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2019-20 AGM Sunday 20 Sep, 2020 4pm

President's Report

I'd like to congratulate and thank our wonderful (stoic) Committee, as we have achieved much this year. A year largely dominated by MRSC-driven garden bed designs, and to a lesser extent Master Plan Working Group meetings, has seen the FGBG Executive guiding the Botanic Gardens toward a progressive future, while steadily progressing a range of other FGBG programs and projects.

Our Noticeboard is up! and we look forward to its completion so we can put it to good use and finally engage with Garden visitors.

Other achievements:

1. Successful grant application for weed works planned once COVID restrictions are eased. Partner - Melbourne Water
2. Successful grant application for design work to underpin construction of a viewing platform over the creek, again once COVID restrictions are eased. Partner - Melbourne Water.
FGBG have been included as a major stakeholder in the MRSC's Strategic Works Plan for Council Managed Waterways. This plan is managed by MRSC Environment Department in conjunction with Melbourne Water. This work has allowed us to build stronger links with the Environment Department and to better coordinate our work along Jackson's Creek.
3. FGBG have applied for a grant under round II of the Growing Victoria's Botanic Gardens program in 2020 for the design and construction of a conservatory and meeting place in the Botanic Gardens. Though a lot of work, the FGBG found very good partners willing to help us with this application. The Friends wish to acknowledge the support from the Australian Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens (AAFBG) and our Wurundjeri Woi wurrung contacts, who helped us develop the concept. If successful, this project will finally deliver a home for the Friends in the Botanic Gardens and continue to demonstrate our appreciation of the cultural values of the traditional owners of the land.

Progress in the Gardens is due to re-commence with our wonderful working bees! These will resume from Tues 22 Sept 2020 and are scheduled for the first and third Tuesday of each month, 9:30-11am.

- In May 2019, approximately 600 small plants were planted in the Manna Gums area in the south-east corner of the gardens;
- Landscape designer (Andrea Proctor), well credentialed, was appointed by Council in early 2020 to enhance the design and rezone the planting areas;
- After this stage was completed, Andrea has been re-engaged by Council to develop more detailed planting plans for each of the garden's zones. Draft plans have been completed for some areas and a final plan for these areas should be completed in the next few weeks;
- Council have also informed us that they have purchased some new plants to complete the Manna Gums planting and are also planning to install some plants which have been collected during the last couple of years; though sticking to the plan is still challenging and keeps our Exec Committee active.

We eagerly look toward 2021 as an engaging year to enable our Friends to contribute further to the Gardens. As you can see there are various projects, and we look forward to your input, whether it be making tea for working bees, contributing our events calendar or just having tea together in the Gardens

Many thanks,
Amanda Gauci, 2019- 2020 President FGBG