



# Friends of the Auburn Tower Newsletter

Winter 2021

## Celebratory Concert on 02 May 2021



The "Friends" were lucky on Sunday 02 May to get a break in the COVID-19 restrictions when the long-awaited concert to celebrate **75 Years that Changed the World** (and particularly Australia) was able to go ahead, though with reduced numbers. It was a huge success and enjoyed by all who attended.



The concert was a celebration of the end of World War 2 and events that impacted on society when service men and women returned home and later, the steady influx of European refugees who changed Melbourne's demographic and ethnic composition, its culture, and cuisine.

The event was generously supported by the Victorian Government and the City of Boroondara with cultural grants.



Master of Ceremonies, Kenneth Park, historian, narrated the events and introduced the musicians and choir conducted by Alan Cook. Music was a major feature of the celebration thanks to the wonderful contributions of the Cathedral Brass Quintet and the Melbourne Chamber Choir which produced a magnificent sound in the octagonal nave which echoed in the tower. Classical compositions by Gabrielli, Maurer and Telman Susato were performed.




The programme incorporated the stories via video of a returned serviceman and immigrant histories of refugees who had made their way to Melbourne.

From the top: Kenneth Park; concert audience; The Cathedral Brass; Eva de Jong-Duldig and her son, Antony with Friends' patron Ted Baillieu

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## *Celebratory Concert on 02 May (continued)*



Di Gillies thanking Luciana Perin, Antonio's daughter

The first was that of the Duldig family whose story was told by Eva de Jong-Duldig, daughter of Karl and Slawa Duldig who had established a successful career as an artist and art teacher and contributed much to their new home. The young Eva remembers clearly the celebrations on 15 August 1945 at Flinders Street station. The family home in Burke Road is now a memorial to Karl's work and can be visited by appointment and the family's cultural contribution continues to be celebrated under Eva's stewardship.

The work of George Dreyfus was featured in the concert with the Cathedral Brass performing a stirring rendition of the memorably rousing theme from the very popular ABC Goldfield series "Rush" which was great fun. The audience was even more delighted when our narrator and MC introduced the composer George Dreyfus who was in the audience. George, now in his 90s, recounted how he had arrived in Melbourne with his brother in early 1939 and reunited with their parents six months later. He attended Melbourne High, found a cello in a music room cupboard and taught himself to play for the ongoing enjoyment of us all. George was accompanied by his son, Antony. His other son Mark was Federal Attorney General in the Gillard Government, Cabinet Secretary and is Member for the Victorian seat of Isaacs.

The life of Antonio Di Lallo was the next post-war immigrant story. Antonio was unable to attend at short notice but members of his family were welcomed by the audience. Antonio had served in the Italian Army, found himself in Yugoslavia at the end of the War and with his comrades made his way home to Italy on foot. He came to Australia in 1959 and three years later was joined by



Exec. Officer Cheryl with "Mick" Dexter

his wife and daughters. Antonio had been a cobbler by trade and took a job with Aquila Shoes (a brand that still exists), boosting the family income by sewing moccasins by night. He subsequently bought a his own home in Carlton and later set up a small workshop in Brunswick East, Invicta Shoes, making his own brand of shoes. Antonio turns 100 this year.

"Mick" Dexter represented those who had served and returned to a different Australia. Shortly after turning 18, he volunteered to join the Royal Australian Navy, he trained to become an officer and finished the war as a Lieutenant with the Royal Navy Volunteer Service where he served along the coast of Australia on HMAS Deloraine. His service finished on the first anniversary of VP Day in 1946. After the War, Mick trained as an agricultural scientist. He worked at ICI and in retirement he became involved in bush regeneration in suburban Heathmont.

The concert concluded with a wrap-up from Kenneth and the Cathedral Brass and the Melbourne Chamber Choir provided more wonderful music, this time war-time hits such as Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy, Little Brown Jug, Moonlight Serenade, A String of Pearls and American Patrol which had feet tapping and some covert jiving in the rear of the auditorium – the Methodists who formed the original congregation in the 19th century would have been aghast.

Kenneth Park closed the concert and invited the audience to the sumptuous afternoon tea and singalong in the Church Hall. I live near the Auburn Tower. Since the concert, whenever I walk the dog past it, I cannot stop myself from humming Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy.



## ***Celebratory Concert on 02 May (continued)***

Many thanks to the Friends of Auburn Tower for devising such a rich, varied and professionally put together program. I believe that, together with great music, the concert achieved its aim: to celebrate the success of Australia's post war immigration and the contribution of those who returned after service in WW2.

**Editor's note:** for those who missed the concert, a few copies of the souvenir programme are available on request from the Executive Officer or Secretary – [execofficer@auburntowerfriends.org.au](mailto:execofficer@auburntowerfriends.org.au) or phone 0419757866.

