

Wellingtonia

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NEWSLETTER – WINTER 2021

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK:



We have an iconic addition to the gardens in our new 12m x 12m gothic structure as an entrance to the fernery precinct. **Andrew Fedorowicz** of *Balance Architecture* has adapted the original design plans of the fernery and designed a building that adds to the heritage perspective of our garden and is an exciting and enchanting visage. We should be popping the champagne corks and celebrating an important step in further cementing our status as an outstanding regional botanic garden and the tourist potential built into that status. Although the building is complete there will be no access for some time, maybe December. We await design and funding details and timeline for internal fit and landscaping. At this point it seems that the fernery saga will continue and there is uncertainty about what is ahead in its development.

The Fernery has pre-occupied the Friends attention for a long time and some revisiting of its history will be helpful, especially for new members.

The fernery was seen as **an important historic component** of BBG, an important educational resource and adding to the Garden's civic value and tourism.

In the years before the deteriorated old structure closed in 2013, Friends worked with the Council on its refurbishment plans and put funds aside for its redevelopment.

For over 20 years the FBBG have accumulated funds for this. The ongoing problem has been sourcing of other funds and gaining stronger allocation of funds from Council. As a result of FBBG lobbying, \$1.4 million was allocated by COB in 2015/16 for an exciting new joint future-focused project by both FBBG and COB. This Fernery Redevelopment Project

came to a halt because of lack of sourcing other grant funding. Moving forward from that we have gone through interesting morphing and evolving processes with the project.

In 2017/2018 the Council decided on a scaled-back staged development and using the available funds of \$1.4 million to build Stage 1.

In 2021 the Friends made a submission for Stage 2 inclusion in Council infrastructure spending for this year's budget and invited the City's Executive team and Councillors to include the Fernery Project in their tour of key infrastructure projects. **Neither of these were successful.**

We have both the Friends and Gardens Foundation trying to progress the fernery and both have set aside funds to contribute but there is uncertainty for the future.

We can't access Stage 1 for a while as there is a safety issue until landscaping is completed. **In Stage 1 we have a grand fernery entrance but it is to an empty space without ferns and a fernery until more funds are committed.**

'In Stage 1 we have a grand fernery entrance but it is to an empty space...'

If Stage 2 is to proceed it has to become a Council priority and attract funding. This would be some time away as it would have to go through the Council budget planning for 2022/2023. The building of Stage 1 first also presents access difficulty for construction and demolition works associated with stage 2. It is unclear what the road map ahead will be. Perhaps more morphing and more change? We await developments.

Stage 1 did gain a \$150,000 **Growing Victoria's Botanic Gardens program** by the Dept of Environment, Land, Water & Planning (DELWP) and that is funding the sourcing of landscaping design concepts. The submission for this grant was supported by both the Friends and the Foundation. Some of that Grant money will be available to fund the associated works.

Will these funds be enough? The Friends and Foundation have been told we will be consulted as this project develops.

We have waited since 2013 to see a new structure emerge in

continues page 2...



- GENERAL MEETING - THURSDAY, 19 AUGUST, 2021 10 a.m.
- A BIRD-WATCHING TREAT AT LAKE WENDOUREE AND NORTH GARDENS, Sunday, 12 September at 10 am.
- FRIENDS OPEN GARDENS - NOVEMBER 6 and 7, 2021. 10.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m.
- SPRING LUNCHEON - FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2021. 9.45 a.m. to 3.00 p.m.
- Open **DESIGNER GARDENS** arranged by Rotary. November 20 and 21, 2021 (More details on page 3)

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



See what Tim's been up to recently on page 9.

and an aged old batten structure with an empty space in between. The long neglect of the fernery precinct in our gardens is an embarrassment for Ballarat.

With increasing local tourism in Australia we are missing the opportunity to promote fully our gardens. It is a challenge for our new Council to move this forward. The Friends and Foundation are ready and committed to contribute to help transform the whole fernery precinct into another attractive educational and inspiring area for visitors.

SOME OF THE AUTUMN HIGHLIGHTS FOR FBBG.

Open gardens April 17 and 18. Excellent event organization by Wendy Taylor and Carole Haines and the garden owners were

so welcoming. As limited to FBBG members it was not over crowded and was a very relaxing experience as well as motivating and inspiring us with our own gardens.

New Friends gathering April 15. We had about 20 there enjoying the relaxed presentations and good food and wine. Our groups benefit by enrichment of new volunteers and the skill they bring. I hope we have a reputation where our groups are open to new input and welcoming.

General Meeting May 20. Many of us miss our exotic travel experiences and **Peter Votearakis'** talk was warmly welcomed. Peter gave us an insight into his experiences visiting several Sub Antarctic Islands. We had beautiful images of the flora and fauna interspersed with other captivating and amusing shots such as the waves breaking over the swimming pool on the cruise ship and the preoccupied traveller with his phone oblivious to it all. Excellent presentation. Thank you Peter.

Ballarat Heritage Festival. FBBG were active participants in this from May 7 - 30 with tours, talks and exhibitions. Hope some of you lingered long enough in the Conservatory to absorb some of the information provided on the *Sequoiadendron giganteum*. Most of the heritage tours we got into the double figures for attendance. We repeated the Giant Redwoods Avenue tour on June 6, a miserable wintry day, and had a gathering of 14.

The Events team at COB have been very helpful with publicity and good to see a broader cross section of our community now attracted to our events. It reflects well on FBBG when we can ask our local people like **Lorraine Powell, Merrill Shulkes, Wendy Sandiford** and **Jock Gilbert** to contribute as presenters at our talks and they have the passion and deeper knowledge to engage their audience. Their efforts and commitment are appreciated by us all. I also want to acknowledge **Peter Marquand** for his contributions and help with all these activities as well.

Handbury Award to Raoul and Beth Dixon was presented at the FBBG May meeting. The award is named in honour of the late Geoff Handbury AO, a major benefactor of the Australian Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens Inc (AAFBG). The award was presented by **Merrill Shulkes** to Beth and Raoul; Merrill contributed an article to the last issue of *Wellingtonia* describing their contributions over many years. Congratulations to you both Beth and Raoul.

