

Wellingtonia



FRIENDS NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2012

President's Report

*Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness !
Close bosom friend of the maturing sun;
With fruit the vines that round the thatch- eaves run;
To bend with apples the mossed cottage trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core
John Keats 1795-1821*



MEETING TIMES 2012

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 4p

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.
School Terms

Autumn is a wonderful time when leaves turn & fall, when nature starts to lose pace. A comfortable time, enjoy the soft light, and gentle exercise when raking fallen leaves. Arguably the best weekend of The Friends year is the Open Garden weekend, when generous friends open their gardens to other members. This is a relaxed happy time to share gardens, plants, and each other's joy. Thank you to all of those who took part in this special time, and our thanks also to Joan Garner for organising this event. Gold coin donation proceeds have gone to BotaniKIDS for new equipment.

The Botanical Gardens look spectacular at present, with annual beds in interesting colour and form. The Begonias again, delighting all who visit. The visitor numbers seem to be increasing with more people learning of the treat that is in store. The Begonia Festival was a great event with many people commenting on the return of a family relaxed style of event; the return of the Floral Carpet was a great success. The FBBG contribution was well received. The Growing Friends made good sales, the Educating Group had an amazing weekend, with nearly 3,000 children taking part in activities, our sincere thanks to all who enjoyed the participation.

Genevieve Lowe, our Administrative Assistant has settled in well, we are keeping her more than busy! She has already proven to be a great addition to the function of the Friends. Enjoy these Autumn days. I look forward to seeing you all soon.

Elizabeth Gilfillan

Growing Friends



Carolyn Pinkowski, Maree Munday & Mike Sorrell
(Growing Friends)

The range of plants offered for sale will be extended and the committee has approved an increase in the minimum price of plants for sale to \$6. We have just completed a successful three days of the Begonia Festival with plant sales in excess of \$4000. Thanks to all the Friends who helped us with the setup and sales over this period.

Maintenance continues within the nursery area, with new weed matting in the walking areas, increased sprinkler heights for better watering, and strengthening of the plant benches. OH&S principles apply to us all within the nursery area and require that high visibility orange vests are worn at all times. Increased awareness of gardens vehicles passing through the nursery area is also required.

Carolyn Pinkowski

Guiding Friends

At our February meeting we thanked our outgoing convenor, Beth Dixon, for the hard work she has put in over the past two years. In that time we have seen an increase in the number of tours in the spring and summer seasons. Our numbers are small and we would welcome any newcomers to our group. The Begonia Festival tours of the statues were well patronised, and from all accounts, enjoyed by all. We are particularly busy now with six tours booked over the next month.

Terry O'Brien is our new convenor and is at present enjoying a holiday in South America.

Joan Garner (Acting Convenor)

Curators Report

Thank you to the friends of the gardens who played a part in the 2012 Begonia Festival. The growing, education, and guiding group all made a valuable contribution to the success of the weekend. Many people took advantage of the perfect weather to enjoy the free entertainment, listen to garden talks, and enjoy the gardens. We had many positive comments about the festival, gardens and begonia display.

On the 16th of March David Grant and I went to an information session on myrtle rust presented by the Department of Primary Industries. Myrtle rust was first detected in New South Wales in early 2010, it has spread to far north Queensland and has been found on over 150 plant species. Myrtle rust has been detected at over 25 sites in Victoria, mainly at production nurseries and wholesale outlets. All members of the Myrtaceae plant family which includes Acmena, Eucalyptus, Callistemon, Melaleuca, and Metrisoderous are potential hosts of the disease. More information can be found on the dpi website, www.dpi.vic.gov.au/myrtlerust. We ask that no plant material from the Myrtaceae family be brought into the gardens.

In the week preceding the Begonia Festival we installed the uncompleted copy of the statue of Hercules in the courtyard of the Robert Clark Centre. This uncompleted work was commenced after the statues of Spring and Hercules were extensively vandalised; the statue of Spring was also to be copied. The sculptor was unable to complete the work. We plan to install interpretative signage which will give information about the carving process and history of the statue.

Recent works in the gardens include maintenance on the Prime Ministers Avenue footpaths and mulching of the gardens north of the fernery. Over coming weeks the Summer display will be removed from the beds to allow the planting of the next display.

