

# Wellingtonia

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## FRIENDS NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2011



### PRESIDENT'S REPORT JOAN GARNER

I would like to thank all members for the wonderful support I have received over the past 2 years. It has been a great experience for me. I am quite overwhelmed by the talent and expertise we have in our various groups, and I look forward to watching the Friends move on to bigger and better things. A very happy New Year to you all. Last year we welcomed 2010 in severe drought conditions. Who would have expected such a dramatic change?

The staff of the Gardens has given us memorable displays during the year both outdoors and in the Conservatory. I congratulate and thank them all. We appreciate the assistance they give to the Friends. A lot of the credit goes to the staff for making our time in the Gardens a happy experience.

This last quarter of the year has been very busy. Our first venture into a Friends Open Garden weekend was a most successful event. The gardens that were opened were all different and I am delighted to say that we have 6 tentative offers of gardens for next year.

We had the George Longley Day where members met for a drink, nibbles and a feast of information concerning George Longley, our first Curator.

Ballarat Gardens in Spring featured a Botanical Art exhibition and sale, a delightful luncheon and workshop and 12 Open Gardens.

A return social visit to the Mechanics Institute included a tour of the refurbished areas of this historic building.

A special event was organised by the City of Ballarat to unveil the restored grave of James Russell Thomson.

We finished with our end of the year barbecue at the Robert Clark Centre. All in all we have had a very successful year and our membership continues to grow. Please encourage your friends to join as a strong membership is most important.

This poem by **H.E RAMSEY** was sent to me from Mrs. Jean John. It was sent to her in Scotland in the 1950s.

### THE TREES OF BALLARAT

*There is very much to greet you  
When you reach this city old.  
Historic buildings, statues fine  
Its tales of blood and gold  
Its placid lakes where black swans laze,  
Its song-birds sleek and fat,  
But the greatest charm to hold your gaze  
Are the trees of Ballarat*

*Eureka with its tragic tale  
Of civil strife and slaughter  
The funny little ferry boats  
On Wendouree quiet water  
The pleasant roads broad scenes unfold  
Of peopled hill and flat  
There's been so much storied life been told  
By the trees of Ballarat*

*They're lovely in the winter  
With their arms bared to the cold.  
They're lovely in the springtime  
With their new born buds unrolled  
They're loveliest in the summer  
When the old and tired chat  
In the dappled shade and dusky cool  
O the trees in Ballarat*

*They're lovely in the autumn  
For their russet leaves and brown  
Weave, with the crisping breezes,  
A gay carpet for the town.  
Their trembling branches in the beat.  
Sway this way and that,  
The squirrels play on dancing feet  
Round the trees of Ballarat*

*The stately trees of other lands  
Their thick dark branches twine  
With paler green of oak and elm.  
With plane and sombre pine  
Their benediction, soft and sweet  
Remains with those who've sat  
In grief or tiredness, joy defeat  
'neath the trees of Ballarat.*

## HISTORY GROUP REPORT

Season's greetings to all our readers!

As we wind up the year, it is grand knowing some things have been done, and done well.

The George Longley Day was truly memorable. Many thanks go to those whose unstinting efforts made it so (Catering especially).

We had the rare privilege of being able to show the original Botanical Gardens report book George Longley wrote for the City in 1864. Heart in mouth it was displayed by Zelda Martin and returned to the Gold Museum still in one piece. (The Gold Museum being the permanent home for this part of Ballarat's history.)



We were also thrilled to have as our guest Carolyn Jones the great-granddaughter of 'Our George', and we were overwhelmed by her generous donation.



On 25 November 2010 the newly refurbished Thomson grave (which the City of Ballarat undertook in recognition of its 19<sup>th</sup> century promise) was celebrated with due ceremony. Mayor Judy Verlin acknowledged the Friends as 'tenacious and persistent advocates' for these Gardens. Jennifer Burrell made a fine speech and a piper piped in yet another 'Scottish mist'.



