



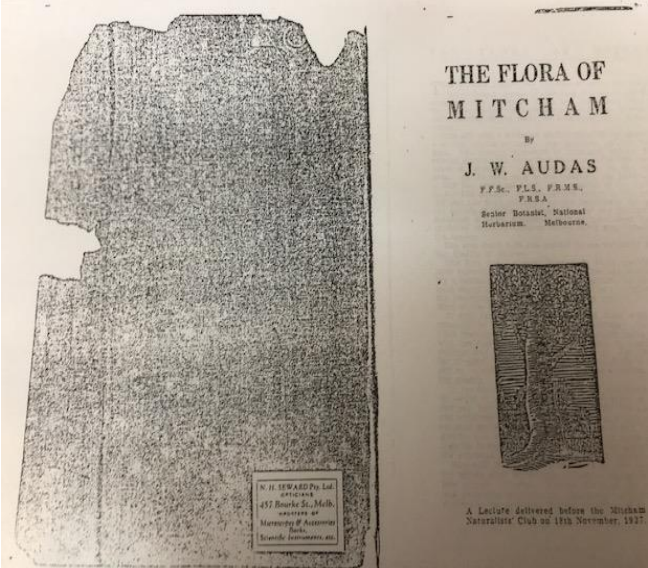
The History of Yarran Dheran Nature Reserve

The name 'Mullum Mullum' is believed to derive from the Wurundjeri meaning of 'place of many eagles' or 'place of many butterflies' while the name Yarran Dheran is believed to derive from words meaning 'wattle valley'

A. EARLY HISTORY

	For thousands of years, members of the Wurundjeri-willam clan of the Woi wurrung language group visited this area twice a year, usually in spring and autumn. At these times men hunted game in the low, open forest and caught fish and eels in local streams; women gathered plant foods and other materials from the diverse natural environments. They had a detailed knowledge of the environment and were able to use the range of plants in the area for food, shelter, medicine, canoes and implements. They did not perceive themselves as owners of the land, but rather as a part of the environment ⁱ
1850	Before the first freehold land sales in the Nunawading area took place in 1850, the area was mostly involved with timber and charcoal products. It was easier to transport charcoal than timber on bad roads and a number of charcoal burners operated in the area ⁱⁱ <i>The arrival of European settlers brought the first major change in attitude to the environment. Settlers needed to conquer and tame the wilderness in order to survive. An ideology of progress was reflected in the exploitation of the land for human benefitⁱⁱⁱ</i>
1861	August Schwerkolt arrived in this remote and isolated area and acquired land now broadly including Yarran Dheran, Schwerkolt Cottage precinct and Antonio Park.

<p>1885</p>	 <p>A section of the bullock track which is being restored by the Council and which forms part of Yarran Dheran</p>	<p>In 1885 August Schwerkolt built a cottage for his family from stone taken from the Mullum Mullum Creek, about 2km upstream of what is now Yarran Dheran Reserve.</p>		<p>Schwerkolt made a living initially as a charcoal burner but also set up a farm with cattle, poultry, beehives, grape vines for making wine, and fruit trees. August won an award for the best colonial wine at an exhibition in Amsterdam in 1882</p>
<p><i>Source: Whitehorse Historical Society</i></p>				
<p>1887</p>	<p>After August's death his second wife Wilhelmina sold some of the property to various families, including to the Antonio family.</p>			
<p>1893</p>	<p>A significant portion of Schwerkolt's land was quarried. Schwerkolt's youngest son Carl Benno Schwerkolt operated the quarry with G Turner and was paid for road metal used in Whitehorse Road by the Nunawading Council in 1880 and 1893^{iv}</p>			
<p>1936</p>	<p>While the Antonio family used the land for farming and survival, Alf Antonio demonstrated a deep love for his bushland environment and lamented the loss of the bushland as it was being transformed by development and progress. His sons shared his love for the land and were later to be instrumental in the formation of Antonio Park and Yarran Dheran as nature reserves to be used for passive recreation^v</p>			

