

# Wellingtonia

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## FRIENDS NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2010



### President's Report - Joan Garner

I would like to wish all members and their families a very happy and healthy New Year.

In 2009 we saw an increase in our membership and have added two new groups to our organisation. The Education Group has been formed consisting of a number of enthusiastic retired teachers who will be working with various educational bodies to set up interesting programmes for children from Pre-school to Year 10. The other group is the Friends of the Buninyong Botanical Gardens, a number of citizens who have come together to organise a series of functions for 2011 to mark the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the Gardens. They will be working under the umbrella of the Ballarat Friends until such time as their own organisation is fully established. There will be many opportunities in the future for us to work together and raise the profile of both our Gardens.

Our AGM is on February 18<sup>th</sup> and enclosed you will find a nomination form for the election of office bearers for 2010. All positions on the Committee will be vacated and all members are eligible to be nominated.

All the Friends groups have had a very productive and happy year as you will see by their reports. Always feel free to join any of them and you will be most welcome.

Thanks to all members who took part in a random survey recently, we have implemented some of the suggestions received in next year's programme. Most

of it is self explanatory, however, I would like to make you aware of the Association of friends of Botanic Gardens Conference on 21<sup>st</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2010 in Mildura. The theme is "Secrets of the Mallee" and Friends from all over Australia and New Zealand will be attending. These conferences are very friendly and informative affairs and it would be wonderful to have a good contingent from Ballarat. Registration forms will be available shortly and all members are eligible to attend.

The other item on our programme is the Friends Open Gardens Weekend to be held on October 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> 2010. This suggestion came from one of our members and we hope that a number of you, our members, will open your gardens for a visit. The arrangements will be for members and their friends only and will not be a publicised open garden event. Please let me know if you would like to take part, we will require at least eight gardens, more if possible, to make it a success. I look forward to hearing from you. For further information please ring me on 5332 6461.



Carolyn Pinkowski, Joan Garner, Nicole Bodman, Bruce Holland  
at the Friends Christmas BBQ at the Robert Clark Centre

## Curator's Report - Peter Marquand

Garden staff have been busy over the last weeks planting the annual beds and dealing with the luxuriant weed growth brought on by the rain and corresponding warm weather. Our arboriculture unit have also been busy removing a number of dead trees in the Botanical gardens and lake precinct. Trees that have succumbed to the effects of long term drought include four Sequoidendron, a liquid amber and numerous pines. There are also a number of Sequoidendron to be removed from the Buninyong gardens.

Maintenance works in the gardens over the last weeks have included painting of the Wendouree Parade fence, garden light poles and kerbing replacement near the statue pavilion. Jude Schahinger has commenced maintenance works on the Robert Clark and Prime Minister busts. The column for the current Prime Minister's bust is being installed by Wilson memorials, with the bust to be installed and unveiled early this year.

The Morey gates that were damaged in July 2009, have now been removed for repair and repainting. Restoration and repair works will include the recasting of damaged post panels, removal of concrete filling and repainting. It is expected that the gates will be returned early in 2010.

A large number of events have been held in December, including the relocated Eureka carols, Eureka weekend at the Stockade gardens and numerous weddings and Christmas parties at both Ballarat and Buninyong gardens.



*Stumps of two of the ancient giant Redwoods (*Sequoia giganteum*) in the Wellingtonia Avenue in the Ballarat Botanical Gardens felled on 1st December 2009*

*At Right: Art Exhibition in the Robert Clark Conservatory featuring the original works and prints of Stephanie Goss, 21 November 2009*

## Growing Friends - Carolyn Pinkowski

We have been very busy the last few months with sales going well from the trolley and nursery. Springfest was very successful with our stall making \$955, thanks to all the people who made this a wonderful day for us. We have had four benches made by the Ballarat East Men's Shed for the nursery and will have more made next year. The nursery is looking good and thanks must go to all the helpers old and new, for all the work it takes. My appreciation also goes to all the garden staff for their help and especially the nursery for the donation of a large number of plants. Please come and buy a plant or two.



### *Growing Friends at Springfest*

*Bruce Holland, Lyn Grohmann, Yvonne Curboch and Coordinator, Carolyn Pinkowski, 1st November 2009*

## Events Report - Carole Haines

### **ART DISPLAY IN THE CONSERVATORY**

Thank you to Sue Rhook who assisted me in arranging the Art Display on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> November at 3.30 p.m.

### **OPEN GARDENS LAUNCH** – 18<sup>th</sup> November.

Friends provided Tea and coffee and assisted the committee of the Open Gardens. Thank you to the staff of the Conservatory and members.

**STEFF GOSS ART DISPLAY** - 20% of sales and \$48 in commission came to the Friends. Many members volunteered for the weekend on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> November to sell cards, prints and paintings. Thank you to all who assisted.





