



# FRIENDS OF WARRNAMBOOL BOTANIC GARDENS

A0032902E



Issue No. 53

Spring 2009

## NEWSLETTER

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

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### **WARRNAMBOOL BOTANIC GARDENS TEAM REPORT 2009**

Firstly, it would be remiss of me not to thank the 'immediate' botanic gardens team of Ros and Mark for all that we have achieved in the previous 12 months.

Also the efforts of the parks and gardens staff that assist in the maintenance of the gardens should also be acknowledged.

Looking back we have been able to achieve the following in the past 12 months:

- Installation of sub-surface irrigation in the fernery
- Replanting of the fernery with key Otway ferns and path rectification works
- Removal of 'inappropriate' plant material within beds and lawn areas.
- Propagating key plant material within WBG
- Planting of new trees and shrubs
- Establishing contact with professional sources outside of WCC
- Continued planting of annuals within key areas
- Mulching of both beds and specimen trees
- Planning and implementation of the waterwise garden including interpretative signage
- Uplifting of boundary Cypress trees

The monthly FOWBG mornings in the garden have seen a wide range of activities undertaken. These mornings are an opportunity for the Friends to mix with the team and learn and/or develop gardening skills.

The assistance by the Friends on these mornings is appreciated by the team as it assists us with achieving set tasks (many hands make light work!) and gives everyone an opportunity to get to know each other.

The continued support of the FOWBG is greatly appreciated and we look forward to further developing this relationship.

For those that haven't visited the gardens for a while, please come in and have a walk around.

## **PRESIDENTS REPORT 2009**

The Friends of the Gardens has continued to support and encourage the future success and development of the Warrnambool Botanic Gardens as an outstanding example of a Guilfoyle garden.

The gardens continue to be used by many members of the community as a focal point for family celebrations and other activities. The Friends of the Gardens acknowledges the meticulous endeavour from the staff of the Warrnambool Botanic Gardens under the able direction of our curator, John Sheely. The garden beds have continued to be maintained, changed and upgraded to enhance the facility, thereby encouraging visitors not only from Warrnambool but from far and wide.

The Gardens were the venue for a visit by Heritage Victoria who were most impressed with our Guilfoyle Garden.

The Friends continue to conduct regular Garden Walks on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month or by arrangement and we thank our willing volunteers who "weather" all sort of conditions. I'm sure their efforts are rewarded by the very positive remarks from national and international visitors who partake of these entertaining wanderings.

The Friends acknowledge the enthusiasm from our curator John Sheely and his staff who conduct informative working experiences such as pruning, propagation and planting. These mornings have been invaluable to also liaise with Ros. Any Friends are most welcome to attend these mornings and enjoy a cup of tea or coffee.

Last year we conducted our annual Spring Garden Day and Plant Stall. This was most enjoyable and once again you are invited to attend on Sunday 20th September. Plants such as herbs proved very popular. Jams and chutneys are also in demand so start potting and making jams and preserves now please.

This year the Friends acquired the shed at the back of the curator's cottage. We have named it Scoborio's Shed after the original curator. At the moment, with the assistance of the Council, the building is in the process of a complete refit where eventually we hope to keep archives and conduct meetings.

In late October this year we shall hold a double celebration with the official opening of the restored fernery and the Friends of the Gardens 20th anniversary. The fernery has special significance, as it is only one of three remaining intact examples in botanic gardens. We acknowledge the pioneering work that the original members undertook.

The Friends have continued to raise funds this year and contributed \$6000 for the restoration of the fernery. The Friends have also contributed \$2000 for the reprint of the informative and attractive updated brochures. I must acknowledge the massive amount of "behind the scenes" work done by our secretary, Mandy King, in expanding these brochures. Mandy has also spent "untold" hours developing a website for the Friends of the Gardens that places the information about the Gardens at the fingertips for everyone.

Unfortunately, our disappointment this year has been the closure of Cockman Street. We certainly hope that we can continue to work in cooperation to enhance and protect our unique, heritage listed Guilfoyle Garden intact for future generations.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the entire hardworking committee for their invaluable support. I would also like to thank you our members for your support of our Gardens. Most importantly I thank all the hardworking staff with whom we are looking forward to continue working for the successful future and enjoyment of our historic heritage listed Guilfoyle Gardens.

