

Wellingtonia

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NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2014

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

Sunny New Year's Greetings to everyone. We are looking forward to twelve months of positive outcomes following a big year of negotiations and happy occasions.

The **Ballarat Gardens in Spring** event was a huge success. The Open Gardens were well supported and we thank sincerely the owners who willingly opened their properties.

The **Speakers Luncheon** was a sell out. The messages from each of the three speakers were of great interest. It was wonderful to be able have lunch in the beautiful surrounds of The Conservatory. Without any subsidy a profit of over \$2,700 was raised.

The committee welcomed a visit from patron Prof. Tim Entwistle in November. It was a great day we all enjoyed a chat and a walk in The Gardens which Tim enjoyed very much, some may have read the *Ballarat Courier* article in which Tim refers to the importance of the Gardens from a Tourism perspective. Members will have the opportunity to meet with Tim at our AGM in February when he will be guest speaker.

(Continues page 2)



Guest Speakers - Christine Reid, Steven Wells and Andrew Laidlaw
at the **Friends' Speakers Luncheon 2013**. (See page 4)

WANTED

BY THE FBBG

WESTERN BEDS GANG

**FRIENDS NEEDED TO
ESTABLISH A NEW SUB-
GROUP.**

**CONTACT BERYL
PLUMMER AT THE
GEORGE LONGLEY
CENTRE 53429354**



Friends Patron

Prof. Tim Entwistle,
Director and Chief
Executive at Royal
Botanic Gardens

WHAT'S INSIDE THIS EDITION?

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Exciting things lie ahead! The Friends are forming a new **Western Beds Group**. This group will be directly involved in rejuvenation of the existing western beds, trimming, planting, propagating and working with Gardens Staff. FBBG will fund some of the works and a programme is to be planned.

We are currently discussing with City of Ballarat the possibilities of employing a **Botanical Gardens Education officer**, this also is so very exciting. The GLB may be used for administration of activities planned, working with our own Education Group, BotaniKids. The Education Group have done amazing things to develop the programme to the high standard it is. Grateful thanks to Julie Bradbury for her cheerful professional approach.

The Botanical Gardens Re-development is a reality!

The FBBG committee will be holding the annual Symposium on January 21, and we are looking forward to meeting with and holding discussions with all concerned.

City of Ballarat (CoB) Architect Tim Grace has prepared working drawings of the Fernery structure. Andrew Laidlaw from Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne will consult on the interior. The FBBG will be forming a small group to work with CoB on this project. The Gardens will play a huge part in highlighting the scientifically proven health and community benefits to our lives.

In December the FBBG facilitated a meeting with CoB and consequent appointment of a Botanical Consultant, Mark Richardson, to undertake work on a Visionary Plan for our Ballarat Botanical Gardens, into the next many years. Mark comes highly recommended by Tim Entwistle, we are really looking forward to hearing Mark at the symposium. You can read about Mark on his website (planningforplants.com.au).

As this Newsletter goes to print FBBG are in the process of finalising a **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** with the City of Ballarat which will be ready for an official signing very soon. The MOU will outline the roles of both parties and it is expected that from the MOU the two organisations will work cooperatively in establishing a shared Vision for the Botanical Gardens and its Precinct.

This is my last letter to you as President; where have three years gone? It has been an honour to take the role and I am looking forward to sharing the journey of the coming years as an active member of FBBG and being able to be a more participating member of a couple of Groups. I thank committee and members from the bottom of my heart for your support of me as your President.

Here's to an exciting and fun 2014!

Elizabeth Gilfillan



Rite Of Christian Farewell
— **STUART RATTLE** —
16th November 1960 - 4th December 2013

Vale Stuart Rattle

The FBBG wish to pay tribute to the sudden sad passing of our dear gardening friend and mentor Stuart Rattle.

Stuart was a warm and generous member of the community, especially to The Friends of Wombat Hill Botanic Garden, Daylesford.

His creativity was exceptional, expressed so beautifully in his garden Musk Farm which he happily shared on many occasions.

His loss is felt and will be keenly missed by all. **EG**

Trip to Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne on 14 October 2013

A small group of Friends travelled to the RBG to visit the Herbarium library, which is generally not open to the public. The librarians put on a display of a number of items, including herbals from the 17th Century which once belonged to Baron Von Mueller.

Also on display were some of Von Mueller's personal possessions including his spectacles, calling cards and a pair of braces.

One of the volumes of banksia illustrations was also on display, along with the actual samples used in creating one of the illustrations.

Following lunch, the Friends then visited the art display "*From the Forest to the Shore*" a wonderful series of artworks by various artists of insects, sea life and plants.

Our thanks go to the librarians for their hospitality and efforts to make our visit so memorable.