*Lorraine Powell, History Group Coordinator, with the Piper and Friends of BBG at the Old Cemetery*

PS. Many hours have been devoted to the creation of our **National Trust Heritage Trees Database**. Look out for it in the New Year.

## JOHN'S JOTTINGS

### THREE STATUES

If you enter the Gardens through the Morey Gates and take the path to the left past Wallace, you will pass the three statues of Hercules, Mercury and Leda. They have an

important role in the myths and legends of the Greeks and Romans, particularly regarding their birth and neo-natal development.

Zeus, the head of the Gods, was the perpetrator of many acts of infidelity which caused his wife, Hera, to get very angry. One night he impersonated Amphitryon to seduce his wife Alcmena whom he fancied. She



must have been pretty surprised when her true love returned from the wars that same night having disposed of a band of pirates who had killed her brother. As the result of all this activity, she became pregnant with twins with different fathers, a case of heteropaternal hyperfecundity which occurs on occasions in animals, but is pretty rare in humans. Hercules was the offspring of Zeus, Iphicle the offspring of Amphitryon. Hercules was a strong infant. He disposed of two serpents sent by Hera to kill him, hopping out of the crib to do so whilst his more fragile brother screamed his head off. Zeus continued his wicked ways with Leda, this time appearing in the guise of a swan, which caused the poor girl to produce two eggs, one containing the twins Castor and Pollux, the other Clytemnestra and Helen (who later stimulated the Greek shipbuilding industry having been seduced by Paris, causing all the trouble at Troy).

And as for Mercury, son of Zeus and Maia, he left his cot and killed a turtle from which he designed the first lyre which he gave to Apollo to appease him when accused of stealing his cattle, using the intestine of one of the stolen beasts to form the strings. By comparison, the specialities of gynaecology, obstetrics and paediatrics seem a bit tame these days (fortunately).

*John Garner*

## ENGRAVING REPORT

We have recently completed some tree replacement labels for BBG and some for new plantings.

Things move very slowly in the engraving department. I follow up initial enquiries and then mostly don't hear anymore for months.



An example of this is from the Friends of the Williamstown BG who made contact more than 8 months ago, then out of the blue along came an order for tree labels. Feedback from this group has been very positive.

After some 10 months from an initial enquiry, I have just received further contact from the Friends of the Melton BG who have now secured some funding for tree labels, and are now in the position to purchase approx 100 labels. They are



still in the process of identifying the trees and a firm order should be coming early in the New Year. They have samples of our work to take to their committee members.

'Misty Downs' at the Tangled Maze along with Wombat Hill Gardens at Daylesford, have also made contact, so we will wait and see if they follow up with an order. One has to be very patient in this small area of the Friend's activities! It is good to be part of such a dedicated group of volunteers which form the Friends of BBG. *Adele Thomas & Mike Sorrell*

### GUIDING FRIENDS' REPORT

Just one tour since our last Newsletter report. We had a Christmas break-up by doing the La Gerche walk at Creswick (La Gerche being a pioneer forester who established many trees in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century). The Guides who participated enjoyed this walk so it is planned to conduct it again early in the New Year for any interested Friends. As always, we would love to hear from any other Friends interested in joining the Guides. Don't think you have to know everything before joining, we provide lots of information and training to help new Guides get started.



*Guiding Friends ready for the La Gerche walk, in centre are Beth & Raoul Dixon – Convenors*

### GROWING FRIENDS' REPORT

Thanks to all the enthusiastic Growing Friends for a very successful past year. The Ballarat East Men's Shed built and installed all our new plant benches, built a new larger plant trolley and repaired the old one. Thanks Bill and mates.

Our plant sales have been solid throughout the year, reaching record levels for October. The welcome winter/early spring rains have encouraged gardeners to get into the spirit of gardening again. Plant sales from the trolley at the Conservatory have been outstanding – thanks to the staff who sell and replenish these stocks.

