

KINGS PARK NEWSLETTER

Updates from the Friends of Kings Park



Welcome to Summer 2024

Summertime really is the most colourful time of year in Stirling's wonderful Kings Park. The Friends of Kings Park have been busy over recent months and our efforts can be enjoyed by all.

Volunteer Activities

The Peace of Mind Garden has been transformed into a colourful summer oasis open to all to sit and relax with a stunning variety of plants on show. We would welcome help with weeding and pruning, usually on Thursday mornings from 10am in the Garden, followed by a coffee and chat in the Pavilion Café. Everyone is welcome, no gardening experience required and tools can be provided.



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Taking on new projects

This season we have taken-on the planting of the three-tier planter by the tennis courts' gate, as Stirling Council is unable to supply summer plants. Our volunteers have filled the planter with donated plants that offer an attractive welcome to the park's visitors.

The four, box-hedge parterres by the main fountain would also have been left empty this summer (apart from weeds) was it not for action by the Friend's group. Our members nurtured cosmos seeds at home, then transplanted young plants to four of the parterres, together with central clusters of gladioli. We are hoping for a colourful display later in the summer!



School Partnerships

Our committee member, Sue Beach, liaised with Stirling High School for senior Higher Geography students to draw-up and carry out a short survey of the views of park users' about the park. We should be able to report the findings in our next newsletter.

Meanwhile committee member Wendy Garcia gave a presentation at St. Ninians Primary School to pupils about the park. This led to pupils coming to the Park with their own young plants, and with support from Lidia Becci, planted and watered them in our 3 wooden plant tub next to the Changing Rooms.

Community Orchard

We have a new information board funded by Stirling Council's Community Grants Scheme. It has been attracting much attention with its bright, colourful details of the apple trees and how they are pollinated. We have carried out a summer pruning (the 'June drop') and there should be a bumper autumn harvest of dessert and cooker apples. When ready, they are free to pick.



Coronation Tree Planting

On the 30th April, the Friends of Kings Park attended a ceremony in the Community Garden, where Provost Elaine Watterson and the Lord Lieutenant, Alan Simpson, planted the Pride of India, for the coronation of King Charles III. The tree joins the Handkerchief Tree planted in November 2021 to commemorate Queen Elizabeth's platinum jubilee. Kings Park, as part of an ancient royal park has a heritage over the centuries of marking significant occasions.



MSP Visit

We were pleased to welcome Evelyn Tweed, MSP for Stirling, on a visit to the Kings Park in July. She had requested to meet with some of our volunteers and hear about our work.

Evelyn walked around our various projects and was impressed with the Peace of Mind Garden and the Community Orchard. And we much appreciated the advice and support she gave us about fundraising for future projects.



Tennis Courts Renewal

The refurbishment of the park's four, run-down, tennis courts is now complete following a significant capital grant by the Lawn Tennis Association working in partnership with Stirling Council. The Friends of Kings Park welcome the new courts as a major colourful investment in the park's amenities. Play on the courts has to be booked via the Club Spark app at www.lta.org.uk/register. Free tennis sessions are available for beginners, intermediates and improvers. For details, visit www.lta.org.uk/play/book-a-tennis-lesson/class/barclays-free-park-tennis



Stirling 900

As part of the Stirling 900, a guided walk, led by one of our members, Lidia Becci, was held in May and attracted a small group. It was an enjoyable walk and discussion about the Park's history as told by nine mosaic panels which we cleaned in advance of the talk. They are now more noticeable to visitors and the stories they represent are described on the information board at the main Park entrance.



Park Issues: Flooding and Vandalism

Recurring flooding of the main path near the changing rooms block has made passage nearly impossible at times. After numerous requests for action by the Friends of Kings Park, Stirling Council cleared a blocked drain. We will keep a watch.

The rising level of vandalism has clearly become an issue in the park. As well as graffiti sprayed on walls, there has been a spate of smashed toilet windows and a damaged toilet door as well as recurring late-evening trouble around the café area. We have previously raised the issue with Stirling Council and Police Scotland but little changes. More commitment and intervention is clearly needed.



