

# Wellingtonia

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## NEWSLETTER – AUTUMN 2020

**STOP PRESS:** Since the last Committee Meeting on March 17 there has been a significant deterioration in the Coronavirus situation. As a result, all activities organised by the Friends will now be cancelled for an extended period, possibly SIX months. This is in line with government policy, and includes all Committee meetings, excursions, garden tours and unfortunately plant sales from the Nursery. Convenors of sub-groups have been asked to cancel activities until further notice.

The Robert Clark Horticultural Centre AND the Conservatory are also closed. The Gardens remain open.

With the rapidly developing realisation that this world-wide crisis is far more serious than anybody ever expected, we need to look out for each other and provide any assistance to those in need, particularly as we move into isolation. Robert Selkirk, 23 March, 2020.

### 'News from the President'



### FRIENDS OF BALLARAT BOTANICAL GARDENS PRESIDENT'S REPORT

At the time of writing this report there was a great deal of confusion and mixed messages about the Coronavirus. The Grand Prix has been cancelled, as well as the Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show for the first time in 25 years. US President **Donald Trump** has just called a national emergency, while at the same time still shaking hands with everybody!

From the Friends perspective it was **decided at the monthly Committee Meeting on March 17 to suspend all activities and programs until the end of April**, subject to review at the end of this period. This decision is in line with the City of Ballarat Council Policy, which also includes the closure of the Robert Clark Horticultural Centre for the next month. The Conservatory will remain open for the time being.

Being faced with the very challenging times ahead, I think it's beneficial to take the opportunity to reflect on the events so far this year.

The year began with a very successful evening **Tour of the Prime Ministers' Avenue** on January 24 to recognise Australia Day. This was well organised by the Guides under the leadership of **Terry O'Brien**.

The Tour captured the attention of the public with more than 50 people taking part.

I must compliment the members of the Guides for their extensive preparation and for the very informative way in which each presenter told the story of the various Prime Ministers.

This was closely followed by the inaugural **Annual General Meeting of the Foundation** on the February 10, and the **Annual General Meeting of the Friends** on February 20. We were privileged to have our Patron, **Professor Tim Entwisle** join us for the meeting, and preside over the election of new Committee members.

Four new General members were elected: **Wendy Taylor, Kim Nolan, Natalie Radomski** and **Jock Gilbert**. Congratulations to all, and with their various backgrounds I'm sure they will make a significant contribution to the Committee.

Unfortunately **John King** has resigned due to ill health. I thank John for his contribution to the Committee over many years and wish him well in his move to Melbourne, which hopefully will see him in a more comfortable situation.

The other three Committee resignations were **Sue Rattray, Stephanie de Boer** and **June Cheetham**, I also thank them all for their contribution.

Our guest speaker at the AGM, **Michele Adler** gave a most enlightening address titled *'There is no other place like the Galápagos Islands.'*

The Committee held an evening function at the Gate Keepers Cottage on March 5 to welcome new members. Over 30 members enjoyed drinks and nibbles on the deck provided by the very capable **Helen Vincent** and the catering team. It was a great opportunity to meet some of our new members, and provide them with an understanding of the various interest groups.

We were very fortunate that this year's **Begonia Festival** over the March long week-end wasn't affected by the COVID-19 virus. The Festival, which was one of the last

'...decided...to  
suspend all  
activities and  
programs until  
the end of  
April...'

continues page 2...

public events held before the Government prohibited large scale gatherings, was another successful event attracting 60,000 visitors who enjoyed spending time in our world standard Botanical Gardens.

Compliments to Peter Marquand and the gardening team for maintaining our Gardens in pristine condition and arranging another very colourful display of Begonias. Compared to last year they were a couple of weeks behind being in full bloom due to the cooler weather.

I also compliment those members who volunteered over the week-end to man the Crèche and assist **Yvonne Curbach** and the Growers in plant sales from the Nursery. Takings this year exceeded \$8,000 which is an increase on last year by nearly

\$800 and breaks all previous records. Very well done to all those involved.

As usual, the BotaniKids attracted a constant stream of children who enjoyed getting their hands dirty and taking home a potted plant. Congratulations to **Julie Bradby** and the dedicated volunteers who kept this event running over the three days.

In conclusion, I wish all members the best of health during these challenging times as the impact of the Coronavirus unfolds. In the meantime the Committee will be monitoring the situation and will further advise when our programs can recommence.

**Robert Selkirk, President**

*"An optimist believes that we live in the best world. A pessimist is afraid that it might be true."*

### MEMBERSHIP REPORT:

The Friends are pleased to welcome the following new members who have joined since the last issue of Wellingtonia: Dianne Childs, Gary Buchan, Cynthia Dennett, Mathew Teasdale & Fiona Oliver, Edwina Millar and Natalie Radomski, Zoe Schneider, Elaine Dickens, Lee Taffe, Pip Josephs and Susan Peardon.

**Total Membership is currently 392.**

**Raoul Dixon – Membership Officer**



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



*See page 7 for three new topics from Tim's Blog plus some environmental points.*

## 2020 FRIENDS ANNUAL MEETING:

We were delighted to have our Patron, Prof. Tim Entwisle attending our AGM and announce our 2020 Committee. Included are four new members: **Kim Nolan, Natalie Radomski, Wendy Taylor and Jock Gilbert.** (See page 6)

President Robert gave his report on the major events for the year and particularly highlighted the record figure for plant sales of \$36,227, and the economic contribution to the Botanical Gardens by the Friends. In volunteer hours this amounted to approximately \$278,000.

