

Friends Of Willow Park Inc.



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

NEWSLETTER — March 2008

A part time Coordinator for Friends of Willow Park

We are seeking to engage a part time Coordinator and would like a few interested people to be part of a sub committee to help recruit the person. It would involve 2 or 3 short meetings.

Can you help?

Contact: Alison on: 6056 1938

Stuart Roberton - Captivating Guest Speaker in February

Friends of Willow Park was fortunate to have Stuart Roberton as guest speaker at the February information meeting. Stuart captivated us all with his presentation and display of weeds. He began by explaining exactly what a weed is – a plant that is growing somewhere it isn't welcome.

Weeds impact on our social, environmental and economic values. For example, weeds can be very costly to control, they can cause injury or illness to animals and humans, and they can even create fire hazards or restrict access to areas if they are growing densely.

Stuart went on to provide us with some weed facts. Weeds cost agriculture in Australia over \$4 billion every year in lost production and control costs alone. Over 70% of new weeds come from our gardens and people unknowingly buy and plant these invasive weeds.

There are now more than 2,500 introduced plants established in the wild in Australia and some natural areas are under threat from these invaders. It is possible that this garden problem will escalate as we begin to purchase hardier plants for our gardens in an effort to deal with drought and water restrictions. The plants that survive best in these conditions are often the ones that can survive best in our environment!

Stuart then took us through a quick weed identification quiz, which highlighted the need for us all to learn a bit about weeds.

Thank you so much for your captivating presentation, Stuart, and we hope to have you back next year so we can show you how much we've improved our weed identification!

If you would like to help prevent new weeds from getting a foothold, please consider registering as a Weed Spotter. Contact Stuart Roberton on (02) 6043 7965 or email stuart.roberton@dpi.vic.gov.au



Stuart Roberton describing how to identify Horsetail at the January Information Evening

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

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

Website: www.friendsofwillowpark.org.au

Phone: Julie: (02)6056 1787, Ali (02) 6056 1938

April's Information Evening Guest Speaker – David Pinder

David Pinder is President of the Tallangatta Rail Trail Advisory Group - a community group formed in 2002 to develop and manage the Sandy Creek to Old Tallangatta section of the High Country Rail Trail.

We hope to see you all at our next information evening when David talks about: the history; trials and tribulations of this community driven project; how it is coming together; and where it is heading.

When? Tuesday 15 April 2008

What time? 7.30 p.m.

Where? Belvoir School, 4 Bowman Court, Wodonga

Further information: Contact Alison on 6056 1938

Master Plan for Willow Park

We are very excited to announce that *Friends of Willow Park's* proposal for a joint community and Council Master Plan for Willow Park has been accepted by Council.

Members of the community will work alongside Council to develop a joint vision and priorities for Willow Park. The plan will help secure the future of the park and its surrounds for current and future generations.

Many studies have found positive health benefits where citizens are involved in planning for the future.

A small steering committee has been set up to oversee the Master Plan. This committee is made up of representatives from *Friends of Willow Park*, Council staff and Councillors. Our representatives are: Alison Mitchell, Jenni Huber and Julie Hind.

We will keep you updated in each newsletter.

We need your help!

For those of you who participated in National Tree Day events last year you will remember how much fun we had.

This year, as well as planting on National Tree Day, we hope to work with two local schools to plant trees and make nest boxes for Arbor Week.

To help make these events a success we need a few people to work with the committee to plan them. You can give as much or as little time as you are able.

Can you help? Contact Alison on 6056 1938

New Banner!

Many thanks to Jenny and Anneka Sutter and Jenni Huber for creating our wonderful banner.

The banner is perfectly displayed below by Amelia and Eliza



*We're certain you'll see it around!
Please come and join us when you do.*

New Website!

Friends of Willow Park is pleased to announce our new website.

Please take a look at this web address:
www.friendsofwillowpark.org.au

We welcome any feedback. Email website@friendsofwillowpark.org.au
Or call Alison on 6056 1938

Strategies for Works on Waterways – Why Do it Like That?

In our last newsletter we looked at selecting appropriate strategies for works on waterways to restore or rehabilitate our rivers and streams. We discussed the need to consider social and economic values in our environmental works and looked at some options for works to protect a reach with an asset of remnant vegetation. In this and subsequent articles we'd like to consider some other strategies managers can use to achieve desired outcomes – more about why do it like that?

One of the most common works on waterways is revegetation. Revegetation with local native plant species has many advantages such as providing high quality food for the organisms that live in the stream, shade so that algae do not overgrow, large woody instream habitat and, most importantly, protection from bank erosion. However, revegetation projects are unlikely to prove effective in streams that are overgrown with exotic plant species as is the case for large sections of urban streams. The exotic species must first be removed and/or controlled to allow the young native species to establish.



There are many examples of exotic vegetation around House Creek in Willow Park

Removing exotic plants requires an understanding of: the type of plant; how it grows; its potential to regrow downstream if inappropriate removal methods are used; and the most appropriate removal method and timing.

For example, willow trees are best removed by poisoning in late autumn when the tree begins to take sap to its roots. Removal of Paterson's Curse is best done before the plant flowers so seeds can't spread.

Poisoning near waterways needs to be done with caution and a combination of painting poison onto the plants and hand-pulling might be required to ensure no accidental poisoning of the waterway. Once the exotic plants have been removed the site is ready for revegetation.

It is important to check the site at least once a year to make sure the exotics are not re-establishing and the native vegetation is growing well. Checking on the native vegetation and watering might be necessary more frequently in a drought year, but this type of maintenance is vital to protect the significant investment involved in the valuable revegetation works on our waterways.

Next Works & Waterwatch:

Sunday 30 March
9.30 am Works
4.30 pm Waterwatch

**Tea after Works at 11 am & before
Waterwatch at 4 pm**
Please bring a small plate to share

Meet near the BBQ area in Willow Park

Come along for a minute or an hour
Phone Geoff 0427 954 050
or Ali 0409 032 490

Contributing to our newsletter

If you have an item of interest for inclusion in our newsletter, please contact Laurie Fitzsimons: 60 245974 or email newsletter@friendsofwillowpark.org.au

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FRIENDS OF WILLOW PARK

Membership Form

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CONTACT PHONE NUMBER: _____ EMAIL: _____

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES AND FEES (Note: the membership fee can be waived in situations of hardship):

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

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 (below).

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

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.

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