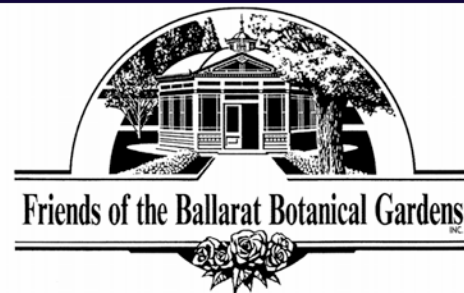


# Wellingtonia



## FRIENDS NEWSLETTER WINTER 2012

### President's Report

Welcome to Winter, a wonderful time of year in Ballarat. Have you noticed the magnificence of the trees in their bare form; the structure of the garden and buds forming on branches? A time to catch up on chores, then relax inside with a good gardening book. Make a visit to the George Longley Building to enjoy some of the great collection in our own library on Tuesdays. Genevieve is in attendance most Wednesdays, or any other time by arrangement. The books are now catalogued and there is something for everyone.

Our membership is steadily increasing and we warmly welcome all new members to join any of the interest groups and events. We look forward to getting to know you.

The Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens is the umbrella organisation for Friends groups, providing support and advocacy for members. The Bi-Annual conference and newsletter Campsis is the main form of communication. It is very informative to learn of other friends activities. I am privileged to be FBBG representative on the committee. This year the interesting, stimulating conference is to be held in Port Augusta. Titled "Mangroves, Myalls & More". There has been significant rain in the area which should ensure masses of wildflowers. Make the most of the visit with an extension journey to enjoy the ancient wonder of the Flinders Ranges, find more information [www.friendsofbotanicgardens.org](http://www.friendsofbotanicgardens.org)

There have been a couple of changes in convenors this year. I would sincerely like to thank Beth Dixon for her leadership of the **Guiding Friends**. Beth has done a wonderful job of leading the enthusiastic group and starting new initiatives to help everyone learn more about our gardens. Her husband Raoul has developed a fantastic power point presentation for rainy days. Both Beth and Raoul remain valued members of the group. Terry O'Brien is the new convenor and the group continues to have a most interesting programme. The second thank you is to Carolyn Pinkowski, who has been the dedicated leader of a happy band of growing friends for a number of years. The industrious group is always busy introducing new and interesting plants for sale. Carolyn continues to support the group with Yvonne Curbach as new convenor. Rug up & enjoy winter!

Looking forward to an interesting second half of the year.

*Elizabeth Gilfillan*



### MEETING TIMES 2012

Meetings are held in the George Longley Building at the rear of the Robert Clark Centre

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

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

**Plant Sales** at the above times and 9-5.00pm daily from the trolley outside the Robert Clark Conservatory.

**Guiding Friends** - 4th Tuesday each month 10am.

**History Group** 1st Tuesday each month 4pm

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

**Plant Labelling** as required  
**Botanical Artists ("BAGS")** - Mondays 10.00-4.00pm.

School Terms

## Growing Friends

Plant sales have been good even though the weather has turned so cold and sometimes wet. A new range of plants have been ordered and should be ready for sale in time for the Springfest in November. Our volunteers have potted up just over a100 lillium bulbs, both Asiatic and Oriental, in time for sale at Christmas. They sell very quickly and are very popular with the public. Sue also provided us with a batch of bronze coloured heucheras (as displayed in the conservatory) and some Gold Bunny roses. Genevieve kindly sourced some pots for us.

### POTS POTS POTS

We still badly need more pots, sizes ranging from 6” to 8”. NOT the tiny ones. Also plastic bags are most welcome. Pots can be dropped off at any time, but please report to Conservatory first.

## John's Jottings

The Gardens were established from native bushland in 1858 and the first maze created in 1862 using *Acacia paradoxa* (now *Acacia armata*). It was probably the first maze to be introduced into a Botanical garden in Australia and New Zealand. It proved to be a popular attraction and it was cleared in 1881 to make room for a conservatory. The following year a new maze was built based on the layout of that in the Hampton Court Palace grounds and with a central tower. It was “rejuvenated” in 1922 but by 1957 it had deteriorated due to age, use, knocking down of hedges and the odd fire. It was therefore removed to be replaced by a children’s paddling pool.

