

Wirraparinga Loop Trail Update

After one and a half years of negotiations, the Wirraparinga Loop Trail Agreement (MOU) is close to being finalised. Carrick Hill Trust, the owners of Springwood Park, Mitcham Council and the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR) are working together in a spirit of cooperation and goodwill to make this agreement possible.

Much has already been achieved along the proposed 9.5km walking trail:

The five month, \$200,000 Green Army project for Brownhill Creek Recreation Park has begun! Nicolle Flint MP, Federal Member for Boothby, secured this project for our community with the support of Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham. The nine team members and their supervisor Jodie Bambridge (see photo) are doing a magnificent job, protecting and enhancing our natural heritage. DEWNR are hosting the team from Conservation Volunteers Australia and Brownhill Creek Tourist Park and Carrick Hill are providing support facilities. The Green Army team are learning valuable skills while being involved in weed control, native revegetation, trail construction, ecological surveys and heritage activities.

Thanks to Martin Hamilton-Smith MP, State Member for Waite, we have been successful in our budget bid for \$200,000 to construct a dedicated heritage pedestrian bridge adjacent to The White Bridge. DEWNR are currently funding the repairs to The White Bridge and Mitcham Council are project managing the works. Once the repairs to the road bridge are completed, the pedestrian bridge will be built. The White Bridge was constructed in 1870 and was first known as Mundy's Bridge, named after the Mundy brothers who ran a nearby quarry. The bluestone used in the construction of the bridge came from this quarry. After the Mundy brothers left the valley around 1900 the bridge became known as The White Bridge, because of its white timber safety railings (see photo c.1900). The new pedestrian bridge will not only provide a much needed safe crossing for walkers, but hopefully will reflect the original heritage of the bridge (see photo of the Muggs Hill Road footbridge in Mitcham).

BCA received a \$20,000 grant from the Federal Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development to develop infrastructure along the trail and our contractor Matt Forte is building three stone creek crossings, one boardwalk footbridge and designing, supervising (Green Army) and constructing sections of walking trail. BCA, The Friends of Brownhill Creek and the Rotary Club of Brownhill Creek have matched the grant in cash and in-kind labour.

BCA's Education and Revegetation Committee, in partnership with the Kurna Nation Cultural Heritage Association, DEWNR/NRM and other key stakeholders, is facilitating an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Survey for the trail and environs. Wouldn't it be wonderful if one day there is an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Trail Officer and employment for indigenous tour guides and artists! Education is a key aspect of the trail and local schools are increasingly running heritage excursions in our area. On the 29th June I had the privilege of leading a history walk for around fifty Clapham Primary School children in Brownhill Creek Recreation Park. Mitcham Councillor Andrew Tilley made a guest appearance to talk about our Market Gardening heritage (see photo).

Mitcham Historical Society has been a constant and influential contributor to our local heritage and we appreciate the \$5,000 that MHS has donated for interpretive heritage signage at key heritage sites along the trail.

Thank you for supporting our rich local heritage.

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