



MOGGILL CREEK CATCHMENT GROUP

P.O. Box 657, Kenmore. 4069

www.moggillcreek.org.au

MCCG NEWSLETTER: SUMMER 2016-17

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Rainforest revegetation early birds (picture: Janine Nicklin): See Andrew Carroll's report of the visit to Peter de Jong's Upper Brookfield property page 4.



VALE: "An extraordinary Man who led a full and distinguished life" (*The Courier-Mail*). Reflections on the contribution of one of our founding members, the late **Emeritus Professor Graeme Wilson**. Graeme only recently 'handed over the pen,' having been the MCCG's longest-serving newsletter editor who also found time to volunteer as a committee member, nursery manager, and section leader page 3.



Photography competition success

(pictures: Cathi Lawrence). Above: Stacey Lake (sponsor, The Pet Chalet) presents Ed Frazer with his People's Choice Prize.

Left: Warren Hoey presenting Kenmore South State School students with the Lord Mayor's Perpetual Shield

page 8.



Chairman's report

2016 closed with the very sad news that Emeritus Professor Graeme Wilson died peacefully, at home. I do hope that many members will be able to join me at the January memorial service (*details page 3*) to celebrate the life of an extraordinary man who made such a far-reaching contribution to our local area and to the MCCG: as our longest-serving newsletter editor, environmental lobbyist, section-leader, committee member, nursery manager, prolific author, and trusted source of environmental advice and information.

Graeme was a man who lived a long and successful life—not only in his contribution to the local environment, but also in his service to his country, his successful academic career, and his love of his family. This edition includes a feature about Graeme with a focus on his work as our editor over the last fourteen years. We are enormously indebted to him for all he achieved, and we will miss him greatly. It will be a difficult task to find a suitable way in which the MCCG can mark Graeme's contribution to our organisation. But perhaps the greatest way in which we can celebrate his work for the catchment group is to continue the work that he was so very personally committed to.

I extend a very warm welcome to our new Newsletter Editor, Dr Catherine Lawrence. Cathi has supported our Photographic Competition, is a University of Queensland Post-Completion Fellow, and Vice-President of UQ's *Alumni Friends*. She has moved quickly to consult with members and supporters who manage our social media platforms, and who work on our Newsletter. The Management Committee will support them all in every way possible.

I also wish to acknowledge and thank Margaret Hastie, who supported Graeme Wilson in ensuring our newsletter was formatted and presented in the most professional way over many years. We are all most grateful to her for that work. The Spring 2016 issue was the final newsletter produced with the work and support of Margaret, and we thank her also for this commitment as a fellow 'quiet achiever.'

In reviewing our strategic plan this year, we have spoken to a number of people and organisations about our work, past and future. Two of the topics featured above—"communication" and "succession"—came up in many discussions. We need to be able to use a variety of communication channels to suit our audiences. And the future of the MCCG depends on succession. We need to plan for it in a deliberate way. Our year did end with sad news, but also with two highlights. Congratulations to Joanna Yesberg, our

long standing and diligent Treasurer, for her recognition in the 2016 Honour Roll (Commonwealth Bank Not-for-Profit Treasurer's Award), and to Geoff Lawrence and his team for an excellent 2016 Photography Competition.

Warren Hoey

Editorial

Hi. As I pick up the editor's pen, the words of Emeritus Professor Graeme Wilson ring in my ears. Ten years ago, when I first met Graeme, I asked him why he volunteered his time at the MCCG nursery and as newsletter editor. Then a mere 89 years old, he said "I don't want people thinking I can't do it." Words to live life by, I feel. So here I am. Members will know that Graeme was not only a diligent editor, but also a prolific author with an encyclopaedic knowledge (which I will not attempt to match). Fortunately, as a member of the Moggill Creek Catchment Group, I have access to a lot of people who are willing to share information about what is a weed and what is a native plant.

We are very lucky to have some long-standing and continuing contributors—particularly Bryan Hacker and Dale Borgelt (thank you both). They join me in encouraging your questions, and seeking new and additional 'voices'. So please do email me, and tell me what you would like to see in future issues. I'd love to hear from you, and to read your contributions. Get writing now!

Cathi

Moggill Creek Catchment Group (MCCG) is a volunteer action group, aiming to conserve & improve the natural environment of our catchment on both private & public land.

