



FRIENDS OF WARRNAMBOOL BOTANIC GARDENS

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Winter 2010

NEWSLETTER

www.wbgardens.com.au

Warrnambool Botanic Gardens Team Update

The autumn/winter face of the gardens is upon us again.

Annual beds have been rejuvenated, remulched and replanted.

Dahlia's have been lifted and stored and the Canna's cut back.

Mulching continues around trees, within garden beds and areas that are devoid of turf.

Interpretative signage has been installed around the 'Money Tree', Habitat tree and on the fernery. It is hoped that this signage will be incorporated into the garden tours offered by the guiding friends.

Work on stage two of the Waterwise bed continues with planting scheduled for commencement in July.

The water lilies within the pond have recently been thinned with the assistance of an excavator. Ros managed this project with aplomb. Anyone wishing to grab a few of these water lilies from the stockpile is more than welcome. The stockpile is located within the southern section of the Pinetum.

Plantings within the Pinetum continue with a special thanks to Marigold Curtis for donating a *Cedrus brevifolia*. It is worth noting that Marigold not only donated the tree but actually planted it as well.

If you haven't been to the gardens recently, we invite you to call in, have a walk around and say g'day to the team.

Hope to see you soon.

John, Ros and Mark

Kew Gardens, Hookers and Plant Collectors

“Both my great-great-grandfather and my great-grandfather were directors of Kew Gardens” Jill Heathcote made this casual comment as we were sorting some pots she had donated to The Friends. It stopped me in my tracks, as on my botanical register, that was at least equivalent to royalty. At my urging Jill has provided the following information.

“Both my great-great-grandfather William Jackson Hooker and my great-grandfather Joseph Dalton Hooker were directors of Kew Gardens for 24 and 20 years respectively. William went on a collecting trip to Iceland in 1809 but lost everything when the ship caught fire on the way home. Joseph was more adventurous, visiting Antarctica with the Ross Expedition in 1839-1843. As a zoologist for the voyage had already been appointed he had to pass his final medical exams to go as assistant surgeon. Two winters were spent in Hobart, and they called in at Sydney and at the Bay of Islands, New Zealand on the way home.”

According to Dr Jim Endersby, Joseph Hooker was one of the 19th centuries most important and powerful botanists mostly remembered today because he was Charles Darwin’s closest friend . When he set sail for Antarctica he was just 22 years old. It was four years before he returned to Britain.

Jill continued;

Joseph went to the Himalayas between 1847 and 1849. He suffered from altitude sickness there, and was arrested and briefly imprisoned in Sikkim for crossing the border into Tibet. In 1850 he was in Eastern Bengal, in 1860 went to Syria and to Morocco in 1871. In 1877 he joined a surveying party in the Rocky Mountains, USA where he covered 8,000 miles by train and wagon in ten weeks. He was a confident and best friend of Charles Darwin. Ferdinand von Mueller corresponded frequently with Joseph and sent a large number of specimens to Kew. (1)

What amazing journeys were undertaken by the collectors of the 19th century in their search for plants! Joseph Hooker spent quite some time in Tasmania in 1850. Dr Jim Endersby speaking on Ockham’s Razor (ABC Radio National, 15 Nov 2009) tells the story of the friendship of Joseph Hooker and Hobart assistant police magistrate Ronald Campbell Gunn, under the delightful title of ‘A Gunn and two Hookers’.

Ockham’s Razor is broadcast on ABC Radio National Sunday mornings at 8.45. It can be down loaded from the web.

(1)Sources: ‘Darwin’s Armada’ Iain Mc Callum; ‘Imperial Nature’ Jim Endersby; ‘Sir Joseph Dalton Hooker’ Ray Desmond; ‘The Hookers of Kew’ Mea Allan.

Pat Varley

Pens

The ideal Gift

Do you remember the Lawson Cypress (*Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*) ?

There were two in the lawn near the Cannon. Their branches swept the ground making a magic space where the children could hide and play. The one directly north of the gun was sometimes called the “cubby tree”. Over recent years they declined and now both have been removed, but part of the cubby tree has been preserved.

Mr Allan McInnes a member of the Warrnambool Woodworkers Group, has turned some very attractive pens from the pale tactile timber. They make a wonderful gift, especially to send overseas, as they are all-Australian, light and durable. They are available from ‘The Friends’ for \$20 each.

