

Medina sees Green

A little history of Medina and the Medina Residents Group

Medina is a unique suburb in the southern outer metro area of Kwinana. To many the area is only known as an industrial strip but travel up behind Rockingham Road and the strip and you will find a best kept secret – a valley of green where around 1500 workers cottages from the 50's and 60's nestle among Tuart, Banksia, Jarrah and Grass Trees on natural undulating land.

Medina was built in the early 50's for the many migrant workers and their families of the emerging industries of BP Oil Refinery, BHP Steel Mill and Alcoa Alumina Refinery and the suburb was extremely fortunate to be designed by renowned W.A. Town Planner, Margaret Feilman.

Medina was Margaret's first gig as a Town Planner, she was the first woman Town Planner in Australia and at 32 years of age probably one of the youngest. Margaret had recently returned from an internship in Europe, restoring and rebuilding towns bombed during the 2nd World War. Her first impression on returning to W.A. was the uniqueness, beauty and diversity of our natural environment. At a recent presentation to Curtin University Town Planning students, Margaret remarked how the ecology of the Kwinana area was as equal or better to any in the South West. She was committed to creating communities that were in harmony with the natural environment. At a time when many other urban parks comprised lawns and rose beds, Medina's parks consisted of native trees and wildflowers. 50 years on our bush parks are a natural treasure, a legacy of Margaret's vision. To compliment the bush parks there are large tracts of bushland surrounding the town, particularly The Spectacles, 360 hectares of wetland and Banksia woodland to the east and Leda Nature Reserve to the south.

The Medina Residents Group was formed in July 2005 in response to our local authority's – The Town of Kwinana – plans to redevelop public open space in the area. We are a group of Medina residents and friends of Medina who saw the enormous tsunami of new housing developments heading our way and knew we had to do something if we were to retain our architectural, social and natural heritage. Medina has been earmarked for infilling by the State Government and this is supported by the Town of Kwinana. Not that we are anti-development but we believe - and some would say naively – that it is possible to have development and retain trees and character. You just need to be creative and think outside of the box.

To date there have been many positive initiatives that would not have happened without the enormous efforts of our volunteers including:

- A moratorium on the development of Public Open Space until the completion of the Town Planning Scheme review.
- A reduction in the number of blocks allocated for future subdivision.
- Classification of Medina as a Historic Precinct by the National Trust.
- The development of Residential Design Guidelines for Medina (to be completed this year).
- The inclusion of sites such as Chalk Hill and Medina Ave street trees in the Municipal Heritage Inventory.
- The development of a Medina Heritage Walk.
- Participation in the multicultural celebration, The Medina Ding Dong.

Currently we are lobbying the Council for a review of their existing urban bush policy, a restoration plan for McGuigan Park (our first park) to return it to a healthy natural bush park and continuing in the process to develop the Residential Design Guidelines.

So plenty to do.... If you would like to venture down to Medina for a cuppa and a bit of a walk through our beautiful bush parks or maybe even a guided heritage tour give us a call we'd love to meet you.

Mandy Grubb, Medina Residents Group.
medinaresidents@hotmail.com Pauline 9439 3171 Mandy 9419 3201