



FRIENDS OF THE MELTON BOTANIC GARDEN (FMBG) Inc.

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK



Category Winner 2016
and 2018



Category Winner

Keep Australia Beautiful Victoria
Sustainable Cities Awards 2013

sustainability.vic.gov.au/KABV



FMBG Contact Information

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Document Revisions

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1.1	Oct 2016	Minor updates	JB	President	John Bentley
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Welcome

Thank you for volunteering at the Melton Botanic Garden. Volunteers are very important to us and we want to support you and ensure your time with us is enjoyable. This information should help you to get started but if you have questions at any time, or if you would like to receive information in a different way, please ask.

About Us (The Friends of the Melton Botanic Garden)

- We are a dedicated group of volunteers who have formed a friend's group to develop a Botanic Garden in Melton. It is a garden that is a tourist attraction for the Western Region and a place where locals and visitors can come to stimulate their senses and enjoy the flora and fauna of the region and beyond.
- Since starting the group, the Melton Botanic Garden (MBG) has become well known nationally and internationally and attracts interest from groups often seeking guided tours.
- We have an elected committee that meets monthly to administer the activities of the Friends group. We also have a monthly meeting for all members and friends which includes interesting guest speakers, updates on activities and the opportunity to get to know fellow members.
- The following is a list of committee members, their roles and contact details.

Elected Committee Members September 2024 AGM

Member	Position	Contact Details	
John Bentley	President	0412 762 531	john.bentley@fmbg.org.au
Robin Stewart	Vice President	0419 383 160	robin.stewart@fmbg.org.au
Barbara Frampton	Secretary	9743 6893	barbara.frampton@fmbg.org.au
Mike Coveney	Treasurer		michael.coveney@fmbg.org.au
Jill Bentley	Member	0412 673 452	jill.bentley@fmbg.org.au
Jennifer Peters	Member		jennifer.peters@fmbg.org.au
Stewart Brown	Member	0439 319 576	stewart.brown@fmbg.org.au
Bec Morritt	Member		
Max Thompson	Member	0425 753 794	max.thompson@fmbg.org.au
Margaret Wood	Member		margaret.wood@fmbg.org.au

FMBG Patron: Jane Edmanson OAM



Who volunteers?

We have many people who give their time in a broad range of ways in a voluntary capacity. They may be retired or have spare time and the skills and enthusiasm we need to progress the development of the garden.

Many people volunteer – there are opportunities to get involved in activities such as planting, propagation, administration, fund raising, being part of a committee or sub-committee, to assist with clean-ups and ‘Grow the Garden’ days.

Volunteers generally do what they do to assist the Friends group meet its goals but also because they like their involvement:

- They want to help because they like being around the Friends group
- They want to learn new skills and meet new people
- They have skills that the Friends group needs
- They want something to do with their time
- They enjoy their own or their children’s participation doing something for their community.

We encourage people to help as much as they can, and encourage an ‘everyone pitches in’ when required culture.



Getting Started

You may already be familiar with the Friends group and the surroundings, but if not please ask an experienced person to show you around including:

- The toilets
- Where tools, equipment and supplies are kept (return to correct location)
- First Aid facilities
- Where to park cars or bicycles
- Where to get a drink when you need one
- Areas where smoking is allowed (no smoking or naked flames are allowed in the depot area and buildings)
- Taken through the Codes of Conduct
- Standard Operating Procedures you need to read

NB: All volunteers require a current Working With Children Check.

People to Help You

Here are some useful people to contact with your questions or for assistance:

