

Wellingtonia

NEWSLETTER Autumn 2023

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From the President's Desk . . .



Begonia Festival Wrap-up

BBG presents many faces. March is the time that our flower beds and the Conservatory Begonia display showcases its colourful beauty and draws in the crowds. The lawns are well trodden during the March Begonia Festival but wonderful to see so many

people delighting in these gardens and enjoying the relaxed festive spirit helped on this occasion by the weather gods. It is a busy involving time for the Friends and especially for the Growers and Botanikids.

Many of the Friends contributed to a very successful Festival plus I hope enjoyed the fellowship amongst those contributing. Not all members are able to be active on this long weekend for a whole host of reasons and so on behalf of FBBG a big thank you to our Begonia Festival volunteers. Our appreciation needs to be very clearly directed to the key people behind the Nursery and Botanikids who are involved on all three days and also the days before getting ready for this Festival. Huge commitment is made and the Friends successes with money raised and connecting people with our activities happens because of this commitment.

On the Wild Side!

But there is a wild side to these gardens and some of our recent discussions have focussed here. It is interesting times for Botanic gardens as they are challenged by sustainable resource use, climate change and declining biodiversity. At our AGM Donna Thomas, our Curator, highlighted the sustainable practices underway at

BBG. Our AGM speakers explored some of the ways Botanic Gardens are reinvigorating their approaches and increasing their relevance in this changing challenging world for environment and community. Plant for nature and not for us, have less emphasis on order and plant to improve biodiversity and manage sustainably were some of the compelling ideas gained from the session chaired by Jock Gilbert with Emma Cutting and Tim Entwisle. Jock and Susan Pilbeam report more fully further on this part of the AGM in our newsletter.

Ann in the Friends Office alerted us to an article she came across in the Guardian about Ventnor Botanic Garden, Isle of Wight.



Rae, Jenny Burrell, Brian Hay, Kim Nolan

This article raises questions about whether we are moving into new fields of botanical gardening. In this garden leaf litter is left to mature where it falls and similarly with fallen branches. The garden is being rewilded and naturally not everyone is happy with this approach that promotes biodiversity as it is not so attractive and as ordered as we are used to. These environmental management questions will be engaging us for some time as we are forced to confront some of the big environmental issues for this 21st century. Here in BBG we are fortunate to have both – the ordered

and the wild. The wetlands' function is primarily to improve the quality of the captured water, but it has become an interesting biodiverse habitat. The new Friends group that has formed called the Biodiversity Group want to work actively to support management of this area. It is early days, and many conversations will take place to establish its role and the tasks that it can take on. We look forward to the evolving of this group and the role they can play in our Botanic Gardens – a role for the Friends in the wilder part of our gardens.

Please note: In this publication some abbreviations are used for simplicity sake:

BBG = Ballarat Botanical Gardens;

FBBG = Friends of the Ballarat Botanical Gardens;

COB = City of Ballarat;

RCHC = Robert Clark Horticultural Centre;

GLB = George Longley Building



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From the President's Desk . . .

Newsletter News

This newsletter is also going through some evolutionary process as well. Wendy Taylor is having conversations with many including our new graphic designer, Andrew Thomas, to develop it. There will be no major changes as the Wellingtonia has always been well received and applauded but some tinkering will take place and so some changes will be tried in the coming issues. One thing I would like to see is more participation by our members writing articles. Friends are united broadly by an interest in plants and gardens and there is a wide focus whether botanical or cultural. The coming shorter colder days is the perfect time to pen some of your knowledge, experience and ideas and share this with other members. This is another way that people can contribute to FBBG.

The Fernery

The Mayor gave the Friends an update at the AGM and so suffice now to just report on that for those members who were not able to be there. The first request for tenders in December was unsuccessful with insufficient numbers. In late February tenders were advertised again and at the time of writing we await to hear the results of this. The frustration and disappointment with this project by the Friends will not cease until we see completion of this stage and Council announcing forward plans for the western side of the Fernery and its surrounds.

