

NEWSLETTER – WINTER 2020



FRIENDS OF BALLARAT BOTANICAL GARDENS PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I trust you've all found your own way of coping with the unprecedented lock-down period. My way was to go out and buy an e-bike, so I could enjoy the beautiful Autumn days we've been

experiencing. Its seven gears and five power assist modes makes riding around Lake Wendouree precinct a most enjoyable way of coping with lock-down (only fallen off once so far).

I have been most impressed with the current technology being built into e-bikes, particularly with significant advances in battery life. My purchase was through local e-bike distributor, Bikes on Latrobe (tell 'em the President sent you). It was most heartening to find that it was designed and built in Perth with all Australian parts and no Chinese involvement.

During this period Committee members have been keeping in touch by email, particularly in relation to events planned for the rest of the year.

With so much uncertainty about when restrictions will be eased, it is very difficult to try and predict what conditions might be like over the next six months. It appears that social distancing will continue in various degrees until a vaccine becomes available, which looks most unlikely anytime this year.

With that assumption, it is very doubtful that it would be possible to hold a function with some 80 people attending in a confined space until we have a vaccine.

Apart from Government legislation preventing this, I suggest people would be very reluctant to commit to attending until there is more certainty, particularly given the age group of those involved.

As functions need to be planned well ahead the committee have reluctantly decided to cancel **the August General Meeting, the bus trip to Sunnymeade in October, and the Speakers' Luncheon in November.**

On a brighter note it appears that the Fernery might be finally breaking free of the virus with an expected start for Stage 1 in



Robert readies for another Lake sortie!

*"We'll meet again
Don't know where
Don't know when
But I know we'll meet again some sunny day
Keep smiling through
Just like you always do
'Till the blue skies drive the dark clouds far away"*

June. Whilst I am very cautious about quoting start dates given several false starts over the last 12 months or so, I believe June could be a realistic start date. The latest information is that the City of Ballarat is currently working through the building permit as the last requirement. Apparently it wasn't possible to obtain building approvals prior to Heritage Victoria's approval.

Council have also advised that they are committed to ensuring as much of the works as possible remains local, which covers engineering and design and supply of materials, all of which are currently being finalised.

continues page 2...



Patron of the Ballarat Friends:
Prof. Tim Entwistle,
Director and Chief Executive,
Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne.

See page 8 for Tim's astonishing news about an 'Australian Invasion' of southern China!



In the meantime preliminary planning discussions for stage 2 are taking place, which hopefully will follow on shortly after the completion of stage 1.

I still have some Champagne left over from last year's May Quarterly Meeting when we had a celebration to mark the expected start of stage 1. I think the appropriate time for any further celebrations will be its **completion**. I'm not going to try to predict when that might be. Let's hope that the recent instability at the Town Hall doesn't cause any further delays.

Finally, I would like to compliment Yvonne and the Growers for their dedication in ensuring that the Nursery has been well being cared for during this period. I also acknowledge the assistance given by Peter Marquand and Glenn Fisher, who maintained a watchful eye on our Nursery plants during this period of limited access.

So, 'till we meet again, don't know where, don't know when, but we will meet again some sunny day, maybe even at the new Fernery?
Robert Selkirk, May 2020

MEMBERSHIP REPORT:

Our current membership is 388. However **there are still quite a few members who have not renewed their membership for this year.**

If you are unsure if you have renewed or not, please just contact me by email – rdixon578@gmail.com or by phone – 5335 9052 and I will be happy to let you know.

Raoul Dixon – Membership Officer



VALE JOHN KING: The Friends were deeply saddened by the death in March of John King, a former Committee member and Vice-President. John was a valued member of the Friends. He was always very willing to pitch in and help whenever he was able, and his friendly and generous nature will be sorely missed by us all. Our sympathies go to Denise and family.

John pictured at a FBBG function 2018



GROWING FRIENDS: The Friends nursery has been closed to the public for nearly three months. However, the FBBG Nursery re-opened on Tuesday 2 June, 1-4pm. There will be restrictions on the number of people allowed in the Nursery and social distancing and other health measures apply.

The Plant Trolley will also return to the front of the Conservatory. Thanks to Peter and Glenn for their tremendous support during the lock-down.

Yvonne Curbach, Convenor

AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS OF BOTANIC GARDENS

Report by Warwick Sellens, Member of the AAFBG and Ballarat Friends.



Kathy Wright (Treasurer), Elizabeth Gilfillan (Acting Sec.) Ro Noone (departing Admin Officer) and Janet Thomson OAM a past President

Like many organisations in Australia, the AAFBG has cancelled its program for 2020. This included the participation in the Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show, our biennial Conference in Brisbane and the AGM which was to have also been in Brisbane.

We recently farewelled our long standing Admin Officer, Ro Noone at a small function held recently in Geelong. The newly appointed Admin Officer is Chantal De Vere, a Queenslander with excellent horticultural qualifications. We wish her well in her new position.

The following is a statement from Dr Wayne Harvey, Chairman of AAFBG regarding a proposed arrangement with Neutrog:



"..we are considering an arrangement with Neutrog Australia Pty Ltd to provide access to Neutrog biological fertiliser products at discounted prices.

In summary, AAFBG member organisations and their individual members will be able to purchase Neutrog products at a member's price which represents a substantial saving. Each AAFBG member organisation will be provided with a code to be used to secure the reduced price from Neutrog. Orders will be placed online by the member organisation at the Neutrog online shop and payment will be made online directly to Neutrog. AAFBG will not be included in the transaction. Orders will be bundled and delivered by Neutrog to a centrally located Botanic Garden for collection."

