

FRIENDS OF MOUNT PAINTER NEWS

APRIL 2021



For more information about anything in this newsletter: contact friends.of.mount.painter@gmail.com or Sarah Hnatiuk on 0424 263 565.

A DONATION!

The Cook Grocer has given Friends of Mount Painter \$500 from the sale of their 2021 calendar. We are very grateful to Daniel Raad and his family for their generosity and support for us. Thank you, Daniel! And thanks too to Marie Ann for her donation. Watch this space to see how we decide to spend it!

THE COOK SHOPS MURAL

Daniel is also responsible for the mural on the western wall of Cook shops. He received a grant from the ACT Government to employ Faith Kerehona and Geoff Filmer to transform the art on the wall to one that reflected the local community's attachment to the local environment and the human connection with our surroundings.



Sarah and Daniel with the cheque



Faith commented about the painting, "I was thinking about the theme of the mural, Our Local Ecosystem and Our Connection to it. To me it became necessary to display this connection, the human involvement of this connection.

"My design shows a portrait of local Wiradjuri woman Dhani Gilbert, laying sleeping along the length of the wall. From her body grows Happy Wanderer, Yam Daisy, Silver Banksia, Chocolate Lily, Bluebells, Salt Bush and Native Raspberry. The roots from the plants burrow into her figure, contrasted with white. A red belly black snake curls up her hip, nearby, a black cockatoo is framed by silver banksias.

“The background, disguised and diffused by paint, is a silhouette of Mt Painter. This artwork, conceptually, is about our return to nature. Metamorphosis, decay, rebirth and progressing towards symbiosis with the natural environment.

“From the community responses, it seemed important that there was First Nations representation and commemoration in such a politically named suburb such as Cook. This is a way to reclaim, represent and return space to First Nations communities.”

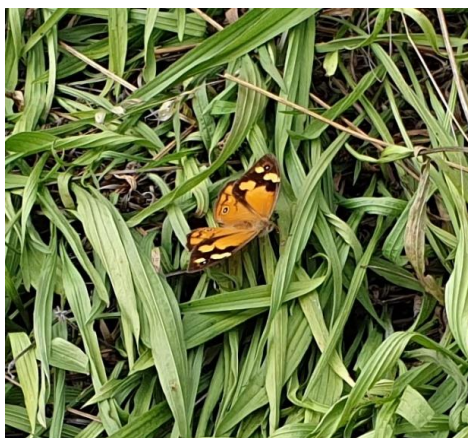
Daniel plans to extend the mural’s theme into the garden beds in front of the mural by having plants used by the local Ngunawal people put in there.

APRIL’S WORK PARTY

- Date:** Sunday, 18 April
- When:** 9am – 12 noon with a break for morning tea. Come for as much or as little of the time as you like.
- Location:** Along the path and road to the summit, near the water tanks. Meet at the gate just above the water tanks. To get there, enter the reserve between no. 20 and no. 22 Booth Crescent, Cook, and follow the gravel road uphill to the right.
- Task:** Planting a small number of shrubs, and weeding, especially Cobblers Pegs
- Wear:** Hats, long pants and long-sleeved shirt. All the equipment needed will be provided, but you might like to bring your own work gloves. No experience needed.
- Bring:** Please bring some food to share at morning tea and your own mug. Drinks will be provided.

Work parties are usually held on the third Sunday of the month, the next few being on 16 May, 20 June and 18 July.

We were sad about cancelling the butterfly walk planned for 28 March because of the cold and wet weather forecast for the day. Instead, Suzi Bond has offered to lead a walk for us on Sunday, 12 December.



Common Brown (*Heteronympha merope*) female on the left and male at right

WHAT FRIENDS OF MOUNT PAINTER HAVE BEEN DOING

Over the last three months, we have done a great deal of weeding on the north and north-east slopes of the hill. In January, we were bagging the seedheads of Saffron Thistles. Now we have moved on to bagging the seeds of Hedge Mustard and seeds and flowers of Cobblers Pegs. We are also chipping out Verbascum rosettes. We are pleased to see fewer Cobblers Pegs than last year; the other weeds seem to have provided them with some competition. However, this summer has been a great one for Verbascum. Removing the plants at the rosette stage is a good idea as, according to the Atlas of Living Australia, it is estimated that this species of Verbascum can produce between 100,000 and 180,000 seeds per plant. It is estimated that seeds will remain viable for 100 years, and viable seeds have been found in Danish soil samples claimed to be 650 years old.



Verbascum rosettes (*Verbascum thapsus*) in a patch of native ground cover (Yellow Burr-daisy with yellow flowers, New Holland Daisy with white puffs of seeds, and Redleg Grass with reddish stems)



Our weeding was helped along by a group of volunteers from Telstra who spent a day with us on the north slope of the hill, continuing the weeding that we had started a couple of days before. Their efforts were very much appreciated, and thanks go to Ginninderra Catchment Group and Landcare Australia who arranged the volunteers' visit to Mount Painter.

The Telstra crew with FOMP's Sarah Hnatiuk and GCG's Fiona Spier



Telstra volunteers weeding Hedge Mustard (left) and woody weeds (right)

We also hosted some Friends of The Pinnacle members, who work on restoring ground cover vegetation. They were interested to see what we were doing and what we had learnt from our various experiences with trying to establish ground cover.

THE STORY OF A FALLEN RED BOX BRANCH

Last October a very large branch crashed down from the tree by the path into the Wildflower Triangle from Wybalena Grove. The clean up by the Parks and Conservation Service, and possibly by others too, removed everything that fell onto the fence and on the left of the fence. Now an



imaginative person has stripped the bark off part of the branch and cut a seat into the wood. In removing the bark, the tracks of larvae that once lived

beneath have been exposed. You can see the thin tracks where the small larvae began to eat their way through the cambium, growing ever bigger and creating wider and wider tracks as they progressed, until they eventually left their larval home.



CHANGING COLOURS AT SUNSET
Looking west from the gate above the water tanks



8.01pm on 26 February 2021



8.02pm on 26 February 2021

Compiled by Sarah Hnatiuk Convenor, Friends of Mount Painter