

Wellingtonia



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PP Number 100020008

NEWSLETTER – Summer 2015-16

From the President's Desk...



FRIENDS OF BALLARAT BOTANICAL GARDENS PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Well what extraordinary weather we are experiencing this year and particularly in the last couple of months – no rain to speak of; hot one day, heaters on the next. It's a wonder that our plants survive!

Despite this however, our Botanical Gardens are still magnificent and a tribute to the efforts by their dedicated staff. The **Conservatory displays** have been notable as well. The *Schizanthus* display looked magnificent, augmented as they were by judiciously located orchids and other flowers, whilst the current display is very imaginative with the location of winding paths located so as to break up the various beds and add variety. We have had many tributes paid by visitors and have passed on our congratulations to the Gardens staff.

It has been a busy and exciting time for the Friends recently as well.

First off we had the **bus trip to Mawallok and Eurambeen**. Reported on elsewhere in this issue, this was a very enjoyable and informative outing.

The **Botanical Art group** held their first ever Exhibition of their art in the Conservatory, opened by Cr Glen Crompton. The artistic skills of these members is quite amazing and inspired praise and admiration from those viewing the paintings.

The annual **Gardens in Spring** event was a great success. Superbly organised by Helen Todd, Elizabeth Gilfillan and Wendy Taylor, it started with the Spring Luncheon with fascinating talks by Carolyn Blackman, Robert Boyle and Criss Canning. The lunch itself was served in the Conservatory where the *Schizanthus* display provided a perfect setting and the Botanical Art display added to the interest of delegates. Then in the weekend there were

five local gardens opened to the public. These were well chosen so that each was of a totally different theme to the others, and all were fascinating in their own way.

Our **Growing Friends** organised sales of plants at the annual *Springfest*, achieving record sales of \$1815 for the day. We were delighted with the help provided by members who responded to an email plea for assistance, particularly with several "new faces". This eased the workload on the regular Growing Friends and made for an enjoyable time for all concerned.

Your Committee organised a **"Breakfast with Councillors"** in late November. This was an opportunity for Ballarat Councillors to meet our Convenors and hear about our various activities and plans for the Gardens.

Finally there has been another change in administration. Chloe Hewitt found it necessary to resign from the position of Administration Assistant. We have however been fortunate to secure the services of Susan Pilbeam, one of our members and an active member of the Botanical Art Group.

Our **Annual General Meeting** will be held on Thursday 25th February and we have organised for an excellent guest speaker on that day, **Dr Greg Moore**, speaking on the importance of trees in the urban environment. I would encourage all members to come along.

Finally, included with this *Wellingtonia*, is the **annual nomination form** for Committee Members.

Whilst our Convenors are *ex-officio* members of the Committee and do not need to be nominated, we will have some vacancies for general committee members.

I would encourage nominations for Committee as we need to have some new faces around the table. This is your chance to have some involvement in the administration of the Friends and I earnestly encourage you to give this some serious thought.

I trust that you all enjoyed a very Merry Christmas and are looking forward to a bright and prosperous New Year.

Raoul Dixon
President.



FBBG Patron:

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

See page 3 for Tim's Blog ...

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Guiding Friends Report:

Spring is for many the season to focus on gardens and so the guides were busy with different tour groups – senior travel groups, garden clubs, Conference groups, care groups – as well as the regular public tours we run in Spring. We have also guided two documentary film groups requiring information and insights into the gardens.

There is a willing spirit that pervades the guiding group that makes this all work smoothly. Guides are often called upon at short notice and cope with last minute changes in tour arrangements. Guides are also flexible and adaptable. Today it may be a small group to guide wanting a special focus; tomorrow a large group for a more general tour; next week a group of school children; the week after a group that is not very mobile and the week after a group of very active and engaged keen gardeners with lots of questions.

Guides have to craft their delivery to suit the audience. A recent group wanted their tour to be a bit quirky and so John Garner developed a quiz of intriguing and stimulating questions to get this group into the desired relaxed tone for their garden stroll.

From the U3A/FBBG class held in 2015 we have recruited new guides. This is very welcome as we need larger number of guides at our peak times in November and March. The U3A/FBBG class will run again in 2016 (see ad page 4). We already have a large numbers of early enrolments so if you are interested enrol soon.

Celebrating Solander:

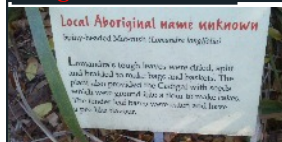
This garden celebrates Daniel Solander's contribution to Australian botany. There are native plants representing the species collected in eastern Australia in 1770, as well as other species named after Daniel Solander. Daniel Solander (1733-1802), an outstanding student of the famous naturalist, Lord Linnaeus, joined Captain James Cook's voyage to the Pacific on the HMS Endeavour in the year 1770.

On this voyage some 12,000 plant specimens were collected, with 970 species of plants being found in Australia. Most were named after the people of Melbournia here.

Two guides, Jane Munro and Terry O'Brien, represented Ballarat at the Volunteers Guides Conference in Sydney in September. It is a stimulating opportunity as like-minded people come together to share and learn, and to examine possible new directions. There was much to discover in the Sydney gardens which display a strong educational emphasis supported by signage in some of their special gardens – Solander, First Fleet, Indigenous, Kids Kitchen and Plant Explorers. Botanic gardens are pleasurable places but they also have a role to educate as well.