Role or Group	Contact Name(s)	Contact Time	Email / Phone
Administration Assistants at the Depot	Paula Willie	Tue, Thu am	admin@fmbg.org.au
Bushfoods Garden and Ryans Creek South	John Bentley	Meet at Depot	bushies@fmbg.org.au
Bushfoods Garden Curator			bushfoods@fmbg.org.au
Californian, Central and Soth American Garden, Curator	Max Thompson	Any time by email	sombreros@fmbg.org.au
Collection Management Records Officer (IrisBG)	Jennifer Peters	Any time by email	jennifer.peters@fmbg.org.au
Creekers Coordinator	Alan Partridge	Any time by email	alan.partridge@fmbg.org.au
Depot Manager	John Bentley	Any time by email	john.bentley@fmbg.org.au
Eucalyptus Arboretum and West/South Aus. Garden	Michael Marshall or John Bentley	Any time by email	gumnuts@fmbg.org.au
First Aid Leader, Admin Manager and Safety Officer	Janet Dyke	Any time by email	janet.dyke@fmbg.org.au
Koori Student, IDP, VVP, Sensory Gardens Curators	John Bentley	Meet at Depot Tue/Wed/Thu am	Tues/Wed/Thu mornings friends@fmbg.org.au
Library and Administration	Admin Team	Meet at Depot Tues & Thu am	admin@fmbg.org.au
Memberships & Lakers Coordinator	Jill Bentley	Any time by email	jill.bentley@fmbg.org.au 0412 673 452
Mediterranean Garden Curator	John Bentley	Meet at Depot	sunseekers@fmbg.org.au
Nursery Promotions & Facebook and Safety Officer	Jen Eldridge	Any time by email	jen.eldridge@fmbg.org.au
Nursery Manager	Anne Langmaid	Any time by email	anne.langmaid@fmbg.org.au
Nursery External Events	Margaret Peters	Any time by email	margaret.peters@fmbg.org.au
Odd Jobbers Coordinator & Safety Officer Coordinator	John Bentley	Any time by email	john.bentley@fmbg.org.au 0412 762 531
Safety Officer, Odd Jobber Ass. Coordinator	Robin Stewart	Any time by email	robin.stewart@fmbg.org.au 0419 383 160
Safety Officer	Alan Squires	At Depot Tuesday	
Sombreros, Safety Officer	Max Thompson	Any time by email	max.thompson@fmbg.org.au
Southern African Garden – Safaris Coordinator	John Bentley	Any time by email	safaris@fmbg.org.au
Southerners Garden Team Coordinator	John Bentley	Meet at the depot or in the garden	friends@fmbg.org.au

Volunteer Registration Form

On your first day as a volunteer, you will be asked to complete a Volunteer Registration Form which requires your contact details and contact person details in case of an emergency. Any personal health statements are confidential and for our use in ensuring you are safe and can be treated appropriately. All information will be kept securely in locked filing cabinet. **See Attachments at the end of this booklet.**

Keeping Everyone Safe

In your next few visits, you will also be shown:

- What to do if you hear the fire alarm
- What to do if you hurt yourself at the garden
- Where the first aid kits and defibrillator are located
- Who can assist with your injury

If you see something that you think is unsafe, please alert one of the Safety Officers and your Team Leader.

What you can expect from us as a Volunteer

Whilst at Melton Botanic Garden you can expect to:

- Be treated with respect and as an equal.
- Receive help and/or training for you to learn and develop skills
- Be given tasks that match your interests and skills
- Be provided with safe working conditions
- Be protected by insurance
- Be thanked and recognised for volunteering

What the FMBG Expects from You

All Volunteers are expected to:

- Treat everyone with respect, be polite and well behaved
- Comply with the rules and procedures – you will be taken through these
- Ask someone if there is anything you don't understand
- Adhere to the rules regarding safe and standard work practices
- Work together with other volunteers
- Be reliable, and let relevant people know if you can't come / will be late
- Ask for support when needed, talk about any concerns you may have
- Let us know on your Registration Form if you have any medical conditions we should know about
- Notify the Secretary of change of address or phone number

Volunteers may choose to leave at any time, we ask for as much notice as possible. The Committee reserves the right to terminate a membership for justifiable reasons such as if the person is considered to have physically abused their fellow volunteers or breached a policy.

Dress Code and PPE

Volunteers set the tone for the Friends group and need to dress appropriately for their duties. Comfortable, neat attire and appropriate closed footwear is required for most volunteer roles. Obviously soft shoes are not appropriate when using sharp tools or lifting heavy objects. You are required to wear safety glasses and a high visibility vest or hi-vis clothing with an approved Australian Standards Code tag on them. Long trousers/pants are required for all activities and seasons. Generally, clothes for gardening including long trousers, sun protection and gardening gloves are suitable for most activities in the garden. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) may be required for some activities.

NB: Long trousers/pants must be worn when volunteering.

Concerns or Complaints

FMBG has a very strong policy on bullying and harassment which you can see displayed at the depot and the attachments in this document. Whilst we hope it will never happen, issues and grievances may occur within the Friends group – this is natural and we would like to try to resolve these as soon as possible:

Here is the approach we suggest if you have a concern or a complaint, you can:

- Speak directly to the person with whom you have a grievance.
- Speak to the Team Leader or a committee member.
- Speak to the FMBG President.

