



FRIENDS OF WARRNAMBOOL BOTANIC GARDENS

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Maintaining and developing Warrnambool Botanic Gardens as an outstanding Guilfoyle garden



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NEWSLETTER
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A WINTER EVENING A WARM FIRE AND A GOOD BOOK



One of the few books that held pride of place between the crinoline lady book ends in my childhood home was *Native Flowers of Victoria* by Edward Edgar Pescott. It was inscribed; Vera Bailes from her friend H Mackay New Years Day 1918. Vera, my mother, was 14 years old in 1918.

It is a lovely little book with four coloured plates and 56 Photo Engravings. Cost 3/6. It was published by George Robertson and Co. The date of publication is not given, but other sources say 1914. One hundred years ago.

In 2012 a facsimile was published, *Native Plants of Victoria*, with text adapted from the original work of Edward Edgar Pescott and photography by Ken Stepnell. There are more than 100 colour photographs.

Both Pescott and Stepnell have links to south west Victoria.

Edward Pescott was born at Geelong in 1872 and educated at Chilwell State School. He became a teacher and taught at schools across western Victoria. He was associated with many natural history groups and was president of the Field naturalists of Victoria from 1926 – 28. He was appointed Head of the School of Horticulture at Burnley in 1909.

A nephew, Richard Thomas Martin Pescott, was director of the National Museum of Victoria (1944-57) and of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne. (1957-70)

Ken Stepnell grew up in Buninyong near Ballarat. In a life devoted to photography, particularly Australian natural history he has won many awards. Stepnell's photographs are superb and Pescott has a way with words;

'...the maiden hair fern, Adiantura ethiopecum. Its daintiness is unsurpassable, growing among the rocks or fringing the creek banks with its long delicate fronds, hanging weeping into the very water, as if seeking a sip of nature's nectar, it is one of the most beautiful of all ferns.'

Edward Edgar Pescott and Ken Stepnell, *Native Plants of Victoria* AXIOM Australia, 2012. (ISBN 978 1 864767377)

The Friends have a small library housed in Scoborio's Shed. A recent donation to the collection is *W.R.Guilfoyle* by R.T.M.Pescott, O.U.P. Melbourne 1974.

Richard Thomas Martin Pescott, (nephew of Edward Edgar Pescott) was born in Melbourne in 1929 and graduated from the University of Melbourne with a Master of Agricultural Science. For thirteen years he was director of the Royal Botanic Gardens in Melbourne where he worked in the same gardens and lived in the same house as William Guilfoyle had done before him. He says that soon after his appointment he found;

'...in the beautifully landscaped area of nearly ninety acres, a man named Guilfoyle was everywhere'....Who was this Guilfoyle who had created such a masterpiece in apparently comparatively few years?'

In seeking the answer to this question Pescott discovers the families' Irish and French heritage and 'record of horticultural excellence' over several generations.

William Guilfoyle was born in England in December 1840 and came to Australia with his parents Michael and Charlotte (nee Delafosse), as a young boy.

His father established a nursery business on arrival in Sydney. This business struggled and was succeeded by the Exotic Nursery at Double Bay; a successful business in partnership with his sons. William is said to have had a special interest in and aptitude for natural history and so won the support of many influential men in the field, including Ferdinand von Mueller. In 1868 he was invited to accompany a party of naturalists on a five month cruise of the South Seas aboard H.M.S.Challenger. On his return he spent some time on the family property in the Tweed River area of northern N.S.W. These experiences widened his knowledge and appreciation of plants William was appointed director of Melbourne Botanic Gardens in 1873. He married Catherine Darling in 1889 and they had one son. Guilfoyle retired in 1909 and died in 1912.

In the preface to the book Professor of Fine Arts, University of Melbourne, Joseph Burke wrote; *'If ever an artist lives in his work it is Guilfoyle, who would have claimed no higher reward....'*

The creation of the landscape garden has been described as England's greatest contribution to the visual arts of Europe. That so classic an example [R.M.B.G.] should appear in Australia is surprising because of its late date....

It is fortunate that Guilfoyle, by temperament an innovator, should have been genuinely attached to the eighteenth century tradition of landscape design and at the same time have seen the marvellous possibilities for an original reinterpretation that were opened up by the different climate and the new species of flora he had at his disposal.'