Curator Peter Marquand looked forward to some key developments in 2020, including the Fernery construction commencement and pending improvements to the Gatekeeper's Cottage area.

Warwick Sellens, a Ballarat Friends Guide and member of the Australian Association of Friends of Botanical Gardens, updated us on the AAFBG programs. He mentioned the 2020 annual conference to be held in Brisbane this May. **(HAS SINCE BEEN CANCELLED!)**

Councillor **Sam McIntosh** thanked the FBBG for their significant contribution to developing and maintain our gardens.

Guest Speaker Michele Adler delighted members with her wide ranging presentation about her work in the Galapagos Islands, beginning in 1995. Michele's horticultural career has encompassed research and lecturing at *Burnley Horticultural College*, work as a journalist, garden designer and (worldwide) tour leader.

The group of 13 islands are 97% national park and all have differing environments and populations of flora and fauna. Michele and her husband were based at the *Charles Darwin Research Station* and able to visit various islands, examining extraordinary plants and getting close to the diverse and unafraid wildlife.



Above: Michele Adler

As well as wonderful images of these explorations, she also gave us a flavour of the people and their often delightful and ingenious art, architecture and landscape design. Michele took us through the garden design project they undertook through photos and descriptions of the challenges faced in working in such a remote and inspiring part of the world.

For more information about Michele's work and some useful articles and short films:

<http://www.adland.com.au/gardening.aspx>

Susan Pilbeam



Above: Tim Entwisle, patron of the Ballarat Friends at the AGM



Above: Guest Speaker Michele Adler (centre) with Carole Haines and Councillor Samantha McIntosh.

## GUIDING FRIENDS –

At the time of writing we are half way through the “*Delving into BBG – the U3A and FBBG course*” and from comments it seems to be an enjoyable, social and informative experience. We have 20 enrolled in the course and with plenty of support from the FBBG guides we always have a good sized group. Some of the highlights so far:



**Terry O'Brien,**  
Guides Convenor

1. **Fred Cahir**, the author of “*My Country all gone .The White men have stolen it. The invasion of Wadawurrung Country 1800 -1870*” showing us how variable the experience was in our regional contact history. The good and bad in people then as now!
2. **Roger Thomas** helped us locate in the new Ballarat indigenous plant collection some of the local endangered plants that are now part of conservation projects in BBG. Roger also highlighted the remnant indigenous grasslands in Victoria Park and the conservation efforts there of these endangered species.
3. Three significant Friends – **John Garner, Lorraine Powell** and **Elizabeth Gilfillan** - took us on a voyage over time to understand what Botanic gardens are. We went from ancient times with the Egyptian Pharaohs 2000 years BC who brought back plants from countries they had conquered, to today’s challenges and today’s focus on conservation, plant bio-security, seed banks and research and education.
4. Access to data about the trees at BBG and the trees of COB were an exciting story for us. Imagine all those bits of horticultural information accessible and organized at the one point. **Donna Thomas**, our Collections Officer, described Iris BG, the new data management system for our plants in BBG. This system is used widely in North America and Europe. Sydney Botanic Gardens uses this system and now Ballarat and also Melton.

**Peter Marquand** became Doctor Marquand and educated us about how he saves lives – tree lives. Corset, cables, props and pruning got a mention.

We had two officers from the city of Ballarat, **Tony Marshall**, Vegetation Officer and **Daniel Semensa**, Sustainability Officer, explaining the City’s approach to tree management. Proactive policies underway aim to increase the canopy cover from our existing 17% to 40% by 2040 and especially targeting some of the disadvantaged communities currently with canopies as low as 7%. It was the access to detailed tree data that stood out in this presentation and we were told this data will be readily available to all soon. We visually zoomed across parts of Ballarat and saw the before and after effect of increased canopies. Mastering these new Apps is ahead for us.

5. The cottage provided a welcoming haven after the small group Guides tour. More history of the gardens was covered by **Lorraine Powell** and **Julie Bradby** and we learnt about the newly restored cottage and how it would be used. Display material produced by the history group on the Zoo and wartime service also featured.
6. Melton and Ballarat Botanical gardens – so different. Melton Council do contribute significantly but this Botanic garden is developed and maintained by dedicated volunteers. Volunteers join different work groups and lots of “hands on” work. The names of the groups gives some idea of the range of work undertaken and in different zones within the gardens – Bushies, Creekers, Gumnuts, Lakers, Safaris, Sun-seekers, Odd jobbers, Nursery Team, Tweeters, Water babies.

The eucalypt collection and other plants are primarily dryland plants and so generate plenty of interest with today’s changing climatic conditions. It is an inspiring Gardens to see what has been achieved in such a short time and to see the ongoing plans and developments. **John Bentley**, the President of the Friends of Melton Botanic garden, has been central to these successes and we were privileged to have him as our guide and sharing and inspiring us with his enthusiasm and knowledge.



Some of the U3A participants along with Ballarat Guides at Buninyong BG recently.

**Terry O'Brien, Convenor**

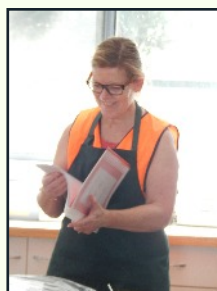
*‘When I was a boy, I had a disease that required me to eat dirt three times a day in order to survive. It’s a good thing my older brother told me about it.’*

### GROWING FRIENDS:

At the Begonia Festival (March 7-9) we had a very successful three days of selling from our nursery. A total of \$8,545 worth of plants was sold.

