



FRIENDS OF WARRNAMBOOL BOTANIC GARDENS

A0032902E

Maintaining and developing Warrnambool Botanic Gardens as an outstanding Guilfoyle garden

NEWSLETTER

Issue Number 88

March 2019

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Welcome to 2019 which marks 30 years since the formation of The Friends. To those members who have given thirty years of continued support we say 'thank you so much'. You have helped maintain and develop Warrnambool Botanic Gardens as an outstanding Guilfoyle garden.

This year our main focus is 'Pick my Project' (PMP). Our proposal for a nature based play space providing for both creative play and adventure is progressing. So far progress is measured by permit applications, land surveys and the like, but you will see some thing more soon. We are very fortunate to have Andrew Laidlaw as designer and architect. He is consulting with the community, and with our assistance and that of the City Council, set up a listening post in conjunction with WUNTA. This was located north of the lake and west of the bridge where the proposed site of the play area was marked out. The day was well publicised in the Standard and Andrew was kept busy answering questions and responding to suggestions. If you missed the day and seek input email friends@wbgardens.com.au

In January, John Hawker announced his retirement from his position as Heritage Officer (Horticulture) Heritage Victoria. John has been friend and adviser to our group from its inception. He knows our Garden better than we do. We wish him a long and enjoyable retirement and trust that he will continue his interest

in WBG.

Have you visited www.wbgardens.com.au recently? You can take a fly around the Gardens seeing them as never before. It will soon be possible to follow a virtual path around the Gardens and select items you want to know more about. For example the name and origin of a tree or the history of the lake will be accessible electronically. We are also working on some traditional signs for our valued traditional members.

The Australia Day celebrations were held in the Gardens again, and this year there was a special relevance as Janet Macdonald was presented with the Citizenship award. Our vice president is not only reliable, creative and constructive, she also has a wicked sense of humour and a work ethic that sees her involved in a wide range of community organisations. Congratulations Janet.

Warrnambool has had one of its hottest and driest summers on record. The berries on my holly turned to red as did the leaves on the ornamental grape vine before the end of February. Never the less the Gardens continued to offer an inviting green haven much appreciated by picnickers, playgroups, photographers and the public in general. They are a tribute to our curator and his team.

Pat Varley.

ARBOR DAY

I recently came upon an article from the Standard 12 July 1901 which told of Arbor Day at the Friendly Societies' Park. It opens;

Surely Australians should love trees. Many of the generations now doing men's and women's work in Victoria grew up where only trees had grown, and in childhood they learnt the value of the leafy screen above when the sun was hot.

This was the era of street tree plantings as a contribution to beautifying the city where
the green lustre of trees

Made city life

more enduring pleasant and healthy.

Today we are more likely to value the tree for its efficient sequestering of carbon which if it is cut down and burnt will be released into the atmosphere.

Back in 1901 the trees were planted by the trustees of the Friendly Societies' Park. There was already a perimeter of pines which had been planted some twenty years earlier to provide a wind break and summer shade. There was a belt of Norfolk Island Pines on the north bank. These had been planted by former trustees some 15 years earlier.

*One of these which had been planted by Mr Scoborio, failed to grow... (so) Mr Scoborio, who was one of the representatives of the M.U., I.O.O.F. *, replaced it with another.*

*Manchester Unity, Independent Order of Odd Fellows

The Norfolk Island Pines still stand, but the perimeter pines were removed in May 2011 when they would have been about 130 years old and past their prime

Back to Arbor Day 1901 when Mr Black, Chairman of trustees of the Friendly Societies, planted an Anglo-Celtic Oak, Mr E. Price for the A.N.A., planted a Moreton Bay Fig and Mr. Armstrong a *Pinus canariensis*.

A Winchester Elm was set in its place by Mr C. Beattie, a representative of the Sons of Temperance.

Altogether 18 trees were planted including, Sugar Gum, Cedar Deodara and Lambertiana.

The gentlemen then retired to the pavilion for afternoon tea and other refreshments. A vote of thanks was passed for the oldest trustees, Mr Scoborio and Mr Beattie. In responding Mr Scoborio said;

He was not a trustee from the commencement, as he took the place of Mr Ardlie when that gentleman resigned. When he was out at the Hopkins the gardens there were not successful and the Town Council requested him to choose another place. He chose that park (Friendlies) for one, and the other was where the Gardens now are.

He pointed out the advantages of the Friendly Society Park with its natural amphitheatre as a site for sporting events and displays.

The Council in 1864 had appointed Scoborio, first curator of WBG, and Clutton, a horticulturalist living in Spring Gardens, to select a site for new botanic gardens, and they made two recommendations as he says, and the Gardens were relocated to their present site in 1866.

