

Who's Who in the Friends' Committee 2024-25



John Herniman, President

John has been connected to the Tower for many years. He used to see the Tower on the horizon when he went to school nearby. When he studied Architecture at Melbourne University he wrote a thesis about the Church's architect, Alfred Dunn. Alfred Dunn died at 29 and designed and supervised Auburn Uniting Church as a 24 year old! He also designed the other buildings in the suite, the Manse, the Sunday School and the Cottage. They have a Heritage listing and are classified by the National Trust. John's interest in the precinct is mainly architectural and his major driver is to "make sure that the Church in particular, but also the suite of buildings, are preserved and maintained".



Di Gillies, Vice President

Di served as a Ward Councillor on Boroondara Council for 4 years from 2020. She has worked, lived in and raised a family in the area for over 38 years and has a wide range of community commitments, including Vice President of the Camberwell Traders' Association, Boards, National Council of Women (Victoria) member, is a local High School Council community representative, and Chair of the Camberwell Community Centre. Di is also an active Justice of the Peace. Her nursing background was the start of a long list of community focussed activities on which she has served. She has completed a Diploma of Governance, is an alumna of the Cranlana ethical leadership course, and is currently completing a Bachelor of Psychological Sciences.



Alan Chuck, Secretary

Alan has served on the Friends committee since its inception, and is currently Secretary and Public Officer. A civil engineer by profession, he has developed a love of heritage churches since attending St Andrew's Box Hill. His link with Auburn goes back to 1978, when he first lived in Hawthorn. He is keen to see the Auburn buildings sensitively conserved and adapted for 21st century use. While supervising work on the Tower in 2003, he invited Ted Baillieu (then Member for Hawthorn, where the Tower is located) to climb the scaffolding, which led to the creation of the Friends in 2004.

**Jane Tisdall, Treasurer**

Jane was elected as Treasurer of the Friends of the Auburn Tower in 2017. Jane is a qualified Certified Practising Accountant with more than 15 years collective experience working in private practice and the not-for-profit sector. As a resident of the City of Boroondara for more than 10 years, her interest in the local surroundings and history has grown. Jane appreciates the uniqueness of the local heritage and the importance of preserving history for future generations.

Daphne Arthur, committee member

Daphne has served as a Friends committee member since its inception. She is a member of the Auburn Uniting Church with its beautiful tower and its magnificent pipe organ. She was a resident of Hawthorn for many years, operating a B&B in an historic precinct in the suburb. She has a deep appreciation of beautiful and historic buildings and is committed to their preservation. She believes that in this fast-changing world there is a great need to maintain the stability and continuity of the urban environment.

**Avril McHugh, committee member**

Avril is a member of the Auburn Church congregation. She enjoys worshipping in the magnificent surroundings of this heritage building and attending various musical performances held in the Church. Avril and her husband Ian are 'the Gardeners' looking after the gardens surrounding the Church and other buildings in the precinct. While working in the garden they enjoy seeing locals walking through and talking with them about the history of the Church. Avril believes that it is very important to preserve the buildings of Auburn Uniting Church so that present and future generations have a connection to their past in this rapidly changing world.

Cheryl Pisterman, Executive Officer

Cheryl is the proprietor of In-(my)-House Publishing, a small desk top publishing and secretarial service in Hawthorn, co-incidentally just down the road from the Auburn Tower. She provides services to the Friends which include minute-taking, general administration, creation of promotional material, maintenance of the membership database and a regular Friends newsletter. Cheryl enjoys living in the historic Auburn area of Hawthorn and hopes that this Auburn Uniting Church complex and its magnificent Tower will be restored and preserved for the future.