'When kissing flowers, tulips are better than one'. (Sorry; I don't write them. Ed!)

GUIDING FRIENDS — In the Autumn issue of Wellingtonia I reported at the halfway mark on the U3A “Delving into the Ballarat Botanical Gardens” and our anticipation of the classes ahead. The last class we were able to have was on March 17 when we focused on the wider garden/lakeside precinct that includes the botanical gardens.



A ferry ride and a presentation by Peter Waugh from the **Tramways Museum** were part of the program on that day. The lakeside precinct offers a variety of riches for education and tourism. Part of the plan for the day was to show how groups exploring this area can link up with so many topics and areas.



**Terry O'Brien,
Guides Convenor**

You can tap into war history, take ferry and tram rides, visit various museums, explore wetlands, take guided walks, stop in at the FBBG cottage or the fish hatchery. All are part of a beautiful ambient environment located not far from Wendouree railway station.

March 17 when this class took place seems like another world away now. That day we were a group without regulation on social distancing and enjoying learning from Peter about the trams and then enjoying the vistas and freedom riding the waters of Lake Wendouree. This activity was completed just in time as that afternoon the FBBG Committee suspended all activities and programs!



Trams and the steamboats bringing crowds were an important link in explaining the growing popularity of the gardens at the end of the 1800s. From 1880 to 1910 the Ballarat Gardens were the social centre of the district. By 1887 double decker horse-drawn trams started carrying passengers to the Botanical Gardens. Then in 1905 the tramways were electrified. By the mid 1890's as many as eight steamboats were competing for passengers on the lake.

Cruising on the **Golden City Paddle Steamer** or taking a tram ride along Wendouree Parade keeps these traditions alive. The Tramway Museum and the Lake Wendouree Museum also have numerous artefacts including many photos to bring this history alive.

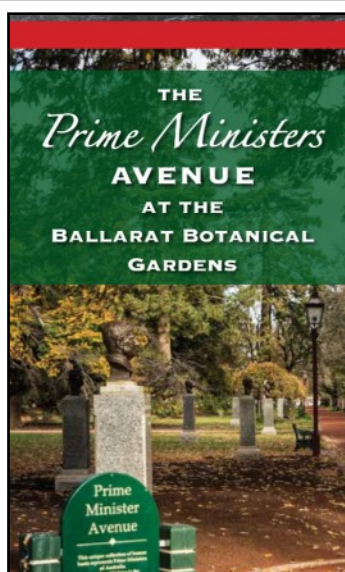


Peter Waugh in his presentation drew our attention to the new interpretation signs that have been installed alongside the tram route. This information is another source to help us reflect on our history and the character of our city.

The Friends' Guides were working on a special event for **Ballarat Heritage Weekend** but this plus the rest of the planned classes in the U3A “Delving into BBG” will now have to wait until rescheduled. We await to see the practical implications for our activities in moving ‘gently, carefully and cautiously’ from our present highly regulated hibernation.



Q. What kind of socks does a gardener wear? A. Garden hose.



John Garner, a FBBG Guide and a member of the FBBG History group is very good at keeping history alive with discovery of new material.

Sometime ago John undertook interviews of key people involved in the Ballarat gardens and recorded their experiences and recollections of events at BBG as part of an oral history project. He forwarded this extract from his interview with **Ian Smith, former Town Clerk of Ballarat**. It is a fascinating trivia piece that I hope will capture your interest as it did for me: –

Ian Smith: “The incident that I do recall particularly with the Prime Ministers Avenue, was when the new parliament house in Canberra was well under construction. We received a letter from the Parliament House Construction Authority, I think they called themselves, saying that as part of the development they were proposing to have a Prime Ministers - I’ve forgotten the word they used, it wasn’t avenue, it wasn’t walk - the Prime Ministers Way leading up to or leading into the building.

I’ve forgotten now, whether they asked us whether we would give them all our collection or whether they were asking did we have the original casts and could we lend them to them for making new casts.

Well the council nearly had a fit. The very thought of a duplicate set being produced!

We realised that the Ballarat ones were unique and as far as I know I have never seen anything like it anywhere else in the world So we wrote back to the Parliament House Authority and said that ‘yes they could make copies and when copies were made the casts from which they were made were to be destroyed and under no circumstances and at any time were any duplicates to be produced. And that, in a very prominent position, acknowledgement would be made of the generosity of the City of Ballarat’. We never heard from them again!”

Terry O'Brien

BALLARAT BOTANICAL GARDENS FOUNDATION (BBGF)

Beautiful Autumn in Ballarat has been wonderful this year, we have all had more time to soak in Nature's pleasures.

Whilst we have been in lock-down BBG Foundation has been able to keep business as usual and meet via video link on Monday, April 22, 2020.

The Board contacted COB with regard to the status of the current Fernery Stage 1 Funding which we were delighted to be notified by CEO Justine Linley that the "funding commitment for stage one has not varied"

The Victorian State Government is delivering a Grant program to assist Botanical Gardens. Round one began in June 2019 and BBGF Board was eager to pursue funding for Ballarat BG in Round one. Round two of funding is now approaching and we are actively in discussion with City of Ballarat for Fernery Stage two.

The Board has been informed that there were **no plans yet for Stage 2 of the Fernery or landscaping**. We believe planning has now begun and will be ready in time for an application in July 2020.