## **BUSY DAYS AHEAD**

Two significant events are planned for the coming months

Our annual **Spring Garden Day and Plant Sale** will be held on Sunday September 20<sup>th</sup>  
We will have a produce stall this year so any contributions of fruit, vegetables, preserves, jams and the like, will be very welcome

If you have potted up plants, or have bulbs or cuttings or other material for our sale it can be left with John or Ros at the work area any time from now on.

A flier announcing the day is enclosed and your assistance in promoting it would be so helpful. Activities on the day will run from 11.00am to 2.00pm .

In October we are celebrating the reopening of the **Fernery** and the **Twentieth Anniversary of the formation of The Friends.**

This event will take place on the lawns near the fernery from 4.00pm on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> October  
We will mark the restoration of the fernery with the Mayor and members of Council. Refreshments will be served and we will celebrate The Friends 20<sup>th</sup> birthday by the launch of an updated history by Marie Johnstone and the cutting of a birthday cake.

Twenty years support and defence for our Gardens is an achievement to be proud of.

As members of The Friends you have been an important part of that success.

Do come along to renew old friendships and hear of plans for the future.

### **The Fernery**

In 1888 the Gardens Committee proposed the building of a fernery at a place suggested by the curator (Chas Scoborio). Ferns were very fashionable plants at that time and required shade houses or ferneries to protect them in the hot Australian sun. In Europe they were grown in conservatories that provided warmth and shelter.

By 1891 the fernery was well established and listed among improvements in the Gardens. The structure collapsed in 1936, after 47 years, and was replaced the following year. Detailed plans of the reconstruction are held in the Council archives.

In 1984-5 the fernery was re-constructed again as part of 150th sesquicentennial provincial garden rejuvenation program, and 'was one of the most successful rejuvenation of provincial gardens projects'. In 1999 the fernery was repaired and repainted by East Warrnambool Rotary and in 2006 the Friends designed and purchased security gates. Major repairs were undertaken in 2008 with a grant from Heritage Victoria and supplementary funding from WCC, the FOWBG and the A.L.Lane Foundation. The fernery, now planted out with ferns of the Otways, stands as one of the few remaining examples of its kind, of the fads and fashions of the late nineteenth century.

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### **New Committee Member**

We would like to welcome Donna Ellis to our committee. She comes with a broad horticultural knowledge and experience on the committee of the Hamilton Botanic Gardens. We look forward to her involvement and input to our committee

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### **Scoborio's Shed**

We are not far away from moving in. Thank you to the WCC for making this building available to us, and preparing it to move in stage. We have applied for funding for our IT equipment and a Warrnambool Rotary club have shown interest in fitting it out. I should probably leave it at this for the moment and hopefully by our next newsletter we will be able to tell you about the finalised building and extend an invitation to 'tea and scones'.

**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.

Membership: Payable at/or by the AGM  
July 2009

August 2009

**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

**MEMBERSHIP**

Your membership is vital to the future of the Botanic  
Gardens.

In the past the Friends have organised garden days,  
luncheons and bus trips. These were exciting days and  
much enjoyed by all. The committee put a lot of work  
into making these days a success and were renowned  
for the quality and diversity.

Unfortunately with the present structure of the  
committee these events have become beyond our  
means.

At present we have 152 members.

People say that they have not got the time to be  
involved in the activities of the friends and so  
shouldn't become a member. I would like to dot point  
how your membership is so important.

- Showing support for the work of the Friends
- Showing the council that you believe the  
existence of the BOTANIC gardens is important  
to our community
- The not so glamorous truth is that we need  
numbers on the page when applying for funding.  
This is essential as it is now our major source of  
income.
- The truth is without your show of support we  
would not have our fabulous curator - John

We are re-building our group with John's morning in  
the gardens and our nearly ready to move into home  
'Scoborio's Shed', where you will be able to come and  
have a coffee and relax, see our archives and join in on  
some educational days.

**Membership**

\$15 single \$20 family \$35 corporate

Due for payment 30<sup>th</sup> July

**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 and meet at the growing  
area at the back of the curators cottage.

**WEB SITE**

The Newsletter is posted on our web site

Visit the site by copying

[www.wbgardens.com.au](http://www.wbgardens.com.au) into your web browser and enjoy.

If you would like to contact us or have your newsletter sent by  
email please forward an email to the friends at

[friends@wboardens.com.au](mailto:friends@wboardens.com.au)