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Summer Newsletter 2023

As it's been some time since the last newsletter - there's quite a lot of information to share. The AGM in November was a special event, with guest speaker, Janet Payton sharing her experiences as a young niece to aunts Doreen Carrigg and Sheila Regan, in their rambling homestead we know as Mattie Furphy's House. They fondly called the house "76" at its original location, being the 2nd to last house on the sand track (the now tarred Clement Street). These wonderfully resilient and accomplished women resided there for over 50 years. Sheila gifted the house to the Fellowship of Australian Writers and it was moved to Allen Park just weeks before she died in a nursing home in 2005.

A predicted hot summer prompted an early start to the watering program as a number of reintroduced specimens including *Banksia attenuata*, jarrah, coastal bearded heath, *Hakea prostrata*, grasstrees and zamias required extra care. Fortunately, a band of volunteers have continued to work across the Allen Park bushland without interruption. Families are taking care of a number of plants on Odern Crescent. Our volunteers focus on watering along Sayer St, and in the Boobook Sector near Jones Park. The City has engaged contractors to run a hose up Melon Hill from the car park to water plants along the edges.

After the relocation of the water storage containers on Sayer Street and near the Boobook Sector (north of Sayer St), the job is now less burdensome. However, it would be great to have more people coming to help and relieve a number of aging volunteers! So, if you are able, the watering will continue on a fortnightly basis, Tuesdays and Saturdays at 8am-9am and continue through to the end of March (depending on rainfall, if any).



Nightlife

At the beginning of October, a group of enthusiasts were taken on a nightwalk in search of invertebrates led by David Knowles from Spineless Wonders. The walk did not venture very far as there were so many tiny creatures to investigate. It culminated in the identification of numerous creepy crawlies that had been attracted to a light tent; a great novelty for us.

During the search, possums were spotted high in the canopy of the tuarts. There was no sight nor sound of Boobook owls. This was concerning, as they have been heard on night walks in the past.

Inspecting the light tent

Unfortunately, the ravens continued their relentless pursuits of the owls, and either drove them away, or perhaps killed them, though carcasses have not been found.

Fast forward to 2023, Tawny frogmouths are subject to the same fate. Currently a female and her 2 young are being harassed whilst sitting on their nest and it may be a race against time to have the young fledge so they can move to a more discreet spot.

Whadjuk Trail

On advice from the Project Manager at Nedlands Council, the planning for the project is progressing well and the City will be formally reaching out to community groups in the coming months. Detailed designs have not been able to progress at this stage as there is currently no available project budget to engage the required surveyors and designers. The project budget will be addressed during the Mid-Year Budget

Review, when a transfer from the Swanbourne Development Reserve will be approved by Council, which will allow a project budget to be allocated. This is expected to occur at the end of February. Once a project budget is available the City will commence engaging the required surveyors and designers to continue to progress the project.

The **Post Nov 5 2022, (page 9) article *Campbell stamps on walk trail plan*** featured an aerial photo highlighting the approved Norn Bidi, that will pick up the trail that is interrupted by the Associates Rugby Club and Bridge Club car park. Visitors are at a loss at this junction, as one descends from Melon Hill not knowing where to go next. The Norn Bidi connects to the Swanbourne Beach oval, hugging “Flyash Hill” just north of the Bridge Club, and along the edge of the swale, an important linkage with the “Seaward Corridor”, which in itself is an important linkage between Allen Park’s landmark, Melon Hill, and the Bush Forever site 315 known as the Swanbourne Reserve located north of the beach oval.

The paths are long overdue, and with some soft landscaping providing shade, preparations should get underway to complete this important leg of the journey.

Tuart Health Project - Tuarts need TLC



Tuarts in the Boobook Sector

Those living close to Allen Park may be aware that concerningly, there has been tuart mortality. 2 tuarts edging Jameson Street and 1 on Sayer Street. Concerns were raised that the tuart forest in the Boobook Sector could be subject to a similar fate, phytophthora, and so the City was approached to fund an investigation and possible treatment program to safeguard the health of the tuarts in the area. Unfortunately, the budget was not there, which is very disappointing given how immensely important the tuarts are across the region. As Bark Environmental consultants had been engaged to treat trees in neighbouring private gardens, it was mooted that a crowd-funding campaign could get up to cover the cost of a preventative treatment program.

Our group and the community at large are therefore extremely grateful for the generous donations to cover the cost to inoculate 9 tuart trees in the Boobook sector. Bruno Riki and the team at Bark Environmental heavily discounted the fee to reflect this community driven initiative. Their suggestion to monitor the efficacy of phosphite, requires a proper monitoring program be developed with the Shire/Scientists that evaluates total tree health, hydrology, and evidence of new soil/drainage disturbances that could vector the disease, etc. This is a very complex task to do and many of the treated trees were in healthy condition at time of treatment. It was more of a precautionary measure to treat trees in the area. Bark Environmental has seen the slow release Phoscaps in our locality and believe they can cause significant trunk damage if used repeatedly, plus uptake may be delayed or ineffective depending on moisture content within the tree tissue, so they’ve recommended direct stem injecting for more reliable and rapid uptake.

As this treatment regime was followed, all 9 trees were tagged, photographed and mapped with GPS coordinates, so that the trees are then measurable. A few more trees will be subject to the same treatment program once the heat has abated, and MHBG will continue to monitor the trees and hopefully a bit of TLC will go a long way to ensuring that good health will continue.

As many will be aware, the Shot-hole borer is making its presence known across Perth, with devastating consequences. We highly recommend revisiting the slide presentation https://www.agric.wa.gov.au/sites/gateway/files/Polyphagous_shot-hole_borer_fact_sheet_September_2021_V2.pdf to familiarise one with the symptoms of the infestation that threatens not only trees in our own

gardens, but some native trees too. This is devastating, and unless the pest is identified in host trees and not eradicated, it will continue to wreak havoc on our urban tree canopy.