Chairman: Warren Hoey. Secretary: Cathie Mortimer, P.O. Box 657, Kenmore 4069 mccgsecretary@live.com.au

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Articles of interest to Members are always welcome.

The Editor reserves the right not to publish any item submitted. Material will be edited for clarity, style and space. *Please email your ideas direct to the editor* (mccgeditor@outlook.com.au).

Editor: Dr Catherine Lawrence (Cathi)

Printing: John Gower

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Emeritus Professor Graeme Wilson

Emeritus Professor Graeme Wilson had a significant impact on the life and development of the MCCG. A founding member, and invaluable expert on native flora and fauna, Graeme's roles included committee membership and working as a section leader. His impact on the success and profile of the group was significant—not only as manager of our volunteer Nursery (since 2002) but also as a prolific newsletter editor and author. Members will all agree with **Bryan**

Hacker that "Graeme made an enormous contribution to our catchment group through informing our members and improving their appreciation of environmental values."

Bryan looked back through the archives to provide some fascinating information about the development of our newsletter, and about the impact of our longest-serving Editor. Our first newsletter was published in November 1999 (when Gordon Grigg was our Chairman). In Bryan's words, "this first issue struggled to achieve four pages, with the font enlarged to take up space. How far we have moved since then."

Graeme's first article in the newsletter was published in August 2001, and he became Editor a year later (successor to the founding editor, Jack Talty). Once Graeme took over as Editor he increased the size of the publication, and later introduced colour (autumn 2006). During his time as Editor (2002-16), Graeme edited four newsletters each year. Rarely was a newsletter been published without at least one—and often three—informative articles written by him (with some generally 'in hand' in case members did not submit anything on time). With a background in plant science and tertiary education, it is not surprising that the items written by Graeme for the newsletter covered a broad spectrum: from articles on bushcare and revegetation, through to plant taxonomy. For example, Bryan notes that the newsletter included 17 articles on different Plant Families over a 7 year period (Spring 2003-09).

Gordon Grigg described Graeme's work on the MCCG newsletter as being "informed by, and an extension of, his passion for and experience in teaching, and wanting to engage others." Gordon will not be alone in missing Graeme's editorials, when he recalls, "of course his Editors section in the newsletter was almost always slanted towards sharing his knowledge and experience, and he tried to have a wide scope. He'd email or phone me asking for

"Graeme's contribution would be worth a significant recognition and accolades whatever his age. That he continues so outstandingly at the age of 95 years is astonishing, such that he is a role model for people of any age. He is a legend."

(Nominator, BCC Australia Day Awards 2013)

'something on some mammal or other' or 'a story about a reptile, or an insect,' to keep a good balance of topics."

The newsletter has previously included a small number of items about Graeme. In his review of the archives, Bryan noted that Gordon Wilkinson's February 2002 article, *Quiet Achievers: Graeme and Andrew Wilson*, focuses on the shared commitment of father and son to the restoration of local native vegetation on their Wonga Creek property (purchased

by Graeme 52 years earlier). In addition, newsletters have touched on awards presented by Local and State Government. Graeme's contribution to MCCG led in 2004 to his being awarded a Ryan Recognition Award, and in 2013 he was awarded the Brisbane City Council

Senior Citizen Australia Day Award.

Dale Borgelt reminds us that Graeme's career, and his continued hard work into his '90s, continued to attract much press attention. Dale recalls that, "in 2009, Channel 9 Extra wanted to film a feature story on Graeme. Typically, this did not go quite to plan. No matter how hard the interviewer tried, Graeme managed to steer the story towards MCCG, what it was doing for the environment, and the work being done in his section."

We have so much to celebrate in our 20th year (2017) thanks to the tireless support and work of members such as Graeme Wilson.

WILSON, Graeme Langdon (26.09.1917 - 14.12.2016) Passed away peacefully, still living in his home as he always wanted, with his Wife and Family by his side to support him. An extraordinary Man who led a full and distinguished life. A talented athlete, a Rhodes Scholar, a highly respected academic, a passionate environmentalist, an x-POW and survivor of Changi and the Burma Railway, a former Senior Citizen of the Year, a natural and admired leader whose advice and opinion was often sought and generously offered, and a loved and treasured Husband and Father. Graeme will be dearly missed by his Wife, Joy and three Children, Alan, Barbara, and Andrew, and their Families. Also missed by the many people whose lives he touched and enriched, his Students, his Colleagues, and his Friends. A private Family Cremation will be followed in the New Year by a Memorial Service to celebrate his extraordinary Life.

