



GOLDEN VALLEY TREE PARK
BALINGUP



Chinampa Area Golden Valley Tree Park: An Area for Contemplation

Highlights

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- Busy Bees: Runaway Community Volunteer and New Tree Plantings Success Story
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2019-2020 Annual Newsletter

Our Beautiful Park Provides Refuge, Solace and Comfort

2019-2020 was a year like no other.

While building on the strength and resilience that comes from decades of community support and valued long-term partnerships, the GVTP Management Committee also sought new partnerships that could serve the sensitive growth and development of our much-loved and celebrated Golden Valley Tree Park.

And, as a result of living through the COVID-19 global pandemic, the Park became a symbol of much more than a place of great beauty, tranquillity and rejuvenation.

Against a backdrop of a world that has been literally brought to its knees and in a Summer where at times it felt like much of our continent was on fire, our Park became a source of solace and consolation for many.

In this 2019-2020 annual newsletter, I am very pleased to share the achievements over the year of our many community volunteers, our major partner, Parks and Wildlife Services (Dept of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions) and of the Management Committee.

What has been especially pleasing is the support and collaboration from the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup which sees the Park as a significant cultural, environmental and economic driver for the Shire and the South West Region.

To all our community volunteers, our partners, our tree and park bench sponsors and whoever else has supported or visited the Park, the Management Committee sends its sincere gratitude.

**Gary Hodge Chair
Golden Valley Tree Park (Inc)
Management Committee**

**International Recognition of the
Golden Valley Tree Park
Co-Founders Dr Chrissy Sharp and
Andrew Thamo**



2019-2020 saw the realisation of a major GVTP constitutional objective, namely 'to develop an internationally-recognised arboretum, educational precinct and visitor destination'.

Following a visit to the Park in February 2020 by Colonel Giles Crisp, the current President of the International Dendrology Society (IDS), the Park was invited to join as an institutional member of this foremost world-wide organisation for tree experts and important tree collections.

Congratulations to co-founders Dr Chrissy Sharp, Andrew Thamo and the Balingup Progress Association in having a vision of the Park realised. What truly sets this Park apart is that it is a **community-developed** and internationally-recognised Arboretum.

Institutional membership is by invitation only and the Golden Valley Tree Park joins such important and celebrated tree collections such as the Kew Garden in the United Kingdom and the Arnold Arboretum in the USA.

This international recognition now sits alongside the Park's national and State recognitions, such as the inclusion in the official list of Australian Botanic Gardens, listing under the State Heritage Act and its recognition by the National Trust of WA.

This is a crowning achievement of a lifetime's commitment to the creation of a landscape that brings - and will continue to bring - so much joy and pleasure to tens of thousands of people each year and which has become a major part of Balingup's identity.

**South Regional TAFE
Partnership**

Another lasting legacy of the Park's existence lies in its capacity to be a rich learning environment for current and future generations of young Australians.

Working in partnership with the South Regional TAFE's senior management and lecturing staff, the Park has opened up opportunities for nationally-recognised Certificate 11-IV studies in Conservation and Land Management, Horticulture, Advanced Information Technology and in the future, Aboriginal and European-heritage Tourism and Building and Construction.

The Committee extends its gratitude on behalf of the Management Committee to SR TAFE's General Manager, Sue Lapham, Mark Combes Manager Business Development, Pamela Patane Senior Lecturer (Horticultural Studies), Zoe Kissane Lecturer Horticulture & Conservation and Alison Coleman Lecturer Information Technology for laying the foundations of an important new partnership for the Park.

Thank you to Gilbert Stockman Senior National Park Ranger Busselton Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions, Parks and Wildlife Service – Blackwood District for attending to the protocols needed to ensure student safety and educational value in having the students learn in the Park.

The Management Committee also expresses its gratitude to Tom Benson our first Park Steward who has enthusiastically supported the student learning initiative and who is engaged negotiating the supervision and provision of the Park as a campus and workplace for the delivery of the "Training and Access to Employment Programme -Giving Back to the Community" program. Tom has been liaising with SR TAFE lecturer Victoria Campbell to make this happen.

