

Wellingtonia



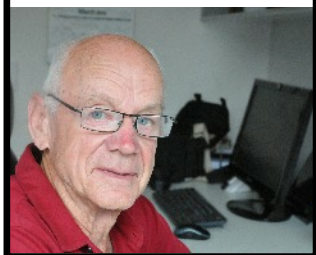
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NEWSLETTER – WINTER 2017

From the President's Desk...



FRIENDS OF BALLARAT BOTANICAL GARDENS PRESIDENT'S REPORT

In May this year a few of us attended the **AGM of the Australian Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens** (AAFBG) held in the Canberra Botanical Gardens. Whilst there, we heard an inspirational address by the Executive Director of the Canberra Botanic Gardens, Dr Judy West. During her tenure there she has dramatically upgraded the Gardens which we were told had been somewhat languishing.

We were impressed by how her horticultural credentials, combined with vision and drive, enabled her to so successfully work with the relevant authorities to achieve these improvements.

Also, as part of the AGM program, we visited the **National Arboretum**, a truly impressive undertaking with 104 different species forests being created. Of particular interest to me was the work being undertaken by a dedicated group of volunteers. Under the acronym of STEP (*Southern Tablelands Ecosystems Park*) they have been granted 2½ hectares on which they are now establishing local indigenous flora, thus assisting to preserve rare and endangered species from grasses through to trees. This led me to reflect again on the potential we have with our own Wetlands in the North Gardens.

As I have mentioned previously, there is scope there to expand and create our own indigenous flora reserve, thus doing our bit to help preserve native vegetation and provide an educational resource to encourage environmental awareness.

On to local news. The relocation of the **Gatekeeper's Cottage** from Gregory St to the North Gardens appears to be progressing, with a contractor able to undertake this within our budget. We will now be applying for heritage grants to assist with restoration once the cottage is in place.

However the **redevelopment of the Fernery** seems still to be in limbo whilst additional funding is being sought. Council has applied for a Federal grant but we are told they are not optimistic about its success.

We had hoped for an application to be lodged by Council to **Regional Development Victoria (RDV)**, with a professional prepared

application ready to go. However it has now been suggested to us, after months of seeming inactivity, that it might be better for the Friends to submit this application.

To have any hope of success, we are told that we must make presentations to local community organisations such as Rotary, asking them to lobby on our behalf, as well as asking our members to individually lobby Members of Parliament. All in all quite a massive undertaking and we are now considering our options.

On a happier note, members and friends enjoyed a marvellous bus tour to Camperdown Botanic Gardens and the gardens of Dalvui and Gnotuk. We were very generously entertained by the Camperdown Friends and we thank them for their hospitality.

The weather looked most unpromising but, although cold, the rain held off so it was a very rewarding experience.

Unfortunately we had many cancellations. As we had organised two buses to handle the numbers, the cost of this has precluded us being able to recompense those who had to cancel.

Our next bus tour will be to **Cloudehill in the Dandenongs** in October. More information about this later in the year. (See p.12)

Our May general meeting was again a good time for socialising. As reported on elsewhere in this Wellingtonia, we were entertained by our guest speaker who most humorously recounted his trials and tribulations in establishing a garden on an unpromising site in Lara.

Our new Ambassador program, reported on elsewhere in this issue, is proving to be a great success. Visitors are very pleased to have someone to chat to in the Conservatory, and our Ambassadors all say that they enjoy the experience. However more volunteers would be appreciated to make it easier to prepare rosters.

Finally, members will be interested to hear that Elizabeth Gilfillan is attending the **6th Global Botanic Gardens Congress in Geneva** in June, on behalf of the AAFBG. She will be presenting a paper there, entitled "*Supporting and Advocating for Botanical Gardens, their role and relevance for the future*". This is indeed a great honour and we congratulate Elizabeth and trust all goes well.

Until next time,

Raoul Dixon
President.



New Display in Ballarat Botanical Gardens Conservatory: Primulas, Cyclamen, Spring bulbs, Ornamental Kale, Kumquats and Viburnum: Until September. Worth a look.



Patron of the Ballarat Friends:

Prof. Tim Entwistle,
Director and Chief Executive,
Royal Botanic Gardens,
Melbourne.

See page 4 for Tim's Blog ...

The Ambassadors started to have a presence in the Conservatory of a weekend in late April. We will stop at the end of June and resume in September. Twenty nine people have volunteered to take part. Although many were nervous about it, working in pairs is a great boost for moral support, and a spin-off is getting to know each other.



Part of the Winter display in the Conservatory

Everyone involved has provided a welcoming presence for the visitors to the Conservatory, and have dealt with questions admirably. All the Ambassadors are saying that they enjoy their role. It is a lovely environment, and you meet people from all over the world, interstate, and even a few locals. The feed-back is positive from the public, and the Ambassadors are receiving high praise.

Our thanks to Donna Thomas for her help in giving us a talk and tour for each different display of plants featured in the Conservatory. Her notes are invaluable.



