



**WARRNAMBOOL CITY COUNCIL  
AUSTRALIA DAY 2021  
LOCAL ACHIEVER AWARD - FRIENDS OF WARRNAMBOOL BOTANIC GARDENS**

The Friends of Warrnambool Botanic Gardens have for some years been heavily involved in the resurgence of our treasured gardens.

In 2018 they embarked on a new challenge – the creation of a unique play space in the gardens, a space that would engage young people and the young-at-heart.

The Friends' proposal – the Nature-Based Play Space – was pitched to the community through the Victorian Government's "Pick My Project" initiative.

The play space was a popular choice and attracted just under \$200,000 in funding.

Then the hard work really began. The Friends engaged the highly regarded landscape architects Laidlaw and Laidlaw to create a play space design that used natural materials and features including fallen trees and local basalt.

There were also some heritage hurdles to clear and the Friends – aided by 150 letters of support from Warrnambool residents – were able to persuade Heritage Victoria that the Nature-Based Play Space was in keeping with the original garden design by the renowned William Guilfoyle.

The new play space, the product of more than 3,000 volunteer hours, was officially opened on October 28 last year, and immediately won approval from children and parents.

Received by Pat Varley President. Mandy King Secretary. Neil McLeod Project Manager