Busy Bees: A Runaway Community Volunteer Success Story

Engagement with the community and showcasing a global diversity of temperate trees in an inspirational setting is another of the GVTP Management Committee objectives.

Nowhere is this objective more fulsomely addressed than in our Busy Bee program coordinated by World Collection Curator Andrew Thamo and Tree Collection & Park Maintenance Coordinator Dr Chrissy Sharp.

Held every third Saturday of the month, volunteers from Balingup and across the South West (and beyond) come together throughout 2019-2020 for a variety of jobs of work to be done to enhance visitor amenity and safety.

From plantings of rare Australian natives in the Australian Collection through to preparing the way for the Magic Oak Woods project for children in the World Collection and planting 2 000 new more drought -resistant pines sourced from Israel in the Hidden Valley, volunteers contributed a whopping total of 1,385.5 hours to the Park in 2019-20.

New Tree Plantings and Developments 2019-2020

Among new plantings, a range of unusual West Australian tree species were planted during the 2020 winter. This brings The Park's collection of trees from the South West Region alone to over 120 different tree species. The Management Committee thanks the Geographe Community Nursery for donating these new specimens for the Australian Collection.

In the World Collection, over summer, a major forestry operation was carried out in the Hidden Valley. The pines harvested have earned some much needed income for Golden Valley. The clearing of some of the pines has also created a wonderful landscaping opportunity in the Hidden Valley.

Unlike in most plantations, the Park has retained many semi-mature pines to grow on to full height while establishing two hectares of *Pinus canariensis* as an investment planting. This exciting pine species is tipped to take over from the well-known radiata as the best softwood plantation choice, as it tolerates some fire and prescribed burns.

The canariensis are among the most drought hardy of the pines, and light fuel reduction burns can be carried out underneath them because they have thick skins. They are slower growing but that means stronger, denser timber. In addition we have started new landscape plantings in the Hidden Valley to create a beautiful and, in WA, an unusual experience of a completely coniferous landscape.

Many thanks to Brad Barr from Wespine for his project management of the thinning operation and to FPC for lending us their log landing.



***Cedrus deodarus* on Olwen's Avenue after interplanted poplars removed to reduce competition for water ahead of a dry summer – part of the necessary adaption to climate change**

Community Education

Sandra Hill Balingup Noongar Elder and Artist

Professor Lyn Beazley AO FAA FTSE Science Ambassador and Advocate for the Golden Valley Tree Park

Balingup Noongar Elder and Artist Sandra Hill gave a moving and informative Welcome to Country based on the Aboriginal six seasons to a community audience of some 100 people in the large gazebo in the Park on 19 October 2019.

Sandra spoke of how trees provide vital support for each other used this relationship to invite the community to walk beside her people in mutual respect as we continue to draw on Aboriginal culture and knowledge of the Australian landscape to nurture and protect Country.

Sandra was followed by Former Chief Scientist of Western Australia, Professor Lyn Beazley who spoke on the topic *Forests, Distant Past to Future Challenges* outlining the local and global significance of Australian forests.

For a complete overview of Professor Beazley's presentation go to the GVTP website:



**Balingup Noongar Elder and
Artist Sandra Hill**



**Professor Lyn Beazley AO FAA FTSE
Science Ambassador and Advocate for the
Golden Valley Tree Park**

Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup and GVTP Advocacy and Collaboration: Southampton Road Widening

Over the past year, the GVTP Management Committee has welcomed the strengthening of its relationship with the Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup and in particular with President Brian Piese and CEO Ben Rose. When the State Government Cabinet met in Donnybrook recently the Park was presented by the President as a significant community and economic asset for the South West Region.

Ben Rose has made himself and staff very accessible and invited the GVTP Management Committee to partner on preparations for the widening of the northern end of Southampton Road. Guided by Dr Chrissy Sharp and Andrew Thamo, this sensitive joint approach was symbolic of this growing partnership and resulted in an excellent outcome. We acknowledge the great community consultation work undertaken by Tom Omond Coordinator Technical Services with the Shire on this



The Management Committee Extends a Special Thank you to the following:

Don Cooper

Special mention is made of the work of Balingup res Don Cooper, the Committee's ex-officio and honorary consulting engineer on water management in the Park.