<p>1937</p>		<p>J.W Audas, Chief Botanist of the National Herbarium delivered a lecture to the Mitcham Naturalists Club entitled <i>The Flora of Mitcham</i>^vThis continues to serve as a key document identifying indigenous plants in the North Mitcham area, and is presumed to include the Yarran Dheran area. Over 350 plant species were listed</p>
<p>1953-5</p>	<p>John Thomas Antonio and Ernest Antonio donated parcels of land to Nunawading Council for the purpose of their preservation as natural bushland^{vii}</p>	
<p>1958</p>	<p>Ernest Antonio approved the sale of some of the land donated to the Council for the proposed Antonio Park Primary School, provided that the proceeds were spent on the acquisition of replacement park land. The replacement land acquired in this way became part of Antonio Park and was called <i>The Newlands</i>. This name continues to be used more than 50 years later</p>	
<p>1962</p>	<p>Bushfires destroyed part of the natural vegetation as well as a pine plantation in Yarran Dheran planted by Mitcham Primary School children in the 1930's</p>	

Source: Yarran Dheran Information Centre

1963

The City of Nunawading Municipal Tip which had been operating in Yarran Dheran closed, with Yarran Dheran by this time being littered with car bodies, broken concrete and ... *overgrown with blackberries and noxious weeds and infested with rats...*^{viii}



Source: Paul Thompson, private collection



Source: Whitehorse Historical Society



Despite its use as a quarry and a tip, Yarran Dheran and the creek continued to be an irresistible place for play and adventure for local children and the local community. Local scout and guide groups used Yarran Dheran as an outdoor adventure area. The Deepdene Rover Scouts used the cliffs of the quarry for abseiling in the early 1950's.

Source: John Addie, private collection

B. DEVELOPMENT OF THE RESERVE

1967	Ten acres of Crown land formerly owned by Schwerkolt were set aside in Quarry Road as a site for a public park (Gazette No 89) and regulations promulgated in 1968, emphasising that its focus was to be on passive recreation. Nunawading Council considering replicating Maranoa Gardens in Balwyn which had been established for the formal exhibition of native plants in the 1890's
1969-70	Following representations from the community, the Blackburn and District Tree Preservation Society was appointed by Nunawading Council as the committee to investigate several sites for the location of a botanic garden similar to

	Maranoa Gardens. It was ultimately decided that while Yarran Dheran was an excellent site for a botanic garden, it was more appropriate as a less formal natural bushland reserve
1970	A report from the Blackburn and District Tree Preservation Society and community members, including John Addie and the initiating committee ^{ix} , outlined the advantage of Yarran Dheran as the location for a native plants reserve, with the focus to be ... upon a passive form of development, and upon the preservation of natural features, flora and fauna.... ^x Nunawading Council designated the area 'Yarran Dheran Reserve.' The name 'Yarran Dheran', meaning 'Wattle Gully' was adopted as the name for the Reserve
1971- 3	A Committee of Management for Yarran Dheran was formed. Paul Thompson, landscape designer, was commissioned to develop a master plan to further develop the concept, produce detailed plant lists, working drawings and cost estimates.
1972- 1994	The process began with the construction of entrances and major earthworks for driveways, carparks and pathways, a toilet block and a store shed. An open space picnic area was constructed. Work was done on the layout and pathways ¹ . Three phases, over nine years, brought the park to completion. The first tree was planted by the Mayor of Nunawading and 100 trees were planted by 100 children as part of centenary tree planting marking the centenary of the City of Nunawading. ² While the report by Audas (1937) was used to provide an authoritative starting point, the plants that were used in the park were not necessarily indigenous to the Nunawading area, rather they were Australian plants '...known to flourish in the city of Nunawading area.. ^{xi} A detailed card system was established to monitor the success/ growth/ failure rates of all plantings ^{xixiii}

¹ Paul Thompson reviewed his original master plan with recommendations for ongoing maintenance, in Thompson, Paul – Landscape Designer, *A report on the Development of Yarran Dheran*, Yarran Dheran Information Centre papers, 1985

² Over the next decade, some 40,000 trees and shrubs were planted





The first planting took place on the old tip face in 1972, comprising 1200 Manna Gums, *Eucalyptus viminalis*, which aimed at stabilising the site for subsequent work.