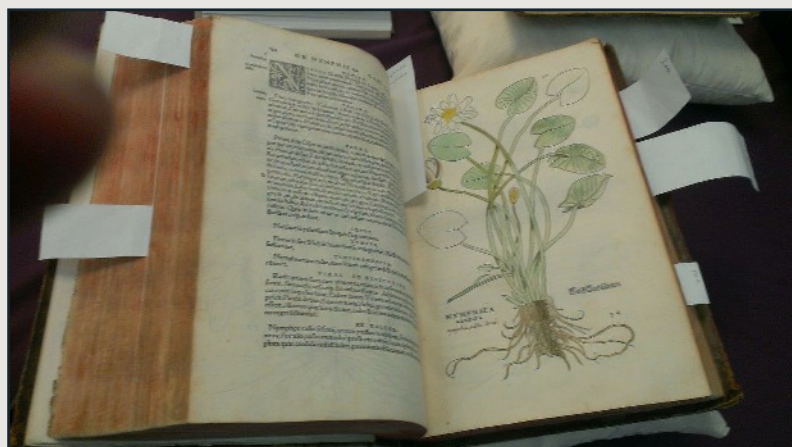


left to right above. Susan Patterson, Sue Pilbeam, Lorraine Powell, Jane Munroe, Heather Fryer (behind), Elizabeth Gilfillan, Beryl Plummer, Beth Dixon and Librarian Sally Stewart.



Beryl Plummer

The spectacles and braces were once worn by Baron Von Mueller (*left*). The embroidered braces were made by von Mueller's sister – imagine that! Surely a lost art!



The open book (*above*) is a 16th Century book. We viewed two of these -- one was dated 1531, the other 1542.

ELECTRONIC FUNDS TRANSFER FOR FBBG MEMBERS!

Payments to FBBG are available via eft!

- Please use your **surname** and **first initial** as **your id**.
- Account name: *Friends of Ballarat Botanical Gardens*
- **BSB** 633 108
- **Acc. Number:** 125334615



For your Diary

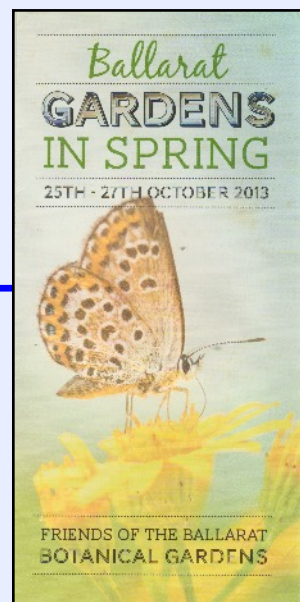
FRIENDS AGM
Thurs. 20th February
10.00am

Robert Clark Horticultural Centre

Guest speaker Professor
Tim Entwisle, Director Royal
Botanic Gardens Melbourne
and our FBBG Patron

Ballarat Gardens in Spring

25 - 27 October 2013



Thank you to all who supported our 6th annual Ballarat Gardens in Spring. The weather was kind which in turn provided the ideal conditions for perusing gardens and celebrating all that Ballarat has to offer during our glorious Spring.

This year's **Speakers Luncheon** held on Friday, 25th October was extremely well received with our guest speakers extremely engaging, informative and most importantly for this occasion, inspiring. A delicious lunch from Peter Ford Catering was served in The Conservatory which was a wonderful environment to mingle with speakers and other guests. A big thank you to Carole Haines and her team for making the catering arrangement flow effortlessly.

Guest Speakers - Christine Reid, Steven Wells and Andrew Laidlaw

The **five open gardens** on the Saturday and Sunday again proved to be very popular, with visitor numbers exceeding our expectations (over 1600 - a great result)! Both days were perfect weather-wise and visitors took their time and enjoyed chatting to the owners, spending up big on plants and preserves and taking advantage of the Sweets Treats Cafe at the Ballarat Specialist School.

Details about the visitors in attendances along with, where they were from and how they knew about the event, are currently being collated to assist with next year's funding and promotional strategies. Scanning through the log sheets, our printed brochure is clearly the best means of promotion, however the publicity provided in newspapers and magazines, on radio and websites all contributed to getting the word out and getting people out and about!

Thanks also to our **Sponsors:-**

- Kate Leach *Tickled Pink Design*, Ballarat – brochure design
- Gull & Company *Real Estate* – Signage at open gardens
- Spot on *Nursery and Pots* – tomato seedling for guests at Speakers Luncheon
- Parklands *Vineyard* - Wine at Speakers Luncheon
- The *Ballarat Courier* – promotional opportunities

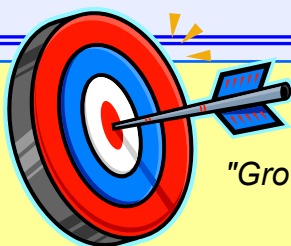
And the **Open Garden owners** for their willingness to open their gardens, hard work and commitment:

- Peter & Meredith *Todd* – Maxyln Ave
- Brigitte *Chitryk-Goss* – Old Curiosity Shop
- Kaye *Deutscher-Watson* and Trevor *Watson* – Neill Street
- Helen & Haydn *Vincent* – Lake Gardens
- Ballarat *Specialist School* – Gillies Street

We are again delighted to advise a profit margin was made from the event along with a contribution from each garden owner returning to the Friends for identified projects.

