

Montrose Fire Safety Garden

There is a new path and mulched areas between Leith Rd and the historical cottage at Montrose Town Centre for a joint project between MEG and Montrose Fire Brigade. The redeveloped garden will display plants, mulches, paths and design features that can reduce bushfire hazard.

Thank you to the Meggers and brigade volunteers who helped lay the path on 7/8/99, and to the Pembroke Secondary College CFA Youth Crew who helped spread mulch.

You're invited to help put 262 plants in the ground.

Time: Saturday 4th September, 10 am – 1 pm (or arrive 9 am if you're prepared to help dig holes).

Bring: gloves, spade.

You will be rewarded with a sausage sizzle when planting is complete. If you can't help with the planting, a barbecue attendant is wanted, too.

Signposts will appear over the following month, to accompany a brochure that is being prepared.

The garden will be officially launched on Saturday, 23/10/99, as part of Fire Awareness Week and the second Montrose Fire Expo. More about that next issue.

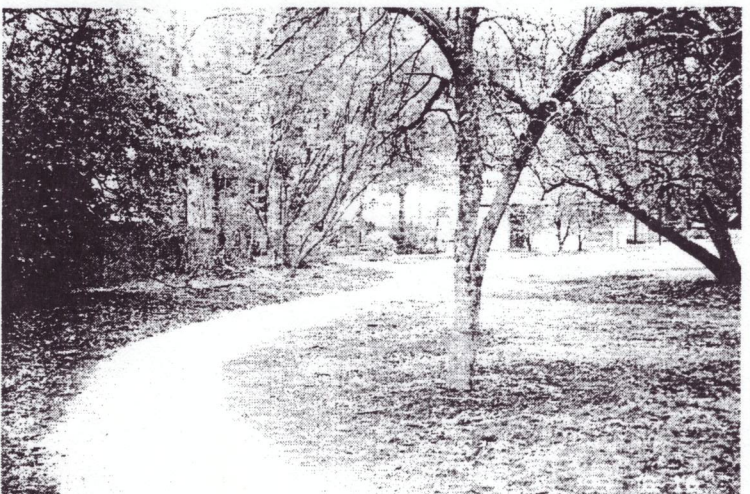
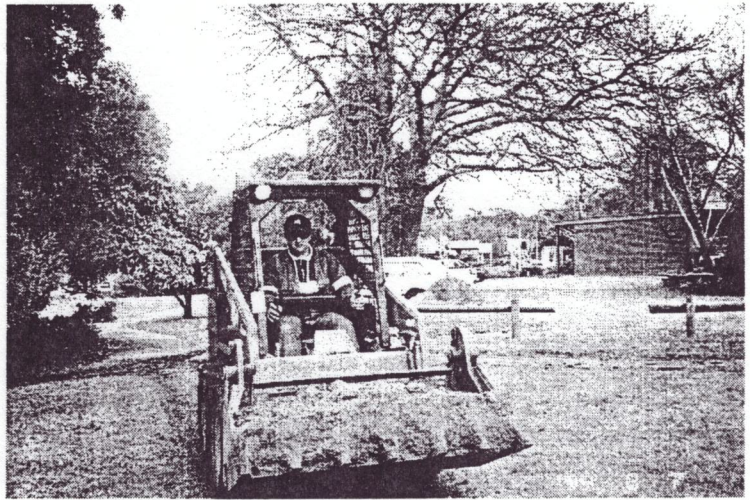
Photographs (top to bottom):

Moving gravel for the path,

Checking plans for the new garden bed,

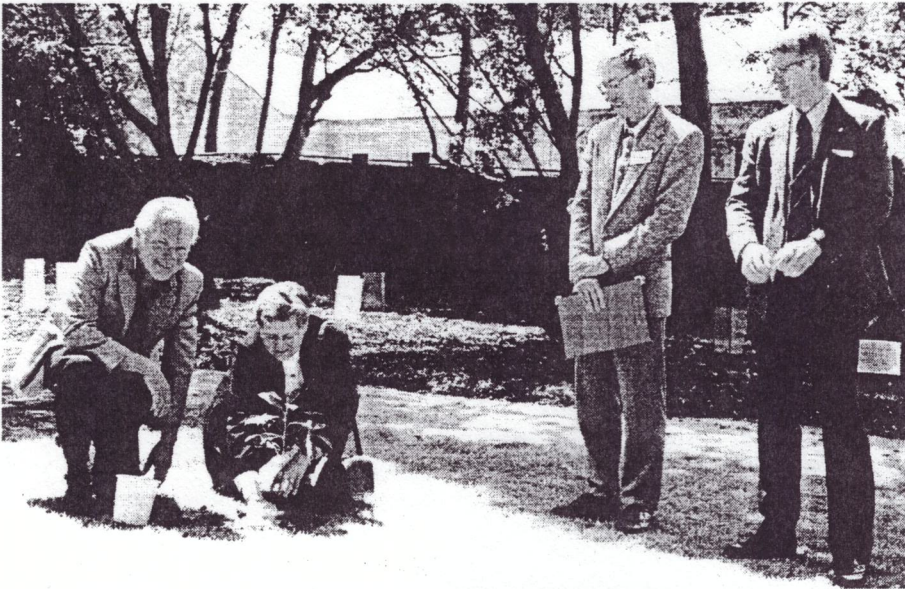
Enthusiastic volunteers from MEG and Montrose Fire Brigade spreading gravel,

The new path completed.



Fire Safety Garden - Now OPEN!

After much preparation by volunteers from the Montrose Fire Brigade and MEG, the Montrose Fire Safety Garden was officially opened on Saturday 23 October. At the opening, Cr Len Cox praised the cooperative effort between MEG, the Montrose Fire Brigade and the Shire on this project. Cr Cox felt this project has set an example that other environmental groups and fire brigades should follow. Mr Neil Bibby, Director of Community Safety in the CFA, also spoke at the opening of the garden, and encouraged involvement in the Community Fireguard Scheme.



Councillor Len Cox with Wendy Ritchie of 'Australia's Open Garden Scheme' planting a native frangipani to declare the garden open, watched by MEG's Dr Graeme Lorimer and Neil Bibby of the CFA.

Mrs Wendy Ritchie from the Open Garden Scheme also officiated at the opening, and together with Cr Len Cox planted a Native Frangipani in the Garden to mark the occasion. The Open Garden Scheme granted \$3,000 to the project. The Shire matched this and provided the land, staff help and a commitment to ongoing maintenance. Many businesses and organisations helped out with donations or labour.

About 25 people were present at the opening, and many took the opportunity of being taken on guided tours of the Garden.

Guided tours were held throughout the day, and it was great to see participants' interest and enthusiasm in learning about fire resistant plants, mulches, landscaping etc.

For those who are yet to visit the Garden, there is a brochure available from the Montrose Library and the Town Centre outlining a self-guided tour in the Garden. The brochure also lists most of the fire resistant plants in the Garden, providing a useful reference to take to a nursery. (Maybe fire-resistant plants may make good Christmas presents?)

Planting appropriate species is of course only one of many steps residents in fire-prone areas should take to reduce the risk of bushfire. It is important that residents have decided whether to stay with their home or leave on high fire danger days, and if they stay they must have prepared themselves and their property beforehand (e.g. flammable material removed from roof gutters and on the ground surrounding the house).

The Garden Committee (L to R): Charles Williams (Shire gardener), Graeme Lorimer, Marga Wennersten, Paul Hill (CFA), Annette Muir, Tim Rowe (Shire) and Tarron Newman (Montrose Fire Brigade).