Congratulations also to Rudolf Heubner who was awarded Life membership of FBBG at our May meeting. For many years Rudolf played a key role helping **Yvonne Curbach** and others in the smooth running of the nursery area and he kept the trolley

sales. Although Rudolf's focus was in the Nursery area he was a supporter of FBBG generally and attended many of the FBBG functions. Rudolf is not able to be as active these days and we miss his involvement. We hope he will be able to come to some of our functions and continue his association with us.

SOME COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHTS FOR AUTUMN:

New equipment installed in the Office – a scanner and two new computers. Equipment initially is just for the use of the History group to facilitate their progress on our archives. **Stephanie de Boer** as new History convener is working hard to establish correct processes and skills for the group. Huge task sorting through and ordering the many items and Stephanie will be pleased to hear from anyone who would like to contribute to the range of jobs involved.

The last six months without a paid Office Assistant has meant increased workload for some. The situation has forced us to be more self-reliant and also an opportunity to look critically at our admin processes. **Kim Nolan** has largely worked us through this transition, and as incoming President during this time, I am most appreciative of what she has achieved.

Other volunteers are also now helping in the Office and we hope we can build on this so that it is not so dependent on the one person. Filing systems have all been sorted and we have had a good clean up and all made more efficient. Kim's computer and organization skills also contribute to the very smooth running of admin work.

Foundation members were invited to the May FBBG committee meeting. It is important that these two groups work comfortably as partners in support of BBG and so time was given to clarifying our different roles and building the relationship.

Changes at the Gatekeeper's Cottage: The cottage has had significant bequests to help develop its role in the gardens. The most recent bequest was from **Fiona Stewart** in memory of her parents, **Llewellyn and Dorothy Williams**.

The Foundation and Friends have worked together to use the various funds to make the space fit its purpose as an education and interpretative centre. The *Plant Evolution Display panel* to be installed is beautiful and engaging. I am sure that when you see it you will take pride that this is part of the resources FBBG provide for the gardens.

The middle room in the cottage will also have a magnifier/microscope mounted on a new wooden table. It is easy to envisage Julie and her team, and also the Guides, exciting kids and others about the natural world with these new additions.

Increasing access to these new additions will also require our attention. It is a very comfortable space to spend a couple of hours. Plenty of facilities on hand and toilets nearby. **Come Spring we will be looking for volunteers to help support opening up public access to the Cottage.**

Wintering – Reprieve time to catch up and plan! The Committee does not meet in July. The August meeting will spend some time reviewing our activities and planning. The committee welcome any feedback from members to help in our planning.

Terry O'Brien, President.

COMING EVENTS FOR 2021

● GENERAL MEETING - THURSDAY, 19 AUGUST, 2021.

CENTRAL WENDOUREE CLUBROOMS -

Gregory Street, Wendouree. 10 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.

GUEST SPEAKER - Anthony Marshall, Vegetation Planning and Management Officer at the City of Ballarat. His topic will be on the **Greening of Ballarat and how the Council is managing the implementation of its Urban Forest Strategy.**

● **'A BIRD-WATCHING TREAT FOR MEMBERS AT THE NORTH GARDENS AND LAKE WENDOUREE for MEMBERS', SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 12, 2021** at 10.00 to 11.30 a.m. The President of the Ballarat Field Naturalists Club, John Gregurke and other Club members, will lead us on a walk through the Indigenous gardens at the Gardens, plus North Ballarat Wetlands and fairylands, talking about the plants, birds and wetland species/ecological role of the Wetland.

Members are advised to bring BINOCULARS to help with bird identification! Following our tour we will have morning tea in the Gatekeeper's Cottage.

● **FRIENDS OPEN GARDENS - NOVEMBER 6 and 7, 2021.** 10.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. Six local members are happy to open their gardens for us to enjoy. As with the most successful April event, three Gardens will be open on each day. Further information in the *SPRING Wellingtonia*. **NO CHARGE.** Keep these date free to visit these beautiful and unique gardens.

● **SPRING LUNCHEON - FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2021.** 9.45 a.m. to 3.00 p.m. We are fortunate to have **CAROLYN BLACKMAN** - '*Gardens Big and Small*'. From large gardens and Commercial projects to small pocket handkerchief gardens. Carolyn is one of Australia's best known gardeners with regular appearances on ABC radio.

Below: Simon Rickard



We are also very happy to welcome **SIMON RICKARD** back to speak to us as well. His topic this year is **Creating a beautiful dry garden.** 'Australians often imagine that our hot, dry summers make gardening a burden. In fact, it is a great blessing, as a fifth of the world's flora comes from climates as dry as our own'. Join Simon Rickard as he explains how to select the right plants for our gardens, and learn to love the climate we have.

Further details will be available in the *SPRING WELLINGTONIA* along with *Try Booking* information. Please keep this date free to come and listen to great speakers. **BOOKINGS OPEN IN SEPTEMBER.**



Carolyn Blackman

Following our Luncheon the next two days are the open *DESIGNER GARDENS* arranged by **Rotary**. November 20 and 21, 2021. (More at: gardendesignfest.com.au, and in next *Wellingtonia*.)

● **CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS - THURSDAY EVENING - DECEMBER 2 - 5.30 p.m. to 7.00 p.m.**

More details in the *SPRING Wellingtonia*.

● **ONE FOR YOUR 2022 Diary! A Friends' visit to Alowyn Gardens in Yarra Glen has been rescheduled to October, 2022. due to COVID restrictions causing booking difficulties.**

Carole Haines, Events Organiser

A CALL TO ALL HISTORY LOVERS

Whether you are interested in: -

- writing history or the oral variety
- giving presentations or creating poster displays
- digitisation and/or archiving
- research or, simply facts and dates about the Ballarat Botanical Gardens!

We hope you will consider joining the Friends' History Group soon!

