



Friends of Merri Creek

Media Release

FoMC say it's time to raise Merri Creek awareness & appreciation

Tuesday July 24, 2018. The escalating number of challenges facing the Merri Creek as the result of development and urban/population growth pressure has been the catalyst for Friends of Merri Creek (FoMC) to undertake a program that will raise awareness and appreciation of the iconic waterway's importance as a community and environmental asset.

The Merri Creek dramatically changed colour twice over recent months as the result of heavy rains in upstream areas where new residential areas are being developed with inadequate sediment controls in place.

An occurrence FoMC believes will increase in frequency as the waterway is surrounded by more and more development throughout its once-rural catchment area.

A further concern for the environmental group was the State Government's decision to sell two significant parcels of VicRoads owned land in the Moreland City Council suburb of Fawkner.

Concerns were further heightened when the State Government announced it would dispose of parkland along the Moonee Ponds Creek in Glenroy placing unprecedented pressure on Moreland Council to make acquisition offers in order to save the three important open space areas.

FoMC was established as a community group in 1988 to restore and protect the Merri Creek. Working in partnership with the Merri Creek Management Committee (MCMC) Friends regularly plant indigenous trees, shrubs and ground layer plants along the waterway, conduct quarterly bird surveys as well as undertaking frequent 'blitzes' to remove litter washed from streets by rain into the Merri Creek.



In addition, the dedicated group publishes a regular newsletter, undertakes monthly water quality testing and organises talks, walks and tours on subjects of interest such as flora and fauna on the Creek, or the life of the

Wurundjeri (the local Aboriginal people).

For all our efforts the need to raise awareness and appreciation of the Merri Creek was brought home dramatically during a recent VCAT hearing where the developer couldn't understand '*what all the fuss was about*' said FoMC spokesperson David Redfearn.

"This realisation, along with the State Government disposing of open space and parklands along the Merri Creek without regard to the impact on the flora and fauna

has highlighted the need to raise awareness of issues confronting the Creek and appreciation of its benefits as a social and environmental asset”.

“Hence the decision to lift our communication efforts starting with approaching local schools and community groups to undertake activities and tours of the Creek.”

The tranquillity of the Merri Creek as an oasis to destress from modern day pressures will also be promoted to residents.



FoMC’s communication team has been bolstered with the addition of university student Thespina Marziano and PR consultant Joe Perri. *(Pictured together with FoMC’s Ann McGregor).*

“It’s also hoped that the promotion of FoMC’s many activities will inspire local residents to enjoy the community benefits of the Merri Creek and also ‘*to join in*’ and get involved with the Friend’s many plantings and litter clean up blitzes”, concluded David Redfearn.

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