

# Newsletter



enhancing Maroondah's environment and urban sustainability

Autumn 2010

## help shape the future of CCS...

...by joining us for our 46<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting!

**We are proposing some substantial changes to the way Croydon Conservation Society will operate into the future, and so strongly encourage all members to show their support and have their say by attending this most important meeting.**

The President's Report (below), which will be tabled at the meeting, outlines the reasons for a change in direction. So have a read, think about what this means for you as a member, and take part in shaping the future direction of our wonderful organisation.

Following the formalities of the evening, guest speakers from the Waterways Alliance will take us on a journey through the development of the Brushy Creek Wetlands project — part of Melbourne Water's plan to improve water quality and reduce nitrogen levels.

Waterways  
Alliance

An alliance between  
Ecodynamics, Fulton Hogan,  
SMEC and Melbourne Water

The AGM will be held at 8:00pm in the Glen Frost Room at the Croydon Library complex, Civic Square, Croydon, on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2010.

## president's report

Welcome to the AGM, with CCS celebrating more than 45 years of being an active community group formed through a shared vision for Croydon. We began as **Croydon Tree Preservation Society** and this remains as one of our highest priorities, and greatest threats.



The past twelve months have been an interesting time for us. Like all community groups we are struggling for members and in particular committee members. Like all volunteer groups, we find people are too busy with their own lives and battles, generally until a development begins in their neighbourhood, and then CCS is suddenly discovered. The burden of trying to attract people is enormous and we have a very poor success rate.

In 2009 we actually did very little active work. We again tried our film night, but in a different format, with two guests who had talks and audio visual material. Karen Johns and her Earthwatch project being first, and our resident composer Dindy Vaughn and her symphony second.

The presentations were excellent, but we had a crowd of only 10 or so as audience, which was disappointing.

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Earlier in the year, we had asked the Council for a sample of their welcome kit, sent to all new homeowners, and were disappointed to discover very little regarding tree retention, waste management and pet registration. Their response was very nebulous, and tree removal is continuing, especially in the face of second dwellings in back yards and paranoia about fire risks.

We investigated the opportunity to reprint our *Trees and Wildflowers* booklet, but in the final analysis discovered very similar material is readily available on the net, so using our website we linked to those local sources, like Yarra Valley planting guide. We attended the Maroondah Council Festival in 2009 – we had not participated in the past few years. We handed out fliers letting people know about our organisation; our website was looked at more frequently after the publicity, though absolute statistics are not at hand. Many residents had no idea of our existence.

We were pleased to see the completion of works at Kalinda Road to re-align Mullum Mullum Creek and provide better bank stabilisation for times of peak flow. The residents of that area now have a substantially improved waterway strip of native vegetation and wildlife corridor.



We have watched with interest as stage one of Brushy Creek has undergone even more extensive works, with the provision of a retarding basin as a side path to the creek.

We have been pleased to see Candlebark Nursery get major contracts for plants for these projects.

Animal management is still in progress with the Council — it seems some decisions are in the too hard basket, while dogs on leashes will probably be formally adopted.

**\$** We recently donated \$100 to the Gippsland East environment group towards their Supreme Court costs in fighting the Government in allowing old growth forest logging in land owned by the entire community through state ownership.

What all this means, is that we have been wondering about our role in the community of late, and we are now of the opinion that for a variety of reasons we should focus on being a web based resource. Insurance costs and dwindling numbers are two prominent reasons for example.

By default really, our role is becoming an online resource for the community. This in itself is something I believe we should embrace and be proactive in providing. Residents are looking for a one stop shop for finding information about:

- how to negotiate the authorities and VCAT in the event of an objection to a planning proposal
- water health in our community
- rallies for climate change either with ACF or Environment Victoria
- local plants and their habits and requirements
- treated pine and alternatives
- companion animals protection and responsibilities
- bottled water and problems with bottles in the environment
- air quality and diesel fuel
- responding to a public transport questionnaire to provide feedback to government
- the effects of pesticides and herbicides in our local area and waterways
- feeding ducks in our two lakes, and water health
- sustainable food, and...



**...wanting a 'community voice' to be heard regarding local and world issues**

At this point we need to work on some further information for our website about ways to live sustainably with regard to energy use, water sensitive urban design, reuse of resources and waste, and to round out our package of information. We also need to investigate the usefulness of setting up a forum on line for schools of the region to actively communicate their own individual page with current projects.

## *in the year 2010...*

All this leads us to believe that in 2010, we should become an easy to find, easy to use web based society of like minded residents who can share information freely and with integrity.

We can collectively contribute to our original aims of being a group —

- who provide local public opinion for the preservation of the environment and the treed character of the district
- who stimulate the interest of young people in conservation through schools and other avenues
- who do all lawful things to preserve the natural environment, especially the native flora and fauna of Maroondah and the surrounding district
- who join with others collectively in the pursuit of conservation objectives and the protection of the environment

With this aim in mind, as outgoing President, I would like to propose that CCS change its constitution so that we meet face to face only 6 times a year (bi-monthly), and that we form an 'online' executive committee who can keep in touch through an online private forum, and who all have input to content of the CCS website.

I also propose that the cost savings from the activities, once undertaken, be put towards upgrading our website to incorporate a more user friendly front page with easier access to information, and a more engaging appearance.

**Liz Sanzaro**

This newsletter is published by the  
**Croydon Conservation Society Inc**  
**(No. A 0031156 D)**

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Just a reminder that it's that time of the year for the renewal of annual membership subscriptions. Please use the attached Membership Application form to update your details and bring your membership up to date. And don't forget to let us know what information you'd like to see on our website in the future!

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