



# FRIENDS OF WARRNAMBOOL BOTANIC GARDENS

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## NEWSLETTER [www.wbgardens.com.au](http://www.wbgardens.com.au)

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### SPIRIT OF REVERENCE AND SINCERITY

#### **Our Gardens. A place to meet, to celebrate our community, to enjoy our heritage.**

This year the Gardens again provided a great venue for the Australia Day celebrations and in February for the very successful Wunta event; 'Jazz in the Gardens'.

Over the years the Gardens have hosted many functions, some formal and official and some far more casual. Recently one of our members, Janet Mc Donald, drew our attention to the Standard Ideal Town Supplement of March 2<sup>nd</sup> 1928. Back then, Warrnambool had been proclaimed the Ideal Town of Victoria and a week of celebrations were arranged.

The concluding event of the Celebrations was a Pleasant Sunday afternoon service in the Botanical Gardens. The Standard reported, *'That the people appreciated this as a fitting close to a most successful week, was evidenced by the very large attendance and the spirit of reverence and sincerity that pervaded the gathering.'* The musical part of the program was supplied by the Warrnambool Town Band. As part of a lengthy service, Rev Frederick J. Wood of the Warrnambool Baptist Church gave the Address which was followed by several homilies from local dignitaries; all reported in great detail. Kipling's Recessional concluded the impressive service. A collection taken at the gate on behalf of the Hospital amounted to 27 pounds.

The format and sentiments of the concluding celebrations sound very sombre and unlikely to excite an audience today. However the opening entertainment of a week earlier was a much more lively event.

*The Streets leading to the Gardens were thronged with sight seers anxious to get a glimpse of the prologue procession which consisted of two large lorries provided by Nestles Condensory. The leading lorry was artistically decorated with lighting effects etc and on it was staged a Tableau representing episodes in the Indian Play to be enacted in the Gardens. Ferocious Indians in all the glory of war paint and native trappings, brandished spears and scalping knives in a most fearsome fashion. The second lorry was fitted up to represent a Settlers hut and it was occupied by a number of Red Indians who sang popular choruses. The Town Band under Bandmaster George Davis marched to the Gardens and rendered popular music. The Gardens were flooded with Electric Lights – the drama staged took the form of an Indian Camp in West America – the Indians captured a small boy who had strayed from his home. In a brief but gallant fight with the Settlers the air was filled with the crack of rifle fire – the Indians danced round the campfire chanting their war songs. In the fight a settler and his wife were captured and dragged to the Indian Camp where the Indians performed all sorts of torture on their unhappy victims. The wife escaped and told her story to the troops – who attacked the Indians and rescued the prisoners. The pipe of peace was produced and the blood curdling episode ended.*

*Owing to the density of the crowd the entertainment got out of hand. It was intended to have a concert and community singing – which was abandoned after several attempts to maintain order.*

Henri Worland Talks 3YB. 17<sup>th</sup> February 1947

No reason is given for the choice of the "Indian Play" the presentation of which would raise some major challenges for a contemporary producer.

Pat Varley

## ROTUNDA

It is 100 years since the Rotunda in the Gardens was built but we are at a loss in finding details of the date of the laying of the foundation stone or the official opening of the Rotunda.

We will recognise the significance of the Rotunda later in the year, in the mean time we are asking the members to come forward with photos or information. People love hearing stories of 'times gone by' which is in our life time, or maybe stories from earlier years that have been passed down through generations. Our committee member Marigold Curtis tells the story about her grandfather Councillor Younger, when he was Mayor he opened the Rotunda.

## NEW SIGNS

The Friends of the Gardens have been talking about new directional signage since forever. In 2007 we started again and this year signs are going up. We don't want to 'look a gift horse in the mouth' but to date the only new directional signs that have been erected are at the Mortlake Rd round about then one down Botanic Rd, we are still hoping new signs directing from the highway, that might mean another push. We do have new signs on the boundary fences at each corner of the gardens and a large one showing the main entrance in Cockman Street. They are very impressive and give a new life to the perimeter of the gardens.



## WARRNAMBOOL COMMUNITY GARDEN

Felicity Jackman came to our 'Wednesday Morning in the Gardens'. She is a very enthusiastic participant and secretary of the Community Garden. Felicity gave us lots of tips on alternative living and a run down on the CG. We have now planned a visit to the Garden on our next Wednesday Morning on the 3rd April. You are all welcome to view the garden. We will meet at the garden at 11am. Grafton Road.