A fern gully consisting of a rainforest type environment and a waterfall were designed by Robert Boyle in 1979, with a water reticulation system laid to pump water up the hill from the Mullum Mullum Creek through three ponds at the top of the waterfall. The ponds and water reticulation systems were installed in 1982. However, the poor quality of the clay lining of the ponds led to water evaporation and plastic membranes were installed. Pumping water from the creek to reticulate through the ponds back to the creek ceased as a result of changed regulations in the 1990's and the ponds began to rely with limited success on storm water diverted from nearby streets

John Addie from the Committee of Management and John Brandenburg (Nunawading Council) continued as the driving forces behind the development of Yarran Dheran until 1994. During this time, a member of the Committee of Management, Ken Le Gassick first proposed a link between Antonio Park and Yarran Dheran along the route of the small stream running from Antonio Park, crossing under Wattle Valley Road to Yarran Dheran³

³ A link between the two Reserves was created by City of Whitehorse in 2020, using the property at 21 Wattle Valley Road

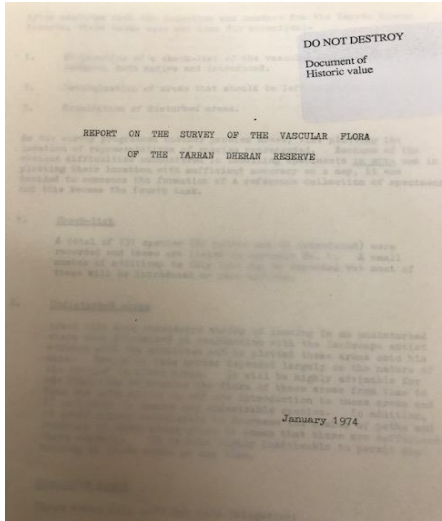
The Committee of Management ceased operation in 1995 due to lack of members but continued informally as a Friends group

Nunawading Council gave substantial support, including funding, to Yarran Dheran in these years. Up to five Council workmen were employed in the Reserve at different times, under the State Government Employment Grants Scheme. Other organisations provided support as well. The Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works (subsequently Melbourne Water) built the creekside bluestone retaining wall and the then Victorian Railways supplied the rock for the Information Centre from a dis-used railway cutting^{xivxxvi}


However, the amalgamation of local councils appears to have caused significant loss of momentum for the further development of Yarran Dheran. The City of Nunawading was abolished in 1994 and was merged with the City of Box Hill to become the City of Whitehorse, with a change of focus for Council on implementing organisational structures over the next two years to 1996.



Source: John Addie Private collection

<p>1973</p>		<p>A plant census was undertaken by botanist A.B. Court from the National Herbarium,^{xvii} as part of a submission by the City of Nunawading to the National Estate Programme⁴, which sought funds for purchase of land, development, establishment and maintenance of bushland and facilities in Antonio Park, Schwerkolt Cottage and Yarran Dheran. Additional land was purchased in Nara Road and Wattle Valley Road as a result, but proposals to purchase land in Casella Street and Collina Glen appear not to have been supported. This is unfortunate as the proposal would have seen... <i>a continuous open space walkway from Dalmor Avenue to Deep Creek Road...</i>^{xviii}</p>
<p>1975</p>	<p>An environmental and ecological study of the Mullum Mullum Valley was carried out by the then Country Roads Board as part of the Ringwood Road Study. The study produced data on vegetation, native orchids, birds, native landscape quality, mammals, aquatic ecology and an overall assessment of the relative ecological value of the area, which resulted in a rating of 'Highly Significant' and a rating of 'High' for landscape quality^{xix} for the Mullum Mullum Valley. A <i>Flora and Fauna Assessment</i> was undertaken by Botanicus Australia Pty Ltd in August 1998 and in 2002 Brian Pell compiled a comparative document which listed the plants found in Yarran Dheran in the three surveys – a valuable source indicating plants found at each of the surveys and plants which had been lost</p>	

⁴ The term 'national estate' was used to describe a collection of buildings and sites that were worthy of preservation for a variety of reasons. It covered natural environments as well as European history and indigenous culture. Grants of money were allocated by the Australian government subject to specific criteria and Nunawading Council had been successful in obtaining grants in 1973/4 to support development at Blackburn Lake Sanctuary. The Register of sites was frozen in 2007.