The Committee will be meeting to discuss the 2014 program very soon however, in the mean time we would welcome any feedback on any aspect of the event. Again thanks to all the 'Friends' for their support and enthusiasm.

Helen Todd, Elizabeth Gilfillan, Wendy Taylor & Kylie Blake
Committee
Ballarat Gardens in Spring



SOMETHING TO AIM AT NEXT YEAR:

Association of Friends Conference

"Growing Matters.....Growing Gardens.....Growing Friends"

Gold Coast Regional Gardens, August. 8-10, 2014

Gold Coast Resort

Contact: secretary@friendsgcgbg.org.au

More info next edition

Curator's Report

5th Global Botanic Gardens Congress. Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI) and Botanic Gardens Australia and New Zealand (BGANZ)

Over 300 delegates from 43 countries attended the 5th Global Botanic Gardens Congress in Dunedin, New Zealand, I was fortunate to be one of those delegates. The theme of the congress was “*celebrating success:—the influence and appeal of Botanic Gardens*” and was hosted by Dunedin City Council between the 20th and 25th October. The beautiful Dunedin Botanic Gardens, which are the oldest New Zealand Botanic gardens, celebrated its 150th anniversary during the congress.

Dunedin has many similarities to Ballarat, beautiful historic buildings, stunning trees, a statue of Robbie Burns and large tracts of gorse.

The first day of the congress started with a traditional Maori welcome and was followed over the next five days by 17 plenary talks, 12 organized symposia, over 80 conference papers and a day of tours.

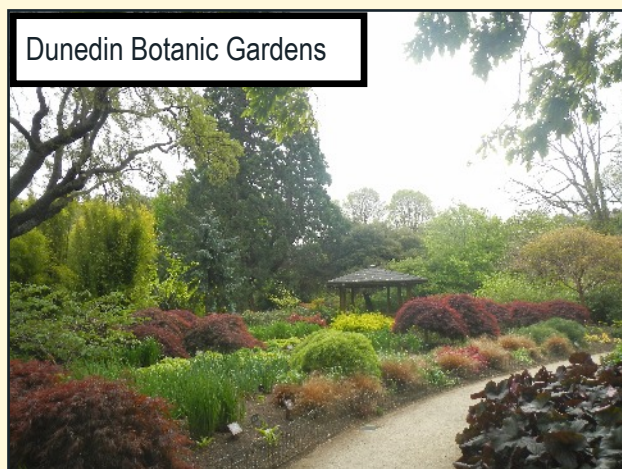
The range of presentations was inspiring – from the extreme of the Chicago and Brooklyn Botanic Gardens and their amazing budgets to presenters from Tonga who wrote out their own business cards to bring with them to New Zealand.

Some of the messages I took from the week include the following:

- Engage the public and work in partnerships
- Relevance to local communities and response to changing needs
- Gardens are able to help people with emotional and physical challenges, are a place to solve our problems and experience being in touch with self
- That gardens are a place to engage people from the cradle to the grave.

Whilst it is very hard to pick a favorite presentation it would be hard to go past the one by the CEO of Brooklyn Botanic Gardens, Scott Medbury. The Brooklyn Botanic Gardens opened their Childrens Gardens in 1914; they currently attract 150,000 children annually through the childrens' entrance to participate in a range of programs. Scott commented that most horticulturalists have been inspired by their childhood experiences in chosen their future careers. This is certainly an important message when we look at a skill shortage.

Following the end of the congress and during the drive back to Christchurch I was able to take the time to visit a number of gardens which included Lanarch Castle, Oamaru, Timaru and finally Christchurch. Each of these gardens was very special in their own right.



Dunedin Botanic Gardens



Conservatory Dunedin Botanic Gardens

Sequoiadendrons Dunedin



Meanwhile – back at Ballarat:

During the last couple months of the year a number of projects were commenced or completed including, painting of the Wendouree Parade fence, alterations to the Lych gates, and maintenance at the Robert Clark Centre included new vinyl on the toilet floors and external painting.

A large number of events have been, or are to be held, in the precinct including Ballarat carols, Toy run, concerts and Christmas parties. January sees the Summer Sundays program and Australia Day. Plans are progressing for **Begonia 2014** with numerous exciting activities planned for the weekend.

Peter Marquand

Reports:

TENANTS GROUP REPORT

The Tenants group ended the year with a presentation from Unravelling Ballarat, a local website promotional company embarking on international expansion. The vision seems promising and the various applications may be valuable for each Tenant group, including the FBBG. An attractive feature: zero cost for not for profit organizations!

Peter Marquand highlighted events and actions successfully completed within the BBG over the year. Major works include the refurbishment of the Conservatory, including re-sealing of the structure. The RCHC has been painted inside and out, and facilities upgraded. Most importantly, the RCHC usage was reassessed with subsequent increase in its occupancy for meetings to around 100.

Kate Partridge detailed plans and arrangements for the 2014 Begonia Festival in March. The focus will be on a Gardeners Market and activities to encourage enquiring youngsters.

