



FRIENDS OF WARRNAMBOOL BOTANIC GARDENS

A0032902E



Issue No. 58

Summer 2010

NEWSLETTER www.wbgardens.com.au

COMMENTS FROM COUNCIL

Warrnambool City Council at its meeting on 25th October received a report on the Botanic Gardens advising what had been achieved in recent years in accordance with the management plan, and further works planned for the future.

In introducing the report, Peter Robertson, Director, City Infrastructure, spoke highly of the Gardens saying that they were well patronised. He emphasised that Council would continue to work with the Friends for the implementation of the Management Plan.

It was recommended that :-

1. *The budget allocations of \$100,000 be referred for consideration in the 2011/2012 budget for footpath repairs throughout the Botanic Gardens and a further \$100,000 in the 2012/2013 financial year for other projects*
2. *That an additional recurrent budget of \$10,000 per year specifically for tree removal and replacement be referred for consideration in the 2011/2012 financial year budget deliberations.*

In moving the recommendations, Cr. Askew emphasised the need to maintain the valuable asset that is WBG. Cr Ermacora spoke of the Guilfoyle legacy in our heritage listed Gardens and Cr Hulin congratulated the Friends on their support for the Gardens. Mayor Cr. Neoh praised the Gardens and the Friends and commented that the Gardens and their story should form part of the induction of new councillors.

The recommendations were accepted without dissent.

An access report on the Gardens attached to the main paper, spoke of the lack of toilet facilities and recommended a centrally located toilet.

The friends recognise the need for accessible toilets. The closing of Cockman Street has exacerbated the problem as visitors entering from Botanic Road have an uphill hike. However the heritage gardens must be respected and any additional toilet if ever approved, would be better placed on the Botanic Road boundary. Botanic Road currently provides the most used entrance and changes to the way in; nearest the bridge, have improved this entrance. Parking near by is very limited.



Oh the Spring time it brings on.....the children. If you have walked in the Gardens recently you will have been delighted to see lots of small children and their parents enjoying the pleasant and safe play space. One mild November morning South west TAFE students, studying Children's Services, set up a variety of learning activities for pre school children. More than 100 children and carers were occupied with creative and imaginative fun and play. Later in the month, the guiding friends enjoyed leading four prep grades from Warrnambool PS through the gardens. They were all so interested and involved.

THE CANNON IN WARRNAMBOOL BOTANIC GARDENS ONE HUNDRED YEARS FROM 1910 TO 2010

Warrnambool's Examiner newspaper reported in May 1872, that a 32pdr gun on traversing platform was on its way from Melbourne. This is probably the gun and platform that was placed in the Gardens in 1910 after the Volunteer Guard was disbanded. The carriage and platform of Burmese teak was constructed at the Royal Carriage Department of the Royal Arsenal at Woolwich U.K. in the early 1860's, with local modifications by the Volunteers after arrival.



By 1995 it was apparent that immediate conservation work was necessary.

The Friends of Warrnambool Botanic Gardens (FOWBG) were keen to be involved, but were advised the task was beyond them.

Years passed, and in 2007 a fence was erected around the cannon as it was deemed to be dangerous to children who climbed it.

The Friends wrote to WCC outlining their concern and expressing willingness to assist with restoration.

Following discussions with Neil Allen, Director City Infrastructure, a submission was made to WCC recommending that;

Council give approval to the Friends of the Warrnambool Botanic Gardens to seek funding and engage a suitably qualified trade specialist to create a replica of the existing gun carriage in the Botanic Gardens.

Council agreed to the Friends taking responsibility for the project and thanked them for their initiative. (June 2008)

The first task was to find skilled craftsmen. Discussions followed with the Warrnambool Triton Wood workers Inc. This club was established in 2000 and had about 30 members. In 2010 it operates in part of the old Fletcher Jones factory. They enthusiastically took on the project. Next we needed the materials.

