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NEWS



LETTER

ISSUE 24 for JAN. to JUNE.

Please send me your comments for publication - Bill Whitbourn at gempark@netspace.net.au, PO Box 91 Emerald or to the Park Office before 24th of the month. This newsletter is distributed to members and stakeholders and also published on [our web site!](#)

EDITORIAL.

Well the 2003 year ended sadly with the loss of a number of ornamental trees along the Emerald Lake road bank and the picnic area bounded by the road. True we do still have plenty of trees, but the loss of color from our wonderful autumn displays is significant. In recent years we have lost ten of our colourful Pinoaks, three of which were in excess of 60 years of age. Visually our park is an organic painting that changes daily, seasonally and annually, and these values are widely appreciated. We urgently need to begin replacing Specific Ornamental trees if the Unique Balance and colour of our park is to be preserved.

There are a number of problems preventing action on this. The high attrition rate of new plantings, about 60% due to damage by vandalism and people stealing them. As yet our Council has no policy for replacement of non indigenous (Heritage) trees. The Friends and Community members are hoping for some (re-active) action, but pressure is waning due to severe battle fatigue.



29th September 2003 - Winter view lost forever.

WIFE VS. HUSBAND

A couple drove down a country road for several miles, not saying a word. An earlier discussion had led to an argument and neither of them wanted to concede their position. As they passed a barnyard of mules, goats, and pigs, the husband asked sarcastically, "Relatives of yours?" "Yep," the wife replied, "in-laws."

ACTION STAKES.

There seems to be a perception by the powers that be, that re-active action, saves resources and serves the community well. This is surely incorrect! In the case of our park, a business-like enterprise, it results in continuing loss of value. Support of our Parks Officers in being more pro-active is necessary. No business

could possibly survive a re-active philosophy. Their aim is not just to minimise Customer complaints. The competitive nature of business requires continued adding of customer value at a rate exceeding that of competitors. Similar concepts should be used for our Community asset value adding.

CONCEPTS

Speaking of concepts, in a recent advisory meeting we were told that "the park was not working!" What was the concept used in this determination? ie. A park that should pay for itself? A park that serves the communities recreational values? A tourist park that attracts business to our community? A peoples park? A conservation park? Some other concept or all of the above? It seems to me that we need a common all encompassing concept for our park including the values we are ALL seeking.



Colorfull Maple 10th May 2004 Boatshed area.

AUTUMN COLORS

Although we had a few examples such as the one in the above pic. the autumn color this year was dissapointing. The rain came late after a long dry spell and seemed to upset many of our most colorful ornamentals. The last to keep its color as always is the Pin Oak opposite the Kiosk. This tree had a close shave when a silver wattle uprooted and crashed onto one side, it should recover its shape by next season as damage was minimal. Interestingly after collecting some green Pinoak Leaves in Summer and drying them indoors, it became clear that their coloring is entirely due to the effects of the weather.

WINTER FALLS

The good rain falls as we came into winter has provided unusually deep soil saturation and caused a few trees to uproot. This has probably been made worse by the poor state of our gutters and drains, an area where more support is needed. Runnoff into

the arboretum areas needs to be minimised. Most of these trees have been large and difficult for our Parks Officers to cut and clear and so are taking their toll on resources. Large tree falls in these areas are causing a lot of damage to the surrounding trees etc.

MULTI USE TRAIL

Work on the bridge at Wrights road has resumed in the last week. At least this will enable walkers and riders to pass this deep creek gully. There is still quite a bit of work required to finish the trail by the opening date. This first stage has been re-scheduled to open on Sunday 19th September 2004. The proposed event will include a bike, run, walk from Cockatoo to Emerald commencing at approximately 9.30am.

JUMPING JACKS

While watching a documentary on ants, I wasn't too surprised to learn that the "Jump Jack Ant" was perhaps one of the most venomous insects in the world. I had often wondered how it could be that these small mites could have such a powerful sting. From experience, a single bite remains painful for over a week but apparently their stings can hospitalize or even be fatal. I have had a few bites since moving to Emerald, they are common on our property and do inhabit our park here and there.



Planting Day at the Lake, 20th May"

PLANTING DAY.

PO's Jamie and Richard organised a load of native grasses for the Fishing Pier areas. The last of three piers was completed earlier in May. The Friends chipped in and helped plant these grasses along the waters edge and banks. The Purple Swamp Hens took a dislike to these and began to remove them over the following days. This seems to have settled down now and a more accepting attitude prevails. The plants were grown and supplied by a nearby resident Julio, who also assisted on the day, thanks Julio.

FRIENDS WORK ACHIEVEMENTS

The Friends have been continuing with the removal of Montbretia from the lake surrounds. This has been successfully completed for the time being with some re-growth expected. Work on the Spanish Heath has continued and some areas are now mostly free of this invader. Trimming of the dead tree fern fronds and general tidying of the creek surrounds has been ongoing. Other planting, tidying of gardens and leaf removal has continued.

PARK RAINFALL

Rainfall in the park surrounds for the 6 months to June was 453mm. This is up from last year which for the same period was 369mm. March last year had good falls - 106mm but produced only about a third of that this year. This seems to have caused the poor show of color this season.



WORKING BEES.

The Friends working bees are organized in conjunction with our park officers. Suggested areas of weed removal and work in the gardens and the park are emailed to our VP. Leo. Co-ordination of activities with the park officers is thus improved. Peggy is in charge of the Friends gardening and working Bees.

Work this year so far totalled XX Bee hours, Thanks to Peggy Stonehouse, Leo Stauber, Shiela Hampson, Lee Ferris, Karl Nagel, Noel Gross and Heather & Bill Whitbourn. and for our Parks Officers support.

WORKING BEE DATES - 2hours only.

<p>July 2004. Saturday 3rd. 9.00am Sunday 11th. 9.00am Thursday 15th. 1.30pm</p>	<p>October 2004. Saturday 2nd. 9.00am Sunday 10th. 9.00am Thursday 21th. 1.30pm</p>
<p>August. Saturday 7th. 9.00am Sunday 15th. 9.00am Thursday 19th. 1.30pm</p>	<p>November. Saturday 6th. 9.00am Sunday 14th. 9.00am Thursday 18th. 1.30pm</p>
<p>September. Saturday 4th. 9.00am Sunday 12th. 9.00am Thursday 16th. 1.30pm</p>	<p>December Annual BBQ Saturday 4th. @ 12.00pm. Boatshed BBQ area.</p>

THE NEXT FELP MEETING.- Please note! -

The next FELP meeting, will be an AGM. The date to be published soon, suggested, the 15th August 11:15am after the Working Bee.



Interesting Fungi - 7th May 04