



FRIENDS OF VICTORIA GARDENS

Newsletter March 2015

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Dear Member,

Just a few days into autumn and there is already a feeling of cooler weather and dew in the mornings. For the first time in many years Melbourne did not experience a day over 40 degrees, and only about 4 days the temperature reached over 38 degrees, 100 degrees F in the old scale. The benefit from a cooler and regular rain was that the Plane Tree leaves remained on the tree and remained green. The past few summers saw many leaves burnt and fall to the ground by mid January and the oval turned brown and dusty. Rainfall and the new irrigation system kept the oval grass green and well covered.

Spring into Gardening

A very successful Spring into Gardening was held on Sunday 12 October 2014 in delightful weather. Large numbers of people arrived to collect their free punnets of plants and enjoy a wonderful community event. The Friends stand attracted a lot of interest and 11 new members, 10 of which were families joined. The raffle was won by Peter Legge and raised \$185. The raffle ticket was selected by a passer-by (see pic below) so rest assured our hands were not in the hat! A special thank you to Peter & Denise Saville, Peter & Jenny Legge, Jill & John Hawker, Nobby Seymour, Vihra Migios and Jennifer Withecomb for their assistance on the day.



Jenny Legge and Vihra Migios with raffle drawer

Christmas Party

On Sunday 14 December the Friends gathered in the Gardens to celebrate Christmas and what was a very successful year. Sam Hibbins, the newly elected Legislative Assembly representative for Prahran joined in the celebrations, as did the usual suspects.



For something different we ran a small photographic competition of members' favourite views of the Gardens. The competition was judged by Kevin Birks and was won by Peter Legge (with specific artistic direction from Jenny who has an eye for such things).

Kevin's comments are worth nothing *"A well-composed image, which encapsulates a sense of peace and tranquillity, We see artefacts of the past. Through the image of the child, one establishes a continuum to remind us of the importance of preserving what we have, so that future generations will have access to this unique urban oasis."*



Two other images were considered worthy of comment with Nobby Seymour's 1992 image of Opera in the Park reminding us that this event has become not only a fixture in February each year but also as Kevin put it "The image is a "Straight " documentary image of the event. This image personifies how "Victoria Gardens" has become a focal point / venue for the community to come together in an informal way to celebrate and share in the performing arts."



Jennifer Withecomb's image of the fountain led Kevin to comment, "The image of the elegant fountain uses a simple composition representing the links with the past. It reminds us of the foresight previous generations had, when creating this open space for communities to come together and enjoy."



Thank you again Kevin for your participation in this inaugural event! Kevin has recently retired from teaching photography at the Photographic Imaging College (<http://pic.org.au>).

RSL Memorial Upgrade

After much discussion during 2014 and reviews of the original proposal, final design plans for the upgrade of the RSL Memorial were agreed with in October 2014 following a site meeting with Council's Landscape Architect Simon McKenzie-McHarg. The final changes included that the two Northern and Western walls will now extend to meet at the North West corner. These will be timber clad. The wall extending out from the memorial has been reduced from 1m to 50cm and the garden bed edge behind realigned.

In early January the Friends were advised that the works were to commence on the 12 January 2015. The contract was awarded to PTA Landscapes Pty Ltd and the improvement works include;

- Installation of paved surface
- Installation of seating and plaque wall to the edge of the garden bed
- Additional planting
- Refurbishment and minor relocation of the flag pole and cenotaph



RSL Memorial works 11 Feb 2015

NEW Treasure wanted

After many years our wonderful treasurer Jennifer Withecomb is intending to move on to other interests and we need to find a new Treasurer. Jennifer has offered to assist with the transition and make it as easy as possible for the new person. If you can spare a few hours during the year to manage the membership and finances, and it's not especially onerous, then please contact Vihra or Jennifer over the next 2 months.

Feedback

If you have any matters you want to raise or suggestions for the Friends to follow up please feel free to contact Vihra Migios, ph: 9529 1959 email: vmigios@gmail.com

STOP PRESS:

A very rare large shrub has just been identified in the Gardens by the Royal Botanic Gardens. It's a *Diospyros dichrophylla*, Poison Star Apple and is growing beneath the south Lemon scented Gum in the east shrubbery (has grey-green olive like small leaves). More about this important discovery in the next newsletter

NEXT MEETING:

DATE & TIME: Tuesday 14 April 2015 at 7.45pm

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