Also refer to Clause 10 “Disputes and mediation” of the FMBG Constitution, if you feel the above will not resolve the situation and it may be necessary to put your complaint in writing.

It is OK to raise concerns!

Conduct

Volunteers are expected to follow codes of conduct. Inappropriate behaviour may lead to disciplinary measures from the Committee.

Examples are:

- Bad language / abusive behaviour directed at anyone
- Breach of trust and confidentiality
- Neglect of duties and responsibilities
- Failure to wear appropriate safety equipment or clothing
- Theft or inappropriate removal of property
- Physical violence
- Use of alcohol or illegal drugs while undertaking volunteer duties
- Arriving under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs
- Committing a criminal offence while undertaking volunteer duties
- Smoking in the presence of juniors whilst in your role.

Protecting People’s Privacy

From time-to-time FMBG may need to collect contact details and health related information from members – it is important to know that this information is stored securely, and NOT distributed unless consent has been given. This information will only to be used for the purpose for which it was collected. For more information, discuss with the President.

Children

FMBG is a child safe organisation. Children are welcome at most FMBG activities but must be under the direct supervision of a parent, guardian, teacher or an authorised group supervisor (e.g. scout leader etc) at all times. Children are welcome in the lunchroom. *The Depot is a work area and children must not be allowed to play in the depot area or nursery.*

Please read the FMBG Child Safe Policy – available on the website.

All volunteers must obtain a Working With Children Check.



Emergencies

Volunteers should familiarise themselves with safety practices and emergency procedures adopted by the FMBG. At a minimum, there should be access to a mobile phone. A copy of the FMBG Emergency Response Plan is posted on the notice board in the Depot.

Safety Officers

Name	Contact	Email
John Bentley	0412 762 531	john.bentley@fmbg.org.au
Janet Dyke	0408 170 070	janet.dyke@fmbg.org.au
Jen Eldridge	0422 374 392	jen.eldridge@fmbg.org.au
Rob Stewart	0419 383 160	robin.stewart@fmbg.org.au
Alan Squires	0419 361 516	alan.squires@fmbg.org.au
Max Thompson	0425 753 794	max.thompson@fmbg.org.au

Loss of Personal Property

Volunteers should exercise caution to protect their personal property. Handbags, purses, wallets, or other valuable items should never be left unattended. If an item is lost or stolen, a committee member should be notified, but the committee cannot be held responsible for loss or replacement.

Non-smoking Environment

The FMBG Depot and surrounding area is a smoke-free environment. Smoking is not permitted in any indoor or enclosed areas i.e., inside the depot fenced areas or sheds. There is a declared smoking area near the information shelter. As the gardens are generally covered in dry, flammable mulch material responsible disposal of cigarette butts is required, as is restraint from smoking in the presence of juniors whilst in your volunteer role.

Reimbursement of Expenses

The volunteer is responsible for expenses incurred, except where purchases are authorised by the Treasurer. Purchases should generally be approved by the Committee prior to any purchase for the FMBG.

NB: Valid Tax Receipts and/or Tax Invoices are required for reimbursement.

Safety and Liability

If a volunteer is injured during their volunteering activity, the President must be notified and the appropriate incident report forms must to be completed. It may also be necessary to inform Council and/or WorkSafe Victoria.

Volunteers **must read and comply** with the **Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)** for their group's tasks. Please ensure you record with admin that the appropriate SOPs have been read. Toolbox talks on tasks and safety are given by your coordinators as appropriate and safety inspections and observations are conducted.

General Information

The induction process will advise you about safety, the facilities available and the various activities that you can choose to assist with. You must advise during the induction process if you are unable to carry out suggested activities.

You will then be assigned to one of the many teams carrying out activities at the Garden. In general, you will be given information about when the various activities will be running and as a member you will receive calendar updates via email.

Thank you again for joining our team of volunteers!