Viv Martinich & June Cheetham Ambassadors for the FBBG in the conservatory

To cover the roster every weekend, we need to have more people involved. How about joining us; it is an enjoyable time!

Beth Dixon, Convenor – Ambassador

Growing Friends



Plastic Pots are always needed: drop off at George Longley Building. Sizes 5, 6 and 7 inch (approx. 13 to 18cm) – no larger. We are trying to be more sustainable, so we ask members to please bring your own box or cloth bag, as we hope to gradually phase out plastic bags.

Yvonne Curbach, Growing Friends Convenor

'Autumn follows summer, winter follows autumn, drought follows planting.' Anon..

The Educating Friends Group and Ballarat Botanikids report:

We all know kids and birthday parties sort of seem to go together and our recent celebration of the 160th year of the Gardens proved it!

We had 67 children attend the party complete with a wonderful flower cupcake birthday cake donated by the Mayor's office! With blue Lake Wendouree jellies with marshmallow waterlilies complemented by worms in dirt treats (choc instant pudding and biscuits with sour worm lollies) we had a tremendous birthday celebration!



Madam Mayor came and made a flower party hat with the children; she also gave us a little speech about the importance of our special Gardens

Despite the cold windy weather the children all walked down to the blue gum to tie a yellow streamer around the trunk to thank the tree for all the wonderful things it has provided over its many years! Lovely to see the young parents encouraging their little ones to lay their hand on the trunk and look up into the canopy. A very special moment!

Thanks to our 17 Friends-helpers who came along to help to run such a special event. A special 'thanks' to the cooks and especially to Samantha McIntosh our Madam Mayor, and to Carmel from CoB Civic Support for their ready willingness to help organise and support the event.

We have been also working on a series of support materials for teachers to help them fit into their curriculum their visits to the Gardens and the whole precinct. This has been made possible by a grant from Ballarat Rotary and we were able to employ two experienced curriculum writers, Chris Rossiter and Renae Harper. Both have done a sterling job, writing extensive, rich and relevant units of work based on best educational practice. I'll outline more of their work in following reports.

Exciting times ahead as The Gatekeepers Cottage is about to come back to the Gardens and we start to work hard to achieve our goals in its renovation!

Julie Bradby and the Educating Group with Ballarat Botanikids

'If a man is alone in the garden and speaks, and there is no woman to hear him, is he still wrong?'
(just a joke, really! Ed.)

Friends Botanical Artists Group



The Ballarat Botanical Illustrators are a very enthusiastic and focused group, who enjoy sessions on Mondays in the George Longley building.

This group is open to all artists, beginner through to experienced, all are welcome and each artist works to their own pace and ability.



This year new members have joined and guided painting exercises have been held, with great success.

Each year the aim is to have at least two workshops, with external artists, who are recognised teachers in their field.



For more information about our Monday sessions or upcoming workshops please contact:

Valerie Richards, on email - valerierichards@iprimus.com.au or phone – 5341 2649.



FROM THE HISTORY GROUP: Tree of the Month JUNE 2017: Commemorative Trees Series Number 4

Common Names: Black pine, Japanese black pine, Japanese pine

Located to the east of the rockery, this tree was planted in 1988 by Cr Neil Steinman, Mayor of Ballarat and Mr Mitsuo Uegami, Mayor of Inagawa Japan, to commemorate the signing of a Sister City agreement.

Class : *Coniferopsila* **Order:** *Coniferales* **Family :** *Pinaceae*

Botanical Name: *Pinus thunbergii* syn *Pinus thunbergiana*

Pinus: Latin for pine from Greek "pitos"
thunbergii: After Swedish botanist Carl Peter Thunberg (1743-1828)
kuromatsu () in Japanese *kuro*, "black" and *matsu*, "pine"
gomsol () in Korean
hēisōng () in Chinese

Introduced into cultivation: Stock was brought from Japan by Dr Philipp von Siebold, having been described by Swedish botanist and physician Peter Thunberg in 1852.

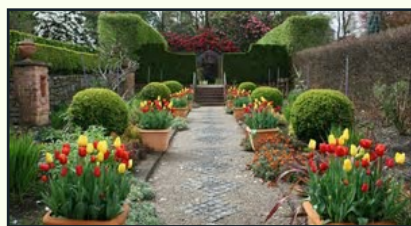
- *Pinus thunbergii* tend to be slow growing conifers living for several hundred years.
- The deeply fissured bark is silvery and black and the pairs of dark green evergreen needles are up to 12 cm long.
- Conical orange-yellow pollen cones and rich magenta seed cones appear in early spring. The cones grow in size over the summer and are nearly round at maturity.
- It is native to the coasts of the warmer parts of Japan, most commonly along seashores, and also in South Korea. Inland it forms shrubby stunted forests, preferring rock outcrops and dry ridge-lines or rock barrens up to a 1000m.
- It can hybridise with Japanese red pine, *Pinus densiflora*, producing a tree with red bark and dark, stout needles.
- Historically, the timber has been used in Japanese architecture. It grows up to 40 meters in good conditions, but is usually much smaller.
- Some Japanese shrines have taller specimens. The tallest on record measures 66 meters.
- It is a popular horticultural tree because of its resistance to pollution and salt, but is considered invasive in Nantucket
- It is used to produce paper pulp, volatile thinners and solvents
- It is one of the classic bonsai subjects



HOSPITALITY AND EVENTS:

EXCURSION TO CLOUDEHILL: Everyone will love the beautifully landscaped Cloudehill gardens especially with the naturalised Spring bulbs.