The Friendly Societies' Park is in Koroit Street Warrnambool, opposite the showgrounds. It was opened in 1872. Friendly Societies arose in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and peaked in the nineteenth century. They were mutual aid organisations in the age before the welfare state. They were voluntary associations of individuals who banded together in the tradition of self help, to protect members against debts incurred through illness, old age or death. The M.U., I.O.O.F. was founded in Manchester and came to Australia in 1840. The Australian Natives' Association (A.N.A.) was founded in Melbourne in 1871 for white men born in Australia. It was almost 100 years later in the 1960s that it admitted women. Other societies were originally exclusively male, but were admitting women by the late nineteenth century and there were some friendly societies exclusively for women.

Apart from the row of Norfolk Pines on the northern bank of the Friendly Societies' Park, the only mature trees remaining today are a Moreton Bay Fig and a Silky Oak near the Koroit Street entrance where there was once a residence. The pines have been replaced with perimeter plantings of Oak, along the eastern boundary, Callistemon to the south and Fig to the west. They appear to be thriving.

The Friendly Societies' Park has been the venue for many a celebration, display and competition. On pageants such as Florado, a procession led by bands and marching girls would travel from Liebig Street along Koroit Street. Today the route is lined with Norfolk Island Pines, but prior to 1910 there were Moreton Bay Fig and Cypress on the north side from Ryot Street to the park.

Arbor Day has a long history, possibly originating in Spain as long ago as 1805 and arriving in Australia via the U.S.A. in 1889. It was taken up by the State Schools of Victoria, with Director Frank Tate concerned for;

...the lack of shade around our country schools, especially those situated on the sun-baked northern plains ...

Many of these schools had admirable gardens, but no shade, as all trees had been felled or burnt in the best traditions of, 'if it moves shoot it, if it doesn't, chop it down'.

With the release of a report on State Forests and Timber Reserves in Victoria in 1901 reforestation became a priority for the Government and Arbor Day was enthusiastically promoted. This was the year of Federation where nationalism, republicanism and the appreciation of all things Australian flourished. We have not always valued our trees as this quotation from Joseph Mitchell in 1870 indicates.

'the settler subdues a piece of land, flogs it to death, abandons the carcass, and repeats the operation on a new subject'

It would be wise to recognise that, to quote Frank Lloyd Wright,

'The best friend on Earth of man is the tree. When we use the tree respectfully and economically, we have one of the greatest resources of the Earth.'

P.Varley

WEDNESDAY MORNING IN THE GARDENS

On the first Wednesday of the month the Friends hold a gathering. This morning has had some very interesting speakers and sometimes we visit other gardens.

As part of our year long 30th anniversary of the Friends, this past Wednesday we gathered original Friends of the Gardens

Our inaugural committee were

Ellen Dwyer President

Isobel Jones Secretary

Committee: Nan Dodds, Lesley Skewes, Thelma Lynch, Judy Loch, Marie Johnstone, Barbara O'Brien, Jean Fitzpatrick, Judi Phillips and Lorraine Richardson.

In 1990 Judy Clarke, Dawn Smith, Marigold Curtis, Mary Mahoney, Rosemary Fish and Anne Hunt joined the group



FRIENDS OF WARRNAMBOOL

BOTANIC GARDENS Inc

A0032902E

President

Pat Varley (03) 5562 4800

Vice-president

Janet Macdonald (03) 5562 4059

Secretary

Mandy King 0438 620 343

Treasurer

Fiona Rule 0438 622 199

Committee

Joan Keith (03) 55624377

Anne Lynch (03) 5562 1303

Judi Phillips (03) 5562 3320

Susan Ewers (03) 5562 5608

Heather Martin-Trigg 0400 621 305

Correspondence:

Friends of Warrnambool Botanic Gardens Inc.

P.O. Box 1190

Warrnambool 3280

Email: friends@wbgardens.com.au

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 2018

To save time, paper and postage
Please ask to have your Newsletter sent by email.
Send us an email at friends@wbgardens.com.au
and we will put you on the email list

WARRNAMBOOL BOTANIC GARDENS WEB SITE AND FRIENDS OF THE WBG

The web site now has a secure SSL certificate
ensuring it is safe for all to visit.

There is so much to be learned about the gardens by
visiting the site, please click [HERE](#)

Funding has been applied for to create an interactive tree
database, so come back soon

GUIDED TOURS

To organise a tour please contact a committee
member or email friends@wbgardens.com.au

PMP Nature Play Space

A unique and creative play space will be established for all ages using natural and recycled materials which sit comfortably in the heritage listed gardens. A large cypress stump and the remains of a historic tree will be incorporated into the design, becoming play pieces. Elements which encourage climbing, jumping, balancing and squeezing will be included, such as logs, rocks, ropes and old bridge timbers. These elements will encourage both active and creative play, providing spaces for adventure, escape and connection to nature. Careful selection of appropriate plantings will further connect children to nature.



Listening Post at WUNTA



The Friends were successful with their proposal to create a nature based play space as part of the State Government's Pick My Project initiative

Laidlaw and Laidlaw renowned for their work with children's gardens, have been contracted to undertake the design

Andrew visited the gardens and spoke to attendees at WUNTA about their views for the new garden space.



Wednesday morning walk with John



Setting sun