FBBG Committee for 2023

We introduce our new members to our 2023 committee in this newsletter. I hope they enjoy their participation and contributions. Welcome. Different and varied inputs keep the committee energised as new conversations and perspectives are shared. Unfortunately, since the AGM Warwick Sellens has decided to move away from Ballarat and so an important link in the management of FBBG will become vacant in the coming months. Warwick helps in so many ways, but it is his position as Membership Officer that we would like to fill soon. It requires computer skills and so if any member would like to contribute in that way, please let me know.

Heritage Festival

Begonia Festival was a busy time for our different groups. The peak of it is the long weekend but begonias continue to draw the crowds for many weeks after and so Guides with their group tours and Growers with plant sales have a busy time right through to April. As autumn closes in on May we are then into the May Heritage Program, another busy time for our groups. These Festival times are times of immersion, and they bring new knowledge, new experiences, opportunities to work with others and socialise and contribute to events and projects for the benefit of our community. It is rewarding work. Autumn is the favourite time of the year for most in Ballarat and so with these Heritage events across the City of Ballarat there is plenty to enjoy in autumn.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

The Friends welcome the following new members who have joined us since the summer edition of Wellingtonia:

Karen McLean, Ann Fisher, Liz Miller, Jeni Murphy, Margaret and Robert Bügge, Marcus Ford and Margaret McAskill.

Our membership has fallen to a figure of 367, as a result of some 40 not yet renewing.

Warwick Sellens, Membership Coordinator

The Ballarat Botanical Gardens Foundation's overriding purpose is to raise funds to provide a strong and sustainable financial basis to support the our Botanical Gardens. In addition we aim at advancing the natural environment in the Botanical Gardens and, in so doing, advance and preserve the heritage of the Gardens as a horticultural museum.



DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE.
Ballarat Botanical Gardens Foundation Ltd.
Banking:
Direct deposit. BSB 633 000. Account No. 165027434
Website: www.BallaratBotanicalGardensFoundation.com.au

FBBG GUIDES REPORT MARCH 2023

It's that time of year again! The Ballarat Begonia Festival and the time when thousands flock to our Gardens particularly to see the wonderful display in the Conservatory. Congratulations to the Gardens Staff, in particular the Begonia Team. Whilst the Guides have chosen not to conduct guided tours during the weekend of the Festival, many other opportunities are available to visitors to have Guided Tours. Each Sunday during March April & May there will be a free Sunday morning tour from the Conservatory at 11.00 a.m. There are booked tours for 15th, 16th, & 28th March and 2nd & 19th April. A group from the Dahlia Society of Victoria are keen to visit early April and the Guides will take the opportunity to have Glenn Fisher share all about the Dahlias with the Guides before then. The Dahlia beds certainly are spectacular. Our March monthly meeting will be in Victoria Park when Anne Ottrey will take us on a guided tour.

We look forward to Heritage Week in the month of May and plans are well underway for the Guided Tour of our amazing Elms on Saturday 27th May.

*Julie Chandler
Guides Convenor*

AUTUMN EVENTS

FBBG - MAY BALLARAT HERITAGE FESTIVAL EVENTS

EXHIBITION

Elms Up Close and Personal! – Statuary Pavilion- Friday May 5th- Sunday May 28th, Free event

This is a chance to see up close the wonderful illustrations of six of the significant Elms in our BBG presented by the talented Botanical Art Group of the FBBG. There will be botanical displays showing amazing information about the Elms. BBG have many mature and heritage examples and their significance is increased as a result of the Dutch Elm disease pandemic in the northern hemisphere.

TOURS

1. Guided Tour of the Magical Elms in Ballarat Botanical Gardens.- Saturday May 27th, 2pm. Free event

Visit eight amazing elms from the Wedding Elm Trees to the Mad Hair Elm, Dutch Elm, Cornish Elm and Frosty Elm. Elm trees have been linked to the mystical underworld and for early settlers to Ballarat it was a popular tree to plant. Learn more about the vast varieties of elms and become acquainted with these rare and grand specimens. Hosted by the FBBG Guides.

2. Guided tour of the Elms at Buninyong Botanical Gardens. – Sunday May 28th 10.30am Free event

Visit the Buninyong Botanic Gardens and learn more about their elms and the adjacent Avenue of Honour dedicated to the firemen of Buninyong who went to WWI.

