



FRIENDS OF VICTORIA GARDENS

Newsletter November 2016

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Dear Member,

Spring into Gardening on Sunday 9 October:

What a day, but for all the wrong reasons! The weather forecast was not good with rain and strong winds predicted. For those setting up their display there was a bit of wind in the morning to contend with but the biggest challenge was all the dust and the Plane Tree fruit fibres floating in the air causing nearly everyone to start coughing. It was very unpleasant. But the day got worse, with severe winds arriving around midday and by 12.30pm the Council told all exhibitors to pack up and leave as the weather was going to deteriorate even further.

The Age reported that there were 3200 calls for help, over 1200 trees were blown down, more than 100,000 homes were without power, and sadly 1 person was killed in their home by a fallen tree. The top wind gust was 122km/hr at Mount Hotham at 4.30pm.

We did have a raffle and I'm pleased to report the first prize of 2 indoor plants was won by Nobby Seymour and second prize of a book by a local resident. We also gained a new member. Welcome to Nicola Farrell. The Friends stand was helped by Denise and Peter Saville, Nobby Seymour, Jill and John Hawker.

Garden News:

The Friends have been in regular contact with Council to keep progressing the works identified in the site inspection held on 11 May 2016. A summary of these works include removal of Box Elder and Privet seedlings, removal of Blackwood and Paulownia suckers, cleaning up recent poor pruning to the Coral Tree, removal of failing Bottlebrush beside Italian Cypress on the west boundary, removal of creepers and ivy, removal of low branch on Chinese Elm beside light pillar and dead Celtis branch over pergola at the High Street entrance, and formative pruning of the two rare Long-leaved Figs, *Ficus maclellandii*.

The need to install possum guards on the young Kaffir Plum *Harpephyllum caffrum* in the east shrubbery was also identified (see over page).

On the 31 October we were advised of a major branch failure to the French Hawthorn (*Crataegus x lavalleyi*) beside the RSL memorial (see over page). This has now been removed and the memorial tied up.

A highlight in the Gardens at the moment are the impressive displays of white and blue violas in the bed near the High Street entrance and the parterre, along the Iceberg roses and the spectacular tall Gymea Lily (*Doryanthes excelsa*)



In September the Friends raised the issue of new landscaping west of the parterre bed. The "Chinese" themed design and planting was work that had not been discussed and was not in keeping with the important Gardens landscape. Last year a bridge suddenly appeared. The Park's Unit has agreed to *remove items pertaining to the 'Chinese Garden' style, specifically the rocks, bamboo and logs.* Further planting will be undertaken in order to maintain the recommended layering effect, which will block the direct view to the paling fence. It is unfortunate that these so called "improvements" but inappropriate works are being done when the most fundamental gardening and weed control is not occurring to large parts of the Gardens.



Christmas Party:



- **Sunday December 11th**
- **3.00pm -6.00pm**
- **Near RSL memorial in Victoria Gardens High Street entrance.**
- **B YO drinks, plate to share, picnic rug/chair and friends and family.**