In November 2019 the BBGF Board were delighted to be approached by a Friends Member who are keen to sponsor a new Adolescent Horticultural Apprentice in the Gardens.

Discussions continue and BBGF Board are hopeful that this generous opportunity of an appointment will be ready to go at the beginning of 2021.

On April 23, 2020 the BBGF Board were notified by City of Ballarat that at the Ordinary Council Meeting of April 22, that the Council formally considered the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and resolved to enter the MOU with BBGF and we are now waiting to sign when opportunity presents considering the Covid-19 pandemic circumstances.

In light of recent change to positions at the City of Ballarat the BBGF will be contacting the acting CEO Neville Ivey and Mayor Ben Taylor to ensure that the Fernery progress remains on track.

The BBG Foundation exists to support the Friends and provide a means for the community of Ballarat and beyond, to contribute to the long term enrichment of **our Gardens!**

Elizabeth Gilfillan, BBGF Chair. The website: www.BallarotBotanicalGardensFoundation.com.au



Q. What did George Michael say to the gardener? **A.** *Rake Me Up Before You Hoe Hoe.*

SPECIAL REPORT: LAURACEAS BOTANICA JARDIN, COSTA RICA

In our quest to see the magnificent Quetzal bird, especially the male one, we decided to spend some time in the Savegre Valley situated in the cloud forest over 80 km south from San Jose and 3000m above sea level at its highest point .



The pond with *Heliconia bihai* on the far banks, lookout at the top and *Alternanthera brasiliana* (Brazilian joyweed) in the foreground, a plant not all find a joy!



Fuchsia corymbiflora - a favourite with the humming birds

This remote valley was discovered in 1952 by Costa Rican farmers who were on a hunting trip in the area. The valley, yet to be named, was dense with 'aguacatillo' (wild avocado) trees, (favourite habitat of the Quetzal), magnolia, three different kinds of oak trees up to 50m. in height and a wide variety of epiphyte plants such as bryophytes, orchids, lichens and ferns.

We were staying in San Gerardo de Dota, a mountain village with the Savegre River rushing through it surrounded by forested hills.



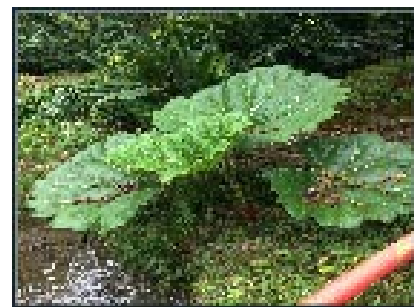
Canna x indica - found in abundance



The elusive male Quetzal.

The Lauraceas Gardens were a two km walk further down the only road into the valley .Their layout followed the lie of the land and as such consisted of a series of terraces looping their way to a viewing platform at the top.

Many of the plants were indigenous and as such provided a snapshot of the local flora. On entering the gardens we were greeted by a trout-filled pond, which was crossed by several attractive red bridges and could be viewed from various vantage points during the ascent to the top viewing area. After a circling up the path we were rewarded with a view not only of the gardens but also the thickly forested hills surrounding them.



Gunnera insignis - poor man's umbrella in Costa Rica

PS. We did manage to see the female Quetzal but the very showy male eluded us this time....perhaps on our next visit we'll have more luck!

Wendy Sandiford, Ballarat Friends Guide



Up to 1 January 1901 the six self-governing Australian colonies of the *Commonwealth of Australia* operated their own postal service and issued their own stamps. The *Postmaster-General's Department* took over all the colonial mail systems and stamps. Postal rates became uniform between the new states on 1 May 1911, an extension of the UK domestic postal rate of 1d per half ounce, so one penny became the uniform domestic postage rate.

From the accession of George VI (1936) until 1971, Australian stamps featured the monarch and Australian fauna and flora. Since then, the designs have focused on fauna, flora, reptiles, butterflies, marine life, gemstones, paintings, handicrafts, visual arts, community and the like. Nearly 300 stamps have been issued featuring Australian native flora and a wide range of Australian artists.

Susan Pilbeam



Margaret
Stones O.A
(1920-2018)
Botanical Artist:
1957 Designs

State
Emblems
1968

More at:
<https://australiapostcollectables.com.au/stamp-issues/view-all-stamps>
(Flora)



'Garden Cuttings' by Green Thumb

- The Gardens have been looking really good over the past few months. Green Thumb believes that many locals and visitors have made excellent use of them for exercise purposes.
- Are you a **Facebook** user? On the Friends F/B page you will find:
"Congratulations to the Bacchus Marsh Avenue of Honour, winner of the National Trust 2020 Tree of the Year. Planted in 1918, these 281 Elms are a beautiful and familiar sight to many of us." Well done Bacchus Marsh!
- Contributors to Wellingtonia** have risen to the occasion for this edition. Discussions had occurred that with so many Friends events cancelled or in recess, that we would not publish at all this winter! Thanks especially to Susan Pilbeam, President Robert, Pam Thompson, plus all our regulars we have been supplied with an abundance of material! Couldn't do it without you! Well done all!
- Green Thumb would like to be able to share President Robert's optimism re the commencement of **Stage 1 of the Fernery re-build**. Just a little bit pessimistic though due to the scope of the work involved. Will the recent removal of the City of Ballarat's CEO as well as the Director of Infrastructure and environment have any impact? Will there ever be funding for Stage 2 or landscaping?
- The *Ballarat News* recently (May 7) ran a story about **the replanting of the Gardens**. 'More than 30 gardens beds have been replanted in the gardens themselves, as well as at the Victoria and Sturt Street entrances.' Steel edging has been implemented on some of the beds, which will help to preserve displays.
- The **Ballarat Heritage Weekend** (last weekend in May) was to have had a significant contribution from the Friends. The Guides group, in particular had put a lot of planning into a new presentation and tours focused on the mighty sequoiadendrons. Alas, not going to happen at this stage. Maybe next year?

