



# FRIENDS OF VICTORIA GARDENS

## Newsletter July 2019

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### Dear Member,

We are experiencing a typical winter in Melbourne, but there have been extreme days where the temperature has been around 6°C above average to 19°C and a few days down to 4°C overnight. While Melbourne reached near average rainfall in May and June, Melbourne has received 79mm less rain than it had this time last year and with Portland at 143mm less rain, is the second lowest in the state. Hopefully the following months will deliver above average rainfall.

The flower beds have been recently planted with Iceland poppy and Polyanthus to provide late winter displays. The High Street bed and west bed near the notice board has been thinned out and mulched.

### Garden Inspection:

On Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> May the Friends held a Garden Inspection with Council staff, Dominic Mazza, Steve Watt, Adam de Zoete and Tim Rathbone. A summary of the main points discussed included;

- Pruning and canopy lifting of London Plane trees around oval to increase light onto the bank lawn
- Removal of woody weed species, *Pittosporum*, *Celtis* and *Ligustrum*
- Prune or remove overgrown *Buddleja madagascariensis* in the south west corner and High Street fence
- Remove large growing *Ficus microphylla* to provide space for Jacaranda and *Hymenosporum*
- Remove large Glossy Privet tree from behind drinking fountain near Bay Laurel to provide space for young Ginkgo
- Prune Lilly Pilly on west side, behind drinking fountain to remove dead branches and prune low *Melaleuca styphelioides* branch
- Replace possum guards on Lemon-scented Gums and *Podocarpus elatus* (Plum Pine)
- Plant Mondo grass around 1888 fountain base and place artificial grass matting below marble plaque to prevent dirt being splashed onto the marble

### Sunken Oval:

The condition of the sunken oval was discussed and it was agreed that further investigation of the cause of waterlogged patches on oval and the severely waterlogged south east lawn. The central area will be fenced off and grass sown.

### Lumley Playground:

A new masterplan being managed by Council's landscape architect Alex Hogan to upgrade the playground is being prepared. The questionnaire survey results have been analysed and a concept plan will be circulated in July for public comment.

### Dogs:

Concern was again raised over damage to garden beds by dogs. The only off leash area is the sunken oval but the damage below shows that dogs are doing enormous damage to plants, especially the Clivia clumps in the beds. Cultural change is hard to impose and we hope that our members do encourage all dog owners to heed the advice about off and on leash areas.



### Information Sign:

This is the third project that was part of the special funding Council allocated to the Gardens in 2018. A concept for the sign has been discussed and comments provided by the Friends. The wording is being finalised and a final draft will be prepared. The sign will include a map, garden history, significant trees and information on the Friends. The proposed location for the sign is inside the High Street gates on the east (right) side along the bed edge.



### Garden Volunteers:

Following the go ahead for this programme, the first session was held on Saturday 1 December. This and the other three sessions proved extremely enjoyable for volunteers (including children) and Adam de Zoete who supervised our efforts. The volunteer programme is now on hold until it recommences in the spring.

### Annual General Meeting:

The 2018 Annual General Meeting will be at 7.45pm on Tuesday 16 July

### Next Meeting:

Tuesday 16 July 2018 following the AGM at 64 Bendigo Street, Prahran, opposite the Flying Duck Hotel.