



FRIENDS OF VICTORIA GARDENS

Newsletter September 2015

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Dear Member,

Garden Inspection Report:

On Thursday 21 May an inspection of the Gardens was conducted between Rebecca James, Steve Watt & Glen Anderson from the City of Stonnington and Vihra Migios, Denise Saville, & John Hawker representing the Friends. Members offered suggestions and raised a number of concerns which were discussed during the inspection. These included;

1. Lumley Playground, weeds, poor condition of lawn and need for shade
2. Public toilet condition poor
3. Poor condition of High Street beds and inside entry
4. Tree removal and replanting required
5. Weed control required, annual weeds and woody weeds
6. Ring-barking lawn trees
7. Sunken oval seat surrounds in poor condition
8. Loss of fence and building screening along east and west boundaries.
9. Interpretation sign required

Over the past 2 months significant improvements have been made in the Gardens and Lumley playground. This has included removal of annual weeds, Kikuyu, ivy and many woody weeds, mainly pittosporum, ligustrum (privet), cotoneaster, and Celtis australis (Nettle Tree). Trees and shrubs in poor condition or dead have been removed and many new trees and shrubs planted. This includes planting along the western and eastern fences to provide more screening. The planting includes 2 new cypress propagated from the cypress removed from near the noticeboard. In the Lumley playground a Chinese Elm and an English Oak will be planted to provide additional shade. Many beds and lawn specimens have been mulched.

Extensive gardening has occurred in the south eastern corner where over grown shrubs have been pruned, Ginger Lily cutback and thinned and ivy removed. New colourful plants and shrubs have been introduced and an Erythrina crista-galli planted. A Gallipoli Oak (*Quercus calliprinos*) has been planted behind the RSL memorial and behind the southern shelter a South African Willow (*Combretum caffrum*) planted. The increased level of maintenance and the new planting is most welcome.

A trial will be undertaken to determine the best way of managing the seat area around the sunken oval. The large bare patches are a major visual impact on the quality of the Gardens landscape. A path to the playground from the oval path will also be investigated. Further projects include the removal of a suckering bay laurel in poor condition and further depot screening. A proposal to review the 1989 master plan and the 2000 management plan was discussed. An information sign, similar to signs in Malvern Gardens and Hedgely Dene will be investigated.

New Treasurer

The Friends were fortunate to have Jill Hawker nominate for the vacant treasurer's position at the AGM. Jill can be contacted on (03) 9510 5012 or emailed at jhawker@bigpond.net.au. After 16

years Jennifer Withecomb can now have a well-earned rest. The Friends are greatly thankful of Jennifer's many years of valuable service and a passionate Friend of the gardens.

Spring into Gardening:

The City of Stonnington's gardening and sustainability festival ***Spring into Gardening*** returns to Victoria Gardens on **Sunday 11 October between 11am and 3pm**. The festival has free demonstrations and works shops by industry experts, and market stalls, and free plants to Stonnington residents. The Friends will again be present to provide information of the Gardens and the work of the Friends.

If you can help with the Friends stall can you please contact Vihra Migios, ph: 9529 1959 or email: vmigios@gmail.com

Suburbs at War:

This is the title of a new book commissioned by the City of Stonnington and written by historian Helen Doyle traces the local contribution to the war and fundraising activities. Victoria Gardens played an important role in recruitment and at a public meeting in 1915 the organisers urged local men to meet in the Victoria Gardens and join in with the 'drilling'. The Prahran City Council also set up a temporary miniature rifle range on vacant land in Yarra Street, South Yarra so that men could practice shooting targets.

At the end of the war, Victoria Gardens was the venue for a 'United Civic Service of Thanksgiving' when a crowd of 10,000 people gathered on 17 November 1918, the first Sunday after Armistice Day. The local bands provided the music, and local parliamentarians and Protestant clergymen addressed the crowd.



Thanks Giving Service
held in Victoria Gardens
on 17 November 1918

From *Suburbs at War*, 2015

Sold at all Stonnington
Libraries for \$29.95

NEXT MEETING:

DATE & TIME: Tuesday 8 September 2015 at 7.45pm

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