

Friends Of Willow Park Inc.



Educating and involving the community in protecting, preserving and valuing parklands

NEWSLETTER – July 2007

National Tree Day An event not to be missed!

When? Sunday 29 July, 2007

What time? 11 am – 1.30 pm.

Activities? Tree planting, Waterwatch demonstration, tree walk and talk, face painting, environmental games, BBQ

Where? Meet at Willow Park car park

RSVP and more information: Contact Julie on 6056 1787 or Alison on 6056 1938

Friends of Willow Park Initiate A Local Parks and Reserves Alliance

On 31 May, *Friends of Willow Park* invited community groups working on parks and reserves in the Albury Wodonga region to a meeting at the Stump Hotel to discuss the possibility of forming an alliance.

The hopes for such an alliance would be to assist the groups to work together to: promote a “system” of urban and regional parks; strengthen community involvement in the planning and management of our parks; support each other through sharing resources, ideas and information; promote the critical role parks play in our communities; and to help conserve, protect and improve our parks for community amenity.

There were nine groups represented at the meeting with apologies from a number of others. The group discussed the benefits, risks, and characteristics of an alliance.

There was general agreement that an alliance could achieve things the individual groups could not and that we should pursue the idea. Another meeting of the alliance will be held at Browns Lagoon, Olive St on 26 July at 7 pm. For further information call Julie on 6056 1787.

Friends of Willow Park thanks the Stump Hotel for the generous provision of their meeting facilities.



Community group representatives discuss the benefits, risks and characteristics of an alliance

Members and Friends Meeting Guest Speaker – Professor Allan Curtis

Professor Allan Curtis is Director of the Institute for Land, Water and Society, Charles Sturt University and Patron of *Friends of Willow Park*. Professor Curtis will speak about the trend to increased suburbanisation of rural areas and the implications and responsibilities for the Albury Wodonga community. Everyone welcome!

When? Tuesday 21 August, 2007

What time? 7.30 p.m.

Where? Belvoir School, 4 Bowman Court, Wodonga

RSVP: Contact Alison on 6056 1938

Patrons: Professor David Mitchell, Professor Allan Curtis, Dr Juliet Bird

Postal Address: c/- P.O. Box 1083, Wodonga, 3689

Website: www.vicnet.net.au/~fowpwod

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Friends of Willow Park Awarded Dilmah Grant!

Friends of Willow Park is now assured of being able to monitor the health of the storm water treatment wetland and creek in Willow Park on a regular basis. We were recently awarded a \$1595 grant from Dilmah (yes, the Single Origin, 100% Pure Ceylon Tea company). The Dilmah Tea and Landcare Australia partnership has provided many grants to community groups and schools throughout Australia to assist with environmental projects that improve water quality. Poor water quality contributes significantly to our river problems. There has been an approximate 90% decline in native fish populations since European settlement.

The grant is a huge help to *Friends of Willow Park* and we are using it to purchase our own water quality monitoring equipment. The water quality data will be used to assess the impact of environmental projects conducted by *Friends of Willow Park* in partnership with the City of Wodonga. Discussions are currently underway with the City of Wodonga to purchase additional water quality monitoring equipment, which will be lent to *Friends of Willow Park*. Details will be in our next newsletter.

We would like to acknowledge the vital support of Parklands Albury-Wodonga, which is administering the grant for us, and Jessica Aiken from Waterwatch for her professional advice. We could not have received these funds without this support. Thanks everyone!

For further information call Alison on 6056 1938. Further information on the grant may be found at www.landcareonline.com or by telephoning Landcare Australia on 1800 151 105.



Jessica Aiken from Waterwatch (second left) assists (from left to right) Pauline Anderson, Stephen Anderson and Geoff Emmanuel to analyse a water sample using a water quality test kit similar to the one we will purchase with the Dilmah Grant

Friendly Gardening with Milton "Gumboots" Kimball from Bunnings

"Pest and Disease Controls without using chemicals"

To grow plants organically is not hard or difficult for you, the home gardener. Keeping a close eye on your plants and using companion planting and materials that are organic is the way to go.

Importantly a successful organic garden will need organic fertilisers such as blood and bone, pelletised fowl manure (Yates Rooster Booster), other animal manures if composted, lime zeolite and compost. Worm castings and compressed mulch materials are a great way of improving your soil's structure.

Garden weeds are an annual problem but can be eliminated by the use of newspaper layers, mulching with leaf mould, sugar cane mulch, straw, lucerne or pea straw. Plastic weed mat (but remember to cut slots in it to allow moisture through) or marix black weed cloth which allows moisture to the soil, can also be used.

A squirt of vinegar or pine oil can also get rid of weeds quickly as they both burn off weeds.

Natural predators such as the beneficial ladybirds, wasps, birds and beneficial mites can only do so much to eliminate insect pests. You can deter nuisance insect pests safely by using soapy water, pyrethrum, pest oil sprays, yellow sticky traps that attract insects, garlic, stale beer traps for snails and slugs, bird netting on fruit trees.