Compliments of the Season were exchanged over a pleasant morning tea. **Mike Sorrell**

MAINTENANCE OF FBBG FACILITIES

Thanks to Peter Marquand and his staff for the recent upgrade of the Growers sales and propagating areas. Leveling of the ground and laying of crushed bluestone have significantly improved the work areas. Yvonne Curbach and her team have also re-arranged the plant benches to allow easier movement through out both areas.

Watering of the nursery areas will be essential when summer arrives. Your help in this activity would be much appreciated.

Mike Sorrell

LAKE WENDOUREE AND GARDENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (LWAGAC)

Recent deliberations of this committee of BCC have unfortunately been ineffective, with meetings being poorly attended and the December meeting postponed at short notice until February 2014.

There has been much achieved around the Lake precinct throughout the year. The level and quality of water in the Lake is first rate, with all users benefiting. Bollards and pontoons have been installed strategically for major rowing events in 2014. A considerable amount of tree work has been carried out around the Lake perimeter and in the North Gardens, including new plantings. Installation of drinking fountains and lighting of paths are other enhancements.

A copy of the December Lake Wendouree Newsletter has been filed in the GLB. Note the invitation for interested persons to report concerns to BCC.

Mike Sorrell

Events and Hospitality Report

Our Christmas barbecue was a great success with many members and friends attending.

Thank you to Jenny Binns for her assistance and thank you to all members who assisted with the cleaning and washing up after the Barbecue.

Thank you also to all members who have assisted me during 2013. All our functions for the year were well attended and help was always given willingly by members.

We were sorry to lose Alison Freeman as our caterer. Alison always provided excellent morning tea, nibbles and special cakes. Thank you Alison. **Carole Haines**

Did you know?

That our History Group, under the astute leadership of Kathleen Hobson and Lorriane Powell, achieved a notable award recently. '*An Eden of Loveliness: Ballarat Botanical Gardens by Lake Wendouree*' received a commendation in the prestigious 2013 Victorian Community History Awards.

Well done History Group members!



Watering Assistance Required:

Did you see Mike's request for **watering assistance** (above)? Contact Yvonne Curbach, Mike or Genevieve to see what you can do to help in our propagating nursery during the hot summer days of January and February.

BotaniKIDS: Educating Group

The Great Big Gardens Play Day.

Despite the cool dampish conditions the day was a success judging by the level of involvement of the 650 children attending, the 150 volunteers, the parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, carers and teachers. Thank you all — we could not stage such a big day without you.

Others needing thanks are: Federation Uni of Ballarat with Horsham Campus; CFA Community Education team; Central Highlands Water, Ballarat City Council; St Peters Floral Group; Sovereign Hill FOSH; Corangamite Water Catchment; Kites4Kids; and Ballarat Library. Lance and Judith Lewis who so kindly offered their time to help children pot up a plant to take home.

The following donors were very much appreciated too: Brumbys Bakery, John Harbour Butcher, Spring H2o, Wilsons Fruit and Vegies and RadMac Art Supplies.

The *Sing Australia Choir* sang their hearts out in the Conservatory and Diggers Seeds donated items for encouragement awards given to children during the day.

Keith Edwards Marketing and Sales Manager of Diggers, attended the day and kindly offered a donation of a tree to the Gardens specifically to appeal to children to encourage them to come back to the Gardens to see how it is growing.

Seventy-five Grammar Year 9 students with four staff helped us during the day. The students were all allocated activities to support, and actively engage the children in activities. Their help and enthusiasm was invaluable to the success of the day.



The Gardens Staff supported us in many ways. Twenty or so Friends volunteered to cook sausages, run activities, serve lunches, set up and pack up. All gave their time in typical good spirits. Thanks to Joan Garner and her willing band of cooks and caterers who prepared and served 180 lunches to volunteers. A superb effort!

Over the last five years we have learnt so much about children, their families, their schools, their playgroups and their keen interest in anything to do with nature. Most of all we have learnt that there is a great deal of goodwill in the wider community and in the Friends to the idea that children need to play and interact in beautiful gardens, in nature and more importantly outdoors!

It is timely now to review our program for 2014 and beyond. Ideas on the table are to streamline our events, establish kits and self guided tours that can be accessed on the website, develop a BotaniKIDS information pamphlet, deliver horticultural information sessions in partnership with the Royal Melbourne Botanic Gardens Education service and FedUni for teachers and parents running school gardens.

You may see more under 5s and their parents in the Gardens in 2014 as we are planning with the BCC, a *Nature Based Playgroup*. We now hope that our hard work will help inform the process to the establish a paid education officer within the Gardens precinct. Initial talks with the CEO recently gave some cause for hope.

And finally.....**The Begonia Festival.** BotaniKIDS Group have once again been approached by the BCC to provide a children's activity at the Begonia Festival. We are paid a fee and all materials are supplied. Our activity will be planting a *pansy in a decorated pot* in a mini nursery setting. Look out for us. Please put your name down to help if you can. You are very welcome to join our crew too at any time; the more the merrier.

