

Friends of the Maribyrnong Valley Incorporated

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Edition 31

Our year is drawing to an end and this gives us a chance to say thank you to everyone for all their support and a large cheer for our band of volunteers who do all the on ground work for 10 months every year.

We have had new volunteers join us this year on a regular basis and I thank them for joining our fun group and working along with us.

This year volunteering has provided many challenges we have had to overcome, and what does not break you makes you stronger has applied to our group this year.

Our projects have been varied this year:

Brimbank Council:

We worked at Caroline Chisholm Reserve in Keilor, and had Keilor Primary School students as our partner. We joined 100+ volunteers at Sydenham Park, Keilor for National Tree Day

Maribyrnong Council had 3 sites:

Pipemakers Park in Maribyrnong, Braybrook Escarpment at Sedge Close and the Maidstone Riparian Planting. We worked with the Maribyrnong Green Army team on all of these sites.

Moonee Valley Council:

We worked at the Education Garden site and the Tea Gardens Reserve Site

Melbourne Water:

Sites this year were the Maribyrnong Floodplain in Avondale Heights (you can see as you walk or cycle along the river edge) and our Lily Street site. We worked with NAB volunteers and the Brimbank Parks Victoria Green Army team on these sites.

Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment Management Authority (PPWCMA)

This site is near the Warwick Court entrance and was supported by NAB volunteers, and the Brimbank Parks Victoria Green Army team.

New sites for next year and the maintenance on all of our current projects will provide another full commitment from all our volunteers.

Looking forward to meeting up with you all again next year

Judy Ingram President.

From everyone at Friends of the Maribyrnong Valley Inc.

We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy 2017 New Year.

OUR YEAR IN PICTURES

Keilor Primary School having fun in the sun



National Tree Day at Sydenham



Melbourne Water Lily Street Site



PPWCMA Site



Melbourne Water Maidstone Riparian Planting Site



Braybrook Escarpment Million Trees Site



Sponsors and Supporters for 2016.

Our volunteer work continues with support from a variety of people and businesses. Please support these stores and businesses if you have the opportunity as a way of thanking them for their help during the year.

Anglers Tavern Maribyrnong: Have provided a voucher for our fundraising event

Boathouse Restaurant Moonee Ponds: for providing a voucher for our fundraising event

Brownstone Café Brimbank Park Keilor: for providing a voucher for our fundraising event

Bunnings Warehouse Maribyrnong: for their contribution to our fundraising event

Coles Supermarket, Avondale Heights: for providing a donation towards our end of year fundraiser

Dan Murphy's Watergardens: have supported us again this year in our fundraising.

Ecodynamics, Keilor: Provided a native plant for all attending our party and storage space for all of our "JUNK"

NAB Volunteers: Their continued contribution and support providing volunteers 4 times a year has assisted FMV in achieving our goals for a greener Maribyrnong Valley Parklands. They always turn up from all over Melbourne **rain, hail, or shine**

Maribyrnong River Cruises, Footscray: Peter's endless enthusiasm for the Maribyrnong River and surroundings suburbs is invaluable. Their public cruises bring the Maribyrnong River and Parklands to a wider audience. We say thank you to Warwick's for his contributions to the Website and Facebook page and assisting with technical problems, and printing for the group.

Officeworks Watergardens: we thank them for their support throughout the year and for their contribution to our fundraising event.

Parks Victoria: for the technical support required to work on their land and their contribution to our end of year fundraiser.

Supreme Hand Carwash: a new sponsor this year in Avondale Heights and we thank them for their support

Western Plains Flora, Wildwood: for providing all of our plants on time for varied and many projects.

Basaltica: Simon Purves for all of his on ground works that makes our work and life easier.

LeadWest: for including us in the "Greening of the West / 1 Million Trees" Program and their continued support of our group.

"The Connies": for supporting the environment and our school and community events all year.

VolunteerWest: for the support and advice they provide to us throughout the year.