Up, up and away! The Gun in the Gardens

At 8.00 am on the shortest day of the year Keppel Prince arrived at the Gardens with mobile crane and flat bed truck. Just over half an hour later, the old wooden stand, which had supported the gun in the Gardens for 100 years, was on its way to a more protected environment at Flagstaff Hill. The Friends greatly admire the skill and care of the men from Keppel Prince and thank them for their practical and timely assistance. Our task now is to provide a replica carriage for the barrel, which is currently on temporary concrete blocks. There are plans to conserve the original.

Provision of a reproduction carriage

In the world of informal cooperation as opposed to regulation, there has been heartening progress.

In February 2010 a concrete stand was placed in the Gardens and the barrel of the gun moved onto it by courtesy of WCC and Keppel Prince. The stand was provided by WCC.

Peter Webster has made several visits to the Gardens Gun. As agreed he has made available for the exclusive use of the FOWBG detailed drawings of the platform and the unique carriage at a discounted cost.

The Warrnambool Triton Wood workers have enthusiastically taken on the project of the reproduction carriage. They have volunteered their skill and labour and estimate their costs will be in the vicinity of \$2000.

Discussions with saw-millers and woodworkers indicate that Monterey Cypress would be a suitable timber and local saw millers are sourcing suitable logs.

Initial enquiries re metal fittings have been made locally. Alderdice Foundry is prepared to manufacture the brass fittings at no cost and Roy Slater Engineering is liaising with the woodworkers on other metal fittings.

This is a complicated operation, but if the cannon can be restored, on a reproduction carriage, in this the centenary year of its position in the Gardens we will be delighted. We aim to raise \$6000 which we estimate will cover costs.

The cannon has been listed on the Victorian Heritage register for its social significance, and there is no doubt in our minds that it stands large in the memories of generations who have been photographed on, under and beside it.

Pat Varley



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BOTANIC GARDENS Inc.**

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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/or by the AGM
July 2010

June 2010

GUIDED WALKS

Guided walks are conducted by our volunteer
guides every Second and Fourth Sunday
of the month commencing at 2.30pm,
weather permitting
Walks can be organised on request
Walks proceed from the main entrance gate in
Cockman Street

Spare a thought to the Castlemaine BG's

Two men have been charged over the destruction of the heritage-
listed Castlemaine Botanic Gardens overnight.

They say vandals caused hundreds of thousands of dollars damage
when they stole three earthmoving machines and took them on joy
rides through the gardens last night.

"They started the second machine and instead of just putting it in
the lake, they took it for a joy ride through the garden and
destroying everything in its path."



OUR LONG SERVING COMMITTEE MEMBER

Marigold invited 'Friends' and staff to dig bulbs and
enjoy good old country hospitality with cake and tea at
her Cudgee property. At the next curator's day we
planted these bulbs around the gardens - make sure you
visit the gardens in spring to see the display of colour.

DATE TO REMEMBER

Annual garden day to be held in the gardens on the
19th September. We would love your help by potting
up plants for sale on the day. These can be left at the
depot yard at any time the gardens are open.

The Lake has had a clean out: If you have use for water
lilies, there are hundreds of bulbs for the taking in the
pinetum

MORNING IN THE GARDENS WITH JOHN

John's 'Curator day' is held on the first Wednesday of the
month at 10.30 am until noon. Each month John organises
an interesting and educational experience. Come along to
the gardens, we meet at the growing area at the back of the
curators cottage.

Calender of dates is attached

Friends of Warrnambool Botanic Gardens Calendar of Events 2010

All days will commence at 10.30am and finish at 12.00pm.

Please meet at the fruit trees at 10.30am.

Days will be held rain, hail or shine.

January 6, 2010 Holiday	February 3, 2010 Maintenance of beds	March 3, 2010 Tree planting	April 7, 2010 Bulb lifting at Marigold's Property
May 5, 2010 Bulb planting	June 2, 2010 Clean up	July 7, 2010 Fruit tree pruning	August 4, 2010 Propagation
September 1, 2010 Preparation for plant sale	October 6, 2010 Annual bed preparation	November 3, 2010 Annual planting	December 1, 2010 Maintenance of annual beds

The above activities are a guide only and may be subject to change depending upon staff availability and the needs of the Botanic gardens