The excursion will take place on Wednesday 18 October. The cost is \$50. (This includes \$10 for a guided tour of Cloudehill Garden).



The Olinda visit will include an hour long guided visit to the Garden at Cloudehill now owned by 'Diggers'. Included is the chance for you to visit the Diggers Club shop and nursery located at Cloudehill.

Please meet at the Morey Gates, Wendouree Parade, Botanical Gardens by 8.15 a.m.

At 12.15 you are invited to join us for lunch at Season's Restaurant beside Cloudehill gardens.

However please note: **The lunch is NOT included in the Excursion cost.** You must book the lunch prior to the day. We ask you to phone **Season's Restaurant** on **03 9751 0168** to make a reservation and say you are with the Friends of the Ballarat Gardens Bus trip.

If you DO NOT wish to make a reservation, you can take your own lunch, chair, etc. You cannot picnic in the gardens anymore.

Following lunch we will go to Gentiana Nursery. This nursery has a great variety of small plants for you to peruse and purchase. We will return to Ballarat by 5.00 p.m.

Booking for this excursion will be at **Try Booking.** (TryBooking.com) On line booking opens Monday 19 June. Enquiries to Susan on 5342 9354.



Members who are unable to book via the internet need to book and pay at the George Longley rooms (Open on Tuesdays from 1.00 to 4.00P.M.)

NO PHONE BOOKINGS TO US, PLEASE.

We have reserved ten (10) tickets for the Friends who do not have credit card or internet access. You can purchase by eftpos or cash at the George Longley on Tuesday afternoons between 1-4pm or send a cheque to **P.O. Box 33W, Ballarat West 3350.**

To make it easy to find this event, please use the following links:

<https://www.trybooking.com/QGBB> or <https://www.trybooking.com/285299>



FROM TIM ENTWISLE'S BLOG -Tuesday, 11 April 2017

DEADLY ROADSIDE BEAUTY, IN SEASON

"Oleander is a well known but hardly loved garden plant in Australia. You see it out the front of rental properties and blocks of cream-brick units, or more recently in dwarf form on motorway verges and median strips. Key attributes are its gaudy pink flowers, tolerance of the most extreme of growing conditions, and ability to kill pets and small children.

Stuck in my head are stories of a child dying after digesting a single leaf and a group of soldiers (with Alexander the Great, or Napoleon - take your pick) who roasted a pig on a Oleander spit and suffered horrid deaths. The reality [seems](#) to be that 5 to 15 leaves can cause a fatal poisoning, but there are varying reports of tolerance and toxicity among the young and old.

All parts of *Nerium oleander* are toxic, [due to](#) something called a **cardiac glycoside**. These heart-stopping chemicals are most concentrated in the seeds and roots, followed by the fruits and leaves. Red-flowering forms have more cardiac glycosides than white-flowering forms, and there is more of it at flowering time.

First-century Roman naturalist, Pliny the Elder [mentions](#) the flowers and the poisonous qualities. His countrymen also knew it as a cure for hangovers - although in the wrong quantity it would seem to be a permanent cure.



So you have to be careful with this plant. But then there are many toxic plants out there so unless you are growing a known vegetable or other food plant, don't nibble any leaves. Apart from its landscape attributes and deadly contents, is there anything else you should know about Oleanders? Well, it is even more common in Spain than Australia, which is why it's in my special series of *pre-Spain-tour* posts. Not only is it widely planted on roadsides and in gardens, but it seems to be native to the Iberian Peninsula and the Mediterranean region more generally, as well as further south into northern Africa, and west into Asia.

There are plenty of cultivars, accounting for the various flower colours and forms, as well as shrub heights. The flower I've posted at the top is a double-flowered form, probably *Nerium oleander* 'Splendens'. En masse, as I said, they can impress."

You can read more of Tim's Blog about this topic amongst many others at:

<http://talkingplants.blogspot.com.au/>. Tim has recently included a series of reports on his travels in 'Iberia'.

OPENING OF THE RESTORED CLAXTON FOUNTAIN:

May 30 saw a Civic Reception to honour the restoration of the famous Claxton Fountain in the Ballarat Gardens. It also coincided with the 160th anniversary of the Gardens being established. In a short but informative ceremony, Mayor Samantha McIntosh and Friends' Committee member Elizabeth Gilfillan briefly outlined some historical aspects of the Gardens and of Frederick Claxton, Ballarat mayor in the 1870's and 80's. The audience then moved from the Conservatory to the Wendouree Parade gates to witness the unveiling of the restored Claxton Memorial Fountain.