We wish to thank all Government agencies and councils for their on-going support in the form of grants for our on ground works, as well as supporting our practical and technical requirements. They also support our community awareness programs and our working with school children programs

A Locals View of our Maribyrnong Valley Parklands

Reprinted with permission by Wild Melbourne 14/11/2016

This is a guest post by Sarah Thomson that appeared on their site.

The Maribyrnong River, to most Melburnians, may be best known as the place to go looking for missing bodies, or parts thereof. But although I do admit squirming just a little seeing people fishing in the river the day after the arm was found, to local residents these stories are merely a quirky sidenote. There's far more to the river than the odd floating morsel of human flesh. To those acquainted with it, the Maribyrnong is a

vital, essential piece of the suburban landscape, both geographically and culturally. Despite the apartment buildings that now punctuate its shores, the surrounding parklands remain both a life-giving and life-sustaining haven of wilderness wedged amidst the clean-cut squares of the suburbs. This is primarily thanks to ongoing efforts of preservation and revegetation of the river.

I have lived next to the Maribyrnong for around three years now, and it's played an indispensable role in my daily life. I've cycled down the bike path to three different jobs; I watched a family of ducklings grow from fluffy waddling balls into adulthood over the course of several months' commute; I discovered a species of parrot new to me when I thought I knew them all. Ducks and moorhens raise their chicks within the safety of the fenced Newells Paddock wetlands (though the ducks seem to believe they have right of way on the bike and walking paths). A little further down, flocks of red-rumped parrots inhabit the trees of Pipemakers Park and take their chances between the driving range and the off-lead dog park across the bridge. Screeching lorikeets also line the path beside the golf course and I've seen this area provide temporary residence for roaming galahs, sulphur-crested and black cockatoos, and the odd eastern rosella, as well as the herons that crouch above the water line and even a few black swans. In parts, you can hear the loud chorus of frogs and (though I've never seen one - and not complaining!) signs warn of the presence of snakes. It's an ecosystem that is teeming with life, and each one of these native species that finds a home by or in the river is an argument for the importance of maintaining healthy green spaces like this as habitat for animal and plant life.

There's another reason, however, that places like this are so necessary to our urban environments. The river provides a habitat for humans, too. On any given weekend (weather providing), the paths and parks surrounding the river abound with human life. Running, fishing, golfing, cycling, team sports on the ovals, kayaking, dog-walking, picnics, sitting in quiet contemplation by the water: these are some of the myriad activities in which people engage, but they all achieve a common aim. The open green space that winds alongside the water provides an opportunity for people to enjoy the outdoors, be active and engage with nature without having to travel great distances. Without places like this close at hand, the barriers of distance to these activities that form such an important part of a healthy physical, mental and social lifestyle become increasingly obvious. If we had to get in a car and drive up to an hour to find a space like this, the reality is that most of us wouldn't find the time or energy, and we'd all be vastly poorer for it.

I now walk my dog in the off-lead park every day and it's become an essential activity for the wellbeing of canine and human alike. When working from home on projects of an endless and soul-destroying nature, I started to feel emotionally synced with my dog, both of us waiting sullenly for that time of the afternoon when we could escape the confines of the house-prison. It is remarkable how stress and frustration melt away at the sight of wrestling pups splashing through the mud as owners try in vain to steer them off-course.

I met a woman who told me she fell into a deep depression after losing her job. She lived in the council flats nearby and decided, despite unstable living conditions and financial hardship, to get a dog to help herself out. She now walks 10,000 steps a day around the river with him and makes idle chat with strangers like me (as our dogs ran in circles for an hour attached to opposite ends of a palm frond). Another man told me, as our paths and dogs intersected, that he lived in Caroline Springs. I joked that I guessed he didn't come all this way just for the dog park, but it turned out he had. 'It's a good park,' he shrugged. He used to play footy there, and kept coming back. When I first moved into my house a five-minute walk from the river, I felt the location was a compromise, being so far from a train. I realise now that there's no way I'd swap my proximity to this urban oasis for a slightly more convenient commute.