The Wollemi Pine was an interesting feature at one session in Sydney. It is a tree that has been well researched

Indigenous Garden



Children's Garden



but understanding the right conditions for germination and healthy growth have been difficult.

Beth Dixon reported in the last Wellingtonia how over 800 Wollemi pines were planted at the Canberra Arboretum and only just over 80 survived. Research continues on to understand this tree more to safeguard its survival.

As guides we like to tell a good story about trees and this iconic tree is one that fits the bill. Many are unaware of the location of this significant tree in our Ballarat gardens but when pointed out to visitors they have a ready connection to it as they have heard about it and know something of its significance. At our October meeting we spent some time reacquainting ourselves with this iconic tree. (Terry has provided a list of everything you would ever need to know about the Wollemi Pine – see page 7.)

Recently a group of Ballarat's Guides visited both the Royal Botanical Gardens of Victoria and the Systems Garden at Melbourne University. When we visited RBGV the new green tips of new foliage on the Wollemi Pine contrasting against the older dark green foliage was very evident. (See right)

We later saw another Wollemi at the Systems garden. It shared a north-facing lawn along with three espaliered Ginkgo trees (see below)



I saw a Wollemi in a pot plant recently that was at least four metres high. The owner said it was always well-watered and in a sheltered spot.

Making contact with other Botanic Gardens and their

guides is a beneficial consequence of attendance at Guides conferences. We share the same goals and work in similar directions and enrichment can occur when we work and share together. Liaison between the guides at BBG and Melbourne RBGV is now occurring.

For our November Guides meeting we had a most enjoyable and informative tour of **Melbourne RBGV** with guides, Rosemary Cotter and Virginia Haywood. Excellent day. They have also offered us access to their library to review and draw upon their many themed walks.

I am hopeful that **Hamilton Botanic Gardens** can also be part of this. Metropolitan Botanic gardens have a richer resource pool to draw upon and smaller and regional Botanic gardens do appreciate the assistance that can be given. Ballarat Guides in 2016 have also been given access to the training program that will commence in the New Year intake for Melbourne RBGV Guides and Ambassadors and we are excited by this opportunity and also very aware of the generosity by RBGV in facilitating these initiatives.

In the afternoon of our Melbourne visit by Guides we toured the Systems Garden, Melbourne University. When this garden was set up in 1856 plants were selected and planted according to an evolutionary system of classification – hence its name 'System' garden. Some of the original plantings are still flourishing but its original design of concentric garden beds is not so evident. Its appeal now for many is just a beautiful hidden space with some interesting diverse plants. This is a garden worth a visit if ever in the vicinity of Melbourne University.



Intriguing flower (like a clawed monkey's hand) on the Chiranthodendron tree in the System garden.

As we move out of one year into another it is an opportune time to acknowledge the work of all the guides. The Guiding Friends are a committed group, considerate and helpful to each other and work to enrich the experience of a visit to the gardens. Whilst guiding is part of the work they also contributing to catering when required for tour groups, preparing material for meetings and giving presentations to classes etc. Guides also volunteer to help other Friends groups as well and involved with Botanikids, Growers, and Education Groups. We are very fortunate to have these willing and resourceful people who add value to the visits by tourists and locals.

Terry O'Brien, Convenor

"We never know the worth of water 'til the well is dry." – Thomas Fuller – esp. this summer! Ed.



"Coconut Palm, just like a woman" (an edited version)

".....(T)oday I want you to focus on the palm tree as I make the case for a Coconut Palm being like a woman.



**Cocos_nucifera - Köhler-
s_Medizinal-Pflanzen**



**Coconut germinating
on Black sand Beach,
Island of Hawaii.**

Rest assured this isn't some Carry on up the Coconut routine, where I compare naughty bits of a plant with naughty bits of a human - that's better done with the Coco de Mer anyway. No, I just want to explore a comment made by friend of a friend about the similarity in what we might call their fertility cycles. Not monthly cycles but over the life of the palm and the woman.

Palms can live for a few decades, or up to 150 years or more, depending on the species. They tend to not live as long as 'true trees' which, as I have argued, can be theoretically immortal. A palm is a grass- or lily-like organism that has developed a rather sturdy stalk, perhaps better termed a stem than a trunk. There is usually a single growing point at the top and a palm can't repair or send out laterals anywhere else. So if you damage the stem of a palm it stays damaged. If you kill or remove the growing point at the top of the stem (where the fronds emerge) you kill either the whole plant or if a clumping form, that particular stem.

So far nothing manly or womanly about all this. But when you consider the fertility and longevity of one of the best known palms, the Coconut Palm (*Cocos nucifera*), that's when things start to get spooky. The received wisdom is that the Coconut Palm can live to about 100 years. Fruit production (fertility) peaks around 20-40 years, tapering off from then on until it become infertile entirely about about age 70 years.

I appreciate it's a gratuitous and rather meaningless comparison but this cycle, you'll notice, is not unlike that of a female human. You could even say, as Bob Dylan might have put it, a Coconut Palm makes love just like a woman. Perhaps.

Coconut palms start life as a cluster of leaves. After about five years, the trunk forms, and the first flowers and coconuts are produced. Fruit production increases as the tree matures, peaking at between 20-40 years of age, at which point a healthy tree will produce 50 to 200 coconuts per year, depending on the cultivar. After that, the amount of coconuts produced by a single palm tree gradually diminishes, dropping off entirely around age 70. Barring diseases or other health concerns, the tree may live to see 100 years or more.