Thanks to all the willing helpers that made this event so successful.

**Yvonne Curbach, Convenor**



Josie La Freniere who was presented with a ‘Growing Friends’ recipe book of afternoon tea treats, prior to returning to Canada

### CAN YOU HELP? GATEKEEPER’S COTTAGE

We are in desperate need of an upright stick cordless vacuum cleaner.

If you are upgrading and have one that still is in working order the BotaniKids team would love to re-home it for you!





# Botanical Illustrators

Botanical Illustrators meet every Monday during school terms, between 10 am and 3 pm, in the *George Longley Building*.

All artists, from beginners to advanced painters are invited to join the group of budding artists, as they journey into the botanical world.

These sessions are run without teachers, but with a range of experience and skills, that are shared within the group. There is a small fee to cover venue costs for each attendance.

Group projects are decided upon with species from the gardens and members can participate or continue with their own works. It is usual that two workshops are organised each year, providing extra tuition and interest.

## Where Science meets Nature:

Botanical art means different things to different people, firstly we have the scientific botanical illustrations which focus on all parts of the plant including dissected plant parts. This allows the plant to be identified accurately and often provides information that would be difficult to capture with photography.

Next, we have the popular realistic painting of the botanical subject which is accurate but without the dissections and the scientific angle. This type of botanical painting is greatly desired by the public and is used decoratively in homes and public buildings.

Botanical art is used extensively on many items including greeting cards, fashion, and home fabrics and china, etc. Then we have general flower painting which uses a more relaxed, creative but still realistic style of painting.

Regardless of the style, botanical painting continues to be a popular choice with people everywhere. Photography is no substitute for the talents of an artist capturing the beauty of the plant form.

## Current Projects:

The group works on individual works or from time to time group projects are studied, where a common theme or subject is worked on.

Our current project is painting plants from a list of rare endangered plants from the Ballarat area. This has required much research and contact with the Botanical gardens, local *Field Naturalist* and *Landcare* groups, which has given us a great interest in these plants and where to find specimens.

## Workshops:

Learn more about botanical art by joining one of our specialist workshops held during terms 2 and 3.

Past workshops have been held with acclaimed artists:

Stephanie Goss: Watercolor – large scale botanical.

Margaret Castle: Watercolour – botanical.

Charlotte Thodey: Acrylic – Still Life – Fruit and Vegetables.

Mali Moir: Botanical Illustration – Watercolour.

Janet Matthews: Coloured Pencil – Techniques for feathers & fur.

Kate Nolan: Insects – Watercolour

David Reynolds: Watercolour – Native Plants

## Exhibitions:

Botanical Illustration Group held an exhibition in November 2014, to coincide with the Archibald prize. It was a very successful exhibition, held in the conservatory. All artists in the group participated, with watercolour, acrylic, and pencil studies. Greeting cards depicting the artworks were also sold at the exhibition. There was an exhibition of works included in an Open Garden in Buninyong, in October 2019.

Plans are underway for an exhibition in the Gatekeepers cottage, in the Heritage weekend of 2020. (N.B. now cancelled. Ed)

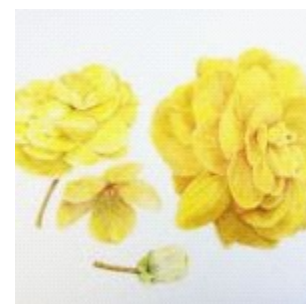
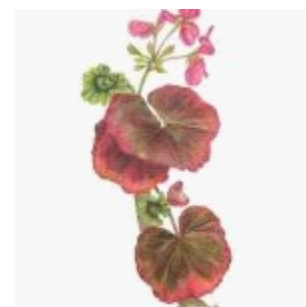
Please register interest in workshops ASAP, as classes can fill quickly.

Email [info@fbbg.org.au](mailto:info@fbbg.org.au) or phone: 5342 9354.

## Convenor

Valerie Richards - phone: 5341 2649

Or email: [valerierichards@iprimus.com.au](mailto:valerierichards@iprimus.com.au)



*I asked my North Korean friend how it was there, he said he couldn't complain.*

## Ballarat Botanical Gardens Nursery

Our Botanical Gardens Nursery is the 'home' of our 3000 Begonias and 'second home' to Erin, Sheree, Alastair and Wayne, who between them have over 120 years of combined nursery experience!

But did you know they also grow an additional 9,500 plants throughout the year for the year-round Conservatory displays, and at any one time they are growing plants for three displays! So although the begonias are on show at the moment, the chrysanthemums are nearly ready, and our winter display is also well on the way – it's always busy!



We are excited to share that we have now been awarded full Australian Nursery Industry Accreditation which acknowledges our 'industry best practise' here in the Ballarat Botanical Gardens nursery. This has involved a long, and very thorough evaluation of our nursery documentation, policies and procedures, and is reward for our new biosecurity practises.

So a big 'thank you' to the Friends for not bringing in used pots or plants from home, and continuing to encourage others not to do so – that has been an important part of this achievement!