- Special Feature -

Reflections on a visit to Kings Park Perth, Western Australia



Friends of Kings Park Perth office

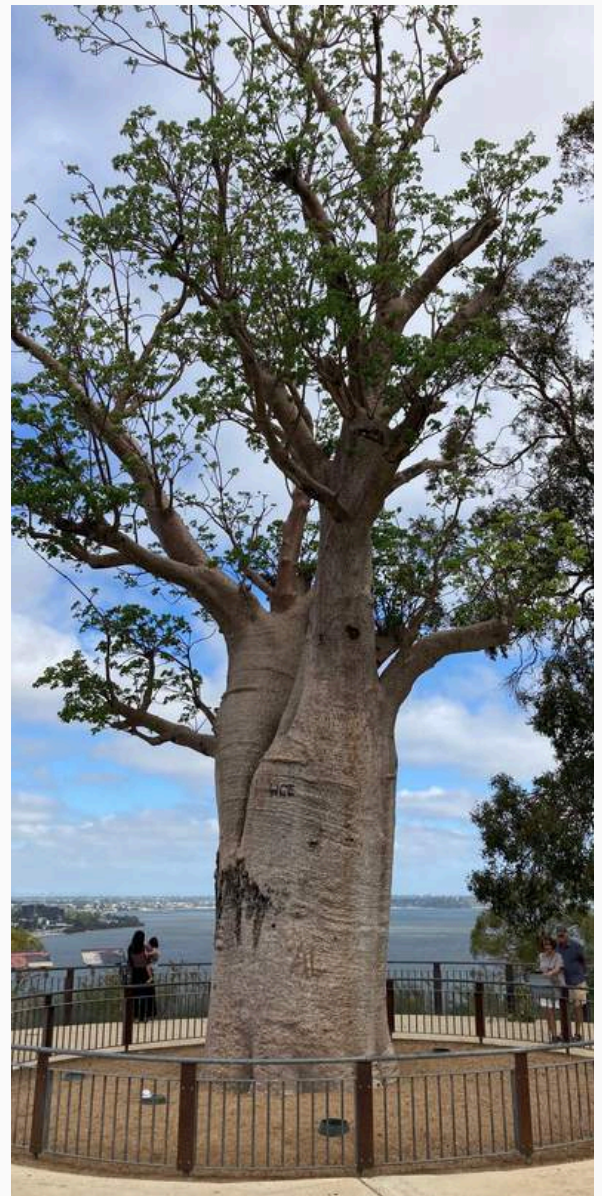
A visit to Perth and Western Australia earlier this year provided Neil Ross, one of our committee members, with the opportunity to visit Perth's very own Kings Park, and to learn about the work carried out by the Friends of Kings Park Perth.

We have published Neil's full story on our website:

www.friendsofkingspark.org/australia

Turn to it to read about:

- the origins of the city and its Scottish connections
- the development of Kings Park, Perth and links with the Aboriginal people
- what's to see in the park, including the State War Memorial, extensive parkland and native bush, and the Western Australia Botanic Garden
- some special points of interest, such as the 760 year old giant boab tree, the elevated walkway, and the treetop glass bridge
- the work of the Friends of Kings Park Perth, operating on an altogether different budget from our Friends' group, but sharing some similar core objectives
- some facts and figures about the Friends of Kings Park Perth, an organisation with more than 1,000 members
- AND, to conclude, an 'intriguing' idea to ponder!



Kings Park Perth's mighty old boab tree

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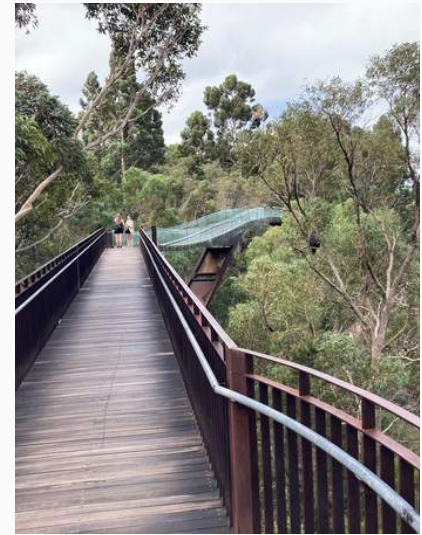
Read the full story of Neil's trip to Kings Park, Perth on our website, learn more about these stunning sites. Does it spark any ideas for our own projects?



Kings Park Road
(plant sale by Friends')



State War Memorial



Elevated walkway



Walkway overlooking Swan River



Kings Park panorama

Your views and input are welcome

We will be canvassing the park with our short survey to help with funding applications for future projects. If you'd like to send us direct feedback, feel free to get in touch via our website or email fokpstirling@outlook.com

- What types of events would you like to see in the park?
- Are there issues we should bring to Stirling Council's attention?
- What types of projects would you be willing to help with? (No gardening experience needed and we welcome donations as well.)

We welcome views from members and non-members alike.