



CITY OF DANDENONG BUSH LAND RESERVES

HEINE JONES

Client: City of Greater Dandenong
Location: Fotheringham Reserve, Dandenong, Victoria, Australia
Scope: Design, illustration, writing, artwork, production, installation
Team: Mike Heine, Steve Jones, Larni Williams
Year: 2016

OVERVIEW

The City of Greater Dandenong is home to numerous bush land reserves, many of which contain significant remnant native bush land, and all of which are important for recreation, conservation and cultural heritage reasons.

THE CHALLENGE

The city's bush land areas, and their importance, have been poorly understood by the public – and in turn undervalued. The City of Greater Dandenong required an interpretive solution which would reveal the significance of the reserves to the public; engender a connection to place; fit appropriately into the natural bush land environment; be robust, long lasting and economical; and minimise soil disturbance during installation. The project required design; research; writing; illustration; fabrication and installation management – all with a very tight deadline. With an initial application to Fotheringham Reserve, the solution will be deployed across other bush land reserves within the city.

THE SOLUTION

HeineJones designed an interpretive solution is simple, robust, and, like the surrounding bush land – unique and individual. Reclaimed iron bark timber posts with natural edges are cut at a compound angle – creating distinctive angular top surface planes – no two of which are alike. Vitreous enamel top disks are then built to precisely match the shape of the top plane, coated in a base colour sympathetic to the bush land environment, and printed with simple black and white text and illustrations. The timber posts are installed directly into the ground without concrete – ensuring minimal site impact and maximum sustainability. The angular top plane, colour palette and natural weathered surface of the reclaimed timber blend comfortably with the natural environment. Materiality ensures a long lasting solution.

OUTCOME

Public response has been overwhelmingly positive. The City of Greater Dandenong are delighted with the solution and have cited an increased public participation and interest in the reserves.







A Special Place

Fotheringham Reserve is a reminder of the once vast natural woodland which covered this area.

After European settlement the extensive woodlands were felled and as the bush was cleared, farming took over. Market gardens were established and cows and horses dominated land where kangaroos once grazed.

Many changes have occurred in the area, some attributed to human impacts and others to climatic conditions. 6000 years ago hailed the end of the ice age and as the sea levels rose, so did local temperatures. This has seen an impact on plant species including the Snow gum *Eucalyptus pauciflora*, which was once widespread but is now confined to alpine areas except for a few isolated stands. Several of these trees grow in Fotheringham today.

In the 1980's the creek was altered, wetlands were drained and sporting grounds were built."

Remarkably, a small area of bush survived – and this significant remnant bushland is now conserved within Fotheringham Reserve, with the support of the City of Greater Dandenong and the Friends of Fotheringham group.

A unusual feature of Fotheringham Reserve is the presence of Snow gums *Eucalyptus pauciflora* which are typically found in high alpine areas. The tree can be identified by its glossy, thick and waxy leaves which have a broad, curving shape.



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CLIENT TESTIMONIAL

"We worked with Heine Jones on interpretive signage in one of our bushland reserves. The process was professional from inception to installation of the signs. HeineJones understood the sensitivity of creating signage in a bushland setting and the materials, design, artwork and installation reflected this. They were efficient and perceptive with the design and content. We are very proud of our bushland signage at Fotheringham Reserve."

Kirstine Oh
Conservation Engagement Officer
City of Greater Dandenong