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

The Friends are pleased to welcome the following new members who have joined since the last issue of the *Wellingtonia*:



Caroline Bilson, Helen Burt, Kristen Burt, Ollie Fraser, Gwen Levey, Emanuel Livori, Diane Notman, Geoffrey Notman, Gillian Robson, Glenis Smythe, Bernadette Aitken

Total Membership is currently 379.

Warwick Sellens – Membership Officer



FOUNDATION

DID YOU HAPPEN TO SEE THIS ARTICLE?

(May 27, 2021)

The local free newspaper, the 'Ballarat News' recently featured an article outlining the appointment of a new Gardens apprentice, Troy Peddle. Troy is working to complete his Certificate III in 'parks and gardens' at Federation Uni.

"Troy's annual wages are funded by the Ballarat Botanical Gardens Foundation and external benefactors (and Friends members) Arthur and Merrill Shulkes". Welcome aboard Troy!

Gardens Foundation funds apprenticeship

BY EDWINA WILLIAMS

THE Ballarat Botanical Gardens exists to share knowledge of native and exotic plants with its visitors.

But with six apprentices currently in the City of Ballarat's parks and gardens team, the site also operates as a hands-on outdoor classroom, educating the next generation of horticultural professionals.

Troy Peddle is one of these young staff members.

Three months into three-years-worth of practical study, he'll soon

begin Federation University's certificate three in parks and gardens, and he's already making history.

Mr Peddle is the first City parks and gardens apprentice to be employed by BGT Jobs and Training, with his annual wages funded by the Ballarat Botanical Gardens Foundation and external benefactors, Arthur and Merrill Shulkes.

"I've always had a passion for my gardens, mainly vegetable gardens, so when I saw the opportunity to apply for the apprenticeship, I jumped at it," he said.

"I'm in the nursery for the first

six months. It's fabulous in there, everyone's very supportive and has a lot of information to give.

"We've just recently taken down the begonia after the festival, so my work has been prepping them for storage. We finished putting out the Mother's Day display, and we've been putting up tulips for our winter display."

City of Ballarat's horticultural apprentices spend time in the Gardens, the nursery, with the tree and sports crews, and on Start and Victoria streets.

Senior parks and nursery, Peter Marquand is proud to be nurturing the "horticulturalists of the future". Educating these young men and women is part of his team's succession planning, encouraging the apprentices to apply for roles with the City of Ballarat once fully qualified.

"Most of them will go through an employment process and gain work with council after their apprenticeship," he said.

"Our parks and gardens are a very important and unique part of what the City does. We have a world-class Botanical Gardens, well-known parks, streets and reserves, and all our employees are an integral part of our seasonal operations."



Peter Marquand, Troy Peddle, Elizabeth Gillman and Anita Godfrey caught up in the Gardens' conservatory, where many of the apprentice's nursery learning takes place.

"Troy's passion has been fantastic. That's what we're looking for in our gardening staff, and that's something you can't teach."

BGT Jobs and Training is the largest employer of apprentices and trainees in Ballarat.

Apprenticeship and trainee consultant Anita Godfrey said Mr Peddle was the successor from a pool of three final applicants she presented to the City of Ballarat, and the Gardens Foundation during the employment process.

"We're proud of this placement, and our partnerships with businesses across Ballarat, helping people create a career," she said.

The Ballarat Botanical Gardens Foundation collaborates with the Friends of the Ballarat Botanical Gardens to help the green space thrive.

FORBGG's Elizabeth Gillman said the volunteers Friends work in diverse ways to make horticultural ideas and educational opportunities a reality.

"Troy's apprenticeship is a very personal and visible project that we can all take interest in, and be very proud of," she said.

The Ballarat Botanical Gardens Foundation enables tax-deductible donations. Visit ballaratsbybotanicalgardensfoundation.com.au.



Proactive horticultural learning: Apprentice Troy Peddle is halfway through his rotation with the nursery team. Photos: EDWINA WILLIAMS

"If you have a garden and a library, you have everything you need."* – Marcus Tullius Cicero
(* Today that would mean a Netflix or Stan subscription. Ed.)

GARDEN EXPLORER: Garden Explorer has been mentioned a number of times over the past twelve months. It is now fully functioning for both **Ballarat and Buninyong Botanical Gardens**.

As well the **Royal Sydney Botanical Gardens** and some of its affiliates (e.g. Blue Mountains Garden Mount Tomah, Australian Botanic Garden Mount Annan) are also accessible.



You now have unlimited access to find something special in each of the Gardens; you can learn more about horticulture and different plant species, as well as take a self-guided tour or find key landmarks - all available at your fingertips.

Both our local gardens are featured along with Donna Thomas in the City of Ballarat's Winter 'ourBallarat' magazine (page 13).

AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS OF BOTANIC GARDENS: Report by Merrill Shulkes AAFBG Management Committee Member and FBBG Representative

At the Management Committee meeting held via Zoom on Monday, June 7 it was announced that Kate Heffernan is to become our new President. Kate belongs to the Friends of Gold Coast Botanical Gardens and has an extensive horticultural background. This makes her eminently suited to her new role with the AAFBG. Coincidentally she is the tour leader of the AAFBG's Botanical Tour of Tasmania in October. (See below left).

The program for the 2022 AAFBG Biennial Conference at Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Gardens (about 5 km south of Batemans Bay on the south NSW coast) on April 29 - May 1 is set to be formally launched in September of this year. The keynote speaker will be the Patron of FBBG, Professor Tim Entwistle. An exciting program is being organised around the theme of **'THRIVING TOGETHER Resilience and Renewal in a Changing World'**, with plenty of time for networking and socializing. There will also be an opportunity for other Friends Groups to make a presentation at the conference and Expressions of Interest will be sent out shortly. Lynne Anlezark, Co-Chair of the Eurobodalla Working Group has recently joined the AAFBG Committee.