SpringFest unfortunately was a bit of a washout this year but the rains continue to be welcome. Trials of the new gazebos show that they will be great in fine weather, but not strong enough to provide support and shelter in heavy rain and wind.

Gardens staff have continued with their generous donation of seedlings and mature plants for sales. We hope you enjoyed our Christmas barbecue as a way of thanking you and continuing our positive relationships.

We wish all Friends and their families a very safe and

enjoyable 2011 and look forward to even more success in the New Year.

*Carolyn Pinkowski*

### EVENTS & SEMINARS REPORT

#### George Longley Day

Thank you to all the members for their attendance at the George Longley Building for our drinks and nibbles celebration of our first Curator.

The Friends History Group was able to give us informative talks on the life and achievements of this remarkable man.

#### Friends Open Gardens.

Eight members welcomed many members to their Gardens – all the gardens were very interesting and unique with garden owners happy to talk with their visitors and answer questions. The weekend concluded with owners visiting each garden and enjoying a lunch together. We will conduct this again in 2011 as the event was very popular.

Open Gardens in Spring.

The Open Gardens in Spring launch was held at the Conservatory with drinks and nibbles on Wed 20<sup>th</sup> October.



*Helen Todd, Elizabeth Gilfillan, Nancy Brewer, Jan Todd, Committee for 2010*

This event included the Art Exhibition by Margaret Castle which visitors enjoyed. Cards and paintings were sold by our members.

#### Workshop Luncheon



On Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> October we had our Workshop Luncheon with everyone enjoying a beautiful lunch and a great social day. The guest speakers were very interesting, giving an insight into their work, knowledge and their many talents in all aspects of gardening. Thank you to all the members and friends who attended, and thank you to the members who assisted with the catering, including preparation of the room, serving drinks and the tidying up and cleaning afterwards. This was very much appreciated, as without the members' help we couldn't run these events.

### Christmas Barbecue

Our Christmas breakup was well attended by members and friends. This was a good opportunity to relax and be with our friends for Christmas Celebrations.

### Visit to the Mechanics Institute

On Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> November we were fortunate to be asked to visit the Mechanics Institute to view the renovations to their building. The difference is amazing. We were welcomed with drinks and nibbles followed by a tour of the building. We encourage members to go and see how this building has been restored to its former glory, using the original colour scheme.

Once again, thank you to all who have assisted in any way these last few months to help make our functions successful. We are especially indebted to the staff of the Conservatory and the Robert Clark Centre.

See the **Calendar of Events** column for events planned for 2011  
*Carole Haines Coordinator*

## EDUCATING FRIENDS' REPORT

### The JellyPots Children's Event on the 30th October

We linked into the Ballarat Gardens in Spring and set up north of the Lakeside Market right near the playground.

While looking at several children thoroughly engrossed in decorating the pots and potting up their precious little succulents and munching on their real jelly beans I reflected on the teamwork that made this event possible.



Firstly, our willing nursery workers who potted up the 100 or so plants back in March this year. The kind donation of the potting mix by Peter Marquand, the washing of the pots by Lorraine and Kaye, Sue and Kaye helping me pack up the van on the day before. On the day itself even though it was overcast and threatening, Mike,

John and Joan arrive smiling and began working optimistically on the gazebos. In no time we had established a great little spot near the Lakeside Market and began work immediately. With Beth and Raoul, Kaye and Joan helping, soon we had a great little system going. Many market shoppers were out early with kiddies in tow sensing the dark clouds meant business! Oh how right they were! Despite the heavy rain we had managed to work with over thirty children decorating and potting their own 'Jellypot'. We did get a little dampish while packing up [perhaps some would say that was an understatement!] but as I drove home I was glad to be a part of a real team of great people who really are truly committed to our lovely Gardens, and know that if we involve children in our endeavours it will hopefully ensure more people will love and support our Gardens in the future too! Thanks Friends. We had more pots and plants ready for another session at the end of November Market if it doesn't rain!