TALKS

The Wide World of the Elm! – Sunday – May 28th 2pm, RCHC

Free event but ticket entry required with Try Booking. Afternoon Tea provided (gold coin donation)

John Hawker, tree expert and co-author of “Elms in Australia”, will talk on the distribution of the Elm tree throughout the globe, its place in botanical history and our living history in the BBG.

Did you know that the BBG grow some of the finest and rarest elms in Victoria?

Book Trybooking: <https://www.trybooking.com/CGUPM>

FAMILY FUN

Botanikids Fun at The Gatekeepers Cottage, Saturday May 27th 12 noon to 1.30 pm

Elms under the microscope and Children’s Benchcraft activities and explore “Fantastic Facts on the Elms”.

Interesting and fun for families with young children.

BGANZ Botanic Gardens Day

This is on Sunday 28 May with the theme of inspirational plants and people. The afternoon tea at the end of John Hawker’s presentation on this Sunday afternoon will also be a time to celebrate all the different groups and people that have helped us focus on our Elm trees during the month of May. Let it be a day we celebrate this happening in our Botanic Garden and it’s amazing collection of plants and people.

FBBG May Quarterly meeting – Thursday May 18th, 10am, RCHC

Linking the community with Woookarung Regional Park – the road travelled and the road ahead.

Our guest speaker will be Jeff Rootes from Friends of Canadian Corridor, Bunanyung Landscape Alliance and Living Corridors Action Plan for Ballarat East and will report on the collaborative campaigns to develop this park and enhance Ballarat’s biodiversity.

Take the opportunity to visit the Woookarung Park and the highly praised Dementia Trail in the park before Jeff’s visit.



Click on this QR code and go straight to Trybooking for the Talk by John Hawker

BALLARAT FRIENDS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

There was something of a festive air at the AGM, with 90 members attending on a delightful summer morning, to celebrate past achievements and look ahead to new ideas. President Terry O'Brien spoke enthusiastically of projects by various *Friends'* groups and the founding of the new *Biodiversity Group*, for those interested in more environmental input and especially eco-systems, such as the North Gardens Wetlands. This year the financially vital work of the Growing Friends contributed \$37,000, redistributed amongst other *Friends'* groups and projects. A photo presentation of the FBBG 40th birthday celebrations was enjoyed by all.

New *Curator*, Donna Thomas, began by acknowledging the work of former *Curator* Peter Marquand and the *Gardens' Team*, in maintaining and developing Ballarat's many parks and gardens, including three *Heritage Listed Gardens* (Ballarat, Buninyong and Eureka). The *Conservatory* is currently being prepared for the *71st Begonia Festival*, when it will house 1000 begonias! She updated members on the *Fernery* project, linked to the new *Gardens Master Plan*, the installation of a new irrigation system and the use of *Integrated Pest Management*, which has reduced the use of chemicals by 70%.

Mayor Cr. Des Hudson addressed the benefits of volunteerism and, sadly, its decline over recent years. He congratulated the FBBG on their significant contribution to the Gardens and understood the frustration felt by many regarding the re tendering of the *Fernery* development, which is being addressed in the new *Master Plan*. He acknowledged the important advocacy of Cr Sam McIntosh.

Thirteen Members were presented with *Certificates of Appreciation* for their commitment to the Friends over many years. The certificates are decorated with images by the *FBBG Botanical Art Group of Rare and Endangered Plants* from the Ballarat area. The

work of retiring Committee Members Wendy Taylor, Doff Kemp and *Wellingtonia* Editor Michael Bird was also recognized.

Rather than a single guest speaker, Jock Gilbert facilitated a discussion about the importance of community, botanic gardens and biodiversity, with Patron Tim Entwisle (Director Royal Melbourne Botanic Gardens, Victoria) and Emma Cutting, founder of The Heart Gardening Project.

The project seeks to transform underutilized pieces of land in urban Melbourne to create the 8 kilometre Melbourne Pollinator Corridor, linking the Westgate Park with the Royal Botanic Gardens. Many indigenous pollinators do not travel far and require indigenous plants and nesting areas, so the initiative seeks to establish and include gardens every 50 metres, linked to a Citizen Science project. A wide range of experts and associations are involved, but the gardens are developed and maintained by community members, connecting with nature and each other. This exciting and positive initiative ended the meeting and was followed by a delicious morning tea in the warm and sunny courtyard.

