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Biddip



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Newsletter of the Toodyay Friends of the River

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The Toodyay Friends of the River are grateful to the Wheatbelt NRM for their on-going support in producing the Biddip newsletter



wheatbelt
natural resource
management

Presidents message by Robyn Taylor

WHAT a wet time we have been having this winter – all good except for the abundant growth of weeds along the river and in our gardens.

With the rains our tree and shrub planting efforts in June and July will have a good chance of surviving. We have planted nearly 2000 native tube-stock, including infill planting at the Boyagerring Brook site that we worked on last year with good results. This site is off the west Drummond Road gravel extension, not to be confused with the earlier plantings along the actual brook behind the school. Plantings were also completed at the Pelham Brook outlet and Millards Pool.

Greg and Bethan ensured the new revegetation site at Cobbler Pool was clearly delineated and roped it off well before the Avon Descent. The event organisers further barricaded the area to protect the seedlings given the high level of activity that takes place. A post-Descent inspection of sites including Dumbarton, Millards Pool, Extracts, West Toodyay Bridge and Weatherall were all positive. Greg's photo taken at Cobbler Pool says it all regarding the wet weather and high river levels. He was most pleased to see the new signage board being put to good use as a shelter.

I think we can all agree that our annual fund-raising raffle outside the IGA in June was a highlight for TFOR. It drew attention to the work we do with a smorgasbord of things to look at, browse through, and listen to. Bridget's excellent suggestion to have a frog theme was a sure winner and I'm sure we will be repeating it next year.

Guess what! We have embarked upon the creation of another walking trail that will be added to our future Trail Hub information shelter near St Stephen's Church. In August members were led by Greg on a 'West Toodyay Wander' starting at the site of the proposed Hub. We crossed Newcastle Bridge and followed the depression made by the old railway track to Bolgart before crossing under the railway bridge to return via the Aboriginal burial site near the Showgrounds. This track will fulfil a long held wish to link the old colonial Nardie cemetery with the Aboriginal burial site via the Bilya Walk Track.

Cover Photo: Cobbler Pool Campsite, 2022 Avon Descent. The cover to the right of the Ambulance sheltering two people is the new cover over our TFOR signage

Photo: Greg Warburton 2022-08-13

Cobbler Pool in the Mist

Photo by Doug Blandford



Above: Doug poses with the framed photograph he took at Cobbler Pool, donated to Drummond House.

Photo: Beth Frayne 2022-08-26

Danjoo Koorliny

Walking Together - Towards 2029 and Beyond

Danjoo Koorliny Walking Together is a large-scale, long-term, systems-change project designed and led by Aboriginal leaders to help us all walk together towards 2029 (200 years of colonisation in Perth) and beyond.

Co-directors of Danjoo Koorliny are Dr Noel Nannup OAM, Dr Richard Walley OAM, Professor Emeritus Colleen Hayward AM and Carol Innes AM.

Friday August 5th saw 60 plus attendees of the WA Landcare Network (WALN) *Annual Network Gathering* welcomed to Oral Maguire's Beverley property where there has been amazing revegetation over the past decade of a degraded landscape from clearing and extensive excavation of gravel. It was a wonderful day of camaraderie with a walk taken to an area to plant endemic species. Three young Rangers were excited to be part of the Caring for Country education.

Wayne and I felt honoured to attend the get-together, to meet up with Noel and Oral again and the many interesting visitors including politicians, Darren West and Shane Love who both mixed freely to meet and talk with those who are so passionate in Caring for Country.

It was a wonderful and fulfilling day.



Photo above: Darren West wore a blue suit (left of middle) but was not adverse to getting his hands (and suit) dirty. Led by Oral Maguire, Darren and 60 other volunteers joined in the planting, followed by time around the campfire yarning and enjoying the best of Bush Foods.

Seated on Darren's right are Noel and TFOR Members Wayne and Desrae Clarke

Photo: Eddy Wajon 2022-08-05

Maurie Jackson

by Maurie

RETIREMENT at last, 50 years passed, climbing out of bed, (in the career I chose), at least 6 days a week, in all weathers, different locations throughout Australia, what next?

As I was slowly approaching that final date, my wife and I were sent to the Avon Valley and settled into the Toodyay Caravan Park beside the Avon River. My mission here was to contract supervise construction of the bridge over Avon River on Goomalling Road and others near Northam. During this time, we were pestered by a daughter, living in Toodyay, to settle here, which we did, never regretting it.