**SPRING LUNCHEON** - Friday 19th November.

The Luncheon was a great success. The guest speakers were excellent with written notes to assist. The basket lunch was very enjoyable. The walk along the Western bed with David Glen from Lambleys Nursery was of particular interest.

Thank you to all the volunteers, some attending the Luncheon and two members who came along just to help at lunchtime with the serving, clearing and cleaning. It was very much appreciated. Thank you to Elizabeth Gilfillan, Jan Todd, Helen Todd and Nancy Brewer for the organisation of the guest speakers and publicity.



*Workshop presenters:  
Michael McCoy, Teena Crawford and David Glenn*



*Workshop participants at lunch in the courtyard at the  
Robert Clark Centre, 20 November 2009*

**BOTANICAL ART CLASS** - 27-28th of November in the George Longley Building. Four participants enjoyed a wonderful weekend in Botanical Art. Thank you to artist Steff Goss and many thanks to Joan Garner for assisting during the weekend.

**CHRISTMAS BARBECUE** - Thursday 26th November. Our Christmas Barbecue was very well supported with 30 members, new members and friends attending. All enjoyed a pleasant evening.



*Hayden Vincent (husband of Editor Helen), Terry Simmons and Carole Haines at the Christmas BBQ in the courtyard at the Robert Clark Centre*

**History Group - Lorraine Powell**

The History Group continues its research into our Gardens history using the resources of the Public Records Office of Victoria, the Gold Museum and Newspapers. Plaques have been placed on the Heritage trees of the Gardens and photographs taken to accompany a folder to be prepared, together with an informative commentary.



*Turkey Oak (Quercus cerris) listed on the National Trust Register of Significant Trees of Victoria, situated at the entrance to the Prime Ministers Avenue, 24 November 2009*

Julie Maddock, a member of the Melbourne Botanic Gardens has kindly offered to provide an audio transcript of the interviews with past curators currently held as discs by the Friends.

A folder of summaries of personalities, buildings, statues and other items of interest related to the Gardens is in the process of being organised together with material from Roy Mosman's history research which will be kept in the George Longley building as an information source for researchers and guides.

The library in the George Longley Building continues to expand thanks to further donations. Categorisation of this involves the use of the expertise and time of the members involved.

### **Thomas Stoddart Grave Restoration Project**

The application to The Ballarat Foundation concerning repairs to the Stoddart Grave was successful and a cheque for \$2,400 was accepted by Jenny Burrell and John Garner on behalf of the Friends on 19<sup>th</sup> November. Hopefully the repairs and the production of a commemorative plaque will be completed by the Begonia Festival in 2010. The grave of Russell Thomson also needs some work done and this matter is being pursued in discussions with the Heritage Advisor of the Council. These two men were responsible for the magnificent marble statues which adorn the gardens.



*Jennifer Burrell, Chair of the Ballarat Foundation James Coghlan and Dr John Garner accepting a cheque for \$2400 for the Thomas Stoddart Grave Restoration Project at the Delacombe Community Centre, 19th November 2009*

### **John's Jottings**

#### **The "Wardian" Case**

In May 1899, Thomas Rooney, then in charge of No 2 section of the Botanical Gardens, instructed the Town Clerk to order from Kelway and Son Langport England, a variety of plants, specifically instructing that they be transported as deck cargo in a Wardian Case. He explained that this was not a closed box but "a strong built miniature greenhouse with strong glass sashes to admit light and patent ventilators to admit air to the plants". The case would cost an extra 9 pounds which he prudently left to the Town Clerk to explain to the Mayor (whose response is not recorded!)

The History Group has found many examples of seeds and bulbs ordered from Europe by George Longley, but this is the first example of the ordering of plants in a Wardian Case. It had been invented by Dr Ward, a London Physician with a passion for Botany, in about 1829 and was tested when a consignment of British ferns and grasses were sent to Sydney in 1833 and arrived in good condition, as did Australian plants returned to England.

The cases were used to transport the 20,000 tea plants smuggled by Robert Fortune from Shanghai to Assam, and seedlings of the rubber tree of Brazil from Kew to Ceylon, to start the rubber industry there. They were also used in European and American drawing rooms allowing ferns and orchids to be grown there despite the pollution of the air of the cities.

Steam ships and the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 made the sea route to Australia much quicker and water, remained for the successful transport of plants as Thomas Rooney quite rightly pointed out so adamantly.