### Decorating a Christmas Tree Activity 10<sup>th</sup> December

A flyer went out to our neighbourhood schools. Contact has been from Yuille and the Specialist School. We organised a timetable of decorating each tree in the area between the Conservatory and the RCC.

### What Else Are We Up To?

Sue Beck has been working on the logo for Ballarat **BotaniKids** talking to various printers and graphic designers for advice. It looks like we will adopt a logo using the sequoia and begonias. How appropriate.

Kaye organised with Carolyn Blackman ABC commentator on the ABC radio garden show, and from her company **Vivid Design** to come up on 27th November to talk to us about our various endeavours working with families and children who visit our Gardens.

### EASY Christmas Craft Idea Using Nature.

A quick fun decorating idea if the Grandies pop over! Collect a few little twigs from under your favourite tree. Pick out two twigs about 3 or 4 inches long. With a bit of red or green wool tie firmly into a cross. Collect a range of interesting wool and yarn from your own stash, or from the cheap variety shops that look a little festive. Wind the wool/yarn around each stick going in the same direction. Make a few different ones and hang on a larger twig. Embellish with beads, buttons etc. Why not take a photo and email it to us [fbbg@ncable.net.au](mailto:fbbg@ncable.net.au)

*Julie Bradby*

## CURATOR'S REPORT

Where did 2010 go? It seems like only yesterday we were celebrating the start of the New Year, now it is over. The year has been very busy with many things happening in the gardens and around the lake. Who would have thought at the start of 2010 the lake would be at 90% full at the end. On a personnel level, my daughter Alice, completed VCE at Loreto. For Alice and her family it has been a busy year with many milestones and some stress.

Gardens and nursery staff have been busy planting annual beds, installing the summer display in the Conservatory and trying to keep up with the rapid growth of the lawns and weeds. With the high rainfall received over spring and early summer, the growth of the lawns has been amazing. Kevin and Brad have been very busy on the mowers at Ballarat Botanical gardens, Buninyong Botanic gardens and Eureka Stockade gardens. After all the rainfall the gardens are looking fantastic.

After many weeks of work the Statuary Pavilion and Adam Lindsay Gordon cottage painting has been completed. The completion of the statue Pavilion painting coincided with the unveiling of the restored Thompson grave. Once again we proved that to make it rain we need to organise a ceremony at the



cemetery with bagpipes. Rain was also received on the day of the Stoddart grave ceremony earlier in the year.

Some projects being completed in the gardens late in 2010 are the painting of the fountain in the sensory garden, removal of tree root damaged bitumen near the Claxton fountain and replacement with Lilydale toppings, sealing of the bridges near the fernery and painting of a number of seats in the gardens

Best wishes for a safe and happy 2011.

*Peter Marquand*

## BUNINYONG GARDENS

All visitors to the Buninyong Botanic Gardens will rejoice to see the Gong now brim full with water and alive with birds and pond life. The Friends of the Buninyong Botanic Gardens could possibly be likened to the black ducks which now swim there. These birds appear to glide smoothly and calmly across the water but are actually paddling furiously beneath. After forming under the supportive umbrella of the Friends of the Ballarat Botanical Gardens, the Buninyong Friends achieved autonomy this winter, when we were officially incorporated. Since then we have been busily planning for the Garden's 150<sup>th</sup> centenary celebrations, which will culminate in October 2011.

These celebrations will encompass several functions and activities held over the year involving as many sections of the Buninyong community as possible, from kindergarten and school groups through to senior citizens. One such activity which the Ballarat Friends may find of interest is a luncheon to be held in Buninyong in May, with Mrs Tamie Fraser, head of the Australian Open Garden Scheme, as guest speaker.

