

Greenlink News



June 2018

Your local indigenous nursery 100% run by volunteers

Regular Open Days Saturday Sales Days

Tuesdays and Wednesdays
9.00 to 12.00 plus
18 August, 15 September
and 27 October

Contact or Visit Us

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Box Hill North 3129
0479 121 653
(Answered Tues & Wed only)

Stay in Touch and Resources

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News from the President



Time has flown quickly since our last newsletter and we have accomplished a lot at the Nursery in the past few months. We have replaced the roof on the shed (the old skylights had badly deteriorated and the roof was starting to leak in a few places).

The beds in the park to the East side of the Nursery have been totally transformed from having Clematis climbing over everything a year ago and have now been replanted with a range of understory shrubs and some mass plantings of wildflowers including Pattersonia, Bulbine and Stylidium all of which should look spectacular come Spring.

We have cleaned out the pond at the back of the Nursery which was somewhat over run with plants, replanted around the edges and put in a couple of large logs to beautify the pond and give a hiding place for the frogs. One good heavy rain and the pond will fill again.

We have had just on 1,300 hours of volunteer work and pricked out just on 6,500 plants in the past 3 months. Orders have been coming in at a steady pace and we have had 2 successful Autumn Saturday sales days. Finances overall remain in a strong position. The long dry spell over the past few months have kept us busy with hand watering this year and although April saw some good rains the subsoil is still dry and little rain is forecast for the winter months keeping us all a bit nervous as to what this year will bring in the way of ground moisture.

All background work to the modifications we want to make on the layout of plants within the Nursery has now been completed and we will shortly begin moving plants within the Nursery and putting up new row signage. This has taken a little longer than anticipated.

We enjoyed visits from members of the Gardens for Wildlife program and IFFA who had a tour of the Nursery and 4 of us attended an open day at Maranoa Gardens supporting Aust/NZ Botanical Gardens week. We received many comments as to the good work of Greenlink and our activities from those visiting the gardens.

This year we have reached a milestone and will be celebrating our 30th anniversary since the very first meeting on 1/9/1988 of a group of residents who formed Greenlink at that time. I am sure little did they know then what they would be creating and the difference and contribution that they would all be making to the beauty of our City. To celebrate this evening we are holding an afternoon tea at the Nursery on 1st September so put this date in your diary. We will be sending out further correspondence to everyone with more details. Also this year our AGM will be on Tuesday evening 14th August at 7.30pm at Clota Cottage. Overall another very successful 3 months thanks to the wonderful efforts of all our volunteers. Again an enormous thanks to you for the difference you continue to make and the effort you all put into Greenlink.

Robert Jones, President



News from the Treasurer



Our Nursery continues to perform well financially, although sales are down on this time last year due to the dry weather and a difficult growing season. As we predicted Sales revenue has increased over the past two months as the anticipated Invoiced Sales and Tenders have come to fruition. The mix of Sales Income has changed slightly over the past year and is now made up of "Invoiced Sales" 57% (up 4%), "Weekday Sales" 32% (down 6%) and "Sales Days" 11% (down 1%). We have also redeemed plant vouchers to the value of \$2,200.

During this month we have replaced the roof on the shed but have yet to have the fence repairs done due to Contractors not turning up to quote as they promised. Other than repairing the fence, we have no more major expenses in the foreseeable future, which means we are looking at returning a strong surplus for the financial year. Thanks to our volunteer members for your ongoing support which has allowed us to achieve this.

Trevor Eddy, Treasurer



Trevor getting stuck in..... moving a log in the newly cleaned up pond

Photo: Michael Dwyer

Greenlink providing opportunities

Greenlink is proud to be supporting young people by providing personal development, increased confidence, work experience and community integration. Over the past couple of years we have developed partnerships with Nadrasca Community Services and families to assist young people in pursuing their individual goals and aspirations. This has been a great initiative and one which delivers enormous benefit to both the participants and the nursery.



Working in the nursery parklands

L-R: Carey, Josh and Fraser

Photo: Trevor Eddy



Greenlink and Bungalook Walk

On a beautiful autumn morning in March about 15 members of Greenlink and Bungalook met for a walk through parched parklands along Bushy Creek. It was a good opportunity to get to know each other better and share knowledge and experience.

