



# Friends News Friends News



AUTUMN 2010

Hello, if you are new to us and wondering what we have been doing for the last 24 years! You can go to our website [www.fmvonline.com](http://www.fmvonline.com) and read back editions of our newsletters.

### Community Mornings for the Friends of the Maribyrnong Valley.

Every one is welcome to join us for a cuppa and see the changes our Melbourne Water grants funding have made to the environment along the Maribyrnong River.

Remember to wear appropriate clothing and sturdy footwear as we are not always on hard pathways. Bring along your gloves just in case you would like to help in some way and also a bottle of drinking water.

#### *WE PROVIDE THE HOT DRINKS AND LIGHT REFRESHMENTS*

Wed June 9 <sup>th</sup>	10 am – noon	Tea Gardens Car park	Mel. 27 G6
Wed June 23 <sup>rd</sup>	10 am – noon	Tea Gardens Car park	Mel. 27 G6
Wed July 14 <sup>th</sup>	10 am – noon	Tea Gardens Car park	Mel. 27 G6
Wed July 21 <sup>st</sup>	10 am – noon	Tea Gardens Car park	Mel. 27 G6
Saturday June 19 <sup>th</sup>	10am – noon	Tea Gardens Car park	Mel. 27 G6
Friday June 11 <sup>th</sup>		St. Columba's Girls College	Essendon
Friday June 25		St. Columba's Girls College	Essendon

### Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> August is National Tree Day.

To find community days for **Parks Vic, Brimbank, Maribyrnong and Moonee Valley** Councils please refer to their websites. Remember at this time of the year everyone needs all the help they can get.

### DATES NOT TO FORGET

**AGM Meeting:** Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> August 2010. Members please return attached forms before July. If anyone else needs nomination or membership forms just let us know.

**Xmas Party:** Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2010 starting 6.30 PM at Brimbank Park

**OUR 25TH BIRTHDAY PARTY April 2011.**

**Footscray Park** 100 years old November 2011



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### Presidents Report

We formed a Sub-Committee that studied the Vic Urban Shared Vision Proposal, and from our information John has submitted a detailed report to Vic Urban for the E.F.M. site, covering the five themes they requested feedback on. We also submitted strategies for redevelopment of site to include historical and heritage listed assets.

**PLEASE REMEMBER our AGM is in August** and you must return your membership and nomination forms prior to this meeting.

A reminder re **our 25<sup>th</sup> Celebration April 2011**: for a hotel by the river or in the village, or any other suggestions to be presented by July meeting. Please advise past members of this important date and we hope to have members from the original meeting in attendance on the important occasion.

I hope to see everyone at the **Dec 1<sup>st</sup> 2010** end of year affair at Brimbank Park.

Peter Somerville

### Clean-Up Australia Day Report 2010

Despite a horrendous afternoon the day before, clean-up day was surprisingly mild with the rain largely holding off until after we had packed up.

We had about 16 people turn up which was down on previous years, but quite good considering the forecast. A number of these were from a cub group and they managed to clean all the way from the Tavern to Afton St. Bridge.

The river was relatively high so there was little chance to go down the banks to collect rubbish. A lot of stuff was floating by and it was frustrating not being able to reach it. In spite of not having access to our main rubbish areas we managed to fill 5 and a half wheelie bins which was quite a good effort was considering.

Maelor Himbury

### Lily Street Escarpment Stage 2. Melbourne Water Community Grant

We wish to say thank you to Melbourne Water for their on-going support and providing funds for **STAGE 2** of the Lily St. Escarpment.

We will be working this year with Meagan Jericho as our river officer and Parks Victoria; Brimbank Park will be our partners in crime again.

Sections of Lily St. Escarpment have been brush cut and sprayed out in preparation for the planting season.

Good natural regeneration of Phragmites Australis (Common Reed) along Steeles Creek has occurred. Selective weed control will be undertaken over the coming months throughout this area to encourage further regeneration.

### Steele Creek to Canning St. Tea Gardens Riparian Woodland Stage 3 Melbourne Water Community Grant

Melbourne Water has also provided funding for **STAGE 3** on this project. Everyone that has not been for a walk around this area over the past 6 months we are inviting you down to our community days to have a look for yourselves and to say thank you to the many hard workers who make this grant into the wonderful area it is fast becoming.

The woody weed, serrated tussock, galleria, Chilean needle grass and artichoke programs have commenced with good results so far.

Planting preparation for 2010 is completed and ready to start planting.

## **RABBITS AND THE RIVER VALLEY**



### **MARIBYRNONG RABBITS LOVE BLUE CARROTS!**

One of the most talked about features of Maribyrnong Valley Parklands is our rather healthy population of Rabbits. Good news, baiting season has just passed and we are happy to report rabbit numbers are lower overall! 35km of baiting trail covered Brimbank Park, Horseshoe Bend Farm and parts of the Lower Maribyrnong River Trail. We had to be selective of the areas baited as we have spotted Wallabies on many occasions and our park is pillar with many visitors over the late summer period. You might have seen the signs posted for baiting warnings and we had a good feedback from visitors keeping their dogs on leads during this time. We use Pindone poison within the carrots as there is an antidote and this is safe to be used in public spaces. These poison carrots are also bright blue green in colour, so can be easily noticed! In saying that, most of the carrots were eaten overnight! In certain areas of the park, rabbit numbers are so low, single figure of sightings were recorded during our late night spotlight surveys!

