

Wellingtonia

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Robert Clark Conservatory 5320 5135 PO Box Ballarat West 3350



FRIENDS NEWSLETTER WINTER 2011

President's Report



MEETING TIMES 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 week 1.00-4.00pm, 2nd Sunday each month 1.00-4.00pm.

Plant Sales at the above times and 9-5.00pm daily from the trolley outside the Robert Clark Conservatory.

Guiding Friends - 4th Tuesday each month 10am .

History Group 1st Tuesday each month 4pm

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.

Congratulations to the Friends on the receipt of the Heritage award.

This was a National Trust and Ballarat City Council initiative to acknowledge outstanding efforts in identifying and restoring historical heritage sites and objects across the city. This was a special award given to the Friends for the advocacy and recent restoration of the graves of Stoddart and Thomson and highlighting the history of the Botanic Gardens. The Friends are proud to be funding the restoration of the McDonald Gates, after initial assessment, work is about to commence, you will be able to observe the progress of this important project.

Look for new labels in pots grown by the friends, a new labelling machine has been purchased.

Everyone has been astoundingly industrious in the cold weather. The George Longley Building is becoming increasingly busy, who can imagine what we did without our own building! You will read more detailed news in the reports.

To celebrate 30 years of FBBG in 2012 the History group is busy compiling what will be a beautiful book, with the working title 'Ballarat Botanical Gardens, a pictorial History from 1857.' This exciting project will be launched at our August meeting, with a slideshow presentation by Lorraine Powell, who will give us an insight into the book.

A new initiative is The Tree of the Month, the Educating and History groups will prepare a display in the conservatory focussing on a particular tree in the gardens.

I am thrilled to report on The Fernery Project. Ian Rossiter has had a follow up meeting with John Hawker, Heritage Vic, after which our executive committee met with Ian, Brian Benson (Heritage Architect) & David Lewis to complete the proposal which is to be put before the Mayor & Councillors. The Friends have sent a convincing accompanying letter to the proposal. The re-development would be a modern interpretation of the former structure, such a fernery will expand our experiences in horticulture, science, interactive education and the creative arts. In time it will become an iconic structure, with the capacity to generate significant economic development through tourism and major events.

The Educating group has a wonderful programme, already having had good attendances despite poor weather. New interactive maps of the gardens for adults and children alike are being prepared for release soon.

Ballarat Gardens in Spring this year will be both interesting and informative for everyone, focussing on rediscovering nature for children and generations to come.

Modern urbanisation is focussing on larger homes occupying more land leaving less open space for relaxation and well being. Lifestyles are less focussed on outdoor activities.

How fortunate we are to live in Ballarat with the four seasons creating beauty and contrast in our daily lives.

Spring is just around the corner.

Eltzabeth Gilfillan



Growing Friends

Well, winter has arrived with something of an icy blast. The strong cold winds and rain remind some of us just what this season used to be like in Ballarat. Our willing band of growers continues to brave the elements, weeding, potting and making solid plant sales.

When the weather turns really bad, we have adjourned to the comfort of the GLB to watch DVDs of interesting plants and gardens and relax over a well earned cuppa!

The new plant labelling software has now been purchased, together with a dedicated printer. Initial training in the use of this equipment has begun, in cooperation with gardens staff. The labels can be printed in black and white or colour, with illustrations of the plant and flowers, and useful text. We can even produce adhesive labels.

In preparation for the planting of new seasons stock we would appreciate any donations of pots. Pots of all sizes will be gratefully received.

Carolyn Ptkowski

Guiding Friends

With winter now upon us there are no requests for guided visits to our gardens in the immediate future. Many of the guides are away. This month we will look at the map drawn up by Rosemary Manion to show historic trees etc. This map will be one that the Friends and the public can use.

Beth Dixon

Engraving Report

Congratulations to Joy & Terry O'Brien who have been working hard to conquer the engraving program. They have had several joint lessons with me and have practised independently over several weeks. We come together to sort out any problems that they have encountered.

