



GOLDEN VALLEY TREE PARK (GVTP) 2020-2021 ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

**Friends and Volunteers
Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup Community**

From the Chair

It has been a momentous year for the Golden Valley Tree Park which saw the passing of co-founder Dr Chrissy Sharp in May 2021.

Part of Chrissy's large legacy is leaving a place of great beauty and tranquillity that has been some 40 years in the making.

Chrissy placed great value on the strong partnerships that she established with the Balingup community and the landowners, Parks and Wildlife Service (Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions).

Advocacy on the broader value of the Tree Park

While the Tree Park provides a much-loved sanctuary for the rejuvenation of the mind and body, it is also a place of significance for the present and future vibrancy and prosperity of the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup and the broader region.

With 78 005 visitations to the Park in the 2020-2021 financial year generating an estimated \$11.53million into the local economy, the Balingup Golden Valley Tree Park has established itself as a major tourist and recreational destination.



Volunteers continue to power the park
The face of a new generation of volunteers in the Golden Valley Tree Park
Undalup Association Junior Park Rangers involved in preparations for a traditional cool burn in the Australian Collection

Andrew Thamo: A New Chair for the Next Phase of Development

It has been my privilege to have been involved with a hard-working and talented Management Committee as Chair for the past two years to lay some of the foundations for the next 40 years with the Tree Park which is now at a mature stage of growth.

I gave notice at the 2019-2020 AGM that I would Chair for a further 12 months but continue to be involved in hands-on advocacy and funding work for the Park. I look forward to making an on-going contributions to its long-term sustainability and health.

Gary Hodge
Chair GVTP Chair Management Committee

INSIDE

Highlights of the 2020-2021 Year include:

- **Establishment of GVTP Priorities 2021-2024**
- **Class A Reserve Gazetted Underway**
- **Collaboration with Kings Park (Botanical Gardens and Parks Authority) and Senior Arbor Team**
- **Engagement with Traditional Owners and Golden Valley Oral Histories**
- **Service Level Agreement with the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup**
- **Engagement with South Regional TAFE (Bunbury)**
- **Relaunch of the GVTP Conservation Appeal**
- **New Plantings**
- **Busy Bees**
- **Growth in Tree Sponsorship**
- **New Infrastructure Projects: Magic Oak Woods Project and Overflow Car Park**
- **All Access Pathway**
- **22 May 2021 Community Forum**

GVTP Priorities 2021-2024

In 2020-2021, the Management Committee identified the following priorities and goals to guide the management of the Tree Park.

A place of tree conservation with trees from Australia and other parts of the world:

- *To be a unique and internationally recognised arboretum of excellence*
- *To plan and manage the Park as a sustainable and adaptive global showcase*

A place of beauty, tranquillity and rejuvenation:

- *An inspirational destination for visitors*

A place of learning and transformation, including the recognition of its Aboriginal and post-European settlement histories;

- *A rich learning environment for people of all ages;*
- *A celebration of ancient living cultures co-existing with and enriching post-European settlement and evolving contemporary cultures*

A place for recreation

- *An exceptional visitor experience.*

The work of volunteers is vital to the achievement of these priorities and goals.



Class A Reserve Gazettal

Application by Golden Valley Tree Park Inc. for A-class reserve status was originally lodged in 2008. Following a personal appeal by Dr Chrissy Sharp to the then Minister for the Environment, The Hon Stephen Dawson MLC, the Minister visited the Park in September 2020 and announced in correspondence that gazettal would proceed.

Collaboration with Kings Park (Botanical Gardens and Parks Authority)

The Management Committee is working closely with Kings Park and Bold Park Botanical Gardens to establish collaborations around volunteering, tourism marketing, conservation science and community engagement programs.

With 5 000 000 visitors a year to Kings Park, this collaboration has the capacity to further boost visitations to Balingup and the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup with ongoing benefits to local businesses and residents.