William Guilfoyle, a landscape artist of genius.

The Friends main purpose is to maintain and develop Warrnambool Botanic Gardens as an outstanding Guilfoyle garden. And so we read with interest that;

Two prominent cities in Western Victoria, Colac and Warrnambool, owe their present municipal gardens to Guilfoyle. In the case of Colac, however, it is believed the project was never completed according to his plans and specifications. Page 139

A complete list of the gardens which Guilfoyle designed for some of the larger property owners of the Western District of Victoria may never be compiled, but it may be helpful to later researchers to note a few. At Beaufort there is 'Mawallock'; at Birregurra 'Mooleric' and 'Turkeith'; at Camperdown 'Newminster Park' and 'Renny Hill'; at Noorat 'Dalvui'; at Skipton 'Carranballac' and 'Mooramong'; and finally 'Wooriwywrite' at Terang.

Page 141

... R.T.M.Pescott, *W.R.Guilfoyle* O.U.P. Melbourne 1974

And we are blessed with many more.

Pat Varley

WARRNAMBOOL'S LONE PINE – THE NEXT GENERATION.

By Lou Hollis.

Although the tree is more than elderly and in decline, it was worth trying to propagate from it. What did we have to lose? That's right – nothing.

So, I let other FoWBG members know that I intended giving it a try. "Oh, yes. We got some seeds from it to germinate, but when we moved them, they died." The seedlings had been moved on not long after germination. Mmm, lesson number one. Sow them in individual pots that they will be able to live in for a year or maybe even two, 'cos they don't like to be moved as babies.

Dr David Shimmin got a couple to grow, and they are now in the grounds of Port Fairy Primary School. He confirmed that keeping them in the same spot as they germinated for quite some time was a good idea, as was keeping grubs and other hungry creatures away from the juicy new seedlings.

Over the years, I have scrounged lots of knowledge about the large pine family, which includes the local Drooping sheoke (*Allocasuarina verticillata*) as well as the Norfolk pine (*Araucaria heterophylla*), cypresses and our Lone Pine (Turkish Pine or Calabrian Pine, *Pinus brutia*).

Pines are wind pollinated. Each tree can be either male or female or have both male and female pollens. Lucky for us, with only one specimen in the Warrnambool Botanic Gardens, *Pinus brutia* falls into the latter category.

Pines are great parents. What do you see growing under a pine of any species? Not much except for maybe nettles or other extremely tolerant pioneer (weed) species. This is because the needles that they drop contain chemicals that inhibit the growth of almost everything but their own seeds.

Pines don't have leaves in the general meaning of the word. 'Stem clasping leaflets' or 'needles' are more accurate descriptions for their photosynthesizing bits.

All pine seeds consist of two parts: the wing and the actual seed. The wing is large enough to allow the wind to move it and the attached seed a reasonable distance from the trunk of the parent to a place with some needles from the parent and enough light to germinate and grow into a mature tree.

Armed with some cones that ripened in late summer/autumn, I set about getting the seeds out. The cones looked a bit dull and tarnished, indicating that they were ripe. I avoided pretty ones that looked too much like what you see on a Christmas card, as the seeds in them were probably not mature enough to germinate – that's if any were pollinated!

We sat the cones in a bowl on top of the cover on our slow combustion stove and waited a few days. Patience is a requirement if you intend growing *Pinus brutia*. The warmth induced the cones to open just enough to show the 'wings' on the seeds, but my stubby fingers were too chunky to get seeds out. Aha, tweezers to the rescue. Gently does it, and after coaxing out a number of wings with seeds attached, I realized that there were two types. The fat round seeds at the bottom of pretty brown wings would probably grow, but the flat petite ones would probably not. The cones get torn apart after the seeds are removed, just in case.

As the wing is only the delivery mechanism, only the fat round seeds were planted. One seed per tree tube, in a good potting mix without those water-storing granules that rob the plant of moisture. The rule of thumb for all seeds is to cover the seed with its diameter of soil (if planting direct into the ground) or potting mix if you are using a pot. Pines are no exception. Cover with a nice blanket of

chopped up needles from Mum/Dad over the top. Green ones are gathered from the ground, as the wind seems to knock these off the WBG tree. Needles that have lost their color have also lost some of the chemicals that the seedlings need.

