

# FRIENDS OF THE MCKAY MEMORIAL GARDENS

## NEWSLETTER

December

2009

### Welcome to New Members

The Friends would like to welcome new members: Timothy, Speroulla, Amanda and Melinda and Anne. It is always good to have new people show an interest in our work.

Welcome aboard. Thanks also to those who have renewed their membership. If you haven't already done so, please help us out by doing so now. Financial membership helps us continue our work.

### Fees:

Adult (12 months) \$5:00  
Concession (12 months) \$4:00

Fees can be paid at any Friends meeting  
or  
by postal order or cheque to  
Friends of the McKay Gardens PO Box  
1021 Robinson VIC  
3019

### Centenary Celebrations

Well our centenary celebrations went off (almost) without hitch. Approximately 200 people turned up to listen to speeches (hopefully not too long) and the bands, to eat excellent afternoon tea, to peruse the historical display and to wander around the gardens. It threatened rain (we can't complain about that) but in the end, didn't. All in all, a good time was had by everyone. We also managed to raise the profile of the gardens not just with the local community but also more broadly across Melbourne.



*New Entrance Sign*



*The Legless Lizards playing*



*Restored gates and Gothic pillars*



*One of the new interpretive signs*

The Friends would like to especially thank the efforts of The Sunshine Community Brass Band and the Legless Lizards and the generosity of the Presbyterian church and church community. We would also like to acknowledge generous donations from the Manager of Agco and from the Melbourne Lyceum Club: the ladies had lunch in the gardens on the Monday after our event and were appreciative of our efforts.

### A little bit of history

The Sunshine Community Brass Band was officially established in 1928 after previous incarnations as the Braybrook Junction and the Braybrook District Band. It arose from the interests of workers at the Sunshine Harvester factory. During the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century the band played most weekends in park rotundas, including the rotunda that once stood in the McKay Gardens, where they often drew large crowds. We are pleased they could renew their association with the Gardens.

### Next Friends Meeting

Please note that there will be **no Friends meeting in December**. The Next Friends meeting will be the **last Saturday of January at 10am** in the church meetings rooms.

Our next meeting will be to organize projects for the coming year, so we particularly encourage anyone who

has ideas for projects to come along to the meeting. You can also send ideas along via our website or blog at:

<http://mckaygardens.blogspot.com/>

or

[contact@mckaygardens.org](mailto:contact@mckaygardens.org)

### Still Seeking Volunteers

The Friends are still seeking people who might be interested in taking on some of the tasks associated with running the Friends Group. Volunteering is an opportunity to gain skills and experience and can take as little as an hour per month. We need people to maintain

Still seeking Volunteers

our website, produce our newsletter, take minutes at meetings, keep our membership data base up-to-date, do historical research, catalog files, find information for submissions and grant applications, etc,etc. If you are interested in any of these areas or others please contact us.

### Brimbank Festival

The Friends of McKay Gardens in conjunction with the Friends of Iramoo, Friends of Kororoit Creek, Friends of Taylors Creek and others will have an information stall at the Brimbank Festival in March. If you are interested in 'manning' the stall for a while or just want to catch up

with the Friends, come along.

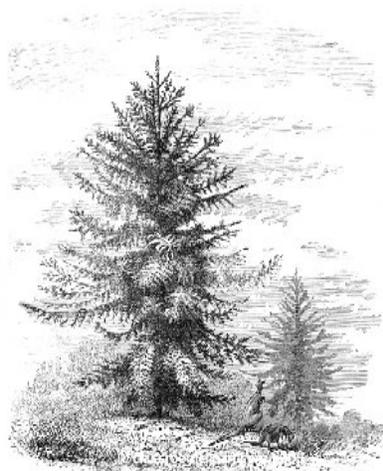
### Centenary Tree

As part of our centenary celebrations, the Friends were pleased to have a member of the McKay family plant a 'centenary tree'. Mrs Jessie Parks, daughter of



*Centenary tree planting*

George McKay, and now aged 94 did the honours. The tree was donated by Mr Richard Sellers-Jones the great grandson of Sam McKay. The species is commonly known as a Bunya Pine or Bunya Bunya Pine.



The **Bunya Pine (*Araucaria bidwillii*)** is a large evergreen coniferous tree in the genus *Araucaria*, family *Araucariaceae*. It is native to south-east Queensland although many fine specimens are grown throughout Australia. The Bunya Pine is the last surviving

species of the Section *Bunya* of the genus *Araucaria*. This section was diverse and widespread during the Mesozoic period. A relative of the recently discovered Wollemi Pine, it has an ancient lineage. Notable for its distinctive thorny 'leaves' and interesting bark, it can grow up to 50 m and can live for more than a 100 years.

Excellent examples of the mature tree can be found at Werribee Park and the Melbourne and Geelong Botanic Gardens.

Seasons Greetings to all Friends.  
Have a happy and safe holiday period

Friends of the McKay Memorial Gardens.

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