<p>1980</p>	<p>The Yarran Dheran Information Centre was officially opened, following its design by Marion Lester (architect) and Kevin Parker^{xx}. The Reserve itself was declared open by the Mayor of Nunawading Council on 3 August 1980 with Charles McCubbin as keynote speaker ⁵</p>	
<p>1980 ff</p>	<p>The Centre was made open to the public on both Saturdays and Sundays, staffed by volunteers, from the Committee of Management and the Friends of Yarran Dheran. In reflection of Council policy at that time, during the 1980's the Centre was widely used as a community hall and was hired out for a wide range of extremely successful social events, popular for its bush setting and its isolation. This changed after 2000 as suburbia crept into nearby streets and the Centre found itself with neighbours close by. Numbers of available volunteers dwindled over the years. After 2002 the newly established Yarran Dheran Advisory Committee found itself able to open the Centre to the public on a more limited basis. The relative isolation of the Centre meant that the public were largely ignorant of the existence of the Centre, and to meet its role of fostering an appreciation of the environment in the community⁶, the Committee introduced an annual events program in 2013 comprising expert presentations and guided walks. A Friends group was established by the committee in 2002 to conduct monthly working bees for planting and weeding. The very active Friends group continues in this role to the present time.</p>	

⁵ Charles McCubbin was an eminent naturalist, painter and entomologist

⁶ As defined in the Terms of Reference applied to the Yarran Dheran Advisory Committee by the City of Whitehorse

1981



A small colony of five koalas, relocated from the overcrowded French and Phillip Island nurseries was established in November 1981. Koalas were known to have lived in the Mullum Mullum Valley in the 1930's and the abundance of swamp and manna gums in Yarran Dheran and surrounding bushland was considered to provide suitable habitat^{xxi} Koalas were seen to use the Mullum Mullum Creek as a corridor to and from the Yarra River at Templestowe until 2012 and regular sightings of Koalas were reported by the community until then. No sightings



have been reported since 2012.

A small colony of sugar gliders was also established with nesting boxes in the old growth forest in the 1980's. Sugar Gliders continue to be found in Yarran Dheran to the present time

**1988-
1993?**

The Junior Field Naturalists program was conducted in Yarran Dheran, led by Libby Atkinson, Ian Balshaw and local environmentalist Cecily Falkingham. Some 32 children aged between 5 and 15 regularly participated in the range of programs offered⁷



⁷ The focus of the Yarran Dheran Advisory Committee on supporting environmental education for children was re-kindled with the introduction of the Rangeview Pre-School Bush Kinder program by Lucy Menzies (Whitehorse Environmental Education Officer), beginning in 2016



A school group at Yarran Dheran in 1994

C. PROTECTION OF THE RESERVE AS A PLACE FOR PASSIVE RECREATION

<p>1969</p>	<p>Eastlink as a section of the M3 Freeway was first shown in the 1969 <i>Melbourne Transportation Plan</i> as the F35 Freeway and was planned by the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works to be within the general alignment of the Mullum Mullum Creek valley. The precise location of the freeway was an unknown factor in the early stages of the Yarran Dheran Reserve project. Three local environment groups merged to form the Mullum Valley Freeway Action Group to oppose, and simultaneously contribute to, the initial planning of the alignment. This process enhanced the concept of active community consultation on major roadworks under the jurisdiction of the Country Roads Board (CRB). Years of contention about the proposal followed, amid ongoing concerns over environmental damage in the Mullum Mullum Valley and the possibility it would lead to a ‘complete’ metropolitan ring road which would cut through green wedge zones in the non-urban areas of eastern metropolitan Melbourne .</p>
<p>1996 ff</p>	<p>Numerous environmental groups in Melbourne’s east and south-east suburbs objected to what was described as the Eastern Ring Road project. Objections raised included concerns about vehicle emissions and disruption of habitat in places like the Mullum Mullum Valley.</p>
<p>1998</p>	<p>The road was the subject of an extensive <i>Environmental Effects Statement</i> (June 1998) The statement predicted an 18.5% increase in carbon dioxide, impacts on groundwater and wetlands, high impacts on areas of conservation value and the potential to affect 38 species of rare or threatened fauna and flora if the freeway was built</p>



Source: *Whitehorse Gazette* 10 September 1997 p. 8

Publicity described Yarran Dheran as a place of diversity and bushland tranquility and the Centre a useful tool for students and people interested in the natural bush environment

1998-2000

The CRB's Environmental Impact Statement was followed by an extensive public hearing process in 1999 with the intention of providing the basis for a final government decision to proceed.

