



FRIENDS OF WARRNAMBOOL BOTANIC GARDENS

A0032902E

Issue No. 61

Spring 2011

NEWSLETTER
www.wbgardens.com.au

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION AT THE ROTUNDA

2nd DECEMBER 2011
5.30pm



BOTANIC GARDENS TEAM UPDATE NOVEMBER 2011

Hard to believe but another year is almost over.

The following is a quick summation of what the team has been up to lately.

Metal edging has been installed in the final beds of the parterre garden, which has created a symmetrical pattern. Planting out of these beds will occur over the coming weeks.

Planting out of the other display beds has been undertaken.

Drainage works around the rotunda lawn have been recently completed. These works have allowed the grass verge to be taken back to road level and a drainage pit installed to capture surface water from the path network. Water from this pit is then redirected towards the 'Money' tree.

Removal of the bamboo in front of the men's toilet has been completed. The bamboo will be replaced with another display bed similar to the one that has established nicely in front of the ladies toilet.

Mulching around trees continues with the job made slightly easier with the purchase by WCC of a small tractor/loader for use within WBG.

A *Pinus torreyana* (Soledad Pine) has been donated by Bendigo BG for planting within the Pinetum. This tree is a great looking specimen and will be a fine replacement for our own Soledad Pine that is aging.

The Mexican Hand Tree (*Chiranthodendron pentadactylon*) located within bed 10 is currently flowering.

These unusual red flowers are worth a look and this may be the first time this tree has flowered within WBG.



Hoping to catch up with members at the FOWBG Christmas drinks.

John, Ros and Mark

Vale Isobel

Isobel Jones, founding secretary and life member of 'The Friends of Warrnambool Botanic Gardens', died on 27th September 2011. Isobel was a dedicated gardener and had a passionate involvement in all activities of 'The Friends'. She was active in the establishment of the FOWBG, a member of the initial committee and continued as a committee member until her death. She established the Guiding Friends group and researched and recorded the story of many of our trees and shrubs as well as the structures that define our Gardens. Her wise counsel and steady support over twenty two years as a committee member was invaluable.

Ellen Dwyer, our founding president, spoke at the funeral service on behalf of The Friends. After the service Isobel's family and friends gathered in the Botanic Gardens to celebrate her life and her love of the Gardens. She will be missed by us all.

Thankyou

Our native garden under the skeleton of the old Manna Gum *Eucalyptus viminalis* has been rejuvenated thanks to the generous contributions of The Society for Growing Australian Plants and Codrington Nursery. Thank you to Kevin Sparrow and to Ewan Roberts for donating the plants.

The Lone Pine *Pinus brutia* and the Soledad Pine *Pinus torreyana*, are our only trees on the Register of Significant Trees of Victoria. The Soledad Pine is huge and was recognised as one of the largest in the state. It is also showing its age. Our curator has acquired a fine specimen, already close to a metre in height, the gift of Bendigo Botanic Gardens. We are delighted with this rare gift.

Guided tours or rustic ramblings.

The Guiding Friends continue to be available for tours on the first and fourth Sunday of the month. They meet at the 'Main Gate' which since the closure of Cockman Street and lack of signage has caused some confusion. The seemingly simple provision of suitable signs has been a frustratingly slow process.

Consider the report to Council from The Friends, Sept 8 1998

The highway signs showing the way to the gardens need improving as they (the gardens) are hard to find

Interpretation board quotes have been received by Council – awaiting decision.

The guides have also enjoyed working with junior grades from Merrivale Primary School and the 'Preps from Jamo', Warrnambool Primary School among others. These visits have become annual events. Again this year, an enthusiastic group of preschool children enjoyed activities planned and delivered by students studying Children's Services at TAFE. A Probus Group and the Committee of the Friends were also treated to a walk and talk, so the guides cater for all levels of interest.



WATER, WELLS AND WINDMILLS IN WARRNAMBOOL.