We have also begun to cross-breed tuberous begonias again, and I just have to share a stunning new Begonia bred by the team. As yet it's unnamed, but in just its first year, it has produced this gorgeous, ruffled, coral-coloured flower - measuring 18cm across!



Can't wait to see what it's 'mature' flower size will be next year!

Donna Thomas, Ballarat Plant Collections Officer

*'Don't count the days, make the days count.'* Anon.

## BEGONIAS IN BALLARAT:

The first reference found refers to George Longley sticking pieces of "stick" in pots causing the gardener to consider he was going crazy. It was reported to have been imported from England, but, Longley's records do not go back to that time to confirm orders to them.

On 15th October, 1925 in a information address to the delegates visiting Ballarat from the Imperial Press Conference in Melbourne the Guide states:- *"Included in the Gardens are 8 glasshouses, 4 of which are regularly staged with displays and open to the public, the chief of which is the annual autumn display of tuberous Begonias, some 1500 being grown and generally admitted to be the finest display in the Southern hemisphere."*

Bill Greville, who commenced work in the Gardens in 1936, at interviews in 1995 and 2007 recalls that the soil used in potting mixtures came from the sods from the side of the creek on the Common which is now the Wendouree housing estate. The leaf mould used was from the previous year's leaf rakings although all the Oak leaves were retained on their own for the Begonia mixture

Coarse Lal Lal sand was used for all mixtures and the sods of soil which had been stacked several feet high and allowed to mostly dry was chopped down with a mattock so as to retain as much fibre as possible to help keep the soil porous.

The mixture for the Begonias as he recalled were as barrow measurements:-

- Four barrows loam
- two barrows of oak leaf mould
- two large buckets of Lal Lal sand
- six 6" pots full of fowl manure
- one shovel full of crushed charcoal (Car charcoal burner type).

The mixture was turned four times by shovel and then moistened to the required condition for potting. A small portion of dried hops on top of the crock was placed at the bottom of the pot to prevent the soil from mixing with the crock and ensured good drainage. The hops were delivered from the brewery and spread out to dry.

After World War2 the Gardens were stopped from taking the soil from the Common by the Wendouree Shire and instead took the soil from Greens Lane at Dunnstown. The sods were cut from the creek bed banks which were black and a similar quantity from the rise which was red. Both had high fibre content.

For taking the cuttings from the growing Begonias the best instrument was a surgeon's scalpel (used) collected by Dr Ernie Shiell from St John's here in Ballarat.

He reported that in the glasshouses at the Southern end of the Gardens Single, Crested and Frilled Begonias were grown from seed developing true to type and colour for years.

Later a severe problem with the Begonias developed with the appearance of mildew, eventually traced to a shrub overgrown on the Back Wall. It proved very difficult to control and led to the removal of the Begonias from the Southern glasshouse as the pest was taking up too much time to control. **John Garner, 2009 (member of the Friends History Group)**





## Favourite Autumn Colour: New Committee members: (Jock Gilbert, Wendy Taylor, Natalie Radomski and Kim Nolan) and Secretary Susan!.

**Jock Gilbert:** Mahonia aquifolium: Has beautiful edible berries and the glossy foliage is already starting to turn yellow and red, which it will retain through winter. Will grow in tree shade and doesn't need much water once it's established, and also has a loosely formal structure.

Jock Gilbert is an academic in the School of Architecture and Urban Design at RMIT University. He is Program Manager of the Bachelor of Landscape Architectural Design and co-chair of the School of Architecture + Urban Design Reconciliation Action Committee.

His research interests lie in community engagement, regenerative practice and Indigenous-led design research, focussed around the development of green infrastructure through the convergence of concepts of place, Country and landscape.

Jock is a registered landscape architect and member of the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects. His academic practice has been recognised with research awards at state and national levels. His work has been exhibited nationally and published internationally and he is a regular participant in national issues through public presentations and interviews. These include Mpavilion presentations, ABC Radio (local and national) interviews and contributions to The Conversation, Landscape Australia journal and Foreground.



**Wendy Taylor:** My favourite autumn plant this year is **Sedum**. This year has been a good year for tall, colourful sedums in my rambling cottage garden. Colours are subtle and superb - from soft pinks to light purples and dark maroons. Easy to grow and flowers for ages, before being cut back to the ground in winter. (Sedum: Autumn Joy)

I have been a member of the FBBG for some years, mainly involved in the *Gardens in Spring* annual event up until two years ago, when it was time for others to have a go.

My role was in publicising the *Speakers Luncheon* and *Open Gardens*. Without an advertising budget we had to rely on media contacts and enticing magazines, newspapers to write up the event.

Having worked in the tourism industry in marketing and publicity, the role suited me and was great fun.

I also opened my garden as part of *Gardens in Spring* and although it took a lot of work, it was a wonderful experience with hundreds of people coming through. I live on six acres in Dunnstown and my husband and I grew organic raspberries for around 30 years! We have now scaled back but still grow berries, lemons and most of our food. And I love cooking!



**Kim Nolan:** My favourite plant for autumn colour is the Maple tree – because of its striking autumn colours

Having moved to Ballarat a few years ago I've been lucky enough to live near the botanic gardens and be part of the growers group, helping out with BotaniKids and attempting to gain skills in botanical drawing! I have always loved to be out gardening, growing veges and flowers and spending time in nature.