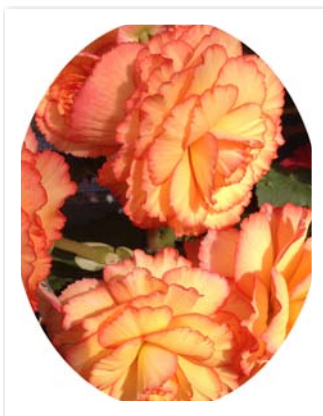
Peter Marquand

Mrs Patsy Hughes from the Ballarat East Probus Club would like to hear from anybody who would be willing to open their garden for a visit by 12 – 18 people during the next spring – summer season. The group would come equipped with their morning tea and a gold coin donation to the Friends. Contact number is 53341861.

Tenants Group

The FBBG are one of 11 tenant organisations operating within the Ballarat Botanical Gardens precinct:

Australian Plant Society,
Ballarat Begonia Society,
Ballarat Bonsai Society,
Ballarat Cactus and Succulent Society,
Ballarat Floral Art Group,
Ballarat Horticultural Society,
Ballarat Spinners and Weavers,
Ballarat Tramways Museum,
Craft Council of Ballarat,
Fish Acclimatization Society, and
FBBG.



Each group pays a minimal nominal rent for the use of meeting rooms and other facilities. The Tenants group meets bi-monthly in the Robert Clark Horticultural Centre. Sue Rhook convenes the meetings and Shane Boot prepares the agenda and takes minutes.

Mike Sorrell

Lake Wendouree and Gardens Advisory Committee

LWAGAC

The LWAGAC has been assisting Council with a review of the Ballarat Botanical Gardens Masterplan and Management Strategy and the Lake Wendouree Landscape Masterplan.

As the lake returns to top condition more and more applications for events will necessitate careful prioritizing, scheduling, and programming.

The dredging of the rowing course is almost complete, sufficient to enable a most successful Head of the Lake regatta – the 100th. Water quality is very good and will further improve once dredging has ceased. Weed harvesting will be continued using a Council purchased and operated weed cutter.

With increased activity around and on the lake comes increased commercial interest and activity.

Applications for commercial ventures are vetted and evaluated, with recommendations made to Council. Of particular interest is the imminent return of two approved paddle steamer operations.

The fernery redevelopment project has moved ahead, with a report from the working party presented to Council's Destinations and Connections division. This division includes three councillors. All members were strongly in favour of Option 4; the option favoured and recommended by FBBG. This entails the construction of a new structure on the original alignment, providing a modern interpretation of the former, rather grand, gothic cathedral form and mass. Encouragement was given for the next step, a more detailed analysis of Option 4 to be prepared for discussion and debate by the full Council.

Mike Sorrell

Maintenance

There was no report on maintenance.

Mike Sorrell

Engraving Report

We have just received a small order from the Macedon Ranges Shire at Kyneton.

Over the years they have been a great customer and have a further order to come shortly.

It still remains very quiet in this area of the Friends activities. As mentioned at the AGM most gardens now want laser produced labels and we do not have the technology to produce these.

Adele Thomas

John's Jottings

Delavay's Oak

On 7th. October 1995 the Ballarat Courier carried a description and photograph of Sisters Enright and Assumption, planting an oak tree in the Ballarat Botanical Gardens, to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Sisters of St John of God arriving in Australia and the arrival of the Order in Ballarat 20 years later to found their Hospital. Sister Assumption recalls that the Sisters were told that the tree was a rare specimen and that they should take good care of it

David Grant, the City of Ballarat senior arborist, remembers sending the tree up to the Gardens; one of twenty he had received from the Herbarium in Melbourne. When I came across the tree, a Delavay's Oak, a few years ago it looked very uninspiring and I tried to look it up in our standard texts without success. Frustrated, I emailed Kew Gardens and the librarian referred me to the Journal de Botanique where there was a full reference, albeit in Latin and French. This was successfully translated by John Clark and his U3A Latin class, and it proved to be an exact description. Further check of the Oak CIA checklist showed a specimen recorded at the Sir Harold Hillier Gardens in the UK, possibly one in Edinburgh and in Ghent. Pere Jean Marie Delavay was posted to Hui-Chou, east of Canton, China, as a missionary for the Missions Etrangeres de Paris in 1867. Then 33, he travelled extensively, particularly in the Yunnan Province. He returned to Paris in 1881 and was persuaded to collect specimens for the Museum National d'Histoire Naturelle when he returned to China in 1882. Travelling around Yunnan on foot he collected 200,000 specimens (!), including 4,000 species of which 1500 were new discoveries, although few were successfully cultivated. He survived the Bubonic plague in 1886 eventually returning to France to recuperate in 1891. Incredibly he returned to China a third time in 1893 adding another 1850 plants to the collection and died in Yunnan Province in 1895.

