



FRIENDS OF WARRNAMBOOL BOTANIC GARDENS

A0032902E



Issue No. 39

Summer 2006

NEWSLETTER

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

It seems a long time ago when we last met for Christmas drinks in the gardens. On that occasion, John Hawker spoke to us about the significance of our Gardens and the process of registration. Notification of the recommendation that the Heritage Council include Warrnambool Botanic gardens in the Heritage Register was published on the 23rd of January. The final decision takes place after the expiration of 60 days. If there are no objections, we will, hopefully, hear the outcome by the end of March,

The recommendation included the statement,

The Warrnambool Botanic Gardens are of historical, scientific, aesthetic and social significance to the State of Victoria.

In another good news story we can report that the Management Plan (2004) has been accepted by the City Council. Members will recall that the review of the 1995 Management Plan was initiated mid way through 2004. The process has been lengthy and at times frustrating, but the outcome is most rewarding.

In summary Council endorsed the Management plan, referred the Budget priorities to its Capital Works Program, thanked the Friends for their dedicated input and recommended,

That Council consider the proposal (the need for a curator) within the 2006/07 Budget process, such proposal relating to not less than 50% of a new full-time staff position to be dedicated to curatorial duties and functions associated with the Warrnambool Botanic Gardens

Council enthusiastically supported the recommendations and there was no dissent.

They further moved to thank The Gwen and Edna Jones Foundation for their offer of financial assistance. This offer of \$8,000 a year for each of three years toward the salary of a curator was in response to a request from the Friends, and we are most grateful for this support. Southwest Institute of TAFE have also budgeted to buy time, one day a week, when a suitable appointment is made. With all this support it should be possible to advertise for a full time or fractional position as soon as Council determines its budget allocation.

We have also made application to the National Heritage Investment Initiative for funding to undertake a Conservation plan for the Curators' Cottage and Surrounds. Applications closed on January 20th and results are expected by the end of April.

Another event anticipated for April is the planting of a Wollemai Pine, the gift of a generous and anonymous donor.

Over what has been an exceptional summer season, the gardens have provided a wonderful venue for a range of community functions. The National Conference of Legacy met by the Lone Pine in October. Australia Day was celebrated near the Rotunda and under every nearby shady tree, as the temperature rose above 40 degrees. In February, thousands of fans, enjoyed Wunta's Jazz in the Gardens.

The Guiding Friends have been rewarded by the delight of children from tiny tots to sophisticated "Preps", the memories of older citizens, and the appreciation of visitors from far and near. Weddings, family picnics, birthdays, meetings, and the Longest Lunch have used and enjoyed the trees, the flowers and the green green lawns. Thankyou to the staff, who despite vandals wind and wear, provide a safe and restful haven for us all.

It is 140 years this year, since work began to establish a botanic garden on the present site. We plan to celebrate later in the year. The Committee is holding its next meeting in the Rotunda on March 15th, after which at 5.00 pm, the guides will conduct a walk through the Gardens. We would like as many of our members as possible to join us.

Pat Varley, February 2006

TREES IN OUR GARDENS

Wollemi Pine

Carrick Chambers, director of Sydney Royal Botanic Gardens said of the Wollemi Pine,

This is the equivalent of finding a small dinosaur alive on earth

The tree was discovered in the Wollemi National Park about two hours drive from Sydney. It was a chance discovery by a bush walker, David Noble, who in September 1994 in a remote and isolated valley, found a clump of tall trees he did not recognise.

The Botanical name *Wollemia nobilis*, recognises the location, the discoverer and the stature of the tree. The structure of the leaves is fern like while the bark is bubbly. Mature trees grow to 40m. It is a member of the Araucariaceae family, as are our Norfolk Pines, Hoop Pines and the Bunya Bunya.

At first the Royal Botanic Gardens in Sydney took on the responsibility of growing plants from seeds and cuttings. This role has now been taken over by Wollemi Australia.

www.wollemipine.com

We are very grateful for the donation of a Wollemi Pine, which will be available for planting in April. Long may it live to enhance our conifer collection and add to the variety of our botanical collection.

Gallipoli Oak

Quercus calliprinos

In October last year the National Conference of Legacy was held in Warrnambool, to mark their ninetieth year. On the last day of the conference a memorial service took place in our Gardens and a fine young 'Gallipoli Oak' which had been planted near the lake, not far from the 'Lone Pine', was dedicated on the day to all those men who fought at Gallipoli and other fields of battle during the first World War.

The Gallipoli Oak, *Quercus calliprinos*, is evergreen and, even stranger, has holly-like leaves. The only other oak with similar leaves is the Holm Oak, *Quercus ilex*, which is planted nearby. These two varieties are the only oaks native to the eastern Mediterranean area.