Don devoted over 100 hours in analysing and designing an irrigation system for the Management Committee giving it great credibility in negotiating future partnerships around the watering of the Park,

Don will leave a lasting legacy as we adapt to climate change.

Pam Williamson

If you have ever wondered who is behind our aesthetically beautiful and informative website, it is Balingup resident Pam Williamson.

Pam's attention to detail and design gives us a web face to the world that we are very proud of.

Please visit the website often – it is full of useful information on what is happening in the Park and ways that people can either support or just enjoy the Park.

Merry Men

As the Park moves into its fifth decade of evolution, one of the constants has been the much-valued work of the Merry Men in the Park.

Every 4.00pm on a Wednesday afternoon extending often into the late evening, they appear and provide essential maintenance, that includes landscaping, clearing, mowing, oiling, burning and pruning.

The beautiful chinampa area behind the visitor information centre alongside the Homestead and Workers Cottage is a testament to their commitment and contribution to the Park.

The Management Committee thanks current Merry Men for their decades of work in the Park:

Peter Hicks
Terry Leserberg
Glenn Mealey
Rick Russell
Nick and Robin Somers (WWOOFers)

Peaceful and Tranquil Scene Alongside the Original Workers Cottage



To see how you can support the Golden Valley Tree Park or enjoy what it offers see <http://www.goldenvalleytreepark.org.au/Golden-Valley-Tree-Park-Sponsorship.html>

2019-2020 Comings and Goings on the Management Committee and in the Park

Outgoing Secretary GVTP Wendy Kurz

Wendy resigned from the Committee in February after many years of devoted service to the Committee and steering it through changes to the State's Associations Incorporation Act 2015.

Wendy's deep love of the Park and her enormous contribution to its development are acknowledged and she is much missed for her professionalism, knowledge and skill.

Jeff Pow Management Committee Member

Due to work and farm commitments during the pandemic, Jeff Pow resigned from the Management Committee. We thank Jeff for the knowledge and energy that he brought to the development of the Park and for his approach to land and tree management.

Laurie Capill Secretary

The Committee was very fortunate in having Laurie Capill fill in the position of Secretary following Wendy's resignation.

Laurie has already made his mark bringing a knowledge of information systems and constitutional matters to the table.

Laurenç Marsol replaces Wayne O'Sullivan as Curator of the Australian Collection

We welcomed Laurenç as the new Curator of Australian Collection when he was appointed by the Management Committee in July.

Laurenç brings international experience in forestry and fire management (France and Australia), nursery management and tree propagation. We look forward to his shaping of the Australian Collection in the years to come.

A special thank you to outgoing and inaugural Australian Curator Wayne O'Sullivan whose commitment to the Park is not reduced as a result of his resigning from the Curator position.

Wayne established broad principles in his approach and leaves a legacy of being the first to hold the position and he celebrated its creation as a major step forward for the future of the Park.

Dr Garry Middle

We welcomed Garry to the Management Committee in May, bringing with him specialist knowledge in Environmental Policy and Planning, Urban Studies from University of Western Australia (1995), Environmental Science, Chemistry and Education.

We look forward to Garry assisting with his strategic and clear thinking as we navigate the years ahead and the unknowns thrown up by the pandemic.

Patron Dr Brian Degaris

2020 Management Committee Members

Gary Hodge Chair

Julia Novikova Deputy Chair and Manager GIS Data Base

Laurie Capill Secretary

Tom Benson Treasurer and Park Steward

Andrew Sandri PaWS (DBCA) Representative on the Management Committee

Dr Chrissy Sharp Tree Collection, Tree Health and Park Management

Andrew Thamo World Collection Curator, Busy Bee Coordinator

Ania Boltuc Tree Sponsorship Secretary

Jan Helsham Cultural and Heritage and Coordinator

Dr Gary Middle Grants and Partnership Coordinator

Wendy Ayers Friends Coordinator

Laurenç Marsol Australian Curator and Management Committee Member

Don Cooper Ex-Officio Honorary Engineering Consultant (Water Management)

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