



Friends of Ferguson Park



Newsletter No. 123 – August 2018

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Park Working Bees
First Sunday of
month 10am, Main
Gate, Hallett Road
Stonyfell

Park Working Bee
Dates 2018

7 January
4 February
4 March
1 April
6 May
3 June
1 July
5 August
2 September
7 October
4 November
2 December

Working Bees Update

June 2018 - A sunny blue sky winter morning. A DEW-funded first round of spraying was recently undertaken along Stonyfell Creek, targeting Periwinkle, Nasturtium, Rice Millet.

Joseph (Ranger) has received a costing for revegetation of the builder's access track from Wayne Brown. This includes initial spraying of weeds, then direct seeding of native grasses and scattered shrubs.

2 or 3 motion detecting cameras (on loan from DEW) were set up with the primary purpose of monitoring Echidnas.

Weed control on the day included hand digging of young Sparaxis in the 'Triangle' and digging out of Rice Millet.

July 2018 – On-going weed control, targeting Sparaxis, Plantain. The Park looks good following very useful rains in June – 45mm recorded nearby.

Gerhard is monitoring the motion detector cameras and reported that there has not been much activity as yet. Maybe foxes at night in Stonyfell Creek and possibly dogs at the eastern site.

Joseph described the proposal for a "Kurna culture corner" for the St Peters Early Learner's Centre and the various features to be established in the Park, adjacent to the school.

August 2018 – More direct seeding of native grasses within the Builder's Track (see more details below), using seed which was collected from the Park 3-4 years ago. Gerhard reported that there have been no Echidnas recorded on the motion cameras as yet. Plenty of people have been recorded and perhaps a dog. The camera seems to be taking lots of photos of nothing! Today he moved the eastern camera into Stonyfell Creek, adjacent to 2 large Sugar Gums.

Builder's track restoration works

On Tuesday 17th July a group of volunteers gathered to help Wayne Brown (Environments by Design) undertake seeding along the builder's access track. The group included Joseph (Ranger), Geoffrey, Sarah and Martin (Friends of Ferguson). Assistance was ably provided by Tom, Sam and Liam (St Peters' College staff). We also had a visit from a group of youngsters from the adjacent Early Learner's Centre!

Rakehoes were used to scrape and dig shallow depressions in the heavily compacted track. Holes were randomly spaced in order to replicate a more natural vegetation structure. Species which were hand direct-seeded included Golden Wattle (*Acacia pycnantha*), Wreath Wattle (*A. acinacea*), Running Postman (*Kennedia prostrata*), Wallaby Grasses (*Rytidosperma* spp.) and Spear Grasses (*Austrostipa* spp.). A handful of gravel was placed over the gently tamped holes – a way of retaining moisture. Each hole was also staked so that it will be easier to locate seedlings and monitor germination success in coming months.

The area was bunted off and a sign erected to alert park users to the project and

deter them from inadvertently damaging the plantings. As can be seen in the photos below, a couple of heavy but welcome showers came through during the morning. So, we await the appearance of a myriad of baby plants which will improve both the biodiversity and aesthetics of this area.



Wayne, Martin and Joseph hard at work direct seeding of the builders track – July 2018.



Joseph, Sarah, Wayne, Geoffrey and Martin in front of the newly erected sign and bunting – July 2018.

FFCP Annual Report for 2017

The year 2017 marked our 35th year of operation! By any standard that's a fair achievement. Congratulations to members who received badges of recognition for various 10's- and 5's- of years of membership, and all those who fell into the years between.

During the year we clocked up 238 volunteer hours, just counting our Sunday morning work. Some of our members put in effort at other times both in the park and in doing other behind-the-scene tasks to keep the group ticking over. Thank you to all of you from all of us! My conservative estimate of hours is 330 for the past year. This includes one session with students from St Peter's Girls (a total of 50 hours).

In observing what we have been doing over the past couple of years, a great deal of effort has been expended on two projects/tasks which are away from our main focus of habitat maintenance and improvement. These were the Stonyfell Creek Restoration Project and dealing with the College's building project late in 2017 and going over into the present year (2018).

Work on Stonyfell Creek had ceased due to no future funding and our time was spent rectifying issues that have arisen with the weirs that were installed across the creek. The weirs have clearly demonstrated how much silt comes down the creek; the build-up behind the weirs has been enormous and in just a short period of time. The build-up resulted in the water flowing around the ends of the weirs and creating new erosion areas. We did repair work in March and September using straw bales.

