



FRIENDS OF WARRNAMBOOL BOTANIC GARDENS Inc.

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Issue No. 30

NEWSLETTER

Winter 2003

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

WEDNESDAY 30TH JULY 2003
WARRNAMBOOL CLUB
KEPLER STREET. WARRNAMBOOL

11.30 AM Arrival
12.00 PM Annual General Meeting
12.30 - 1.15 PM Lunch (Light lunch will be provided by the Friends)
1.15 PM **Guest Speaker**
Richard Barley, Director Royal Botanic Melbourne Gardens

R.S.V.P. 25th July 2003 To assist with catering please phone:
Anne Kelly 5562-4982 or Mandy King 5562-0343
or email amandaking@datafast.net.au

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

2003		2004	
July	30 th A.G.M	February	Basket Lunch - Wunta
August 28 th	Movie Luncheon	April	Mothers Day in gardens
	Mrs Caldicot's Cabbage War	May	Basket Lunch
September	Networking day		
October	Luncheon Caroline Blackman		<i>If you would like to attend the movie luncheon</i>
November	Trip to Glenormiston		<i>please call Lorraine or Anne to make a booking. More</i>
December	Christmas Drinks		<i>information on other events will be given as they arise</i>

Picea pungens glauca

Blue Spruce

Of all the varieties of conifers the Blue Spruce is known as the most beautiful because of its brilliant blue-grey colouring, graceful branches and shape. The Picea family can be found in most Northern Hemisphere countries from the Himalayas, China and Japan, to North America, across to Europe, Scandinavia and even Siberia.

The Blue Spruce is also known as the Colorado Spruce as it is a native of the Rocky Mountains, USA, and can be found throughout Colorado. We are particularly fortunate to have one established some 40 years ago down from the rotunda. Unfortunately this is no longer a true specimen due to inappropriate removal of lower branches.

The careful planting of the Blue Spruce in large parks and gardens is important because their colouring acts as a foil for the changing autumn leaves of nearby deciduous trees. In this case we are lucky to have the Ginkgo tree next to it whose pale green leaves turn to a stunning yellow each year. As the name indicates their pine needles are spiky and the branches carry the most beautiful brown cones.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Again we have had a very happy and successful summer.

Our main events have been Wunta, Jazz in the Gardens which was organised by the Wunta Committee. We then held The Teddy Bears' picnic, run in conjunction with 3YB and McDonalds, with Ronald McDonald as the guest star. Ronald was a great success with the children who watched his every move. Ken Smith and his group provided the music and the Holiday Actors added to the enjoyment of the day. In April we held our second Fair in the Gardens, in conjunction with the Warrnambool City Council and sponsored by The Community Grants Program, Midfield Meats, The Rural Grants Program, 3YB, Warrnambool Standard, and Bakers Delight. It was an outstanding success helped by near perfect weather. 72 organisations participated and approximately 8000 people attended throughout the day.

My very sincere thanks to Mandy and Anne for their very hard work as organisers, also the wonderful committee and members who worked so hard to make the events successful.

The Friends Plant Stall organised by Lorraine, the Produce Stall run by Marie and the Lunch and Afternoon Stall run by Anne were successful money raisers for the Friends.

Mandy has completed the database and is to be congratulated on the provision of such an excellent reference source. 50 of the trees are about to be labelled and further funding for the labelling of another 125 trees is being sought through an application to the A.B.C. Open Garden Scheme Grant.

It has been noted that the Master Plan has not been reviewed since 1995. We wish to commence planning for a Childrens' Garden, so it has been decided that a full review is required.

Representatives from the Friends, Council representatives and Garden Staff, met to discuss setting up the review and the employment of a Consultant to manage the project. Peter Reeve has included the review in his 2003/4 budget. Our thanks to Peter and the Council for their continued support.

On July 30 we are holding the Annual General Meeting. We have been most fortunate in obtaining Richard Barley, Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, as our guest speaker. He is going to discuss the introduction of plants relevant to the 21st century whilst respecting the heritage/history and garden design of the 19th century. He is also going to include reference to the planning of a Childrens' Garden.

As he will be a most exciting speaker I do hope as many of you as possible will attend.

We will make the business of the meeting as brief as possible!

My very grateful thanks to the committee members for their valuable contributions and to you all for your continued support. My best wishes for the remainder of the year.

Friends Patron - Richard McGarvie

With the death last month of the Hon. Richard McGarvie the Friends of the Warrnambool Botanic Gardens lost their patron, supporter and friend.

Mr McGarvie became patron of 'The Friends' in 1998. The following year he visited Warrnambool to open 'The Blooming Western District' as the conference of the Association of the Friends of the Botanic Gardens Victoria was titled. In his opening remarks he spoke of the value of botanic gardens. They were accessible to all, without charge, to be enjoyed at any time. He also noted the great work

PLANT RESEARCH - DATABASE

All plants in the gardens are now identified and grid referenced. The database has been valuable in labelling plants and the reconstruction of garden beds. The research has also shown that many trees and plants have been lost since the survey conducted about 15 years ago. It is of considerable concern that if this trend is to continue, what will be the botanic status of the gardens in 10 years time?, what will we be leaving our grandchildren?, especially considering the age of most of the specimen trees. It is believed that to retain the botanic significance of the gardens there is an urgent need for the WCC to allocate funds to employ a specialist ('curator'), to oversee the future management and development of the gardens. Council need to understand that our gardens require unique consideration and should not be categorised with Lake Pertobe or the Reid Oval.

Having said this, research has been completed on the restoration of garden beds 15 & 16 which are the

**FRIENDS OF WARRNAMBOOL
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.

June 2003

NEWS FROM THE GARDENS

Growers Report

The Growing Friends had a busy year potting up plants and tending the fruit trees. The frames which support the espaliered fruit trees have been a great success. The yield of fruit this year was amazing. We ended up with buckets full which were given to our members and friends at the "Wunta" Day in the Gardens.

We had a very good result from plants we sold at the Gardens Fair, making \$576. Some plants were left over and we are hoping to sell them in the Spring.

Seeds were collected from our famous Gallipoli Lone Pine and three people tried to propagate them, unfortunately without success. Next year we will try again.

After several years the *Diates robinsoniana* or "Wedding Iris" in the main entrance bed is about to bloom. It is a stunning plant and we believe it to be the *Diates* from Lord Howe Island and wait eagerly to see it flower so that we may be able to identify it as such.

I would like to thank Judi and Bradford Phillips and Jan Irvine for all the time they have given and to Terry for helping us to achieve our goals.

Lorraine Richardson

Guiding Friends

We have had a very rewarding autumn with many more local people wanting to be guided through the gardens, learn of its history and be shown the interesting and rare trees. Many have been impressed with the trees now in bloom, such as the Anchor Plant, the *Diates* which is reaching a great height and the *Sparmannia*. Nearby is the *Ficus opposita* or "Sandpaper Fig", a gift from John Hawker. It is a tree found in Northern Australia with rough leaves that aborigines used to smooth their wooden tools. The fruit is small, edible and pear shaped.

Pat Varley took 20 TAFE students who are studying Child Care for a walk around the gardens. It was part of a unit on creativity and highlighted the gardens as a source of imaginative ideas for young children.

Paul Grey, Environment Officer Warrnambool City, came to talk to us about the bats. There are about 50 of them at present, mainly living in the palm trees near the cannon. Paul said that if one stayed in that area



