



THE FRIENDS OF BRAESIDE PARK

NEWSLETTER

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The Friends are changing the newsletter to email format only. This allows us to comply with Covid-19 guidelines and to maintain our low membership fees for the future. braesideparkfriends@gmail.com



Braeside Park

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Friends of Braeside Park

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The opinions expressed in this newsletter are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect those of Parks Victoria or its staff.

President's Report 2019-2020

The Friends' constitution gives many objectives for the Group. They include promoting, encouraging, supporting, seeking grants, assisting and co-operating with the community and Parks Victoria for the improvement of Braeside Park and the Green Wedge where it is located .

Over the last five years, the Friends have had to become advocates for Braeside Park as well. This was something that members of the Group previously thought that they would never have to do. Over the last 30 years, Victorian Governments have taken resources from Parks Victoria. By 2021, the Park has 4 full-time rangers, and a couple of part-timers. What this actually means is that Braeside Park has only drive-through surveillance twice a day on many weekends, and that the facilities in the Park are years beyond when they should have been replaced. (It is now the Friends group who greet and guide many community group walks through the Park.) The Friends in response have lobbied: the local Members of Parliament, the Minister of the Environment, and the Premier. *AND it appears that lobbying may have had some success as Des, Ranger in Charge of Sandbelt Parks, said there is some money coming to the Park for restoration of facilities. This is great news and full marks to Des who did mountains of paperwork and no doubt argued persuasively for a share of the pie for Braeside Park.*

However, there is still the increasing encroachment on Braeside Park as a natural, open, green space; rather than as land for government bodies to favour interest groups who would like somewhere more for dogs, horses, trail bikes, tents, canoes, drones, kites, remote control playthings and fishing rods but do not want to pay for land. There are those who want cafes and outside dining facilities, and clubhouses. (No doubt there are lobbying developers who want to build a housing estate on all Park land too.) Braeside Park is part of a long-standing plan with the alleged support of both Kingston Council and the State Government (even to the point of promising \$25 million at the last state election) for a Chain of Park linking Karkarook Park through the Kingston Green Wedge to Braeside Park.

In the past few years, the attack on the Green Wedge and the Park is more insidious. The building of the Mordialloc Freeway beside the Park' southern and western borders means long-term particle, light and noise pollution. The responsible authority, Victorian Major Roads Projects Authority, is obliged to consult but dismissed Friends and Environment Groups with experience managing and observing their local environment.

Local Councils, Parks Victoria and Melbourne Water, being government agencies or dependants, could do and then did little. Biodiversity, natural things like trees, small animals, insects, birds and frogs are not part of the State Government's plans to win seats and to boost an economy based on speedy construction. The next attack on the Green Wedge was yet more "consultation" on "Planning of Environmental Infrastructure for an Increasing Population." We were a bit excited to see the word "environmental" but the next word was the dampener. Duly, the Friends read the paper, and wrote a submission. Then came the Covid-19 virus showing the true worth of Braeside Park and the Green Wedge to the community, but obviously not the State Government. Restrictions such as one-hour's exercise per day saw the Park inundated. Surely, that would make anyone see value in open green spaces for physical and mental respite? No!

The next planning paper for "consultation" appeared. "Planning for Melbourne's Green Wedges and Agricultural Land." This paper would have you believe that it protects a green wedge expanded to a 100km radius from central Melbourne. to "give non-urban rural uses primacy".

However, the paper contradicts itself.

Simply, the Green Wedge, is still under attack. And if you did not get that, then (1) on 17 November 2019, the Victorian Planning Minister gave an 11th hour approval for a concrete crushing facility to remain in Kingston's Green Wedge for a further 10 years. The Kingston Council had voted not to renew the licence and even offered an alternative site in Dandenong South's Industrial zone. (2) On 16 December 2020 Premier Andrews announced that the latest Train Loop's train stabling yard would be at Heatherton in the Green Wedge, smack in middle of the (former?) Chain of Parks. Of course, there will be a public "consultation" but this is just box ticking- I know!

The Victorian Government's standard *Machiavellianism* was most obvious in the timing. The first detailed documents of where the \$50 billion rail line's 26-kilometre first stage will run were released on December 21 2020. That is the same day that Premier Daniel Andrews released the final report of an inquiry into mistakes made in Victoria's hotel quarantine programme and 4 days out from Christmas. What better time to bury anything you do not want the public to know!

