

NEWS FROM PEACEHAVEN

March 2023

FROM THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Gus Hamilton presented his 'Planning for the Future' paper at the November 2022 meeting. The members adopted his Scenario 1, 'Continue as is', but with the proviso that a planning workshop would be held, open to all members, to revisit the aims and objectives of the Friends and determine the best way forward.

The planning workshop will take place at the March general meeting, and will be facilitated by Jill French. Jill is a member of the Friends with extensive experience in guiding this kind of process.

This is your chance to have input on the path the Friends of Peacehaven will take in the years to come, so please be sure to attend the meeting.

Planning for the future benefits from knowledge of the past. With this in mind, your editor has put together a brief historical overview of the park, the Friends, their objectives and their achievements. This is included as page 2 of the newsletter.

MUSIC IN THE PARK

The first event of the year in this popular series will be presented by Harlaxton RSL Brass Band. The band consists of musicians ranging in age from early teens to early 90s, who perform brass band music to suit all ages.

Date: Sunday 12 March

Time: 1 pm to 3 pm

SOMETHING NEW

You will soon receive an email about a new Friends' venture, Seminars in the Shed (see below). This is a series of daytime talks at the Nursery Shed on topics such as the park itself, native garden plants, gardening for biodiversity – more information to come. The seminars will be social as well as informative, providing plenty of opportunity to meet up with friends, make new ones, and recruit new members.

PARKS WEEK 2023

Toowoomba Region will celebrate Parks Week from 4 to 12 March this year, with events and activities in parks throughout the region.

In keeping with Stan Kuhl's vision of Peacehaven as 'a place of peace and tranquillity', TRC is offering a free meditation session in the rotunda on the morning of Thursday 9 March.



MYRTLE RUST ALERT

Be vigilant! Nursery coordinator Robin Case has found myrtle rust on trees in her Highfields home garden; so you may have it too. This fungal disease affects native plants in the Myrtaceae family, e.g. myrtles, eucalypts and lilly pillies. Robin has discovered it on lemon myrtle and grey myrtle.

Don't be discouraged if you find it in your garden. Staff at the Peacehaven nursery can advise on how to treat it.



Leaves infected with myrtle rust

SEMINAR IN THE SHED

The inaugural talk is to be given by **Joy Sheath**, on the topic of **Rainforest Plants**. Joy has a wealth of knowledge about growing native plants, and a particular interest in rainforest species.

Date: Monday 20 March

Time: 10 am – morning tea provided

Place: Nursery Shed

RSVP: peacehaven3@gmail.com

NEXT GENERAL MEETING

The next general meeting of the Friends of Peacehaven will be devoted to the planning meeting mentioned above.

Date: Wednesday 8 March

Time: straight after the management committee meeting, which will start at **9.30 am**.

Place: Nursery Shed

Please come – your input is important.

SOME BACKGROUND ON THE PARK AND THE FRIENDS

PRE-PARK HISTORY IN BRIEF

Peacehaven Botanic Park is on the land of the Jarowair people of the Wakka Wakka nation.

The first Europeans to settle in this area were loggers, attracted here in the 1850s and early 1860s by the magnificent trees. Next came farmers, among them a young couple from Germany called Ludwig and Albertine Kuhl. (Note the umlaut, hence the pronunciation *Keel*.)

The Kuhls selected 40 acres (about 16 hectares) of land for a dairy farm, extending from what is now Peacehaven down as far as today's Kratzke Road. Ludwig's ownership of it was confirmed in 1879. They cleared the vine scrub that covered most of the land, but retained the towering eucalypts, which grace the park to this day.

Albertine bore Ludwig 17 children, of whom 11 survived to adulthood. Many of them were born and raised in a 2-room slab hut, but eventually a weatherboard farmhouse was built instead. This in turn was replaced by the house that many people will remember: the brick house built in the mid-1970s for Stanley, grandson of Ludwig and Albertine. A strong advocate for world peace, Stan called his new home 'Peace Haven'.

STAN'S GENEROUS GIFT

Twenty years ago, in 2003, Stan Kuhl approached the then Crows Nest Shire Council with his intention to donate almost a third of the original family farm to the community for a botanic park. An agreement was signed in December 2004, in which Stan also pledged funds towards the cost of the park's development. He resisted suggestions that the park should be named after him, instead requesting it be called 'Peacehaven'.

THE FRIENDS OF PEACEHAVEN

Work on the park began in early 2005, but sadly Stan didn't live to see his vision come to fruition: he died in March that same year.

Percy and Joan Kuhl, Stan's brother and sister-in-law, officiated at the 'turning the first sod' ceremony in August 2005. The *Chronicle* quoted Percy as saying Stan's hope was 'that residents would band together to form a Friends of the Park group to work with council to maintain Peacehaven'.

This hope was fulfilled on 6 February 2006, when a public meeting was held to form the Friends of Peacehaven Botanic Park as a committee of the Crows Nest Shire Council.

The Friends were given responsibilities that included working with the council to develop and maintain the park, raising funds, helping organise special events and open days, keeping records, and assisting with a nursery and herbarium.

In 2011 the Friends became an incorporated organisation. Objectives stated in their constitution included:

- to protect and enhance the natural environment of Peacehaven and support the development and maintenance of it and other botanical and biodiversity resources in the Highfields area as valued community assets
- to provide information and activities that build community knowledge, awareness and appreciation of the natural environment embodied in Peacehaven and other local botanical and biodiversity resources
- to provide a vehicle for community views on initiatives and activities to be expressed and to have input into the setting of priorities
- to achieve the vision of Stan Kuhl for Peacehaven as a place of peace and tranquillity for the community to enjoy.

SOME OF THE FRIENDS' ACHIEVEMENTS

The Friends worked tirelessly to meet the responsibilities they took on at that first meeting, and to fulfil Stan Kuhl's vision of Peacehaven as a 'place of peace and tranquillity for generations to come'. The Peace Pole on the compass mound is a symbol of that vision.

At first the Friends' focus was mainly on practical work to help construct the park, and on fund-raising and obtaining grants to ensure that the various phases of development could proceed. Some notable achievements were:

- the tree sponsorship scheme
- establishment of a native plant nursery and herbarium
- successful lobbying against a caravan park development on Stan's former home block (land subsequently bought by Council and incorporated into the park)
- the rotunda (with assistance from Highfields Garden Club)
- the Stump in Time project
- Music in the Park
- the steel statue of Stan at his gate
- the new nursery complex.

These are just a few examples of the practical and financial ways in which the Friends have contributed to creating the Peacehaven we know today.

Since about 2015 the thriving native nursery has been the Friends' sole source of income, generating funds that they make available to the Toowoomba Regional Council, on request, for special projects in the park. Council now takes care of all the planting, maintenance and planning work, but encourages input from the Friends and continues to collaborate and consult with them.