Pictured above l to r: Deputy Mayor Cr Mark Harris looks on as President Raoul Dixon opens proceedings; Mayor Samantha McIntosh addresses the gathering; Elizabeth isn't saying, 'it's easy, just give us more money', she is explaining the role of a botanical garden; the ribbon cutting at the Claxton Fountain.

Day 1 for the Ballarat Botanical Gardens Ambassadors: very first day for Ambassadors in the Conservatory - Saturday, 8th April.

Pictured below: Ambassadors Heather Boyd and Trish Twaits in front of our new display board..



**'SNAPPED' DOING
'FRIENDS' THINGS'!**



Above: Lunch was a grand affair on our Dalvui visit.

BALLARAT BOTANICAL GARDENS ZOO PROJECT:



Pictured above from left: Two of the panels; Susan Rattray, Friends Secretary and History Group member; and, the History Group members.

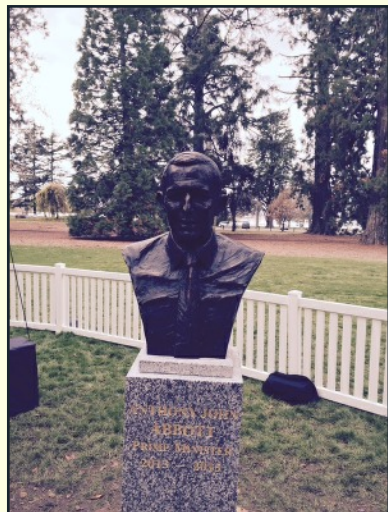
Zoo Display opening: After what seems a very long time the Zoo Project reached its conclusion with a grand opening on April 24 this year. The History Group of the Friends, ably led by Lorraine Powell, has achieved an outstanding result with their array of panels pertaining to the Zoo which opened in 1917 and closed in 1959. Henry Ben Jahn left a bequest of about \$20,000 for the purpose of establishing a zoo (for full story look in *Wellingtonia*, Autumn edition 2017).

The excellently produced panels will be on display elsewhere in Ballarat in the near future. They include one which sets out the amazingly large number of individual species of animals seen in the Zoo over the years. Worth a look if you haven't yet seen them.

Curator's report

Over 80 people attended the *Broadsheet*, Ballarat Regional Tourism lunch held in the conservatory on Sunday May 28. Guests enjoyed lunch which was prepared by **Café Meigas** (located in Armstrong Street North, Ballarat).

The event coincided with Ballarat's **Heritage Weekend** and Botanic Gardens Australia and New Zealand (BGANZ) second annual open day.

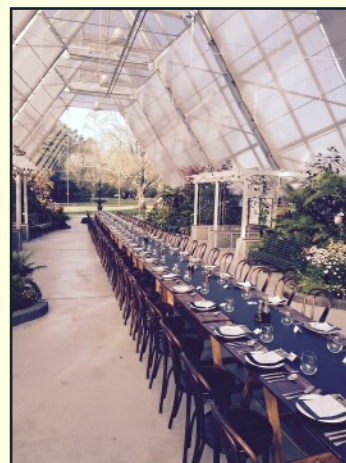


On Monday, June 5, the Honourable Tony Abbott MP, and former Prime Minister, visited the gardens to unveil the newest addition to the Prime Minister's Avenue.

The bust has been sculpted by Sydney-based sculptor Linda Klarfeld.

Mr Abbott's bust is the 28th to be added to Ballarat's famous avenue.

The Avenue was officially opened by the Governor of Victoria, Sir Winston Dugan on March 2, 1940, who unveiled the busts of the first six Prime Ministers of Australia. Some of these first six were of men who had already passed away so were not sculpted from live sittings like in recent times. Linda commented that she had spent one and a half hours with Mr Abbott as his sitting.



The first twelve busts in the Prime Ministers Avenue were a gift to the people of Ballarat from prominent local benefactor and Member of Parliament, Richard Armstrong Crouch. He left a further bequest to ensure the continuation of the Avenue after his death. Ballarat City Council now takes responsibility for these commissions.

During the week commencing June 29 garden staff installed the Conservatory winter display which features Kale, Cineraria and Cyclamen (see example right). The Ballarat Craft Council will hold their annual exhibition in the Conservatory from June 10 through to June 18.

Peter Marquand, Curator



*Above: A curator's work is never done!
Peter applying a few last minute touches
to an impressive Conservatory display.*



"Evergreens go a funny shade of brown in the winter." Anon.

BALLARAT
Gardens
in Spring

Ballarat Gardens in Spring 2017:
Speakers Luncheon - November 10
Open Gardens - November 11 & 12
Details to come ...
[www:ballaratopengardens.com.au](http://www.ballaratopengardens.com.au)

Ambassadors 

*Would you like to take on a new
role for the Friends?*

Contact the Friends Office **5342 9354**

DO 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**. A good method is to use your surname and initial/s as your ID.