Although my background is IT/Maths and teaching I also trained at Burnley to gain more knowledge in Horticulture. I have an interest in organic, drought resistant gardens and floral art and like being able share my love of gardening with others

**Natalie Radomski:** Natalie worked as a teacher and researcher in the Monash University School of Rural Health and has a background in health professional education and community-based learning. With more free time over the past year, turning her home garden into a more productive and sustainable green space has been great fun...with plenty yet to do. Natalie is looking forward to being part of the FBBG Committee and to learning more about vital role of the Botanical Gardens in our community.

**My favorite plant for autumn colour** is the Banksia Spinulosa (Birthday Candles) with its golden tones, textures and wonderful structural form. Watching the cones take shape over the past 2-3 months has been exciting... slowly but surely they've found their way.



**Susan Pilbeam:** Ginkgo Biloba (Maidenhair tree) is the only living species in the division Ginkgophyta, all others being extinct. It is found in fossils dating back 270 million years.

Native to China, the tree is widely cultivated, and was cultivated early in human history. Slow growing and long lived, there are examples in many Botanic gardens, including Ballarat. My grandfather planted one in his garden and I live with the one my father planted. Lovely soft green leaves in summer and a delight in autumn. "I have planted one too" said Susan!



The Australian Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens Biennial Conference will be held in Brisbane, May 22 to 24, 2020. **CANCELLED DUE TO COVID-19**



**Ballarat Botanical Gardens Foundation's** overriding purpose is to raise funds to provide a strong, sustainable financial basis to support the Ballarat Botanical Gardens.

Go to: [ballaratbotanicalgardensfoundation.com.au](http://ballaratbotanicalgardensfoundation.com.au) for information and access to tax deductible donations.

## Favourite Autumn Tree

*Taxodium distichum* also known as the Bald Cypress, is always spectacular in Autumn here in the Ballarat Gardens. It's one of the few conifer species that is 'deciduous' and turns a stunning rusty-red colour in Autumn. There are two magnificent 'dry land' specimens near the statue pavilion and both are National Trust registered.



Swamp Cypress near Statue Pavilion

A native of southern USA, another of its common names is the 'Swamp Cypress', so not surprisingly this tree is right at home in its preferred natural habitat standing in, or alongside, water.

It's these 'water wading' qualities I truly adore, and knee deep in water, like the younger specimens in 'Swan Pool' (near Pipers) is where they really start to reveal



Mature Swamp Cypress 'Knees' at Wollongong BG.

their quirky side with wonderful buttressed trunks, and when mature, fabulous wooden stalagmite-like structures called 'Knees' arising from their roots – both thought to aide stability.



Young Swamp Cypress in Swan Pool

**Donna Thomas**  
Plant Collection Officer BBG

## Why is 'The Wellingtonia' called Wellingtonia?

One of the new Friends at the recent gathering for them, asked why *Wellingtonia* is called by that name. Here's the answer:

"*Sequoiadendron giganteum* (giant sequoia); also known as giant redwood, Sierra redwood, Sierran redwood, **Wellingtonia** or simply big tree. It is the sole living species in the genus *Sequoiadendron*, and one of three species of coniferous trees known as redwoods, classified in the family Cupressaceae in the subfamily Sequoioideae, together with *Sequoia sempervirens* (coast redwood) and *Metasequoia glyptostroboides* (dawn redwood). Giant sequoia specimens are the most massive trees on Earth.

The common use of the name sequoia usually refers to *Sequoiadendron giganteum*, which occurs naturally only in groves on the western slopes of the Sierra Nevada Mountains of California. The oldest known giant sequoia is 3,200-3,266 years old. (Ours are closing in on 160! The mile long avenue was planted in 1860.)

... The name "Wellingtonia" has persisted in England as a common name."

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sequoiadendron\\_giganteum](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sequoiadendron_giganteum)

**Michael Bird**

*'I was addicted to the hokey pokey... but thankfully, I turned myself around.'*

## Talking Plants MARCH, 2020

Here is a summary of the most recent entries in Tim's Blog. All are reflections on his recent trip to China and well worth looking at.

**March 17, 2020** - Chun's emblemic palm from Hainan Island (*Chuniophoenix hainanensis*, only found naturally on Hainan Island).

**March 10, 2020** - Another cycad with ferny leaves (*Cycas debaoensis* is one of only two cycads with multi-pinnate leaves).

**March 03, 2020** - Rare Chinese plant, flowers no longer wanted (It's *Tigridiopalma magnifica*, a 'rare and critically endangered herb endemic to China').

You can read more fascinating '**plant talk**' at <https://talkingplants.blogspot.com/>

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



### TIM'S ADVICE ON ENVIRONMENTAL PLANTING

#### PLANTING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

- The green roof on Parliament House in Canberra keeps surface temperatures 22°C cooler than nearby granite paths, which helps to cool the building itself.
- In Adelaide SA Water encourages smart use of water to green lawns and gardens, as it cools buildings and reduces reliance on air conditioners.
- On a 30°C day in Melbourne, the surface of the turf at Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria, Melbourne Gardens is about 24°C, while the nearby bitumen path is 40°C.
- In Melbourne Gardens, the combination of large trees and lawns on the Oak Lawn makes this area as cool in summer as the nearby Fern Gully with its running water and lush vegetation. Both are up to 6°C cooler than the surrounding city when temperatures rise above 30°C.
- Plant more trees - not only for shade, but as evaporative coolers for our planet. One moderately sized tree can transport 100L of water per day from its roots to the air above, which is the equivalent to the cooling capacity of two residential air conditioners.