(Published in [The Courier-Mail](#) on 16/12/2016)

Memorial service: Centenary Memorial Gardens, 353 Wacol Station Road, Sumner. 13th January, 2017 (2pm).

Rainforest Regeneration

Peter restores what he helped to destroy more than 50 years ago.

More than 20 early bird MCCG members and nearby residents (pictured, page 1) recently toured the extraordinary and ongoing rainforest regeneration project undertaken by Peter de Jong on his 7.8ha property at Upper Brookfield. Well-known and respected throughout the area (including his role as President of the Upper Brookfield Community Hall Trust), Peter arranged the visit and subsequent Hall breakfast to help broaden the appreciation, knowledge and management of such a large revegetation project.



One of 13 children, Peter's family purchased 170 acres of Upper Brookfield farmland in 1952. Three of the boys were tasked with clearing the pristine rainforest slopes to farm the fertile volcanic red soil. While the family's pawpaw, bananas, and small crops were eagerly sought (and kept the family going for years), it was a painful legacy. Many great trees, like this 400-year-old Moreton Bay fig (pictured above), were consumed by the pioneering axe- and cross-cut wielding de Jong boys. Now, wielding a brush hook to clear lantana, carrying a knapsack to control weeds, and adopting a systematic approach to planting and maintenance, Peter has transformed his property once again. The project began in 1998 with the signing of a Voluntary Conservation Agreement with the BCC by

Peter and his wife Sigrid. Since then almost 17,000 rainforest species have been planted and maintained, mainly by Peter. And he has not finished yet, having just ordered another 1000 of the 3000 trees still to go in before he'll be satisfied that he's restored the most vulnerable parts of the property. In the meantime he's been planting out neighbouring properties and riparian zones.

Everything about the project is stunningly larger than life—especially the man doing it, 74-year-old Peter de Jong. At the same time, his reasons for embarking on



the transformation are personal. For Peter, the reforestation is a gesture of atonement. As a teen and young adult in the '60s and '70s he was handed a brush hook, and an axe, and told to clear everything that could grow something else. After many years he left, became a successful real estate

businessman, bought back more of the original farm and decided to give it, and the neighbourhood, a second life.

Peter reckons he could not have achieved the current transformation without his farming background. No shrinking violet, he'll use whatever mechanical and chemical means necessary to achieve his goals. And while he insists this is not about him or Sigrid, his determination to give nature a second chance has been dramatic. Even in the midst of a two-year fight with lymphoma, he was still out there—scaling the slopes in his weakened state. Frustrated that he was getting behind schedule, walking stick to maintain balance in one hand and the wand of a half-filled knapsack in the other, he continued to maintain his "flock" of flora.

He now seeks to protect the property in perpetuity, looking for a legal mechanism that's more robust than the VCA to ensure his legacy is not diminished...to ensure a future of many more 400-year-old fig trees.

Andrew Carroll (pictures: Kate McVicar)

Errata: Spring 2016 Newsletter Apologies

Page 3 (6 lines from foot of page) 'emu grass' should read 'Embu panic grass'.

Page 4 (lines 6/7) should read as follows: 'There are two local species which do *not* retain their leaves in winter...'

Weed Alert: Broadleaved pepper.

A number of visually appealing plants are restricted invasive species. Here is some information from *Bryan Hacker* on another exotic needing removal.

After recent minor floods along Moggill Creek I was surprised to find a leafless branch laden with small, red fruit, left in the flood debris. Following discussion with fellow MCCG members we agreed that it was broadleaved pepper, *Schinus terebinthifolius*. This exotic tree is a significant weed and seedlings are quite commonly to be found in our catchment. Its common name is associated with the leaves and fruit giving off a pepper smell when crushed.