For more information: The Melbourne Pollinator Corridor Handbook and The Heart Gardening Project website.

Also now available Tim Entwisle's memoir: *Evergreen, The Botanical Life of a Plant Punk*.



BIODIVERSITY, COMMUNITY AND BOTANIC GARDENS:

A Conversation Between Professor Tim Entwisle, Director and Chief Executive, Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria, Emma Cutting, Founder and Chief Doer, Heart Gardening Project and Melbourne Pollinator Corridor, Jock Gilbert, Landscape Architect, Program Manager Bachelor Landscape Architectural Design and Director of Yulendj Weelam Research Laboratory, RMIT University

The conversation kicked off with Jock asking Tim and Emma to give personal reflections on what gardens mean to each. Tim reflected on writing by Robert Dessaux in looking for clues as to what gardens (and particularly Botanic Gardens) might offer (or not) to members of various communities generally and Emma delving into both human and non-human communities; the community of 'critters' which inhabit gardens at both the micro and macro scales.

For Emma, this is where biodiversity and community become entangled; when human communities coalesce around gardening activities with outcomes that benefit non-human animals and micro-organisms which in turn benefit the humans engaged in that activity on so many levels. Emma spoke about this through examples drawn from her Heart Gardening Project and especially the Melbourne Pollinator Corridor; examples which also highlighted the networks of care associated with such endeavours and which paralleled Mayor Des Hudson's observations of the powerfully positive role of volunteers in the FBBG.

The conversation then addressed the sometimes messy nature of some of these entanglements and the contradiction between this



and the generally more mannered and cultivated nature of the Botanic Gardens as a landscape type. Drawing on the example of the recent controversy around maintenance regimes (or lack thereof) in the current management of the Ventnor Botanic Garden on the Isle of Wight in the UK, Jock highlighted the garden designer's dilemma between achieving a desired outcome and leaving space for (and celebrating) the unexpected turn. Tim used a recent wonderful example of the death of a large old oak in the Melbourne Botanic Garden. Gardens staff have carefully and purposefully retained the deceased log on the Oak Lawn as a place of repose for humans; a symbolic reminder of life, death and decay but also a haven for the microorganisms involved in that decay.

Tim and Emma then concluded by speaking of the opportunities inherent in embracing the entanglement of biodiversity (and diversity more generally) and community, noting that with care and an embrace of the 'messy' we might be able to re-visualise the Botanic Garden beyond its current boundaries, both physical and imagined. In doing so, the Botanic Garden might open up more fully to both human and non-human communities – a wonderful prospect!

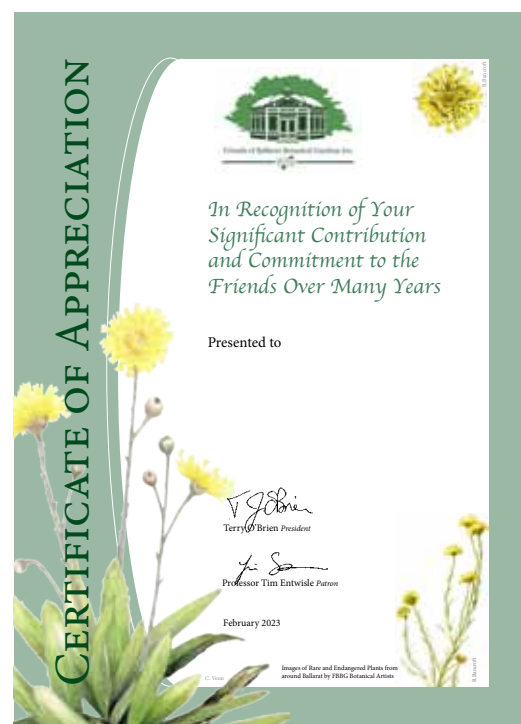
Report from Susan Pilbeam and Jock Gilbert

Certificate Recipients (In Person) AGM 2023

Elizabeth Astbury
Trish Campbell
Cathie Keller
Doff Kemp
Susan Pilbeam
Valerie Richards
Julie Sellens
Warwick Sellens

Certificate Recipients (Unable to Attend) AGM 2023

Kerrie Johnson
Jacinta Nuttall
Wendy Sandiford
Tim Sandiford
Nonnie Tennant



71ST BALLARAT BEGONIA FESTIVAL



The House of 1,000 Begonias and Much, Much More!