My employment in the previous 20 years took me to many rivers from the Kimberley down to the south coast and the little bit I seen of these rivers, I realized it was a small part of our world that needed attention. On 11 September 2001 we bought a property, backing on to the Avon and started settling in. During this period, we obtained a Border Collie, Max, who turned out to love the Avon as much as myself. We walked along the river together near on daily and as dogs do, Max loved to swim. The cunning old boy would go to the opposite bank, where he knew he was in control and I just had to wait until he had had enough. Not being the type to stand and wait, I would pull weeds, pick up litter or any other tidying necessary.

My first meet with TFOR. was at one of our main street festivals and I made up my mind to help out after that final date. This I have done willingly and enjoy this little bit of effort to improve our planet, it does not flourish otherwise. If others out there are approaching this long-awaited final date, come along. One day a month for a couple of hours, it is not strenuous (lighter work can be found) and equipment is supplied. If necessary, you may require rubber boots, gloves, hat and anything else to elevate your personality.

See ya there, Maurie



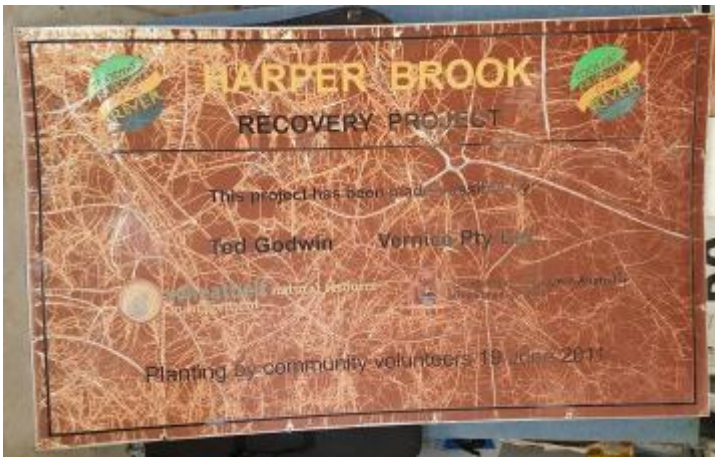
*Left: Foreground, left.
Maurie with his dog at a
working bee on
monitoring.*

Photo: Wayne Clarke

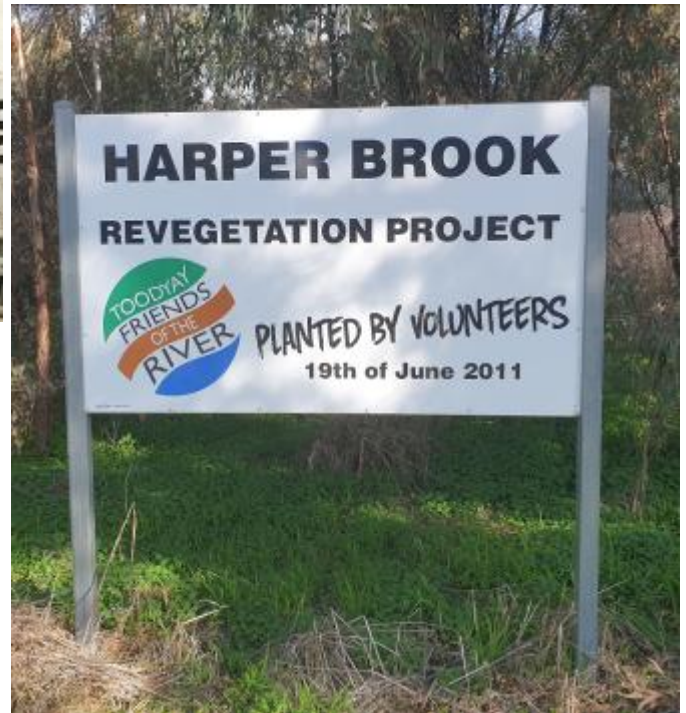
2018-02-04

HARPER BROOK PROJECT 11 YEARS ON

by Greg Warburton



*Above: The Original Harper Brook Project sign
Photo: Greg Warburton 2022-08-26*



*Right: The renewed sign at the site.
The new sign has been produced using a different process to the one above, and should outlast the current members.*

Photo: Greg Warburton 2022-06-22

I remember back when I worked for the Department of Water in Northam I was busy with fencing and revegetating waterways throughout the catchment.

Every day on my way to work I'd drive past Harper Brook where it crosses the Northam-Toodyay Road.