To learn more about the workings of the CG go to <http://www.warrnamboolcg.wordpress.com> or follow them on facebook

## THE BATS ARE BACK

Our regular visitors, the bats, returned to the Gardens in the last week of March. Visit them before they leave for warmer places. It is ten years since they began their regular visits and we reprint the information from 2003

Fri 23-May-03 Report from Paul Grey

The Warrnambool Botanical Gardens is presently hosting a small group of [Grey-headed Flying-Foxes](#) (*Pteropus poliocephalus*), GHFF. It is not known at this stage how long these animals will stay in the Warrnambool area. Due to winter climate at this south-western limit of their range and limited food resources in this area, a build up of large numbers is not expected.

## BOTANIC GARDENS INTO THE FUTURE

What is the oldest scientific institution in Australia?

The Royal Botanic Garden Sydney, according to its new director David Mabberley. They were established in 1816.

The City Botanic Gardens in Brisbane were established in 1855 on the site of the Government Garden of the Morton Bay Penal settlement. In 1970 planning and development began for a second garden at Mt Coot-tha

In 1846 [Charles La Trobe](#) selected the site for the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne, from [marshland](#) and [swamp](#). In 1857 the first director was [Ferdinand von Mueller](#). That was the year before the original site of the Warrnambool Botanic Gardens was selected to the east of the cemetery reserve. They relocated to their present site in 1866.

Old and venerable as these gardens are, they are 'Johnny-cum-latelys' compared to the oldest in the English speaking world founded in 1620 at the University of Oxford.

Oxford is one of the significant historic gardens at which our Curator will work and study as part of the Professional Development Program he is undertaking later this year. He will also spend two weeks working as a volunteer at West Dean Gardens in West Sussex, an innovative heritage garden. We are proud to support John in this thoroughly researched initiative which is so relevant to his role in our heritage listed garden.

It has been a season for change in Australia's gardens. Dr Philip Moors has retired as Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne. During his 20 years at the helm, he saw the establishment of the native garden at Cranbourne and the restoration/modification of Guilfoyles 'volcano' as a water conserving feature. He emphasised the need to prepare for climate change, 'making our plant selections now, for 50 years ahead'.

Tim Entwistle has taken over from Dr Philip Moors as director of RMBG. While Tim started his career in Melb he was for some time executive director of Sydney's RBG and has recently spent two years at the RBG Kew, as director of conservation. He sees conservation as the primary role of botanic gardens around the world today.

David Mabberley 'The role of botanic gardens has moved from medical training, to collections for collections sake, to economic hubs of imperial ambition, to pleasure gardens and then to conservation repositories, but now to the well being of society. They have never been more important.'

Ockhams Razor ABC Radio National, March 2013

## EVENTS IN THE GARDENS

The Friends eventually held their Christmas celebration at the Rotunda in Autumn.

The function was postponed when the Telstra fire made communication with members very difficult in late November. The change of date enabled us to enjoy a very relaxed and pleasant afternoon/evening with about fifty guests. Conditions were perfect and the Gardens were a peaceful haven of green lawns and magnificent trees.

Another fun activity in March was the Children's Services games for pre school children, hosted jointly by the Friends and TAFE. This event attracted more than 200 participants who made mud pies, read books and played games, designed and supervised by the TAFE students. Organiser Donna Lumb, stressed the value of out door play in the natural environment for the development of active healthy youngsters.

## BURR OAK

*Quercus macrocarpa*

As you will remember we planted a small 'Burr Oak' some years ago in memory of Agnes Robinson, one which her family had raised for us. It is planted close to the lake and the row of Algerian oaks.

It comes from North America and can be found growing from the Canadian border right down to Texas. It has a long tap root which helps make it drought and fire resistant.

These oaks have been known to grow to a height of 30m, with a spread of 5m and a trunk diameter of 3m. They can grow for over 250 years which means they need space. Our tree is planted very close to the Kauri Pines, which is unfortunate because they grow to extreme heights also. It is a fast growing tree and if planted carefully can be an outstanding ornamental tree. I suggest here that we plant another one, well away from the Kauris, giving it space.

In connection with the planting of suitable trees for our gardens, I refer you to some serious advice given to us from Dr Philip Moore, who recently retired after 20 years as Director of the RBGM. He achieved tremendous changes in this time; including the establishment of the Cranbourne Gardens with its unique indigenous planting, and redesigning of the entire irrigation system to capture and harvest storm water.

He led the way in understanding and managing our botanic gardens better, and most importantly to be aware of serious climate changes now and in the decades ahead. He said we must select species of trees and plants that can survive and flourish in the face of climate change - no matter what country they come from.

It seems that the Burr Oak was a good choice.

*Marigold Curtis*

## IN THE GARDENS



Our Curator John is developing an Acanthus Collection, raising mixed emotions. We have to be amazed at the variety of Acanthus around the world.

Note from John:

Exciting news within WBG. Our *Acanthus sennii* (Ethiopian Acanthus) is flowering! Although the foliage is similar to other Acanthus species, the flower is distinctive because it is orange/red. This Acanthus is from the highlands of Ethiopia. This specimen was sourced recently from a nursery near Kinglake and forms part of our Acanthus collection.