FMBG Contact Information

Email:	friends@fmbg.org.au
Web Page:	www.fmbg.org.au
Social Media:	Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter
Postal Address:	Friends of the Melton Botanic Garden PO Box 2381 Melton South VIC 3338
Street Address:	Friends of the Melton Botanic Garden 21 Williams Street Melton VIC 3337

Attachments

Volunteer Registration Form
Induction Safety Checklist
Anti-Discrimination Policy
Emergency Response Plan

VOLUNTEER REGISTRATION FORM

(To be completed when initially volunteering with FMBG and updated annually by all Volunteers)

Given Name _____ Family Name _____

Street Address _____

Town / Suburb _____ Postcode _____

Telephone (home) _____ Mobile _____

Email _____

Emergency Contact Person _____

Relationship: (e.g. Parent, Partner) _____

Telephone (home) _____ Mobile _____

Do you have any medical conditions, allergies, disabilities, past injuries or take any medications that may affect your participation? Yes No
If yes, please discuss with your Friends Group Activity Leader. It is the volunteer's responsibility to update the Activity Leader of any changes to your health or medical condition when participating

Working With Children Check Yes No → Reason for No _____

WWCC Number: _____ Expiry Date: ___/___/___

Note: You must have a WWCC or equivalent and to add FMBG to your WWCC.

Please sign below once volunteer induction completed and the relevant safety information and volunteer responsibilities have been covered with the Safety Officer.

SAFETY OFFICER		VOLUNTEER	
All declared pre-existing medical conditions discussed with volunteer	<input type="checkbox"/>	I will inform the Activity Leader of any relevant medical conditions that may affect my work with the group	<input type="checkbox"/>
Safety briefing has been provided	<input type="checkbox"/>	I have read and understood the workplace safety information and know where the first aid kit is located	<input type="checkbox"/>
All information has been checked and is complete	<input type="checkbox"/>	I have read and understood all identified risk and safety prompts	<input type="checkbox"/>
Volunteer responsibilities discussed with volunteer and induction completed	<input type="checkbox"/>	I understand my responsibilities as a volunteer and induction completed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Signature		Signature	
Date		Date	

Safety Induction Checklist

*****This induction must be conducted by an authorised Safety Officer *****

Volunteer Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Induction Performed by: _____

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS		DONE (✓)
1	Worked through the Volunteer Handbook	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Read all relevant Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) – Can be done after induction	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	All persons involved identified – See lists on notice boards or Volunteer Handbook	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Persons in charge of activities, first-aid and safety identified	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Shown how to secure garden shed doors on opening	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Advised the location of rest facilities e.g. Toilet/washroom – depot and garden	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Communications discussed	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Shown Safety Data Sheets (SDS) folder	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Shown waste bin and green bin procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES		DONE (✓)
10	Safety Officers / Safety Monitor(s) identified	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Shown and discussed Emergency Procedures and Evacuation Procedure	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Shown location of first aid kit(s) – Must have a kit nearby when volunteering	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	Shown location of firefighting equipment /extinguisher/fire blanket	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	Environmental Protection and Controls discussed (<i>oil spills, waste disposal etc.</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE) AND CLOTHING (Show PPE locations)		DONE (✓)
15	PPE and clothing requirements discussed. PPE to be worn when required by certain tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>

HAZARD IDENTIFICATION		DONE (✓)
16	Hazard identification and control procedures discussed	<input type="checkbox"/>
17	Take 5 steps covered – See notices in depot	<input type="checkbox"/>
18	Reviewed and discussed current activity hazards	<input type="checkbox"/>

ACCIDENT/INCIDENT REPORTING		DONE (✓)
19	Accident and incident reporting procedures discussed. Shown location of forms.	<input type="checkbox"/>

WORK ACTIVITIES – WILL BE SPECIFIC TO GROUPS YOU WORK WITH		DONE (✓)
20	Identified tasks to be done (<i>ensure competency to do the tasks</i>) and associated hazards	<input type="checkbox"/>
21	Use of plant and equipment identified (<i>ensure competency to use and training requirements</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>
22	Person in charge of activities	<input type="checkbox"/>
23	Any other items discussed (<i>note them here</i>):	<input type="checkbox"/>

FMBG POLICIES		DONE (✓)
24	Antidiscrimination and Harassment Policy	<input type="checkbox"/>
25	Child Safe Policy, Code of Conduct and Working With Children Check requirement	<input type="checkbox"/>

This checklist provides a method of ensuring the volunteers involved with FMBG activities have been made aware of the details of FMBG requirements. Admin: add newcomers to training register and retain a copy onsite

FMBG ANTI-DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT POLICY STATEMENT

The Friends of the Melton Botanic Garden (FMBG) is committed to ensuring that our working environment is free from discrimination and harassment. Discrimination and harassment in our activity areas will not be tolerated under any circumstances and action will be taken against any member, volunteer or subcontractor who breaches this policy. Any breach of policy by a non-member directed to any person engaged on an FMBG activity shall be handled in a similarly appropriate manner.