The freeway was strongly opposed by a range of groups, including the Public Transport Users' Association on the basis that it would result in public transport alternatives such as the proposed Rowville railway line being scrapped. This proved to be the case.

The *Friends of Yarran Dheran* was established to protect the Mullum Mullum Valley together with strong support from Whitehorse, Maroondah and Manningham Councils and the Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF). The Eastern Freeway Tunnel Project established itself to conduct a campaign for 'the long tunnel option' to go under the valley, and in so doing, protect bushland in Hillcrest, Yarran Dheran and Chaim Court as well as housing in Savaris Court Donvale. It facilitated meetings and was supported by a range of community groups, including the Koonung Mullum

Forestway Association, the ACF Mullum Branch and Greenlink Box Hill. Groups and individuals campaigned tirelessly for the tunnel option with vigorous community support. Support also came from the local Councils as well as politicians including the Victorian Planning Minister Robert McClelland

Confusion about the proposed freeway and community unrest continued. The Department of Infrastructure developed cost estimates for the proposed Eastern Freeway extension, including the option of building two 1.6km tunnels to protect the Mullum Mullum Valley. The Victorian government announced in 1999 that the freeway had been scrapped in favour of supporting public transport proposals

<p style="text-align: center;">Save the MULLUM</p> <p style="text-align: center;">PUBLIC MEETING</p> <p style="text-align: center;">7.30 pm WEDNESDAY 4th AUGUST 1999</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Waratah Room, rear of Whitehorse Civic Centre Maroondah Highway, Nunawading (Melway 48 G 9)</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">GIVE THE MULLUM MULLUM A FUTURE</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">EASTERN FREEWAY TUNNEL GROUP</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Public Meeting</p> <p style="text-align: center;">7.30 pm WEDNESDAY 22nd MARCH 2000 Mullauna Secondary College Hall (Mitcham High School) 456 Springfield Road, Mitcham (Melway 48 J6)</p> <p>The Eastern Freeway Tunnel Group (EFTG) (representing many local conservation groups) will be holding a public meeting to help inform interested people about the four government tunnel options for extending the Eastern Freeway to Ringwood. In order to help save the Mullum Mullum Valley from devastation, EFTG will also provide assistance for people wishing to make submissions to Government. The meeting will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview (with maps) of the four Government tunnel options • Panel of experts to answer questions relating to the options and the broad environmental issues including: Flora & Fauna experts, CSIRO Air Pollution expert, and the Halcrow Pacific Engineer • Assistance with preparation of submissions to Government <p style="text-align: center;">Save the MULLUM</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Support LONG-TUNNEL Option 3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The ONLY option that will provide the most protection for the Mullum Mullum Valley</p> <p>For further information please contact:</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td>Jim LeCornu</td> <td>9802 0794</td> <td>Jane Pammer</td> <td>9844 4370</td> <td>Richard Casey</td> <td>9872 4785</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>0373 3358</td> <td>Alistair Mailer</td> <td>9850 5338</td> <td>Mary Symons</td> <td>9890 2647</td> </tr> </table>	Jim LeCornu	9802 0794	Jane Pammer	9844 4370	Richard Casey	9872 4785		0373 3358	Alistair Mailer	9850 5338	Mary Symons	9890 2647
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Vow to preserve valley

1/1/2014

Call for 'long-tunnel' option

By FAYE MICHELSON

ABOUT 500 people last week vowed to "take all necessary action" to preserve the Mullum Mullum Valley.

