



WARM TREES: 2023 WRAP & 2024 NEWS!

I am delighted to announce that our Embassy partner in 2024 is **Chile**! This will be our first partnership with a country from South America. We have seven forests at the Arboretum that have Chilean trees, including the Monkey puzzle (*Araucaria Araucana*) which is their national tree. Their flag has three colours – red, white and blue. You are welcome to knit scarves in one, two or all three colours, and of course any other colours.

This newsletter provides a wrap-up from Warm Trees 2023, some ideas for improving our 'green' credentials, and a call for more knitters for next year.

Warm Trees 2023

First, a huge thank you for all the volunteers who knitted or crocheted scarves, made items for this year's display featuring national symbols of South Africa, helped to install the 500 or so scarves, took them down at the end of July, washed them, and made them into rugs to donate to local charities – and contributed in lots of other ways to the success of Warm Trees this year. Our youngest contributors were 10 years old, and our oldest, so far as I know, was a keen knitter who donated a scarf on her 90th birthday.

The Arboretum's figures show that there were over 30,000 more visitors in July than there were in June. And there were plenty of very positive comments from the visitors.

Going green for next year

We had some innovative ideas this year for reducing our waste. Students from a local secondary school made new scarves from old woollen jumpers from charity shops – sewing them together rather than unravelling and reknitting the wool.

Another volunteer found a way to repurpose the plastic cable ties, collecting them and putting them into plastic bottles to then be processed into plastic 'bricks'. And another is investigating using reusable ties for installing the scarves next year.

I'm now looking for other idea to reduce the waste for next year. One idea is to contact charity shops to see if they have any woollen items, in particular those that are not suitable for selling but might be fine for scarves, and unravelling them and washing them to get rid of the kinks. Or you might have a jumper or cardigan that is past its best and could be made into a scarf. You might already be doing this, or if you have other ideas, please let me know.

More knitters and crocheters please!

We don't seem to have had as many new scarves this year as we have had in previous years. We did, however, have a few unexpected new sources which might prompt you to think of other people who might be interested in knitting.

First, are there other young potential knitters out there? Can you teach your children or grandchildren how to knit? Our two 10-year-olds also wrapped their scarves around trees on the Events Terrace. I'm hoping that more students from their school will be encouraged to learn to knit next year. If we get a group of young knitters from another school then we could invite them to wrap them around a group of trees so they can show their friends and relations.

And secondly – are there any men in your life who can knit, or could be encouraged to try? The inspiration for this came from one of our volunteer knitters who donated scarves that her father had knitted. He started knitting when he was recovering from lymphoma of the brain, as part of his relaxation and to keep his brain active and his fine motor skills going.

And just in case you think this is a one-off, the boys who live on an island in Titicaca Lake in Peru learn to knit a special cap called a chullo. When they are adult and find a potential wife, her mother will only give permission if he has knitted a good chullo! And they are real works of art.

Size of scarves

As in previous years, we ask that you make the scarves one metre long and 25 centimetres wide. We usually get a variety of sizes, but can you please make them just **one metre long**. Our wrap-making volunteers try their best with scarves of varying length, but it is much easier and quicker for them if the scarves are one metre long, give or take a centimetre or two. The width is not quite so important, although ideally they should be 25 cm wide.

Other activities

We plan to have workshops again to make the display items for the gabion wall. They will probably be in May, and I will let you know the dates and times later. We will also hold drop-in knitting / crocheting circles again, at the Village Centre.

Suggestions? Questions?

And finally, if you have any suggestions that can help to make Warm Trees 2024 even better, or if you have any questions, please let me know.

Thanks again

Jan Morgan

Warm Trees convener 2024

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