



### Park in the spotlight

Ranger Peter Wiltshire will lead one of his legendary spotlighting walks after our next information evening, on **Tuesday 30 May**. The meeting starts at 8 pm, in the ranger's office, at the end of Separation Street, Alphington. Please bring a torch and wear warm clothes and sturdy shoes for the spotlighting walk. For information, phone Graeme on 9499 3849.

### Kings, queens and committees

It's been a lively start to the year, with another successful **Picnic Races** in March. With eggs and boots flying and lots of aspiring Kings and Queens of the Mountain pitting their fitness against the mighty Mount Puffalo, it was an action packed day. Meet our new monarchs on page three.

The DPA's leadership received a welcome injection of fresh enthusiasm when four new members joined the committee at our **annual general meeting** in February. Our committee, which includes long-serving members such as the "mother" of the park, Sue Course, is now more than ever a healthy blend experience and new ideas. More about our new committee members on page three.

The 2006 DPA committee is:

**President** Graeme Martin  
**Vice-president** Ingrid Svendsen  
**Treasurer** Anthony Jones

**Secretary** Karina Rook

**General members** Laura Brewer, Sue Course, Sue Kelly, Maryanne Newton, Eve Recht, Carina Watson, David Williams.

Thanks to Isabelle Renaudin, who is taking a break from the committee after two years as our unofficial community liaison officer, and also to Sue Kelly, who has handed over the books to Anthony Jones, our new treasurer.

The DPA's new three year plan, based on ideas from our member survey, is a top priority for the new committee. You can hear all about it at our next **information evening** on 30 May.

And finally a big thank you to all of those members who have renewed their DPA subscription, and also to those who have made donations to the organisation. Your support is invaluable in keeping the DPA an active force in the park.

– **Graeme Martin, president**

### DPA events 2006

**May 21** Park Care Day 1 pm–3 pm  
(*Note change of date for this event*)

**May 30** Information evening

**June 18** Park Care Day 1 pm–3 pm

**August 29** Information evening

**Sept 10** Park Care Day 1 pm–3 pm

**Nov 28** Information evening

**Nov 26** Park Care Day 1 pm–3 pm





## It's all happening in the park

Hello members,

Things are really exciting at the parklands as we prepare for the new financial year.

We have secured a grant of \$45,000 from the Federal Government to install bio-bale cartridges into the leachate system at long last. This is a new technology (partially developed by the Darebin Parklands), where minerals and bacteria are used to clean up the leachate. This will make the water in the pond network clear and cleaner and make a huge difference to the appearance of the wetlands on the Alphington side of the park.

Other projects include:

- Darebin Council is funding the production of 10,000 high quality visitor brochures/maps and also new signs for the entrances and throughout the park
- Melbourne Water is preparing to undertake significant works along the creek throughout the park, with the focus on the creek near the railway bridge
- Banyule Council is investigating the funding of a new management plan for the park in partnership with Darebin Council
- RMIT is funding the revegetation of the Horseshoe Mound while its students undertake studies on the cultural and recreational uses in the park, as well as preparing management plan briefs
- And of course Westpac has agreed to fund stage two of the Hidden Valley path project.

Several other projects are close to being decided as well, so all in all things are very good at Darebin Parklands.

Over the next two months the rangers will be undertaking more small mosaic burns throughout the park. These cool burns produce lots of smoke, so don't be too concerned if you see smoke.

We have prepared several areas for future DPA Park Care Days. The main areas we are keen for the DPA to plant out and develop are the Island below Wynstay Crescent, along the creek, which has the magnificent sandstone backdrop, and the Yarana Road/ Parklands Avenue corner and fence line, which is highly visible and needs some TLC.

And finally, just a note that SBS will be filming a documentary on the business entrepreneur Fletcher Jones in park in the coming weeks.

So from a motivated parklands staff,  
See you in the park,

**Peter Wiltshire**  
**Ranger in charge**

### May Park Care Day

At our first Park Care Day for 2006, on **Sunday 21 May**, from 1-3 pm we'll be planting at the Island site, on the Alphington side of the park. The Island is five minutes walk from the Smith Street entrance – just walk down the path through the mulberry trees, then follow the trail around to the left and along the creek.

Please bring gardening gloves.

Junior Rangers should also bring along their cards to enter the prize draw. Afterwards you can join us for afternoon tea.