A public meeting last Thursday at Nonsuch Road in Vero Beach, a suburb proposed to be built on the Eastern Freeway, drew the best news since forest would destroy the valley.

The Mullum Mullum Valley's 200-acre, mostly valley forest, is a remnant of the original forest which once covered the area. It is one of the last remaining in Australia.

The meeting was organized by the Eastern Freeway Tunnel Project, in cooperation with the Australian Conservation Foundation, Facilitator Chris Ashby described it as "probably the most vocal environmental meeting to be held regionally for decades."

Held at the Whitehouse Centre, it followed a similar meeting the previous week in neighboring Mooroolbath which attracted more than 150 people.

"It appears the State Government is very close to a start on the Eastern Freeway extension."

The irreversible destruction that will be caused by VicRoads' extension through the valley with the 'tunnel' option is making many people very angry," he said.

"There is a strong feeling that the government would be making a decision against the community's interests if it chooses that option."

Mr Ashby said the meeting passed state resolutions:

- recognizing that the Mullum Mullum Valley must be preserved as a matter of priority;
- calling for the government to abandon the VicRoads extension through the valley and adopt the long-tunnel proposal;
- vowing to take all necessary action to protect and preserve the priceless Mullum Mullum Valley;
- Koorring Promenade MP Bruce Ashkinson supported the call;
- "If a tunnel can be achieved at a reasonable cost, we would be foolish."
- Council's stand: Page 13



Eastern Freeway plans for review

by CHRIS TINKLER

TRANSPORT Minister Peter Batchelor has sent plans for the Eastern Freeway extension back to the drawing board.

A government spokesman confirmed last week that Mr Batchelor was unhappy after seeing the independent report on the extension, commissioned by the Kennett Government.

Victim MP Tony Robinson, parliamentary secretary for State Regional Development, said the new Labor Government to what was the best option for the region.

Robinson said the report's to list the cost of options by VicRoads, examine a 'other options and come 'optimum' long tunnel

at it contained detailed

No road: Savaris Court residents, whose houses would be bulldozed under one freeway extension option. Picture: ANDREW BROWN/BILL 121 140518

of that option at this stage," said Mr Robinson.

However, he said, the report did establish how to accurately cost the options.

ations, and costings of all extensive alternatives.

Mr Robinson expected to at least "half a dozen" options considered, including five suggested by the Australian Conserva-

Andrew GRAND
 The Report
 Normal Price \$2.995
 Covering State Police
 Queen Bed Set
 Pillow Top Matt
 Alarm Clock
 Copier/Scanner
 12 YEAR
 Millennium
 50 Year
 Historic
 Organ
 Road

Bruce Atkinson
for
Koonung
Province

LIBERAL
VICTORIA

Andrew Munroe
for
Mitcham

Vote Liberal for the freeway extension!

The extension of the Eastern Freeway from Springvale Road to Ringwood is the most important local issue in this election.

If Andrew Munroe and Bruce Atkinson are elected in a Liberal Government on September 18th, work will start within weeks on the extension to the freeway. Traffic snarls on all the major roads and through traffic in local residential areas will be dramatically reduced.

The Kennett Liberal Government has already committed \$255 million to the extension in the last budget based on a plan that includes a tunnel option through sensitive bushland areas.

The independent candidate in Mitcham may support a construction compromise but has a preferred position of no freeway extension. The Greens and Democrat candidates in Koonung Province are also against the extension of the freeway.

And Labor and its candidates have refused to give a commitment to build the freeway extension. It was not included in their policy speech and has not been mentioned in local campaign announcements. Remember the Cain/Kirner Labor governments refused to build the freeway from Doncaster to Springvale Road and wanted to sell off the land.

Voting for Labor or other non-Liberal candidates at the State Election on September 18th could see the Eastern Freeway extension stalled at Springvale Road. You could be voting for increased traffic congestion and more through traffic in residential streets!

...most important issue in this election, you get a road block from ... Freeway extension!