They have made some labels for the Growing Group, and Joy has researched some information for some western bed replacement labels. These will be completed before too long.

An email from the Melton friends group was very positive and they have been pleased with the labels which we completed earlier this year for the Botanic Garden which they are developing.

Adele Thomas.

LETTER FROM MELTON BOTANIC GARDENS

Hi Adele

I thought you and Friends would be interested to see that we have started putting on the tree labels last weekend. A long way to go to get them all done. We are concentrating on better located and larger trees around the area first.

Good news on our Eucalyptus Arboretum, first big project, will be starting the planting of around 500 trees in the next couple of weeks.

Have a look at our website www.fmbg.org.au

Kind Regards,
Alan Partridge - Vice President

Treelabel Melton



FRIENDS NEW COFFEE MACHINE

Friends will now be able to make a quick, very quick one cup of coffee to get them through their next meeting in the George Longley Room.

Thanks to all who purchased tickets in the "Dinner for Four" special effort, won by Viv and Jack Martinich.

My thanks to Lorraine Simmons and Carole Haines "Chefs Extraordinaire" and Nola Oliver for her wine donation which raised the money we needed.

The machine was launched at the Special Morning Tea on April 14th, and after a few overflows we all managed it really well.

It really is "state of the art".

Just read the instructions, in the drawer nearby, and ENJOY!

Sue Beck



Viv Martinich, Lorraine Simmons, Carol Haines, Sue Beck, Jack Martinich

"Chefs Extraordinaire"



Carol Haines & Sue Beck
with
Coffee Machine



Educating Friends

We have welcomed four new members to our group this year. Just as well as we are as busy as bees! Please contact me if you are keen to help in any way.

We meet the first Tuesday of the month 10 am in the George Longley Building

Children's Events:

Grandies in the Gardens /Teddy Bears Picnic May school Holidays.

A few determined Grandparents brought along their grandchildren with their rugs and chairs and settled in for a Story under New Story Tree [large oak] near Hatchery entrance. It was a cold wet drizzly day but we soldiered on and read our story and explored and collected conkers, other seed pods and some lovely leaves. We enjoyed a picnic together back under the tree and then off home to the warm! I noticed the children's cheeks were glowing and I felt they were all the better for a walk in amongst nature however wet and cold it was! Hope they felt the same!

Mothers Day Poster School Activity: Be safe and Have Fun in the Garden with Mum. Posters by Yuille Community School. Their pictures were a lovely addition to the Mothers Day display in the Conservatory. I hope some of you had a chance to see them.

Winter School holidays Children's Activity.

Many children and parents attended the winter school holiday childrens event on July 5th in the RCC. We explored the Sailing Ship Trees ,highlighting the many different oak species we have in our gardens. Acorns and leaves were duly collected by members in autumn and these were used to show the children the different features of our oaks. The children then observed Brian Rickard from the Woodworkers Guild make each child a wooden whistle on the lathe along with a lovely display of wooden objects he had made from reclaimed wood from the Gardens. As the weather was not on our side [again!!!] we didn't take the children outside but enjoyed the Conservatory display, and kept indoors all snug and cosy. We made our own sailing ship with milk cartons, a hat with newspaper and packed our own goody bags of lollies and various giveaways kindly donated by Officeworks.

The children's ages ranged from two and a half to ten years and all were actively engaged, and hopefully learned about our lovely oak trees and their link to the sailing ships.

A display of the acorns leaves and caps is in the Robert Clark Centre Please drop in and have a look. \

We look forward to three events in Spring

Spring Activity 1

Young Mothers Groups ---Cuppa and cake for Mum, Collage and Musical Capers for Kids

Targeting Toddlers---1st Sept Thursday \$5 each child.

Numbers limited. Please register early. Supervising adult to accompany each child.Registration required.---PH Julie 53413954 or fbbg@ncable.org.au

Spring Activity 2

School Holidays ---*Explore and Draw*. Outside weather permitting or under cover.

\$5 each child. Tuesday 27th September 2.00pm .