I could see that on private property south of the road large Flooded gums lined but the creek but its banks were devoid of understory and weeds were the only ground cover.

The block was leased by a local pastoralist and livestock had been grazing there for many years.

I ear-marked this as a very worthwhile rehabilitation project that had the potential to extend further upstream as this tributary of the Avon was badly degraded.

I approached my manager at the Department, Bern Kelly and he was supportive and enthusiastic as long as I had a signed agreement from the landholder. Ted Godwin was the land holder and I knew him.

He was appreciative and more than happy for the work to take place as Ted had always wanted to do something to protect the creek.

HARPER BROOK PROJECT 11 YEARS ON (cont)

Then the appropriate amount of fencing materials was allocated and I began constructing the fence.

Because the fence line followed the curves of the creek many strainer posts were required and fencing across the creek at two points presented an extra challenge.

I approached Vernice our local earth moving company to put in rip lines in preparation for planting.

The company were happy to do this gratis due to an arrangement secured by the Department of Water to the benefit of TFOR.

I believe the subsequent success of the project is due in no small part to the depth of the ripping that the machine and operator achieved.

The activity attracted the interest of the land lessor, a person well known in the community who was initially bemused by the project but none the less thought it was a good idea.

With the installation of gates and a TFOR working bee to ensure no wire tying had been missed the fence was deemed complete!

I had pre-ordered 2,000 seedlings of appropriate riparian species from Rob and Beth Boases' Arynna Tree Farm and took delivery of them in early June.

The planting day was advertised for Sunday the 19th of June and 52 community volunteers turned up including the local Scout group.

With TFOR members coordinating the activity it was an organised and efficient operation with planting completed within a couple of hours.

It was followed by refreshments and a presentation from TFOR to Bern Kelly who had come for the planting.

As a part of this project a large sign was produced and installed but over the ensuing years it became badly faded and discoloured.

Earlier this year I was able to replace the sign with a new, bright one which highlights not only the revegetation project but also the work of volunteers.

The sign can easily be seen by any one driving past and is a great promotion for TFOR, the environment and volunteering.

Eleven years on the plantings have thrived and the benefits of bank stabilisation, weed exclusion, improved habitat and biodiversity can be seen.

Those majestic Flooded gums so symbolic of our precious Avon waterways are now in good company.

I am grateful to the new owners of the property, they have fully embraced the revegetation site and will continue to value and protect it.

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HARPER BROOK PROJECT 11 YEARS ON (cont)



Above left: Rip-lines being put in by Vernice (for gratis). These were nice and deep consequently enabling the seedlings to thrive.

Photo: Greg Warburton 2011-01-21

Above right: A recent photograph of the planting showing the success of the project. The Toodyay-Northam Road can be seen at the top of the photo.

Photo: Courtesy Google Earth 2022-08-26

Right: Trays of seedlings from Arinya Nursery, Dowerin, being sorted by Sarah Dudley.

Behind Sarah at left (partially hidden) can be seen Val Tanner and right Wayne Clarke.

*Photo:
Greg Warburton
2011-06-19*



Looking backwards, Looking Forward: Bob Frayne reflects on his work with TFOR

Bob Frayne and Bridget Leggett

BOB FRAYNE was present at the first meeting of Toodyay Friends of the River nearly three decades ago and was awarded Honorary Life Membership in 2011.

I caught up with Bob at his home in Toodyay, and asked him about his time with TFOR and his work caring for the Avon River.

Bob's reflections on TFOR and its work are mainly described in his own words.

It was inaugurated on the initiative of Wayne Clarke and in the early years he was the driver.

The early ideas were to clear weeds – that is undesirable plants – along the river bank, particularly Tamarisk and Bridal Creeper, and to plant native species instead. So that's what we did for the first few years. Some years later when Greg [Warburton] became active, Greg became the driver, he expanded the aims somewhat into different areas.

Greg's idea of revegetating Harper Brook was a great idea and I participated in that – a lot of native species were planted along Harper Brook, on what was at that time Ted Godwin's property – it's since been sold – and the area was then fenced off to keep the sheep out, and I think that was a very good project.

Revegetating the area along the Boyagerring Brook, again I think that's good practice.

TFOR's greatest achievements – things we should be proud of? I think raising awareness in the town of the importance of the river and the work we are doing. In one year we were the Community Organisation of the Year and raising our profile like that is a good thing. And I think people appreciate the work we are doing and some people have said so and of course it helps us recruiting new members.