Broadleaved pepper is a tree with spreading branches, growing to a height of about 16m. The leaves are very distinctive, with 2-4 pairs of opposite stalkless leaflets and a terminal leaflet (see photo, below). The flowers, male and female, are in panicles at the end of branches, the five whitish petals about 2mm long. These are followed by spherical red fruit about 6 mm in diameter. Like many of our serious weeds, this species is native to South America, occurring naturally in Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay.



Broadleaved pepper is a restricted invasive plant under the *Biosecurity Act 2014*. It must not be given away, sold, or released into the environment without a permit. Adapted or highly adapted to coastal and subcoastal regions of Queensland, it extends from Cape York into NSW, and is naturalized in south-west WA. This species has distinctive foliage, and there is no risk of confusing it with any desirable native.

And what about the species name? Referred to in the Bible (Genesis [ESV] 35:4, in the King James version translated as 'oak'), it seems the terebinth is a Mediterranean tree, *Pistacia terebinthus*, in the same genus as the pistachio nut tree.

Bryan Hacker

Seed Search: Many-flowered mat rush

Bryan Hacker writes about an attractive plant which is yet to be available through our nursery. Do members have any seed to share from *Lomandra multiflora*?

Most of us are familiar with *Lomandra longifolia* and *L. hystrix* but there are several other species of *Lomandra* in our district, including *L. multiflora*, which is quite common as an understorey plant in eucalypt



woodlands. Plants form quite dense clumps, with long, narrow leaves up to 90 cm long but just 2-4 mm wide and with a rounded tip (in contrast to several other species in the genus). Like other species of *Lomandra*, this species has male and female plants, and this year the male plants were quite spectacular in spring, with their showy flower heads up to 90 cm tall (see photo, above). In contrast, flower heads on female plants are much less obvious, with just a few flowers which in time produce fruit about 5 mm long (see photo, below). Flowers on both male and female plants are tiny and yellow in colour.



To many this species appears to be a grass, but the grasses are in a quite different family, the Poaceae. The genus *Lomandra* has been ascribed to various families but is now considered to be in the Asparagaceae; in

the popular reference book *Mangroves to Mountains* (published 2008) the genus was (then correctly) ascribed to the family Laxmanniaceae. Further back, when Volume 3 of *The Flora of South-eastern Queensland* was published in 1989, *Lomandra* was included with the grass tree genus in the Xanthorrhaceae. Back to our *Lomandra multiflora*—it is a remarkably hardy species, tolerating drought, infertile soils and shade more than most species. Unfortunately it is difficult to collect seed—perhaps the bandicoots find it before we do—so we have never had it on offer at the nursery.

Bryan Hacker

Bryan advises the Nursery team always need more seed-collectors (and not just for *Lomandra multiflora*). Keep your eyes open for fruiting native trees in your neighbourhood, watch for when the seed is ripe and then collect. If unsure of the species, please also bring a small leafy branch along with you.

MCCG Nursery

Most MCCG members will be aware of our Nursery, located at the end of Gold Creek Road. Seed is collected by several enthusiasts and working bee volunteers twice a month aim to sow collected seed and pot up seedlings once germinated and grown to a suitable size. Tubestock is then made available to members for their revegetation projects. We do not charge Members for this service – it is part of our stated goal to protect and restore our natural native environment.

If you want plants please phone (3374 1468) or email (jbhacker@powerup.com.au) to arrange a time to collect your plants.

A visit to the Nursery can be a good experience for members and their families of all ages. For the young there are opportunities for castle-building with our store of flower pots while their parents are discussing the merits and attributes of particular plant species (see Lisa Lahey's photo, left). How tall does it grow? Can it stand full sun? Does it attract birds or butterflies? For the nursery attendant one of the most encouraging aspects is when members return (as they often do) saying how well their previous collection of plants from the Nursery has established. With rare exceptions, all the species we distribute from our Nursery (and every year we give away up to 15,000 plants in 200 species) should be well adapted to local conditions. But we do need to be aware of differences in soil type, aspect and whether the target site is up



towards a ridge or on lower slopes towards a creek. Exchange of information is a way we all learn.

Although we are primarily aiming at restoring local native vegetation on acreage properties, there are also opportunities on smaller properties, creating 'pollinator corridors,' as an aid for smaller wildlife, birds, bees and butterflies, to move freely through built up areas.

