

Friends of Williamstown Botanic Gardens Inc.  
Annual General Meeting  
30th October 2012  
President's Report for 2012-2013

In their fifth year the Friends of Williamstown Botanic Gardens Inc are a well established community group. The "Paint the Gardens" art competition, Storytime under the Golden Elm and the Book Corner are centre piece activities bringing the community into the Gardens. As well as working closely with Williamstown Botanic Gardens staff and the broader HBCC Parks Department we work in partnership with Hobsons Bay Libraries and HBCC Arts and Culture Department. In 2013 (as in 2012) the Friends have assisted at events other than ours at the request of HBCC.

**Friends Activities to October 2013:**

- Regular committee and sub committee meetings
- Propagation for plant sales
- Newsletters for members
- Production of display materials
- Two Story Time sessions in the Gardens from October 2012 to February 2013 (November event rained out)
- Plant Sale at "Saturday Morning Team" (Relay for Life) event in December 2012 in place of planned sale at November Storytime
- Educational sessions in Gardens with Williamstown Primary School Prep and Grade 1 students in November, December 2012 and with Grade 2 in September 2013
- Reading Corner in the Gardens in January, April and September school holidays 2013 as well as at Paint the Gardens 2013
- Paint the Gardens Art Competition April 2013
- General meeting April 2013 where Ian Rae spoke of special trees in Williamstown
- General Meeting May 2013 with Ian Brown Manager Parks speaking of the HBCC street trees with particular reference to the Elms programme.
- Committee participation in initial stakeholder discussions with the consultants for the new Master Plan for the Williamstown Botanic Gardens in May 2013
- Visit to Castlemaine for a tour of the Botanic Gardens with Kevin Walsh followed by a tour of historic Buda in late May 2013
- Display at HBCC World Environment Day event at the Substation in June 2013
- Participating in the Open day for the consultation for the Master Plan in late June 2013 – wonderful turn up of members of the Friends. We assisted serving afternoon tea and welcoming community members.
- Collection of feedback for the Master Plan from members who could not attend on the Open Day, collated and forwarded responses to Shelley Wood and Loraine Callow for HBCC Parks Department and consultants
- Attendance at Williamstown Historical Society July meeting to hear Dr Gwen Pascoe talk on Victoria's 19<sup>th</sup> Century Botanic Gardens
- Plant sale in early August at the Old Fire Station, Cecil Street, Williamstown
- Submission of grant applications to HBCC Community Grants programme in August
- General meeting in September with Shelley Wood and Loraine Callow as speakers
- Initial work on history activities commenced.

We are members of the Royal Horticultural Society of Victoria through whom we obtain liability insurance and of Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens Inc Australia through whom we receive news of many other Friends groups.

## Acknowledgements

- Particular thanks are due to Shelley Wood, Curator of the Gardens for her unstinting support, attending functions, assisting in publicising the Friends and always being available to provide advice and assistance.
- Head Gardener, Michael Wilkins for his ready practical assistance. It has been good to receive copies of his reports.
- Loraine Callow, Arts and Facilities Officer, has been untiring in her work at the Gardens and in her support of the Friends.
- Ian Brown, Manager Parks who is always a supporter
- Many other HBCC staff including Janet Dawes, Tania Blackwell, Ilona Rayson, Hazel Finney, Rosemary Clark, Sarah Lavelle, Andrea Ellis, Jake Carroll and Ben Gross have been most helpful. We appreciate the network of support which has developed and we thank all of them.
- We have been fortunate to have the support of our local member Wade Noonan and his staff for copying our newsletter.
- We thank Williamstown Bowling Club and subsequently HBCC for the use of the Williamstown Ladies Bowling Club facility for meetings.
- Williamstown Croquet Club has generously allowed us to use their club rooms since August when the Williamstown Ladies Bowling Club became unavailable and we thank them.
- We acknowledge the support of Paint the Gardens prize sponsors Bendigo Community Bank, Bonny Gardens, Banjo Plumbing, Dirty Dog Pet Supplies Ferguson Street Provisions, Fitzgerald Optometry, Ferguson Street Lotto, Fitzgerald Optometry, Foster Care Association of Victoria. Kim Sawyer, Hobsons Bay City Council, Lions Club of Williamstown. Thanks also go to JAS H Stephens for providing advertising boards for the event.
- We are grateful to HBCC Mayor Angela Altair, a great advocate for the Gardens, for her yearly Ward Grant of \$225.00 towards highly commended awards in the Paint the Gardens and for her work judging the entries.
- We appreciate Williamstown Historical Society's invitation to their July meeting
- Dr Gwen Pascoe, is to be thanked for sending us a CD of her slides and talk on 19<sup>th</sup> Century Botanic Gardens.
- Anja Lee is notable for her leadership in the education work of the Friends developing and presenting Storytime, running the activities for Williamstown Primary and playing a major role into the development of the Reading Corner along with other members of the Children's Activity/Education subcommittee.
- Kim Sawyer, our vice president, has taken the leadership of Paint the Gardens and each year makes that his special project.

As ever, we thank our all of our committee and subcommittee members for their work and of course our general members for all the ways they support the Friends and the Gardens.