The planting takes place on the new moon closest to Anzac day. If you are familiar with the lunar planting calendar, this should give the best chance of success. Autumn is when the seeds naturally drop from the parent tree. Germination seems to be also very much aligned with the moon and seasons, as the seedlings emerge as one group on the new moon closest to the spring equinox! One seed took 18 months to germinate, and yes, it came up at the same time as the seeds planted a year after it.

Germination rates are rather low. About 15% to be exact, and just like in nature not all seedlings survive past the first year or two. If you have any tips on increasing the germination and survival rates, I would love to try them.

Fertilizing is not really something that we have ventured into. Each year, a new layer of chopped up needles from the parent tree is given to the seedlings (and last year's seeds), which seems to give them a boost and encourage the occasional extra germination.

HARVEST

The Lone Pine in Warrnambool Botanic Gardens

Our Lone Pine has been in the spotlight this year and is likely to continue to attract attention as we approach the centenary of the Battle of Lone Pine in August 2015.

In January we marked the occasion 80 years ago, when the Pine was dedicated to the AIF. The recent ceremony was attended by descendants of both Sergeant Keith McDowell, who collected the cone and Mrs Emma Gray who propagated the seeds. Dan Tehan, Federal Member for Wannon, also attended and was very moved by the story of the Lone Pine. He returned to the Warrnambool Botanic Gardens on June 11 to announce a grant of \$5,000 for signage, irrigation and seed propagation from the tree. This was the result of an application by The Friends for support from the Federal Government's ANZAC Centenary Local Grants Program.



Our project: Preservation, Propagation and Promotion of the Lone Pine has also been supported by both Warrnambool Legacy Club, the Warrnambool branch of the RSL and Warrnambool City Council.

Melbourne Legacy is also interested in obtaining some cones from our tree and has offered assistance. Cones were harvested from the canopy of the tree with the aid of a cherry picker on Thursday June 19. It is a little late in the season but we hope they will provide some viable seed that can be shared with Melbourne Legacy.

Several of our members have had success in growing trees from seed gathered from the Lone Pine. Lou Hollis tells of her success in a separate article in this news letter.

One second generation tree grown by Lou is flourishing in Toll Bar Park Lexton where it replaces a commemorative tree that died in the drought. Another will have pride of place in Penhurst's memorial avenue.

Pat Varley President FOWBG June 2014

DRACAENA DRACO

DRAGON TREE

One of the most unusual trees in our gardens, planted up by the main entrance is the “Dragon Tree” – though not actually a tree, but a plant of the Agave family. It is sub-tropical and is native to the Canary Islands where it is known to grow to 20m with a spread of 4m. It is evergreen with long sword like or strappy foliage. After some 15 years it produces a flower spike with white perfumed flowers, followed by orange berries, occurring high up in the leaves. Each branch grows for 10-15 years and rebranches so a mature plant will have an umbrella like habit.

Although there are many Dracaenas to be found across South Africa, our species, the Dragon Tree can only be found on the Canary Islands, Cape Verde and Madeira. What is interesting is that they are all volcanic islands. They can also be found in western Morocco.

These trees are known to grow for many many years and were introduced to Australia in the early days. The Brisbane City Botanic Gardens, for example, planted one back in 1864.

The Koroit Botanic Gardens has had one growing since the gardens were first established and it is now 6 – 8 m high, has a girth of 2.5m with a spread of 6m. Gerard Kearney tells me that to mark the occasion of their 150th anniversary in 2007 they planted another one grown from the original tree. At that time they grew three young trees to prepare for the anniversary and we are fortunate that they have given us one which now stands proudly at the main gates.

Our Dragon Tree with its huge canopy and flowers and berries will be spectacular one day and will probably out grow many other trees in the gardens.

Marigold Curtis

FOWBG - AGM - Guest Speaker

THE SCOTTISH MAFIA IN OUR GARDENS

Pamela Jellie has chosen this title for the talk she will give at the Friends AGM on 9th July.

