



# FRIENDS OF VICTORIA GARDENS

## Newsletter September 2014

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**Secretary & Public Officer: Denise Saville**

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**Dear Member,**

I am writing this Newsletter on a day that the weather forecast in Melbourne is for sunshine and 21 degrees. Winter finishes on Sunday but while we might complain about grey skies and wet cold weather compared to many other cities Melbourne, has a mild winter. Already we have had a number of sunny days and wattles, magnolias, flowering plums and daffodils have been flowering well since mid-August. If you are near the Prahran Railway Station take time to enjoy the spectacular *Acacia boormanii* (Snowy River Wattle) growing at the south end of the City bound platform (west side). Melbourne has once again been listed as the world's most liveable city and our parks, gardens and street trees make an important contribution to our liveability and health.

### Spring into Gardening

**The 2014 Spring into Gardening will be held on Sunday 12 October from 11am.** This annual community event is a major activity for the Friends and again we will be calling on members to assist with the stand, to promote the Gardens and the role of the Friends.

If you can assist can you please contact **Vihra Migios, ph: 9529 1959 email: vmigios@gmail.com**

### RSL Memorial Redevelopment and Bruce Kingsbury statue

Following the successful May meeting with representatives from Stonnington City Council and the subsequent tabling of their report to Council (August 2014) we can look forward to seeing exactly where the redevelopment will occur. Meg Jones (SCC) has advised that the site will be marked-up in the first week of September, and we urge members to have a look prior to the start of the necessary work. In case this is not done before our September 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting, and should you wish to comment on the mark-up of the site, please contact Vihra on 95291959 or vmigios@gmail.com with FoVG in the subject line.

As for the commemorative statue to Bruce Kingsbury VC, the matter is not longer an issue for the FoVG as Stonnington Council has accepted our recommendation that they seek another site. It took a while for us to be heard, but heard we were!

### Introducing our New Treasurer

We look forward to introducing members to our new young Treasurer, Leila Gardner who has taken over from Jennifer Withecomb after 15 years as Treasurer. Leila works as a Reception/Marketing assistant and studying Journalism via correspondence. Having lived around the Prahran/South Yarra areas for over five years, Leila has developed an affinity with the gardens through regular walks around the area with her family, who live in Bella Street. Leila hopes to recruit some young members to join the Friends during her time as Treasurer.

Welcome Leila!

## Victoria Gardens 1887

The ability to search the digitised newspaper database (TROVE) of the National Library reveals interesting information on Victoria Gardens. One such entry from "A Lover of the Beautiful" appeared in *The Telegraph, St Kilda, Prahran and South Yarra Guardian* on Saturday 18 June 1887.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>THE VICTORIA GARDENS.</b> <i>To the Editor.</i></p> <p>SIR,—Seeing a paragraph in your last issue that they were beautifying the above gardens, I wended my way to the locality expecting to see something grand. To my surprise I found the two principal sights had already been named, the one Mount Folly and the other Lake Forbes. (I presume you were not invited to partake of the champagne, or you would have mentioned it.) Before proceeding further, let me say I am not one of the grumblers who object to having <u>Public Gardens</u>; I have always thought Prahran was a long way behind other places in this respect; and it is a great pity ground was not secured earlier, when we could have had recreation places suitable, and on a scale worthy of so great a city. My objection, Sir, is not to the gardens, but to the way in which they are being laid out. The design might have</p>	<p>passed had the ground been twenty acres instead of four. I know there are certain classes who should not see things half done; but I also know that an ugly thing however much adorned cannot be made to look well. I must confess to be unable to describe this wonderful Mount as it should be done, and would therefore request all your readers, who are interested in the welfare of their city, to come and see for themselves. It is a huge mass of earth some twenty feet high stuck in a corner of the ground; and when I saw it they were placing stones on one side fearing there might be a landslide some day. A short time ago an old gentleman (evidently not a Prahranite) asked me if it was a railway embankment they were making, and where it was going to. With regard to Lake Forbes, it covers a great part of the place, and though it had a lot of water in it, still it was scarcely deep enough to invite his Worship the Mayor and Councillors to a row on it.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Yours, &amp;c., <b>"A LOVER OF THE BEAUTIFUL"</b></p>
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"Mount Folly" seen in the photograph below continued to be criticised and was eventually removed in the 1930s. As for "Lake Forbes" this is the sunken oval and an important feature of the nineteenth century design. The soil from the oval was used to build the mound and is not dissimilar to the lake and mound in the Ripponlea Gardens.



### NEXT MEETING:

**DATE & TIME:** Tuesday 2 September 2014 at 7.45pm

**LOCATION:** The Studio, 64 Bendigo Street, Prahran (opposite the Flying Duck)

You are encouraged to attend and are welcome to raise any issues on the Gardens and the Friends activities. Our next event is *Spring into Gardening* on 12 October.