The 71st Ballarat Begonia Festival opened to eager crowds, keen to enjoy the good weather and the wide range of activities and displays. New Curator, Donna Thomas, was working at the Conservatory, meeting locals and tourists, queuing to see the spectacular display of 1000 different Begonias. She was proud of the Gardens' team, who have been preparing for months to have everything looking its best. Newly retired Curator, Peter Marquand, was waiting to see the Begonia named in his honor and looking forward to enjoying the Festival and the Gardens, with no responsibilities, for the first time in decades.



71ST BALLARAT BEGONIA FESTIVAL



The Growing Friends had a large and wide variety of plants in peak condition. Nursery sales over the Festival contribute significantly to FBBG income. This year, two Plant Crèches were run, one next to the Begonia sales area, and both were well utilized. The BotaniKids team was, as usual, extremely busy and happy to be helped out by the Scouts this year.

There was an extensive program of talks, music, art and activities, as well as a spectrum of specialist stalls for garden lovers. The bean bag lawn was popular, as was the variety of food and drink available. The Begonia Festival has always been enjoyed by all ages and its appeal continues to broaden, with visitors coming from Melbourne, regional areas and interstate.

Thanks and congratulations to all those members who helped out.
Susan Pilbeam



IN THE KNOW

You may have heard that Professor Tim Entwisle recently announced his retirement as Director and Chief Executive of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne and Cranbourne.

The good news is that he is staying on as our Patron.

We have installed a tap system for the sale of the Friends Nursery plants from the trolleys in the Gardens. Up until now you could only use cash. Located in the Conservatory, it will make it that much easier to buy our Nursery plants! Sales are sure to increase with this new initiative. Thanks to Kim Nolan, Office Manager.

As reported in the Begonia Festival article, a new begonia variety has been bred by the City of Ballarat Nursery staff. It is to be named Peter Marquand! (Peter was the Curator of the Ballarat Botanical Gardens for many years and retired late last year). Check the orange, ruffled begonia in the photo on the Begonia Festival page, being proudly presented by Sheree Blood of the Nursery staff. Apparently it was 5 years in the making!



before the Festival. “The House of 1,000 Begonias” was truly amazing. Sheree with her team created a stunning display with a more formal feel than last year’s tropical theme. With the help of

pencil pines, box balls and topiary the display was unique. Added to this, for the first time, two begonia towers each with 150 to 200 pink begonias rose up at the front and back of the Conservatory!

The Friends brought in an amazing \$9000 at the Begonia Festival from the sale of plants, donations at plant crèches and cottage and the sale of books!

- 53 Friends volunteered over the 3 days plus setting up before the event! - some for more than one shift - some for the whole three days!

- hundreds of connections to visitors both local, around Victoria, interstate and overseas.

We were able to give that personal connection, working with children and families at the cottage to excite and inspire, helping provide a plant to give ongoing joy, looking after treasured plant purchases and providing a place of rest and help for directions and lost keys.....

I was lucky to be given a preview of the Begonia display the week

Wendy Taylor

CURATOR'S REPORT

What an exciting Begonia festival we've just had! Over 60,000 people came to the gardens in what was one of our biggest visitor attendances.

It was wonderful to showcase our gardens to so many and we saw many visitors travel up from Melbourne, but also many interstate and international visitors including from New Zealand, the UK, and Canada who had travelled to Ballarat purely because of the Begonias!

We were delighted to have Jerry Coleby-Williams from Gardening Australia as our gardening guru this year & hear how his affinity for Begonias stemmed from growing & showing Begonias as a 12yr old in the UK. He too had bought begonias from Blackmore & Langdon - the same English nursery that over half of our tuberous begonias originated from.



Of course you cannot have that many visitors without some damage from foot traffic. We are fortunate that Autumn is the perfect time to renovate our lawns and we will soon implement our annual lawn regime of gypsum, fertiliser, & aeration to get things back on track as soon as possible.

And importantly, a big thank you to the Friends for the two plant crèches you manned over the three days. It provided a wonderful service to so many, and assisted our biosecurity efforts to prevent purchased plants entering the Conservatory by reassuring people their 'plant treasures' were safe while they viewed the Begonias.