Until next time, keep your secateurs sharp and sterilised! Green Thumb

A Couple of Garden Laughs:



A SPECIAL FEATURE: Wellingtonia

Robert Clark Conservatory 5320 5135 PO Box 33W Ballarat West, Vic 3353
ABN 32 346 573 092 ACN346573 fbbg@ncable.net.au www.fbbg.org.au



Spring 2009

President's Report - Joan Garner

It is indeed a joy to see spring alive and well in our gardens, just 6 months after the dreadful 7th of February.

With much planning and hard work, the garden staff will be facing another summer but much better prepared for whatever is thrown at them. The water supply is assured and is now able to be dispensed to appropriate areas on a very scientific basis. We will have water in the Lake and the annuals we are famous for will be there to lift our spirits.

I cannot speak highly enough of the staff, David Lewis, Peter Marquand, Sue Rhook and all the gardeners, not only do they do a great job but their assistance and kindness to the friends make being in the gardens a very special experience.

I am delighted to tell you that the labels for our Heritage trees have arrived and the Gardens staff will soon be putting them in place. The History group is working on the production of a pamphlet for visitors with information about these special trees and showing their location.

Our General Meeting in August was very well attended and it was pleasing to welcome several of our new members. Guest Speaker was Ian McBean, a member of the Trentham Sustainability Group. He provided us with an interesting and challenging address entitled "We are living in interesting times - thoughts on sustainability".

We have formed two new groups. The Education Group has met for the first time with a view to organising a teaching arrangement with schools. Julie Bradby has been nominated as Convenor. The second is the Botanical Artists Group and there is specific information about this elsewhere in the Newsletter. All members are free to join these groups or any other, they will be most welcome.

We have been most fortunate to have had some very special books donated to our library and our sincere thanks go to the donors. The library is open on Tuesday afternoons. We do not lend out books at this stage but are very happy for you to browse or look up any specific information you may require. In addition Tim and Elizabeth Gilfillan have donated a Computer for which we are most grateful and which is proving a great assistance to various groups.



Tree line of Wellingtonias viewed across Lake Wendouree to Ballarat Botanical Gardens

We have now paid off the George Longley Building thanks to the steady income we receive from our hard working Growing Friends. Plans are now moving ahead for the new fernery and future funds will no doubt go towards providing special features in this area.

We have a name and a new format for our Newsletter which will be distributed four times a year plus two "fliers" in between to keep you in touch with activities. The Calendar of events for 2010 will be in the Summer Newsletter. I would appreciate your comments.

The internet was connected to the George Longley Building on June 5th this year. It is ADSL which means we are paying for the telephone line rental and Neighbourhood Cable for the connection. Both these companies have kindly allowed discounts to the Friends and requests for further sponsorship by Telstra Countrywide is pending. The new Email address for the Friends is fbbg@ncable.net.au The Friends website was redesigned and transferred to Ncable at the beginning of September. It is exciting for the Friends to have such a presence on the internet. It will grow as we add pages about the history of the Gardens, photos of events and editions of our Newsletter.

An image featured on www.fbbg.org.au is Pomona, one of the Stoddart statues with schizanthus (Poor Man's Orchid) in the Conservatory.

We know these have been displayed in our gardens for at least 86 years because Mr Toop, Gardens Curator, mentioned them in his report in 1923.

Please visit the site and view for yourselves.

In view of these developments we would like to hear from members with internet



Friends of Ballarat Botanical Gardens, Wellingtonia Spring 2009

1

Above is a reproduction of the front page of the first edition of the Wellingtonia!

Jennifer Burrell writes: "Helen Vincent was the editor at that time who made big improvements in the technical production, formatting in columns and including colour photos. It was steep learning curve to learn the publishing programs. We also changed to four newsletters a year to be named for the seasons."



Four recent photos by Warwick Sellens in the Gardens:
From the top: Swamp cypress ready to change colour and then shed foliage; Turkey oak on the PMs' Avenue; Statuary from Wendouree Pde.; Swan on Fairyland pond

TOILET PAPER SEEDS
.25 EACH



**A LITTLE LIGHT RELIEF AMID THE
RECENT RESTRICTIONS.**



BOTANIKIDS REPORT :

Why do we run the Plant-a-Pot activity at the Begonia Festival?

Our involvement in the Begonia Festival is a huge commitment by a very small dedicated Botanikids team. It is primarily to ensure many children and their families can experience a quality nature activity that also reflects and promotes the ethos of the Friends.

Fee: The fee paid by CoB for staging event was, and always is a welcome addition to our funds and helps our ongoing educational programs which we proudly provide free of charge for children and young families for the year.

Community Botanikids Event Ballarat Twins Family Support Group



Well before Covid loomed we booked an event for March 22 with the **Ballarat Twins Group**. With careful consideration in the light of social distancing we ran the event out on the deck. The Cottage was open for viewing only.

The families worked together to make **kokadama moss balls** with five of the Botanikids team and with morning tea and a nature walk, we all enjoyed our morning together.



On departure each family was presented with a goody bag containing daffodil bulbs to plant at home, a few lolly treats, fruit, a Botanikids postcard and the Friends information pamphlet. The group very kindly donated a few hundred dollars to support Botanikids programs, which was very happily received!