This is all the more reason to grow the tree canopy in our suburbs.....

Joining the dotswith 'Naturelink Perth'

Western suburbs bushland groups are combining to drive a project to enhance the green corridor between Kings Park and Bold Park. Whilst many trees are under threat from a multitude of factors, there is urgency to reduce the heat island effect in our suburbs, read on.....

https://www.naturelinkperth.org/?mc_cid=437585fece&mc_eid=2134673839

Bunuru (Feb-March) The Second Summer.

Half way through the season, the marri is flowering, along with the Rottnest tea-tree; whilst along the ground, bobtails enjoy a snack on the tasty floral morsels of the prickly groundcover, *Hemiandra pungens*. If you stop along your way, you may see flowers being pollinated by competing invertebrates.



Melaleuca lanceolata
(Rottnest teatree)



Hemiandra pungens (Snake bush)



Corymbia calophylla (Marri)

SAVE THE DATE!!

23rd March is National Eucalypt Day

Details to follow

As the tuart, *Eucalyptus gomphocephala* is a much loved and significant species in Allen Park, there will be a special event to celebrate this magnificent icon. Follow us on Facebook to find out more.

Aussie Bird Count

The annual bird count required twenty minutes standing in a patch, whether in a home garden or in the bush, to measure what's present and what's not, right across Australia. To stand in one spot, in real time, looking out for birds is always a wonderful experience. The time slot submitted from Allen Park included Weebills, Silver-eyes, Wattlebirds, Magpies, Variegated fairy-wrens with a 28 parrot and rainbow lorikeet passing by. Perhaps it's no surprise to find that nationally, the Rainbow Lorikeet was the most prolific. Make a note to flock together and participate later this year – it's a great exercise in mindfulness.

Before and After

This edition showcases archived images from many years ago.

The approach to Swanbourne Beach along the cycle path, was photographed in 1988.

1988



Approaching Swanbourne Beach

2023



This event may be familiar to those who participated in the bushland group's end of year celebrations at the Allen Park Bowling Club. It was also the inauguration of Nedlands first Bushcare Officer, Steve McCabe.

1999



Note the sparseness of Melon Hill

2023



Marker in foreground in proposed Hospice site

Children's Hospice Proposal

It is anticipated the SDAU hearing will be announced before long. On advice, there will be 5 days of advertising, and by 2pm of the 2nd day, those who lodged a submission must state whether they will make a presentation to the hearing. Further to the following advice,

“Members of the public and key stakeholders who provided comment on the proposal during the consultation period will be advised when the application is scheduled for consideration by the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC). The scheduled meeting will be open to the public and deputations can be requested. Information about applying for a deputation is available on the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage website via the [State Development Assessment Unit Agenda and Minutes page](#). Agenda papers and minutes will be published on the same page.”

New information came to hand:

WA PLANNING COMMISSION HEARING - NEW CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

A routine call to the State Development Assessment Unit last week by a member of PFLASH (People for a Safer Hospice), revealed that the proponent has just submitted a "Final Assessment Package" (FAP) in anticipation of an imminent WAPC hearing. This new information cannot be accessed by the public, unlike the original Development Application which was available so that individuals or groups could make submissions. Presumably this FAP contains new information about the development, however no-one except the SDAU can see it.

The City's Coastal Ward Councillors Smyth and Amiry will be representing the City at the SDAU. Ken Adam, an independent planning consultant, has provided guidance to the Councillors in this regard. Should anyone wish to follow the process chronicled by Dr Neville Hills, please contact him for further information: nhills1934@bigpond.com

Allen Park Cottage

Enquiry to the City's administration regarding an update on the repairs to the cottage and follow up to the Heritage Architect's Report to the City in June 2022 has not been answered to date. As it is approaching the 7th year since first advice from the City that the cottage was in dire need of repair, visitors will notice that nature is taking over and Native wisteria is finding the 'temporary' fencing to be a suitable structure upon which to climb. It is 18 months since the exclusion fencing went around it.

We were provided with an update by Councillor Smyth at our AGM in November as we had enquired as to where the balance of the 20/21 original budget of \$150 000 (Stage 1) was sitting. Through further research, \$136,916 remained after design work, then costs incurred by the Heritage Architect's report reduced it further (exact figure unknown). Stage 2 delivered \$75.465 (21/22), and the \$75 000 available for Stage 3 of 22/23 projected funds. We continue to hold onto hope that this slow process will ultimately lead to the return of the cottage to a safe and usable condition.

Next Bushcare Dates for your diary:

Tuesdays through March 8-10am, meet first at Mattie Furphy's House to disinfect shoes etc.

7th March: Watering Sayer Street

11th March: Watering in the Boobook Sector, a seedling survival count, followed by morning tea

1st April: Erosion control

Did you express interest in buying a T-Shirt with our logo? Pricing: \$45/each if 15 orders are placed, or \$35 for 30 orders

If you haven't paid memberships for 2023, please consider supporting us. New fee structure approved at the November 2022 AGM: \$15 single, \$25 family.

EFT: Acc Name: Melon Hill Bushland Group Inc. BSB 036-034. Acc # 193802 please include your name for reference.

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Contact us by email melonhillbg@gmail.com, or Secretary Judy jhe74786@bigpond.net.au

See us on the Urban Bushland council website

<https://www.bushlandperth.org.au/groups/friends-of-allen-park-bushland/>

and on Facebook [melonhill_bushland](https://www.facebook.com/melonhill_bushland)



Think Global: Act Local

Join us to help care for our local patch. You can make a difference!

