

Recognition at last for creek volunteers

Leader - Northcote Leader (Melbourne, Australia) - Wednesday, May 29, 2002

LOOKING after the Merri Creek became a passion for **Carolyn Lunt** when she saw a neighbour throwing rubbish into its waters.

``I pulled out the rubbish and threw it back into the neighbour's yard," Ms Lunt said.

``But after six months of repeating this cycle I decided to make the creek into a beautiful place where no one would want to throw rubbish."

For 20 years, Northcote's Ms Lunt and a group of volunteers have worked every Friday to replace weeds with indigenous plants along the creek's banks.

Earlier this month Darebin Mayor Vince Fontana recognised Ms Lunt and her band of 10 volunteers with the unveiling of a plaque acknowledging their 20 years of voluntary work.

``We've saved the council hundreds of thousands of dollars in the work we've done managing the weeds," Ms Lunt said.

The group, formerly known as Friends of Ross Street, is now called Friends of Merri on Parade.

They meet every week between 10am and 2pm.

The group also has community planting days every 10 weeks on a Sunday and holds other events.

``We are establishing habitats for platypus, the white faced heron, blue tongued lizards, white tailed rats, the white striped mastiff bat and growling grass frogs and other creatures which once lived on the creek," Ms Lunt said.