Since then there have been several suggestions that a new maze be constructed but this has not occurred. However, Julie Bradby has plans for one on the Botanikids “Great Big Gardens Play Day” on October 24<sup>th</sup> constructed from hay bales. This will be our 4<sup>th</sup> maze but will be the shortest lived – 6 hours from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.! *John Garner*



**Hampton Court and Maze**

## Membership

Our current **membership** stands at **270**. We extend a big welcome to the new members who have joined us this year. Several friends have encouraged their neighbours and friends to become members and we would encourage others to do likewise. A strong membership gives us the opportunity to keep the residents of Ballarat informed about our Gardens. Membership of the Friends includes four Newsletters a year, a discount on plants purchased from the Growing Friends and all plants, gift shop merchandise and coffee in the Conservatory on production of their membership card. New members are always welcome to join our special interest groups if they wish.

*Raoul Dixon*

## **Guiding Friends**

The guides have focused on the Prime Ministers Avenue and the garden trees in their recent meetings.

### **Prime Ministers Avenue**

Peter Nicholson has been working since January on the 27<sup>th</sup> addition, Julia Gillard's bust, to the Ballarat collection of Prime Ministers busts. Mr Nicholson has already created busts of Malcolm Fraser, Bob Hawke, Paul Keating, John Howard and Kevin Rudd for the Ballarat collection and these caricatures of more recent Prime Ministers engage our visitors to the gardens. Peter Nicholson's had a wealth of material to draw from as he pondered how to shape the bust of Julia Gillard. He has the cartoons, the media clippings, the sitting. Contrast this with the first bust sculptured by Wallace Anderson of Edmund Barton, our first Prime Minister. Barton had been dead for 20 years when Anderson was commissioned for the job in 1940 and only had photos to use. At that time there was not the same media inundation of different glimpses of the PM. Nicholson is attempting to make a sculpture that's like what people see of the Prime Minister on television every day. Nicholson's modern approach to his sculptures conveys comment about the person and as it is subjective will engage reaction and response. It will be interesting to see what we all think of his caricature of Julia Gillard.

A new bust installed always creates interest and the guides look forward to facilitating group visits at that time and helping the visitors engage with this Ballarat icon.

### **Tree tours**

Guiding time is quieter in winter and we use the respite to develop new approaches and understandings. We are developing tree themed tours and a brochure for a self guided tour on heritage trees.. David Grant is coming to our July meeting to help us further with this task. Our trees add so much to the elegance and grandeur of our gardens but because of their age and climate stress there are lots of conversations to be had about the issues all of this raises.

### **New Members**

We welcome three new guides - Maria Marco, Michael Bird and Lucy Brisbane - and trust they enjoy their guiding time and exploring the historical, social, botanical and environmental dynamics of our Ballarat Botanical Gardens. We have appreciated their active involvement and how quickly they have become part of the Guides group. *Terry O'Brien*

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## **THE ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS OF THE BOTANICAL GARDENS**

The Association originated in Victoria when, in the early 1990s, it was considered that Friends groups already existing and others that were getting started would benefit from such an organization for support, advice and assistance. A few years later this state group expanded to form the present National Association.

The major event organised by the Association is the bi-annual conference held at designated Botanic Gardens in Australia.

This year the conference is at Port Augusta, South Australia, the home of the Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden on 18<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> August. There are 8 Ballarat Friends attending. Very interesting events are anticipated and good ideas will, as usual, be exchanged. All our members are welcome to attend and if you would like to join us please contact the Robert Clark Centre, phone 5364 2764. **Elizabeth Gilfillan** has registration papers.