Julie Bradby, Convenor BotaniKIDS: Educating Group. *Planting Ideas for Growing Minds*

The presentation of the Longley family bible to the Friends by Mr Reginald Jones, great grandson and Mr Mark Jones, great great grandson of George and Helen Longley, is a reminder of the close association of the Botanical Gardens with the Wendouree Jubilee church which stood at the corner of Forest St and Wendouree Parade. This association is recorded in the "*Centenary Celebrations*" booklet of the church which was produced in 1960.

Founded in 1860 as the Wendouree Wesleyan Church on its present site the original church was a brick structure. The Minister was the Rev J. Bickford. The first meeting of the church leaders in 1862 included George Longley, at that time the head gardener at the nearby Botanical Gardens. In 1887, Queen Victoria's Jubilee year, the original church was sold for 50 pounds and removed and a new church, the present wooden structure, was built for 500 pounds. This was made possible by subscriptions and George is named as a trustee of the new Jubilee Church. He also served as Superintendent of the Sunday School and bell-ringer on Sundays.

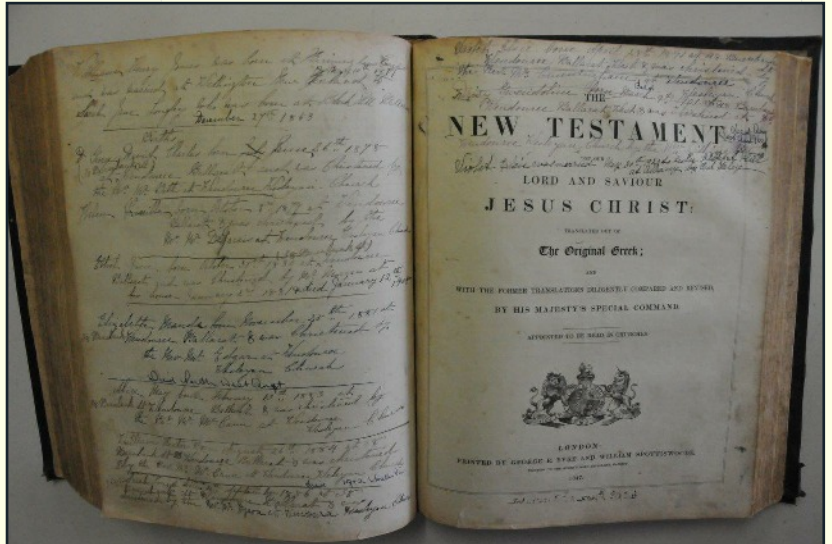
He had strong religious convictions as is apparent in his letters to his niece and nephew in Canada, copies of which are held in our archives. His wife Sarah until her death in 1866 and his second wife, Elizabeth, were also very much involved in the Church activities and he continued to serve the congregation until his death in 1899. His daughter, Sarah Jane, married W.H.Jones who in turn was involved in the church and became a trustee in 1902.

As Lorraine Powell pointed out in her talk on Longley Day this year (see page 11 for an edited version of Lorraine's talk, Ed.) the church congregation provided a source of trainees for the gardens and the name of a later curator, J Lingham, also appears as a trustee in 1902. His successor, Tom Toop, is mentioned in the document, together with the redoubtable Tilly Thompson who donated land to the church for a tennis club, was a good friend of Toop and who has a memorial area in the Gardens in honour of her services to the community.

Frank and Enid Rogers, founder members of the Friends, were involved in the Sunday school and kindergarten and Frank served as a Trustee. With the involvement of so many interested gardeners over the years one could be certain that the church never lacked floral decoration.

The Kindergarten is still functioning but the Church has closed and the buildings were sold in 1996.

John Garner



THE LONGLEY FAMILY BIBLE:

The Longley Family Bible has been presented to the Friends by George Longley's great grandson, Mr Reginald Jones and great great grandson Mr Mark Jones. It was given to George and Helen Longley on the third March, 1853, prior to their departure from Liverpool on the "Marco Polo" to travel to Australia. The name of the donor is not stated.

On "Longley Day" this year it was placed in the display case in the George Longley Building, the case being the gift of another Longley descendant, Carolyn Jones. Opened at the space between the Old and the New testaments, it contains, as many of these Bibles do, a record of the names of descendants and details of their birth, christening and in some cases their marriages.

A booklet next to the case contains a copy of these entries as well as other notes about the King James Bible and the family tree.

Between the pages are several postcards from Europe (no writing), pieces of scriptural writings and a pressed flower.

John Garner

T WILIGHT Talk – Tuesday March 25 at 7pm – Come along and hear Celia Burnham's address entitled: "*MaMa's Garden*". Celia and her husband Graeme are fourth generation owners/custodians of the historic property "Mt Boninyong" at Scotsburn.