Donna Thomas
Curator Gardens and Nursery

BOTANIKIDS REPORT

Ballarat Begonia Festival 2023 at the Gatekeepers Cottage

The Cottage itself became a show piece during the Festival. It was open to view with a pamphlet explaining its history and unique story.

There was an inaugural mini exhibition of eight very special selected species varieties of Begonias from the Begonia Society.

Also a children's interactive nature table of the world of weird and wonderful plants.

The activity bench with plants inspired reading for the smaller children.

The heritage room was simply displayed as if the gardener of the day had just left for work in the gardens. Leaving behind his spectacles, a game of unfinished dominoes and his reading matter, a seed and seedling catalogue of the latest plants he could order.

Outside on the deck behind the Cottage we set up a country garden with a unique arbour for potting for children assisted by the Ballarat District Scout Joeys group from 11am-2 pm each of the days of the Festival. Almost 700 children planted seeds into a jiffy pot with a pretty amazing sweet pea planter marker.

The deck was decorated with artwork and special clay and nature nests created by the Under five Botanikids scattered around the 'country garden' on display.

* The double sided verandah of the Cottage set up as two giant daybeds with nature inspired books for quiet reading, cushions, rugs and cane chairs, and a place for young families to take some quiet chill time at the Festival.

* Our museum standard digital microscope showcased the significant trees in the Gardens with plant material and information about these trees.

All in all as part of the 'fringe' Begonia Festival we are not in the main 'arena', we still had a strong presence and was a great place to visit and stay awhile.

Our regular weekly Children's Nature Club sessions are conducted by the volunteers of the Botanikids team Tuesday 10-12 and Thursday 4-5.30pm. Our partnership with Loreto VCAL program begins on 21st March every fortnight.

Julie Bradby and team



AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS OF BOTANIC GARDENS (AAFBG)

The AAFBG Management Committee had their first meeting for 2023 via Zoom on Friday, 17th February. Much of the discussion concerned planning for the 2023 AGM, the new Botanical Tour and the 2024 Biennial Conference.

The **2023 AGM** will be hosted by the Melbourne Friends at Mueller Hall, National Herbarium of Victoria, Royal Botanic Gardens, Birdwood Avenue, Melbourne from 9am to 12 noon on Friday, 5th May. Following registration and prior to the AGM, a special morning tea to celebrate the AAFBG's 30th Anniversary will be served by the Melbourne Friends. At the conclusion of the AGM and the presentation of the Hanbury Awards, there will be a lunch break followed by guided walks in the Gardens. Registration details for the AGM will soon be available on the AAFBG website.

As a precursor to the AGM, a coach trip to **Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne and Cruden Farm, Langwarrin** will take place on **Thursday 4th May**. Walking tours led by experienced guides will showcase the design, distinctive features and special character of each garden. For the itinerary and bookings see the AAFBG website. Cost including return transport from the Melbourne CBD will be \$94

A new **AAFBG Botanical Tour** from 29th October – 4th November 2023 is being finalized and the destination will be gardens in the Southern Highlands of NSW. Elizabeth Gilfillan who has a close connection to the region is working with the Friends of Southern Highlands Botanic Garden on a six-day coach tour that begins and ends in Sydney. As with the earlier Botanical Tour of Tasmania, the

itinerary will include large historic gardens, botanic gardens and private gardens that are rarely open for viewing, complemented by other attractions such as museum exhibitions, winery visits and an historic town walk. For the itinerary and bookings see Jon Baines

Tours info@jonbainestours.com.au or
Phone 03 9343 6367

The **2024 AAFBG Biennial Conference** will be held at Maroochy Regional Bushland Botanic Gardens from 23-25 August with an optional tour on Monday 26. The Keynote Speaker and other presenters are in place and the organizers are close to deciding on a theme for the conference.

The AAFBG is calling for expressions of interest from member gardens to host the 2026 Biennial Conference.

An interactive **Map** showing all current AAFBG member gardens is now on the AAFBG website www.friendsbotanicgardens.org This will be very helpful when planning visits to botanic gardens throughout Australia.