Bryan Hacker

Cottage Talks: An Update

Dale Borgelt organises a fantastic program of Thursday talks at our Gold Creek Road Cottage. Dale reminds us that these are highly popular events, and are exclusive to members, due to the limited available space. Experts present information on locally relevant biodiversity (subjects including beetles, bees, birds, butterflies, figs, flora, frogs and fungi). Talks are held on Thursdays (10am-12noon), with a cuppa and something to eat afterwards. A chance to meet fellow members, and learn more about a topic you are interested in. Early bookings are encouraged as space is limited. **Contact Dale** to reserve your place (daleborgelt@gmail.com or call 0408 741 035).

Coming events

16th FEBRUARY: *Having an Eco friendly garden in the suburbs* (Dr Sue Turner)

16th MARCH: *Who lives here? Spotting fauna clues and creating more habitat niches at home.* (Leah Hattendorff, Creek Catchment Officer)

20th APRIL: *Nuts, leaves and bark—Your Eucalypt decoding clue* (Leah Hattendorff)

For more information on forthcoming events, why not check our website or Facebook page? We also aim to report back on events in the newsletter, including the recent talks on Koalas and Cane Toads (below).

Koala Catch-up

Douglas Kerlin joined MCCG members at the Cottage for a Spring talk about Koalas (more in our next newsletter). If you are keen to ensure your property includes suitable trees for Koalas, why not look at the AKF brochure for a list of trees suitable for planting in our region (BCC is on p125 of the 2015 AKF National Koala Tree Planting List, available at www.savethekoala.com).



Cane Toad Challenge

Margaret Palmer shares some extra information about the Cane Toad Challenge, following the September Cottage Talk.

Professor Rob Capon, of The University of Queensland's Institute for Molecular Bioscience (IMB), gave a fascinating presentation about a promising new project which is seeing thousands of Cane Toad tadpoles collected and destroyed (see also page 8, Spring 2016 newsletter). Professor Capon explained why the toads are so dangerous. The toxic secretions of the Cane Toad (*Bufo marinus*) contain a soup of chemicals, including some which cause cardiac malfunction. Another component, adrenalin, makes these cardio-active toxins even more effective. These bufo toxins are stored in vesicles. When the toad squeezes its vesicles to exude venom, the bufo toxins mix with an enzyme contained in glands at the opening of the vesicle ducts, making the venom 100 times more toxic than that stored in the vesicles. Our speaker reassured his audience that this control method is harmless to other species, none of which is attracted to the traps. Unfortunately the approach is less effective in running water, and is not feasible in large areas such as Kakadu. One particularly

fascinating fact included in the talk was the information that the flower heads of the imported weedy succulent mother-of-millions (ruthlessly weeded by environmentally aware gardeners!) contains the same venomous compounds as cane toads, and work is underway on the practicalities of extracting these chemicals from the flowers and using them instead of toad venom. More information, and the opportunity to participate in the cane toad challenge project, can be found at www.imb.uq.edu.au/canetoadchallenge.

Margaret Palmer

Photography Competition Report

Our annual competition attracted over 180 photographs this year—so our judge, Dr Joseph McDowell, had to make some very tough decisions. Congratulations to all of the winners—including Kenmore South State School (Schools category, see picture page 1), and John May (Supreme Exhibit—pictured, below, receiving his prize from Warren Hoey). The display at Kenmore Village Shopping Centre drew the crowds, with over 500 votes cast for the People's Choice award (won by Ed Frazer, with his picture of a very inquisitive Kookaburra, see page 1). All of the winning photos will be displayed on the MCCG website, so do visit www.moggillcreek.org for more. Thanks again to Dale, all of our entrants and winners, the wonderful stand volunteers, and our competition organisers (Robyn, Bruce, Jocelyn, Janine, John & Geoff), for all playing a part in promoting interest in the native flora and fauna in our catchment. We are particularly grateful for the support of our sponsors and supporters who enable us to present over \$1,500 in cash prizes: **All Seasons Garden Management, Aussie Beaver Chipping, Brookfield Produce, Halfwaytree Photography, Ingredients Deli, Kenmore Fresh, Kenmore Village, The Local Bulletin, Moggill Constructions, The Pet Chalet, Cr Kate Richards (& the Lord Mayor's Suburban Initiative Fund), Dr Christian Rowan MP, Water Solutions, and Westside Printing.**



Membership Fees Due!