Plans are underway too for a lasting structural monument to be erected in the Gardens to commemorate the 150<sup>th</sup> year, an acknowledgement of the pioneer stone wall builders of the district, a set of "dry-stone wall" entrance gates are intended for each end of the Gong, together with appropriate interpretive signage.

As well, district families will be invited to "sponsor a tree" to be planted in the Gong area, so that current citizens have the opportunity to leave a legacy of significant trees to be enjoyed by future generations, as we enjoy the plantings of generations past.

*Christina Hindbaugh*

Hon Sec. Friends of Buninyong Botanic Gardens  
5341 3556 or 0409 621 293

## BOTANICAL ART GROUP

On the completion of our 1<sup>st</sup> year, the group has experienced much pleasure in the learning and awareness of botany through illustration. This process was not always straight forward; overcoming obstacles with perseverance and smiles. Some of the group had the pleasure of visiting The Melbourne Botanical Art School Exhibition viewing exquisite works some by our very own teachers, Marg. Castle and Steph Goss. The inspirational exhibition by Marg Castle in the Conservatory, during Ballarat Gardens In Spring, was admired by many.



*Grapevine by botanical artist Margaret Castle*

Andrea Patterson has kindly agreed to be our Convener next year and we look forward to holding three workshops and a "beginners" workshop for new members.

We would love to hear from anyone who would like to join us. Painting day is Monday 10 – 4pm in the GLB.

Contact Andrea Patterson 5349 7435

*Elizabeth Gilfillan*

Ballarat Gardens in Spring 28<sup>th</sup> Oct - 2<sup>nd</sup> Nov 2010 was another very successful event and attendance figures were good in spite of the downpour of 50mm of rain on the Saturday night. Gardeners are an intrepid lot and all gardeners welcome rain whenever it comes. Planning is underway for next year's programme and we are looking to continue offering an interesting and diverse mix of gardens to retain interest in the event. The committee will juggle the numbers of gardens included for 2011 and will include a number of gardens not previously opened to the public. The program began on the Wednesday evening in The Conservatory, where the Mayor, Cr Judy Verlin officially launched the event. Sponsors, art lovers, garden owners and 'Friends' mingled with a glass of bubbly amongst the spectacular Schizanthus display.

**The Guest Speakers Luncheon** held on the Thursday again proved to be a great success with the three speakers, Carolyn Blackman, Richard Barley and Simon Griffiths complementing the theme and each other very well. We had 55 garden lovers attend the day with any profits going to the Friends of the Ballarat Botanical Gardens. Feedback received was overwhelmingly positive in regard to the setting, delicious lunch and interesting and entertaining speakers. Similarly the **Botanical Art Exhibition** received favourable applause with a percentage of sales from paintings and cards again going to local projects of the Friends.

We believe that the brochure is still the best means of advertising, however we endeavour to obtain coverage via local and Melbourne radio, newspapers, several magazines and event calendars. Sometimes our best efforts for editorial (free) and such go unheard!

Special thanks to Carole Haines and her team for arranging catering for both the launch and the luncheon, the Friends Botanical Art Group for their assistance in mounting Marg Castle's exhibition and the staff at The Robert Clark Centre for their ongoing support. We look forward to another exciting program next Spring!

*Committee 2010*



## FRIENDS OPEN GARDENS OCT 2010



*Top: The Bradly Miners' Church B&B garden*

*Above: Ann Maloney in her garden*

*Right: Yvonne Curbach and Bruce Holland in Yvonne's garden*

*Below: John Garner, Carolyn Pinkowski, Joan Garner, and John Burrell at the Garners*



## WELLINGTONIA

To receive your *Wellingtonia* electronically please send an email request to Raoul Dixon [rdixon@ncable.net.au](mailto:rdixon@ncable.net.au) This list has grown to 50 members which amounts to significant savings in paper, ink, handling and postage. Group convenor reports, photos and items of interest for 2010 to be sent to the Editor of the newsletter Helen Vincent by email: [handh@ncable.net.au](mailto:handh@ncable.net.au)

Closing date for Autumn 2011

Monday 28<sup>th</sup> March.