For further information on AAFBG activities and the member gardens, the monthly E-ucalypt News is available on the website www.friendsbotanicgardens.org

Report by Merrill Shulkes Committee Member and FBBG representative



THE FRIENDS COMMITTEE



Committee 2023

President:	Terry O'Brien
Vice President:	Julie Bradby
Treasurer:	Kim Nolan
Minute Secretary:	Natalie Radomski
General Committee:	Jock Gilbert, Geoff Notman, Anna Beasley, Karen McLean

Nominated Committee Positions:

Immediate Past President:	Robert Selkirk
Growing Friends:	Yvonne Curbach
BotaniKids/Education:	Julie Bradby
Exhibitions/Library:	Lorraine Powell
Guides:	Julie Chandler
History:	Natalie Radomski
Hospitality/Ambassadors:	Heather Boyd
Events:	Carole Haines
Membership:	Warwick Sellens
AAFBG Rep	Merrill Shulkes
Botanical Art:	Ro Bancroft
BBG Foundation Rep.	Terry O'Brien

New Committee Members

Anna Beasley



Anna is an experienced government lawyer and passionate horticulturalist who together with her husband moved to Ballarat at the beginning of 2018. Prior to coming to Ballarat, Anna and her husband were the custodians of an heritage listed Edna Walling Garden in Bickleigh Vale for 7 years, opening their garden as part of the Australian and Victorian Open Garden Schemes in 2012 and 2014.

Since arriving in Ballarat, Anna has been transforming her 1200m2 garden from a grass-filled block to a sustainable ornamental garden.

Anna is looking forward to being a general committee member of the FBBG and to helping to ensure the gardens continue to be a thriving green space for future generations. Anna has a particular interest in looking at the implications of climate change adaptation measures for public heritage landscapes.



Heather Boyd

Having grown up near Fairyland, the lake and gardens were my playground and have always been special to me. With a career in Early Childhood Education, BotaniKids was the perfect combination of young children and nature for me to become actively involved with the Friends. This extended into helping the catering committee and then joining the Ambassadors where I have the privilege of not only meeting an amazing collection of visitors from Ballarat and all over the world, but in sharing with them the pleasure and joy our Botanical Gardens bring.



Karen McLean

My love for gardens and nature was nurtured in childhood by my parents and grandparents, providing me with many happy memories of exploring their gardens, the Botanical Gardens and gardens in general. For my children, the Botanical Gardens in Ballarat, Buninyong and surrounding areas, provided an invitation for playful 'wanderings', 'wonderings', and appreciation of nature's beauty. As a teacher, teacher educator and early childhood education researcher I am passionate about ensuring all children and their families experience the 'magic' and joy of gardens. I am thrilled to be part of the FBBG Committee and look forward to contributing to community-based education through a 'lifelong learning' lens.



Ro Bancroft

I've always had an interest in botanical art, so joining the Ballarat Botanical Art Group in 2017, and working in the wonderful Botanical Gardens was the perfect place to discover this very exacting form of art. Recording and exhibiting the significance of rare and endangered plant species, with like minded artists, has been a highlight, with more on the way. I look forward to being a part of, and working with the FBBG Committee.

FRIENDS GROUPS CONVENORS



Admin: Office Manager Kim Nolan

Ambassadors: Convenor Trish Twaits

Biodiversity group: Current convenor Terry O'Brien

Botanical Artists: Co - Convenors Valerie Richards and Ro Bancroft

Botanikids / Education: Convenor Julie Bradby

Catering: Convenor Heather Boyd

Events: Convenor Carole Haines

Guiding: Convenor Julie Chandler

Growers/Nursery: Convenor Yvonne Curbach

History: Convenor Natalie Radomski

Exhibitions/Library: Contact Lorraine Powell

Plant Trolley: Manager Sue Rattray

Wellingtonia Liaison & Publicity for Major Events: Wendy Taylor

Membership: Membership Officer Warwick Sellens

Involvement in our groups brings rewarding social benefits and support for our organisation. Please contact Ann in the office if you would like more information about becoming involved: 03 5342 9354

Most groups meet in the George Longley Building.

The Friends are proud to recognise our Corporate Members for 2022-3



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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 the Winter Wellingtonia 2023 are due by Friday 16 June please.