## Picnic fit for a king

Eggs splattered, gumboots flew and Mount Puffalo was conquered when around 100 people enjoyed the DPA's second annual Darebin Parklands Picnic Races on Sunday 5 March.

Congratulations to everyone who got into the spirit and took part in the egg throw, gumboot toss, sack races and King and Queen of the Mountain.



Pictures: Anthony Jones, Peter Wiltshire

Amy H continued her family's winning streak in the King and Queen of the Mountain; last year Amy's mum and dad, Fiona and Simon, took out king and queen and this year Amy won Junior Queen of the Mountain. In the Junior King of the Mountain, last year's winner, Heath M, successfully defended his crown. In the adult section, our new royals are Vince McCarthy and Julie Smith. The winners (pictured above with our race mascots) received prize packs and beautiful crowns created by DPA member Chris Rowntree from leaves and flowers from the park.

A huge thank you is due to everyone who volunteered as games marshals and on the membership desk, and also to ranger Peter Wiltshire. The DPA would also like to acknowledge the generous support of **Johnny F's greengrocer** in Alphington, for providing the eggs.

## New faces on the committee

**Carina Watson** recently moved into a house bordering the park in Alphington with her partner and three young sons. Her family has quickly grown to love this bit of bush in the city and the park has become their backyard. Carina is keen to lend a hand to the great work being done by the DPA.

**Maryanne Newton** is completing a Dip Ed (Secondary) and moved to Alphington in 1997. She is passionate about resource conservation and has previously worked in conservation reserve planning, biodiversity conservation on private land, Landcare and grants programs such as the National Landcare Program and the Natural Heritage Trust. Maryanne enjoys working with parks and wants to help the DPA with planning process and grant applications.

**Karina Rook** traded the inner city for a house near Rockbeare Park almost three years ago. Karina's family uses the park regularly and her children are Junior Rangers. Karina got involved to support the park and the rangers. She enjoys growing and planting trees, tackling litter and promoting Junior Ranger activities as a great way for kids to get outdoors and have fun.

**Laura Brewer** was overseas as this edition of *DPA News* went to print. Details on Laura in the next edition.





## News in brief

**Darebin-Yarra trail** The DPA is part of a coalition of community groups that regularly meets with Parks Victoria to support the planning for the Darebin-Yarra trail. Parks Victoria recently received planning approval to build the next section that will extend the current path from the railway bridge for another 100 metres and across the creek. Unfortunately that still won't get it under Heidelberg Rd – that's next year's project. We'll keep you posted on further developments.

**Westpac Hidden Valley project** The DPA recently received confirmation that the next stage of the Westpac Bank-Landcare project has been approved. The next stage will see further revegetation of Hidden Valley, on the Ivanhoe side of the creek near the big palm tree. The project provides funding for materials and on-ground input by Westpac Bank staff. The DPA is pleased to build on our relationship with the Westpac Bank and we look forward to seeing further great work happen in this beautiful part of the park.

**Banyule Council funding** A deputation of DPA committee members and head ranger Peter Wiltshire recently met with Banyule Council's Cr Jenny Mulholland to discuss the council's funding of the Darebin Creek Management Committee. The DPA is concerned about the level of funding by the council to the committee for upkeep of the parklands. Cr Mulholland expressed her support for funding for development of a management plan for the park. Darebin Council has already allocated money for this vital project and the DPA is very pleased that Banyule Council will now consider its contribution as part of its forthcoming budget process.

## Mailbag

Dear DPA,

We live close to Darebin Parklands, with our back yard finishing at Donaldson's Creek.

We thought other DPA members might be almost as excited as us to know that a pair of tawny frogmouths raised two young in our garden in September-November 2005. Their nest was above our carport and we could watch them from the living room.

We've also been visited by a small but stocky bird of prey on two separate days recently. It was sitting in a gum and flew off when we got too close to the window. It was a fairly dark colour with striations across the breast and yellow feet. There seem to be a few different birds that it could be so I wondered if there is a bird of prey like this that DPA people may already know lives around here.

Any other 'birdos' in the DPA can contact me at [robbey@melbpc.org.au](mailto:robbey@melbpc.org.au).

Regards,

**Robin Massey,  
Ivanhoe**

*Thanks for your letter Robin. We also received an email recently from a DPA member who lives in Ivanhoe who was surprised and delighted when a long-necked tortoise dropped by to visit. If you spot some interesting wildlife or have any other news to share, drop us a line at [info@dpa.org.au](mailto:info@dpa.org.au).*

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