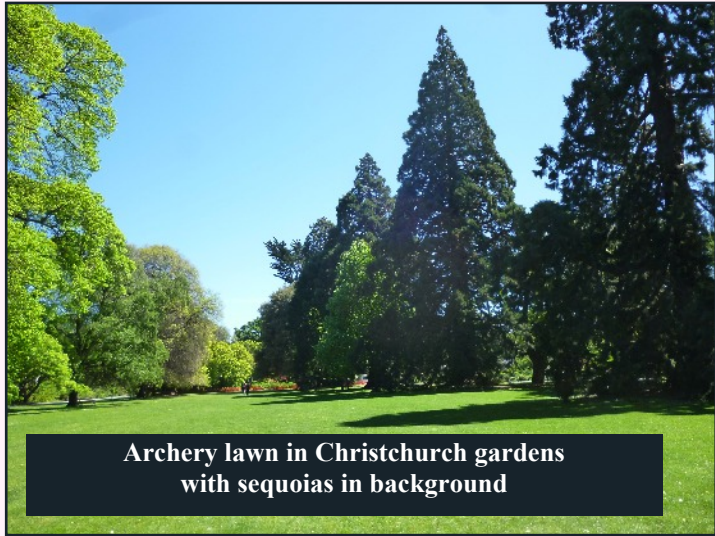
Celia will talk on the establishment of the garden by her great grandmother.

(Editor's Note: We are planning to have a visit by the Friends to this garden in April along with Narmbool. Cost approximately \$50 including morning tea plus lunch at Narmbool.)

GUIDES REPORT : (On the Trail with Terry!)

The Australasian Conference for Volunteer Botanic Garden Guides was held in Christchurch, 28 October to 1 November 2013. It is biennial and alternates with the AFBG (Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens) conferences. In 2016 the Guides' Conference will be in Sydney and 2018 it will be in Canberra.

Christchurch is slowly rebuilding from the extensive damage of the 2011 earthquake. While I was there for the conference there was an aftershock tremor of 3.4 magnitude. Since the earthquake 2 years ago more than 11,200 aftershocks have been recorded. For the people of Christchurch there are plenty of raw reminders with rubble and closed sites. One can easily appreciate the tensions and frustrations within the city as it rebuilds. The renewal does offer opportunities and it will be interesting to see in the future what develops.



Archery lawn in Christchurch gardens
with sequoias in background

Visitor numbers to the gardens are still not at pre-earthquake levels and guides were very keen to showcase their 21 hectares Botanic Gardens and to conduct the specially prepared themed walks.

The Christchurch Gardens were started in 1863 and so there are many parallels with the Ballarat Gardens that opened a few years earlier in 1859. Both have the heritage features that give these gardens their timeless quality. Six Wellingtonias were planted from seeds imported from California in 1873 (our Avenue of *Sequoiadendron giganteum* was planted 1863-1874).

The temperate Christchurch climate is kinder than Ballarat's and so their sequoias have acclimatised well and have healthy growth right to the top. Our *Taxodium distichum* Swamp Cypress certainly rival their new plantings in their *pinetum* (an arboretum of pine trees or related conifers). They are amongst many species and cultivars of cedar, cypress, fir, larch, juniper and spruce. To wander through this pinetum was a real joy with all the textural changes and colours and especially with the new colour tips of the season's new growth.

Another inspiring part of these gardens was the **Gondwana garden**. They have planted trees from the great southern land mass that broke up over 100 million years ago in a concentrated section of the garden – *Araucaria bidwilli* Bunya Bunya pine, *Araucaria araucana* Monkey Puzzle tree, *Wollemia nobilis* Wollemi Pine, etc. Their Gondwana garden has several information boards telling the story of how these living fossils have survived millions of years of climatic change. We have many of these trees scattered throughout the Ballarat gardens. Next year the tree of the month display in the conservatory will focus on these relics from the age of the dinosaurs.

A New Zealand section with its native plants was started in 1920 in the Christchurch gardens. Around 80% of all New Zealand's flowering plants and trees are found nowhere else on Earth and some 10% of them are considered endangered. Today about 30% of New Zealand's land area is in protected reserves and parks and the hope is that conservation management will help preserve their biodiversity. Research and conservation are part of the Christchurch Gardens. They have several joint projects with Christchurch City Council, School of Biological Sciences at the University of Canterbury and the Lincoln University Bio-Protection Centre plus their sister city of Wuhan in China researching plants and contributing to conservation science.

Forests covered about 3/4 of NZ before people arrived and now forest cover only about 20% of the land. Podocarps (a large family of conifers) and beeches make up the two main forest types. (Cont'd..)



Planting the Past for the Future

Our newest garden will feature some of the oldest plants known in the Southern Hemisphere. Here you will eventually be able to walk among modern representatives of plants growing at the time of the dinosaurs.

Many related plants grow in Southern Hemisphere countries now separated by large oceans. We now know that the ancestors of these plants evolved a hundred million years ago when these countries were part of ancient Gondwana – a vast southern landmass.



"Planting the past for the future"
signage in Gondwana garden

The endemic trees are not known for their colour but a colourful feature in NZ's mainly green forest is the tree fuchsia. It is the largest fuchsia in the world with pale-brown papery bark and gnarled trunk. It sheds its bark and leaves in winter and is one of NZ's few deciduous natives.