Lockdown Blues! Covid-19. What to do? Our families were facing home-schooling, working from home, job losses and strict stay at home edicts. Our Botanikids community needed support. So, we posted 16 activities on Facebook to engage children for busy families.

Botanikids Covid Special FACEBOOK Nature Education Program :

Post 1 Hope: Encouraged parents to plant daffodil bulbs as a sign of hope so when blooming in Spring we will be able to resume our life hopefully.



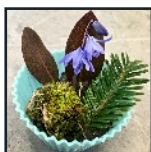
Post 2 Dig Archeology online [DlG Ventures] for older children. (<https://digventures.com/archaeology-for-kids-2/>).

Post 3. Stick to Walking. Ideas for Exercise outdoors: Sticks and ideas in photos.



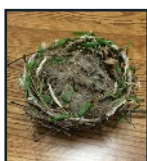
Post 4 Bear Hunting: The Gatekeepers Cottage became a part of the *Going on a Bear Hunt* webpage where bears were placed in windows around Ballarat and plotted on a map to give the kids a focus and fun for their daily walk.

Post 5 Mudcakes: Make a mud cupcake idea



Post 6 Cubbies: Simple cubby making ideas for the backyard

Post 7 Nature Art : Decorating natural objects, leaves, gum nuts, pebbles, etc.



Post 8 Nests are Best Easter: Make an Easter Bunny nest.



Post 9 Leaf Art: autumnal art ideas with decorative coloured leaves.

Post 10 Pasta Poster: Make an easy poster of a lifecycle of a butterfly, book suggestion and an online link to ongoing activities.



Post 11 Look and Learn: Eden Project idea. Investigate a sq metre of your backyard



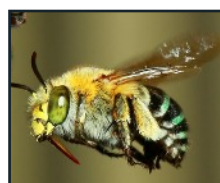
Post 12 NatureQuest: Make a Nature Journal and how to display nature walk finds in an easy quick way.



Post 13 Dirt: Information on what plants need and easy facts notes on soil.

Post 14 Plant-sitting: Link to being a bush pixie to care for propagated indigenous plants

Post 15 Slow Nature: Snail trails, stories and art ideas about snails.



Post 16 World Bee Day: Honey recipes, information links and special introduction to our special native bee, blue-ringed bee.

CONNECTEDNESS WITH OUR BOTANIKIDS COMMUNITY: A total 8,807 people reached our Facebook posts between March 20 and May 20. This is an average of 550 people per post reached:

<https://www.facebook.com/ballarotbotanikids/>

Julie Bradby, Convenor

WHAT'S COMING UP FOR THE BALLARAT FRIENDS

THURSDAY, AUGUST 20, 10 AM	CANCELLED General Meeting 10 am; guest speaker was to be Peter Voterakis.
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28	CANCELLED Day excursion to <i>Sunnymeade</i> , near Kithbrook.
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 9.45 - 3.30	CANCELLED Speakers' Luncheon
THURSDAY NOVEMBER 26 (COVID-19 PERMITTING!)	Christmas Nibbles and Drinks. 5.30 (time, venue and cost to be confirmed). (I THINK WE WILL BE DESERVING OF THIS EVENT! Ed.)

CURATOR'S REPORT WINTER 2020



As I write this report, we are entering the ninth week of the Covid 19 state of emergency. The Conservatory, Robert Clark Centre, Statue Pavilion and other council facilities such as the Ballarat Library and the Art Gallery of Ballarat have been closed to the public since March 23. The closure of council facilities is in line with directions from the Deputy Chief Health Officer.

Those staff that can be working from home, this change in work practice looks to continue for some time. Initially garden staff were rostered to undertake essential operations such as watering of nursery-based collections for a few hours each day. Most of our staff have now returned to work full time whilst continuing to practice social distancing and adopt extra hygiene practices. Staff who are in the high-risk category have chosen to stay home and have been able to access leave.

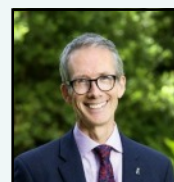
The gardens have continued to be busy during this time with people using the gardens and lake to undertake exercise. Staff have planted the annual beds and installed a small chrysanthemum display in the north and south windows of the conservatory. The team have also been kept busy picking up leaves and general maintenance in the gardens and nursery.

Peter Marquand, BBG Curator

Talking Plants

April, 2020

Patron of the Ballarat Friends: Prof. Tim Entwistle,
Director and Chief Executive,
Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne.



AUSTRALIAN WATTLE POISED TO MAKE HOSTILE TAKEOVER IN SOUTHERN CHINA

'.. Black Wattle, *Acacia mangium*, is a tropical species, growing naturally in northern Queensland, Papua-New Guinea through to the eastern islands of Indonesia.

As a fast growing tree with decent timber, it is also a popular species to plant in reforested areas of southern China. I saw it near Guangzhou, not far from Hong Kong, and I have some ... pictures to prove it!

... this is a popular species in southern China, where it has been planted since 1979. Where I saw it, the wattle was used to stop erosion and increase soil fertility, but also as 'nurse trees' to allow the establishment of other understorey plants.

Like many legumes, the roots of *Acacia mangium* form a symbiosis with the bacterium *Rhizobium* which converts nitrogen into forms usable by the wattle and other plants.

...most wattles when planted outside their natural range can spread into nearby forest and displace native species. In fact it has been shown that all Australian *Acacia* species used for forestry or widely planted for other uses have become invasive.



