Merri creek. The data will also be loaded onto the Citizen Science National Waterbug Blitz app and website. Lunch is provided. Some previous experience with macroinvertebrate identification is ideal. Bookings essential to www.mcmc.org.au.

This event is proudly funded by the City of Moreland.



Launch of the Galada Tamboore Project

(no bookings required)

Saturday 5 March, 10am - 12 noon

Meet near Merri Creek footbridge ([Google map](#))

Park in Merri Concourse, Campbellfield and walk east to Merri Creek, or park in Whittlesea Gardens Lalor and walk across the bridge over the freeway. Learn about the cultural heritage and ecology of the spectacular [Galada Tamboore](#) and find out what makes this area so special. Includes a Smoking Ceremony and an introduction to this wonderful site.

Please note that participants over 12 years old must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19. Please bring evidence of vaccination with you. This project is supported by the Victorian Government through the Volunteering Innovation Fund.

WATERWATCH TRAINING

MERRI CREEK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

field work session

Thursday 17 March
10.00 am - 2.00pm

Bookings Essential

Meeting Point
Gleeson Centre,
Darebin Parklands

Proudly funded by the Cities of Darebin, Moreland & Yarra.

Waterwatch Training

Thursday 17 March, 10am-2pm

Gleeson Centre, Darebin Parklands

Do you love taking a stroll down your local waterway? Why not give back to our creeks and help monitor the health of our waterways? Merri Creek Management Committee (MCMC) are hosting a FREE training session for new Waterwatch volunteers. By becoming a citizen science Waterwatch volunteer, you'll learn how to collect water samples and test water quality, learn about the current ecological health of the Merri Creek and carry out habitat assessments safely. Long-term data from this program assists with monitoring waterway health. Lunch will be provided. Let us know your dietary requirements.

Please note: you must complete the online theory session before attending this event:

<https://www.mcmc.org.au/mcmc-waterwatch-training-17-june-2021>

This event has a COVID Safe Plan, and you must be fully vaccinated to attend. Bookings essential at: <https://www.mcmc.org.au/29-front-page/front-page-blurb/1101-waterwatch-training-learn-about-waterway-health-2022>

CERES Waterwatch Training

Saturday 19 March, 10am-3pm

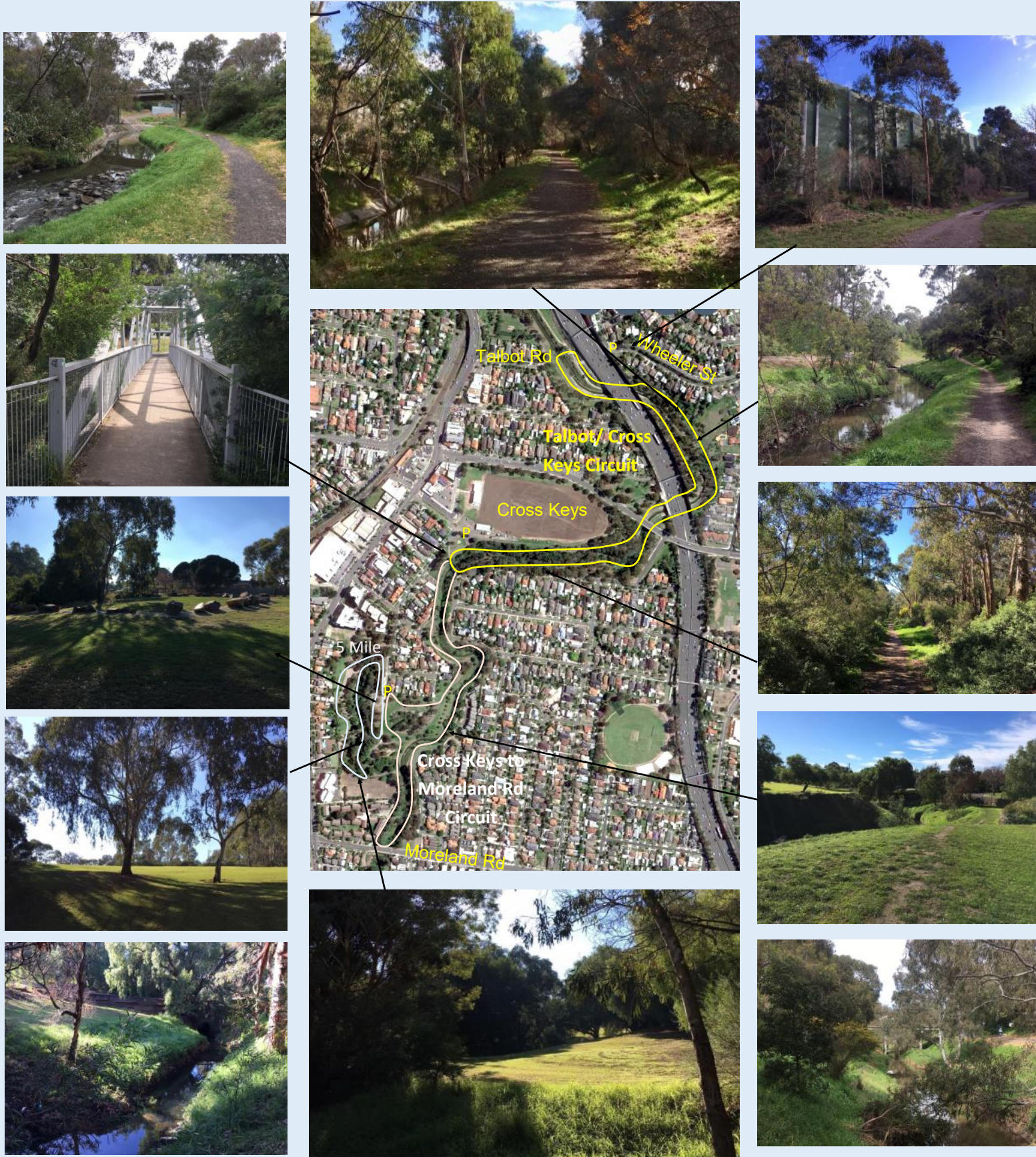
Van Raay Centre Room 4, CERES Environmental Park, Brunswick East