Also, it makes it easier for our Treasurer if you **state what the payment is for**, e.g. membership renewal, bus trip, etc.

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

BALLARAT DISCOUNTS FOR MEMBERS

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

You will need to show your FBBG membership card

How Gardening Improves Your Health by Stimulating Your Brain

No matter your age, you can benefit from gardening because of the health benefits it delivers. While you may think that the health benefits of gardening are limited to those you reap by eating fresh, homegrown produce, think again. Gardening gets people moving and provides physical activity that works nearly all muscle groups. It also reduces stress and improves people's mood, thereby improving their overall mental health. And, gardening has long-lasting benefits for people because it stimulates the brain. We explore exactly how gardening stimulates the brain and improves overall health below.

Gardening Leads to Learning: Many people who garden begin with some knowledge of growing plants but then expand their know-how by reading, talking with fellow gardeners, experimenting with various pH balances, fertilizers, and soils, and so on.

Many colleges and universities, garden centres, and community centres offer classes and [educational opportunities](#) for adults who want to learn how to garden. Some teach about soil science to improve the performance of plants, some feature the importance of planting bee-friendly plants to help the environment and make your garden healthier, and some instruct people about the best plants to include in the garden for their area. Regardless of the content matter of the class, online video, or article, when you pursue learning about gardening, you stimulate your brain and improve your overall mental health by expanding your knowledge about growing plants.

Some people further their learning about gardening by sharing what they know with others. One of the best ways to learn is through teaching, and that's what people who participate in [community gardens](#) do. People who take part in community gardens determine what to grow and how to grow it, and they work together to make the garden flourish. They rely on one another's knowledge and experience to make their garden successful. Finally, community gardeners welcome children and neighbours to learn from their garden.

If you don't live in an area where community gardening has been established, you can grow a garden and teach others about what you are doing. Your [neighbours](#) will be enticed to learn more about gardening if you grow an edible garden and share the fruits of your labour with them. And, the more you teach others about your garden, the more you will learn yourself.

Gardening Stimulates the Brain and Improves Cognitive Function: [Research](#) suggests gardening is one of the best ways to stimulate the brain and improve brain health. Gardening is also

shown to stimulate the mind and ease suffering for Alzheimer's and other dementia patients. Tending to plants awakens natural instincts to nurture plants and enjoy time outdoors, even in people who may not remember how to do daily tasks. In fact, some dementia patients who enjoyed gardening before their cognitive function became impaired can recall plant names and recognize plants; for this reason, gardens are safe spaces that make them happy and give them peace. While gardening positively impacts the mental and physical health of dementia patients, learning about gardening and applying your knowledge benefits the cognitive function of all people.

Researchers are also learning that certain microbes in soil may be why gardening is so good for our brains. *Mycobacterium vaccae* is a bacterium that lives in soil that improves [cognitive function and mood](#).



Dr. Charles Raison, associate professor of psychiatry at the University of Arizona College of Medicine and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at the University explains: "What's remarkable is that this micro-organism seems to know how exactly to signal the brain areas we believe are most important for reducing depressive symptoms. It's like it immediately goes on a mainline right up to this one particular area of the brain."

The research suggests gardening is a tool for combating depression and similar mood disorders.

Regardless of your age and mental state, gardening can stimulate your brain while you learn and teach others about your plants, improve your cognitive function, and positively impact your mood and mental health.

Image via [Pixabay](#) by Unsplash. Contributed by Maria Cannon, maria@hobbyjr.org

People who take part in community gardens determine what to grow and how to grow it, and they work together to make the garden flourish.

Did Doug dig Dick's garden or did Dick dig Doug's garden?

GUIDING GROUP NOTES: Not surprisingly things quieten down a lot for the Guides during the Winter 'off-season'. Sunday tours finished at the end of May and start again in Spring.

Guides Bill and Trudie recently provided two interesting talks to the Guides monthly meeting. Bill covered the resurgence of the Sensory Garden which has grown out of the 1987 'Rock Garden Project'. New labelling, including Braille signs, plus wheelchair access has resulted in a quiet, reflective space. Annuals are to be planted into four of the garden's segments.

Trudie's talk covered the roses in the Botanical Gardens. She emphasised roses in the (Sister) Betty Johnson Garden, the CWA Anniversary Rose Garden and the Western Bed plantings.



Resplendent in Red: Guides Michael, Sandie and Jane patiently await another group booking

Not Just an Autumn Bus Trip to Camperdown – A Grand Tour!

Members braved very cold and windy weather to visit three very different Camperdown properties, two rarely open to the public. Our tour began with Elizabeth Gilfillan re-organising our morning tea to a superb undercover venue.

A member of the *Camperdown Botanic Gardens and Arboretum Trust Inc.* offered her lovely 19th century home, giving us a warm and tasty welcome before we



Entry to the Camperdown Botanic Gardens

pushed on to the Botanic Gardens. They were reserved in 1869 and planned by William Guilfoyle, and have spectacular views over Lakes Bullen Merri and Gnotuk and the Western District. Unfortunately only 1.2 hectares are accessible to the public.