Another star is the Lancewood. This tree changes shape according to its age. It starts off with narrow spear-like leaves that bend down and as an adult the leaves face upward and are broader and a rounded crown is formed.

The Hebes are New Zealand's largest group of plants and hundreds of hebe cultivars and hybrids have been created worldwide. Scrub and tussocklands, alpine and wetland communities were all featured in their New Zealand garden. Amongst such diversity it was easy to miss some of the plants that are used commercially such as the *Leptospermum scoparium* Manuka tea tree for honey production.

Leptospermum scoparium, commonly called mānuka, manuka myrtle, New Zealand teatree, broom teatree



The New Zealand garden is just one of 14 collections in the Christchurch gardens. Six conservatories have special indoor environments for plant collections – NZ ferns, alpine plants, orchids and cacti and tropical and flowering plants. The gardens are also involved in a seed exchange program; they receive more than 250 seeds and send out over 400 packets of their seeds each year.



Botanic gardens have many functions and research and conservation is just one of many possible functions of a Botanic garden and the Christchurch gardens can clearly demonstrate their efforts with plant science. The gardens are being used to discover and share knowledge and as a consequence enriching and preserving life. A new centre,

conservatory and a Children's garden are other new exciting developments in these gardens.

A constant theme of the conference was to work better collaboratively, lead in sustainability, education and conservation as well as plant science. It is a challenge. As guides we play a small part in trying to meet these challenges.

We show that a tree is more than just a green thing. We include ecology, plant science and environmental pressures in our discussions. We work on the quality of the visitor experience so that in our interaction with visitors and development of interpretative materials we educate, highlight issues and give relevant messages for our changing times.

Terry O'Brien

DISCOUNTS FOR FBBG MEMBERS AT LOCAL NURSERIES, 2014

Members will receive discounts when displaying their membership cards at:

- **Formosa Gardens Nursery** 104 Leith St Ballarat 5% off all stock
- **Grow Master** 9527 Western Highway Ballarat 10% off plant purchases excluding advanced trees
- **Spot on Pots** 13-15 Wallis Street Delacombe 10% off all purchases
- **Blackwood Ridge Nursery**, Trentham-Greendale Rd 10% off all purchases

History Presentation for the 2013 George Longley Day held Thursday 17 October 2013

As part of the proceedings the Friends History Group provided a short, informative talk on an aspect of the life of our first Curator, George Longley. This year the aspect chosen was Education.

George Longley was born in August 1822, the youngest of four children born to a tenant of Lowther Hall, Westmoreland, north-east England. He was apprenticed as a boy, probably aged between ten and twelve, as gardener on the Lowther Hall Estate, where his father was employed as a joiner. This apprenticeship would have taken up to a decade under the tutelage of the leading hands and the head gardener.

He would have started out as a pot-washer in the nursery sheds, moving on to raking the paths and leading the horse with the mower. As his experience grew he might be entrusted to weeding. His experience would have included working in the hot and cold houses, laying out bedding plants, working in the vegetable patch, the ponds and the orchard. Skills in propagation by division, root and seed, grafting and pruning would have been honed. The arcane art of making composts from scratch would have been perfected. Annuals, perennials, shrubs and trees would all have been grown and turf managed. He had to develop skills in animal husbandry and building maintenance, and the care of equipment.

As an apprentice he would have had to learn the details of fifty new plants a week. The Head Gardener would have carefully overseen his progress to the next stage. At the end of an apprenticeship a 'Journeyman' year at another estate was traditionally taken, before returning to rise, potentially, through the gardening rank to become a leading hand or head gardener. Perhaps George's 'Journeyman' year was a stint at nearby Brougham Hall, the estate of Lord Brougham, former Lord Chancellor of England? Certainly his obituary mentions him working there.

Records show him as living in Furnace Lane, Maryport in 1851, possibly in a boarding house. We know nothing yet of his employment at this time, though his occupation is registered as Gardener in the Census of that year. What is known is that he married Helen Tickle on March 5, 1853, and ten days later he (designating himself 'Farmer') and his new wife headed to Australia as unassisted passengers to 'strike it rich', reaching the Black Hill diggings a mere three days after disembarking.

We can only presume that this hope was unrealised because he applied for the job of gardener to lay out the new Botanical Gardens at Ballarat in 1858, and together with his wife and four year old daughter he was prepared to live in a tent on the site. The position was his by a single vote only. Of the others who applied, one went on to be Curator of the Ballarat East Botanical Gardens and some were employed at our gardens or as nurserymen in the district.

At that time there were many nurseries in and around Ballarat so perhaps he was employed occasionally in one or another of those. As the Ballarat Botanical Gardens were evolving and some finances made available, employing lads became possible so George developed a form of apprenticeship along the lines of the one he himself had experienced.

A devout Methodist, George acted as Superintendent at the Wendouree Jubilee Church Sunday School, so had a fairly good idea of the nature of his potential apprentices, though he did not select exclusively from his own congregation. Men who completed their training at the Ballarat Botanical Gardens were well regarded, and many became curators of Municipal Gardens and Reserves.