Grave threat to Mullum Mullum Valley

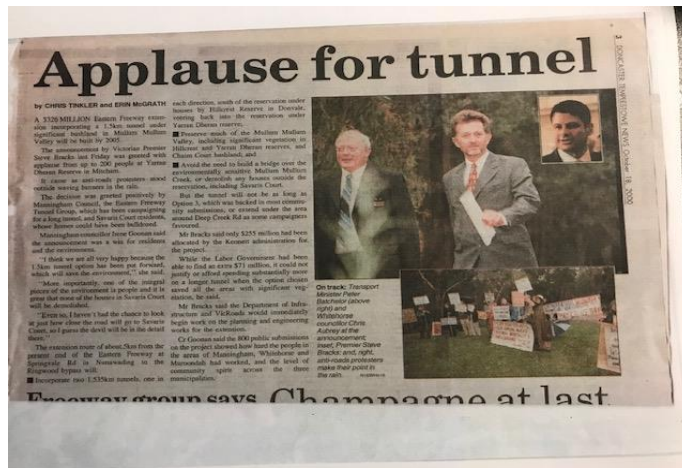


Why building a long freeway tunnel is a better decision, and how you can show your support

2000

The tunnel option was finally accepted as a political decision in the face of unrelenting community opposition. As part of an election promise by the Victorian Labour Party, the Victorian government announced that it would seek federal funding support for building Eastlink, with the 'long tunnel' option to be included.

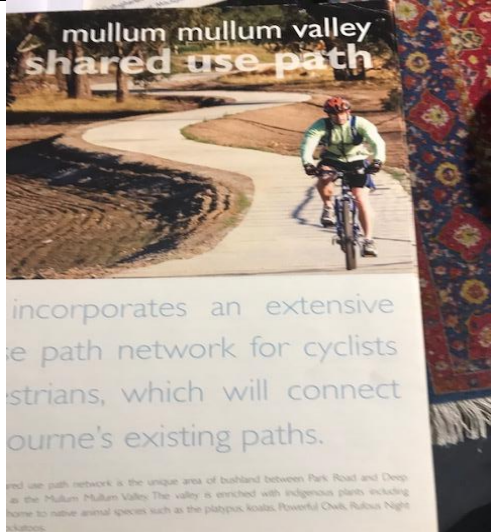

It was agreed that the tunnel would protect the length of the Mullum Mullum Valley, with portals at Park Road and Deep Creek Road – a remarkable win for environmental interests, successful only because of the overwhelming level of community support it had achieved. Up to 200 people packed into a marquee in Yarran Dheran for the announcement, to hear Premier Steve Bracks announce the freeway option, a \$326 million extension featuring a 1.5 km tunnel on 11 October 2000 as anti-roads protesters stood outside waving banners in the driving rain. Transport Minister Peter Batchelor described the announcement as ... 'a victory for local residents, a victory for the environment and a victory for common sense...' Whitehorse Gazette, 18 October 2000 p. 1)



2001

University of Melbourne academic Paul Mees launched legal action at the Federal Court seeking an injunction under section 475 of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 to prevent Vic Roads from *'taking any further action relating to the construction of the Scoresby freeway or the Eastern Ring Road'* alleging that the freeway would threaten migratory bird species, plant species and wetlands, and that the freeway was part of a larger plan to build a metropolitan ring road to Greensborough. The court case heard the claim that such a freeway would damage the environmentally sensitive green wedges through either Eltham and Warrandyte or Heidelberg and the Yarra Flats. State government bureaucrats removed references to the ring road from a draft Metropolitan Strategy as a result⁸.

⁸ However, the Victorian government under Daniel Andrews committed itself in 2018 to building the North East Link if it was victorious in the election that year

<p>2001ff</p>	 <p>incorporates an extensive path network for cyclists and pedestrians, which will connect Melbourne's existing paths.</p> <p><i>Source: Mullum Mullum Valley Shared user Path, brochure, Thiess John Holland [nd]</i></p>	<p>Options for the bike path to accompany the freeway were considered, arousing significant levels of controversy before the Eastlink Trail opened on 15 September 2017 as a 35 km shared walking and cycle path which follows the Eastlink Tollway from Mitcham to Dandenong.</p>  <p><i>Source: Yarran Dheran Information Centre, Fairfax Community Newspapers [nd]</i></p>
<p>2003-4</p>	<p>The Southern and Eastern Integrated Transport Authority (SEITA) was established by the Victorian Government to manage the project. It awarded the contract for the design, construction and operation of Eastlink to Connect East who contracted Thiess John Holland to carry out the detailed design and construction of the controversial road, now declared to be a tollway rather than a freeway and with two tunnels under the Mullum Mullum Valley.</p>	
<p>2005- 8</p>	<p>Work began on the road and the tunnels under Yarran Dheran by Connect East and Eastlink was opened in June 2008. ConnectEast is the owner of the road and is responsible for its day-to-day management until the concession deed expires in 2043</p>	