Want more? Search for **Talking Plants**, or go to <https://talkingplants.blogspot.com>



IF YOU NEED TO PAY US SOME MONEY:

Please remember to identify yourself, when paying into our bank account and even **what the payment is for**. good method is to use your surname and initial/s as your ID.*

Please **state what the payment is for**, e.g. membership, bus trip, etc.

The Friends' bank details are: **BSB** 633 000
Acc. No. 125334615

*** make sure that you clearly identify yourself when making an electronic payment.**

BALLARAT GARDEN DISCOUNTS FOR MEMBERS

- **Formosa Gardens Nursery** 5% off all stock
- **Grow Master** 5% off plant purchases excl. adv. trees
- **Spot on Pots** 10% off all purchases.

You will need to show your FBBG membership card

The Covid-19 'isolating' restrictions are being eased.

How is your free time looking?

You might be interested in joining a Friends Group? Ambassadors, Guides, Growers and BotaniKids can always use extra volunteers. Contact Susan at info@fbbg.org.au or 5342 9354





Brain
Test

Ballarat Botanical Gardens Quiz

Answers page 12



(Photo 1)

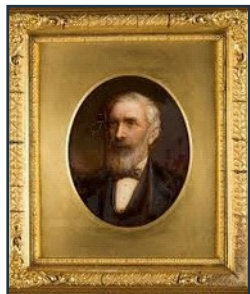


(Photo 2)



(Photo 3)

1. What is the name of this statue at the centre of the Pavillion, depicting an incident of flying embers? (Photo 1)
2. He founded The Ballarat Courier and in the 1990s his grandson, of the same name, made a significant gift for the building of the Horticultural Centre and the award winning Conservatory. (Photo 2)
3. How many statues did Thomas Stoddart present to the gardens and how many can you name? (Photo 3)
4. Honoured by the FBBG, he was the 'first' in 1858. What was he and what was his name? (Photo 4)
5. In the Avenue of Prime Ministers, who are the first and the last, as at May 2020?
6. This cottage is named for which famous poet and horseman? (Photo 5)
7. Which cottage has both left and returned?
8. Which famous couple planted this flowering plum in 1983, long before they divorced? (Photo 6)
9. Poppies 'bloom' here. (Photo 7)
10. A very large home for old travellers?



(Photo 4)



(Photo 5)



(Photo 6)



(Photo 7)

COLLECTIONS REPORT WINTER 2020:

During this unique and challenging time, we are fortunate that our gardens have remained open for exercising when so many other botanical gardens have been closed.

Changing Conservatory displays:

Although the Conservatory remains closed to visitors, the team continue to produce the plants required for upcoming Conservatory displays in readiness to reopen when permitted to. The winter display will be placed in the Conservatory shortly for viewing through the windows (though the doors will remain locked) and yes, the ever-popular *Schizanthus* will still be on display in Spring!

New labelling machine:

In exciting news, we have recently purchased a new 'laser' engraving machine to replace the previous unrepairable machine. This new machine also engraves aluminium, and will facilitate the gradual replacement of all labels in the gardens to this more durable material, and in a new standardized format & size.

Due to the new machine importing information directly from our computers & database, label printing will now be based in the RCHC office, and managed by BBG staff.

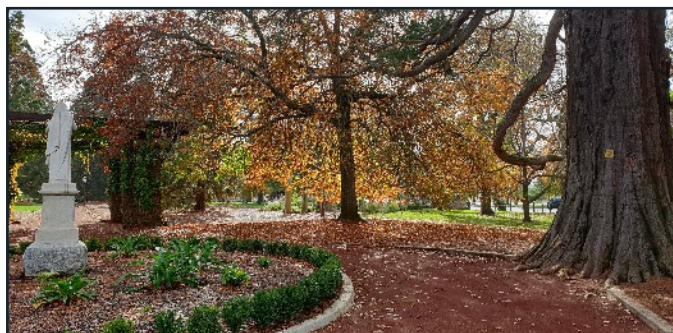
Thank you to Joy O'Brien:

We would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to **Joy O'Brien** for all her tireless hours working on (and often wrestling with) the old engraving machine over the years. Despite the aging machine's idiosyncrasies she single-handedly produced thousands of labels, meticulously cross-checked plant names, as well as performing hours of maintenance of those labels in our gardens. Her talents have not only benefitted our gardens, but also Buninyong Botanic Gardens, and other important plant collections further afield. She has done so much more than most of us realise, and always to such a high standard – thank you so very much Joy!

We would also like to acknowledge all of Adele's wonderful work producing so many plant labels in the past, which still forms the foundation of what we see today!

Stay safe everyone!

Donna Thomas, BBG Collections Officer



Friends Committee member and Membership Officer Raoul Dixon provided this beautiful photo of the southern end of the Gardens

THE GATEKEEPERS COTTAGE UPDATE: There it is still looking as if it never went away! Pity about the wire fencing but that's dependent on the landscaping and construction of a ramp for wheelchair access which is still pending. Hopefully done soon.

As you can see the fretwork has been remade painted and installed on the verandah along with interior painting of cupboards completed. "Thank yous" to Wendy Jacobs, Heritage Architect, who navigated the journey through planning permits with Heritage Victoria, to Peter Broadhead who managed the construction and to The Ballarat Botanical Gardens Foundation for financing.