Pests can also be reduced by practising crop rotation in your veggie patch. For the dreaded fruit fly try placing, in a suspended container, a mix of orange juice and finely chopped banana or yeast mixed with water. Both of these concoctions attract both male and female fruit flies.

Works on Waterways – Why Do They Do It Like That?

Many of you will have noticed that works are currently underway removing weeds and replanting native vegetation along House Creek in Willow Park to improve the ecology of the area.

Friends of Willow Park is working in partnership with the City of Wodonga to achieve these works and we hope to continue to build this relationship and have input into future management plans.

We have heard many and varied comments about these works ranging from “fantastic” to “terrible”.

In our next newsletter we will begin a series of articles about works on waterways – the how and why of them.

As part of these ongoing works on the creek, *Friends of Willow Park* is now involved in monthly Water Care activities; primarily weeding and maintenance. We do this on the same day as our Waterwatch. Bring your gardening implements and join us!



City of Wodonga has mowed the *phragmites australis* (common reed) and removed dead Willow stumps along House Creek recently

Waterwatch and Waterway Care Schedule:

26 August and 22 September
2 p.m. – weeding and maintenance
3.15 – afternoon tea
3.30 pm – Waterwatch

Meet near the skate park
Come join us! Contact Alison on 6056 1938

Parklands Albury-Wodonga's Wayne Carlson – June's Guest Speaker for Friends of Willow Park

Friends of Willow Park members were fascinated to hear of the many exciting things happening in our regional parks and reserves that are being initiated by Parklands Albury Wodonga (*Parklands* for short). Wayne Carlson from Parklands spoke at our meeting on 19 June.

Parklands undertakes management projects such as conservation, recreation, cultural heritage and tourism in the many regional bush parklands and reserves around Albury and Wodonga, including McFarlanes Hill, Huon Hill and the High Country Rail Trail. *Friends of Willow Park* shares *Parklands'* view that (as Wayne so eloquently pointed out) “*our parks and reserves are the lungs of our cities and the glue that holds our community together*”.

One of *Parklands'* roles is to assist the local community to get involved in management projects. Along with its own projects, *Parklands* happily assists people from all walks of life to become involved in projects initiated by other community groups in either urban or bush parks and reserves in our region. This role in facilitating broad-based community involvement is a vital ‘value-add’ that helps to further strengthen local groups such as *Friends of Willow Park* and the broader community by connecting people with each other and the environment.

Wayne also talked about why we should all be very proud of *Parklands'* achievements. *Parklands* is now recognised internationally as leaders in facilitating community involvement in the management of parks and reserves. It is rated in the top three community organisations in the world for adding value to projects. Through its skill in attracting volunteers, grants and work programs, *Parklands* has achieved an additional \$5 to \$7 (actual and in-kind) for every dollar received in funding from Albury City Council and City of Wodonga.

It has to be said that the importance of *Parklands* to our community cannot be overstated. As *parklands'* own motto says – *the benefits are endless*. Thank you so much for a fascinating and informative talk, Wayne. *Friends of Willow Park* is very excited about working with *Parklands* in the future. You can find out more about *Parklands* and its work at <http://www.parklands-alburywodonga.org.au/index.htm> or by telephoning 6023 6714.

Friends of Willow Park Website

Visit us at: www.vicnet.net.au/~fowpwod

Contributing to our newsletter

If you have an item of interest for inclusion in our newsletter, please contact Laurie Fitzsimons 60 245 974 or email ldfitz@bigpond.net.au

FRIENDS OF WILLOW PARK

Friends



Of
Willow Park

Membership Form

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CONTACT PHONE NUMBER: _____

EMAIL: _____

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES AND FEES:

- \$10 concession, students, individuals, concession household
- \$20 households

Note: the membership fee can be waived in situations of hardship

I wish to join Friends of Willow Park. I agree to be bound by the rules of the Association and to support the group's objectives (attached)

Membership category: _____

Payment: (circle) Cash/Cheque
Cheques payable to: Friends of Willow park Inc.

SIGNATURE: _____

Participating in Friends of Willow Park

Friends of Willow Park is an active group and we encourage you to get involved. Please indicate how you would like to participate (you can tick as many of these as you want).

- Helping with the campaigns to save Willow Park from undue development
- Being part of the Committee of Management
- Helping with the newsletter
- Walks, talks, tours, socials
- Hands-on environment projects
- Water quality testing
- Information stalls and publications
- Interest Groups
- Fundraising

Send your completed form to:
Friends of Willow Park Inc.
c/- P.O. Box 1083, Wodonga, 3689
Wodonga, 3689

OUR OBJECTIVES

- (a) To promote the protection and preservation of Willow Park as public open space parkland;
- (b) To promote the protection and preservation of the social, economic and environmental value of Willow Park including the flora, fauna and features (scenic, archaeological, geological, historic or scientific);
- (c) To educate and inform the community about the role and value of Willow Park; and
- (d) To foster community involvement in, and enjoyment of, Willow Park in accordance with the above objectives.