Bookings essential at: <https://www.mcmc.org.au/29-front-page/front-page-blurb/1104-waterwatch-workshop-2022>

Between the Bridges — Circuit Walking the MPC

Part 3—Five Mile Creek to Cross Keys or Talbot Road, 1.5/ 3km

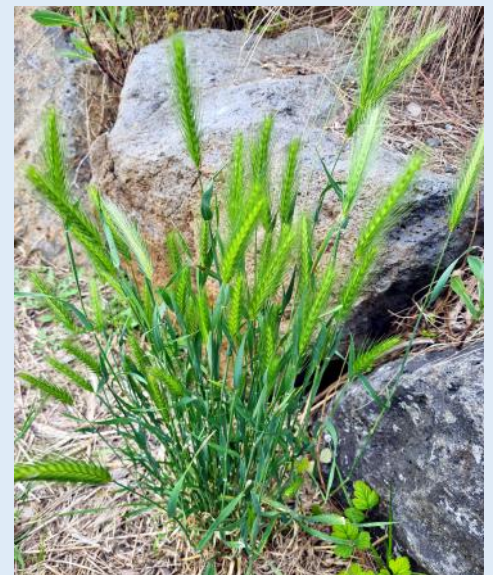
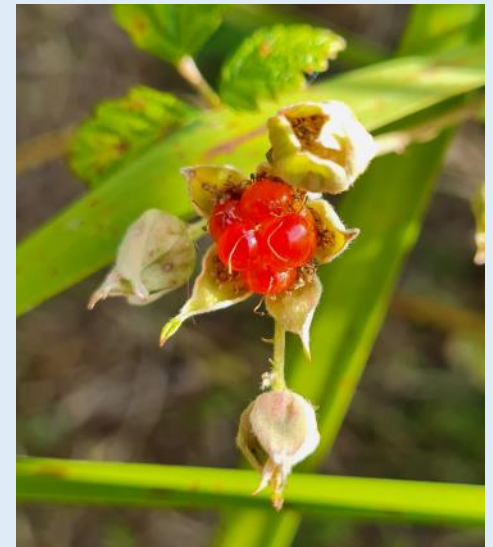
This region of the creek features three beautiful areas: Five Mile Creek Reserve, The Boulevard and Mitchell Parade. Highlights here include the rock circle and vegetation at Five Mile, plus the east side track between Cross Keys and Talbot Road. Alternative shorter walks can use the Cross Keys Reserve bridge instead, or just the Five Mile Creek circuit. P - Parking. <https://walkingmaps.com.au/walk/5192>





