



Beaumaris Conservation Society Inc



Why join Beaumaris Conservation Society?

Is there something distinctive about Beaumaris that you really enjoy? To many residents, it has a special character not found in other Melbourne suburbs. In the 1950s when the suburb was first developed, many people were attracted to the area for the natural vegetation, sandy tracks and interesting architecture. Many of these early residents were artists, architects, writers or simply people wanting to live somewhere with natural beauty.

Beaumaris is quite different from other suburbs of Melbourne. Until the mid-1950s much of the land in Beaumaris was owned by the Dunlop Rubber Company. Before the Second World War, Dunlop planned to relocate its Port Melbourne factory to Beaumaris. The company planned a 'Garden City' type housing development for its workers as well as developing a port for the shipping of its products. After the war the company decided to sell the land instead. So, unlike many other Melbourne suburbs that were developed much earlier, Beaumaris and its surrounding landscape survived with much of it untouched until the 1950s.

Suburbs of Bayside closer to the Sandringham railway line – Brighton, Hampton, Sandringham and Black Rock were largely cleared of vegetation and developed from Victorian times. In Beaumaris and parts of Black Rock the unique heathland and coastal woodland survived. These areas had been admired and studied by nature enthusiasts for decades, so when the subdivision and development of Beaumaris began in the 1950s, steps were taken by the then Sandringham Council and nature

groups to ensure some examples of native heathland and woodland were maintained.

Now vast tracts of land that were once dominated by indigenous plants and animals are covered in houses and exotic (imported) plants. Fortunately, there are some examples of the original plants in bushland reserves and the foreshore reserve – places where you can feel as though you are kilometres away from the suburbs. These places have become precious because they are so small compared to the area covered by houses. These areas also allow us to imagine what Beaumaris was like when it was inhabited by the Kulin Aborigines, who lived in this area for thousands of years.

Fifty years ago early Beaumaris residents formed a group to preserve the unique character of Beaumaris. The group was called The Beaumaris Tree Preservation Society, the name later changed to Beaumaris Conservation Society Inc.

Today, fifty years later, as you look around and admire the trees, nature reserves and minimal development (at least compared to other Bayside suburbs closer to the city), it is thanks to the foresight and perseverance of past and present members of the Society.

However, the intrinsic nature of a suburb can change very quickly with inappropriate development and areas of Beaumaris which feature indigenous plants are very quickly diminishing. An active membership is required to carry on the valuable work of the Society.



What does Beaumaris Conservation Society do?

- Beaumaris Conservation Society works with various friends groups to weed and re-vegetate the foreshore and bushland areas – evidence of the dedicated work over the many years is now obvious with hundreds of indigenous plants along the foreshore playing an important role in preventing the erosion of dunes and cliffs as well as attracting wildlife.
- Some members are involved with the Bayside Indigenous Plant Nursery in Reserve Road. The nursery propagates local bushland plants to provide trees, shrubs and groundcovers to revegetate both the bushland environment and suburban gardens.
- As a reaction to the clearing of blocks and the development of crowded, bulky developments, the Society has also become active in planning and development issues. Many residents have been alarmed at their loss of privacy and natural light as well as the overall loss of trees.

(You might feel there has been a great deal of unsuitable development in our area recently – but there would have been a lot more but for the work of the Society and its dedicated members).

- Beaumaris Conservation Society works with Bayside Council and our local councillors to try and maintain the character of Beaumaris. In the past few years we have contributed to the Beaumaris Urban Character Study, The Bayside Tree Planting Strategy, The Banksia Reserve Master Plan, The Concourse Structure Plan, as well as fighting several inappropriate developments at council and at VCAT.
- Melbourne 2030 is a future plan for Melbourne to add another million residents to our city by 2030. The implications of this plan on our streetscapes, traffic, the bay and development strategies, are to be debated in the next few months and years. Participate in this debate with Beaumaris Conservation Society.





What are indigenous plants and why do we need them?

- Aside from their ecological benefits, there is a fabulous range of plants from which to choose – ground covers, climbers, hedges, shrubs and trees – all perfectly suited to our sandy soils.
- Most indigenous plants require less water.
- Local plants attract wildlife and preserve local character.
- Growing indigenous plants in your garden preserves these unique local plants for future generations (some indigenous plants propagated by the Bayside Indigenous Plant Nursery were almost extinct!)

Who belongs to Beaumaris Conservation Society?

The society represents a real cross section of the community. There are still many of the early members – with great stories to tell about the history of the area, there are new residents, young families, those who love the trees or the architecture... all with one common thread – a love of the area.

What does membership involve?

If you like everything you have read so far, then joining up is easy. Annual membership is only \$6.00 for individuals and \$10.00 for a family. (There is an application form on the website, or call us).

Your level of involvement is entirely up to you. However, throughout the year there will be a range of activities in which you are welcome to participate. These include community-planting days, clean up days with a barbeque, wine and cheese nights with an interesting speaker as well as committees you might be interested in joining. You will meet new people, (meet your neighbours!) make new friends and have a lot of fun as well, doing something worthwhile for your community and future generations.

If you love Beaumaris and care about its future, then become a member of Beaumaris Conservation Society and really make a difference!

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PO Box 7016 Beaumaris Victoria 3193

T 9589 5194 **F** 9589 1680

E info@beaumarisconservation.net

W www.beaumarisconservation.net