Read more : http://www.ehow.com/info_10020031_life-span-coconut-tree.html

Let me end briefly with the fruit of the palm's labour, coconuts. The coconut we consume is a large seed extracted from a fibrous case. When intact, the fruit of the Coconut Palm travels around the world on the surface of the ocean and in boats, starting somewhere in East Asia and ending up in 89 countries throughout the tropics.

It has been shown that wind and water can push the fruit along at around 40 kilometres a day, meaning it would take seven months (about 210 days) to travel from one side of the Pacific to the other. Not too far shy of the 9-month human pregnancy. Sadly for the windy-floaty hypothesis, coconuts not only can't stay buoyant for this long but the seawater they take in kills the seed within the first 110 days.

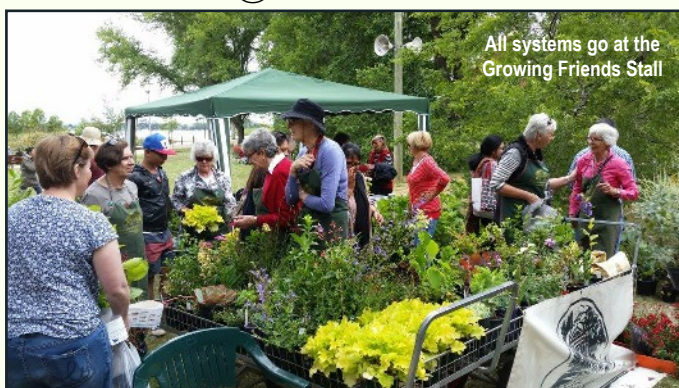
With more more than 12 million hectares of Coconut Palms grown today, there is one hectare for every woman in Australia. Now that's a frivolous fact.

(more from Tim at: <http://talkingplants.blogspot.com.au/>)



**Committee Treasurer
Bruce Holland takes a
break**

SNAPPED @ SPRINGFEST 2015



**All systems go at the
Growing Friends Stall**



**Yvonne loves potatoes while
Joan looks on in awe!**

VERY IMPORTANT STUFF....



MEMBERSHIP MATTERS!

We welcome the following new members who have joined since the last edition of Wellingtonia: Pamela Thompson, Chloe Hewitt, Jeanette Troup, Pamela Underwood, Margaret Blizzard, Christine Liston, Christa Boyer, Graham Gilbert, Elizabeth Thurgood, and Chris & Glenda Phillips.

We are also very pleased to welcome the following Corporate Members and thank them for their patronage:

Haymes Paints, Heinz & Partners and Gull & Company.

Our current membership stands at 335 plus the three Corporate Members.

We always welcome new members and encourage our members to nominate their friends to come along to our general meetings and to consider joining as well.

Raoul Dixon, Membership Secretary

HELP WANTED # 1



Do you have any skills in **serving cups of tea** or **washing dishes**?

If so, we have an opportunity for you to use these skills to help us in our occasional catering events.

Our Catering Convenor, Carole Haines, would love to hear from any member willing to be included in a list of members who could be called on from time to time to help her.

Please call Carole direct by phone 5338 8175 or by email at: cr_haines@bigpond.com

Thank you. Raoul Dixon, President.



HELP WANTED # 2

The convenor of the Growing Friends, Yvonne Curbach, is looking for POTS! Do you have any clean plastic pots, 4 to 7 inch (*that's 10cm to 14.5cm approx. to us young Friends, Ed.*) Larger pots are not needed and would just be recycled.

HELP WANTED # 3

We still need some people to check on the watering situation; it is a lot better now compared to last year, but when it is windy pots dry out much more quickly. Hopefully the people who are volunteers at the moment will be happy to continue over the next few months, they are doing a great job. **Yvonne Curbach, Growing Friends Convenor**



BALLARAT U3A MEMBERS AND FBBG MEMBERS – a course to get to know more about Ballarat Botanical gardens!

There are different topics and different presenters in each session. In 2016 all sessions will be in the Robert Clarke Horticultural Centre and this will make catering and presentations a lot easier to manage.

The 12 sessions will be on the **first, third and fifth Thursday mornings** between 10am and 12 noon. The dates are: Feb 4, 18; March 3, 17, 31; April 7, 21; May 5, 19; June 2, 16 and 30.

Participants in the course will be exploring the history and development of the Botanic gardens. We will look at the changing role of the Botanic Gardens today – experiences, challenges and directions. It is an ideal opportunity to get to know more about our heritage listed botanic gardens.

Contact Terry O'Brien (0438 459504) or email tobrien1@tpg.com.au if you would like to join this program in 2016.



GROWING FRIENDS: We had a great day at the Springfest on Sunday, 29 November. The weather was beautiful and we had lots of sales due to the hard work of my fellow potters. Thanks to all the people who helped to make this day a success.
Yvonne Curbach, Convenor

Launch of BBG Fernery Re-development Program:

Special Event: Dr Toby Musgrave

Dr Toby Musgrave is one of the UK's leading authorities in garden history and design. With a degree in horticulture and a Ph.D. in garden history, he has, since 1994 been an independent scholar, author, lecturer, television and radio presenter and consultant, photographer and garden designer.

Through his writings - in books, magazines and newspapers Toby spreads his enthusiasm for plants and garden history to a wide audience.