Thanks to the ABC Gardening Australia magazine, February 2020, page 39



## CURATOR'S REPORT AUTUMN 2020

Begonia festival has been and gone for another year! The annual festival attracted around 60,000 people to the gardens on the Labour day weekend. Visitors enjoyed perfect autumn weather during the weekend, free entertainment and activities scattered through the gardens.

This year's Begonia display included over 900 tuberous and 200 non tuberous begonias from the Botanical Gardens collections.

One of the great inclusions in this year's festival was cooking Sunday with alumni from *Master Chef* including Poh Ling Yeow and Ballarat Tim Bone. It was also great to catch up with Costa and Sophie from the *ABC's Gardening Australia*; both were very positive about our Gardens and the festival.



This year's apprentice display was one of four display gardens set up in the Sequoiadendron walk, other displays were put together by Federation University, the Floral art group and Bells water gardens.



Federation University's TAFE display garden.



Garden's curator Peter Marquand and Ballarat Mayor Ben Taylor

If you're still looking for that one person who will change your life take a look in the mirror.



### IF YOU NEED TO PAY US SOME MONEY:

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

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

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

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

### BALLARAT GARDEN DISCOUNTS FOR MEMBERS

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

*You will need to show your FBBG membership card*

### How is your free time looking?

Can you find a bit of time to help out a Friends Group? Ambassadors, Guides, Growers and BotaniKids can always use extra volunteers.

Contact Susan at [info@fbbg.org.au](mailto:info@fbbg.org.au) or 5342 9354





## AUSTRALIA DAY WITH THE PRIME MINISTERS

This year, the Ballarat Guides decided to commemorate Australia Day by dusting off their accumulated facts and stories about the Australian Prime Ministers.

The attendance for this free, twilight event was really encouraging; some said 50, but I thought it closer to 75! The event was aimed at highlighting of how much change we (i.e. Australia) have gone through in the way we see ourselves since Federation in 1901. From 'White Australia' to 'Multi-culturalism'; the World Wars and the Great Depression.

The group wandered down the Prime Ministers Avenue with the Guides as they examined how over time our Australian identity and spirit have changed.

**Michael Bird, Ballarat Guides member**



Guide Trudie Dickinson is almost lost in the audience as she covers the 1930's.



Warwick Sellens explained the post-war changes



~~FRIENDS' EXCURSION~~ April 22. ~~Tour of Musk Farm~~  
**Cancelled**

~~MAY 21. GENERAL MEETING: 10 am~~ GUEST SPEAKER  
~~SHELLEY WOOD~~ Curator Warrnambool Botanic Gardens.

**Cancelled**

**AUGUST GENERAL MEETING** - 20th August, 2020.  
10 am in the Robert Clarke Horticultural Centre  
(providing the health crisis has passed!)

Our Guest Speaker for this meeting is Peter Voterakis.

Peter is a Ballarat resident and businessman. He has travelled extensively with botanists and like-minded travellers to the Antarctic to observe flora and fauna. Peter has a collection of fabulous images from his journey and his presentation -  
'The Unique Environment of the Sub Antarctic Islands'.

**Carole Haines, Events & Speakers Convenor**

*The future, the present and the past walked into a bar. Things got a little tense.*



## 'Garden Cuttings' by GreenThumb

- Malcolm Turnbull will be soon looking across at his old 'mate' Tony Abbott in the Prime Ministers' Avenue. Possibly August or September.
- The current label engraving machine which shares space with Secretary Susan in the George Longley back office, will soon be gone. Can't be repaired. A new machine is to be purchased at a cost of some \$20,000 and will mean the garden staff will take over the operation. What will Joy O'Brien do with her extra spare time? Anyone for tennis maybe?
- John King's smiling face has been missed amongst the Friends recently. He and wife Denise are pulling up stakes and moving to Melbourne. Good luck 'King John'.
- Some-one has stolen the 'Closed/Open' sign which hung on the fence behind the Robert Clark Horticultural Centre. GT hopes it isn't the same felon responsible for the missing newly-acquired 'Guides' flag, which also mysteriously vanished. Otherwise, maybe a serial offender? Who needs these things?
- The new deck behind the Gatekeeper's Cottage once again proved itself to be a very useful acquisition when used for a most pleasant 'New' Friends evening just before the Begonia Festival. Will be even better when the security fencing is removed.
- Progress on the Fernery redevelopment? No; nil; nix! Maybe in April?
- President Robert is of the opinion that we may have a new leader for the Western Bedders. Stay tuned.
- Terry O'Brien will be somewhat disappointed by the cancellation of the U3A Botanical Gardens course. Only a few weeks to go too. Visits to Melton Botanic Garden and to Buninyong Botanical Garden were recent highlights.
- The Ballarat Gardens Guides are working hard to put together a thematic event as part of Ballarat Heritage Weekend in May. Sounds exciting. Focus on the sequoiadendrons. They will be joined for the event by the BotaniKids Friends who are organising a complementary event in the Gatekeeper's Cottage.
- Growing Friend Glenda Phillips generously provide hundreds of miniature daffodils, iris and other bulbs to the Friends Plant Crèche at the Begonia Festival. Bags of these goodies were quickly snatched up in return for a donation to the Friends.
- GT was fascinated by the guest speaker's talk at this year's AGM. Michele Adler has an impressive history with Galapagos. Carole Haines has once again done an impressive job in finding high calibre speakers for us! Thanks Carole.
- If you attended the AGM in February you will have seen the list summarising the hours the Friends groups have put into their activities over the preceding year. Total provided was in excess of 9200, a conservative number in reality! Take a bow Growers who chalked up over 3700 hours!
- GT is worried there will be nothing to report in the Winter *Wellingtonia* since all activities have been curtailed! **Till next time: GT**