Once again, the Friends began reading the "consultation" paper, and attending the on-line consultation session, and will submit their thoughts. Parks Victoria's Braeside Park Precinct Plan and the plans for the Dingley's Kingswood Golf course are idling somewhere until another busy day shortly before a public holiday. Advocacy is now the foremost purpose of the Friends, because without the security of the Green Wedge and the Park's environment there is no Friends' Group. Why bother, you may ask? Because someone, some group, in fact everyone should stand up for the environment on which we all depend for air, food, water and sanity while just dreaming of some alternative world where governments act honestly, consistently, with principle and even common decency.

Judith Sise

From the Secretary (cont.)

Aboriginal Repatriation Ceremony Friday 12 February 2021

The Major Roads Project Victoria (MRPV) organized a ceremony, on the freeway reservation to recognize the return to aboriginal artifacts to the freeway reservation and a smoking ceremony for special guests. This included MRPV representatives, construction agency representatives, representatives from the Friends of Braeside Park/Dingley Village Mens Shed, the Bunurong Aboriginal groups and special guests from the Lyndale Secondary College. Following the ceremony, which was appreciated by all present, we had a further presentation on the Aboriginal heritage/artifacts used and information at the Governor Road Car Park near an 800 year old tree. Lunch was provided also by MRPV, at Governor Road site. Thank you to Des Lucas from Parks Victoria (Ranger, Team Leader Sandbelt Parks), and MRPV for organizing this important function at Braeside Park on this special occasion.

Night Walk Program 2021

The popular Friends of Braeside Park night walk program is running again, subject to COVID restrictions in 2021. The first night walk is on 9 April with spaces currently available, and spaces available on the May walk as well. Bookings are through the email address braesideparkfriends@gmail.com/0417 323 460/ or the Friends Park Connect Site. Numbers will be capped at 20 for each walk with bookings transferred to later walks. Special group walks are available also if guides are available. This program runs on the first Friday of the month until September 2021.

Margaret Hunter

From the Secretary (cont.)

Friends of Braeside Park Membership Recruitment for 2021

The Friends of Braeside Park are one of the first Friends Groups established in August 1989. We have a membership brochure with the opportunity to become a financial member of the Friends, with subscriptions ranging from \$5 for concessions to \$15 for a family, and \$20 for corporates. This provides us with a strong support base for our environment interests and projects – The Mordialloc Freeway, submissions on the Green Wedge and Agriculture, on Environmental Infrastructure and Growing Populations, and to local projects as well.

There is always opportunities for involvement in our nursery projects, tree planting, working with the Park Staff 'in the enhancement of environment and development of facilities', working on the Wednesday A Team with Ranger Andrew and upskilling in environmental areas and knowledge

The Friends are a member of the Victorian Environment Friends Network, a state wide group with a range of other opportunities, and it is a positive way to support the Park.

Enquiries to the Secretary, Margaret Hunter on braesideparkfriends@gmail.com or to 0417 323 460.

A copy of the membership form is included at the end of this newsletter.

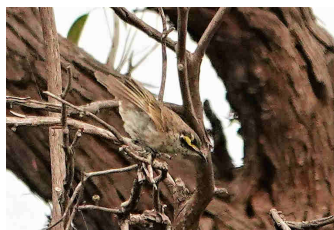
Margaret Hunter

Braeside Park Bird Surveys start up again!

After the Covid problems of 2020, it's great that the Bird Survey Group can get out into Braeside Park again and resume our monthly bird counts. We aim to identify, and count, the birds in 10 x 2 hectare plots over a 20 minute period in each plot. Five plots are in the heathland habitat and five are in woodland habitat (some old growth, some more recently planted). We hope the data will give some insight into how the birds are using these different habitats



and assist in future management decisions for the Park. The data is also entered into BirdLife Australia's long-term database (Birddata) which is used to monitor changes in bird populations Australia-wide and to make recommendations to both Government and private institutions to promote bird conservation and maintenance of biodiversity.



In January 2021, we were welcomed back by Des Lucas and initiated into using the latest attendance, safety and Covid forms. John S. introduced a splendid new recording sheet for us to use and we marked the beginning and end of each of our heathland plots (so that, as we have newcomers to the survey, they, too, can become familiar with each plot). Highlights of the morning were hearing Eastern Yellow Robin (uncommon in our previous surveys) and recording breeding Kookaburras, Mudlarks and (rather too many) breeding Noisy Miners.