Summer Blooms

Images by Nina



Down the Drain - Lost Tributaries of the MPC

Part 14 — Final Summary — by David Widdowson

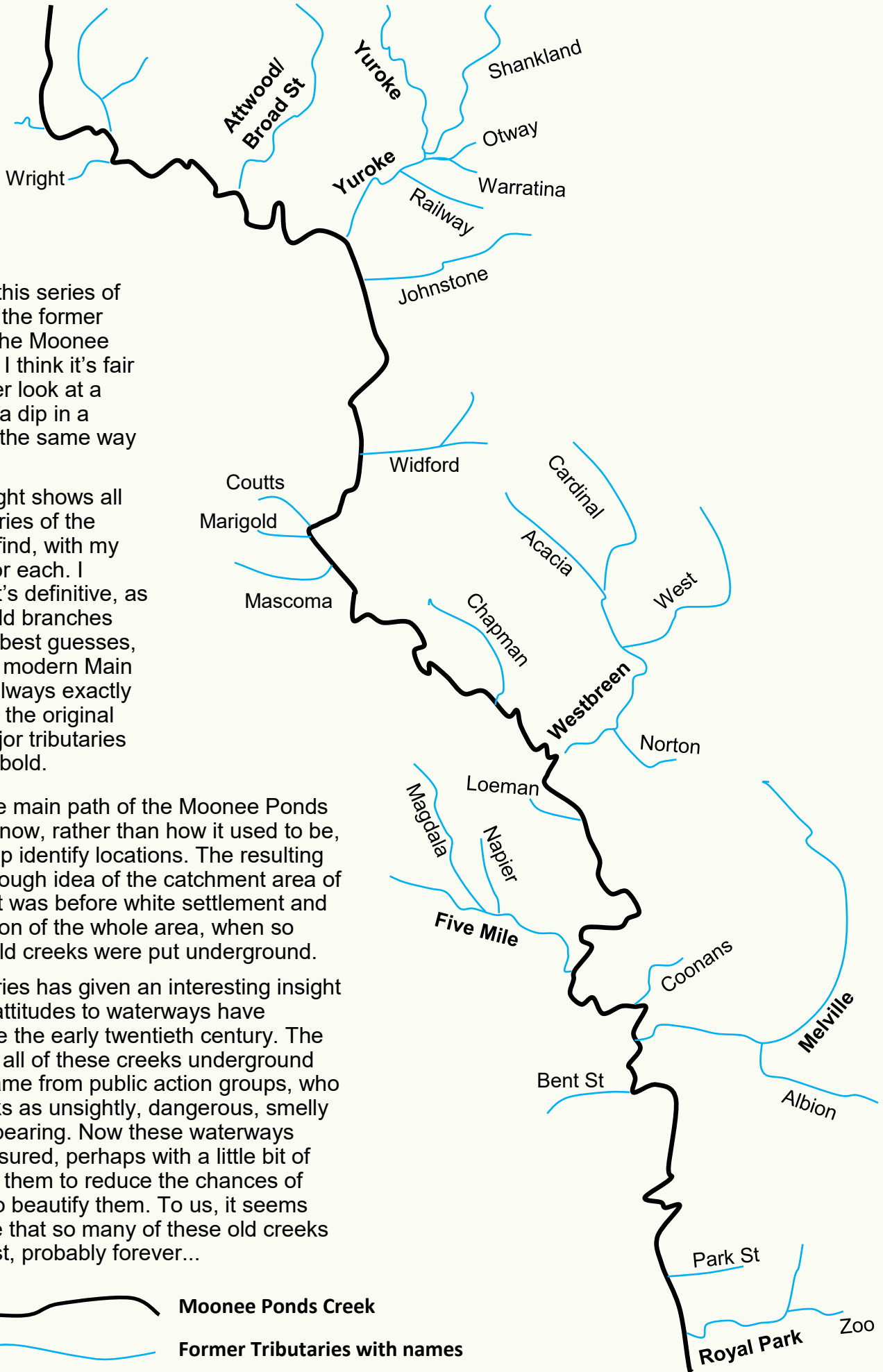
Conclusion

At the end of this series of articles about the former tributaries of the Moonee Ponds Creek, I think it's fair to say I'll never look at a linear park or a dip in a major road in the same way again!

The map at right shows all the old tributaries of the creek I could find, with my given name for each. I wouldn't say it's definitive, as some of the old branches are based on best guesses, given that the modern Main Drains don't always exactly correspond to the original branches. Major tributaries are named in bold.

I've shown the main path of the Moonee Ponds Creek as it is now, rather than how it used to be, in order to help identify locations. The resulting map gives a rough idea of the catchment area of the creek as it was before white settlement and the urbanisation of the whole area, when so many of the old creeks were put underground.

The entire series has given an interesting insight into how our attitudes to waterways have changed since the early twentieth century. The push to place all of these creeks underground sometimes came from public action groups, who saw the creeks as unsightly, dangerous, smelly and disease-bearing. Now these waterways would be treasured, perhaps with a little bit of work done on them to reduce the chances of erosion and to beautify them. To us, it seems such a shame that so many of these old creeks have been lost, probably forever...