Numbers limited. Supervising adult to accompany each child. Registration required.

PH Julie 53413954 or fbbg@ncable.org.au

Spring Activity 3

As part of Children's Week : The Great Big Gardens Play Day Wednesday October 26th

Also part of Ballarat Gardens in Spring.

Targetting young families.... playgroups, preschools and early primary. More details later.

Highlighting and supporting the endless possibilities of quality nature play experiences for young children in the gardens and surrounds.

Summer Free schools event : Decorate the Christmas trees and make some Christmas crafts.

Targetting invited neighbourhood schools and preschools Friday 9th December all day from 10.00

Please complete form and drop into Conservatory, email to....julie@dbradby.net or post to:----- Educating Friends

C/O Robert Clarke Centre Botanic gardens Gillies St. Wendouree 3355

Money will be collected at each event

Name of child	Name of Event	Date and time	Cost	Where	Target A
	Spring Activity 1: Cuppa and Cake for Mum. Collage and 'musical capers' for toddlers.	Sept 1st 10.00am	\$5 per child	Courtyard behind RCC	0-3yrs
	Spring Activity 2: Explore and Draw . All materials provided with tuition.	Tuesday 27th.Sept 2pm	\$5 per child	Begin in RCC	School

CURATORS REPORT

This week I hosted a BGANZ Victoria meeting at the Buninyong town hall. I had forgotten what a beautiful building the town hall is; we can be guilty at times of taking some things for granted. Committee members attended from Sale, Geelong, Colac, Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne and Cranbourne. After the meeting we were taken on a tour of the gardens by Lorraine Powell. The Friends of the Buninyong Botanic gardens have been successful in obtaining funding from the state Government for the construction of stone entrance walls at the gong. The walls are being constructed to commemorate the gardens 150th anniversary being celebrated this year. Preliminary works were commenced on the 14th of July.

Restoration works are due to commence on the McDonald gateway and associated pergolas in September, this exciting project is being generously funded by the friends of the gardens. The works are being undertaken by a local contractor who is currently assisting with works on the Arch of Victory.

Garden and nursery staff have been battling the cold and wet winter days pruning the roses and attending to other gardens and nursery maintenance. It does seem to be one of those Ballarat winters of old with short and dreary days. No wonder some people head north for the winter.

Peter Marquand

TENANTS GROUP REPORT

All groups are functioning well.

The RCHC Meeting room is having concertina doors installed which will enable the main room to be divided into two smaller, sound proofed rooms for meetings.

A new ceiling mounted projector is also being installed. It will provide simpler connection to laptops, easier operation and better quality images than the previous system.

A new microwave, crockery and cutlery have been placed in the kitchen.

Mike Sorrell

MAINTENANCE REPORT

Painting of the exterior of the GLB has now been completed and the interior floor re-sealed.

Take care when walking around the timber walkways which can be very slippery when wet

Mike Sorrell

Lake Wendouree and Gardens Advisory Committee

Monitoring of the quality of water in the lake takes place regularly. Results are quite favourable. There should be no ill effects from turbidity as a result of either the dredging of the rowing course or cutting/harvesting of the weeds. The level of the lake has to be maintained just below 'full' to allow dredging to proceed. The new outlet on the east shore, and modifications to the Redan Wetlands pump station, now allow good control of water level. However, continuous heavy rains can still result in net inflows.

Dredging of the rowing course is progressing satisfactorily with completion still on target for late September this year. The weed cutting and harvesting has been reasonably effective, with much clear water created around the shore line. The contract has been extended, with cutting currently occurring around Fairyland and the western portion of the lake.

Rainbow trout liberated around the lake late last year are growing rapidly, and brown trout have recently been liberated, with more to come.

Some commercial activities around the lake are operating when weather permits. Council is keen to see ferry operations resume and has issued licences for five years to two operators. Strict criteria apply to ensure safe high standards. The old decaying hulk of the 'Begonia Princess' was recently removed and impounded.