The 2022 AAFBG AGM will be part of the Biennial Conference and include the presentation of the 2021 Handbury Awards. The awards have increased in popularity and to maintain high standards the judging criteria is soon to be reviewed. Since the awards were launched in 2019, FBBG has been very successful (Julie Bradby 2019; Beth and Raoul Dixon 2020) and we hope to continue that tradition in 2021.

We currently have 16 bookings (max. 26 people including the Tour Leader) for the AAFBG Botanical Tour of Tasmania October 24-30 this year. All Management Committee members have been enlisted to promote the tour to the Botanic Gardens that they represent.

In addition to information on the tour provider's website (www.jonbainestours.com/AAFBG) we have created a promotional flyer to use in Friends' newsletters and on Facebook to publicise the tour. (See left). Jon Baines was recently in Tasmania to check out all aspects of the itinerary.

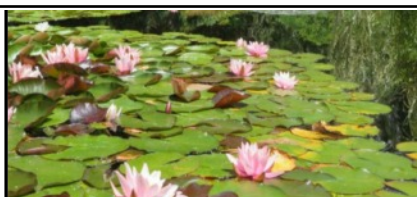
Merrill Shulkes

TASMANIAN TOUR OCTOBER 2021:

Our association (the AAFBG) is conducting a six day tour of Tasmania in October.

Bookings are now open.

Full details are available from the website shown.



24 – 30 October 2021

3 nights Launceston – 3 nights Hobart

For further information and booking
www.jonbainestours.com/AAFBG
email: info@jonbainestours.com.au
tel: 03 9343 6367

Jon Baines
tours





INCOMPLETE HERCULES STATUE

‘..from the records of John Garner’



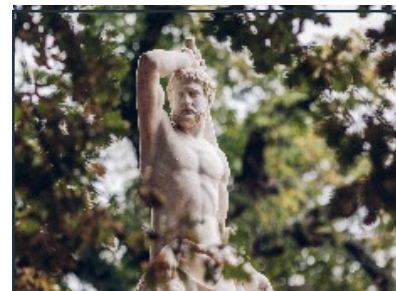
Have you ever wondered about the rough looking statue between the Robert Clark Centre and the Friends nursery? John explains:..

“Following an attack on the Stoddart Statue of Hercules a sculptor was engaged by the Ballarat City Council to prepare a copy.

Having got half way through doing so he gave up the task.

The incomplete statue now resides in the garden at the back of the Robert Clark Horticultural Centre awaiting an explanatory panel. In its way it provides an insight how sculptures are copied as various stages are demonstrated.

The original Hercules showed lines and markings used by the sculptor for the necessary references and measurements but these have been removed when the statues were renovated by Jude Schalinger (who has recently retired from her role as conservator for the statues in the Ballarat Gardens. Ed)”.



Above: the ‘real’ Hercules near the Sequoiadendron Avenue;
Top left: the ‘Incomplete’ Hercules.

BOOK REVIEW:

“LAKE WENDOUREE

Pleasing to the Eye and Satisfying to the Soul”

Introduced by Doug Bradby, Ballarat, 2021

Lake Wendouree is one of ten “delightful tales” about life in Ballarat. After a brief historical introduction as to how Yuille’s Swamp became Lake Wendouree, there are brief cameos of life in and around the Lake. From Regattas to Adventures and Shipwrecks and then to Swimming and Moonlight Concerts, we are soon persuaded that, “as a pleasure resort”, Lake Wendouree is unrivalled.

What gives this tale its immediacy are the parallels drawn between the past and present. During the years 1867-1873, it was possible to walk across part of the Lake from the eastern shore, and also have a training track for horses on the northern part of the Lake.

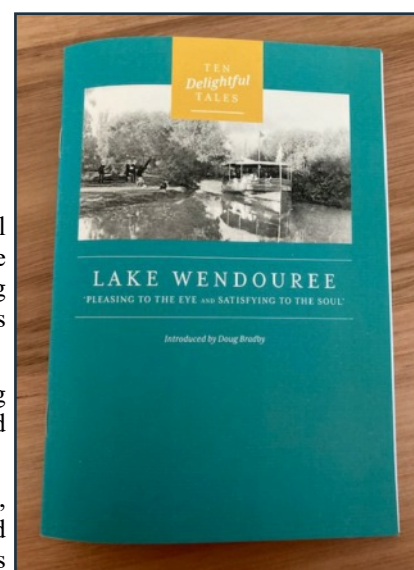
For some Ballaratians, this will prompt memories of the Millennium Drought. And then in 1883, there was the problem of the Wendouree Rushes. Baron Von Mueller suggested rolling and flattening the weeds, while Mayor Claxton advocated using the steamer to cut them. Whereas today, “a sort of tractor, lawn mower” is used.

The newspaper articles and photos together with Doug’s commentary bring the history of the Lake to life. And these sources are carefully selected to amuse and entertain. There are stories of Adventures and Shipwrecks with “foolish men and [fainting] women.”

The Voyage to the Botanical Gardens comes at the end of the booklet. As Doug tells us, in 1864, the Municipal Council had 500 pounds, which they intended to spend on establishing the Botanical Gardens immediately. So, the wealth of the Ballarat miners was put to good use in creating the Gardens where “the poorest man or woman could enjoy the flower gardens and the grand park as much as “the toffs” of Ballarat.

This tale about Lake Wendouree makes light enjoyable reading with or without “a cup of coffee or a glass of wine.”

Stephanie de Boer, History Convenor



GUIDES REPORT: During Autumn and including *Ballarat Heritage Festival* more than one hundred visitors participated in Saturday and Sunday morning guided tours. Our ‘giants’ were highlighted by way of a guided walk in *Wellingtonia Avenue*, a presentation of the *Sequoiadendron Giganteum Avenue* and thirdly with a photographic exhibition of the giant trees.

Fine examples from the **Friends Botanical Art Group** were included in the exhibition. Awareness was created of Sequoias beyond our Gardens and you may choose to find them for yourself! One of Ballarat’s Exceptional Tree Register, *Sequoia sempervirens* in a backyard in Gregory Street directly north of Durham Point, others near the tennis courts in Mollonghup and a group of *Sequoiadendron giganteum* in the garden of *Belmont* at Raglan near Beaufort.