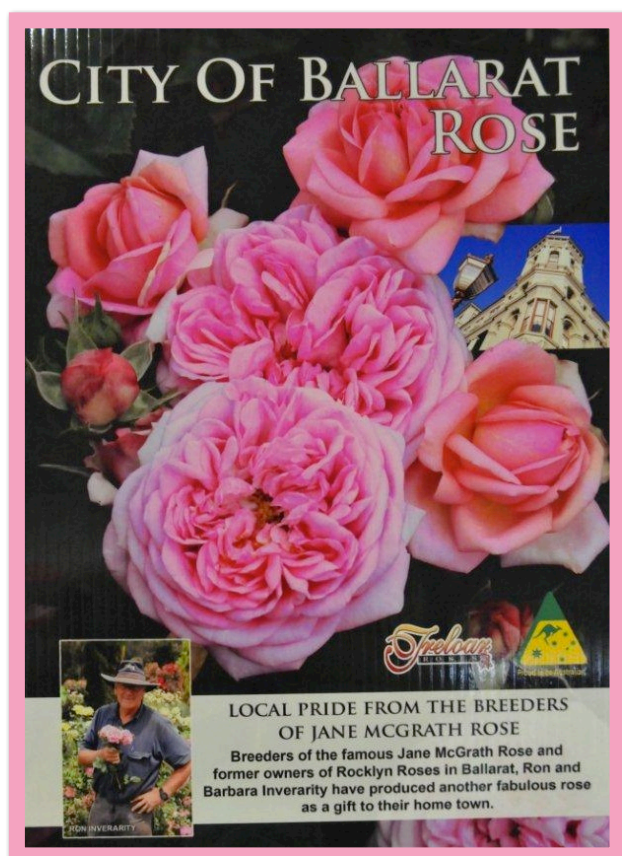


## Winter Display at the Conservatory

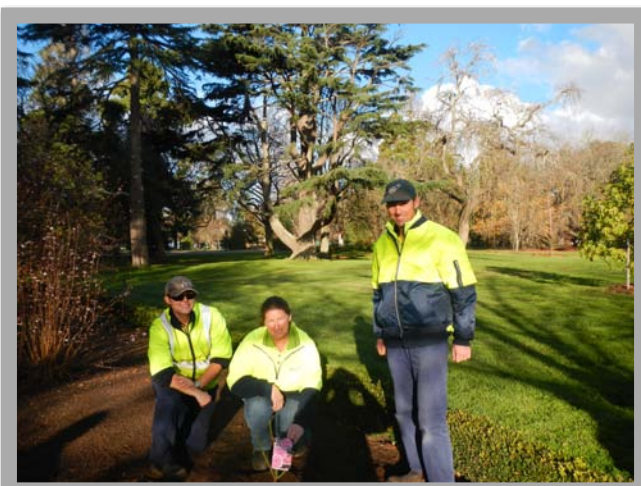
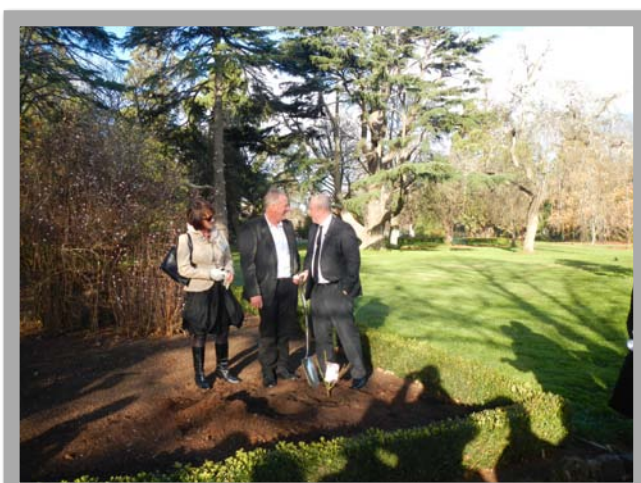
### Curators Report

The Botanical gardens hosted the launch and planting of the new City of Ballarat rose on Friday the 15<sup>th</sup> of June. The rose was bred by Ron and Barb Inverarity, former owners of Rocklyn roses. The rose is available at local nurseries and Treloar Roses, who supplied six to the Botanical gardens. Pictured below are gardens staff Lauren, Liane and Alastair completing the planting and below the Mayor Cr Mark Harris with Ron and Barb Inverarity. The rose was planted in the bed south of the sensory garden.