A Lecturer at Danish Institute for Study Abroad in Copenhagen Toby teaches three semester courses: *Garden Art in European Culture*, *The Impact of Plants on World History* and *Danish Greenspace*. He is also an invited lecturer to a wide range of audience including the Royal Horticultural Society and Universities of Oxford, Bristol and Copenhagen.

On screen Toby presented the 8-part series *The Great Garden Guide*, previous to which he co-hosted two series of *Lost Gardens* for Channel Four and joined the design team on ITV's *Better Gardens*. On Radio 4, Toby was conceiver of, and major contributor to the 6-part landmark series, *The British Garden*.

On the other side of the camera he also acted as Consultant Garden Historian to the award-winning television series *Royal Gardens* (BBC) and *The 20th Century Garden*.

For the BBC he was Horticultural Consultant for the award-winning BBC landmark series, *How to be a Gardener*, for which he also wrote the horticultural content for the Educational Television Award-winning and BAFTA-nominated website.

Toby also designs gardens across the world. Recent assignments include gardens for a spiritual retreat in upstate New York, a pioneering town garden in London, a vineyard garden in Denmark, a 2 ha. woodland garden in Long Island and a roof garden in Bombay.



Villa Ruolo, Amalfi Coast, Italy



**Dr Toby Musgrave will be guest speaker
at the official launch of the**

**Ballarat Botanical Gardens Fernery
Re-development Program**

**4 March 2016 at 10.30 am.
Robert Clark Horticultural Centre**

Booking details will be published soon.

Proudly sponsored by 'Botanica Tours' and Magazine. Photos above provided by 'Botanica Tours' and Magazine.

LATEST
NEWS

BALLARAT BOTANICAL GARDENS Fernery Redevelopment Project:

The Group has been working very hard with COB to keep things moving. The first Tender process finalised and the successful Tenderer is Laidlaw and Laidlaw, Landscape Designer together with Bower Architecture, award winning architects from Prahran.

The proposed building design should be developed by end of March 2016. The Group is currently working on Finance submissions and making appointments for linkages with key Ballarat partners.

Elizabeth Gilfillan Convenor

History Report: Season's greetings to all our readers!

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

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

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

We were also thrilled to have as our guest the great-granddaughter of 'Our George' who made a most generous donation.

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

Lorraine Powell - Convenor



Ballarat Gardens in Spring:

Thank you to all who supported the eighth annual Ballarat Gardens in Spring. The weather was very kind which in turn provided the ideal conditions for perusing gardens and celebrating all that Ballarat has to offer during our glorious Spring.



This year's **Speakers Luncheon** was again inspiring, educational and fun with our three speakers providing a personal journey of experiences and insights into all things gardening, floral and design. It was a delight to host Carolyn Blackman, Robert Boyle and Criss Canning on the Friday and hope many of you were able to meet up

with them during lunch. A delicious lunch was enjoyed by all in the colourful Conservatory with the spectacular Schizanthus display being the perfect backdrop

The open gardens on the Saturday and Sunday proved to be very popular, with visitor numbers exceeding our expectations yet again. Visitors from outside of Ballarat recorded much higher numbers than in previous years. All gardens received between 1900 and 2700 visitors over the weekend – a fabulous response to our increased publicity and popularity. Both days were perfect weather wise and visitors took their time and enjoyed chatting to the owners, enjoying coffee and food, not to mention spending up big on plants and preserves!

Special thanks to our **Open Garden** owners for their willingness to open their gardens, hard work and commit-

ment: Tracey & Stuart Fraser, Kylie Rose Blake, Greg Block, Liz & Greg Armstrong and Meredith & Peter Todd

Thanks also to our Sponsors who contribute to our event so generously:

- Kate Leach @ tickledpinkdesign – brochure design
- Gull & Company Real Estate - Signage
- Spot on Nursery and Pots – Seedlings for Guest
- CountryStyle Magazine
- Ballarat Regional Tourism

A special mention to Lorraine Powell for hosting the Melbourne Visitor Coach tour to the open gardens on the Sunday. Carol Haines and team for setting up for morning tea, Jane Munro for her delicious home-made biscuits and all who assisted with the wrap up after the luncheon and garden openings. Thanks also to all the volunteers who assisted at the Open Garden either on the entry gate or assisting the garden owners in preparation.

We are again delighted to advise a profit margin was made from the event along with a contribution from each garden owner returning to the Friends for various projects. The Committee will be meeting to discuss the 2016 program very soon. However, in the meantime, we would welcome feedback on any aspect of the event. Again thank to all 'Friends' for their support and enthusiasm.

Helen Todd, Elizabeth Gilfillan & Wendy Taylor
Committee Ballarat Gardens in Spring 2015



Luncheon in the colourful conservatory. Photograph thanks to El Ebenreuter and The Ballarat Courier

**'..celebrating
all that
Ballarat has
to offer...'**



Guest Speakers Robert Boyle and Criss Canning with Helen Todd



Alison Barby & Josi Smith

**Spotted amongst
the large number
of Friends and
Supporters
attending the 2015
Ballarat Gardens
in Spring.**



Janene Byrne, Malcolm Robert, Wendy Graham

Wollemi Pine (*Wollemia nobilis*):

Some selected facts and statements about this iconic tree one of which can be found in the Ballarat Botanical Gardens.