The floral clock may be repaired and relocated from the gardens to Sturt Street.

The Ex PoW Memorial will have to have more panels added to take up to 70 – 80 new names. The walking/running track has become waterlogged in a number of places, requiring stabilizing with granite sand and concrete. Solar lighting may also be installed along some sections.

Progress of the Fernery Re-development sub Committee has been slow, due mainly to the difficulty of getting all representatives together (particularly the Heritage Victoria representative.)

Ian Rossiter has produced an options paper which we hope to discuss very soon. He can then report to Council.

Our President has an update in her report.

Mike Sorrell

History Report

Since the last newsletter, the History Group has been given a really big challenge – to produce a publication for the end of 2012. This put the cat amongst the pigeons! What could we possibly do? Simple to say, just get our skates on. A Special meeting was called to put some perspective onto the proposal. We all agreed to proceed with the idea, and then John Garner went away. (We soldiered on.)

The unanimous decision was to produce a soft cover pictorial history and call on the whole community as helpers. Scanning days have been set for 28 Aug.-- 11 Sept. to harness the great collection in family albums related to these gardens. Please note that these gardens comprise the area bounded by Gillies St, Carlton St, the Lake edge and the Wetlands. The period covered is from the 1850's

to tomorrow. No photos will be kept, but scanned and returned, if not immediately, then by registered mail.

We have enlisted a large group of helpers for the days, so bring your stories and photos. Tea, coffee and yummy biscuits will be provided. Hopefully you will also hear about this via the various media outlets. There are various sub-committees for designated tasks eg, writing, image selection, layout. This will mean everyone is involved.

Elizabeth Gilfillan is launching the project at the next general meeting, August 18 10am. Hopefully the project launch will be accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation of this rich history by Lorraine Powell.

We have a small display at the rear of the Conservatory – Tree of the Month; this month the Oak (in support of the Education Group Theme). This was housed in our new display case, bought with funds gifted to us by Caroline Jones at the last George Longley day.

Our efforts have also been recognised in the department of sustainability/Keep Australia Beautiful Victoria sustainable cities awards. We are finalists in the category of Community Action, and Community Leadership.

The Ballarat Collections Network Memorandum of Understanding is a finalist in the Heritage section. (We are co-signatories of this.)

These awards are to be announced on July 29th.

Our efforts have played a most significant part in Ballarat City Council being a finalist in Sustainable City of the Year.

Lorraine Powell

John's Jottings

Ballarat Squirrels

These were American Grey Squirrels. They were obtained by the Ballarat Council for the Botanical Gardens from Rippon Lea.

They arrived in 1937 and Tom Beaumont picked them up from the Ballarat Railway Station. They were in a cardboard box and were taken to the Gardens and left overnight. Apparently Tom Toop opened the box in the morning and had his finger bitten for his trouble. He found that one of the two had lost its tail but they were released anyway. Bill Greville, one of the Gardens staff who served in the 2nd World War, was responsible for looking after them when he returned and resumed work in the Gardens. It is said that Tom Toop didn't like them which is understandable, as he came from England where they were considered vermin, being accused of seeing off the native red squirrels in many areas.

They proliferated and delighted children and adults alike for half a century. In 1985 they were considered extinct in Ballarat possibly due to cats or possums - certainly possums are the present occupiers

Reports on the Ballarat squirrels can be found on "Ballarat Squirrels" in the reports of the Acclimatisation Society associated with the Melbourne Zoo.

John Garner



NEWSLETTER ITEMS

TWO NOTEWORTHY BIRTHDAYS.

Two important members, namely Winston Loveland and Llew Williams, have celebrated their 90th birthday since our last Newsletter. Winston was one of the very early members and Llew was our first Life Member. Both gentlemen have made a large contribution to the Friends over a long period of time. Sincere congratulations to you both.