Mark Gutterson, Team leader for Natural Values Management here at Brimbank is impressed with the positive results. But, the Rabbits have been here a long time and we have made long term plans to control the population. Over winter you will see large warrens are located being ripped and permanently removed within the Maribyrnong Valley area. More follow up works will be completed to tackle the rabbit problem in accordance to our integrated pest animal management strategy. If you have any queries, please don't hesitate to call the office and have a chat to Mark.

Staff, Brimbank Park, Parks Victoria.

### **BRIMBANK RABBITS**

Brimbank City council has undertaken an extensive rabbit control program in the 2009/10 season involving baiting across council reserves from Keilor North to Sunshine West. The control program was coordinated across other agencies, such as Parks Vic, Vic Roads and Melbourne Water and also with private landowners to achieve the maximum coverage. Initial post control rabbit counts indicate that the bunnies are fighting back, with highly mobile rabbits re-infesting controlled areas. Follow up work will involve fumigation and warren destruction and exclusion fencing where we have high quality remnant vegetation that we want to protect. Next season we hope to secure funding from "Visions for the Werribee Plains" which would give us the resources to do much more to control rabbit numbers across the Middle Maribyrnong Catchment.

In addition to this Brimbank City Council and the Hume City Council ran a rabbit control field day in January 2010 that sought to bring together landowners across the 2 municipalities and help to spread the word that we need to coordinate our efforts to achieve low rabbit numbers across the catchment. Our aim is to get rabbit numbers down to a level that will allow natural regeneration to take place and Revegetation efforts to be successful. To achieve this goal we need everyone on board.

## **Hello from the team at Maribyrnong Valley Parklands!**

Well, it's been a while since we last had an article in FMV newsletter, but we're happy to tell you we have been really busy! Firstly, we have some news faces here at the Brimbank park office. Tim Thomson joins us from DSE Bacchus Marsh until February 2011 as a Ranger. Tim has 4 years experience in fire management and a strong volunteer wildlife rescue background. Ian Harris joins us from Eastern Melbourne as a ranger. He has extensive experience in Visitor Services and Park Operations along with fire management. We welcome James Morton joining the team in May as the Visitor Services Team Leader. James has many successful years experience as a Ranger at Yarra Bend Park and lives locally within the Maribyrnong Valley area. We look forward to his leadership and knowledge in Visitor Services management. Last, but not least – Ray Bloore is back! Ray enjoyed his time on the water at Williamstown but of course, he knows that the Maribyrnong Valley is the place to be! As a team, we are looking forward to a productive year ahead and hope to meet you all soon!

In other news, the rabbit baiting program had finished with good solid results in certain areas and producing an overall reduction in the population. School cross country season is upon us and it is great to see loads of students running around the park! We are gearing up to the winter planting season and look forward to all hands on deck, working with the FMV to get many plants in the ground. I hope to see you all there! Greenvale Reservoir Park is set for an upgrade of visitor facilities. Serrated Tussock and Chilean Needle grass have been selectively targeted and sprayed as a priority for weed control. The Lower Maribyrnong River Trail is still closed from Brimbank Park to Canning Street entrance due to large sections of wash out and safety issues concerning trail stabilization/erosion. Parks Victoria is working to repel the trail as soon as possible and we ask you to please find an alternative route during this time. We will let you know as soon as we can when the trail will be reopen.

Lisa Freeman, Ranger, Brimbank Park, Parks Victoria

## **“TALL TALES, AND TRUE FROM MEMBERS”**

### **“JEDDA STUBBY”**

This fictitious person was made mention of in our summer newsletter, and below is the story. Whilst working “the girls” throw a stubby bottle up on the bank encrusted with barnacles. I felt sorry for the poor thing so I put a string around its neck and gently placed it back in the river. Some times while checking it, it seemed to have a power, was it magical. I was beginning to think it was a bit special.

Did it hold a “Jeanie” like the magical T.V. Show?” No” of course, it held a “Spirit” of magical waters! I asked this “Spirit” what it all means. You must listen carefully then you will know that it said, “Hark I hear a Ring tail Possum” **This is the Magic of “Our Maribyrnong River”**

Then one day it came to pass the “Spirit” said in beautiful Australian strine “g’day mate can I elp ya!” We hesitated; we do need a bit of help. Yes, we have a lady with an insatiable need for money; suddenly I had a never ending cheque written on paper bark. We need “um” I was given a whip made of Melalucia for another uncontrollable woman, and oh we have this family of boat people that have many hats, I was given a boat in the form of a hat. I must say this left me most enthusiastic.

Your Resident Looney      Ian Wheeler

Maribyrnong is derived from MIRRORGNAY-BIRNONG

### **MY LIFE LONG AFFAIR**

I have had a love affair with the Maribyrnong River for almost 80 years. I have vivid memories of being at the Tea Gardens with my parents Nell and Ernie Wheeler. My father, a singer of some notoriety, performed there with a touring quartet. I remember the peacocks strutting on the lawns. There were birds unfortunately in cages. All of this in the late 20's and early 30's, and even later than that, I used to swim in the river very often, going to the sand pits (now part of the conservation park) for scout campfires and day excursions. But never going to “The Cave” that was “Boys business” I have lived to tell the tale, but I worry about the next generations, what will they have to remember?

Mrs. Enid Pretty    Member