Requests for guiding in the winter months are a rare event and the guides welcome the opportunity to reflect, plan, develop and anticipate until the busy months of Spring.

Guides look forward to visiting, as a group, some interesting gardens in and not too far from Ballarat.

This year we welcome **Geoff and Di Notman** to our group. I’m sure they will share with the current guides a common interest in gardening and botanical developments. The guides encourage each other to be an informed and helpful source for all visitors. New members are always welcome to the Guiding group and if leading a tour doesn’t appeal and you are interested in assisting with research or have plant information to share, we need you! We meet each 4th Wednesday of the month at 10.00 a.m. at the George Longley Building.

Julie Chandler Convener

THE HORSE CHESTNUT AVENUE IN THE BALLARAT GARDENS:

The strong linear design of the *Ballarat Botanical Gardens* features four main north-south axes: Wendouree Parade, the Giant Redwood Avenue, the Avenue of Horse Chestnuts (accommodating the Prime Ministers' Avenue) and the path along the Western Beds boundary.



Ballarat Chestnut Avenue 1919

The most famous Horse Chestnut Avenue is the *Champs Elysees*, in Paris.

(Ballarat at left)

The *Aesculus hippocastanum* originated in a small area in the Balkan mountains and is widely cultivated throughout the temperate world. It grows to 36 m tall, with a domed crown of stout branches, with each leaflet 13 to 30 cm long, making the whole leaf up to 60 cm across.

The leaf scars left on twigs have a distinctive horseshoe shape, complete with seven "nails", though the common name is related to the erroneous belief it was a kind of chestnut and the observation that eating them cured horses of chest complaints.



The flowers, usually white with a small red spot are 10 to 30 cm tall with about 20 to 50 flowers on each panicle.



The fruit has a shell of green, soft spikes, usually containing one a glossy, nut-like seed, with a whitish scar at the base. Often called conkers, they give their name to the traditional children's game. The game is played by two players, each with a conker threaded onto a piece of string; they take turns striking each other's conker until one breaks.



The nuts, especially when young and fresh, are slightly poisonous and the acetone produced from them was used in military armaments and is still used for health purposes and whitening fabrics.

Sadly, almost half of the two million Horse Chestnut trees in the UK are infected with a virulent fungus called Bleeding Canker (*Phytophthora*), which is causing vast losses.

We are lucky to be able to appreciate this beautiful avenue, which inspired Clarice Beckett's (1924) painting

(see right).

Susan Pilbeam



'Saw a vegetable being delivered to the local library. That's a turnip for the books.'

AUTUMN GENERAL MEETING AT WENDOUREE BOWLING CLUB

Our Autumn Meeting coincided with *National Volunteer Week* and President Terry elaborated on this year's themes of *Recognise, Reconnect and Re-imagine*. It was fitting to then acknowledge the work of three members with *FBBG Life Membership*. **Rudolph Huebner** has been a long term and dedicated *Growing Friend*. Regardless of the weather, he has worked in the nursery and been instrumental in the management and growth of trolley sales. Many members are familiar with **Beth and Raoul Dixon**, who have, over decades, supported the *FBBG* in a myriad of official, innovative and hands-on ways. All awardees spoke of the joy of volunteering, the friendships made and the importance of teamwork in achieving goals. **Julie Bradby's** prestigious *AAFBG Handbury Award* for her work with *BotaniKids* was also recognized. (See *Autumn Wellingtonia*)

Peter Marquand reported on the awarding of the inaugural *Ballarat Botanical Gardens Foundation Apprenticeship*. He updated members on the Fernery development and the achievement of *DELWP* funding. The online *Gardens Explorer* program (*IRIS*) has been launched and the *Significant Trees Register* is now accessible through the *CoB* website. He commented that the rain means the lake is overflowing and then answered members' questions.

President Terry updated members on what the various groups have achieved, though several events have been postponed. The **History Group** has begun digitalising their archives, the *Guides* research projects, a new *Ballarat Gardens* guidebook and the *BotaniKids* program. He then looked forward to several Spring events.

Guest speaker **Peter Votearakis** took us on a fascinating tour of the Sub-Antarctic Islands, illustrated by his photographs and videos. This World Heritage site consists of five island groups (the Snares, Bounty Islands, Antipodes Islands, Auckland Islands and Campbell Island) in the Southern Ocean south-east of New Zealand. The islands, have a high level of productivity, bio-diversity and wildlife population densities, among birds, plants and invertebrates. They are particularly notable for the large number, diversity and rarity of bird species, particularly penguins. Access is strictly controlled, so results in intimate and exciting encounters.

Congratulations to the *Catering Group*, who have adapted to Covid restrictions, to still provide a delicious morning tea. The noisy post meeting socialisation showed just how much we enjoy getting together.

(See: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/8771>)

Susan Pilbeam

Photos below: 1. Rudolph Huebner; 2. Merrill Shulkes with Beth and Raoul Dixon; 3. A handsome gull; 4. Peter Votearakis; 5. A rare specimen.



PUTTING A FACE TO THE BALLARAT FRIENDS COMMITTEE 2021

The 2021 Friends Committee was featured in the Autumn 2021 Wellingtonia. This month it's the turn of our two non-Committee members, both of whom carry out important roles by leading sub-groups of the Friends: the Ambassadors and Botanical Art. The latter group has been long established but the Ambassadors is an emerging group having only started in the last three years or so.

I don't know when I started gardening, but have always enjoyed it. I love to travel and always make time to visit the botanical gardens in each place I go too.

My involvement with the Friends Ballarat Botanical Gardens began when I joined BotaniKids and now as Convener of the Ambassadors. It is a lovely group to belong to, as we take all the compliments from the public about the gardens without any of the hard work put in by the gardeners.