There must be specimens of Delavay's Oak in other Botanical Gardens, but one has to conclude, given the difficulties in finding out about ours, probably not very many. What a happy chance that David Grant chose such an appropriate tree, associated with one of the great catholic missionary botanists of the 19th century to send to the Gardens for the Sister's celebrations.

Thanks to:-Sister Assumption ,

John Clark and his U3A Latin class, tutor John Poliness,

Craig Brough and Tracy Wells, Kew Gardens and

*David Grant for their assistance in preparing this jotting. **John Garner***

History Report

As we are busy with the book, this will be a brief report. A title has been agreed upon.

The title, "A Vision of Loveliness" is a quote from an article in the Ballarat Star newspaper at the very infant stages of the development of The Ballarat Botanical Gardens, and is a reference to, and reminder of, the aspirations of the men (no women in the earliest times) who were determined to have the very best and most modern amenities in this, the newest and most vibrant of provincial cities. We are still writing text and selecting images to be used.

As this is the Diamond Jubilee Year of the reign of HRH Queen Elizabeth II, the Robert Clark Conservatory is showcasing all *begonias* with a royal connection in their naming.

On the right-hand side of the main walk, in the Tom Beaumont lawn, there is a *Quercus palustris* (Pin Oak)

planted by the Ballarat Branch Country Women's Association on April 21st 1947, to celebrate the

21st birthday of the then Princess Elizabeth. Perhaps this particular type of tree was selected because the leaf mould of this oak, and only this oak, was used as one of the 'secret ingredients' in the manufacture of the Gardens own special mix for potting up *begonias*.

On April 21st. this tree will be the focus of a very special " **tree of the day**" with the rest of the month focussing on the Heritage listed *Sequoia sempervirens*, Redwood, a cousin so to speak, of the *Sequoiadendron giganteum*. It is one of the world's largest trees and, unlike its cousin, yields many super feet of durable timber.

Lorraine Powell

Educating Report

Ballarat BotaniKIDS Childrens events in the gardens.

The three activities for the Begonia Festival were a huge success. With countless families involved over the three days we were very happy that we could do what we had set out to do. With the wonderful support of the Events Department of the BCC, and in particularly Heidi Zukauskas and our other partners, Eureka Community Kindergarten Association, Ballarat District Girl Guides and BRI Industries, we managed to deliver quality children's activities based on nature and gardening. We welcomed a new member Lesley Hughes who worked two days for us in the ClayPlay marquee! What a welcome!

We had so much fun and the whole three days were full of many joyful experiences with families all loving seeing their children playing with clay, making a scarecrow and making a Nature Carpet.

Please keep our dates and other events in mind for the year we would love to see you. Please spread the word too.

We now meet the second Tuesday of the month at GLB and we really do need new members in our group and would welcome you with open arms, a happy smile and lots of fun things to do.

We are now working with the University of Ballarat on a Community Enterprise project. Three students will help us with the self guided tours of the gardens for children and families that visit the Gardens. These girls are in their fourth year of study in Education and judging by the initial talks the project will be a winner.

Julie Bradby Convenor Educating Group.

PHOTOS of BOTANIKIDS ACTIVITIES AT BEGONIA FESTIVAL





2012 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

BOTANIKIDS

Meeting Times : 2nd Tuesday of each month. 10.00am

Meeting Place [unless otherwise arranged] GLB Ring Julie to check.

FUNCTIONS

Each of the School Holiday activities and Coffee and Cake sessions have a limit of 20 so ringing Julie on above phone number to register is recommended. **Cost \$6 per child .**

Winter School Hols :Ships Ahoy!

