



FRIENDS OF VICTORIA GARDENS

NEWSLETTER

MAY 2010

Dear Member,

It is almost 6 months since the last Friends activity and this is our first newsletter for 2010. Over 30 Friends gathered in the back garden of Peter & Jenny Legge's for the annual Christmas party held on 4 December. It was interesting to see Victoria Gardens from a different position with the mighty Lemon-scented Gum dominating the view. A special thankyou to Peter and Jenny for providing this lovely venue.

We are now well into 2010 and fortunately Melbourne avoided a repeat of the severe summer of 2009. In fact we exceeded the average rainfall for March (almost on one day), but unfortunately April was dry and warmer than average. The Gardens are showing signs of this long dry period, especially the oval which is now very patchy. The Friends were advised in March of Council's intention to remove a Box Elder (*Acer negundo*) from the Lumley Playgrounds. This tree on the High Street frontage was removed in early May.

Of greater concern is the condition of two London Plane (*Platanus x acerifolia*) trees to the west of the steps near the fountain planted around the edge of the sunken oval. Both trees are about half dead, including the trunk. While some branches have been removed, other branches have continued to die back. It is unknown why these Plane trees have declined but it is interesting to note that about 4 years ago a large Turkey Oak (*Quercus cerris*) was removed from the south side of these trees. Increased exposure, extreme heat, and obviously the dry conditions have all contributed to the trees decline. The Plane trees will require removal in the near future.

The decline and loss of mature trees is now being encountered all over Melbourne. There are many Elm trees in serious decline and the Planes trees are suffering from several years of drought and the extreme temperatures of 2009. An extra \$7.2 million was added to the City of Melbourne's 2010-11 draft budget to remove and replant trees. Under the program 900 trees will be removed and 1500 new trees planted. (Age 11 May 2010). Let's hope there are no further trees losses in Victoria Gardens. It is pleasing to see the South African Willow growing well and has about doubled its size.

NEXT MEETING

DATE & TIME: Wednesday 26th May, 2010 at 7.45pm

LOCATION: Prahran Club, 258 High Street, (corner Hornby St), Prahran

Agenda Items:

Appointment of Secretary (Newsletter editor/Minutes secretary)

AGM meeting

FoVG records

Other Business