Photos by Graham Gill

Braeside Park Bird Surveys start up again (cont)

In February 2021, we were greeted by Des showing us the Tawny Frogmouths which have returned to roosting in the Casuarinas outside the Rangers' Office - what a splendid way to start the morning! We split into two groups - heathland and woodland. The heathland group were thrilled to see and hear many Spotted Pardalotes - they have probably bred up well in nests in tunnels in the sandy soil of the heathland habitat. They also recorded Yellow-faced Honeyeater and Graham G. photographed a very young cuckoo - most probably a Shining Bronze-Cuckoo. The woodland group marked their plots; their best birds were Red-Rumped Parrots, Straw-necked Ibis and a fleeting glimpse of a raptor (which set up many alarm calls from Noisy Miners and Rainbow Lorikeets) - most probably an Australian Hobby.



Ideally, we need a minimum of 6-8 people to cover both heathland and woodland plots in the same morning. We meet at 8.00am at the Rangers' Office car park on the 4th Friday of each month and spend 2-3 hours in the Park. We always welcome new volunteers - anyone who would like to join us should contact Des Lucas, in the first instance, on 0418 173 228.

Pat Bingham

Park Report

Nursery:

Discussions on how the nursery and plants propagation is going to be managed into the future.

There will be some upper storey required for the western boundary of the park adjacent to the freeway.

There will be no planting season this year. There are currently no plants available for revegetation either.

Park Report (cont.)

- Park Connect:** Loading and reporting of Friends needs to be an ongoing activity into the future as Parks Victoria is working towards having all volunteers registered via this portal.
- Mordialloc Freeway:** 1 bird hides is to be constructed around the rear of the wetland as well as the placement of around 40 cut down trees from the freeway. A viewing location is also proposed for front (east) side of the lakes.
- Pedestrian access from Parkway is due to open with a community event on March 13.
- Wetland:** Wetland has been full most of the winter and spring due to excellent rains. Summer has been relatively cool and the wetlands have benefited.
- Park Works:** Trail construction is being delivered to connect parkway via the underpass by park staff. Planning has commenced on how to deal with the thistle population into the future.

Des Lucas

Residents

As the autumn light softly shines, many of the residents are starting their preparation for the anticipated winter. This is an excellent time to view and photograph the natives. The light is soft, the temperature is moderate and the winds are kind. Best time of the year to walk and view the park.

Following are a few photos from the friends.



Residents (cont.)



David MacLean



Danny Fog



Chris Gray



Lucy Farmer



Russell Myers

Friends of Braeside Park Inc.

President: Judith Sise
Secretary: Margaret Hunter
Assistant Secretary: Rosemaree MacLean
Treasurer: Helen Russo
Newsletter Editor: David MacLean
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Join us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/groups/327955807288240/#>

Newsletter Contributions

Thank you to Judith Sise, Margaret Hunter, Frank Russo, Des Lucas, Ian Morehouse, Pat Bingham and David MacLean for contributions to this edition.

We thank the many contributors to our Facebook page for their excellent photos and stories.

If you have an item to share in future editions or have any feedback in relation to the newsletter, please contact the editor at braesideparkfriends@gmail.com

Editor's Note

This newsletter is being distributed to all current, past and non financial members for the remainder of the pandemic period. After the next AGM, only financial members will continue to receive the newsletter.

If you like this newsletter, and if you would like to support Friends of Braeside Park in their efforts to improve the park for the community and future generations, you can help by becoming a financial member.

For a family, membership (\$15) is cheaper than a meal at a fast food store, and for an individual (\$10) it is the same as coffee and a small burger.

But a membership lasts a full year and helps us continue the work of improving and maintaining the park for all.

So, please join us.

David MacLean

Night Walks for 2021



Friends of
Braeside Park

**The Friends of Braeside Park invite
you to attend a night walk to view
nocturnal animals of the park**

On Friday Nights at 7pm

from April thru to September

**on the 9th April, 7th May, 4th June,
2nd July, 6th August & 3rd September**

Meet at Visitors Centre

Braeside Park, Lower Dandenong Rd, Braeside

Cost: Gold Coin Donation per person

Numbers Limited - Bookings Essential

**Via email: braesideparkfriends@gmail.com
or contact Margaret Hunter on 0417323460**

www.braesideparkfriends.org.au for more info

Clean Up Australia Day @ Braeside Park



Because when the rubbish is gone,
nature can carry on.