On Friday the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June I met some friends who were having coffee in the conservatory, the weather outside was bleak, the temperature inside was not exactly warm. They were rugged up for the weather and enjoyed a couple of hours amongst the flowers. I had been in the conservatory that morning and had admired the view from the south window through the trees across to the lake. It is easy for us to forget as we go about our day how lucky we are to work in such a beautiful environment. *Peter Marquand*



### PLANTING THE BALLARAT ROSE



## Member Profile -----Kathleen Hobson



### **Elizabeth Gilfillan & Kathleen Hobson** **Presentation of Life Membership**

**Kathleen Hobson** has been a member of FBBG for more than a decade and a half. A long-standing committee member and past vice president, she has provided invaluable leadership. Her serene and confident manner has endeared her as a most respected mentor and role model. Her involvement with the FBBG is but a small part of her community contributions. She is a life-long member of her St Peter's Anglican congregation, playing an integral part in their affairs. A devoted mother, she is recognized as the longest serving member of the Ballarat and Queen's Anglican Grammar School Parent's Association. Music has been an important part of her life. She has been both a chorister and a pianist. It is an enduring part of her family life, a life filled with laughter as well as song. Her stories are always thoughtful and told with good humour, but she

does more listening than talking.

Her pastoral care of her community includes an active role in Ballarat Anglicare as well as regular Meals-on-Wheels rosters.

In the FBBG, her involvement spans a wide range of member groups. She was an invaluable 'cleaner-upper' for the Growing Friends, giving untold hours to the group and always going 'beyond the call of duty.' Her contribution, as part of the History Group, towards the long awaited book cannot be underestimated. Her role in the exhibitions, 'Digging up the Past' and 'Growing History' was also significant. As well as regularly attending our various functions, she has given of her time serving at the kitchen sink **Lorraine Powell & Mike Sorrell**

### **VALE----- GREG BINNS**

The committee of the Friends of the Ballarat Botanical Gardens expresses its sincere regret at the recent death of one of our keenest supporters.

Greg Binns was a man of many parts: an educated man, an artistic and creative man, a very cultured man, and a man with a deep understanding and appreciation of nature and the environment. He had a remarkable appreciation for our local history and heritage. But above all, he was a man devoted to his causes, in particular his family and wider circle of friends

Greg's life was lived to the full. His significant contribution to so many civic activities was truly inspirational and will be forever remembered.

The Friends of the Ballarat Botanical Gardens extend their deepest sympathies to his family.

**Mike Sorrell**

## **History Report**

For this the winter edition of Wellingtonia an excerpt from the book '*An Eden of Loveliness*' is included. As the project comes to its inevitable point of closure, the team knows not all the stories have been told. Not all the truly significant moments of the Gardens have been given their due. Even in the FBBG section a vast quantity of information has necessarily been omitted due to space constraints. However, that leaves the opportunity for a series of smaller, more focused publications in the future **Lorraine Powell**



