

Wellingtonia

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Spring 2009

President's Report - Joan Garner

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Treeline of Wellingtonias viewed across Lake Wendouree to Ballarat Botanical Gardens

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

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

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

An image featured on www.fbbg.org.au is Pomona, one of the Stoddart statues with schizanthus (Poor Man's Orchid) in the Conservatory. We know these have been displayed in our gardens for at least 86 years because Mr Toop, Gardens Curator, mentioned them in his report in 1923. Please visit the site and view for yourselves.



In view of these developments we would like to hear from members with internet connections who would like to have their newsletter

“on line” If so, please let us know your Email address. This will help to reduce the work and expense in distributing the Newsletter.

Judith Bailey, our past president, has resigned from the Committee. Judith has been on the Committee since 1993 and in that time has held almost every position. We thank her most sincerely for all her hard work and she remains an active member of the growing friends. Bruce Holland has taken over the role of Treasure with Tim Gilfillan as Book-keeper. At the Keep Australia Beautiful Regional Awards Presentation Ceremony at the Town Hall on 19th August, Sue Beck, Convenor of the 150th Anniversary Celebrations at the Gardens accepted the Culture and Heritage Award. I accepted the Government Partnership award. Jenny Burrell also accepted a surprise award for the Gardens DVD. Lorraine Powell prepared all these successful submissions which recognised the wonderfully busy year the Friends had in 2007. After the ceremony the Keep Australia Beautiful officials enjoyed a tour of the Gardens.

Please note our Seniors Festival event on Saturday 4th October. It will be a great opportunity to learn more about the different organisations that have their base in the Gardens.

Our Christmas break up on November 26th is a great social event. It will commence at 6 p.m. Please bring your own food, the BBQ will be available and the friends will provide wine and soft drink, also all crockery and glasses etc. There is nothing formal about the evening, just pure relaxation and chatter and I look forward to seeing you all there.



Joan Garner, Jenny Burrell, Cr Mark Harris, Sue Beck at the Regional Keep Australia Beautiful Awards at the Ballarat Town Hall

Wellingtonia Avenue

The giant redwoods (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*) are one of the most dominant features in the gardens. The avenue extends for more than a kilometre and forms the north-south spine of the landscape. They define the magnificent treeline when viewed from the east across Lake Wendouree and in the shade of the cathedral-like canopy many a wedding has taken place. In recent years the conservation of these signature trees has been a priority. The grandest of them all date from the 1860s and are Heritage listed. When first planted these very special trees were

known as Wellingtonias and it is proposed that we adopt this name for our newly-designed newsletter. Jenny Burrell



Giant Redwood

Sequoiadendron giganteum,
also known as *Wellingtonia*

A junior replacement tree and an original specimen.

Guiding Friends-Ann Watson

After a quiet period in booked tours of the gardens the guides are now being called upon to meet with more visiting groups.

We had a tour for veterans on Monday, August the 24th for Veterans Week and have a large commitment in September in conjunction with the BGANZ Conference, which is being hosted at the Ballarat Botanic Gardens this year. We also have two tours booked in October along with mini tours for the Friends Flowers and Trees event on the 3rd Of October.

A warm welcome is extended to members who wish to join the friendly group of guides. We meet on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 10.30am in the George Longley Building.

Engraving - Adele Thomas

I have just completed a large order of 270 botanical labels for the Macedon Ranges Shire Council. These will be for the Kyneton Botanical Gardens where they have undertaken a large planting of dry tolerant plants. This will generate over \$2,000 for the funds of the Friends. Lorna MacNeill who was involved with engraving program at its inception but retired some time ago assisted with this task and I would like to acknowledge her help.

John's Jottings

The Gardens Pavilion

When the Gardens Pavilion was built in 1891 it was very much part of the Botanical Gardens, not, as now, part of the Lake foreshore.