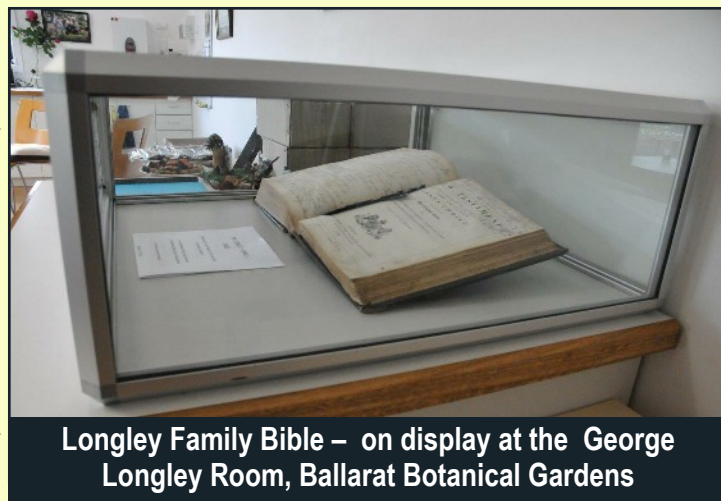
In his own family, education was clearly valued. Eldest daughter, Sarah Jane, became midwife of the district, delivering 200 babies and not losing one. His two younger daughters became music teachers. However, George did not regard son William, who was apprenticed to the Gardens as "up to it".

By 1890, the year Victoria Park was laid out, the garden staff included Tom Rooney, a Presbyterian trained on an Irish estate, Tom Toop, a Methodist trained on an English estate, and local lads Hugh Linaker, John Lingham and John Williams. All worked and developed gardens in the Ballarat area and further afield.

Years after George had died and Tom Toop was Curator, the Council requested that the issue of Apprenticeship be reviewed. Tom gave due consideration and concluded that the system had served the City well and no change was needed. When Tom Beaumont had charge of the Gardens, the men were examined by 'a Professor from Burnley' and were not found wanting. For over a century and a half, the Ballarat Botanical Gardens has had a role in the education of apprentices.

Today, many aspects of the apprenticeship system have changed but who knows where some of the current crop might end up, given the amazing and productive lives of their predecessors?

Lorraine Powell/Kathleen Hobson



Longley Family Bible – on display at the George Longley Room, Ballarat Botanical Gardens

Friends of Ballarat Botanical Gardens Information 2014

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Friends of Ballarat Botanic Gardens Inc.
 P.O. Box 33W Ballarat West 3350

Tel. George Longley Building 03 53429354

Meetings and Events:

February 20	10.00am	AGM
March 8, 9 and 10		Begonia Festival
March 25		Twilight Talk
April 17	10am-12pm	Special Morning Tea
April 10		Bus Trip (see p.8)
May 22	10.00am	General Meeting
August 21	10.00am	General Meeting
August 8 -10		Association of Friends Conf. Gold Coast
October 16	10.00am	'George Longley Day'
October 24	TBA	Spring Lunch & Events
November 27		BBQ Xmas Meeting

Educating Friends Activities:

Feb 11	Coffee and Cake 10am-12pm
April 22 or 29	Coffee and Cake 10am-12pm
June 10	Coffee and Cake 10am-12pm
July 8	Holiday Activity 2-4pm
August 12	Coffee and Cake 10am-12pm
Sept 23	Holiday Activity 2-4pm
October 22	Big Garden Day (21 Oct booked for preparation 10am-3.00pm)
Nov 11	Coffee and Cake 10am-12pm
Dec 3	Christmas Activity 11am-3pm

Early Notice:
May General Meeting: Speaker Anne Vale, author and lecturer in Australian Garden History, 'The Last of the Romantics'
August General Meeting: Terry Smyth, Curator of Asian Collection, RBGM Herbarium, 'My Visit to Xijiang' (NW China)

MEETING TIMES 2014

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

Committee - 3rd Tuesday of each month at 3.30pm

Growing Friends - Tuesday each week 1 pm--4pm, and the 2nd Sunday each month, 1 pm-4pm.

Plant Sales at the above times and 9 am -5 pm daily from the trolley outside the Conservatory.

Guiding Friends - 4th Tuesday each month 10 am.

History Group - 1st Tuesday each month 4 pm.

Educating Friends - 2nd Tuesday each month, 10 am.

Plant Labelling as required.

Annual General Meeting

- Thursday, 20th February 2014
- 10.00am
- **Guest Speaker:** Prof Tim Entwisle, Director Royal Melbourne Botanic Gardens, FBBG Patron.
- Robert Clark Horticultural Centre



Photo credits: Thanks to Raoul Dixon, John Garner, Jennifer Burrell, Mike Sorrell, Elizabeth Gilfillan, Julie Bradby and Peter Marquand for organising photographs used throughout this edition.

(Below and left:)

Christmas merriment was the order of the evening at the Friends' Christmas break-up.