## REPORT EDUCATING FRIENDS, INCLUDES BOTANIKIDS, GATEKEEPERS COTTAGE 2020

During the 2020 Begonia Festival 3700 children participated over three days in our *Pot-a-Plant* activity. This number does not include their families and carers so we can add quite a few more thousand to that figure for the Festival. This is an important 'showcase' opportunity for the Friends and our program. The support of the Friends during the Festival for the BotaniKids team was again marvellous. In fact it was vital as it enabled team members to take breaks during the day. This year was especially busy as we planted up many thousands of buckets with herbs with the children and families. In fact we had long queues at our activity most of the time.

**Gatekeepers Cottage: New Education and Interpretation Programs:** The Cluster Groups have been a wonderful success and provide a more relaxed way to deliver our programs focusing on seasons, plants and learning about the Gardens. A feature of the sessions is the generous hospitality provided by the team, with a homemade morning tea for parents and carers and a fruit bowl for the children. 278 children participated with their siblings, parents and carers in the few months we have run these groups. Total of 125 'students' (Walking, French and music groups).

**Happenings at the Cottage:** • Combined adult creative classes conducted in Gatekeepers Cottage: Weaving and Crochet : 20 participants.

• **Photo-Biennale:** three meetings with admin and staff, followed by two workshops with 55 children and 11 helpers and teachers, as well as two open-deck gatherings for families where similar activities were undertaken. 78 people participated in these family events.

• **Probus,** 27 members.

• **Ballarat Library,** a meeting with community outreach person who outlined an idea for reading in the Gardens. We participated in the event last Sunday with 15 children with their families riding and listening to music.

• **U3A : Walking group and Ukulele group** Total of 55

• **Ballarat Community Radio Arts Program:** Julie invited to speak about the Friends, process of restoration of the Gatekeepers Cottage and BotaniKids programs.

• **Woodworkers Guild:** attended meeting re involvement in programs.

• **Schools: Mount Pleasant P S** (60 children) this school visited twice.

• **Pleasant Street P S** ( 55 children )

• **Lake Gardens Childcare** (6-10 can visit for a program often)

• **Jubilee Preschool :** 67 children

• **Cape Clear P S.** We attended their school Fair and planted 160 pots with community

• **Great Western P S.** City camp. (34 children)

• **Cottage Open Days:** We have made a real effort to open the Cottage when we can. We have 'opened' when events are happening, during children events and when we are preparing for events etc. We indicate the Cottage is open by putting out a sign or decorating our fence with bunting.

We opened the Cottage to the public on 35 full and half days with visitor numbering between 5-15 each day. These have been mainly locals, but we have had overseas visitors too. All are curious and appreciative and all get a brief talk on the restoration and the heritage of the Cottage and the work of the Friends. Membership forms are handed to local visitors.

We also opened the Cottage most days on which we had a children's activity, often including visitors into our morning tea. Many visitors put a contribution into our donation box. It needs to be said no money is stored in the Cottage. Petty cash is always stored offsite.

BotaniKids team with the help of Friends opened the Cottage for the entire *Begonia Festival*, from 10 am to 5pm during which two Cottage stewards were in attendance. Special thanks to **Doug Bradby** who was in attendance most of those three days. With over 600 visitors viewing two art exhibitions, one with seven local artists expertly curated by **Pauline O'Shanessy Dowling** from *Ballarat Arts Alive* group and the other with our very own very talented Botanical Art members' beautiful work illustrating six of the trees of the Gardens. These were especially chosen as they are most loved and visited trees by BotaniKids.

**Social Media including Facebook** continues to drive our support base, often posts achieving a remarkable reach of 2000+.

**New programs proposed:** *Artist in Residence at the Cottage*, with an artist who utilises plant materials from the Gardens into their art. Programs in 2020 Continued development of schools program (with closer links to the Tramway Education, Fish Hatchery, POW memorial, Indigenous educational program) will start soon in Ballarat including the Wetlands area.

Our educational programs and written curriculum guides we offer schools include- The Prime Minister Avenue, The Trees and other plants, The Statues and The Lake. These materials were written and published by the Friends with the support of two Rotary grants. We will now seriously pursue the possibility of the appointment of a trained teacher, working, conducting and planning educational programs within precinct. The Ballarat Botanical Gardens Foundation has given their financial support to the education programs in the Cottage through the fitting out of the interior of the Cottage. The painting of the cupboards are about to start late March.

**The Young Friends Group** has been evolving with a Christmas picnic well attended in Dec in the Cottage with lunchtime talks in planning.

**Heritage Weekend:** The Gatekeepers Cottage will be opened, linked with the BGANZ open Botanical Gardens day with a demonstration 'olden days Botany lesson' for children (with a parent or carer) conducted in the Cottage on the Sunday. There will be a display of educational material on the Sequoias to support the Guides Heritage weekend program.