Presumed extinct until discovered in 1994 by David Noble, a NSW National Parks and Wildlife Officer who was abseiling into the deep rainforest gorge 150kms from Sydney.

Noble observed a group of trees he hadn't seen before and brought back a branch from this small grove of unusual seedlings and mature trees on ledges in the deep gorge.

The only match botanists could find was from fossil records dating back 90 million years.

Noble had stumbled upon the world's oldest and rarest tree species, belonging to a 200 million year old plant.

Botanical find of the century.

Its discovery is the equivalent of finding a dinosaur today.

Thought to be widespread across Gondwana, the ancient supercontinent, that existed before Australia broke off from Antarctica. Now the pines (106 adult trees) only grow in three known rainforest gorges where they cling to steep, moist hillsides surrounded by rugged protective mountains.

Several Wollemi pines have been assessed as having rootstock that is more than 1000 years old.

Wollemi is an aboriginal word meaning "look around you, keep your eyes open and watch out".



Local potted example of *Wollemia*

Nobilis is a reflection of its noble majestic qualities and honours David Noble.

Broad-leaved conifer which bears male and female cones at the tips of its branches.

Unusual bud development and branching habit. Bark looks like bubbling chocolate.

Sprouts multiple trunks (coppicing).

Araucaceae family and its relatives are the Kauri, Norfolk Island, Hoop, Bunya and Monkey Puzzle pines.

Rainforest emergent tree, best under a canopy and likes filtered light.

Temp range 11-37 and least tolerant of high temperatures. New plantings doing very well in Southern England.

Propagation with cuttings is more satisfactory than dangling from helicopters and trying to extract seeds from the tips of the pines in the gorge where it was found as was done initially.

Took about 15 years from discovery for its commercialization to take place. Now available as garden and indoor plants and home gardeners are contributing to its conservation. Royalties from Wollemi Pine sales fund ongoing conservation research.

Terry O'Brien

(Signage in the Sydney Botanic gardens was the source for a lot of this information):

Amazing Facts From BotaniKIDS: 692, 2-12 yr olds; 214 Adults 96 Tertiary students and 540 self-directed nature activity kits were handed out to families visiting the Gardens during the school Holiday program in Sept and Children's Week in Oct. Plus 4,000 children who joined in the program during the 2015 Begonia Festival! Well done Julie and helpers.

The story of The Friends of Ballarat Botanical Gardens Botanical Art Group:

Botanical Illustration is the art of depicting the form, colour and details of plant species most frequently in watercolour medium. The profession emerged in the 17th and 18th Centuries when systems of botanical nomenclature began to be published and a need for drawings was recognised.

The Botanical Art Group of the Friends of Ballarat Botanical Gardens was formed in 2009 by a small group of eager participants; the first Workshop Instructor was acclaimed artist Stephanie Goss. In 2010 a Beginner's Workshop was held by acclaimed artist Marg Castle, Marg has done two further sessions 2013 and 2014. She staged the first Exhibition of works in the Conservatory in 2011.



Acclaimed Artist Jean Dennis conducted a wonderful workshop in 2011, Jean traversed Australia to document the whole *brachychiton* genus of 31 species (Kurrajong & Bottle tree among them). In 2012 we were fortunate to be tutored by one of our own FBBG members Geraldine Roberts, Geraldine did a further event and together with the Group submitted works for the FBBG history book "*An Eden of Loveliness*".

In April 2015 talented and well known Charlotte Thodey from Sydney held a two-day workshop in acrylics; this was well attended and thoroughly enjoyed. The group also produced

illustration and support for the Friends WW1 Exhibition.

The core group continues to meet and enjoy painting together, with the aim to capture the "essence" beauty and life of a plant. The Ballarat Botanical Gardens holds a significant collection of over 300 Species and Tuberous Begonias, this year the group has depicted some in this collection.



The Botanical Art Group meets each Monday in school terms, 10am-3pm, in the George Longley Building, attending instruction, sharing experiences, delicious food and friendship, we hope you enjoyed our recent first staged exhibition opened by Cr. Glen Crompton. Cr. Jim Rinaldi also attended. The opening was kindly supported by **Biggin & Scott, Daylesford**; **Michael DeVincentis** generously sponsored the wine and food for the opening. Valerie Richards will be the group convenor in 2016. I wish Valerie luck, and thank all who assisted in any way to help make the group a success.

Elizabeth Gilfillan.

Upcoming Events:

FRIENDS OF THE BALLARAT BOTANICAL GARDENS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2016

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Friends of the Ballarat Botanical Gardens will be held on **Thursday, 25 February**, commencing at **10.00 a.m.** in the Robert Clark Horticultural Centre.

Business to be conducted:

1. Presentation of reports of activities for 2015
2. Election of Committee for 2016
3. Any other general business

This will be followed by our guest speaker, Dr Greg Moore who will be talking about the value of trees in the urban environment (*see separate notice below*).

Raoul Dixon, President

AGM and Guest Speaker: Please be aware that the date of our AGM has been shifted one week later than usual and will be on **Thursday, 25 February 2016**, at the usual time of 10.00 a.m. in the Robert Clark Horticultural Centre.

I am delighted to announce that our guest speaker for this event will be **Dr Greg Moore**, Senior Research Associate and former Principal of Burnley College, and also former Head of the School of Resource Management at Melbourne University.

