



THE GREENDALE TIMES

THE NEWSLETTER OF BROOKVALE - CURL CURL SCOUT GROUP
AND GREENDALE CREEK LANDCARE GROUP



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SPECIAL ISSUE - NOVEMBER 2010

Welcome to this special issue of the *Greendale Times*, devoted completely to the Greendale Creek Rehabilitation Project. The aim of this special issue is to update you on what has transpired recently, where we see the future of our project and what we need from you...

BACKGROUND

As many of you are aware, the last remaining open section of Greendale Creek flows through the Brookvale – Curl Curl Scout Group property in Brookvale. We are rehabilitating Greendale Creek to create a green space in the industrial heart of Brookvale and enhance the environment of this forgotten ecosystem.

Greendale creek originally flowed from what was the Brookvale Brickworks in a south-easterly direction towards Curl Curl lagoon before the industrialisation and development of the Brookvale area encased much of the creek and turned it into a glorified stormwater channel. Today it draws stormwater from Beacon Hill, Narrabeena, Frenchs Forest, Allambie Heights and of course Brookvale and fills Curl Curl lagoon.

The possibility of extending the stormwater channel, piping our creek underground, was entertained during the 1970s and 1980s ... but that time has passed and that thinking is very much out of touch with today. After all, a Scout cares for the environment.

So what is the state of the creek? Anyone that has seen it will be able to tell you - it is extremely degraded, the banks are lined with fill material, building, concrete and demolition waste, the odd shopping trolley, rubbish from pedestrians too lazy to find a bin ... it is fair to say it has been a dumping ground for too many years. The vegetation too can be described as foreign, camphor laurels, coral trees, choco vines and many different noxious weeds and exotic ground cover. The few saving graces include a magnificent eucalyptus tree and tolerant wildlife including a tawny frog mouth owl, blue tongue lizard and other parrots and lorikeets. Surprisingly, the water quality is quite good.

Plans to revitalise the creek started to formulate during discussions to build a new home for the combined Brookvale – Curl Curl Scout Group in the late 1990s and

early 2000s with the true potential not realised until the late 2000s. Early plans developed included planting out much of the creek bank with the sole purpose of minimising erosion. A more involved plan is currently being prepared to rehabilitate the creek to not only minimise erosion but also improve water quality, enhance the environment, create a useable space, provide ecosystems for native plants and animals, reduce pollution, stabilise the creek banks, reduce vandalism, improve aesthetics and above all, create something that we are proud of!

RECENT TIMES

With construction of the hall complete in 2008 and Joeys, Cubs and Scouts starting to use the new hall, it was time to start focussing on the creek project. The first task was sitting down and taking everything in to better comprehend what lay ahead, take stock of what we had, what we thought was best for the environment, what we wanted, the resources available as well as what we permitted to do.

A lot has been achieved in a very short time, thanks to former and current members of Brookvale – Curl Curl Scout Group as well as supportive members of the community.

Here is what we have achieved with a small selection of photos showing our progress provided at the end of this newsletter. Many more photos can be found on our website (<http://bit.ly/greendalecreek>).

- We set the foundation for a strong working relationship with representatives of Warringah Council and the NSW Office of Water through early discussions.
- We gained the support of local politicians, who continue to support our cause and seek out assistance on behalf.
- Early discussions with Landcare Australia identified possible future funding from one of their corporate sponsors.
- A generous donation of \$500 from Dick Smith, probably Australia's most famous Scout.
- We formed Greendale Creek Landcare Group to further promote and widen the appeal of the project.

- The Rotary Club of Brookvale, through its members and affiliates, will assist the project with the provision of trees and shrubs needed in the future.
- A successful application to the Community Building Partnerships Grant saw the Group provided funding worth \$14,400 to complete Stage 1 of our project, the removal of exotic groundcover and trees.
- Sunday, 7 March 2010 saw over 40 members of the Group and local community participate in Clean Up Australia Day. A significant amount of rubbish and weeds were removed from the creek.
- The success of our Clean Up efforts saw the Manly Daily report on our fantastic efforts and Scouts Australia feature our project on their website as an environmental partner.
- A small group of volunteers attacked the creek vegetation with great enthusiasm in July 2010 in preparation for professional tree removal commencing later in the year.
- Envirolab Services have provided free water testing to check the health of the creek's water. Surprisingly, the water quality is quite good given that the creek is majority fed by stormwater over a very large residential and industrial area.
- Warringah Council removed a number of coral trees from their land above the creek in preparation for future work to remove remaining trees.
- Active promotion of our project to engage neighbours and business owners within the Brookvale industrial area. This has been achieved by word of mouth, distribution of flyers, regular updates on facebook, twitter and the Group's website, reporting at our Group's AGM as well as stories in our Group's newsletter that is circulated within the community.
- Local artist, Maria Romeo, prepared some drawings of the creek and our ideas helping us to conceptualise the project. These have been used as a talking point to seek further suggestions and refine our ideas.
- Conversations with Jim Boyce, a local historian who authored Warringah: Pictorial History, has provided an insight into the creek's history. Jim is also gathering information on the history of Brookvale.

And lastly, the noxious coral trees were removed by professional arborists throughout September and October, letting our magnificent eucalypt stand proud above the creek. The trees were removed to ground level and poisoned, allowing the root mass to hold the creek bank together until further work is completed. This saw the completion of Stage 1 using funds from the Community Building Partnerships grant. The

massive camphor laurel was also removed at our cost, funded by the group and donations. This has really opened up the creek and we can now start appreciating the work that lies ahead... So with the first stage complete, it is fair to ask, what's next?

THE FUTURE

Clearly, a lot has been accomplished and although we are still within the planning phase, actual work (weed and tree removal) has commenced. Our next steps:

- Complete the rehabilitation plan in consultation with Council and the NSW Office of Water. This will require a lot of technical input and engaging professional support.
- Identifying and applying for suitable grants to fund the project.
- Ongoing maintenance and management of the creek to prevent further erosion, improve bank stability, remove weeds and rubbish through community working bees.
- Continue to build relationships with the local community who can share in the successful achievement of this important environmental project.
- Identify and seek out people and companies who are able to assist and support this project.

This is extremely important to put us in the right position to really kick things off once the rehabilitation plan is complete.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

As a grassroots, non-profit community-based organisation and youth movement we need your help to see this vital and important environmental project come to fruition. Hopefully this newsletter has you considering what you can do. Here are some suggestions and we welcome whatever support you can offer:

- Donate time, materials and money or offer contacts, suggestions and ideas
- Follow us on [twitter](#) or like us on [facebook](#)
- Put us in touch with people/companies that could help.
- Help out at working bees.
- [Register](#) your interest and support to hear about future developments.
- Champion the media, politicians, business owners and community members to support our project.
- Spread the word – send this newsletter to your friends and encourage them to do the above.

With your support we know we can achieve something great!



CONTACT DETAILS

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THE FUTURE?