



FRIENDS OF VICTORIA GARDENS

Newsletter March 2020

President: Vihra Migios
Secretary: Denise Saville
Treasurer: Jill Hawker

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Dear Member,

We have just been through arguably the most devastating summer on record. The word most commonly used to describe the period is unprecedented, resulting in the loss of life, townships, homes and destruction of large areas of forest and wildlife on the east coast of Australia, Tasmania and in the Adelaide Hills. Fortunately, Melbourne and the surrounding forests have not been impacted by fire, but there were several days when Melbourne recorded the worst air pollution in the world from smoke haze and there were two separate days of severe dust that saw Melbourne covered in red mud following weather changes.

February has been unusually cool when compared to the past few years. No days over 34° C, and a few days below 20° C, and importantly we have received 68mm of rain which has maintained our parks and gardens in good condition. This followed January rainfall of 115mm which is more than twice the average of 47mm. However, December 2019 was extremely dry and hot with 3 days over 40° C, and only 6mm, when the average is 59mm. Of major concern, 2019 was one of the hottest years on record.

Volunteer Program:

The Council has agreed to support the Garden Volunteer Program and the recommencement date is **Saturday 4 April between 9am to 12pm**, and will be followed with a BBQ. Council has issued volunteer guidelines and includes;

- The gardener in charge will provide a briefing / introduction to the day's activities at the start of each volunteering day.
- Volunteers must only undertake agreed / approved activities – as directed by Council and on the day by the gardener in charge – and must not under any circumstances undertake non-approved activities or use any non-approved tools etc.
- All volunteers must be aged 18 or over or under the supervision of a parent / guardian.
- All volunteers must have read and signed the following two documents; Risk Assessment document and Site Induction document.
- FOVG must maintain a detailed record of all volunteers participating in the program including personal details.
- FOVG to provide a simple mechanism for volunteers to be clearly identified on the day – eg a name tag, coloured tag, FOVG badge or other mechanism to help maintain clarity of who is an approved volunteer on the day
- FOVG is fully responsible for the conduct and wellbeing of its volunteers on the day

The program will be held on the first Saturday of every month. If you would like to stay involved with the volunteers progress you can follow us on www.instagram.com/victoriagardensvolunteers
For more information contact Alex Ralton, ralton@hotmail.com ; phone 0437 178 403

Stonnington Website:

The Friends have asked Stonnington Council to upgrade 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.

Dog Survey:

Council meeting on 16 December 2019 resolved to respond to the Dogs in Public Spaces consultation as follows:

1. NOTE the report on the outcome of the recent community consultation undertaken, regarding the public perceptions and experiences of safety between dogs and people in public places, for discussion.
2. AMEND the Council Order pursuant to section 26(2) of the Domestic Animals Act 1994, by deleting clause 7. (Remove the 4 dogs per walker limitation).
3. WORK with Professional Dog Walkers; by forming a focus group with them to identify and manage issues of concern.
4. EXPLORE with the Professional Dog Walkers' Focus Group possible advocacy to the Victorian State Government on regulation of professional dog walkers.
5. Continue to SUPPORT dog ownership with ongoing maintenance of off lead and on lead parks; bins and bags in streets and parks; clearer signage; education; and compliance.

Copy of the Survey compilation and link to Council meeting is available on request from info.fovg@gmail.com

Lumley Playground Upgrade:

Alex Hogan, Landscape Architect provided the following information on 3rd February:

"Following recent confirmation of play equipment install dimensions, we are now looking to finalise the design this month. Once the design is finalised, a notification will be distributed to key stakeholders, the local community and also park users. We will then produce construction documentation, prior to seeking Contractor quotes. It would be difficult to confirm a construction program prior to receiving Contractor's quotes.

Whilst we are still looking to undertake the works as part of the 2019/20 financial year, play equipment elements from Europe will not be available in late April/early May, so it would be safe to say that construction will not be commencing before such time. Once we have a Contractor on-board, we'll provide further construction information to the community – especially regarding playground closure and reopening".

Membership:

Renewing your membership is very easy. We look forward to your ongoing support and involvement with the Friends

Membership Fee: **\$10 Individual and \$15 Family**

Financial Year July 1- June 30

Account: Friends of Victoria Gardens Inc. BSB 083 427 Bank NAB Acc # 43 521 3152

Please email us at info.fovg@gmail.com with the subject line "FoVG Treasurer" and write your name and phone number, so that we can acknowledge receipt of your membership.

Next Meeting:

Tuesday **3rd March** at 7.45pm at 64 Bendigo Street, Prahran, opposite the Flying Duck Hotel.

Meeting dates for 2020

- **Tuesday 14th July (after our AGM on the same night)**
- **Tuesday 8th September**
- **Tuesday 10th November**