

MINUTES OF ECCO GENERAL MEETING, JUNE 22 2011

Present: Edward Thornberry, Tony Lodge, Bill Josh, Vicki George, Rose Middleton, Rosemary Stapleton, Brian Kellett, Peter Baxter, Colin Foster, Brian Phillips, Jenny Smith, Tony Smith, Jenny Kellett, Roger Smith, Dorothy Hoye, Bob Hoye, Nick King, Neil Jones, Peter West, Phil Stephenson

Apologies: Simon Wright, Susan Sanders, Matt Jeffrey, Stephen Nugent, Beverly Alexander-Fish

As the June general meeting was a public meeting about the parks of Orange, there was no ECCO general business conducted. The following is a report on the public meeting.

The meeting was addressed by Mr. Roger Smith, the Natural Resources Co-ordinator for Orange City Council. Part of his role is the co-ordination of volunteer groups.

Also addressing the meeting was Mr. Bill Josh, who manages the Parks Alive program and is the team leader of Conservation Volunteers.

The Parks Alive Program:

Involves 914 community volunteers, responsible for generating 2,742 hours of volunteer labour in the past year.

The Parks Alive program has a working bee once a month at a designated site. Information about these working bee days can be obtained from Orange City Council, or from reading Bill's Parks Alive column each Wednesday in the Central Western Daily.

The program involves a wide range of volunteers, from interested individuals, to school groups, to groups attached to such areas as the Orange Botanic Gardens, the Glenroi Community Gardens, and large areas of public green space such as Jack Brabham sports ground, Gosling Creek, the Kearney's Drive detention basin, Somerset Park constructed wetland, to name but a few.

Each year Parks Alive provides the driving force behind Orange's response to National Tree Day, July 31. The site targeted for this year's National Tree Day is Ploughman's Valley constructed wetlands.

The main function of the Parks Alive program is the establishment of a site through planting and maintaining trees until they become established. Hopefully the community will then assume responsibility for ongoing maintenance.

Bill has noted that there are individuals who live near parks and areas of open space who take responsibility for the maintenance of their park.

Community groups for each park: If the neighbourhood parks which have recently been under threat are to be made safe from future threats of reclassification, it is important that each park have a local community group which is involved in its

development, maintenance and advocacy. Each park is unique and offers something special to the local community. If parks are to remain useful and relevant to each community, it is necessary for the community to become involved in decisions about their park. Bill has agreed to meet on site with advocates for their local park to discuss their suggestions for any development or proposed future park maintenance, and also how individuals and groups can become involved. Those members wishing to contact Bill can do so through Orange City Council.

Identified advocates for individual parks:

So far we have advocates for Sir Neville Howse Park, Froglet Park, Ooranga Playground, Larance Park, Withington Park, Kearney's Drive, Cypress Park, Amani Place, Rose Park, Alua Playground. More are required. Anyone wishing further information about parks advocacy contacted Nick through the ECCO email address.

Bill's Bush Tours: Those who wish to see what has been achieved through the parks Alive program are welcome to Join Bill on his bush tour, which takes place on the second Tuesday of each month, leaving the Orange Visitor Information Centre at 11 am. You will be taken on a tour to current sites being developed by the Parks Alive program. You will also see established sites completed and maintained by the program.

Coming events: ECCO committee meeting for July on Monday, July 11 at 6 Pasadena Place,. commencing 7.30 pm. Agenda attached.

July 31. National Tree Day.

Nick King Secretary.