Two 16 feet long by one foot square beams form the side pieces of the platform. The original were Burmese teak. Teak was out of the question, and Hopkins Bridge timber was not suitable. We were advised that Monterey Cypress was durable and available. Ray Smith had a log that was once a tree in the WBG and he cut it into the side pieces at his mill in Naringal. Ray donated much of his cost in time and transport and also made a photographic record of the process. Bill McKeller, with his mobile sawmill, was able to source and cut to size many other components of the stand, from local cypress.

Then there were the metal components.

We are fortunate to have Alderdice Brass Founders in Warrnambool. Here Jon Downing turned the pattern from plywood, formed the mould of sand and clay and poured the molten metal for the wheels that are the fore track of the carriage. As in the original, the wheels are gun metal-LG1. He generously donated them to the Friends.

Roy Slater of R.A. Slater Engineering took responsibility for the numerous rods bolts and nuts needed to hold the whole structure together. He liaised with the woodworkers adapting or creating fittings as required. Apprentice Brendan Wines undertook the skilled work needed. Keppel Prince handled the moving and lifting, while Block-n-Pave donated pavers for the stand to rest on.

The Archie and Hilda Graham Foundation made a donation of \$3000, half of our projected budget. Meanwhile the construction of the stand was under way.

The Triton Woodworkers are a remarkable group. The workshop is a place of activity, enthusiasm, creativity, skill, improvisation and fellowship. Construction of the stand presented many challenges, but with ingenuity each challenge was overcome

President, Len Byron has worked more than 150 hours on the project providing leadership and coordinating the work. He organised on site discussions with all involved, taking photographs and measurements of the old stand at Flag Staff Hill. The momentum and energy of the group is remarkable. They estimate that more than 400 hours have been worked by Len Byron, Ian McNabb, John O'Brien and Maurice Wheeler with other members contributing as needed. The large timber was cut with a chain saw and smaller sections by electric saw and bandsaw. An electric saw and router was used to round-over sharp ends and corners to make the structure child friendly. The finish for the stand – Woodshield – was provided by Hammonds.

As at 21st November the stand is complete, awaiting a coat of paint and transport back to the Gardens.

Pat Varley

SPRING GARDEN DAY

Memories of our Annual Spring Garden Day and Plant Sale fade in the distance as we wonder what ever happened to spring and will summer hit us hard.



We were fortunate to have mild weather on 19th September – one of the few Sundays in recent months when it was quite pleasant out of doors. The Gardens looked magnificent. They are a credit to the team who, despite high winds, fallen trees and marauding birds maintain a very high standard. Thanks to all who contributed to a very successful day, which showcased the Gardens and raised about \$1,500. - a similar result to last year.

A special thankyou to John Sheely for all the work he put in before the day sourcing plants, and helping all through the day, organising the sausage sizzle and providing advice and support. The Warrnambool City Band and the Pipes and Drums enhanced the spring theme. Free water melon from Materia's and activities by the Flowering Gum, organised by Donna Lumb, attracted the small children, and many parents as well.

The Friends are very grateful to the numerous organisations and individuals (listed below) who contributed to the success of the day, while the committee especially thank all members, families and friends who helped out on the day.

Ballarat Botanic Gardens
Bakers Delight
Bunnings
Banyan St. Milk Bar
Reeves Bakery
West Island Nursery
Trevor Bullen
Leigh Fary
Pearsons' Nursery

Swintons IGA
Coles Supermarket
Safeway
Midfield Meats
Warrnambool Standard
The Extra
ABC, 3YB, Community Radio
South west TAFE
John McInnes

DREAMS CAN COME TRUE

For some time the Friends had dreams of a home of their own. Secretary Mandy King believed that a meeting room and repository in the Gardens was essential for the groups continued existence. We now have that facility which we call Scoborio's shed.