The leasing conditions at that time included provisions that the Assembly rooms be open to the public from 9 am to evening, there was to be no selling of malt or spirituous liquor or wine and the parking of carts and the hitching of horses was limited to 15 minutes.

There was a degree of protection for the Lessees, however, in that no hawking of refreshments was allowed in the Gardens or around the Gardens and Reserve by carts or hand barrows.

The list of refreshments provided in the Pavilion and the cost thereof was also laid down:-

Cup of tea with coffee or milk 3d

Lemonade, soda water, ginger ale or any other aerated water 6d

Cup of tea with bun or sandwich 6d

Dinner (two courses) Cold meat, hot vegetables and pastry with a cup of tea or coffee, salt, pepper and mustard 1/6

Tea – cup of tea with shrimps, salad or cold meat, bread and butter, salt, pepper and mustard included 1/6

Fortunately the Pavilion, now “Pipers”, is able to offer a far more extensive menu including spirituous liquor and wines. (If only that the prices could have remained unaltered!

John Garner

Events Report - Carole Haines

Our last meeting on August 20th was well attended and our Guest Speaker, Ian McBean gave us an interesting and enlightening talk “We are living in interesting times – Thoughts on Sustainability”.

Our next social function "Trees and Flowers" is on 3rd October from 10.30a.m to 3.30p.m. (**Seniors Festival Event**) to be held in the Robert Clark Centre. The Floral Art Society will be demonstrating the art of Flower Arranging in the morning from 10.30a.m.

The Woodworkers Guild will be at the Robert Clark Centre from 1.00p.m. and will have samples of their work including some woodwork made from the Elm that was blown down in a storm 18 months ago. The members of this guild will give demonstrations on making wooden treasures.

An invitation is extended to all members and their friends to come along and enjoy a cup of tea or coffee, meet with our demonstrators and new friends.

BOTANICAL ART

Experienced artists are asked to register their interest in a weekend workshop with experienced artists on the 28th and 29th November.

A four-day intensive workshop will be held in February for beginners in art and following this we will have a six week course.

We really need members and friends to register as soon as possible so we can organize these classes. Steffi Goss will be holding an exhibition of her art in the Conservatory from the 20th to the 22nd November.

Please contact Elizabeth 5334 7085 or Carole on 5334 88175.

WORKSHOP AND LUNCHEON

20th November, 10.30a.m. to 3.30p.m.

In conjunction with the committee of the Ballarat Open Gardens the Friends will be organizing the luncheon only - for this day.

The Guest Speakers will be Teena Crawford David Glen and Michael McCoy. The subjects have not been finalised as yet.

This is a wonderful opportunity to hear from these well known speakers and we hope you will come along and enjoy

Please contact Elizabeth 5334 7085 or Carole on 5338 8175

Coming Events

3rd October - Seniors Festival event on Saturday

6th October - A bus trip is being conducted by **Ballarat and District Open Gardens** to Woolongoon at Mortlake, Wagandia at Noorat and The Vicarage in Terang. Woolongoon is a fourth generation garden operated and owned by James and Luki Weatherly just north of Mortlake. Luki writes in the Age and is a passionate gardener. There are many historic trees and the challenge is now to garden with limited water. Wagandia is built on a base of scoria and its design has to be seen to be believed. William Martin is a very clever gardener with design and use of used iron etc. He also gardens with very little water. The Vicarage is in the pretty township of Terang and there are no water restrictions. This garden, owned and operated by Ian and Judy Blackburn, is a picture in the spring with roses, iris many different perennials and wonderful viburnum and maples. Cost \$55 Depart 8.30 Return about 4.30.

20th November - Workshop and Luncheon
10.30a.m. to 3.30p.m.

26th November - Christmas breakup Robert Clark Centre

FRIENDS MEETINGS

Committee Meeting

3rd Tuesday of every month at George Longley Building 4.30p.m. unless otherwise notified.

Guiding Friends

4th Tuesday month at George Longley Building 10.30am unless otherwise notified.