The Explorers and the Oak Trees in our Gardens

July 10th Robert Clark Centre 2pm-4pm

Spring School Hols : Kids Botanical Art:

Sept 25th Robert Clark Centre 2pm-4pm

Great Big Gardens Play Day

October 24th 10am-4pm

Olden Days Christmas Picnic

December 5th Robert Clark Centre and North Gardens from 10am

Coffee and Cake sessions for Mums and activities for Toddlers

June 12th Aug 14th Nov 13th. Robert Clark Centre 10am -12pm

Botanical Illustration



Welcome to 2012, with sincere apologies for lack of communication over the last months.

Last year was very busy with FBBG commitments and many people away, so we are looking forward to some enjoyable Art sessions ahead.

Our next Workshop in drawing & watercolour, with local artist, Geraldine Roberts will be good for all standards of expertise. We are very grateful to Geraldine for giving us her time.

Dates are 26th. & 27th. April.

Painting on Mondays will begin again on 9th. & 16th. April, from 12md to 3pm to get us back into swing for the Workshop.

The group are submitting some line drawings for the History Book which is being compiled at present. Looking forward to happy painting ahead, future events will be published soon; new members always welcome.

Elizabeth Gilfillan

Fbbg Open Gardens

Unfortunately, I was only able to visit three gardens. The first one was Kaye Crawfords. This was only planted in 2009 but looked well established with fruit trees, vegetable garden and native plants. The second garden was Mike and Jenny Sorrell's. The main feature was the fish pond in the centre of the front garden. This was surrounded by many roses, and perennial ground covers. The third was an established garden of Jenny and David Haymes. The main feature in the front garden was a newly established water feature and fish pond either side of it. Mature trees featured were elms, golden ash and liquid amber.

The gold coin donation went to the BotaniKIDS to purchase equipment.

Thankyou to all the people who opened their gardens. *Helen Vincent*



Kaye Crawford & Julie Bradby



David Haymes

BUNINYONG BOTANICAL GARDENS

Luncheon 7th July \$45

Guest speaker Anne Latrielle on

Gardens of Villandry – France

Contact Lorraine Powell 53413151

EVENTS AND SEMINARS REPORT.



Our Annual General Meeting was well attended and all enjoyed the talk by David Grant from the City of Ballarat. David gave an interesting insight on the management of the parks and trees of Ballarat, using a visual presentation.

David Grant

Lorraine Powell was given a Life Membership from the Friends of the Gardens, in recognition for all the tireless hours and knowledge she has given in her many roles, as a Friend of the Gardens.

Lorraine Powell receiving her award from our president Elizabeth Gilfillan



Next General Meeting – Thursday 17th May at 10.00a.m.

John Ditchburn will be talking about his Urban Food Garden in Ballarat, and how we can provide food for ourselves in our own gardens.

August General Meeting – Thursday 16th August at 10.00a.m..

Geoff Crowhurst will be visiting from Melbourne and with the aid of photos from his recent trip to Bhutan he will talk about the people and gardens of this interesting country. **Carole Haines**

Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens Conference

To be held in Port Augusta by The Friends of Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden.

18th & 19th August 2012

‘MANGROVES, MYALLS and MORE’ with pre and post conference tours.

www.australian-aridlands-botanic-garden.org

This event is always a most enjoyable experience & we encourage members to attend. For further information please contact Elizabeth Gilfillan 53347085

CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2012

Please note all these dates in your diary

MAY GENERAL MEETING Thursday May 17th 10am Robert Clark Centre
John Ditchburn speaking on Urban Food Garden in Ballarat

AUGUST ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS Botanical Gardens Conference
Sat-Sun 18th& 19th at Port Augusta South Australia. (registration forms can be obtained from
Elizabeth Gilfillan)

AUGUST GENERAL MEETING – August 16th. 10am Robert Clark Centre
Geoff Crowhurst will be speaking on his trip to Butan

OCTOBER GEORGE LONGLEY DAY – Thursday 11th at 4.00 pm.GLB

NOVEMBER Spring Open Gardens and Special Luncheon Friday November 2nd.

FRIENDS CHRISTMAS BARBECUE

and

BOOK LAUNCH (dates to be announced)

FBBG CONTACT DETAILS

info@fbbg.org.au www.fbbg.org.au

P.O.Box 33W Ballarat West 3350

Robert Clarke Conservatory

N.B.new phone number 53642764