Since 2013 volunteers have planted and maintained thousands of, often donated, plants and lobbied for conservation and improvement of the site, which includes 12 *Significant Trees*. A Council *Conservation Management Plan* is being currently developed.

William Guilfoyle also designed *Dalvui* (1898), which has been carefully maintained and developed. It features sweeping lawns, shrubberies, rockeries and lakes, with many mature specimen trees. Owner Pamela Habersberger led a tour, prior to hosting lunch in the dining room of the magnificent 1907 house. After warming ourselves by the open fire, members explored the garden during a timely break in the weather.



(Above and below: Dalvui)



Above: Gnotuk

Gnotuk is sited on the bank of the lake, with views across to the Arboretum. The original garden was laid out by Daniel Bunce (Director of *Geelong Botanic Gardens*) and includes several *Significant Trees*. Owners Fiona and Alun Morris have restored the 19th century Federation house and continued to develop the garden, which includes many rare plants. Sections of differing plantings and design styles are spread over five acres, constantly surprising and delighting members. Happily there was shelter enough from a passing hail storm and members agreed it was a trip full of surprises and delights. "A Grand tour indeed!"



Susan Pilbeam

"There are no gardening mistakes, only experiments". Janet Kilburn Phillips

SPECIAL OFFER FOR FRIENDS:



Botanical Treasures is a small hobby nursery. Tabatha, the owner, originally set up her fledgling business in North Ballarat. She has since relocated to Trentham.

For the month of JULY, FBBG members can get 20% off the purchase price of her plants.

Have a look at her website (<https://www.botanicaltreasures.com.au>). When you order enter the special Friends' code: FBBG20. This will get you a generous discount of 20%. (Postage isn't discounted.)

Botanical Treasures specialises in cottage garden perennials and shrubs.

AND TONY MAKES 28!



The latest addition to Ballarat's historic and distinguished Prime Ministers Avenue was unveiled in the presence of former Liberal PM Tony Abbott on Monday morning June 5. Cold but fine weather graced the event with a crowd of about 350 people attending. It is the 28th bust to be unveiled at the Ballarat Botanical Gardens.

Mr Abbott's bust was presented to the community at a ceremony that marked the first time one of the artworks has been sculpted by a woman. Sydney based artist Linda Klarfeld is already believed to be working on the 29th bust, that of Malcolm Turnbull.

Clockwise From Top Left: The official party arrive; Mayor Samantha McIntosh welcomes guests; Linda Klarfeld, sculptor; Mr Abbott addresses the crowd; the unveiling; a rear view; the 28th PM's bust.



Autumn General Meeting:

In 1982 Steve Anderson bought five acres of flood prone land in Lara. Today it is *Yarrabee Native Garden*.

As Guest Speakers at our Autumn Meeting, Steve and wife Judy gave an entertaining and lavishly illustrated presentation of the garden's development.



Above: Friends Vice President John King congratulates Steve and Judy

Steve began by building dams and ponds and then raising the level of the entire block. He used a wide range of recycled materials, timber grown on the property and mountains of mulch. Using "the wisdom of the ancients", i.e. hard labour, a

lever and rolling logs, he moved huge rocks to create a water-fall, ponds, terraces, seats, etc.

Steve shared his trial and error approach; unafraid to pull out/cut down whole areas and replant, constantly improving drainage systems and using builders plastic to contain beds.

Marrying another keen gardener also lead to changes in plant choice and placement; including the development of an orchard, raised bed vegetable garden and the inclusion of sculpture and other features.

Tours, fruit, vegetable and plant sales assist in the ongoing development of this beautiful garden. Steve and Judy's energy and passion for plants was inspirational and they were delighted to be asked to speak and visit our nursery.

Susan Pilbeam



New Friends Morning Tea:

Pictured at the Special New Friends Morning Tea recently:

Left: Valerie Williams (Botanical Art Convenor), Connie Bemm, Lyn Broadstock, Kim Nolan and President Raoul Dixon.

Right: Sandi de Groot and Liz Rush



Development of the FBBG Nursery:

The Nursery was one of the first initiatives of the newly incorporated (1993) *Friends of the Ballarat Botanical Gardens*. It had several aims, primarily to raise money for the gardens but also to bring together members and enable them to utilize and learn gardening skills.

Judith Bailey (the first convenor) and a group of enthusiastic new members began work at a bench in the Council shed at the Gardens. They were also allocated a hothouse bench for young plants and began with quarterly sales.



An opportunity for expansion came through the *Ballarat Orchid Society* and a redundant greenhouse which was re-erected to grow tender plants, primarily Begonias. It formed the basis of the

nursery, on the Gillies Street-side of the works area behind the *Robert Clarke Horticultural Centre* (1995).

Gradually the area expanded, two watering systems were installed and work tables, built by the *Ballarat East Men's Shed*, lifted the plants off the ground. There are now 46 tables, as well as work areas and sheds.