Discrimination and harassment occurs when a person is victimised on the basis of but not limited to the following criteria:

Race, Colour, Gender, Religion, Disability, Sexual Orientation, Pregnancy or Age and shall include exposure to racial or ethnic jokes, offensive profanity, intimidating behaviour and exposure to unwanted sexual flirtations.

FMBG strives to achieve an environment where all persons are treated with dignity, courtesy and respect. An effective procedure is provided for all complaints to be lodged and investigated based on the principals of natural justice (*Reference Anti-Discrimination Procedure – FMBG Management Plan*).

All complaints shall be treated in a sensitive, fair, timely and confidential manner and complainants shall be guaranteed protection from any victimisation or reprisals. It is an important fundamental of FMBG policy that the reporting of behaviour in breach of policy is encouraged in order to correct and promote appropriate standards of conduct at all times.



Friends of the
Melton Botanic Garden Inc.

Code of Conduct Child Safe Standards

All volunteers and committee members of Friends of the Melton Botanic Garden (FMBG) are required to observe child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children, as noted below.

Our organisation is committed to child safety. This includes our younger members and any children that have contact with our organisation, for example children who attend meetings, participate in our activities and visit the nursery with their parents/guardians.

All volunteers and personnel of FMBG are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of children by:

- adhering to the FMBG Child Safe Policy at all times and upholding the FMBG statement of commitment to child safety at all time
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
- treating everyone with respect
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused and/or are worried about their safety or the safety of another
- ensuring children stay fully clothed at all times, only removing outer layer of clothing, such as coats and jumpers as required with the assistance of a parent/carer/guardian if required
- ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not left alone with a child
- reporting any allegations of child abuse to FMBG Child Safety Officers or Committee Member, and ensure any allegation is reported to the police or child protection
- reporting any child safety concerns to FMBG Child Safety Officers or Committee Member
- if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure as quickly as possible that the child/children are safe
- encouraging children to 'have a say' and participate in all relevant organisational activities where possible, especially on issues that are important to them.

Volunteers and our visitors must not:

- develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children)
- avoid any action that may affect a child's self-esteem
- exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical (for example inappropriate sitting on laps. Sitting on laps could be appropriate sometime (for example while reading a storybook to a small child in an open plan area)
- put children at risk of abuse (for example, by locking doors)
- do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes
- engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children (for example, personal social activities)
- use inappropriate language in the presence of children
- express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children
- discriminate against any child, particularly in relation to culture, race, ethnicity or disability
- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse.

By observing these standards you acknowledge your responsibility to immediately report any breach of this code to the FMBG Child Safety Officers and/or Committee Members.

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE MELTON BOTANIC GARDEN

In the case of an event which necessitates an Emergency Response because of an injury to an individual or a situation or event arising which has the potential to place an individual or individuals at risk, the following actions shall take place as described in detail in the Risk Management Plan.

1. In the case of an injury of any severity, approach and notify an FMBG Volunteer who will be clearly identified by a High Visibility Vest/Top.
2. The Volunteer will assess the situation and escort the injured party to the Depot or a pickup point if required.
3. If the person is disabled by his/her condition and is unable to be moved, the Volunteer shall immediately notify the First Aider by phone.
4. The First Aider will proceed to the location and initiate appropriate emergency medical procedures to stabilise the situation and call emergency services Dial 000.
5. Contact will be maintained with the emergency service until such time it is no longer necessary.
6. In the case where evacuation is required, the Volunteer will, on becoming aware of the need, contact the Safety Officer who will sound 3 blasts on an Air horn followed by 3 blasts 5 seconds later. This is the signal to round up all persons working in the Plant Nursery and Depot and nearby areas and direct everyone to the Emergency Assembly Area marked on the south side of the Plant Nursery and Depot Car Park area. If evacuation is required in other areas in the Garden go to the closest Emergency Assembly Area which is the Public Carpark on Lakewood Boulevard.
7. The 'All Clear' will be sounded by a long blast.

Contact Phone Numbers:

Project Manager/ Team Leader: *Ask for their contact details*

Safety Officer: *A list is in the Depot – please note these*

First Aid: *List of first aiders is in the depot – please note these*

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