



# Ranelagh Estate

## Autumn 2020 Newsletter

The Newsletter of The Ranelagh Residents' Association (A0007234H)

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### RRA in the time of plague

In response to the situation in which we all find ourselves your committee resolved to conduct meetings electronically for the time being. This does impact on our ability to carry out our responsibilities, so although we may not be quite as active as normal we will endeavour to address the most salient issues as energetically as possible.

One change is that we will not be printing and distributing newsletters to the whole of the Ranelagh Estate, which is our usual practice, but will continue to pass on items of interest to those members with whom we can correspond by email. As soon as this situation can be improved we will do so.

At the last Annual General Meeting it was agreed in principle to increase membership fees to \$25.00 per household from 1st July 2020. In light of the reality that members' incomes will likely have been impacted negatively by the pandemic your committee has decided to postpone that increase for twelve months, and to attempt to contain costs in the meantime.

We hope all members remain safe and well during these troubled times and look forward to a brighter future together.

## Ranelagh Estate Community Page

Here is another example!

In recognition of our beautiful community and the impact Covid-19 is having on so many of us, a wonderful caring Ranelagh family has set up a new Ranelagh community group page on Facebook. The aim is to connect us as we get through this difficult and stressful time by means of support, information sharing and by linking residents who may need some extra neighbourly input such as food drops, shopping or a friendly connection to relieve the isolation. The page already has almost 80 members and is run as a closed group. All you need do is request to join on line and admin will approve you. Once on the page you will find it is welcoming, informative and uplifting.

The page is named 'Ranelagh Estate Community Group'. Please do consider joining, you can search under the group name or connect via this link. If you are unfamiliar with social media please don't hesitate to contact us via email and we will put you in contact (not literally) with the creator of the group so that you can be included.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/289436075370290/?ref=share>



## Working Bees temporarily suspended

It was with extreme disappointment but in the interests of community safety, that the Shire's Bushland Management team was instructed in March to cease all joint community volunteer work until further notice. This directly affects our ongoing work at the **JT Smith Reserve** and at **Earimil Bluff**, and no working bees will be taking place until it is safe to start lifting restrictions. As soon as we receive advice from the Shire that our volunteers can restart we will contact members.



This happened just as we were due to resume **working bees at JT Smith Reserve** following the long summer break, so the reserve will definitely be in need of some TLC by the time we can get back in there. We will be asking for extra volunteers to get things back on track when the time comes and will be putting a request out to members to dust off the old gardening boots, hopefully in a couple of months' time. Until then we can still walk through the reserve during our brief essential outings and enjoy the autumn weather and flourishing shrubs.

Working Bees at Earimil Bluff are scheduled for the four Thursdays in September and we are hopeful that by then life will be back to normal – so keep this one in your diary!

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## Our Resident's Story

Due to the need for social distancing we have not been able to interview our special resident for this season's Newsletter. We have someone with a particularly memorable family story lined up, so look out for this article in the next RRA Newsletter.

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## Ranelagh Restoration – the story continues

In our previous Newsletter (Summer 2019) we devoted page 3 to celebrating the planting of a grove of Tuart trees, *Eucalyptus gomphocephala* across the large traffic island at the corner of Ravenscourt Crescent and Wimbleton Avenue. These trees were planted by the Shire in the Spring of 2019 and had been flourishing due to the unusually wet Spring and recent Autumn rains, with additional watering over dry periods by a nearby Ranelagh resident.

In the early hours of the morning of Tuesday 14th April, at approximately 4:50 am, this entire grove of ten trees was removed along with their stakes and ties. Two trees were dug out, the other eight were snapped off at the base, and all material evidence removed by the perpetrators. A number of nearby residents heard vehicles and something going on at around 5 am but assumed it was materials being delivered to the building site over the road.



*This was not a random act of vandalism, it was a deliberate and carefully planned act of criminal damage.*



## ....But it didn't go unnoticed....

Throughout Tuesday the RRA received emails and telephone calls from distressed residents who had noticed this destruction. All of them were devastated by what they saw and several were in tears. Reports were lodged with the Shire and on the Mount Eliza Facebook page.

These trees were grown and planted out by Mornington Peninsula Shire in accordance with the Shire's heritage revegetation plan. All traffic islands and nature strips on Ranelagh Estate come under Heritage Victoria jurisdiction. These saplings were grown from seed taken from the original Tuart trees on the Estate, and nurtured at The Briars for two years before being planted here. The Tuart (*Eucalyptus gomphocephala*) is native to Western Australia. This fact was discussed in detail in 2011 as the Vegetation Management Plan for Ranelagh Estate was being developed by heritage and horticultural consultants, when it was felt that the original Wimbledon Avenue alternating planting of Cypress and Tuart trees be maintained as originally planned by the Griffins. Clearly they thrive in this area. As is required by state legislation, the planting of this traffic island was endorsed by Heritage Victoria.

Within 24 hours of this wanton destruction, contractors from Mornington Peninsula Shire were on site replanting the traffic island, and by Wednesday evening the restoration work was completed! Ten Tuart trees, of similar sizes and in the same locations, but this time with more substantial stakes and wire cages to protect them.



*Thank you to all those who notified the authorities, and congratulations to the Shire for its amazingly prompt response.*

### ... some of the comments posted on Facebook on Tuesday 14th April:

"Mindless senseless vandalism"

"Not vandalism, this was criminal damage"

"Aw so sad"

"This is shocking"

"I agree, they were looking so healthy as we entered into autumn, really flourishing."

"The Briars will also be devastated!! The time, care and energy they have contributed now totally gone to waste. So sad."

"Mindless, mindless people"

"Who would do such a thing in our beautiful neighbourhood."

"Hope the council plants them again. And I hope the low-life idiots who did this are caught."

### ... and some of the comments posted the next day:

"Terrific response. Let's hope they stay and grow."

"Well done Mornington Shire and everyone who notified them."

"Thank you all concerned."

"So good to see them replanted."

"That is such an impressive response."

### ... and one final comment:

"In these times, when people are demonstrating enormous community spirit and care for each other, it is sad to find there are a few (hopefully not directly among us) with such total disregard for our community that they need to destroy something which gives so much pleasure to others"



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