History Group: First Tuesday of the month 4.30pm

Educating Friends: First Tuesday of the month 11.30am

Engraving Friends: When necessary by arrangement

The listed *Friends Groups* meet in the George Longley Building and warmly welcome members to join them.

Growing Friends in the nursery every Tuesday 1pm-4pm and 2nd Sunday of the month 1pm-4pm

Growing Friends - Carolyn Pinkowski

The Growing Friends are having a very good year. Sales are going well especially from the trolley; we are also receiving new stock nearly every month.

I would like to thank all the friends who volunteer each week to make our nursery a great success. Thanks also to the garden staff for plants, bulbs and etc.

All donations of clean pots would be appreciated.

History Group – Lorraine Powell



History Group members Lorraine Powell, Joan Hunt, Kathleen Hobson at the launch of the Heritage Collections Network MOU at Art Gallery Ballarat

Unusually for us, (as we are usually cloistered in the 'office'), we have been out and about, collecting data

for the planned brochure on the significant and heritage listed trees in these gardens. This project has had us being quite creative in our presentation. As they say, 'Watch this space!'

We also continue the accessioning of our library, and are more than half way finished at this point.

All members continue research into their selected topics, and this will be transformed into information sheets on the personalities, structures, statues, and plaques etc which are the rich tapestry of our gardens. For want of a better name this is being called the Gardens Manual Project. This research makes for interesting and lively discussion at our monthly meetings. Should you want to learn more or even 'tell us a thing or two' do join us at our monthly meetings, 1st Tuesday of the month 4:30-6pm.

If you read your recent 'My Ballarat' you would have noted the launch of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between members of the Ballarat Collections Network. We are a member of this group. As part of the launch, we were very proud to be able to display our Treasure, (the signed and personal copy of *Shrubs and Trees for Australian Gardens* by Ernest Lord) at the temporary exhibition of Ballarat Treasures in the Ballarat Art Gallery.

The MOU is an agreement between the parties to help each other in the event of a disaster such as the Great Flood of 2007. It also allows a greater degree of networking between the groups. This has already led to some collaborative efforts, including our assemblage of a PowerPoint presentation for David Lewis to use at the BGANZ conference at the end of the month. The history group was able to make permitted use of an image from the Art Gallery, and of information held at the Gold Museum.

Gardens Report - Peter Marquand

The legacy of previous gardening staff is evident in our impressive tree collection with over 50 trees listed on the national trust register of significant trees. In conjunction with the friends of the gardens we have purchased tree labels for Ballarat, Buninyong and Eureka gardens that specifically identify those trees. The history group is developing a brochure giving details of the heritage listed trees whilst the guiding group are developing gardens tours. We need to also be conscious that a number of those trees are under threat particularly the Sequoiadendron Avenue where more trees are to be removed in the near future.



New signs to be placed on the trees listed on the National Trust Register of Significant Trees of Victoria

Recently staff have been planting trees in the North and South gardens redesigning parts of the Asian section of the Western bed and mulching throughout the gardens. The fernery has also received a major cleanup with the ferns being cut back, ivy removed and the mulching of all beds. Jude Schahinger has commenced cleaning and other maintenance on the Claxton memorial. Over the next few weeks we will witness the tulips burst into flower.

We are still currently using water from the goldfields pipeline allocation prior to the gardens going onto treated waste water.

In readiness for the use of treated waste water monitoring equipment will be installed in the gardens, this equipment will enable the measuring of moisture levels at a number of sites in the gardens and on the Lake foreshore.

This week we say farewell to Sharon Williams who is finishing up on the 11th of September. Sharon has been a valued member of staff and will be missed by staff, garden visitors and tenant group members.

Dates

BGANZ conference 23rd and 24th September

Conservatory changeover and installation of schizanthus display 5th-9th October

Exhibition in the conservatory by Ballarat and District Spinners and Weavers, 21st-27th September

Exhibition in the conservatory by Ballarat Cacti and Succulent Society, 12th -20th September