Castor Oil? Yes, I've have done a bit of a campaign against that over the years. It's a problem underneath the Newcastle Bridge especially on the North side. I've tried over the years to keep it down, but it's no longer possible for me to do that. So I'm hoping someone else will take responsibility for that. I reckoned if I did it in March it would be in time to avert flowering. I think March is the critical month for that.

Working in his own back yard

Bob has taken a special interest in the river bank at the bottom of his garden – affectionately known as Frayne Park by some of the longstanding members of TFOR, in recognition of Bob's long term commitment to the area. We got talking about this area while the recorder was switched on and then as we wandered down the garden to look at his work and at the river. Bob shared his knowledge of the plants and the area as he showed me the fruits of decades of commitment and labour.

“In recent years I haven't attended meetings or workshops but I still do a lot on my own account, beyond my own back fence. And I look after the area removing the weeds and I have until this year been using a brush cutter to cut down the weeds. I've given that up now, but I still use a back-pack spray which I'm still able to use. And I've been doing that in the last few weeks. I'm part way through disposing of the weeds in that area. And there's quite a number of trees and bushes which are growing up well so that's my contribution rather than attending meetings with members.”

[Continued Page 10](#)

Looking backwards, Looking Forward: (cont)

Looking forward

Asked about the biggest challenges for the TFOR and the river, Bob initially stayed with the theme of weeds.

Weeds. They are a constant problem and it's a job which is never finished. No sooner do you chop them down or spray them or whatever, there's more come up the following week and they are there competing with native plants. I don't see there is any answer to that other than what we are doing.

.... Well yes, the long term goal is to get the native plants to out-compete the weeds. When the planting includes big trees or large bushes, they shade out weeds to a large extent. And of course some of the eucalypts in particular, some of the species inhibit weed growth underneath them.

We also need to keep up the flow of information to the towns folk about the work we are doing.

I think liaison with other similar groups up and down the river – or up river, anywhere, is a good idea, and I believe some liaison with people from Northam, York and Beverley

I remember attending a couple of early meetings of CARE [Caring for the Avon River Environment]. I believe some of the people in Northam are suggesting a river path between Toodyay and Northam all the way. Peter Weatherly in Northam, and I think Greg's involved in that, too.

I don't know if it's physically possible, I couldn't say. You'd need to do a survey, to see if it's physically possible, if there's a route available, all the way without interruption, and without straying onto people's private property, then no doubt the work could be done, physically to do the work is no great problem if there's a route available. So that's an idea worth pursuing.

In presenting Bob with his Honorary Life Membership in 2011, the President, Greg Warburton noted 'There are always members of voluntary organisations that are quiet, behind the scene, contributors... Bob has always been a staunch worker in the numerous clean ups that involved removal of incredible, large, heavy stuff right along the river.... The Toodyay Seed Orchard Group has had Bob as a keen supporter and willing worker over a long period. His beautiful native garden demonstrates his keenness in this area.'

Thank you Bob for your decades of work for the river, and for TFOR.

(see Page 11 for Bob's Photograph in 'Frayne Park')



Left: The signs on the side of our trailer says it all...

These will be positioned at the site of the proposed Walk Trail Hub.

*Photo: Greg Warburton
2022-06-22*

Members Gallery



Above: Honorary Life Member Bob Frayne in 'Frayne Park'.

Photo: Bridget Leggett 2022-08-25



Left: Basket or Lattice Fungus, Clathrus pusillus

Photo: Robyn Taylor 2022-08-14

(reference: A Field Guide to the Larger Fungi of the Darling Scarp & South West of Western Australia

*by Kevn Griffiths
(father of Mike, known to many members and a recent speaker at the Toodyay Naturalists' Club))*

**Newsletter of the
Toodyay Fiends of the River (Inc.)**

**WORKING FOR THE HEALTH OF THE
AVON RIVER**

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Toodyay & Districts
Community Bank Branch



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www.toodyayfor.org.au**

The Back Page



Left: Someone had to boil the billy for the workers at the Harper Brook tree planting on Sunday 19 June 2011.

At left is Honorary Life Member the late Gaven Donegan doing just that.

Gaven was among our earliest members and joined shortly after our first meeting. In spite of his illness Gaven's enthusiasm was infectious and he inspired many of our members over the years.

Photo: Wayne Clarke 2011-06-19

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The Toodyay Friends of the River acknowledges the continuing support of the following sponsors:

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