Trish Twaits (Ambassadors)

I moved to Ballarat 10 years ago and joined the Friends to be part of the botanical illustrating group, it wasn't meeting then, so I volunteered for working on garden beds with other friends and gardens staff, this was such a good experience. I have found the same enthusiasm and dedication, in all other Friends groups. Botanical Illustrators are meeting again so I am now part of this group.



Valerie Richards (Botanical Art)

A BIRD WATCHING TREAT AT LAKE WENDOUREE AND NORTH GARDENS

Join us on Sunday September 12 at 10 am for a **walk and talk** with members of the *Field Naturalists' Club of Ballarat*. **John Gregurke** (Club President) and other Club members will lead us on this tour.

We will wander through the Indigenous Gardens plus Northern Wetlands and Fairyland to hear about the birds, plants and wetland species. Lake Wendouree is a habitat for an abundance of water fowl, so bring binoculars to identify many of the species up close!

Tour will last approximately one-and-a-half hours finishing with morning tea at the Gatekeeper's Cottage.

To book for this free tour and complimentary morning tea, phone Carole Haines on 0437 462 731 or email cr_haines@bigpond.com

Bookings essential. Please RSVP by Thursday 9 September.
Family and friends of FBBG members most welcome.



Bring Binoculars to help with bird identification.

Warning: Grandfather joke: Q. *What's orange and sounds like a parrot?* A. *A carrot.*



'Garden Cuttings' by Green Thumb

- Green Thumb is very worried. There is a veritable paucity of gossip to relay to you!
- However, you must have read the report in the *Ballarat Courier* on June 12. The heading was '**Rather unfortunate**' **flaw in the new fernery**. And of course 'we' all knew that didn't we? Behind the new 'gazebo' we have an empty space. Will it ever see a second building? GT is taking bets!
- The **Royal Melbourne Botanic Gardens** are celebrating their 175th birthday this year. (Well done RMBG!). **Buninyong Botanical Gardens** are 'catching up' and turning 160 this year! GT understands our own **Tim Entwisle** will be making an appearance at Buninyong soon.
- The Ballarat Friends Guides worked extremely hard to develop their **Sequoiadendron program**. Shame on Covid interfering though! However, some excellent resources were developed and the Gardens got a heap of publicity. Well done Guides! They are already planning a new theme for 2022!
- Coming up sometime in the distant future: unveiling of the PM Turnbull bust, and, the opening of the new 'Fernery'. When?
- GT is looking forward to seeing both the **new microscope** and the **Evolution of Plants diorama** in the Gatekeeper's Cottage.
- You may not be aware that there has been a **Tenants' Group** representing the various community groups which use the Gardens and the Lake precinct. It has been re-convened GT believes, and will have something like fourteen groups participating.
- GT is looking forward to hearing **Tony Marshall from the City of Ballarat**. He is going to speak at the August General Meeting on the topic of how the Greening of Ballarat program is being undertaken.



A recent photo of the completed but closed 'Fernery Entrance'

Until Next Time; keep your secateurs clean and sharp! Green Thumb

REPORTS:

GEORGE LONGLEY BUILDING RELOCATION UPDATE AS OF JUNE 10

The following is an update after the Special General Meeting held on March 11, which endorsed the concept for the relocation of the Nursery and the construction of a new George Longley Building (GLB).

- A Pre-application form from **Heritage Victoria** has been completed in conjunction with **Peter Marquand** (Ballarat Curator) and a Permit Reference Number received.
- Following this, contact has been made with a Permit Officer from Heritage Victoria and a site meeting held on May 1. This provided the opportunity to visit the current location as well as the proposed new site and to discuss the concept. The meeting was very productive with several suggestions being made by the Heritage Victoria Officer. This will assist in the Planning Permit process.
- I have since been advised that the Pre-Application stage has now been closed off and a full Application for Heritage Victoria approval is the next step. To assist with this process **Tony Jones** from *Absolute Building Design* has agreed to offer his services. Tony will also be involved in the preparation of a Submission to Council for the relocation.
- A further site meeting has been arranged for June 22 with Tony Jones and the Education Manager Building & Construction Training Centre at Federation University. This meeting will be the starting point for the preparation of the Submission to Heritage Victoria and the City of Ballarat.
- In the meantime the **Nursery Growers** have compiled a wish list of requirements for the new GLB. Hopefully with the easing of Covid restrictions sooner rather than later, a meeting involving all Convenors who use the GLB will be held to complete this wish list. This will then be used as a 'Brief' for Tony Jones as part of the Submission. *So far no red flags!*

Robert Selkirk.

AMBASSADORS RETURN: In April as Covid 19 restrictions began to be lifted the Ambassadors returned to the Conservatory just in time to enjoy the last of the Begonia display.

Whilst the country is waiting on vaccination numbers to improve, we have had a smaller group of ambassadors return and have been able to fill a morning shift each weekend. A big thank you to you all those involved.

I am pleased to welcome four new members Kay, Joyce, Bernadette and Solouchana.

A winter break over July and August; back in September. **Trish Twaits, Ambassadors Convener**



Ambassador Jenny Haines (right) with a group of visitors

TREASURER'S REPORT: Our **major source of income** this year has been from the Begonia Festival! With a different format this year over four weekends we brought in takings of an amazing \$12,753, with over \$400 from the sale of books, cards and donations and over \$12,000 on the sale of plants. Other income through the year has been from Membership Fees, BotaniKids, Grants, Guided tours, Bank Interest and sales of plants on our trolley and in the Nursery. During this latest lock-down due to Covid we have had no income and it is a good reminder of the unpredictability of our income. While expenditure during this time also decreases we still have some expenses that are on-going.



We appreciate your support in **buying plants from our trolley and nursery** in which we make approximately 80% profit and which generates approximately 80% of our income. All the help we get from volunteers in all our activities are a crucial part of the money we are able to raise and what we are able to offer as a group. We have recently been able to update some of our computer equipment in our office with some of our profits.