Moonee Ponds Creek
Former Tributaries with names



Rainbow Lorikeet by Maurice



New Holland Honeyeater by Maurice



Ducks by Maurice



Laughing Kookaburra by Anna



Crested Pigeons by Maurice



Corella by Maurice

Sightings



Damselfly by Maurice



Scaly-breasted Lorikeet by Maurice



Rainbow Lorikeets by Maurice



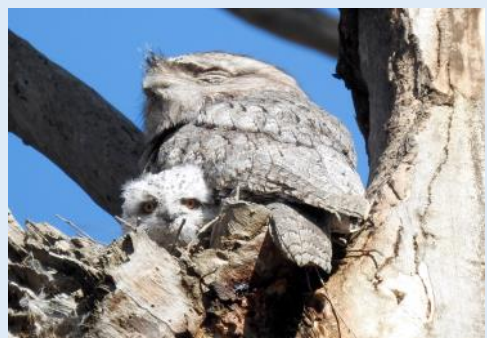
Bee by Maurice



European Carp by Maurice



Hare by Dennis



Tawny Frogmouths by Anna



Tawny Frogmouth by Maurice



Nankeen Night Heron by Anna

MPC History — Images from the Archives



Hopetoun Avenue



Talbot Road Bridge



Hopetoun Avenue



Hopetoun Avenue

These photos from the FoMPC Archives give an insight into how much vegetation has been added along the creek in the last 30 years or so and how many fences have been removed!



Gaffney St Bridge



Moreland Road Bridge



Pascoe Vale Road Exit/ Bell Street



Boeing Reserve



Boeing Reserve



Boeing Reserve



Cross Keys Reserve



Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek Inc

PO Box 54, ESSENDON 3040

www.mooneepondscreek.org.au

friends@mooneepondscreek.org.au

friendsofmooneepondscreek@gmail.com

FoMPC News by Carolyn Layton, Minutes Secretary

Archives Update

David reported that so far 220 sets of the Minutes of Meetings of the FoMPC had been commercially scanned. They can be found as readable PDF files on the FoMPC website under 'Documents'. He noted that Minutes for 2000-2007 had 'patchy coverage.'

He reported he had gone through all correspondence and reports (mainly 1989- 2006) and sorted and filed them into ring binders. He noted there was a series of reports on the Creek, concept plans, action plans, etc which could also be scanned. Kaye suggested that the technical reports that were part of the 1992 Concept Plan were worth being scanned. John requested that Kaye contact him regarding these and any Minutes she had from her time as Secretary.

David reported that he had scanned slides, large photos, historic photos and 200 small prints. There are 1000 more small prints that could be scanned for about 30c each. The photos were categorised by region. The location for some images, particularly around Westmeadows and the lower reaches of the Creek, remain unidentified. David suggested that the photos could be uploaded to Flickr by area, but this would cost \$72 per year for a subscription. They are currently stored on a hard drive, arranged by region. Kaye also suggested checking through the boxes containing MPCCC and FoMPC documents stored at the Living Museum of the West.

iNaturalist Update

Anna reported that the Moonee Ponds Creek Catchment Map was up and running and had 9600 observations already. To access, open the 'iNaturalist App' and choose 'Projects' from the drop-down menu (top LHS) then search "Moonee Ponds Creek Wildlife." At the time of writing there were 10,992 observations recorded, including 1740 species.

Anna spoke about 'research grade' observations which required a photo plus confirmation of an identification from others. Anna highlighted the insect collection of which 33% were not at research grade. She encouraged anyone with expertise with insects to confirm identification so that the observation go to 'research grade.'

Memberships

Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek memberships align with the financial year, so reminders will be provided in the future. We have had several new members — which we welcome — however we have had a payment made to our bank for a membership but received no contact details.

If the people below are reading this, or any readers know them, please ask them to complete a new membership form available on our website at the Join Us tab: <http://www.mooneepondscreek.org.au/join-us/> then click the Submit button. The payment was made by SJ Mcquire for Wendy Orams.

Farewell to Bob Steadman

John acknowledged Bob's great involvement with the Creek over many years. He reported that Bob was unwell and wanted to end his involvement with the FoMPC. Kelvin spoke about Bob as a regular attendee at Creek events. He said Bob was a practical hands-on person who, for example, would regularly take it upon himself to water plantings along the creek and to pick up litter. Kelvin said he has been a great asset to the Creek and the association. John acknowledged that Bob's generous donation had been received and expressed his best wishes.



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, 11th April 6.30pm	FoMPC meeting, details to follow	mooneepondscreek.org.au

Contributions to Ponderings are welcome!

Please send your images and stories to fompc.ponderings@gmail.com