We're just waiting to resume activities as we adapt to the new normal! **Julie Bradby**



Winter Wonders: continuing some inspirations from the Committee AND Friends:

My favourite Winter plant has to be *Galanthus nivalis*. The real or common snowdrop, best known of the 20 species. The last of winter flowers and harbinger of Spring, these exquisite gems are known to pop up through snow and frost.

The generic name *Galanthus*, from the Greek *gala* (milk) and *anthos* (flower), was given to the genus by Carl Linnaeus in 1735. He described *Galanthus nivalis* in his *Species Plantarum* published in 1753. The epithet *nivalis* means "of the snow", referring either to the snow-like flower or the plant's early flowering.

Although often thought of as a British native wild flower, or to have been brought to the British Isles by the Romans, it is now thought that it was probably introduced much later, perhaps around the early sixteenth century. It loves to grow in woodlands or semi shade and will kindly tolerate most conditions. When we first moved to Buninyong/Ballarat 35 years ago the snowdrops in our historic garden were my first unknown garden joy. These tiny precious bulbs have accompanied me to each of our gardens since and have been shared with many friends.



Elizabeth Gilfillan (Chair: Ballarat Botanical Gardens Foundation)



Plants that are great in a garden in the winter are – grevilleas, banksias and correas and some of the bottle brushes. I have had them in every garden I have had over the years. Even some of the clematis are winter flowering. And all sorts of bulbs of course! Yvonne Curbach (Growing Friends)



Violas (heartsease, pansy, violet) are great annuals and perennials. They last for many, many months and come in such a variety of colours. These tough and adaptable 'woodland plants' are easily grown in sun or shade, but a semi-shade is best. Good for containers or beneath shrubs (Native and exotic species). Bruce Holland (Friends Treasurer)



Araucaria bidwillii – The Bunya Pine

One of my favourite features of the gardens in winter are the Bunya Pines. We have six here in the gardens that were planted around 1900 – just look up and you can't miss them!

Winter is the time when their deciduous neighbours allow Bunyas to show off their beautiful domed canopies, providing architectural green structure and interest at a time when so many trees are hibernating.

Bunyas are the wonderful Aussie heroes from Queensland, well renown for producing their huge football sized 'female' cones of up to 10 kg. (There have been some beauties this year at Buninyong BG. Ed)

But there's more....their ancient form actually harks back to the Jurassic era to when their close relatives lived alongside the dinosaurs! They have curious prehistoric looking bark, trunks like elephant's feet, almost 'reptilian' scaled male cones and wonderfully spiralled foliage! Fabulous!

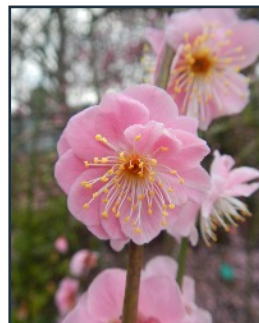
However, the *Prunus mume* (Weeping Apricot) in the fragrant garden is pretty impressive too? Look out for it's stunning mid-winter display! With long weeping branches to the ground smothered in pink flowers, and it's strong musk fragrance, you just can't walk past it!



'Elephant-like' trunk of the bunya pine



Araucaria bidwillii - male cones



Close-up of the *Prunus mume* blossom



In full bloom last year in the Western Bed

Donna Thomas, Plant Collections Officer

Do you have a favourite Tree?

During the Covid-19 Lockdown I have had time to reflect on my youth, friends and experiences. My life before arriving in Australia was spent in (then) Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe. As a 7 year old I distinctly remember hugging my favourite tree, talking and reading to it. My special space was established when my dad built me my own cubby house (a few planks to form a small platform). There I sat, played, cried, laughed and listened to the wisdom of my tree!



Turkey Oak Ballarat Botanical Gardens (1890s)

I recall the gentle sound of leaves in a spring morning and remember, with pride, being able to play Sinding's *Rustle of Spring*. Or hearing thunder hitting the skies and the spectacular lightening flash, contemplating Shakespeare's *Tempest*, when called back to reality by my mother "Get inside NOW!"

All too soon I left childhood behind, completed my education, got married, built a home and had two children. Suddenly we had to move. Thank you Australia for receiving us! For Pete and myself, all consuming professions followed and our children assimilated into Australian school and culture. Then my soul mate Pete died. What next?

Do I move to Melbourne or Sydney? No! I stayed in beautiful Ballarat to pursue my life long ambitions, involvement in the *National Trust* and gardening, which lead me to the *Friends of the Ballarat Botanical Gardens*. Both organisation have been most enriching experiences and have combined in a passion for Heritage Trees.

In 1858 George Longley was appointed gardener and by 1863 the first glass house had been built. 40,000 Blue Gums (*Eucalyptus globulus*) were propagated per annum for distribution. (One of these shades the *FBBG Nursery* and is Heritage listed.) In the same year planting commenced on the Wellingtonia (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*) avenue, completed 1874. The avenue is registered on the *National Trust Heritage Trees* list, as are 14 other varieties found in the *Ballarat Gardens*.



Canary Pine
Ballarat Synagogue (1867)

The *National Trust* encourages communities to enter a favourite tree in the *Tree of the Year* competition. A final nine are selected and in 2019 my favourite tree, the *BBG Turkey Oak* (*Quercus cerris*) was a finalist with the "Tree of Knowledge" (Blue Gum) at *Federation University's* Mount Helen campus. It was an exciting process. Congratulations to the 2020 winner *Bacchus Marsh Avenue of Honour*. Its 281 Elm (*Ulmus*) trees were planted in 1918 and will be familiar to many.