The provision of Warrnambool's water, from first settlement to the present, is an intriguing story. The early settlers depended on rain water, stored in tanks. Later springs below the cutting near Pertobe Road and west of the bridge leading to the golf links, augmented the tank water. Additional water was obtained from wells, of which there were a hundred or more in the town. Few wells remain today and the wind mills used to raise water are fading from memory

From 1893 to 1939 Warrnambool's water was supplied from the Merri River. A pumping station raised water from the settling ponds on the river bank, (later the old WMCA stadium) to a reservoir and water tower on the Liebig Street Hill. When in 1902 the Merri River was deepened by 2 feet from Levy's Point to the woollen mills, a weir had to be built to raise the water level and fill the settling ponds.

In 1939 Warrnambool was connected to the Otways water supply, which was supplemented by numerous bores.* A bore was sunk in the Gardens in 1961.

The Warrnambool Botanic Gardens were originally watered from a well in the grounds. The well is still there and the Friends would like to reinstate it, complete with windmill as part of the story of water and its source over the last 150 years.

Wells

Thanks to Henry Worland¹ we have a wealth of information on Warrnambool's early water supply - from the springs in Grumbling Gully to the hundred or more wells he estimates were sunk in the town

The sinking of a well was a work of art – they had to be excavated by expert workmen. The wells were circular in shape, say 5 to 6 feet across and some would reach nearly 100 feet in depth. The water was raised to the surface with a windlass, worked by a handle – a length of stout rope with a large iron bucket brought up the water. Even when the water was raised to the surface it was no easy matter to lift the heavy bucket to the side of the well. To do this it was necessary to step on to the wooden staging above the well, which was somewhat dangerous.

He went on to relate the sad story of a mother drawing water from a well in Henna Street where Ellerslie Grove is now. The staging collapsed and she fell 70feet to her death.

Another story relates to a well at the stables of the Western Hotel at the corner of Timor and Kepler Street.

On one occasion the horses of Cobb & Co Coaches refused to drink the water from this well – and on investigation a dead man was found in the well – his name was Moses too – no bullrushes to keep him afloat.

And thanks to the archives of the Corangamite Regional Library, Warrnambool, we have the original specification for the sinking of the well in the Botanic Gardens

Headed:

'Borough of Warrnambool'

'Specification of work to be executed in sinking a well at the Botanic gardens', dated 9th December 1881 and signed by A Kerr Borough Surveyor.

The past really comes alive when you touch the paper and read the handwriting of our renowned town surveyor.

The specification, extracts of which follow, is very detailed

*The well to be sunk where the Town Surveyor shall direct a little westerly of the Curator's Cottage
The well shall be four feet in diameter to be sunk perfectly perpendicular and to a depth of four feet below the level of the water.....*

The wall to be built with sandstone where required ...to be all through stone neatly and carefully jointed and the whole to be bedded and jointed in mortar.

A platform to be constructed at the bottom of the well 4 feet above the level of the water,.....

Contractors shall tender for the work specified at per foot in depth...

The whole of the work to be completed in one month from the date of acceptance of tender.²

So we can confidently claim the well in the Gardens dates from 1882. We hope that our application to Heritage Victoria for a grant to conserve and display the well will be successful, and as speedy as the sinking of the well.

Windmills

We sent out a call for information on windmills. All we had was an indistinct photograph of the wind mill over the well in the 1880s. We thought it may have been made by John Esam, as Henry Worland noted that the windmill erected on Cannon Hill by the Council, around the same time, was made by local manufacturer J. Esam.

The Morawa Museum in Western Australia sent copies of advertisements for “Windmills to Perfection” made by J. Esam of Koroit Street. They also sent a photograph of the Lyndoch mill taken about 1920 and thought to be an Esam mill. This was contradicted by a photograph of the mill in The Argus 5 April 1924 with the caption;



Of different type from the usual galvanised iron mill is this old Dutch windmill which, after many years work still operates at a Warrnambool homestead. The miniature revolving wings acts as a rudder.

The Argus 30 March 1937 reported the demolition of;
The old Dutch mill which was brought from England more than 60 years ago...