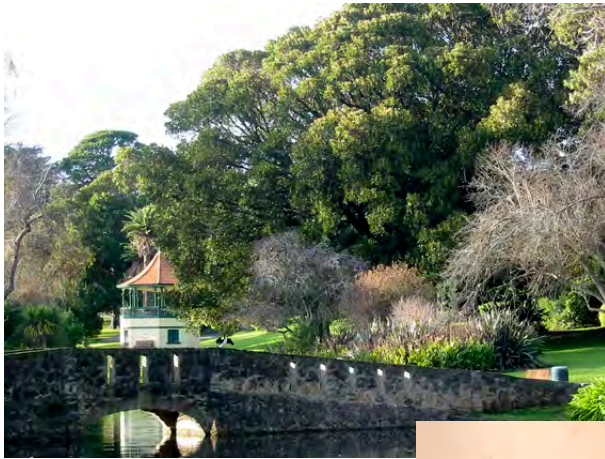
Pamela has a long association with the Australian Garden History Society and with the National Trust of Australia. Her love of heritage gardens has shaped her career as a conservation landscape architect. She has worked on projects including the Abbotsford Convent and Caloola, formerly Sunbury Asylum.

She is very familiar with the historic gardens of the Western District pastoral properties and has worked in many of them.

Pamela grew up in Colac, and as a girl enjoyed the Colac Botanic Gardens with their legacy of Daniel Bunce and William Guilfoyle. She is currently the chair of the Camperdown Garden Group.

We are delighted to welcome her as our guest speaker.

Cards will be available for purchase at our AGM



WBG Team Update June 2014

Winter has finally arrived!!!!

Work within WBG over the last few months has included:

- Mulching of feature trees on the central lawn area and palms within the palm precinct.
- Automation of the fernery irrigation including new upright sprinklers.
- Infill planting of the fernery with stock from Lorraine Deppler.
- Installation of new 63mm poly pipe within central lawn linking existing bore lines.
- Installation of solenoid valves to beds 8, 10, 13, 14 and 16 for future automated irrigation of these shrub beds.
- Planting of specimen trees.

- Removal of a large dead pine within the Pinetum.
- Continued plantings within shrub beds.
- Cutting back within shrub beds.
- Planting of spring flowering bulbs.
- Collection of Lone Pine cones via elevated work platform for potential propagation and distribution.
- Clean up works after the recent strong winds.

We look forward to surviving the winter and the wet conditions.

Please if you are visiting WBG during working hours feel free to grab a team member and discuss the recent developments within the gardens.



Autumn Colours



Dr John extracting seeds from a Lone Pine cone

John for WBG team

Bus Trip and Luncheon

For your diary: 13th November 2014

Anna Affleck is hosting a bus trip to visit three and possibly four local, historic homesteads gardens between Warrnambool and Caramut.

This will be a sought after tour as these historic properties have not been open for the public for some time. Proceeds will go to projects organised by the Friends for the WBG's

Further information and flyers will be available soon.

For early booking please contact: Mandy King 0355620343 or Pat Varley 0355624800

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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 2014

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
and we will put you on the email list

POST CARDS AND GIFT VOUCHERS

We now have available sets of five post cards with scenes
from the Gardens.

There are three contemporary colour photos and two sepia
prints from the past.

These will be available at the AGM selling at \$10.00 the set
or \$2.00 a card.

We can now provide, in the form of a gift voucher,
membership of the Friends of the Warrnambool Botanic
Gardens. These make a nice gift for garden lovers who
will be kept in touch with the Gardens by way of our
Newsletters.

AGM

Our AGM will take place at the TAFE building Timor St at
12noon on 9th July 2014. (Please note change from usual time)
Note attached invitation

MORNING IN THE GARDENS

Join us in Scoborio's shed at 11.00am first Wednesday of the
month.

FACEBOOK

Don't forget to go the WBG [Facebook](#) page. John Sheely
and the team upload photos continually of plants and flowers
as they change and come into bloom. It is a good way to go
to the gardens from your lounge room, when you are unable
to get there in person, or of course encourage you to visit.
Get on board

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 obtaining a
booking form.

MEMBERSHIP PAYMENTS

We have an on line [membership form](#) that you can fill in and send
to us. Then make your payment by the usual way of Direct
Payment or by sending a cheque

EFT

BSB: 083 957

Account Number: 048342632

Refer: Your Name (this is important to enable us to match our records
with your payment)