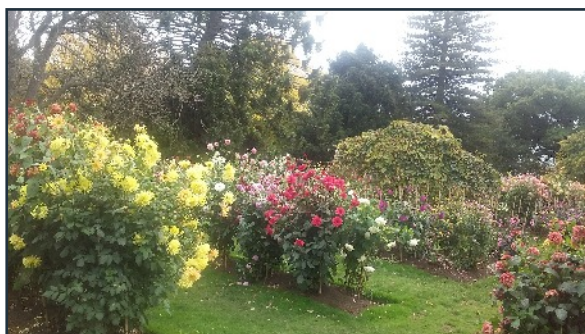
In 1995 the *Robert Clarke Conservatory* (designed by Peter Elliott) opened. How delighted I was to find the site had been moved to avoid damaging my favourite tree. I love the *Turkey Oak* in all its seasons. I still sit, read, contemplate life and years gone by and those to come- now on a bench, not up a tree in a cubby house.

I hope you have a favourite tree. **Pam Thompson (FBBG Ambassador)**

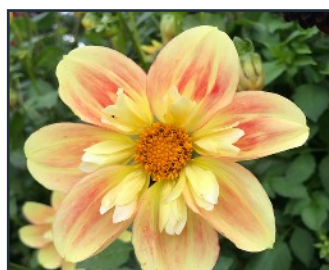
More at: <https://www.nationaltrust.org.au/treeoftheyear/>



Elms Bacchus Marsh Avenue of Honour (1918)



(Above) Fungii growing in the Wetlands on Gregory Street



SPOTTED IN THE GARDENS:

(Top left and above: Autumn views; (At left: the dahlias have hung on well - at left is Jenny Burrell's favourite; (Right) Ex-PM Julia Gillard got into the swing of the Covid-19 shutdown.



Friends of Ballarat Botanical Gardens Information 2020

Email: info@fbbg.org.au
 Website: <https://fbbg.org.au/>
<https://www.facebook.com/FriendsBBG>

Friends of Ballarat Botanic Gardens Inc.
 P.O. Box 33W, Ballarat West 3350
<https://www.facebook.com/ballaratbotaniKIDS/>

Tel. George Longley Building 03 5342 9354

2020 FBBG COMMITTEE AND AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

POSITION	NAME	POSITION	NAME
President	Robert Selkirk	General Member	Warwick Sellens
Vice President	Terry O'Brien	Growing Friends	Yvonne Curbach
Past President	Raoul Dixon	Guides	Terry O'Brien
Secretary	Susan Pilbeam	History	Lorraine Powell
Treasurer	Bruce Holland	Hospitality	Doff Kemp
BotaniKids/ Education	Julie Bradby	Membership	Raoul Dixon
Events and Speakers	Carole Haines	Newsletter Editor	Michael Bird
Foundation	Elizabeth Gilfillan	Promotion/Public Relations	Vacant
General member	Jock Gilbert	Western Bed	Vacant
General member	Kim Nolan	Ambassadors	Trish Twaits (non-Committee)
General member	Natalie Radomski	Botanical Art	Val Richards (non-Committee)
General member	Wendy Taylor		

COMMITTEE MEETING TIMES 2020

Meetings are held in the George Longley Building (rear of the Robert Clark Horticultural Centre):

Committee 3rd Tuesday of each month at 3:30 pm

Botanical Artists Mondays 10 am to 3 pm during school terms.

Guiding Friends 4th Tuesday each month 10 am.

Growing Friends Tuesday each week 1 pm-4 pm, and the 2nd Sunday every month, 1 pm -4 pm.
Plant Sales at the above times.

BotaniKids /Educating Friends 2nd Tuesday each month 10 am (plus special events)

History Group 1st Tuesday each month 4 pm.



QUIZ ANSWERS:

1. The Flight from Pompeii
2. Robert Carmichael Clark (1826-1902) and Robert Bruce Clark
3. 12. Hercules, Pomona, Hebe, Flora Farnese, Flora, Mercury, Leda, Bacchante and the four seasons.
4. George Longley the first curator, 1858-99.
5. Edmund Barton (1901) and Tony Abbott (2013-2015)
6. Adam Lindsay Gordon 1833-70
7. Gatekeeper's Cottage
8. Prince and Princess of Wales
9. Australian Ex-Prisoners of War Memorial
10. Ballarat Tramway Museum.

DEADLINE FOR THE SPRING EDITION 2020
 mid-September 2020

Submit articles to the Editor info@fbbg.org.au



Many thanks to our fantastic band of contributors. Without their interest and input your **Wellingtonia** would not be as successful as it is. You know who you are - Thank you. Ed.

This Newsletter is distributed with the financial assistance of the City of Ballarat.



Photo credits: Thanks to: Warwick Sellens, Jenny Burrell, Terry O'Brien, Tim Entwisle, Julie Bradby, Susan Pilbeam, Raoul Dixon, Tim & Wendy Sandiford, Peter Marquand, Donna Thomas, Pam Thompson and Michael Bird for providing the photographs and illustrations used. Apologies for any omissions. Ed.

Disclaimer: The views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the Friends of the Ballarat Botanical Gardens. The Friends of the Ballarat Botanical Gardens does not accept responsibility for statements made or opinions expressed, although every effort will be made to publish reliable and accurate information.

Contributions for Winter Wellingtonia 2020 are due by MID-SEPTEMBER please. Michael Bird, Editor.

Editorial Committee: Robert Selkirk, Elizabeth Gilfillan, Susan Pilbeam and Michael Bird.