



# FRIENDS OF VICTORIA GARDENS

## Newsletter March 2021

**President: John Hawker**  
**Secretary: Denise Saville**  
**Treasurer: Jill Hawker**

**Email:** [info.fovg@gmail.com](mailto:info.fovg@gmail.com)

**Website:** [www.fovg.org.au](http://www.fovg.org.au)

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### **Dear Member,**

Victoria Gardens has continued to experience high usage by the community and has become a popular place for picnics, play and family gatherings. The upgraded Lumley Playground has been very popular. The Gardens have generally coped well with this increased use over summer although the central area of the sunken oval is now looking stressed.

Melbourne experienced a very unusual summer with just 4 days over 30°C in December, maximum 33°C and 42°C mm of rain, January 6 days over 30°C, maximum 39°C and 88mm of rain, with 42mm in one day, well above average and in February just 2 days above 30°C but only 9mm of rain. There were no days above 40°C and February was much cooler than normal, which was fortunate given that rainfall was much less than average. The final week of February was cool, ranging from 18-26 and it felt as if autumn had arrived early. The cooler and wetter summer saw lawns remaining green and many plants putting on lots of growth and not being destroyed by the extreme heat.

### **Committee:**

At the delayed AGM on 24 November Vihra Migios chose not to seek re-election and John Hawker has taken on the role of President. Vihra has contributed significantly to the work of the Friends over the past 8 years. Her persistence and strong advocacy for Victoria Gardens will be missed. Projects included:

- Upgrade of the RSL Memorial and garden
- A \$20,000 Council grant to repair the two shelters, marble plaque and new information sign
- Sunken Oval upgrade and watering system
- Upgrade of the Lumley Playground, with support from Amy Lee
- Initiation of the Garden Volunteer program, with support from Alex Ralton
- Council policy development on Dogs in Public Places, and enforcement issues
- Celebration of the 30 years of the Friends in 2018
- Development and the launching of the Friends website

### **Stonnington Website:**

Council has upgraded their website information on Victoria Gardens with reference to the important history of the Gardens, features and planting and the work of the Friends in supporting the Council. If you have any comments on this site please email the Friends.

Visit [Victoria Gardens City of Stonnington](#)

### **Environment Unit:**

The Sustainable Environment Unit at the City of Stonnington invited John Hawker from the Friends of Victoria Gardens to take part in a community engagement *All About Gardens* project on Thursday 18 February and speak on the history, features and trees of Victoria Gardens. These monthly events were born out of Stonnington Council's transition to online events through COVID-19 restrictions. Further information on the "Engaged" program is available at: [Engaged programs and events City of Stonnington](#)

The Friends have been notified of Council's development of a **Community Vision 2040** plan for Stonnington. The Council is undertaking extensive consultation with our community to hear what you want for the future of this city and then Council will create a plan that gets us there. As part of this process, Council held a conversation about climate action and sustainability on Thursday 18 February. If you want to share your thoughts on the future of our city, complete the [online survey](#) or share on our [ideas board](#) on the Council website.

### **City Nature Challenge:**

The purpose of Council's City Nature Challenge event in May, using the iNaturalist app is three-fold:

1. to get people out and observing/connecting with nature (i.e. looking more closely at natural phenomena)
2. to help people learn about species around them (plant or animal) and over time distinguish native and exotic/introduced species (the app suggests ID for photos submitted that include a summary about suggested species origin, distribution, characteristics)
3. to contribute to an overall picture of biodiversity across the city, which includes a mixture of plants and animals, both native and exotic

If you, your children or friends wish to participate and become a *Citizen Scientist*, visit the [City Nature Challenge – City Nature Challenge](#)

### **Prahran High School gift:**

Discussions have been held with principal Nathan Chisholm and are ongoing.

### **Volunteer Program:**

Inquiries have been made with Stonnington Council about recommencing the program. A response is yet to be received.

### **Plant News:**



4 February 2021

A major landscape feature of the redeveloped RSL Memorial, which was officially opened in April 2015, is the row of red standard rose planting behind the seating wall. The colour is a deep, rich crimson-pink, taking on a tinge of mauve just before the petals drop. There is a light-medium fruity scent. The rose has high disease resistance and is dense flowering over a long period in summer.

The rose is *Rosa* 'Darcey Bussell', a repeat flowering English bush rose bred by the famous David Austin nursery and released in England in 2006. The rose is named after Darcey Bussell, the highly acclaimed ballerina. She was appointed principal at the Royal Ballet at the age of 20 and has danced in the title role of many ballets around the world. She has been honoured with many awards, including the OBE in 1995.

**Next Meeting: Tuesday 23rd March at 7.45pm** at 64 Bendigo Street, Prahran

Meeting dates for 2021

- Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> July (after our AGM on the same night)
- Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> September
- Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> November