*Acanthus sennii*

## SLOW BUT STEADY

Our major project this year is to restore the well and incorporate it into the gardens. This has been slow as we are waiting for a response to our application for funding, through the Local History Grant Program, along with a formal design layout that we have commissioned.

We do have a strong, temporary, well cover to allow the old shed to be safely removed in the interim.

## TRIMMING OF DEAD BRANCHES



With the windy weather over the last 2 weeks there has been some natural pruning especially the palms, alongside nature John has called in some professional help.

John reports: The historic Lone Pine (*Pinus brutia*) located within the central lawn of WBG received some special treatment this week. The Tree Works came to WBG to undertake some specialist pruning. Seen in the tree are Tom and Anthony who did a superb job of pruning out the dead wood within the Lone Pine.

## WHEN THE PINES GO FERREL

Our Lone Pine (*Pinus halepensis brutia*) is treated with great respect. As reported elsewhere in this Newsletter, it has recently been carefully 'pruned'. It has proved quite difficult to propagate seed from this tree and the seedlings that have survived have been tended with great care by our members.

So it was quite a surprise to learn that a close relative The Aleppo Pine (*Pinus halepensis* Mill.) is regarded as a weed on the lower Eyre Peninsular of South Australia.

The Aleppo Pine is a large (25-30 metre) coniferous species from the Mediterranean. Its natural distribution extends from Morocco in the west to Jordan in the east, and from France in the north to Palestine in the south.

Aleppo Pines were introduced to the peninsular by the forestry industry last century. They were ideal for wind breaks around farmhouses and as shelter belts; much as Monterey Pines were used in the Western District of Victoria. Early settlers and later soldier settlers from World War II planted the trees, which were still recommended by the Department of Agriculture until about 30 years ago. The conditions were ideal and the trees took off. 'Severe infestations' occur along the Flinders Highway.

While the Aleppo Pine is regarded as an environmental weed and a threat to the regions biodiversity, threatening native vegetation, it presents an enigma, for it is a very important source of food for the endangered [Yellow-tailed Black- Cockatoo](#). The challenge is to provide for both the birds and biodiversity.

For more detail see Way.S.Department for Environment & Heritage, South Australia 2006

**FRIENDS OF WARRNAMBOOL  
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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 2013

**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

Please note: If you would like to have your  
Newsletter sent by email please send an  
email to [friends@wbgardens.com.au](mailto:friends@wbgardens.com.au) and we  
will put you on the email list

**BOOKING AN EVENT IN THE GARDENS**

Are you thinking of holding an event in the Gardens. Please  
go to our [web site](#) to get information and to download the  
application form. You are also able to book by going to the  
gardens or WCC during work hours and obtain a booking  
form.

**RECIPE**

End of the growing season for tomatoes, here is a recipe  
from an earlier curators wife Mrs Donald

**Tomato Relish**

12 Large Tomatoes 1lb Sugar  
4 Medium Onions 1 Handful of Salt  
1 tables spoon Curry Powder 1 ½ table s Dry Mustard  
5 or 6 Chilies or Cayenne pepper  
Vinegar to barely cover

Cut tomatoes into walnut size pieces. Place in a dish and sprinkle  
with salt. Let stand overnight. Slice onions and stand in separate  
dish, sprinkle with salt and stand overnight.

In morning drain tomatoes and onions and place in pan with  
vinegar and bring to boil. While boiling mix curry and mustard  
with cold vinegar and place in pan with sugar and chilies. Stir and  
boil for a good half hour

**COMING EVENTS**

**Morning in the Gardens**

First Wednesday of the Month 11am

Our next Wednesday 3rd April is at the Community Garden.  
Take this opportunity to see this amazing project, meet at the  
Community garden at 11am

Monet's Garden - 10 May to 8 September. Exhibition devoted to  
Claude Monet's iconic garden at Giverny Franc  
Visit [ngv.vic.gov.au](http://ngv.vic.gov.au) for full details

**Open Garden Australia Listing**

**Warrnambool Botanic Gardens** Cockman St, Warrnambool.

Open daily from dawn till dusk this Guifolyle designed garden is a  
must see on your gardening journey.

The 8ha garden includes open expanses of lawn, large shrub beds,  
display gardens, specimen trees, a rejuvenated pinetum and a  
picturesque pond.

[www.wbgardens.com.au](http://www.wbgardens.com.au)

**Membership payment**

If you did not pay your membership before or at the AGM  
we would be pleased if you could do that now.

You can send a cheque to the Friends POB or we now offer  
Direct Payment

EFT

BSB: 083 957

Account Number: 048342632

Refer: Your Name