### **Educating Friends - Julie Bradby**

Instead of our November meeting three of us went to the Geelong Botanical Gardens to see at first hand a marvellous education program for local schoolchildren. This program is partly run by the Geelong Friends and a part time teacher, R Noone. We were suitably impressed and came away bubbling with all sorts of ideas and possibilities for the educational programs we may offer in the future. We have also been thinking very seriously about the establishment of a Children's Garden within the parameters of the Gardens. We are just at the very embryonic stage [no pun intended] and welcome ideas and input from other members who have seen other children's gardens. If you have ideas on how we can incorporate such a garden into our midst or just would like to be a part of our group please pop along to our meetings, first Tuesday in the month 11.30 in the GLB. ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

### **Guiding Friends - Ann Watson**

Guiding Friends assisted with several tours of the Gardens in the last few months, including the Somers Gardening Club, two Veterans Affairs groups, and delegates attending the BGANZ Conference in inclement conditions. The powerpoint presentation in the Robert Clark Centre can be viewed by people with mobility problems and interested visitors. A preliminary questionnaire is being prepared for groups, and variable shorter tours may be offered depending on the requests.

Ann Watson is retiring as Convenor for the Guides. Beth and Raoul Dixon will be taking on the responsibility and may be contacted on 5320 5135.



## Engraving - Adele Thomas

I have recently completed another 80 labels for the Macedon Ranges Shire. They have been great clients and their orders have contributed a considerable amount to the Friends' funds.

Apart from this it has been quiet in this department. Julie Bradby came one day to see how the program operates. It would be really good if we could find a two person team who would like to take over from me. I would like to have other people trained for the entire operation of the labeling which includes more than just the computer work. If you know of a retired couple who would like to do this please let me know.

Best wishes to all the Friends' membership for the coming year which looks like being another very busy one for everyone.

## Program of Activities - 2010

**Committee** - 3rd Tuesday each month at 4.00pm.

**Growing Friends** - Tuesday each month 1.00-4.00pm, 2nd Sunday each month 1.00-4.00pm.

**Plant Sales** At the above times and daily from the trolley outside the Robert Clark Conservatory.

**Guiding Friends** - as required

**History Group** - 1st Tuesday each month 4.30pm.

**Educating Friends** - 1st Tuesday each month, late morning 11.30am, please bring lunch.

**Plant labelling** - as required.

**Botanical Art Classes** - Dates to be finalised.

**Wellingtonia** - group coordinator reports, photos and items of interest for 2010 to be sent to the Editor of the newsletter Helen Vincent by email: handh7@bigpond.com

**Closing dates for 2010:** *Autumn* Monday 5th April, *Winter* Monday 5th July, *Spring* Monday 4th October, *Summer* Monday 6th December.

## Calendar of Events for 2010

**FEBRUARY - Thursday 18th at 7.00pm**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** - Please note that this is an evening meeting. Guest Speaker:

**Kevin Walsh.** Topic will be "*Master Plan for the Bendigo Botanic Gardens*". Kevin has been working on these plans over the last twelve months.



**Thursday 25th February at 11am** - meet at the Ballarat Old Cemetery to celebrate the refurbishment of the grave of benefactor **THOMAS STODDART** whose gift to the Gardens was twelve marble statues.

**MARCH - BALLARAT BEGONIA FESTIVAL**

will be held on Saturday 6th, Sunday 7th and Monday 8th of March.

**GROWING FRIENDS - Sale of Plants**

Roster of volunteers for the long weekend and for the Conservatory. Ring Sue at RCC 5320 5135



**Thursday 25th March** - Visit to the **BENDIGO BOTANIC GARDENS** and Goldfields Revegetation Nursery.

**APRIL - Tuesday 13th April at 10.00am**

**SPECIAL MORNING TEA FOR MEMBERS**

Garden Staff will be present to talk about the Gardens and assist us with **Questions and Answers** about the Gardens.

**MAY - Thursday 20th May at 10.00am**

**GENERAL MEETING** - Guest speaker: **Attila**

**Kapitany** who will illustrate and talk about his trip of **Exploration around Australia looking for Australian Succulents**. He has written 8 books as well as the current book *Australian Succulent Plants*.

**AUGUST - Thursday 19th of August at 10.00am**

**GENERAL MEETING** - Guest speaker: **Lynsey**

**Poore** on a topic to be decided. Lynsey is **Secretary of the Friends of the Melbourne Botanical Gardens** and has various topics she can talk about due to her many travels overseas.

**OCTOBER - Thursday 14th October at 4.00pm**

Help us celebrate **GEORGE LONGLEY DAY**. Members are extended an invitation to attend and remember our first Curator, George Longley. Enjoy nibble and drinks in the George Longley Building.



**Saturday 23rd and Sunday 24th October**

Members are invited to visit **OPEN GARDENS owned by members**. Morning and Afternoon Tea to be included at some gardens.

**NOVEMBER - Thursday 18th at 6.00pm**

**CHRISTMAS BARBECUE** Invitation to members and their friends to enjoy a relaxing evening at the Robert Clark Centre in the Gardens.



**Friday 19th November**

**OPEN GARDENS SPRING LUNCHEON**



**Saturday 20th and Sunday 21st November**  
**Ballarat and District OPEN GARDENS**

If undelivered please return to  
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