

# Friends Of Willow Park Inc.



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

## Projects Report Compiled by Alison Mitchell AGM, 12 November 2009

Friends of Willow Park (FOWP) have engaged in a number of exciting and productive projects and other activities in our third year. We offer a summary of our achievements for the 2008 - 2009 year.

### Grants & Sponsorship:

#### Received:

Funding Body	Date Granted	Amount	Purchased
Volunteer Small Equipment Grants (VSEG), Australian Government, FaHCSIA	1 October 2008	\$1,063	Brushcutter, Whipper Snippers, First Aid Kits
2 <sup>nd</sup> Generation Landcare, Victorian State Government, NECMA	1 July 2009	\$10,270	Coordinated Community Involvement Program
2 <sup>nd</sup> Generation Landcare, Victorian State Government, NECMA	1 July 2009	\$14,050	Biodiversity by Design Project
<b>TOTAL 2008-2009</b>		<b>\$25,383</b>	
<b>Total since inception</b>		<b>\$38,483</b>	



*Pauline Anderson showcasing our trailer and equipment purchased with Australia Post/Landcare and VSE Grants*

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

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

**Website:** [www.friendsofwillowpark.org.au](http://www.friendsofwillowpark.org.au)

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

**Application made:**

<b>Funding Body</b>	<b>Date Applied</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Requested</b>
Volunteer Small Equipment Grants, (VSEG), Australian Government, FaHCSIA	25 September 2009	\$4,013	Office Equipment
Caring for our Country, Community Action Grant, Australian Government	19 October 2009	\$20,000	Gardens for Wildlife Project
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$24,013</b>	

- City of Wodonga kindly provided consumables for the Smart2 Colourimeter (instrument for nutrient analyses) that we have on loan from them for our Waterwatch Program.

**Waterwatch:**

- Waterwatch is conducted on the fourth Sunday of every month at 3.30 pm or 4.30 daylight saving time.
- Our Waterwatch program has been underway for 36 months and we have collected some very useful data that Alison Mitchell presented at our June Information Evening. The storm water treatment wetland is monitored at the inlet and outlet and the data indicates that it is functioning as it should; however, the data analysis indicated that we need quite a bit more data to be certain. It was great to see that the additional data from the past 12 months has increased our confidence, but more data will be needed so we intend to continue the program. House Creek has been sampled a limited number of times this year because of the ongoing drought, but the water quality is as you would expect for an urban stream with slightly higher nutrient and salt levels than we would find in streams in pristine areas.



*Sampling macroinvertebrates (bugs) for Waterwatch monitoring*

### Community Gardening in the Park:

- Community Gardening in the Park is conducted on the fourth Sunday of the month at 1.30 pm or 9.30 am in the Daylight Saving months. Gardening activities are not conducted in the summer months (December, January, and February).
- This year, gardening activities consisted of weeding, repairing guards and stakes and spreading mulch for the now 3000+ trees, shrubs and grasses planted near House Creek in Willow Park on National School and National Tree Days over the past three years. There are many opportunities for improving the environs of Willow Park and we are currently reviewing the Gardening program to improve our effectiveness with these activities.



*Hard at work for Community Gardening in the Park*

### Events Hosted by FOWP:

- FOWP hosted another successful Planet Ark National Tree Day (2 August). Approximately 25 volunteers attended planting 240 trees, shrubs and grasses and maintaining previous plantings over the two hours before our BBQ cooked to perfection by Wodonga Apex Club. FOWP intend to host National School and National Tree Days in 2010.
- FOWP's Information Evenings are held on the third Thursday of every other month beginning February with our End-Of-Year Party scheduled for December. Four wonderful guest speakers for 2009 provided fascinating information and food for thought. Those speakers were:
  1. **Dean Twist, "Climate for Change"**, Dean was one of 85 Australians chosen to work with Al Gore on his Climate Project in 2006. He has a background in science and agriculture, and in the development of sustainable energy. Dean explained to us the significance of the Governments Greenhouse Reduction Target, and the global, national and local implications.
  2. **Dr Brian Lord, "Fire ecology and living with fire – what have we learnt?"**, Brian recently retired from Charles Sturt University, Albury, where he had been the Head of the School of Environmental and Information Sciences. Brian's area of expertise is fire ecology and vegetation ecology and management.
  3. **Dr Alison Mitchell, "House Creek: What is going on in there?"**, Alison spent 20 years working for CSIRO at the Murray-Darling Freshwater Research Centre where she gained a broad understanding of freshwater ecology. Alison now teaches at TAFE NSW and runs the Waterwatch program for *Friends of Willow Park*. Alison talked about the ecology of urban streams, the things we do to improve them and our Waterwatch data.

4. **Dr Terry Hillman, “Looking after our dwindling water resources”**, Terry is an Adjunct Professor at La Trobe University in Wodonga and he also chairs the University’s Regional Advisory Board. Terry has been a Board member of the North East Catchment Management Authority and also the Murray Darling Association for many years. He was also Director of the Murray-Darling Freshwater Research Centre. Terry talked about the challenges of managing our valuable water resources in this unprecedented time of reduced inflows and increased demand.
5. **Julie Hind, “What did the community say about Willow Park? Findings from the Community Conversations Project”**, Julie is President of Friends of Willow Park and has been instrumental in not only proposing the Master Plan project to City of Wodonga, but also ensuring that an innovative community engagement program formed a significant part of that Planning process. The Community Conversations part of the Master Plan process has drawn to a conclusion and Julie presented the data gathered in this important and innovative project.
  - FOWP are developing a strategy to seek sponsorship and other support for the group.
  - FOWP intend to incorporate more social/fun activities into our program in 2010.



*Having a say about Willow Park at the Play and Say Day, 22 August 2009*

### **Events FOWP Participated In:**

FOWP participated in a number of events throughout the year such as:

- Waterwatch Saltwatch Program, Wodonga, May 2009
- Waterwatch Quality Assurance/Quality Control Day, Wodonga, July 2009
- North East Landcare Forum, Beechworth, November 2009

### **FOWP Input to City of Wodonga's Policy and Planning:**

- FOWP made a submission to Council about the fenced dog park proposal.
- FOWP have continued to work with the City of Wodonga developing a community-led Master Plan for Willow Park.