## ‘The Fernery’



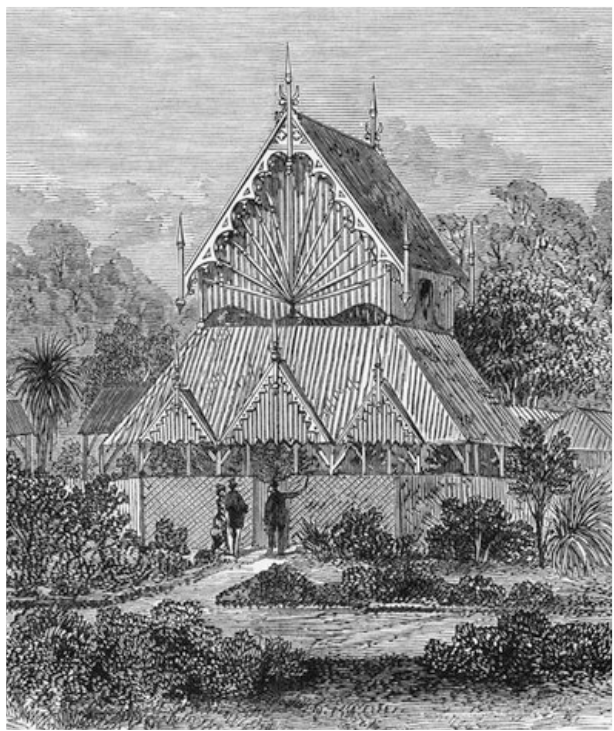
### Fernery Ballarat Gardens

In the Colony of Victoria there were fern gullies quite close to population centres. The great Victorian Exhibition of 1854 showed a small display of tree ferns from the Dandenong Ranges east of Melbourne. Eugene Von Guerard immortalised the tree fern with his painting *Fern Tree Gully*. Ferns became an emblem of Australia with furniture and decorative items such as mounted emu eggs festooned with fern motifs. In Creswick, a massive batted fernery was built beside Creswick Lake. Landscape Designer, Robert Sangster, developed a naturalistic fernery beside the reservoir at the Wombat Hill Botanic Gardens in Daylesford.

In Melbourne, the fernery at ‘Ripponlea’ became the epitome of *pteromania* with its enormous batted house.

George Longley, caught in the current enthusiasm for ferns, designed and built a lattice shelter-house thirty metres in length. A planned palm house, based on memories and pictures of the 1851 Crystal Palace in London, could not be implemented in Ballarat due to budgetary constraints. The lattice shelter-house was constructed with an ornamental front to match the Curator’s own cottage. This Gothic confection served the dual purpose of providing a northern windbreak for the infant plantings and a sheltered position for the more delicate plants.

In 1879, the Council engaged Borough Architect H.R. Caselli, an ex-Councillor, to produce sketches for a large-scale fernery. The central portion was pegged out in May 1880. An estimate for the construction was put at £ 105.15.0. Extensions were added annually until 1883. The final edifice was four hundred and fifty feet long and sixty feet in width and ran from Wendouree Parade to the unmade Gillies Street. This included another ornate entrance to the south with two main and four smaller sections, all with fretwork bargeboards. The batted building was being constantly extended and renovated. In 1889, a rockery and pond were added to the south side. In 1907, the original central section and the 1888 eastern section were replaced with a new central section and smaller east wing. In 1927-28 the western end was demolished and replaced. A new pergola was constructed. A pair of large fish tanks flanked the entrance. Internally, there was seating for hot days. Ferns and a tree fern grotto as well as camellias, Japanese maples, fuchsias, rhododendrons and azaleas were displayed. The original paths were replaced with a serpentine walk and the ironstone was converted to bitumen.



Baron Von Mueller, in his role of Examiner in Botany for the University of Melbourne, came to Ballarat regularly. After viewing the Gardens, Von Mueller sent a note to the Town Clerk on 21 January 1890. *'Since visiting your beautiful Garden, my dear sir, I have thought that my suggestion of placing mirrors in your conservatory should receive some practical application.'* He mentioned that a group of gentlemen would like to present the fernery with mirrors. *'If you take action at once you may be the first in Australia to carry this new principle before you are forestalled.'* His suggestion, however, was rebuffed.

James Veitch, of Veitch's Nursery in London, visited in 1892, and opined that Ballarat 'possessed Gardens of unusual interest, but though called Botanic, they can in reality scarcely claim to be such', but he went on to state 'The collection of Tree Ferns (*Cythea medullaris*, *C. Princeps*, *C. Cunninghamii*, *C. Dealbata*, *Dicksonia australis*, *D. Squarrosa*, *D. Antarctica* etc) is large and

in good condition...the paths, nearly all at right angles, as the streets in Australian towns, are twelve feet wide, covered with a fine iron-stone gravel, weedless and perfectly smooth...The species more ordinarily met with of *Cyrtomium*, *Pteris*, *Davallia*, *Lomaria*, *Asplenium*, *Platynerium*, etc, occupy the open borders between the Tree Fern stems, and adorn a neat rockery and waterfall at one end.'

