

# Working Bee July 27<sup>th</sup> 2014

## National Tree Day

By Terry Lane

A beautiful sunny day for this annual event. Brimbank City Council had plans to put in 3000 plants at two sites as part of the Greening of Maribyrnong Project in an area of Sydenham Park, the council owned property that adjoins the South East border of the Organ Pipes National Park.

There were over a dozen varieties of plants indigenous to the slopes of the Maribyrnong valley to plant, Gold-dust Wattle, Sticky Hop-bush, Black Wattle, Yellow-gum, Drooping Sheoak, Yellow Box, Sweet Bursaria, Grey Box, Drooping Cassinia,, Sticky Boobiialla, Shiny Cassinia, Fragrant Saltbush, Rock Correa and Large Kangaroo Apple.

The day had been well advertised so a large mixture of residents, families, Friends and other groups were expected to turn up.

4WD vehicles from the Victorian Mobile Landcare Group were on hand to transport people to and from the lower planting site, Rotary Club of Brimbank Central would provide refreshments by way of soft drinks and a BBQ, Animal OZ to entertain the young and young at heart and St Johns Ambulance were there (just in case) 1<sup>st</sup> Keilor Scouts and 1<sup>st</sup> Taylors Hill Scouts were expected to turn up as well as the charity groups Alpha Phi Omega

Alumni based in the Philippines and Dera Sacha Sauda, their Headquarters are located in India; closer to home groups included Friends of Iramoo, Friends of Taylors Creek and Friends of Maribyrnong Valley as well as our own FOOPs.

I arrived around 10am and met up with FOOPs member Kara, her husband Damien and her father Steve.

Cars were continuously arriving; this was going to be a successful day no worries. After signing in where Judy Ingram from Friends of Maribyrnong Valley was manning the register and an induction from Brimbanks Conservation Community Liaison Officer Martha Ragg, we jumped into a 4Wd and went down to the planting site where I met up with FOOPs Treasurer Robert Irvine who arrived earlier.



**Robert rolls up his sleeves to get stuck in.**

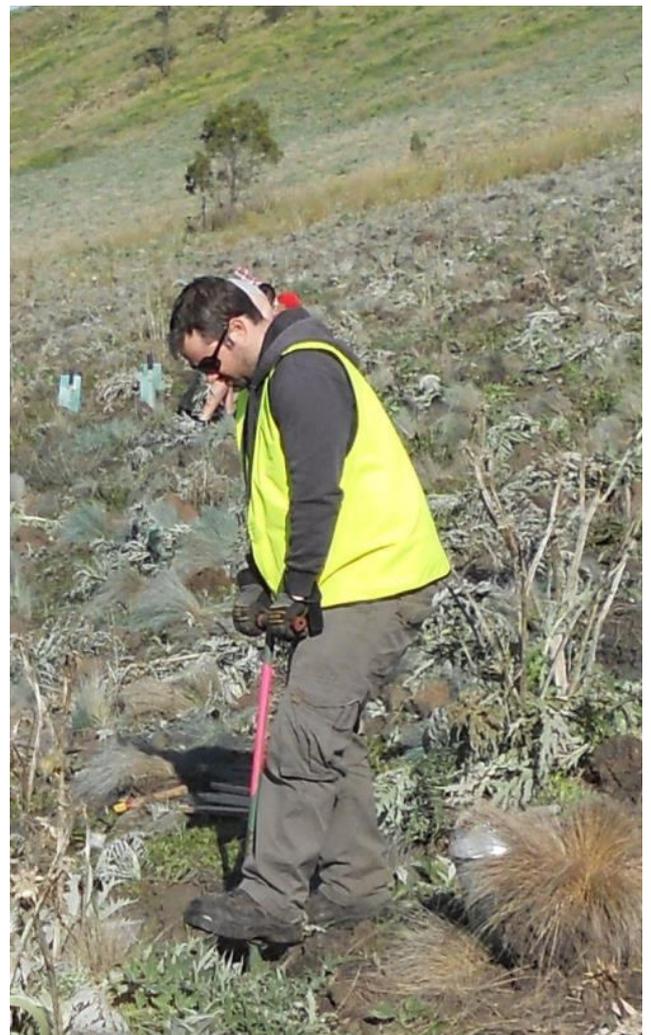
Brimbanks Land Management Officer Simon Hayes was supervising this area and gave instructions as to the order of planting.



Before long I heard a familiar voice, FOOPs member Andrew Harris.



**Trailer of tools and water tanker.**



**Andrew amongst the thistle.**



A small group at first but soon people started arriving in droves

The last time I saw Andrew we were hunting Growling Grass Frogs at night in

the Organ Pipes National Park some six years ago.



We were making good progress running back and forth with water buckets, plants and frames and meeting up with people from other Friends Groups and organizations and before long another familiar voice greeted me, Michael Howes The Publications officer at Victorian National Parks Association,

All of a sudden these guys turned up and we shifted into top gear.



This non for profit welfare and spiritual organization based in India has more than 50 million followers around the world

practicing selfless service to others, they plant, clean up, provide health services and help the poor. I got chatting to their

Team Leader Rahul who had flown in from Perth that morning (*naturally I got his contact details.*) They were so well organized, the older members of the group made up tree frames, and the children ran around with jugs of Masala Chai (*Indian Chai Tea*) and Naan Bread. They worked so furiously that the borders of the planting zone became irrelevant as they continued on past.

Check out this wonderful Organization: [www.au.derasachasauda.org](http://www.au.derasachasauda.org).

Time for a break, Kara, Andrew. Steve, Damien and I caught a 4WD and went up to the marquees to have a feed.





**Kara and Steve enjoying a well-earned break.**

I went and had a look at Animals OZ where a few children had gathered around to have their photo taken with this half grown Wombat that looked as though he really didn't want to be here.



***"More bloody kids"***

However a Sugar Glider was next on stage and I couldn't

resist.



It was time to catch a 4WD and go back down to do more work.

The site was starting to fill up; we were working so fast that we were running out of plants and frames.



2.30 pm and I had to leave to fulfil Grandparent duties.

At the end of the day 154 volunteers had put in over 1700 plants and trees making it the biggest Brimbank National Tree Day ever.



It was a lovely day catching up with old "Friends" meeting other "Friends" and meeting the young and old in the Brimbank community like John in his eighties originally from Poland who could barely walk but came along with his wife, daughter and granddaughter to be part of National Tree Day.

Click on this link to see a Time lapsed video put together by the Brimbank media team.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uYDAuYNwi2I&list=UU2WjgwqOuFbfMBAZZ9grQaw>

On Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> August we are planting in the Organ Pipes National Park with the Catholic Archdiocese Scout Group, meet at the Visitors Centre 1pm. The next official working bee at the park is Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> August to continue planting above Red Gum Flat and don't forget our AGM Friday 22<sup>nd</sup>.