Plant trolleys have been built over the years, and located outside the Conservatory, so visitors could purchase plants. The plant trolley now contributes up to \$1000 per month.

In 2008 the *George Longley Building* was erected and the FBBG area defined.

Some important early figures include Jane Barret, Bruce Holland, Lorraine Powell, Caroline Pinkowski and the current convenor Yvonne Curbach (2011).

Tube-stock is sourced from various suppliers. These are potted up and nurtured for sale. Occasionally the *Botanical Gardens* or *Friends* members donate plants for sale, but there are bio-hazard and other regulations, so not all donations can be accepted.



The Nursery sells mainly perennials, shrubs, small trees, natives, succulents and, of course, bulbs. A member's discount means most plants are only \$5. Nursery sales generate over \$20,000 annually.

The nursery nemesis are the (protected) possums. They delight in feasting on tender young plants and digging up plants and bulbs. Many and various solutions have been tried, including chili spray and protective mesh, but the possums persist and some plants are no longer persevered with.

The *Growing Friends* are now at capacity with over a dozen very active members who enjoy their work and shared afternoon tea on Tuesday afternoons.

Each summer, extra volunteers are needed for watering and the *Begonia Festival Springfest* is another period of extra activity. You can also help by donating your 5, 6 and 7 inch / 13, 15 and 18cm pots.

Recycling: If you bring your own cloth bag or box you can also help make the nursery even more sustainable in its practice.

Nursery Open: (cash/credit/eftpos)

1 - 4pm Tuesdays and 1 - 4pm second Sunday of the month also the fourth Sunday in Summer.



ANZAC DAY: A very special Anzac Day event occurred this year. The Guiding Friends invited Lorraine Powell (History Group Convenor) to organise and conduct a tour of significant parts of the Gardens which have a link to the First and Second World Wars.

This included commemorative trees (e.g. the US Marines) and garden staff who served in the armed services (e.g. Charles Coulter). Of course the Tilly Thompson link to the famous Ballarat Arch was strongly featured.

About 50 people attended and feedback has been very positive.



Gardens Collections:

Ambassador program - It's been great to meet and talk with, the enthusiastic Gardens Ambassadors group, and pleased to hear the enjoyment such an important role brings. Beth and team keep up the great work!

Visit by international Begonia authority - In late March we welcomed a visit from Dr. Peng, from Taiwan. We received very favourable feedback about our registered Non-tuberous Begonia collection.

Staff Library Database - Thank you to Lorraine Powell and everyone else who have diligently entered the Library books into the 'Friends' database over the years. We have been able to use this data and create a parallel computerised library database for the gardens staff- thank you to all involved - it's an invaluable resource for all of us.

BGCI article - An article about our Botanical Gardens work experience program was recently published in the BGCI (Botanic Gardens Conservation International) Education

Magazine, promoting our gardens and education program to over 500 Botanic Gardens globally!

The Chrysanthemum Collection - was huge this year - literally! Following a trial of new fertiliser by the nursery team, we saw extraordinary vigour with some plants reaching well over six feet tall (that's nearly two metres)- we believe them to be our tallest ever.

The new veggie boxes at the 'Inclusive play space' in Victoria Park - have been a wonderful success in community engagement. Coordinated by the gardens, and built by Ballarat Regional Industries, the veggies in the boxes have been planted by McCallum Disability Services. McCallum's trainees provide ongoing maintenance of the space as well. Visiting children can water the gardens with watering cans provided.

Donna Thomas, Plant Collections Officer, BBG

Psst: Don't forget: Spring Meeting: 10 am Thursday August 17

Guest Speaker: Sheila Kentish, Ballarat Community Garden:

(Cnr. of Queen St/Dyde Pde.) Established in 2004, the garden now has 75 beds, an orchard, herb garden, several small sheds, a greenhouse, composting area, native garden, two pizza ovens and chooks. COME ALONG!



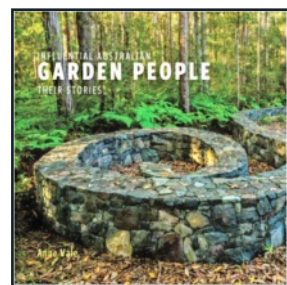
'Garden Cuttings' by Green-Thumb

Treasurer Bruce is a keen gardener and a member of the **Growing Friends** sub-group. They are always on the lookout for pots suitable for their propagating work. He was really surprised recently to find two wool bales (and you know how big they are) full of plastic pots! I say *surprised* rather than 'excited' because he only got about a dozen suitable for use for the Growers; the others were too big and went to recycle bins! All at great inconvenience to Bruce. **Pots suitable for the Growers are 5, 6 and 7 inch (approx. 13 to 18cm) - no larger.** (I think pot sizes has been mentioned in every edition of the Wellingtonia that GT has ever read!)

The **Tony Abbott** unveiling revealed an impressive bust! Green Thumb was pleasantly surprised.

A suggestion from a **Friend**: "the Gardens should always have a concrete base ready for the next P.M.bust and encourage children (and others) to pose on it for family photos . Perhaps a frame through which you can put your head like at a theme park?