I had the pleasure of hearing Greg give an address at a forum on the *Natural and Cultural Values of Trees* in Melbourne in May 2015. He is an entertaining and very informative speaker with a strong message on the value of trees in the urban environment – a very topical subject for us here in Ballarat.

I encourage members to take advantage of this opportunity to hear Greg's message. You will not be disappointed.

Raoul Dixon, President

Australian Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens 2016 Conference: GEELONG

Friday, 29 April until Sunday 1 May

We look forward to welcoming members of Friends groups as we continue with our planning for the 2016 Association Conference. Our website www.friendsgbg.org.au provides all the details (regularly up-dated). It includes the Registration Form, Program outline and information about some of the speakers. Important dates:

- **Early Bird** closing date January 31
- This is also the closing date for **Priority Tour Bookings**. Geelong members will be offered places on the tours after January 31
- **Registration** cutoff Friday April 15

Registrations are coming in and it appears that the **Tours** will be very popular – another reason to register as soon as possible as there is a maximum number for each. We have completed our 'tour recy trips' and are very pleased with the itineraries (and we had a lot of fun checking them!)

A reminder for **accommodation** bookings for the Conference Centre as these are filling – check details on the Registration Form.

We invite people to submit questions or topics for our **Panel/Forum** segments; these segments are included in response to feedback from recent conferences.

The guest speaker for our **Conference Dinner** is Jackie Young and she will be talking about the **Mount Rothwell Conservation Model** – the location being of particular interest to movie-goers being one of the locations for the highly acclaimed film *The Dressmaker*.

We are delighted that we are able to include a **City Precinct Tour** during the conference and the highlight is a visit to the prestigious Geelong Art Gallery for the Exhibition by our School of Botanical Art "**[IN] visible: Geelong Botanic Gardens Revealed**".

During the conference, "**TREES Capturing the Essence of the Geelong Botanic Gardens: Artists' Views**" will be launched - this book celebrates the trees of the Geelong Botanic Gardens and includes many images of artwork from members of our School of Botanical Art.

Geelong Committee



The Growing Friends will open the Nursery for sales **every second and fourth Sunday from January to April inclusive next year.**

That is an **extra** day, (the fourth Sunday in addition to the usual second Sunday) and every Tuesday of course. Usual opening hours apply - 1.00 p.m to 4.00 p.m.

CURATOR'S REPORT

In March 2015 a crack was found in one of the *Araucaria bidwillii* (Bunya Bunya) at the start of the Botanical Gardens Prime Ministers Avenue. After the discovery of the crack temporary fencing was installed to stop access by staff and gardens visitors in the immediate area. A number of specialist arborists were consulted regarding potential remedial options to save this heritage-listed and significant tree while ensuring the safety of staff and gardens visitors. Last month a purpose built structural support was installed, this will provide additional support to the tree.



The sensory gardens fountain was turned back on this week after the installation of a new fiberglass liner and painting of the fountain.

On the night of Tuesday, 24 November ten panels of the gardens in Gillies Street were heavily "tagged" by vandals. Arrangements were made as soon as the tagging was discovered for the cleaning of the fence by Council graffiti removal staff.



Over the last few weeks statue conservator Jude Schahinger has undertaken an annual clean and inspection of the gardens statue collection. The Council's bronze collection of busts in the Prime Ministers' Avenue have also been cleaned and waxed. Jude was responsible for the repair of the vandalized statues over ten years ago and has been engaged on an annual basis since to inspect and clean the collection.

Facilities maintenance contractors have been painting the Statuary Pavilion over the last few weeks. The scaffolding was removed in time for visitors to the precinct during spring fest.

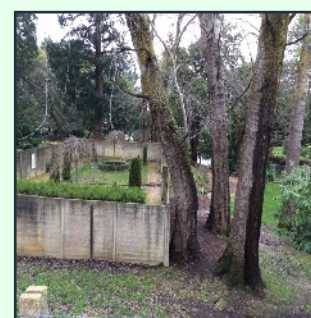


Botanical gardens staff have recently installed the new summer display in the conservatory. The display includes an arrangement of plants including the always popular hydrangeas, fuchsia and vast array of summer flowering plants. The sheer number of plants in this display is massive and very colourful. We have received many positive comments about the building being filled with plants particularly in the former shop area,

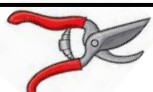


Contractors are currently removing nine *Populus alba* located in the **Buninyong Botanic Gardens**. As a safety precaution the area surrounding the pool has been closed to staff and public access since February 2015. Once contractors have finished the area will be replanted and rehabilitated.

The trees were deemed unsafe as part of Council's asset inspection process. The process of removal has included extensive discussions with Heritage Victoria and other bodies.



Peter Marquand



'Garden Cuttings' by Green-Thumb

- Hurrah! The reinforcing collar has been placed on the damaged Bunya Bunya. But the fence remains! GT believes it's to do with on-going safety concerns. Perhaps it will be gone by Begonia Fest in March 2016?
- The Friends Committee morning tea for staff went off very well. It was a good opportunity for the garden staff to get to know the Committee members a little better.
- Bill O'Driscoll is the new Convenor for the Western Bedders Group. They are hoping to get into natives next year!
- There must be a technical person out there who can resolve once and for all (at least for this coming year) the disputed heights of the Cottonwood and Ponderosa. GT believes the Cottonwood behind the Fernery is taller; others beg to differ and have the pine a tad in front.
- Lorraine Powell is still chasing any memories that you have of the Zoo in the North Gardens.
- It is disappointing to learn that the AAFBG Administrative Officer, Ro Noone, is leaving us to live in New York with her family for 12 months. Ro will be missed and we wish her well. She will be replaced by Lisa Tuck, current Chair of the Australian Garden History Society.
- The 'Tree Tales and a Picnic in the Shade' event organised by the Guiding Group at 5pm on 15 January looks really promising. Rumour has it that it will not rain that evening either!
- The Statuary building has taken on a new lease of life with its new paint-job! GT was also interested to see bird-proofing of the Conservatory being done a month or so ago. Those pesky birds are into everything!

