



Friends of Williamstown Botanic Gardens Inc.

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Upcoming Events

1. Children's/Education sub-committee meeting - Wednesday 20th August, 7.30, Customs House Hotel.

Anyone interested in helping to plan the children's activities are invited to attend. Please email Carol Challis at carol@challispalace.com if you are interested but unable to attend.

The following dates have been booked for story time sessions:

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|------------------|---------------------------------|
| 24 October 2014 | Where the wild bugs are |
| 12 December 2014 | A bush Christmas with Santa |
| 16 January 2015 | Magical creatures in the garden |
| 27 February 2015 | Pond life |
| 27 March 2015 | Teddy Bears Picnic |

Don't forget the very popular Book Corner that is set up on fine weekdays in the school holidays. Carol would love to hear from volunteers to help set up in the morning and put away in the afternoon.

2. General Meeting – Monday 1st September 2014, 7.30, Croquet Club, 104 Victoria St, Williamstown.

Did you know that the Victorian grasslands have more endangered species than Kakadu? Come and hear some of the exciting stories about our local botanical treasures from Colleen Miller, coordinator of the Western Melbourne Catchments Network.

3. Visit to the Bendigo Botanic Gardens - Wednesday 1st October 2014

Keep this date free for our spring outing to Bendigo. We will have a few cars going for those who don't want to drive. Another option is to enjoy a leisurely train trip and we will pick you up at the Bendigo Station. Further details will be sent to you closer to the date.

4. Annual General Meeting - Wednesday 22nd October 2014, 7.30, Croquet Club.

Don't forget renewal of annual membership for the 2014-2105 year is in October. Notice of the AGM and membership forms will be sent to you.

5. Gardens Open Day - Thursday 13th November 2014

Mark this day on your calendar for the presentation of the oral history project that is presently underway collecting memories and experiences of the Gardens. Afternoon tea will be provided.

Did you come to the Gardens as a child, have you brought your parents here, or your children or grandchildren? Do you or anyone you know have a story to share with us? If so please give Lindy Wallace a call on 9391 5387.

Recent Happenings at the Gardens

Approximately twenty members of The Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens recently paid our Gardens a visit. Tour guide extraordinaire, Shelley Wood, kept them thoroughly enthralled with her intimate knowledge of the gardens history and the 'behind the scenes' stories of the restoration of ornamental pond and Clark statue.

Helen Page of the Advisory Group reports that the Master Plan is in the hands of the Consultants. It will then be returned to HBCC before being sent to key people and published on the web site for final comments.

Head Gardener, Michael Wilkins Horticultural report notes:

- The annual pruning of the Buddleias, Plectranthus and Malvaviscus has been completed; the Canna lilies have been cut back and pruning is continuing. The path installation in Giffard and Osborne streets is receiving very positive feedback and the grass planted there is taking quite well.
- New permanent apprentice, Winter Steinhart continues to show interest in the workings of the gardens. He recently helped the Horticultural Team pruning at Rose Garden Altona adding further to his skills and getting to know other employees.
- A group of Werribee Park employees Michael recently took on a tour of the Gardens made favourable comments.
- As the Gardens requires an upgrade of the irrigation system in the forthcoming months, Michael and Shelley visited the Geelong Botanic Gardens to inspect their newly installed irrigation system. They also attended Creating Resilient Horticultural Landscapes at the combined BGANZ and Parks and Leisure seminar in July.
- General feedback from visitors to the Gardens has been positive and the Master Plan is nearing completion.

Over the past twelve months the Department of Primary Industries have placed traps around the Gardens to ensure that no 'nasties' such as exotic beetles arrive via the shipping channel.

Botanic gardens was the focus of the current edition Landscape Architecture Australia in which there is an article on Williamstown Botanic Gardens by Mark Frisby, local resident and National President of Australian Institute of Landscape Architects. Mark's concluding comments echo the feelings of many us and is worth sharing with you (with Mark's permission).

Gardens such as the Williamstown Botanic Gardens are very much part of the Australian landscape history – even if we sometimes forget the affection we have for them. More importantly, an essential part of successful public gardens is the public. A well-designed public garden provides the opportunity to bring people together in a space they cherish, which ultimately results in better, healthier communities.

A full copy of the article accompanies this newsletter.