The building project on the college's main building resulted in considerable impact extending from the Hallett Road gates to the end of the school building. The construction of an aggregate track for vehicle access and then its less than successful removal has been the main concern. The removal left rubble behind, damaged vegetation and probably most significantly, resulted in the scalping and removal of about 10-15 cm of top soil. The area has since eroded due to water flow. At the time of writing (June 2018) negotiations are in-hand for the revegetation of the site which will be funded by the college. Our thanks to our Rangers, Brent and Joseph, for their invaluable input in helping to resolve this unfortunate saga.

Our work during the past year has included:

- Spraying trials on Soursob and Sparaxis
- Poisoning of Ash trees along Stonyfell Creek
- Targeted weeding of Pentaschistis, Plantain and Cape Tulip, to mention the main species
- Maintenance work on the patch of regenerating Native Apricots near the Early Learning Centre corner – weeding and spraying for Pittosporum Bug.

The mild wet winter has resulted in quite a lot of germination of young seedlings of native plants including acacias, Native Pine, eucalypts, Goodenia (the most numerous I have ever seen) and Dodonaea's, all of which is very pleasing.

Our 35th anniversary was celebrated on 10th December with a lunch at James and Sue Swanson's home. We had a good turnout and it was lovely to have our previous ranger Amy present.

My thanks, on behalf of all our members, to each of us who keep our group productive.

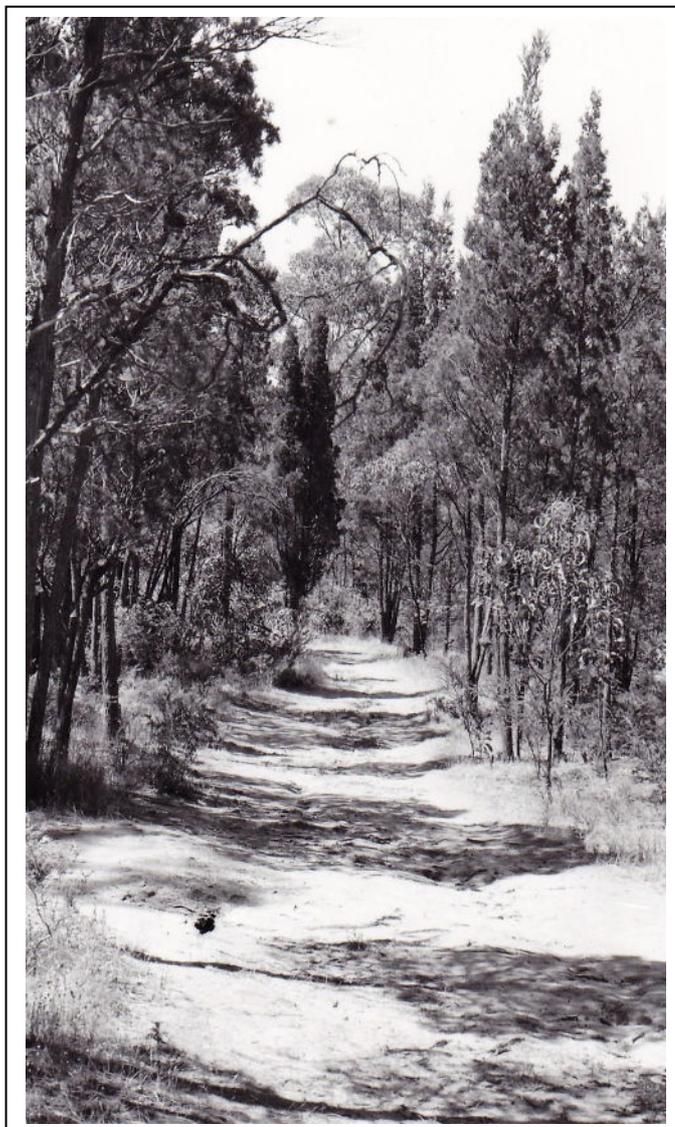
Geoffrey Bishop - President

June 2018

Volunteer Hours July 2017 to June 2018 –

- Monthly park meetings – total of 214 hours, 107 volunteers participated
- Other contributions – tasks undertaken by volunteers between monthly working-bees included SPCGS building project and site rehabilitation; monitoring cameras; contract weed spraying; track/drain work; AGM discussion and planning; newsletter; secretarial; repairs to two signs
- Estimated total of 120 hours, 25 volunteers (note that this is an underestimate as we have no formal means of recording number of visits to do work)
- Total 334 hours, 130 volunteers

Supplied by Geoffrey Bishop



This photo was taken in October 1980 and shows the main track east from the rear of the school oval. This was before the logs were placed across the track to control soil erosion. A worthwhile task would be to re-take the photo-points that were 'set up' around 20 years ago. Some were marked with posts (now vanished) but most are identifiable from particular trees in the line-of-sight. (Photo supplied by Geoffrey Bishop)

October 1980 and east from the rear of the school oval.

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