FRIENDS OPEN GARDENS - November 19th and 20th

Thank you to the members who have offered to open their gardens on this weekend. The event is not advertised outside our Newsletter, and is run just for our members and their friends. It was most successful last year. The gardens were all different, and from the offers we have had to date this year will not be a disappointment. If you love your garden do invite us in to enjoy it with you. We are not looking for the standard of the Open Garden Scheme so think about it and contact me, *Joan Garner*, on 53326461. All details and addresses of those participating will be found in the Spring newsletter.

THE BALLARAT BOTANICAL ART GROUP

Our year has been busy with two series of workshops being completed so far this year. Both workshops have been conducted by Jean Dennis from Castlemaine. The first one was for experienced artists and the second was a beginner's workshop over 5 weeks. Both were well attended with eight new artists joining our group. These proved to be very enjoyable workshops and we all learnt techniques new to us all. Botanical Art is a challenging art form as we try to accurately record plant specimens in watercolour, but also a very rewarding past time.

We are proposing to conduct other workshops throughout the remainder of the year. Hopefully one day master classes on weekends as well as Monday lessons. Plans are underway for visits to visit Botanical Artists in their own painting environments.

We invite any "Friends" who would like to join us on Mondays. Drop in and see what we do and have a little "dabble". The Ballarat Botanical Art Group meets on Mondays in the Gerge Longely Building between 10am & 4pm.

We will recommence on July 18th following the school holidays.

Interested people are welcome

If interested please phone

Andrea on 0417 672133 or Elizabeth on 0407 845034

Ballarat Gardens in Spring October 28th – November 1st 2011

Our theme for this year's Ballarat Gardens in Spring program is focussing on rediscovering nature for children and generations to come. The program is coming together well with confirmed open gardens in the Smythesdale, Ballarat and Scotsburn areas, together with selected schools with a focus on kitchen gardens and a sustainable environment.

Our guest speakers have been confirmed for our popular Speakers Luncheon to be held on Friday 28th October and include Lisa Stafford, Kevin Walsh and Stuart Rattle – which the Committee is very excited about!

We are currently putting the final touches on our funding submission which will be lodged with the City of Ballarat next month and we have already started our advertising campaign to secure Spring promotional coverage. We have also engaged the assistance of a graphic designer to assist with our promotional brochure and are currently sourcing other sponsorship for signage and 'showhags'.

Be sure to diarise the dates and have a treat to look forward to

Helen Todd, Nancy Brewer, Wendy Taylor & Jan Todd
Ballarat Gardens in Spring Committee

**Maria & Peter Millikan's
Open Garden Spring 2010**



FRIENDS OF BUNINYONG GARDENS

Plans have now been submitted to Heritage Victoria for beautiful stone wall entrance gates for both ends of The Gong. These have been designed by landscape architect David Hay in consultation with the Friends' Committee and the Ballarat Council. Our aim is to have the entrances built and ready for Opening on November 13th, 2011. This day will be our major day for the celebration of 150 years of the Buninyong Gardens, and we ask all interested people to record the dates in their diaries.

During the winter and spring, we have planned children's activities (in conjunction with the Buninyong Primary School) Botanic Garden tours (both historical and horticultural), photographic displays, and a Sponsor-a-Tree program, in order to give today's district residents an opportunity to plant a tree for the next generation to enjoy, as we have been so richly endowed by generations past.

Christina Hindhaugh

Hon Sec. Friends of Buninyong Botanic Gardens.

Buninyong Botanic Gardens 150th Anniversary

Lunch with Tamie Fraser

A Lunch to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Buninyong Botanic Gardens was held in the Buninyong Town Hall on Saturday 14th May, 2011. The guest speaker was Mrs Tamie Fraser, who took us through the four gardens that she has developed and nurtured during her various moves from Nareen in far western Victoria, to Canberra, and then back to their present home on the Mornington Peninsula. Tamie explained her initial lack of gardening knowledge with her story of how, as newly-marrieds, she took a posy of 'snowdrops' when going to dinner with their neighbours. A life-long friendship began when her neighbour, the renowned gardener Mrs Joan Law-Smith, quietly explained that they were onion-weed flowers! Tamie's delightful commentary was interspersed with slides showing various aspects of their gardens in their 'before', 'during' and 'after' clothing. Much practical advice was in evidence, for example, placing garden beds no closer together than the width of a lawnmower. Comments about men's enthusiasm for building man-made structures during the wife's temporary absence brought knowing laughter from an appreciative and largely distaff audience, especially when such structures, while well meant, turn out to be hideously masculine in a sea of serene beauty.