Paying **membership** promptly and also for more than one year at once if possible, helps reduce our administration. Paying **by direct debit** is the best method of payment as it is the easiest for us to process (Please don't forget to specify what it is for, e.g. Name, 5 years subs). We appreciate your support in this.

Kim Nolan, Treasurer

"My garden is my most beautiful masterpiece." – Claude Monet

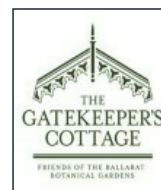
GATEKEEPER'S COTTAGE PART 1: *Eastern Entrance to Cottage Project*

Planning of the project of paths, fencing and East entrance to the Cottage linking to the deck is ongoing and progressing well.

I have suggested perhaps a simple installation of some sort of an interpretive trail be considered within the garden along the concrete path, or perhaps in the garden landscape utilising details from the Evolution of Plants display. With this space if you have any ideas or photos from Gardens visited please pass them on to Julie or one of the Cottage 'elves'.

A brief overview of the history and story of the Cottage and its restoration as a handout will be completed soon for visitors. We are envisaging a simple A4 PDF document to be printed and to be available on the webpage.

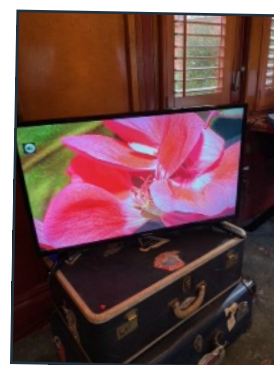
Julie Bradby



THE GATEKEEPERS COTTAGE 2: *A New Digital Microscope, plus a new fit-for-purpose timber table, and the Evolution of Plants installation.*

April and May have been very exciting months for the Cottage, with new fixtures and fittings enriching our capacity to enhance the interpretative and educational opportunities with visitors to the Gardens the local community, schools and the BotaniKids group.

The new much anticipated **Evolution of Plants installation** has arrived as digital copy. Planning is now underway for suitable framing and placing in the Cottage. This is along with a very beautifully crafted purpose-built table to house our amazing digital microscope and screen. Potential merchandise may be developed using this equipment. **Julie Bradby**



(Above left): the new microscope with image to be projected (right) on to a television screen

Open Gardens *April 2021*

1. Chris Dickinson's and Pauline Moody's Garden, Invermay
2. & 3. Robyn and John Gilbert's Garden, Brown Hill
4. Jane and Russell Luckock's Garden, Mt Buninyong
5. Anne and Berry King's Garden, Scotsburn



A 2021 highlight has been the opening of four of the Friends' member's gardens in April. The weather threatened but the turnout by Friends, families and their friends was really positive.

Thanks to the Dickinson/Moodys, Gilberts, Kings and Luckocks for their generosity and hard work!

We have SIX more on offer for the Friends in November. I for one, can't wait! Ed.



BALLARAT BOTANIKIDS REPORT:

Highlights: Mothers' Day Activity: 30 children and families attended our Mothers' Day activity assembling happily on the deck of the Cottage. We made cards as well as little pot-pourri bags from dried rose petals and lavender. It was a magically sunny happy day.

On May 21 we held a special event: *Cooking in the Gardens with Sara Kittlely*. We cooked pancakes and decorated them with all sorts of yummy botanicals to match Sara's beautiful cakes. Sara decorates her cakes with edible flowers and foliage. We added fruits and the children all had a great time in the sunshine. Ticket cost included a free ticket in a special effort; this time it was one of Sara's donated cakes which was won by a lucky grandma and granddaughter.

Upcoming: The **Sovereign Hill FOSH (Friends of Sovereign Hill) Olden Days Children's Day** is on in the Gardens on Sunday, August 15. The theme will be May Gibbs' stories. This is a Sunday and we shall see what the weather lets us do; but we have a plan A, B and C if things get a bit too wet! Activities will be centred around what children played with and in garden play back then. To add to the fun a packed paper bag lunch is included. This will be small donation advertised event and we are hoping for a great different day.

Farmers Markets: Cottage is open to the public. There will be a small plant stall, visitors invited to see the Cottage with activities available for children. The Cottage has been open on previous Markets and its heartening as we get quite a few visitors. With our QR code, sanitiser station and masks we are getting used to the new normal. It is hoped restrictions will allow us to open the Cottage as this is a great way to talk about the Cottage, the Gardens, the Friends and the BotaniKids program. Display in the Cottage will be minimal but it will showcase the Cottage itself and its restoration.

School Holiday Program is only weeks away on June 28. We have a weaver leading two workshops with the children creating natural shapes using natural material. Times 10 a.m.-12 noon, and 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.

This will be in the Robert Clark Horticultural Centre. This will be a controlled numbers activity with a \$5 per child donation.

Other plans for events are: In October a combined *Buninyong Community Choir* and Susan Pilbeam's *The Bard in Buninyong* theatre group will create an outdoor theatre interactive performance for families in the Gardens for Children's Week based on Norman Lindsay's 'The Magic Pudding'. This will be a very different addition to our program.

Spring School Holiday we will host "a bug and mini-beasts" group of science experts from Melbourne who will also do sessions in the Ballarat Library. We have piggy-backed on to this activity at the invitation of the Library.

BotaniKids have been approached to be a part of a team to create a new *Nature Playgroup* in Ballarat! Talks are ongoing with Community and Family Services, Playgroup Victoria, Eureka Community Kindergarten Association, BotaniKids and the Loreto College VCAL students. We anticipate to begin in the spring. It is hoped we can access a funded qualified early-childhood facilitator to conduct the program.

Another watch this space happening!

Julie Bradby, BotaniKids and Education Group



'I used to think Elton John's favourite lettuce was Iceberg. Then I realised that he's more of a rocket man.'

Talking Plants May 25 2021

CERISE, COLOUR OF CHOICE FOR DESERT FLOWER AND OUR NEW LOGO

Tim has recently commented upon the **Desert Rose**, *Adenium obesum*. It's in the family Apocynaceae, also home to oleanders and frangipanis. (See photo 1 right) Don't be confused, the floral emblem of the Northern Territory is **Sturt's Desert Rose**, *Gossypium sturtianum*, a different plant altogether.