Once again the support, patience and encouragement of the Committee, the Foundation the wider Friends membership and the CoB, especially **Peter, Glen, Donna and Shane** in our endeavours is so very much appreciated and never taken for granted. Total volunteer Hours: 1,250 hrs

**Julie Bradby and the Ballarat BotaniKids team**



Thousands potted up during the Festival



From left: Jen Haynes, Helen Vincent, Cathie Keller, Trish Twaits and Julie Bradby

*Did you hear about the guy who got hit in the head with a can of cola? He was lucky it was a soft drink.*



The U3A course officially ends on April 7 but has now unfortunately been curtailed by the COVID-19 crisis. The weekly commitment needed, plus the scheduling of many group tours, has made for a busy autumn for the Guides.

**Jane Monro** has not only had the rostering task and its on-going changes with tour details but also the hospitality arrangements.

The Guides are stretched when we have four or five tours in quick succession. So please let us know if you are interested in joining this valued and enjoyable volunteer activity. No experience necessary!

I am sure I speak for Jane as well, when I say I am so grateful for the support we get from the Guides. Amongst the Guides there is always a preparedness to help where they can.

Guiding Friends are also involved in other Friends activities, helping out at the Begonia Festival and were also to be promoting the **Australian Association of the Friends of Botanic Gardens stall** at the *Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show*. Our ever popular Sunday morning 11 am free tours were to recommence for Autumn on March 15. However, these too have been cancelled for the near future.

Guides in April and May will be contributing to the activities associated with the focus on the ***Avenue of Sequoia giganteum*** during Heritage weekend. This will provide an opportunity to find out all about this "heart" and "spine" in the Botanic gardens. We will have special tours, displays of art, photos and information on these special trees and on the Sunday a special presentation with a series of speakers. The Cottage will also be used for family oriented activities. Look out for details coming via Ballarat Heritage weekend publicity and emails from FBBG. (Now cancelled due to the virus outbreak. Ed)

**Terry O'Brien, Guides Convenor**

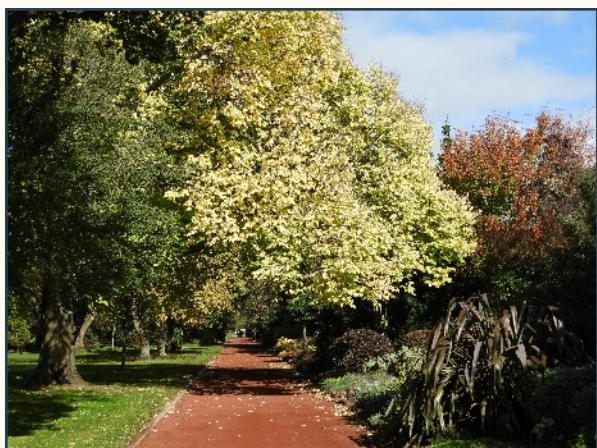
## WHAT YOU CAN SEE IN THE GARDENS:



A family of three tawny frogmouths spotted by Tim and Wendy in the Wetlands area recently.



Promise of things to come: (above) Autumn colour from the ginkgo trees behind the fishpond. And, (below) along the Western Bed



## AT THE BEGONIA FESTIVAL 2020:



(above): 9.30 am before the crowds arrived at the Begonia Festival on Sunday morning (below).



(Left:) one of the many wandering performers in the Gardens at the Festival. This one had the large crowd enthralled.



(Right:) a wandering minstrel serenaded all and sundry.



# Friends of Ballarat Botanical Gardens Information 2020

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

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

Tel. George Longley Building 03 5342 9354

## 2020 FBBG COMMITTEE AND AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

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

### COMMITTEE MEETING TIMES 2020

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

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

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

**Guiding Friends** 4th Tuesday each month 10 am.

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

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

**History Group** 1st Tuesday each month 4 pm.

**Plant Labelling** as required.

## WHAT'S COMING UP FOR THE BALLARAT FRIENDS (see page 1 too for important announcement)

<b>WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22, 9.30 AM -4.40 PM</b> <b>CANCELLED DUE TO COVID-19</b>	Excursion to <i>Musk Farm and Frogmore Nursery</i> (not the Garden). \$50. BYO lunch. <b>Booking:</b> direct at George Longley office
<b>THURSDAY, MAY 21, 10 AM</b> <b>CANCELLED DUE TO COVID-19</b>	General Meeting 10 am. GUEST SPEAKER—SHELLEY WOOD—Curator Warrnambool Botanic Gardens who will speak on the history of those gardens. RSVP May 19.
<b>THURSDAY, AUGUST 20, 10 AM</b>	General Meeting 10 am; guest speaker is Peter Voterakis. (See page 6)
<b>WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28</b>	Day excursion to <i>Sunnymeade</i> , near Kithbrook.
<b>FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 9.45 - 3.30</b>	<i>Speakers' Luncheon</i>
<b>THURSDAY NOVEMBER 26</b>	<i>Christmas Nibbles and Drinks</i> . 5.30 (time, venue and cost to be confirmed)

**DEADLINE FOR THE WINTER EDITION 2020**  
 Friday June 12, 2020

Submit articles to the Editor [info@fbbg.org.au](mailto:info@fbbg.org.au)



Many thanks to our fantastic and loyal contributors. Without their interest and input the *Wellingtonia* would not be as successful as it is. You know who you are - take a collective bow! Ed.

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



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

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

**Contributions for Winter Wellingtonia 2020 are due by mid June please.**

Michael Bird, Editor.

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