

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ROYAL PARK PROTECTION GROUP (RPPG) GIVEN AT THE AGM ON 22 October 2016

Over the last year, RPPG has been involved in a number of issues as outlined below:

Issues over the past year included:

- **E-W Link**
 - A celebration of the “victory” in saving our park was held Sunday November 15th at Walmsley House in the Australian Native Garden Royal Park.
 - Note – Infrastructure Victoria have released a 30 year plan and mention completion of the “link” – see page 95!!
- **Heritage Listing**
 - Heritage Victoria deleted the exemption that allowed the EWL to be placed in parkland.
- **Meaker Photographs Launch**
 - The launch was held together with the EWL celebration at Walmsley House.
 - The City of Melbourne kindly reproduced old photographs of the first Ranger and Bailiffs of Royal Park – Francis Meaker and his son, Charles Meaker – to be hung in the Walmsley House, where the family lived for seven decades. The photographs were made available by Tony Ferguson, the ~~great~~, great grandson of the Meakers and he and other descendants of the Meakers attended the launch.
- **Royal Children’s Hospital (RCH) and return of parkland.**
 - The MCC has completed the construction of another “silver” toilet block located on the Gatehouse St. entrance to the playground.
- **Development issues**
 - **Flemington Oval.** The works have now been completed apart from the light towers which we are still objecting to. Heritage Victoria approved the lighting towers however we have questioned how they treated the paper prepared by Dr Barry Clark, (submitted by PPL VIC) which provides evidence of harm on health grounds; as well as not being in line with the Master Plan. We note that Royal Park is officially a dark park at night.
 - **Wetlands Pollution –**
 - SERCO are responsible for monitoring and perform regular water quality tests for the wetlands.
 - Waterwatch program was held
 - Some of the above issues highlight the issue we have being kept informed of developments in the park and often we are finding out from members who see something and bring it to our notice. We have approached the MCC to provide us with notification of these sort of projects.
- **Dutch Elm Disease**
 - Members inspected the parks Elms and highlighted those suspected of being infested. It appears the Parks and Gardens concentrated on those trees to the south of the city and “forgot” about those in Royal Park. The elm at Walmsley House (which is on the National Heritage Tree Register) also appears to be affected.

Community Involvement:

- Supervision of plantings in Royal Park by a large contingent of students from Trinity College, University of Melbourne late September 2015.
- RPPG assisted with the African Broom removal to the remnant vegetation area September 2015.
- We again participated in the Spring Fling Festival in North Melbourne (18 Oct) to raise community awareness of the Royal Park.
- RPPG supported City of Melbourne community plantings in Royal Park last May/June 2016.
- RPPG participated in the Bioblitz program March 2016

Website: We hope that this has been of use to people as a repository of information on the park as well as highlighting activities. If you have any suggestions for improvements please let us know.

Royal Park Cards

We wish to thank our Committee member Margaret Jungwirth for all the effort put in to prepare cards which have been a great hit with the community at large.

I would like to end by thanking all our RPPG members, friends and allies for assisting over the years with all the hard work involved in rallies, protests, blockades, publicity stunts, attending meetings and keeping the Government and Council under constant surveillance . As usual I will end with a well known quote from Patrick White at a 1972 Rally, Centennial Park, Sydney.

"Your parks are your breathing spaces. Guard them, cherish them. Parkland is valuable and greedy eyes see the money in it. So you must always be on the alert. Hang onto your breathing spaces in this developing and already over-congested city. Protect your parks from the pressure of political concrete."

Paul Leitinger Convenor Royal Park Protection Group October 2016