TREE TALES
and a
PICNIC
in the
shade

Friday 15th January
Ballarat Botanical
Gardens

SEE ENCLOSED FLYER



A FREE EVENT presented by the FBBC Guides

Chill out on a summer's evening and hear fascinating stories about some of the significant trees in our gardens. BYO your picnic tea and join us under the canopy of a great tree.

No need to book.

5pm Meet at the start of the Prime Ministers walk under the Turkey Oak.

6pm BYO Picnic tea under a shady tree.

Info fbbg.org.au

Enquiries 53429354
Friends of the Ballarat Botanical Gardens

BALLARAT BOTANIKIDS :



Betwixt a Shed and Shelf!BotaniKIDS - an evolving Gardens Learning Program. *

The Education/ BotaniKIDS Group organised, compiled and implemented two self-guided weeks with a total of 530 BotaniKIDS Nature Kits by local and visiting children and their families to the Gardens.



The Kits were created firstly for the school holidays, where we manned a stall for five days in the Conservatory giving out kits to the children who visited the Gardens (to be a part of a fabulous School Holiday program jointly devised and implemented with Donna, Education Officer) and secondly for Children's Week where a table was stocked in the Conservatory for families to help themselves.

The November Under Five children's session was held outdoors on rather a soggy morning. However 25 little ones and 19 'grown ups' attended and all enjoyed the potting activity in wonderful garden space front of the Craft Cottage.

The second Lake Wendouree and Gardens Education Hub event with 80 children from Buninyong and Scotsburn schools took place on Nov 25. This was a great event working with the POW Trustees in organising logistics.

Our very own Guides kindly and expertly helped with tree talks, Doug Bradby conducted the PMs avenue interactive activity,

the POW trustees running their guided talks and Donna taking the children for hands on WaterWatch activities. Feedback was exceptionally positive from the schools and a booking for 2016 has been made already.

The Christmas party for our under fives was on Dec 8 with all the fun of a childhood festive party. We saw party foods, festive crafts and Christmas singing as well as a small gift for each child. The little ones all left knowing they are special to us here at BotaniKIDS and value their joy and excitement as they participate in our nature play activities in the Gardens.

Thanks for your support and patience this yearnext is shaping up to be a doozy and as this was our first year working in with Gardens education staff (Donna) and supported and encouraged by Peter Marquand along with all staff it has been tremendous. More to come. Watch this space.

** A little explanation re the heading. The entire year's program has been planned conducted and resourced from the Little Shed kindly allocated by staff for the use and storage of educational resources and a set of shelves in the George Longley Building. Both now are 'chock a block' even after regular resource culls and rationalising of what is stored, suffice to say the education program has outgrown the space allocated.*

With no classroom space other than the RCC when it is available we will need to be even more resourceful finding appropriate learning spaces in the precinct as our numbers increase next year. So when we say ... watch this space! We really meanlooking for a space! Any ideas ?

We are still looking for coloured wool for our Begonia Festival activity and please consider if you can spare some time to help us at the Festival.

Thanks to everyone for their willingness to help, encouragement and especially the BotaniKIDS team.

Julie Bradby Convenor Education Group and BotaniKIDS

The largest bequest of its time was for the Ballarat Zoological Gardens, made .. by ... gold-rich bachelor Henry Ben Jahn (£11,000 in 1911). The zoo opened in 1917 and lasted for fifty years. Source: THE BALLARAT & DISTRICT GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY INC *Ballarat Link* May 2010 - No. 165

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



- The **Growing Friends** need help watering over the summer. Leave a message on **5342 9354**.
- The **BotaniKIDS** team still need lots of coloured wool.
- **Treasurer Bruce** wants you to be careful when transferring money into our account!

Two Historic Gardens: Mawallok and Eurambeen

On a somewhat cool and drizzly day in October, 42 members and friends visited two historic homes and gardens in the Beaufort area.

Mawallok was the first one visited. This is a well-established and maintained garden on approximately 5 acres, laid out in the style of the English Landscape movement.

William Guilfoyle designed the garden in 1909 for the Russell family who had owned the property since 1847.

In the 1920's a magnificent lake was created, designed by Sir John Monash and fed by a natural spring flowing at 10,000 gallons per hour. This naturally ensures that the garden is never without water.



Mawallok Copper Beech

Our group delighted in the beauty and variety of plantings which surround the homestead, which was built in 1907-08. There is a Tilia Lime walk and some magnificent hedges behind which



Mawallok

is the tennis court. A rockery adds interest and of course there are many magnificent old trees, such as a huge Copper Beech standing proud on a lawn to the east of the house.