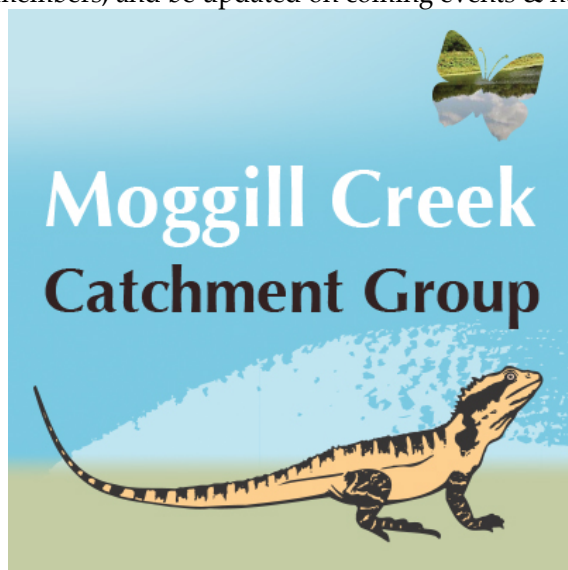
Yes, it's that time of year already.

Membership fees (\$20 per person) are now due—unless you have recently joined or renewed. Renewal forms for existing members are issued with this newsletter. Remember, there is the option of paying by direct deposit.

Do encourage friends and family to join us. New members can complete the application form at www.moggillcreek.org

Facebook Keeps MCCG in Touch

Over 300 members and friends of MCCG already follow us using Facebook, thanks to the hard work of Janine Nicklin (MCCG Facebook Editor). For those members who have yet to 'like' our Facebook page, Janine provides this quick overview. A great reminder of how easy it is to keep in touch with fellow members, and be updated on coming events & news.



MCCG started publishing to Facebook on 20 June 2015. Almost 18 months later we have 300 people who have 'liked' our page and who follow the activities and events of the MCCG. Women make up 69% of the people who like our page. For both men and women who follow us, the largest single age group are those in the 35-44 age range (18% female, 7% male). The vast majority of our followers are located in Australia—but we also have 3 friends in the UK, 4 in USA, 2 in France and one from each of Switzerland, Japan and Colombia!

For those yet to visit our page, here are a few tips:

If you do not have a Facebook account: Facebook accounts are free (visit www.facebook.com for more

information). But even if you do not have an account you can also see the page at this address:

<https://www.facebook.com/moggillcreek/>

If you have a Facebook account, our Facebook page can be found by logging onto your account, and then typing 'Moggill Creek' into the search bar. You will know you are in the right place when you see our profile picture (pictured below, left).

Liking the page: Once on the page - to LIKE the page you just have to click on 'LIKE'. You will then become one of the 300+ followers informed by the page.

Event alerts: Once you have 'liked' the page, why not go to the 'events' button. Click the 'subscribe' button and you will automatically receive alerts about all of the events posted for our Facebook page, telling you about the interesting events you can attend e.g. talks on fauna, flora, regeneration; working bees that are coming up; competitions; surveys (bird, water quality, platypus) and training events. These might be related to our catchment or to the broader Brisbane area.

Sharing your news: If you feel you have an event, a piece of interesting news (something you have discovered, regeneration work you are doing on your property, a plant or insect or animal that you want identified, etc) please do one of two things:

- Send an email (mccgfacebook@gmail.com) to suggest the post you want to appear on the Facebook page. Include a two or three short sentences, and don't forget to add an interesting photo or two to illustrate the story (pictures are a real bonus, and attract more attention).
- Go to the Moggill Creek Catchment Facebook page and *write a post on the page*, including your photos (to make it more interesting). Someone from Moggill Creek, or the followers of the page, will respond to your post.

Next time you are on a walk and find something interesting, share it with MCCG! You will be amazed by the interest and responses you will get!

Janine Nicklin

Newsletter

Membership dues fund the costs of the printing and distribution of our newsletter. Members can opt-in to reducing our footprint by requesting a full-colour version of the newsletter by email only. *To request your copy*, just email mccgsecretary@live.com.au. Please ensure you confirm your name and current postal address, and note 'newsletter by email only' in the subject line of your message.