Charles Scoborio was the first curator of Warrnambool Botanic Gardens. The gardens were originally located just to the west of the cemetery on a windswept hollow that resisted his best gardening efforts. He resigned. Later, after the Gardens were relocated to the present site, he resumed the role of curator. He continued until his retirement in 1905 aged 79, by which time he had served 41 years as curator. Scoborio and his wife and son lived in the curator's cottage. This heritage listed residence, built in 1870, is one of Warrnambool's oldest buildings.

There is a sandstone building at the back of the house with entry from both the back yard and the system garden/works area. The City Council has made this historic building available to *The Friends of Warrnambool Botanic Gardens* as a work space, meeting room and storage area for their collection. No doubt Scoborio worked in this area and the friends have named it Scoborio's Shed.

The shed had fallen into disrepair, with leaking spouting and peeling paint work all hidden under a rampant growth of creeper and shiny leaf. The Council undertook to make the shed weather proof. Central Rotary removed the creeper and cleared the exterior. They went on to repair the entrances, paint the interior and polish or carpet the floor.

We had our thank you to Central Rotary and Council on November 10. Rotarians, together with Cr Jacinta Ermacora, Mark Mirtchen and the Friends, enjoyed a good hour of fellowship. Pat gave a brief talk, Marigold bought some beautiful Tulip tree flowers, Billy & Judi made some savouries, the girls had some bubbles and the boys had a beer. What could have deteriorated into another derelict ruin has been restored.

Scoborio's Shed stands as a tribute to a pioneer gardener, a workstation for present day *Friends of the Gardens* and an example of what community spirit and cooperation can achieve.

BHUTAN CYPRESS

We have lost one of our beautiful Himalayan Cypresses. It would have been planted early last century and was situated next to the fernery close to the Canary Island Pine and Moreton Bay Fig. It fell down in the strong winds and storms which lashed the Western District last month, crashing down over the path and falling on the Anchor Plant. It had grown to 20 metres and it is a miracle that it did not fall over the fernery causing immeasurable damage.

Luckily we have another one in the Pinetum, equally old and tall, known for its fine trunk with red-fissured bark.



The Anchor plant is a very rare plant native to South America, dating back to von Mueller's time. It has no leaves but 'stems' which branch upwards in the shape of an anchor. It has small white flowers which are fragrant. We understand that there is a similar plant in the Geelong Botanic Gardens which suggests that they are part of experiments with acclimatization carried out by von Mueller. This valuable plant has survived thanks to the careful attention given to it by 'the team'
Marigold Curtis

**FRIENDS OF WARRNAMBOOL
BOTANIC GARDENS Inc.**

A0032902E

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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 2011

November 2011

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

DATE TO REMEMBER

Canon launch & Christmas drinks Friday 3rd Dec
5.30pm

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. We meet at the growing area at the back of the
curators cottage.

WEBSITE

We have been working on the web site. More has gone up
but as time and material become available more will appear.

*The Role of Botanic Gardens from the Past to the
Present* was the title of an interesting paper presented
by Simon Thornton-Wood, director of Science and
Learning, Royal Horticultural Society, UK at a recent
conference in Genoa.

For that paper and related items go to the following:-

<http://www.bmib.it/en/publicazioni.php>

<http://www.bmib.it/documents/72/Introduction.pdf>

Membership renewal

A friendly reminder to some

We have 115 members on our books and more when
you include family membership. We know that you all
love visiting the gardens and to hear all about their
progress through the newsletter. Membership shows
the interest that Warrnambool residence have in their
gardens and shows that the gardens are important to all
members of our community. The underlying benefit
from your membership is that it is important when we
apply for funding through grants. This is now our
biggest fundraiser. Without your show of support our
gardens would not be what they are today. It would be
hard to convince the government and other benefactors
to give us funding without your show of support.

The committee work hard and find solace in the
membership knowing that many people are interested
in their efforts.

This is the crunch, out of our 115 members 24 have
been nonfinancial for the past two years and 65 didn't
pay this year. I know from experience it is difficult to
remember to pay memberships especially now that we
hardly use a cheque book anymore.

There will be a reminder along with this newsletter for
those who are nonfinancial. Thank you.