The Gallipoli Oaks come from acorns sent home by Captain Winter-Cooke of "Murndal", Hamilton. He was at the Anzac Cove landing and later served in France where he was awarded the Military Cross. Several trees were successfully grown from the acorns and our tree is struck from the original one in the "Murndal" garden, raised by the well-known tree expert, Bill Funk of "Mereweather", Dunkeld.

According to the stories of the soldiers, they had to climb treacherous slopes, struggling through what they took to be holly bushes. In fact they were Gallipoli Oaks which covered much of the Peninsular. The Anzac Requiem refers to their ordeal –

“On this day above all days....we remember those who still sleep where they were left amid the holly scrub in the valleys and on the ridges of Gallipoli....”

Marigold Curtis.

'The Money Tree'

The huge old elm to the east of the lake shades the area most used for community events. This tree was planted in the Scoborio era and must be at least 100 years old.

The tree developed a serious split some twenty odd years ago and was in danger of collapse. Thanks to the generous efforts of the Warrnambool community money was provided to secure the branches with rods and cables. This expensive exercise, undertaken in 1981 and supported by Rotary, led to the elm being known as the Money Tree. Archie Graham used some of the timber removed from the tree to make items of furniture. Some of this is displayed in the PAC (now the entertainment centre)

The tree has a wide branching habit. The spreading limbs have to support a huge weight, especially when in full leaf and wet.

Early this year a new split developed. None of the pre-existing bolts or cables failed.

Terry O’Sullivan and the gardens team reacted immediately, reporting that the tree is significant and all should be done in an attempt to prolong its life. Initially work was undertaken to reduce the load, by lopping selected branches and installing temporary cabling. At this time, as a safety measure, an area to the east was cordoned off, and Jazz in the Gardens was relocated as a precaution.

Expert assistance was sought from “Tree Works” in Melbourne. New work including bolting and bracing has been completed and we hope the elm will be there to shade visitors to the Gardens for many years to come. Thanks to all concerned.

Guiding Friends

During the summer months we have had very few walkers on our Sundays as we seem to have hit extreme weather every day but we have guided quite a number of local groups at various times of day. The evenings in particular have been glorious - try it.

Our new guide Laurel Myers is ready to begin.

Thank you for tacking us to the gardens.
from prep 4 XOXOXO
(Jamo)



Growing Friends

We have had a very quiet summer with only the fruit trees to care for - which the watering system covers very adequately. Plums were picked and given to committee and friends. The apples don't seem to have done so well this year but have been tipped pruned by Lorraine and look attractive.

Plans being formulated for a plant sale to coincide with a function later in the year

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2006

Guided Walk March 15th 5.00pm - come one come all

Guided walk dates: Every 2nd & 4th Sunday starting at the Main Gate at 2.30pm

Remember that if you would like to organise a group 'tour of the gardens', for your family or business, please contact Isobel Jones or another committee person. Most times can be accommodated.

**FRIENDS OF WARRNAMBOOL
BOTANIC GARDENS Inc.**

A0032902E

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Our newsletter is published spring, summer,
autumn and winter.

If you would like to contribute to our publication
please forward material to the above address.

Membership: Payable at AGM July 2005 or
any time afterward

March 2006

HISTORY 140 YEARS

Our Gardens were established at their current
site **140** years ago.

The Friends are formulating plans to celebrate
this auspicious occasion in spring 2006 when
the gardens are at their best.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank
you for your support and help since 1989 when
the friends were formed.

Part of our celebration will be showing the
history of the gardens and we would like to call
on you to supply us with **ANY** history that you
may have. This could take the form of photos,
artefacts, anecdotes - stories that you remember
being told by your family and friends, maybe
fun or mischief that you got up to in you youth.
If we receive enough we will put our collection
into book form, to be shown on the day and to
be archived for the future.

One story we have is 'Donald (past curator)
drying his tobacco leaves on the roof of the
fernery'.

Did you ever patronise "Tail light alley" along
Botanic Road?

Did you sit astride the cannon as a child, and do
you recall the cold metal on your bare legs?

Do you remember stories told by your parents?
Help us put together the sounds, the smells, the
feel and the delight of the past.

Please send contributions to our Friends
address or email address as shown in the
opposite column. Photos could also be sent by
email.

*All original photos and articles will be scanned by myself
and returned to the contributor.*

Mandy King

MEMBERSHIP

As you would appreciate we are now sourcing
large dollars through government grants and the
like, your membership is **vital** to us in showing the
significance and importance our gardens hold with
the people of Warrnambool.

We have 165 members on our books 138 financial
could you please check your payment records -

Thank you - Mandy King