Alan Barrett
Executive Director Kings Park Botanic and Gardens Authority
presenting at Balingup Town Hall
22 May 2022



Kings Park Senior Arbor Team
Amanda Shade (L) Chelsea Payne (R) and Daniel Sutherland gave a presentation to an appreciative local community audience on *The Kings Park Approach to Tree Health and Tree Safety Risk* Balingup Recreation Centre 16 July 2021

Engagement with South Regional TAFE Bunbury



SR TAFE (Bunbury) surveying students Christiaan Prenaar and Ben Sudlow at work in the Park

Another highlight of 2020-2021 was the use of the Tree Park as a rich learning environment for current and future generations of young Australians.

Over 80 students studying and applying conservation and land management techniques, horticulture, information technology and surveying were able to engage in a range of 'real world' learning opportunities. These included tree identification activity, black cockatoo observations and recordings and assistance in surveying for a proposed all-access walk path.

Busy Bees

Busy Bees are central to the ethos of the Tree Park, providing a vital and on-going connection to the community.

In 2021, part of the focus was on weed reduction in the newly harvested Hidden Valley area with infestations of several varieties of thistles and a special focus on the Australian Collection.



Australian Collection Curator Laurent Marsol (R) and Community Volunteer Logan Anderson (L) manually removing invasive wattle species

Culture and Heritage Respect: Engagement with Traditional Owners

2020-2021 saw a reaching out to the Traditional Owners and the Wandandi-Pibulumun and Kaneang Elders and Custodians to seek their knowledge for the conservation and land management efforts of the Tree Park.

Along with the involvement of junior Undalup Aboriginal Rangers (Busselton) and the Breakaway Aboriginal Corporation (Bunbury), this area of activity will only grow in importance.

Of particular interest is Wadandi traditional cool burning as a technique not only to protect fauna, flora and insects, but also as a fire mitigation approach.



Dr Wayne "Wonitji" Webb Pibulumun/Wadandi Elder & Traditional Custodian and Sandra Hill Balingup Wadandi Elder and Cultural Advisor at GVTP Community Forum Balingup Town Hall

Oral Histories

Invaluable oral histories have been recorded and lodged with the Battye Library through a collaboration between the GVTP Management Committee with Culture and Heritage responsibilities Jan Michele Helsham and Bridgetown archivist Sue Doherty.

The first recordings were with Dr Chrissy Sharp and these were completed and lodged with the State Library for all to access just before Chrissy passed away.

Original Golden Valley orchardists and farmers David and Wendy Ayers are currently being interviewed and recorded.

Launch of Updated Golden Valley Tree Park Conservation

The Management Committee committed in 2021 to develop policies that ensure the ongoing financial sustainability of the Tree Park and to acknowledge ethical donations.

The updated GVTP Conservation Appeal is one of the main vehicles to achieve this financial sustainability.

The first Conservation Appeal was launched in 2007 since then the National Trust has provided an on-line portal to facilitate donating.

The Tree Park relaunched its Appeal on 22 May 2021. Through this Appeal, all donations \$2.00 and above are tax deductible with an instant tax receipt provided to the donor.

The purpose of the new Appeal is to raise funds for the conservation and interpretation of the cultural and natural heritage values of the GVTP.



**The Hon. Bob Kucera APM
Chair National Trust Western Australia
launches the 2021 GVTP Conservation Appeal
in the Balingup Town Hall 22 May 2021**



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**FOR DETAILED INFORMATION ON
ANY ITEM IN THIS NEWSLETTER PLEASE EMAIL
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Tree Sponsorship



**Ania Boltuc Tree Sponsorship
Coordinator and Dr Robin Wright
Community Volunteer putting in new
tree plaques**

The need to celebrate life and love by sponsoring a tree also benefits the Park. This was particularly evident in the last couple of years, under the stress of the pandemic lock-downs and restricted travel rules. In the last financial year, this resulted in 3 benches and over 20 trees being sponsored, resulting in \$5262 in income for the Park. The trees and benches sponsored were in both World and Australian Collection.

Infrastructure

The main infrastructure projects completed or in implementation phase in 2020-2021 have been the **Magic Oak Woods** project for children and those young at heart and the **All Access Path** in the World Collection.



The construction of the Wishing Well at the entrance to the oaks collection marks the completion of this project which is designed to stimulate the imagination of children through exploratory play in and around the oaks.