



FRIENDS OF VICTORIA GARDENS

Newsletter September 2020

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Dear Member,

We reported in the July Newsletter that all Friends activities were postponed due the restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic. In Victoria we have unfortunately experienced a second wave and for the past 7 weeks Melbourne has been in Stage 4 restrictions. Hopefully on 28 September the restrictions will be reduced to Stage 3 and the community will be given more freedom and we will be able to get together, subject to Covid-19 restrictions.

A winding back of the restrictions is however unlikely to allow the Friends to hold a meeting or conduct the AGM. Permission has been granted to delay the AGM and over the next month a zoom meeting or similar arrangement will be investigated.

Similarly, Stonnington Council has had to cancel the annual *Spring into Gardening* event in October. In its place Stonnington's Events and Environment team is presenting the new online Spring Sustainability Series from 14 September to 7 November 2020.

To participate in the Spring Sustainability Series visit:

<https://www.stonnington.vic.gov.au/Events>

New events will be posted weekly

These events may also be of interest:

<https://www.stonnington.vic.gov.au/Library/Whats-On/The-thrifty-gardener>

<https://www.stonnington.vic.gov.au/Library/Whats-On/Small-space-gardening>

Gardens:

The Gardens in Spring are looking spectacular and the warmer weather and good winter rains has resulted in healthy green lawns and a great display of flowers. A highlight at the moment are the numerous clumps of the orange flowering Kaffir Lily (*Clivia miniata*), Abutilon, Spiraea, Nandina, Magnolia and Viburnum bushes and flower beds filled with colourful Polyanthus. In recent weeks the surrounds of the oval seats have been top-dressed and lawn resown.



Clivia miniata



Nandina domestica



Polyanthus

May Garden Inspection:

During the annual inspection with Council a few trees were identified for removal and pruning. North of the Depot a twin trunked Monterey Cypress growing on the fence line was removed following damage to the neighbour's property. Trees have been replanted to restate boundary screening, consisting of 4 *Azara microphylla* (Box-leaf Azara) and 2 *Buckinghamia celsissima* (Ivory Curl).



27/6/2020



15/8/2020

In the southern portion of the east shrubbery the possum damaged and dead Kaffir Plum (*Harpephyllum caffrum*) was removed and a large, over mature Glossy Privet (*Ligustrum lucidum*) were removed. This will allow for improved growth of an existing Bay Laurel (*Laurus nobilis*). In the shrubbery behind the Weeping Elm an uncommon Plum Pine (*Podocarpus elatus*) had suffered extensive wind damage. The broken branches were removed and the tree canopy shaped. Similarly, the Golden Elm beside the path to the playground was dead wooded, shaped and the canopy reduced.

A brief record of our involvement since 1987:

The Friends of Victoria Gardens Inc. follows the long tradition of community involvement in the enhancement and maintenance of these historic gardens. In the past this has included the donation of urns, statue and a replica fountain; the land for the children's playground (the Lumley Trust); numerous garden seats amongst many other initiatives. An FoVG fund raising event helped to raise some of the funds for the refurbishment of the gates and this event subsequently morphed into Council's public "Spring into Gardening" day in October each year. In the 1990s, the FoVG was involved in the design and creation of the parterre garden.

In more recent years, the FoVG lobbied and worked with Council and the community to achieve the following:

- The May Inspection walk led by member John Hawker and Council representatives. This has led to the development of a maintenance and enhancement plan to guide Council work over the following 12 months.
- Repairs and conservation works to the historic High Street Gates and fence.
- The creation of the Victoria Gardens Volunteers, a community development program, meeting once per month to engage in gardening activities under the guidance of Council gardeners (on hold due to Covid-19)

- Began discussion with Prahran High School for a project engaging students (on hold due to Covid-19).
- Participated with Council in the creation of the interpretive signage that gives a brief summary of the Gardens and the Friends, and the graphic identifying the location of some of the significant trees (High St entrance).

Lumley Playground Upgrade:

The FoVG successfully lobbied Council to bring forward the date for the upgrade of what had become a tired and uninspiring playground that did not meet the needs of the young families that have moved into Prahran/Windsor. Our members, and in particular Amy Lee, participated (and facilitated the involvement of residents) in the excellent community consultation conducted by Alex Hogan and Council staff for the design of the new playground. The whole area has been redesigned with new equipment, seating, landscaping and planting.

Construction began in mid 2020 and the newly refurbished playground opened on 17 September 2020, much to the delight of children and their parents.



Membership:

In planning for the AGM we would like to remind you that you need to be a financial member of the Friends to vote. We look forward to your ongoing support and involvement with the Friends. Renewing your membership is very easy.

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: To be announced once Covid-19 restrictions are lifted.