Whitcham Weekly 1 November 2006

Fairfax Community Network

News



Keeping the green in valley

THE Mullum Mullum Valley will be protected from future development, with the State Government handing over management of the land to Parks Victoria. Premier Steve Bracks announced funding of \$2.5 million to manage and improve the bushland and enhance visitor amenities and information. The project includes building playgrounds, picnic facilities and a walking and bike trail.

At last: EastLink tunnel concreter Nigel Daly takes the first steps from the Springvale Road end of the Mullum Mullum tunnel into the Deep Creek Road section. Picture: Julie Boyer

When tunnels meet

By Danielle Butcher

SPECTATORS were smothered in a cloud of dust last Tuesday as the remaining 30 centimetres of rock separating the Mullum Mullum east-bound tunnel was removed. Premier Steve Bracks gave the order to start the final stage of digging, say-

ing a significant part in protecting the Mullum Mullum Valley. "The reason we are tunnelling here is because we want to protect the environment. Of course, if you look originally at the Melway there was a reservation and a route which went through the Mullum Mullum Valley and of course the bushland above us."

Head of tunnelling at Springvale Road, Matt Phelan, said he was honoured to be one of the first men to take the first steps through the wall. "Because of the ground conditions and the strength of the ground it has taken a long time to get to this point."

Yaman Dheran Advisory Committee president Gay Gallagher said while the committee was happy that money was being invested to protect the area, the group strongly opposed a shared-use path. "How responsible and safe is for planning authorities to



2009	<p>Changed management responsibilities were agreed between the City of Manningham, the City of Whitehorse and Parks Victoria in relation to the component areas of the Mullum Mullum Valley. Parks Victoria acquired responsibility for Chaim Court bushland, on the northern side of the creek as well as Hillcrest Reserve to Parks Victoria through the creation of Mullum Mullum Park, while the City of Whitehorse elected to retain Yarran Dheran.</p>
2020	<p>The City of Whitehorse agreed to demolish the dwelling at 21 Wattle Valley Road Mitcham and to re-vegetate the land to create a link between Yarran Dheran and Antonio Park</p>
Yarran Dheran today	<p>The Mullum Mullum Valley is recognised environmentally as forming part of a significant wildlife corridor along the Mullum Mullum Creek, downstream to Templestowe and the Yarra River. The creek is one of the few urban creeks in Melbourne that has not been barrelled or channelled. The creek, the ponds and the bushland in the valley provide habitat for a wide range of wildlife, some of which is unique within Whitehorse.</p> <p>Yarran Dheran is enjoyed by the community for its bushland. Its environmental values form the basis of a range of environmental activities and programs led by Whitehorse, the Yarran Dheran Advisory Committee, and the community</p>



Working bee, 2020



Bush Kinder group 2016



School group, 2020

Challenges for the future

Ongoing issues are pollution and litter which is washed down the creek from upstream, weed control, improving the health of the ponds, and the need to monitor the former tip face for possible gas emissions together with the challenges associated with its revegetation
From an environmental perspective, the current fragmentation of responsibility is arguably not in the best interests of the Mullum Mullum Valley

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- ⁱ Presland, Dr Gary, *The Land of the Kulin*; Melbourne, Penguin Books, 1985
- ⁱⁱ Whitehorse Historical Society, *Nunawading Pre-history, Beginnings and Growth*, 2021
- ⁱⁱⁱ Jeffery, Jennifer, *Changing attitudes to conservation and the environment reflected in the sites of Antonio Park and Yarran Dheran*, Whitehorse Historical Society, [nd]
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