



FRIENDS OF VICTORIA GARDENS

Newsletter July 2020

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Dear Member,

In the March Newsletter there was discussion about the devastating bush fires in south eastern Australia. We were able to fit in a Friends meeting on the 3rd March and then within a week the COVID-19 virus saw the closure of international flights, schools, playgrounds, a shutdown of businesses and most sports, and shortly after a lock-down of state borders and a restriction in community movement.

We were all asked to stay at home in isolation and to work from home, if you could. The speed with which COVID-19 has forced us to adapt and change has been extraordinary. The virus has led to the postponement of the Volunteer program that was due to recommence in April. This recent outbreak in parts of Melbourne is an indication of how contagious this virus is.

During the period of isolation one of the permitted reasons for leaving your home was for health and fitness. Council quickly placed signage in the Gardens to advise visitors of the need to keep 1.5m apart and Lumley Playground was closed. Being a regular visitor to the Gardens, I have never seen them so popular. It was during this period that the Royal Botanic Gardens, National Trust gardens and some other gardens in our area were closed.



The Friends were planning to hold the AGM and ordinary meeting on Tuesday 14 July. Due to the extension of COVID-19 restrictions to 12 July 2020, our proposed 14 July AGM and first general meeting for 2020-2021 will be rescheduled to a later date (to be advised). We thank you for your patience and understanding. As always, our priority is the health and safety of our members.

In the meanwhile, please note that memberships are due on July 1: \$10 single \$15 family. Details for renewing your membership were provided in the March Newsletter. This small contribution and paid up membership are a testament to your continuing support for FoVG Inc.

We wish to acknowledge the recent passing of Dorothy Chalmers. Dorothy was a founding member of the Friends and for many years the secretary. Dorothy made a very important contribution to the early development and Friends activities over many years.

Lumley Playground Upgrade:



The playground construction works are proposed to commence at the end of June/early July 2020. Council previously contacted local residents and park users in October 2019 to seek feedback on the draft concept plan. Following a review of the feedback received, Council has developed a final concept plan for the playground upgrade.

Updates to the previously issued draft concept include:

- Inclusion of an additional piece of fixed play equipment (climbing posts and bars)
- Revised north-east entrance arrangement with arbour - to provide a buffer and control path of travel between the entrance and the swings.
- Allowance for gated access to the toilet block direct from the playground.
- Exchange of the shelter structure for new shade trees to distribute shading across a wider playground area and to allow for natural light in winter.
- A meandering pathway with a central donut-shaped timber seat and central tree.
- Addition of a new recycling bin and updated seating locations.
- Formalised area of bound gravel in the north-west corner to serve as pram parking, maintenance access or kindergarten assembly point, as required.

For further information please contact urbandesign@stonnington.vic.gov.au or call 8290 1067. **Georgina Hagger Landscape Architect**

Gardens Information Sign:

In early March the Information sign that had been proposed and contributed to by the Friends was installed in the Gardens, inside the High Street gates. This is the final project that received additional Council funding in 2018. The sign includes information on the Friends, history and the location of 9 significant trees.



Next Meeting:

Due to COVID-19 restrictions the AGM and first general meeting for 2020-2021 will be rescheduled to a later date and we will advise you once gatherings of more than 5 is approved.