As Kenneth Park commented, "The program was very well thought out and informed attendees of the historic, military and social events which contributed to developing the Victorian community we now enjoy."

*with thanks to our new member Jane Gilchrist*

## ***Storm Damage to Longacres and across the Dandenongs***

After a mild summer with plenty of rainfall, Longacres enjoyed halcyon days for the first part of 2021. Everything was lush and green, inviting picnics on emerald lawns beneath the linden trees.

The unprecedented storm on the night of 9 June 2021 brought the idyll to an abrupt end. Although I wasn't at Longacres that night, friends describe being awakened in the small hours by a terrifying roar like a locomotive, as the cyclonic storm surged up the mountain. Everything went dark as the power failed everywhere.

The sight the following day was total chaos, with hundreds of forest giants torn from the earth, often shattering buildings (including houses) and leaving debris metres high. Power lines were totally destroyed. With no power in mid-winter for up to a month, arctic temperatures and steadily falling rain, the beautiful Dandenong Ranges were indeed a disaster area.

Longacres escaped relatively lightly, despite the loss of several gigantic centenarian trees. One smashed the fence and gate, falling across the road into the adjacent property. The heroic SES volunteers removed it within a day or two, restoring access to Longacres. Luckily, although the garden was a complete mess, the house and cottages escaped damage. Moreover, nothing was irreparable.

The major clean up is already underway, with chainsaws, excavators and mulchers making progress. Another positive outcome: the timber from the great and venerable fallen mountain ash in the oak lawn fronting the property is not being mulched or used for firewood. It is being milled and cured, and will be used to renovate the century old house of my adjoining neighbours.

*with thanks to Julie Dodds-Streeton*



**Damage at Longacres front gate**



**Century old trees down at Longacres**



**Trees take out the front fence at Longacres**

# Friends Calendar of Events for 2021-2022

Sunday 12 September, 12 noon – 4.00pm	Tower Open Day
Sunday 10 October, 2.00pm	Salvation Army Camberwell Band concert, with special guest artist Mark Slavec, organ at Auburn Uniting Church
Wednesday 27 October, 7.30pm	Friends AGM, followed by guest speaker Justin Buckley, Executive Manager South City Properties (Rippon Lea, Como, Labassa, Glenfern), Manager of National Trust Gardens
Sunday 21 November, 3.00 – 7.00pm	Tower Twilight Opening
Date to be advised	<i>Longacres</i> Working Bee to assist with restoration of the garden

## Friends' AGM Guest Speaker, Justin Buckley



Our special guest speaker following the forthcoming AGM on 27 October 2021 is **Justin Buckley**, a qualified horticulturalist, with more than 20 years' experience in the gardening industry. He is presently the Manager of National Trust Gardens and in his professional career has held many challenging roles such

as Head Gardener of Rippon Lea Estate. He is skilled in realising gardens that perform to high standards while keeping their use of resources efficient. He has specialised knowledge in managing heritage gardens and alternative water supplies.

If you are a keen gardener or just love the beauty and serenity of our amazing Melbourne gardens come hear Justin about his years of experience.

Feel free to bring along any fellow garden lovers.

### Reminder

Thank you to all our members who have renewed their subscription for 2022-2022. If you have forgotten to renew, a reminder will be sent out at the end of July. If you no longer wish to continue your Friends' membership, may I ask that you advise this in writing (via email) to: [execofficer@auburntowerfriends.org.au](mailto:execofficer@auburntowerfriends.org.au) If you are not sure whether you have renewed or not, please give me a call on 0419 757 866.

Cheryl Pisterman, Executive Officer

## How does our garden grow?

The aim of the team of volunteers (listed below) is to establish gardens of fragrance, hope and colour at Auburn.

The Oxley Road gardens are of remembrance with colours red and yellow. Red for our war-dead, yellow for hope in times of stress and lockdown. Fragrance with Rosemary and perfumed Roses. The regenerating cottage flowers, give hope to the observer and reach out to those passing by or attending the precinct.

The Hepburn Street wave garden is of hope with scented Salvias and fragrant Roses. Ornamental trees, Crab Apple, Elvins and Dogwood are the colours of new life. The red stems of the Japanese Maple evoke ongoing life in times of darkness and cold winter days. The plants are cottage garden themed showing self-reliance. With Winter Iris, and Daffodils coming up in late winter; hope for the spring, and fresh beginnings.

The Duffy Place garden is full of herbs and fragrance with the Lime Orange and Lemonade citrus trees providing hope, colour and new life.

**Fay, Avril, Deborah, Libby, Rae, Neale and Ian**

**Editor's note: We will provide updates in future newsletters**



Early plantings: Oxley Road, above and Hepburn Street, right