We walked along Bushy Creek to some signed remnant bushland just the other side of Station Street. We spent some time examining the species in this fairly small isolated area. Rob queried how much was actually remnant and how much had been planted. We identified plenty of *Iomandra filiformis* and Amanda identified *tricornyne*, a small herb. There were plenty of introduced species also.



As we crunched on the dry ground Amanda remarked that it was like walking on cornflakes! I received lessons in Greek and Latin pronunciation from Peter – every syllable should be pronounced so *olearia* which is often pronounced in 4 syllables (o-lee-ree-a) should really be pronounced in 5 (o-lee-a-ree-a). He was also very helpful in explaining the meanings of some of the Greek and Latin terms which would certainly help when trying to remember them!

Greenlink received many compliments on the appearance of our nursery, a compliment which we would like to pass on to all who have contributed their work.

Community Coach of the Year



Congratulations to our immediate past president Suzette Hosken for winning Cricket Victoria Community Coach of the Year Award at a presentation at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) on 21st March, 2018.



Suzette with former Australian cricket star Damien “The Bowlologist” Fleming.



Deakin University Students



Ray, Albert and Anwin weeding acacia tubestock in March 2018

Greenlink has welcomed students from Deakin University for a number of years to assist in work at the nursery. These international students, Ray (Rui Su), Albert (Xiangyu Hong) and Anmin (Anmin Zhu) have now completed 40 hours of work as part of a practical placement course requirement.

Q: What country do you come from?

A: All three of us come from Hubei Province in the middle of China. We first met as students in China and came out to Australia together. Ray is from Huanggang, Anmin from Jingzhou and Albert from Shiyan. These cities all have populations over 3.5 million. Ray, Anmin and Albert all agree that Melbourne seems quiet in comparison to China.

Q: What course are you studying?

A: We are all studying our third year of Environmental Science (Environment, Management and Sustainability) at Deakin University.

Q: How many hours of practical work do you need to complete?

A: 80 hours but due to a timetable clash we are only able to complete 40 hours with Greenlink. The rest will be with the University chemistry laboratory.

Q: What have you learned from your work here at Greenlink?

A: We have learned about many of the different plants in Australia –very different from plants in China. We have also improved our English by speaking to different people in the community.



.Q: What do you enjoy most about your work at Greenlink?

A: The people are kind and friendly. We enjoy meeting many people from different backgrounds and understanding more about Australian culture. We celebrated Albert's 21st birthday at Greenlink but in China it is not such a big deal. In China the more important birthdays are the 12th birthday and the eighteenth.



Albert cuts the cake made by Giovanni to celebrate his 21st birthday at Greenlink on March 14.

Plant of the Season



Hakea Nodosa

This *Hakea nodosa* or Yellow hakea is flourishing in our nursery display bed. It generally grows to between 1-3 m X 1-2 m and flowers over winter. Our specimen is over 2 m tall and is in full flower now.

We have successfully propagated this hakea from seed and are experimenting with taking cuttings. This plant is very attractive garden shrub and will attract birds and insects.



Reflections on the origins and history of Greenlink

On September 1 this year we will be celebrating Greenlink's 30th anniversary. We requested Brian Pell, former President of Greenlink to write an article about Greenlink's founder, Minette Russell Young. He has written a great tribute to Minette and the concerted efforts of all of the volunteers who were inspired by her. We think Brian tells an important story of how Greenlink came to be.



Minette receives a Federal Seniors Award from the Prime Minister in 2000

Minette Russell Young – Founder of Greenlink

Minette Russell was a Lecturer at Burnley Horticultural College teaching ecology and plant identification with an emphasis on indigenous plants. Together with her students she organised a planting along the bank of the Yarra River at the Kevin Bartlett Reserve in Burnley and she and her students were also involved with the restoration and revegetation of Churchill Island in Western Port Bay.

When she retired she married Patrick Young becoming Minette Russell-Young and moved to Box Hill North. It was quite a shock for her as there were almost no indigenous plants in the public land in the City of Box Hill and few indigenous street trees. Box Hill was really a highly developed residential suburb styled on an English pattern.

This was in contrast to Nunawading, where a former student of Minette's, John Brandenburg, was Superintendent of Parks and Gardens and there were many areas of original bushland still remaining. There are only three tiny remnants of the original bushland left in Box Hill.