Carole Haines writes..."I have had an email from **Anne Vale** advising us her new book is now out in the shops. She has .. asked us to ... advise of its availability with price etc. " Anne has been a well-received Friends' Guest Speaker twice in recent years. (See picture of cover at right; \$49.99 + \$13.00 post & packing).



With all the recent sunny days the **solar panels** which were installed a few months back on the roof of the Robert Clark Horticultural Centre will be really 'chugging away'. Much to the delight of the rate payers?

The last few copies of the '**Eden of Loveliness**',,,,,, the pictorial history of the Gardens, are selling out at \$25 each. GT believes there are copies at the **Craft Cottage** in the Gardens as well as from **George Longley**.

The **Fernery Redevelopment** is at a standstill? Also, GT believes the City Council may have given approval for the moving of the **Gatekeepers Cottage** back into the Gardens, but it has not approved plans for any renovations! Who knows how much of a delay this will add? Work has begun to dismantle the cottage. Stay tuned!

The **floral clock** is to be re-instated! A new mechanism is being acquired and it will be unveiled later this year. The clock was moved from Sturt Street in 1977, but has not functioned for a few years now. GT is happy not having to rely on a wristwatch any more! Yeah!

Green Thumb

Friends of Ballarat Botanical Gardens Information 2017

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2017 FBBG Committee and Areas of Responsibility

POSITION	NAME
President & Membership	Raoul Dixon
Vice President	John King
Secretary	Susan Rattray
Treasurer	Bruce Holland
Development Convenor	Elizabeth Gilfillan
Education Convener	Julie Bradby
General member	Carole Haines
General member	Stephanie de Boer
General member	Helen Vincent
General member	Kathleen Hobson
Growers Convenor	Yvonne Curbach
Guides Convenor	Terry O'Brien
History Convenor	Lorraine Powell
Hospitality	Doff Kemp
Western Bed Convenor	Bill O'Driscoll
Newsletter Editor	Michael Bird
Ambassadors Convenor	Beth Dixon (non-Committee)
Botanical Art Convenor	Valerie Richards (non-Committee)
Engraving Convenor	Joy O'Brien (non-Committee)

This newsletter is produced and distributed with the generous financial assistance of the City of Ballarat.



MEETING TIMES 2017

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

Growing Friends - Tuesday each week 1 pm-4 pm, and the 2nd Sunday every month, 1 pm-4 pm.
(During summer also open on 4th Sunday as well.)

Plant Sales at the above times.

Guiding Friends - 4th Tuesday each month 10 am.

History Group - 1st Tuesday each month 4 pm.

Educating Friends - 2nd Tuesday each month 10am

Plant Labelling - as required.

Coming up:

Thursday 17 August GENERAL MEETING - Guest speaker Sheilagh Kentish "*BALLARAT COMMUNITY GARDEN*".

Wednesday, OCTOBER 18. DANDENONGS SPRING EXCURSION to CLOUDEHILL GARDEN and SEASONS RESTAURANT. Following lunch we will go to GENTIANA NURSERY. Cost \$50. Bookings on-line at TryBooking.com OR you can purchase by eftpos at the George Longley on Tuesday afternoons between 1-4pm OR send a cheque along with your details to **P.O. Box 33W, Ballarat West 3350.**

IMPORTANT COMING EVENT:

At our **next General Meeting** (August 17) our Guest Speaker will be Sheilagh Kentish. Sheilagh is a member of the **Ballarat Community Garden**. You may have seen reference to her and the garden in recent editions of the *Ballarat Courier*. The stories covered two recent break-ins costing the group thousands of dollars plus much inconvenience.

Her topic for the talk is '*The Ballarat Community Garden - A Growing Place*'. **Carole Haines, Events Convenor**

Membership Report: We are pleased to welcome the following new members who have joined since the last issue of *Wellingtonia*:

Janine Balharrie, Gina Brochie, Leonie Crosbie, Mary Duffy, Anne Fraser, Russel & Tanya Macauley, and Alison Smith.

Hoy!

Total membership is currently 334 plus five corporate members.



We still have a few members who have yet to pay, some of whom have promised. I would greatly appreciate it if you would **please attend to this as soon as possible.**

Raoul Dixon, Membership Officer.



Photo credits: Thanks to Raoul and Beth Dixon, Elizabeth Gilfillan, Susan Patterson, Val Williams, Helen Vincent, Peter Marquand, Tim Entwisle, Donna Thomas,

Disclaimer: The views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the Friends of the Ballarat Botanical Gardens or those of the Ballarat Botanical Gardens. Neither the Friends nor the Ballarat Botanical Gardens accepts responsibility for statements made or opinions expressed, although every effort will be made to publish reliable and accurate information. **Contributions for Spring Wellingtonia 2017 are due by early September please.** Michael Bird, Editor.

Editorial Committee: Raoul Dixon, Elizabeth Gilfillan, Helen Vincent and Michael Bird.