The present owners purchased the property in 1980 and have been busy

returning the gardens as near as possible to their original form, including the 6 hole golf course. One of the owners, Serena Mitchell, was very generous with her time, accompanying members of our group throughout the morning, and also presenting us with a Gallipoli Oak seedling for planting in our Botanical Gardens (see separate write up).

From Mawallok a short drive took us to Eurambeen where members enjoyed their picnic lunch. Eurambeen presented a vivid contrast to Mawallok, with this 3 acre garden having been designed by Edna Walling in the 1920's, resulting in a completely different layout and appearance. Originally named "Mt Cole Station" the property was taken up by the Campbell brothers who built a wooden homestead on the site in 1840. The present homestead was originally built in 1850's and extended in 1927. The current owners, Sarah Beaumont and her husband are very busy doing an amazing job in restoring the property.



Eurambeen

They were fortunate to have located the original garden plans at the State Library of Victoria. They have had major support from the Australian Garden History Society, both in terms of financial assistance, which for example enabled them to have the stone walls restored to their original appearance, and in hands-on assistance, helping to clear overgrowth away from the swimming pool which had been completely concealed from view.

Having originally been the centre of a major pastoral operation, there have been many other houses associated with the property, many are now gone but remaining ones include a manager's cottage and schoolhouse, both of which have been restored and now operate as B&B's. There was much to see and admire, including many beautiful roses and we were fascinated by Sarah's descriptions of the gardens and their restoration efforts as she took us on a guided tour.

All in all a great day with thanks to Serena and Sarah, as well as Gold Bus Company who looked after us very well.

Raoul Dixon

Postscript: Eurambeen Historic Homestead and Gardens won the Grampians Pyrenees Business Award for the Best New Business in the Pyrenees Region! www.eurambeen.com.au Ed.

GALLIPOLI OAK COMES TO BALLARAT BOTANICAL GARDENS

Whilst the **Lone Pine** from Gallipoli is well known, there is another tree more infamously known to the soldiers fighting at Gallipoli, and that was the **Holly Oak**, so named because the leaves resemble holly leaves. The tree is infamous because of its prickly leaves. General Sir John Monash referred to the tree "with which these hills are covered and which has inflicted many an unkind scratch on hands, arms and bare knees."

Four trees were propagated in Victoria from acorns brought back from Gallipoli, two in Hamilton and two in the grounds of Geelong Grammar School. Ballarat now has a seedling grown from one of the Hamilton trees, which was propagated by Serena Mitchell, owner of Mawallok Homestead.

On our visit to this property, Serena donated this seedling to the Friends for planting in our Botanical Gardens. For the time being the seedling is being nurtured by Yvonne and her Growing Crew until it is a suitable size for planting out.

For the botanically minded, the scientific name of the Gallipoli Oak is *Quercus calliprinos*. It is a small tree by Oak standards, reaching only about five metres in height.



Serena Mitchell presents the Holly Oak to Raoul Dixon

Raoul Dixon

Friends of Ballarat Botanical Gardens Information 2015

Email: info@fbbg.org.au
Website: www.fbbg.org.au

Friends of Ballarat Botanic Gardens Inc.
P.O. Box 33W Ballarat West 3350

Tel. George Longley Building 03 5342 9354

Meetings and Events:

'Tree Tales and a Picnic in the Shade' event organised by the Guiding Group 15 January

Friends AGM **Thursday, 25 February 2016.** 10.00 a.m. in the Robert Clark Horticultural Centre.

BotaniKIDS 2016

Dates will be announced on our website .

More details : <https://www.facebook.com/ballarotbotanIKIDS>
Info@fbbg.org.au

If you wish to help at any of our activities please contact us on the above email address.

Note *no events planned in Jan and Feb 2016.*

MEETING TIMES 2016

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.

WANT TO PAY US SOME MONEY?

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

Guess what?the wooden fence erected between the Friends Nursery (plant sales area) and the driveway leading to the Gardens' Workshop area is there for a reason!

Members and visitors MUST NOT access the Friends' area via the driveway!

Please use the single wooden gate at the rear of the Robert Clark Horticultural Centre.

This is an on-going safety issue.
Please use the small gate.



Photo credits: Thanks to Raoul and Beth Dixon, Terry O'Brien, Julie Bradby, Elizabeth Gilfillan, Helen Vincent, El Ebenreuter Peter Maarquand, Botanica Tours and Magazine, Michael Bird and the Ballarat Courier for providing photographs used in this edition. Ed.

2015-16 FBBG Committee and Areas of Responsibility

POSITION	NAME	POSITION	NAME
President	Raoul Dixon	History Convener	Lorraine Powell
Vice president	John King	Hospitality	Carole Haines
Secretary	Beryl Plummer	Membership	Raoul Dixon
Treasurer	Bruce Holland	Merchandise	Helen Vincent
Convenor Fernery Proj.	Elizabeth Gilfillan	Western Bed Convener	Bill O'Driscoll
Education Convener	Julie Bradby	General member	Kathleen Hobson
Grants/Proposals	Glen Lake	Newsletter Editor	Michael Bird
Growers Convener	Yvonne Curbach	Botanical Art Convener	Elizabeth Gilfillan
Guides Convener	Terry O'Brien	Engraving Convener	Joy O'Brien (non-Committee)

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 Summer Wellingtonia 2016 are due by early-December please.** Michael Bird, Editor. **Editorial Committee** Raoul Dixon, Elizabeth Gilfillan, Helen Vincent and Michael Bird.

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