"Let's just focus on those beautiful petal lobes, softly downy and pinkish in colour. Sometimes they are described as cerise, the colour we have introduced into our logo for the 175th milestone year of Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria." (See photo 2, left)

Happy Birthday RMBG!



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



You can read more of Tim's offerings at: <https://talkingplants.blogspot.com/> OR just search on line for 'Talking Plants'



Friends of Ballarat Botanical Gardens Nursery
Specialising in rare groundcovers, perennials, shrubs and succulents

Nursery Open: Tuesday 1-4 pm, and the second Sunday of Month 1-4 pm

Trolley: Plants available outside the Conservatory during business hours-plants updated daily-
Cash honour system

Why not take a look at the plants we have for sale the next time you are enjoying the gardens!
We have a variety of salvias and abutilons and other hardy long flowering plants at present!

Members \$1 discount off each plant!



**GET INVOLVED WITH THE FRIENDS ...
BY PARTICIPATING IN ONE OF OUR GROUPS!**

You have a unique set of life skills! Just what the Ballarat Friends need! Every recent edition of the *Wellingtonia* has included an advertisement asking for additional help with the Education group, the Growing Friends, the Ambassadors and the Guides.

Each group is **always looking to increase its numbers** and member participation levels. There is a veritable **kaleidoscope of jobs** you could help fill. For instance:

Administrative tasks - Tuesdays	Cleaning, filing and tidying up Tuesday mornings
Nursery set up Tuesdays 12pm	Computer skills
Writing Grant submissions (irregularly)	Meet & Greet (Tues. & Weekends)
One person one day a week to fill the plant trolley with plants	
Nursery Clean-up	Food preparation (for events)
Computer skills (History/Admin)	

Contact the Friends at info@fbbg.org.au or leave a message on (03) 5342 9354



**WHEN
YOU NEED TO PAY US
SOME MONEY:**

Please remember to identify yourself, when paying into our bank account and **what the payment is for**. A 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

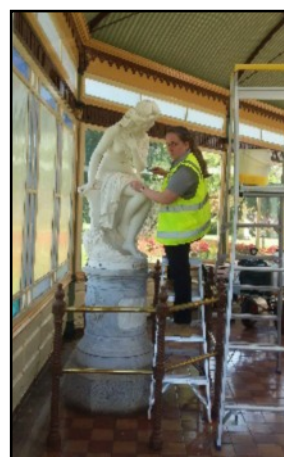
* make sure that you clearly identify yourself when making an electronic payment.

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

FRIENDS & GARDENS HAPPENINGS:



From Top: This group of children had fun chasing soap bubbles back in Autumn; Julie Chandler, Guides Convener, speaking at the New Friends Meeting April; and, one of the statues in the Statuary gets a thorough clean from the new maintenance squad.

Friends of Ballarat Botanical Gardens 2021

Friends of Ballarat Botanic Gardens Inc.

P.O. Box 33W, Ballarat West 3350

Email: info@fbbg.org.au Website: <https://fbbg.org.au/>

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

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



Tel. George Longley Building 03 5342 9354

FBBG COMMITTEE

POSITION	NAME
President	Terry O'Brien
Vice President	(vacant)
Past President	Robert Selkirk
Minute Secretary	Natalie Radomski
Treasurer	Kim Nolan
BotaniKids/ Education	Julie Bradby
Events and Speakers	Carole Haines
Foundation Rep.	Terry O'Brien
PR/Promotions	Wendy Taylor
General member	Jock Gilbert
General member	Lorraine Powell
General member	(2 vacancies)
AAFBG rep	Merrill Shulkes
Growing Friends	Yvonne Curbach
Guides	Julie Chandler
History	Stephanie de Boer
Hospitality	Doff Kemp
Membership	Warwick Sellens
Newsletter Editor	Michael Bird
Western Bed	Vacant
Ambassadors *	Trish Twaits
Botanical Art *	Val Richards

(* non-Committee positions)

FRIENDS COMMITTEE MEETING TIMES 2021

Meetings are held in the George Longley Centre subject to Covid-19 regulations (rear of the Robert Clark Horticultural Centre). The BotaniKids/Educating Friends meet in the Gatekeeper's Cottage.

Committee:

3rd Tuesday of each month at 4 pm.

Botanical Artists:

Mondays at 10 am during school terms.

Guiding Friends:

4th Wednesdays at 10 am.

Growing Friends:

Tuesdays each week 1 pm to 4 pm, and the second Sunday of each month 1 pm to 4 pm. **Plant Sales** at these times AND everyday from the plant trolleys outside the Conservatory.

BotaniKids /Educating Friends:

As required. No set time or day.

History Group:

2nd Thursday each month 2.30 pm. (Not 4 pm as shown last edition).

COMING EVENTS:

Normally the Friends **Coming Events** is placed on this page. Due to space constraints this time and a re-drafting of the layout, you will find a full list on page 3 in this edition. Other items have had to be held over this edition.



THE BALLARAT BOTANICAL GARDENS FOUNDATION

Members of the Friends (and the general public) are able to make a tax deductible donation to the Ballarat Botanical Gardens Foundation.

June 30 is rapidly approaching and **you may be in a position** to make a donation this financial year.

Tax deductible donations. Ballarat Botanical Gardens Foundation Ltd.

Banking direct deposit. BSB 633 000. **Act. No.** 165027434

Website: www.BallaratBotanicalGardensFoundation.com.au



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



Warwick Sellens, Terry O'Brien, Tim Entwisle, Susan Pilbeam, Kim Nolan, Merrill Shulkes, Raoul Dixon and Michael Bird all provided photographs and illustrations. Apologies for any omissions.

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 Spring Wellingtonia 2021 are due by early September please. Michael Bird, Editor.

Editorial Committee: Terry O'Brien, Merrill Shulkes, Wendy Taylor and Michael Bird.