

Editorial :

Our February meeting was close to capacity due to the popularity of our guest speaker Tony Walker of our sister organisation "Friends of Scotchman's Creek and Valley Reserve". The topic of the evening was the Waterwatch programme. Tony and the FOSCVR have been involved in waterwatch for the past five years and have accumulated valuable baseline data. However, the most notable achievement to date has been the identification of an oil leak into the creek in 2009. The source of the pollution proved to be leakage from storage drums of transformer oil. The detection of such sources of pollution is a prime reason for the existence of the waterwatch programme and the removal of this pollution source improves not only Scotchman's creek but also Gardiner's creek and, ultimately, the Yarra and Port Philip bay.

The continuing existence of Waterwatch depends on the dedication of waterwatch monitoring groups such as FSCVR and FODCR.

Tony filled us in on some, not very pleasant, realities of creeks such as Damper Creek and Scotchman's creek. However well managed, they are "event driven" with very high peak flows resulting from rapid runoff from hard surfaces such as roads, driveways, carparks and roofs. A variation in stream flow from drought to flood of over 1000 : 1 has been measured for Scotchman's creek. This bears little relationship to their historical flow patterns which were mitigated by natural springs and absorption by soils. To some extent the creation of wetlands has helped restore some continuity of flow but the

benefits of the two wetlands on Scotchman's creek have been mixed.

In spite of these difficulties the creek has demonstrated reasonable health with a good population of macroinvertebrates, a good indicator of stream health.

Our next speaker will be Dr. Ian Nicholls of the Monash University Geology Department who will address the April meeting.

Clean Up Australia Day 7 March 2010



Enthusiastic collectors Phillin and Campbell

1. Weather - fine
2. 19 Friends of Damper Creek registered including Maxine Morand MP and her husband John
3. The Friends this year joined in with the registration of the KUAA (Kelaniya University Alumnist Association Australia (Sri Lanka) who had 50 volunteers - their first experience with Clean Up Australia Day), and the total collection came to approx 20 bags of rubbish - which included plastic bottles, glass bottles, food wrappings, plastic pieces, etc. (This did not include several bags of weeds pulled by enthusiastic FODC members).
4. Unusual items - 3 trolleys, one outside table setting, 2 wicker chairs, one printer/fax machine, plus other various broken pieces of trolleys etc.

All together a successful event.

Did you know?

April 2010 marks the centenary of the construction of the first private hydro electric power plant in metropolitan Melbourne as originally reported in the Melbourne Electrician of April 1910. Mt Waverley, at an elevation of about 360 feet, is one of the higher points to the east of Melbourne City. Damper Creek flows from a height of about 300 feet at Highbury Rd down to sea level in

Port Phillip Bay. Rainfall records from the late 1800s show that Mt Waverley had a reliable 45 inches (1140 mm) per year and Damper Creek flowed year round fed in part, by a spring near Highbury Rd.

On the north side of High Street Rd, near Park Rd you will notice a very large hole through which Damper Creek flows. In 1910 Park Rd did not exist and this area was the site of a large dam constructed by the local residents for watering of stock and market gardens.

At this time there was no reticulated power supply to the area and a couple of local residents - Lirpa and Foops noted the height of the water level and calculated that it would be possible to operate a water wheel connected to a dynamo to generate power. They made a wooden overshoot water wheel and placed it at the top of the dam wall. Using a series of gears they connected up a war surplus generator with an output of 24 volt a.c. Although inefficient, this was used to power their two houses during the evening and also charged up some storage batteries which they had made with scrap zinc metal electrodes. During the day the batteries were used to power a pump which brought up water to fill the tanks for irrigation of the vegetable gardens. Unfortunately, there was insufficient power to serve more than their two houses but nevertheless the local residents were amazed and foreign experts visited the site and reported back to their home country on the Australian developments using the newly installed telegraph at the Mount Waverley post office.

With the coming of reticulated SEC power in 1911 there was no further use for the "power station" and the locals, upset with the waste of water from the community dam, forced the entrepreneurs to dismantle their equipment. In the 1960s during subdivision of the area, the remains of the water wheel were found serving as chick coop on a nearby farm.

References.

The Melbourne Electrician 1910, and the first April Files of the Waverley Historical Society.

Friends of Damper Creek		
Important dates to remember:		
	March	Notes
Meeting:	Wed 24th - 7:30 pm	Alvie Hall
W-Bee	Sun March 28th 10-00am to 12-30pm	Middle Bridge
	April	
Meeting:	Wed 28th- 7:30 pm	Alvie Hall
W-Bee	Sun May 2nd 10-00am to 12-30 pm	Middle bridge
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Damper Creek Reserve Inc is a member of 'Landcare' and 'Land for Wildlife' Volunteer Nature Conservation.

Damper Creek Bushland Reserve: part of the Yarra Catchment.

Please address all mail to:
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Mount Waverley 3149

The Newsletter of

***FRIENDS OF
DAMPER CREEK RESERVE INC.***

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DAMPER CREEK DOINGS

March 2010