Minette wanted to redress this imbalance and got her friend Councillor Mary Ryan to organise a meeting of interested citizens and Greenlink Box Hill was formed in 1988. A major problem for Council was sourcing indigenous plants. Minette got a grant to build a shed in the back of the Box Hill Council nursery (next to Box Hill RSL – since demolished). Seeds of indigenous plants were collected and grown in the rear of the Box Hill Council nursery. The first plants went in along Gardiners Creek where community planting days were held and Greenlink has continued its involvement in Gardiner's Creek parkland. The area between Station St and Burwod Highway had almost no plants as it had been totally cleared for farming. Gradually indigenous plants went into the Council's areas – some of the first were grasses in the roundabouts near the Swimming Pool.

Greenlink shifted its focus to Koonung Creek, which was also completely bare – it was largely a fill site when Box Hill Station was undergrounded.

When Box Hill and Nunawading Councils amalgamated the Commissioner 'rationalised' the 2 Council owned nurseries into one – at Nunawading. Greenlink was asked to move but we argued that most volunteers were unlikely to go to Nunawading. Minette sought help from Cr Ryan and she persuaded the new Whitehorse Council to let us use a vacant house block that had recently been purchased at 41 Wimmera Street (it was to be added to the Bushy Creek parkland). So we set about building a purpose built nursery with considerable assistance from Council . We spent over \$50,000 establishing the nursery and relocated to it in 1996. At this time we were selling plants to Councils, various contractors, VicRoads and Melbourne Water.

When the Eastern Freeway was extended from Doncaster Rd to Springvale Rd Minette opposed it, but once it was decided she was on site nearly every day. Minette was an expert "networker". She was in constant contact with the engineers and even the bulldozer drivers, whom she showed which plants were valuable and they carefully saved many. She had VicRoads dig up plants on the north side of the creek and transport them to our south side. She also changed VicRoads planting methods – instead of covering the banks with topsoil, which was ideal for introduced weeds, she told them to plant straight into the original soil, knowing that our indigenous plants had always grown there. Hence we saw the massive planting of a large section of Lomandra. Although we never had any big contracts for supply of plants, often contractors would be a few hundred short. Minette was on hand to sell them some from Greenlink. These sales greatly helped Greenlink to have enough money to build our nursery.

As part of the freeway, Melbourne Water rocklined the bottom section of Bushy Creek. They asked Minette if Greenlink would plant it out. Nothing was ever too difficult for Minette. Our first planting lasted until it rained and Bushy Creek became a raging torrent and our plants went down to the Yarra. Undeterred Minette got us to go back and push the tubestock into the crevices between the rocks with sticks which enabled the plants to survive. It was so successful it became a training site for other contractors.

Minette saw Greenlink as more than just a local group. When the Government gave grants to join metropolitan environmental groups with country Landcare groups Minette joined Greenlink with a Landcare group near Wallan. She met Jim & Jill Hammond, who later bought a farm north of Kilmore. This farm had a severely eroded creek about 1km long & with only about 5 Eucalypts. Jim fenced the creek and Greenlink helped revegetate the fenced area by growing about 500 tubestock each year for the next 20 years. Once a year 3 or 4 carloads of Greenlink members spent a day planting and tree guarding (and enjoying the most delicious lunch). This was a fascinating project as we watched the seedlings grow into mature trees.

Another major project that Minette had Greenlink take a very active role in was saving the Mullum Mullum valley from the Eastern Freeway. The Government wanted the Eastern freeway extended from Springvale Rd to Ringwood as a surface road through the Mullum Mullum valley. This area was rare very high quality Valley Heathy Forest with some of the best ground orchids in Victoria. Greenlink joined with the Mullum Mullum branch of the Australian Conservation Foundation in organising community participation to get the freeway put in a tunnel (actually 2 tunnels). This was a 10 year campaign with Minette and other Greenlink members attending monthly meetings as well as assisting in organising rallies and working bees. Minette organised 2 National Heritage Grants for Greenlink to work in the Chaim Court bushland. Minette was not strong on documenting anything (hence there is little that she wrote). On one of these Grants she came to me and asked me to complete the necessary paperwork. "Where's the map?" She handed me a used envelope with what looked like a spider's footprints. We received the Grant.

