

Working bee June 28th 2014

By Terry Lane

A cold windy day and with rain imminent I arrived at the Friends Shed at 9am with my 26 year old Ute which has been off the road for a while getting an engine and body makeover.



Soon Neil and Maelor arrived. With the weather being what it was I wasn't expecting a good turn out today and sure enough only three of us turned up.

The plan for the day was to do some planting on the slope above Red Gum Flat.

We loaded up with plants and tools and hooked up the water tanker.



Lots of plants to go in.



Neil filling up.

Having this tanker operational and back on the road will make watering a lot easier, quicker and safer than walking down and filling from the creek as we have done in the past.

After updating the notice board and putting up the Working bee sign we drove down to the planting site.

We unhooked the trailer and whilst Neil set out the plants Maelor and I went down to Main Flat to get wire to reuse for frames from a planting day many years ago.



On the way back we came across this Swamp Wallaby.



We see this animal regularly; it appears to be healthy but is quite lethargic and sluggish. He or she is either sick or maybe just suffering from old age.

Laying out the wire along the track Neil and I made up frames and Maelor put them around the plants.



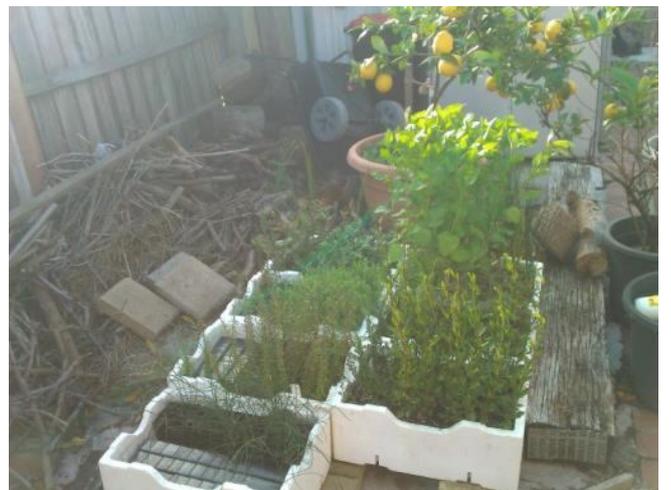
Although quite soft the ground was extremely rocky making it difficult not only to dig holes but also to knock in the pins to hold the tree frames in place.

The weather was turning for the worst, so after a cuppa we decided to work another half hour or so before calling it quits.

We ended up getting in around fifty plants but framed only thirty or so.

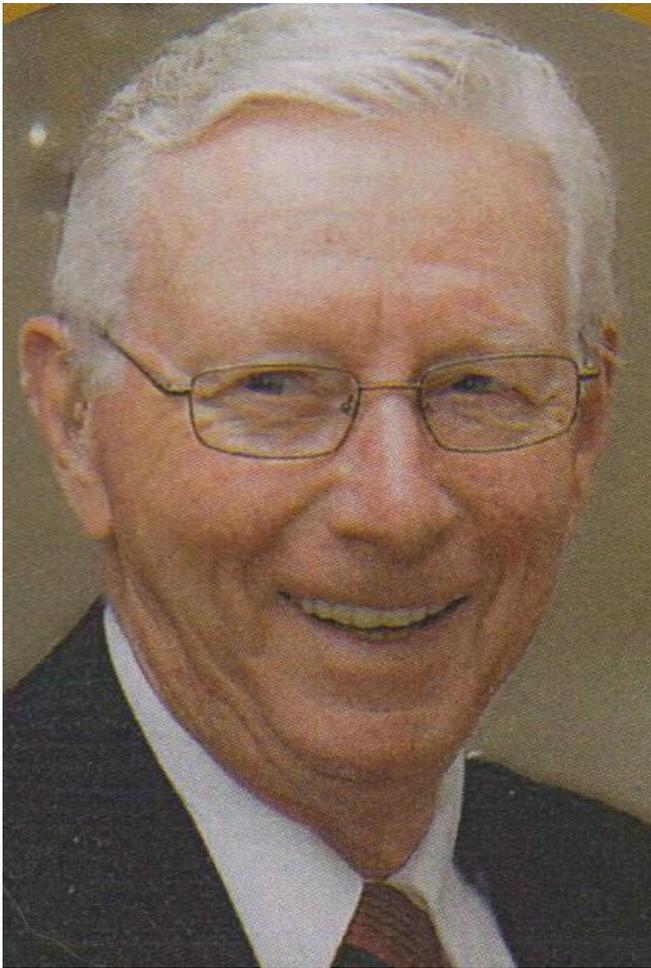


We packed up and I took the rest of the plants home for another day.



With a membership of 43 people, to have just three turn up was very disappointing. I realise everyone is time poor these days and we don't expect a big turn out every month but it would be great to have some members turn up at least once during the year especially for planting. Three weeks ago I attended the funeral of George Westwood. George was a long serving, hardworking member of Foops joining in 1988 and designed our logo of Friends of Organ Pipes National Park encircling a sugar glider.

George's passing reminds us that the old guard is changing and moving on and without the next generation of Foops taking up the reins the oldest Friends Group will struggle to continue.



George Westwood

Next month's working bee will be on Sunday 27th July which is National Tree Day.

We will be working alongside Brimbank Council and other community groups planting in Sydenham Park behind the Keilor Golf course.

This is a Greening of Maribyrnong and PWCMA project and there will be a lot of plants to go in. A BBQ will be provided.

Hope to see you there.