By the end of World War I, most of the great ferneries of the nineteenth century had fallen into disrepair as a lack of manpower made maintenance all but impossible. Soon after, in the 1950s Ballarat architect, Valentine Lohse, was engaged by the City Council to draw up plans for a new fernery. Designed as a more modest construction and in a rustic style, it replaced its derelict predecessor. The Fernery retained the original 1907 entrance as well as all the stanchion plinths.. In 1962, the eastern entrance was demolished and a new entrance bay built, keeping the entrance stanchions as picturesque vine supports. During the construction of the Robert Clark Horticultural Centre, several of the westernmost stanchions were removed.

Heritage Listing protects the remainder.

Early this century, people in Ballarat advocated the fernery's restoration to its nineteenth century glory. A complete review of the fernery by Council was initiated as a result. While discussions raged little maintenance was carried out. Progress towards a final decision has been affected since the Ballarat Botanical Gardens received Heritage Listing in 2010

## **Botanical Illustration**

Winter is a good time for painting, and the group has welcomed several new members. There has been a most enjoyable workshop with Geraldine Roberts, and we are pleased to announce Geraldine will present another workshop on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> & Friday 20<sup>th</sup> July 9am – 4pm  
Several line drawings have been produced for inclusion in "An Eden of Loveliness" our soon to be released pictorial history.

We are looking forward to welcoming Margaret Castle again, who will be doing two, one day workshops on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> Sept & Mon 10<sup>th</sup> September 9am – 4pm.

New members are always welcome to join us on Monday afternoons 12<sup>nd</sup> onwards, not during school holidays. For enquiries and bookings please contact

The George Longley Building 53429354

***Elizabeth Gilfillan***



### FBBG Contact Details

Mail: The Secretary, Friends of Ballarat Botanical Gardens Inc.

PO BOX 33W Ballarat West, Vic 3350

George Longley Building 5342 9354

Email : [info@fbbg.org.au](mailto:info@fbbg.org.au) Website : [www.fbbg.org.au](http://www.fbbg.org.au)

### Group Convenors

Guiding Terry O'Brien

Growing Yvonne Curbach

Education Julie Bradby

History Lorraine Powell

Engraving Terry & Joy O'Brien

Botanical Illustration Elizabeth Gilfillan

Newsletter Editor Helen Vincent

### Lake Wendouree and Gardens Advisory Committee (LWAGAC)

Community groups will be asked to assist Ballarat City Council (BCC) by commenting on aspects of the reviews of the Ballarat Botanical Gardens Masterplan and Management Strategy and the Lake Wendouree Landscape Masterplan.

The long process of dredging the rowing course is finally nearing completion, with removal of 'bumps' between the start of the rowing course and the 1000m mark. The Masters Rowing regattas in May were most successful, despite the very inclement weather on one day. Weed harvesting will soon be undertaken by staff trained to operate the BCC's own weed cutter. A short term contract has been let for commercial harvesting in the interim.

The Friends joined other community groups in June to plant 80 advanced plane trees in Victoria Park, parallel to Russell Street.

Progress on the fernery redevelopment project has slowed, waiting on outcomes of discussion and debate by the full BCC. *Mike Sorrell*

### **Seen at Friends of the Ballarat Botanic Gardens Activities**



Speaker **John Ditchburn**  
at May General Meeting



Meet & Greet Morning Tea  
L. to R **Heather Fryor , Anne King**  
**Pam Coghlan ,Michael Bird**



## **FRIENDS OPEN GARDEN WEEKEND** Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> March – 1<sup>st</sup> April

In our last Newsletter we had a report on three of the gardens opened for the weekend, this time we are reporting on the other three. All of the gardens were most interesting and we once again thank those who participated and here are the reports concerning the remaining three gardens.

Ricky and Eric McLeod's garden, "The Ridge", Mt. Buninyong, has the most wonderful sweeping views to the west and so they have concentrated the major planting to the north and south of the house to retain this view. Highlights include a ceanothus hedge, a crab apple and lavender walk, and a grove of silver birches. 200 indigenous trees and shrubs have been planted on the road reserve to provide a koala corridor. They describe their concept as "evolving" as they continue creating a wonderful garden.