Unfortunately in later years Minette did not enjoy good health and she died in 2002. Greenlink held a memorial service for her and over 500 people crowded into the Nova Theatre. Speakers included the CEO of Whitehorse Council, senior staff from VicRoads and Melbourne Water. Representatives came from many organisations many of which Minette belonged to and gave valuable commitment and service to. She was a great networker and widely respected for her knowledge, enthusiasm and practical help.

At a ceremony to mark Greenlink's 20th Year a plaque on the north side of Koonung Creek at Frank Sedgman Reserve was unveiled at Minette's Rock. It stated:

"Minette Russell-Young
1926 – 2002

If you seek her Memorial, look around you!

This plaque commemorates the life of a dynamic and visionary woman.

Minette's passion and persistence enabled the transformation of an urban wasteland to the beautiful indigenous bushland reserve you are standing in today. As a founding member of Greenlink Box Hill, Minette inspired a team of volunteers who will continue to work to ensure the preservation of this valley for future generations."

This tribute to Minette Russell Young was written by Brian Pell, OAM and life member of Greenlink.

*Brian speaking at a
Memorial held in Minette's
honour on 4th October 2002.*





SAVE THESE IMPORTANT DATES:

- 1. Tuesday August 14**
- 2. Saturday, September 1**

1. Greenlink AGM - 7:30 pm, Tuesday, August 14

Clota Cottage, 31 Clota Ave., Box Hill

All members and visitors are invited to attend Greenlink's AGM.

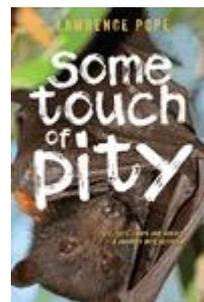
We are pleased to have as our guest speaker Lawrence Pope who will be talking about 'Bats, Bushcare and Biodiversity'.

Lawrence is President of Friends of Bats and Bushcare Inc, a Parks Victoria 'Friends of' group. He has been an animal advocate for over 22 years and worked with Grey headed flying foxes since 2001 following the Save the Bats encampment in the Royal Melbourne Botanic Gardens and the colony's successful move to Yarra Bend Park.

Lawrence has written 2 books about his experiences as an advocate for animals, most recently *Some Touch of Pity* published in 2016.

Dr Megan Davidson (FOBB Secretary and CEO of Wildlife Victoria) will probably be accompanying Lawrence to assist with Q & A.

This is a wonderful opportunity to hear from 2 wildlife advocates who have much knowledge to share about urban conservation and how we can all help to make a difference to biodiversity within our city.



2. Greenlink's 30th Anniversary Afternoon Tea – 2.00pm, Saturday, September 1st

All members are invited to a splendid afternoon tea to celebrate Greenlink's 30th year. We have hired a marquee and will be celebrating at the nursery on Saturday September 1 between 2:00-4:00 pm to honour the work of all volunteers, past and present, who have contributed their work to making Greenlink the productive nursery it now is.

As part of the celebration the Mayor of the City of Whitehorse, Andrew Davenport, will be planting a commemorative tree in honour of Minette Russell Young, the founder of Greenlink.

We are preparing the ground in the parkland now ready to receive a *Eucalyptus globoidea* (White Stringybark) obtained from Bungalook. This is a species of eucalypt which Minette identified in Wurrundjeri Walk (Blackburn South) and which is not commonly found in our immediate area.

We hope to see every one of our members at this grand celebration!



Greenlink Box Hill Inc.



New planting has now been completed in the bed East of the nursery. We are looking forward to a massed display of wildflowers in spring.

At Greenlink Box Hill, we value:

- every customer who deals with us and provide exceptional service
- a happy, safe and enthusiastic workplace
- the high quality of our plants
- the contribution that everyone makes to our success
- honesty and ethics in all of our dealings with customers and each other

Greenlink Box Hill Inc. Reg No. A0018547D

President: Robert Jones, **Vice President:** Emi Luppino,

Secretary: Janet Hodgson **Treasurer:** Trevor Eddy,

Ordinary Members: Heather Eadon, Karin Godfrey,

Newsletter editor: Janet Hodgson.