Tamie's discussion was greeted with warm enthusiasm by the sellout crowd of 140 avid gardeners, and there was animated agreement about her comments during the gourmet boxed lunch and wine that followed. The event concluded with the raffle being drawn by Tamie's husband, Malcolm, for prizes such as gift vouchers from Unique Garden Decor in Buninyong, succulent pots made by Jill Salathial and a Wollomi pine. The Lunch raised funds towards Buninyong Botanic Garden's infrastructure and further 150th Anniversary celebrations to be held in the Gardens in Scott St on Sunday, November 13th this year - so put that date in your diary!

Russell Luckock



Lto R
**Tamie Fraser
Topsy Nevett
Joan Garner**



Organising Committee

Events & Seminars

Our General meeting on May was a great success and we were happy to see many members and friends come along and hear our Guest Speaker, Mr. Richard Aitken.

Our speaker for the next General meeting in August has not been confirmed as yet. Our trip to the Johnson collection in East Melbourne is on 12noon Friday 19th August 2011. Twenty places have been booked; twenty two is the maximum for the tour. We will have 3 guides with our members in 3 groups. A cup of tea or coffee will be provided. Cost of the tour is \$18.00 each. We meet at the Hilton Hotel at 11.45 for the 11.50a.m. bus that will take us to the Johnson Collection. (We can book the extra two places if we think we can fill same.)

As the bus was too costly, travel will be by train (the station is opposite the Hilton) or by sharing cars. It is necessary to send a cheque for the full amount as soon as possible. View the work of Richard Aitken, our last Guest Speaker.

Carol Haines



**Elizabeth Gilfillan, Mike Sorrell,
Richard Aitken and Jenny Burrell**



**Group enjoying refreshments after
Richard Aitken's interesting
presentation**

CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2011

Please note all these dates in your diary

AUGUST – General Meeting 10.00am Thursday 18th Lorraine Powell will give a power point presentation on new history book

OCTOBER

GEORGE LONGLEY DAY – 4.00pm Thursday 14th at the GL Building.

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

SPRING OPEN GARDENS

Gardens open around Ballarat 28th October---1st.November

SPRING LUNCHEON Friday 28th. October

NOVEMBER

FRIENDS OPEN GARDENS – Members Gardens November 19th & 20th.

Gardens owned by members are open to members of the FBBG.

Any members interested in opening their gardens contact Joan Garner ph.53326461 e-mail jfgarner@tpg.com.au

WERE YOU THERE?

PICTORIAL HISTORY BOOK PROJECT.

The Gardens and Lake precincts 1857 to now.

The Friends History Group invite you to share your photos, home movies, slides and stories of:-

Begonia Festivals, Boating, Picnics, Processions, Trees, Trams
Water activities, Wild life etc.....

Bring them to the Robert Clark Centre between SUNDAY August 28th and SUNDAY September 11th 2011. 10am....3.30pm.

We will provide refreshments, scanners, everything you need

Enquiries: Kathleen Hobson 53393443

GARDENS OF THE BLUE MOUNTAINS NSW

The Garden Clubs of Aust.Inc are holding a National Convention from 9th -13th October - "**Crossing the Mountains**" with many optional garden tours. Some rarely seen and historic. It is not necessary to attend meetings. The Garden Festival of Leura, 1st-9th October, also featuring 2 private estates. Comprehensive accommodation and details available. Please contact me on thegilfillans@gmail.com or Phone 53347085

Elizabeth Gilfillan

If undelivered please return to

Friends of Ballarat Botanical Gardens Inc.

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