SUNDAY MARCH 7th

*10am till 12pm, Meet at Visitors Centre
Everything Supplied & Morning Tea*

Major partners



Partners



Suppliers



The Friends of Braeside Park Activity Calendar for 2021

Activity	Time/Day	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Committee Meeting	7pm - 9pm 2nd Thursday at the Visitor's Centre	20 (Wed)	16	11	8	13	10	8	12	9	14	11	9
Community Projects Weekday - "The A Team"	9am - 12pm Wednesday's at the Park Office	*	3 10 17 24	3 10 17 24 31	7 14 21 28	5 12 19 26	2 9 16 23 30	7 14 21 28	4 11 18 25	1 8 15 22 29	7 14 21 28	4 11 18 25	2 9
Nursery open for plant sales	10am - 12pm 3rd Sunday	*	21	21	18	16	20	18	15	19	17	21	19
Plant Propagation Community Nursery	10am - 12pm 1st Saturday & 3rd Sunday	*	6 21	6 21	3 18	1 16	5 20	3 18	7 15	4 19	2 17	6 21	4 19
Community Waterwatch Program	9:30am - 12pm 2nd Saturday Visitors Centre	*	13	13	10	8	12	10	14	11	9	13	11
Bird Observations	8am - 11am 4th Friday Park Office	22	26	26	23	28	25	23	27	24	22	26	24
Nightwalks	From Visitor's Centre 7pm	Nightwalks offered from April through to September. Gold Coin Donation per head Bookings Essential 0417323460											
Community Projects Weekends	9am - 12pm, follow the signs	*	*	*	*	*	World Environment Day Tree Planting Sunday 6th	National Tree Planting Day Saturday 25th	*	*	*	*	*
Special Activities are held throughout the year at various times		*	*	Clean Up Australia Day Sunday 7th Meet at Visitor Centre 10am 12pm	*	Significant TreeWalk led by Rangers 9:30am on 4th or 11th TBC	*	Mystery Walk Saturday 10th 12:30pm - 3:30pm with afternoon tea	AGM Sunday 8th 1pm - 3pm with afternoon tea	Breakfast with birds Sunday 19th Red Gum Picnic Area 7am - 9:30am	Spring Walk & Nursery Open Day Sunday 17th, 1pm-3:30pm	*	End of Year BBQ Wednesday 8th

Website www.braesideparkfriends.org.au

Email braesideparkfriends@gmail.com

Community Nursery is Open on the Third Sunday of the Month 10:00am to 12:00 noon – Seedlings are \$2.00 each.



Friends of Braeside Park
ABN 72 959 503 118 INC NO A00242027B
Membership Renewal/Application Form:

I/We wish to become/renew our membership of the FRIENDS OF BRAESIDE PARK INC
(No joining fee)

Membership types:

Corporate	\$20
Family	\$15
Ordinary Member	\$10
Student Member	\$5
Organisation Member	\$15
Concession/Pensioner	\$5

DONATION: \$.....

Personal Details

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email address: _____

Interests: _____

Membership Type: _____ Paid: _____

Payments can be made into our bank account –

CBA BSB: **063-144**

Account: **1008 3808** Include family name in description

Mail to: The Treasurer, Friends of Braeside Park. PO Box 608,
Braeside Victoria 3195

Or Email to: braesideparkfriends@gmail.com

Further information on the Friends' activities are available on our website and Facebook page.
Secretary contact number **0417 323 460**

Friends of Braeside Park Renewal Membership form July 2020

Members receive by email our newsletter and other information on the work of the Friends. Our activity calendar is also available in Braeside Park and on our website. The Friends of Braeside Park use personal information only for Friends activities and the management of Braeside Park.

Helen Russo (Treasurer), Margaret Hunter (Secretary) Friends of Braeside Park 28/7/2020

The Purposes of the Friends of Braeside Park are as follows:

TO PROMOTE the use and enjoyment of the Park by the community

TO ENCOURAGE community awareness and understanding of the Park by education and direct hands on experiences

TO SUPPORT the protection, conservation, and environmentally sensitive development of the Park for the benefit of present and future generations

TO ASSIST Park staff in the enhancement of the environment and development of facilities

TO PUBLISH material for educational and informational purposes related to the features and environment of the Park

TO CO-OPERATE and undertake joint activities with other organisations with similar purposes

TO RAISE, MANAGE AND SPEND FUNDS for financing suitable projects in the Park

TO FORM specific activity groups within the Park to manage and organise specific projects

At present interest groups include:

Indigenous seed collection and seedling preparation

Bird observation and recording

Water Watch, water quality monitoring

Project days, focusing on an outcome

Ground water bore monitoring

Community (Indigenous Plant) Garden

Friends of Braeside Park Renewal Membership form July 2020