Any members with computer knowledge who would like to help compile the newsletter please contact me on the above email address.

*Helen Vincent*



*Above: Judy Verlin, Elizabeth Gilfillan and Margaret Castle at the Gardens in Spring launch*

*Below: Ian & Jill Salatbiel with Joan & John Garner*



## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Well it's that time of year again when we ask members to renew their membership. If you are an annual member, you will find a membership renewal form enclosed with this Newsletter. I would very much appreciate your prompt attention to this. Those who joined late in 2010 are automatically covered for 2011 so, along with those who have paid for more than one year's membership, there should not be a form included with your Newsletter. In case I have made a mistake, or if you have any queries, please call me on 5335 9052 or email [rdixon@ncable.net.au](mailto:rdixon@ncable.net.au).

*Raoul Dixon Membership Secretary*



## MEETING TIMES FOR 2011

Meetings are held in the George Longley Building at the rear of the Robert Clark Centre.

**Committee** - 3rd Tuesday each month at 4.00pm.

**Growing Friends** - Tuesday each month 1.00-4.00pm, 2nd Sunday each month 1.00-4.00pm.

**Plant Sales** At the above times and daily from the trolley outside the Robert Clark Conservatory.

**Guiding Friends** - as required

**History Group** - 1st Tuesday each month 4.00pm.

**Educating Friends** - 1st Tuesday each month, late morning 11.30am, please bring lunch.

**Plant labelling** - as required.

**Botanical Artists ("BAGS")** – Mondays 10.00-4.00pm.



*Schizanthus display in the RC Conservatory*  
Below: Foxgloves leading to the Statuary Pavilion



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2011

Please note all these dates in your diary

### FEBRUARY – Annual General Meeting

10.00am Thursday 17th February 2011

Guest speaker is **Christina Hindhaugh** who is a writer, gardener and farmer in Western Victoria. She has written for *The Age* and the *Australian* newspapers for many years, has published 4 books and produced a documentary film about Aboriginal cricketers from her district who toured England in 1868. Christina has written two plays, one based on the Life of Adam Lindsay Gordon and this play was performed in Ballarat in the early 1990s under the auspices of Arts Victoria.

Christina's talk is titled '*Adam Lindsay Gordon – Man and Legend*'. "through Gordon Australia found her first fine utterance in song". Oscar Wilde.

### MARCH - Ballarat Old Cemetery Guided Tour

5.00pm Tuesday 1st March 2011.

A stroll to see the final resting places of Curators & Benefactors of BBG as you hear about their stories.

**BEGONIA FESTIVAL** – Sat-Mon 12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> March

### APRIL – Special Morning Tea 10.00am Thursday 14<sup>th</sup>

Members are invited to come and enjoy morning tea and have a pleasant morning together.

### MAY – General Meeting 10.00am Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> May

Guest Speaker is **Richard Aitken**, an author who has written many books on gardening including '*The Garden of Ideas*' a book many members purchased recently. The meeting will be a brief talk by Richard followed by a forum of questions and answers.

### AUGUST – General Meeting 10.00am Thursday 18<sup>th</sup>

(Speaker to be finalised)

### OCTOBER

**GEORGE LONGLEY DAY** – 4.00pm Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> at the GL Building.

Members are invited to come and enjoy nibbles and drinks to celebrate the life of George Longley.

**FRIENDS OPEN GARDENS** – Members Gardens

Dates to be finalised for October 2011. Gardens owned by members are open to members of the FBBG.

### NOVEMBER

**SPRING OPEN GARDENS** – Gardens open around Ballarat .and **SPRING LUNCHEON** (TBA)

**CHRISTMAS BARBECUE** - 6.00pm Thursday 17th Nov at the Robert Clark Centre

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