Susan Patterson's garden at Dunnstown House, Dunnstown, is another incredible garden. Susan and her late husband bought their house in 1970. The house was derelict and the garden nonexistent. They soon realised that they were in the path of very strong northerly winds. To solve this problem they commenced curved plantings of trees and shrubs and in doing so created an interesting and peaceful series of "rooms".

Jane and Russell Luckock's garden is at Granny White Lane at Mt Buninyong. High on the Mount, with incredible views to the Grampians, they have a beautiful garden. To maintain the views, here again the tree plantings are beside the house. The sheltered areas at the back of the house have borders of perennials, long flowering shrubs and evergreen hedges, a credit to the gardening skills of Jane and Russell.

*Joan Garner*

### **BOTANI**KIDS****

#### **2012 CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

Meeting Times : 2nd Tuesday of each month. 10.00am

Meeting Place [unless otherwise arranged] GLB Ring Julie to check.

#### **FUNCTIONS**

Each of the School Holiday activities and Coffee and Cake sessions have a limit of 20 so ringing Julie on above phone number to register is recommended. **Cost \$6 per child .**

#### **Winter School Hols :Ships Ahoy!**

#### **The Explorers and the Oak Trees in our Gardens**

July 10th Robert Clark Centre 2pm-4pm

#### **Spring School Hols : Kids Botanical Art:**

Sept 25th Robert Clark Centre 2pm-4pm

#### **Great Big Gardens Play Day--it's aMAZEing. See next newsletter for details.**

October 24th 10am-4pm

#### **Olden Days Christmas Picnic**

December 5th Robert Clark Centre and North Gardens from 10am

#### **Coffee and Cake sessions for Mums and activities for Toddlers**

Aug 14th Nov 13th. Robert Clark Centre 10am -12pm

## **BALLARAT GARDENS in SPRING**

The final touches and detail are currently being implemented on our soon to be printed promotional brochure, which will encapsulate and promote gardening, art and horticulture in Ballarat for Spring 2012.

Be sure to diarize now our popular **Speakers Luncheon** scheduled for **Friday 2nd November**. This year it is to be held at the Ballarat Art Gallery and will include entry into the much anticipated Botanical Art Exhibition “**Capturing Flora- 300 years of botanical art**”. **Jenny Philips** – Australia’s leading Botanical Artist and **Trisha Dixon** – well known Author and Photographer will be our special guest speakers.

A selection of open gardens in and around Ballarat will also be showcased along with various garden related activities including the Friends Children’s Activity, Great Big Gardens Play Day–” **It’s aMAZEing**”

on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> October in our magnificent Botanical Gardens.

Thanks to all involved with this year’s organising and we look forward to all the Friends support in Spring.  
**Committee Helen Todd, Wendy Taylor, Jan Todd, Elizabeth Gilfillan.**

## **CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2012**

*Please note all these dates in your diary*

**August Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> 10am General Meeting** in the Robert Clark Centre

We would like to invite all members to enjoy the guest speaker Geoff Crowhurst who will give a presentation talk on a recent visit to Bhutan, showing Rhododendrons, other plants, people & gardens he was privileged to see in this interesting country. Join us for **morning tea afterwards**.

**August 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> Association Of Friends Conference, Port Augusta**  
**ARE YOU COMING ? Enquiries and bookings RCC**

**October Thurs 11<sup>th</sup> George Longley Day at 4pm** in the George Longley Building.

On this day, the anniversary of the death of George Longley, we celebrate the contribution to the Gardens of founding curator, George Longley, to the stunning place we all enjoy today. All welcome, **refreshments will be served**.

**October 24<sup>th</sup>.Wednesday. Great Big Gardens Play Day-----it’s aMAZEing!**

**November 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday. Spring Luncheon** to be held at the Ballarat Art Gallery

**November Sat 3rd & Sun 4<sup>th</sup> Ballarat Gardens in Spring**  
Open gardens, brochures out soon

**November 22nd. RCC 5-9pm Book Launch**  
and  
**Christmas BBQ**