The Lyndoch mill stood at the corner of Marfell Road and pumped water to a circular reservoir up the hill on what is now 15 Omega Crescent. The reservoir about 60 feet diameter, was made of red wood planks, wired together and coated with tar. The base was concrete – a solid 12 inches of aggregate. A 1½ pipe ran into the reservoir and the outlet was a 2 inch pipe.³

Another well remembered mill, pumped salt water from Lady Bay to the public baths located next to Mozart Hall. Its solid wooden frame can be seen in an 1894 photograph of the wreck of the Freetrader. It was later replaced by a gas powered pump and a new pipeline.



South-west Victoria was known for the manufacture of windmills in the late nineteenth century. James Alston, John Esam, John Morieson, Bruce and McClure were successful windmill makers

From further afield we heard of restorations at “Rippon Lea” and “Werribee Park”, in Victoria and

in NSW and Queensland. We discovered the “Wind mill Journal of Australia and New Zealand”.

We became familiar with terms like hubs and shafts and turntables, and the mortices and tenons of the stands.

Then we struck gold: an original hand written report to the Warrnambool Town Council from the Town Surveyors Office on the wind mill and pump in the Botanic Gardens. Unsigned and undated it read, in part;

I found both the windmill and the pump in good working order, and the tanks were in about two feet six inches of being full of water. At the time of my visit it was blowing a very moderate breeze from the south.

No doubt the windmill would act very much better if the stand was from ten to fifteen feet higher, but to make any alteration now would necessitate a new stand which I am not prepared to recommend.

There were also specifications for the wind mill and pump at Cannon Hill. We have not found the specification for the windmill stand and pump in the Gardens. There may not have been one. It is possible that they were the same as Cannon Hill.

Returning to Henry Worland's talks he said;

*In 1880 the Council put in Warrnambool's first Water Supply scheme. They had a well 80 feet deep excavated on Cannon Hill one of Esams Windmills was placed over the well to lift the water into a small surface reservoir beside the wella pipeline was taken from the Reservoir to the corner of Timor and Liebeg Streets, where a stand pipe was erected for the purpose of filling the water carts etc. This scheme cost the Council some 500 pound. **About the same time the Council had similar water supplies installed at Albert Park, the Botanical Gardens and the Cattle Markets.***

Cannon Hill

Tenders were called in 1880 for a windmill and force pump for Cannon Hill. The specification is quite detailed. It calls for 'a No 4 Brass double action Douglas force pump and windmill to be erected *sufficient with moderate breeze....to work the force pump described and to pump water to a height of 85 feet.*

There is a separate tender for the windmill frame. Again this is specified in great detail which a few extracts will demonstrate.

Mason Work

The red gum sills of the frame to be supported on sandstone walls 18 inches in thickness of the depths figured on plan.

Wood Work

The frame to be constructed of sound oregon (sic) timber free from large knots from cracks and other imperfections. The sills to be red gum 12" X 6" by 20 feet in length half checked. And each sill to be bolted with two 7/8" bolts to two pieces of bluestone one piece at each end of the sill, the upright posts to be 8 inches square at the lower end...6 inches square at the top to be tenoned with the sills at the bottom and firmly secured thereto with two angle irons made out of 3" X 1/2" iron by 3 feet...

A platform to be constructed at the level shown upon sketch of 4" x 4" H.W. bolted to the posts with 5/8" bolts and covered over with 3" X 2" quartering

.... the upper portion of the frame above the stage to be also provided with steps made of 3" X 1.5" properly secured to the corner posts with two 3" nails to each end and supported on a small cleat made out the same size scantling –

Do let us know if you have any leads on items such as the 'No4 brass double action Douglas force pump' – the contractor undertook to supply that and the windmill (not the stand) for £108-13-3. The tender for the stand was £54-0-0.

We have gathered a wealth of information and we will continue our quest, still tilting at windmills.

*A history of Warrnambool's water supply can be found in *From Merri to the Gellibrand*, MJ. & D.S. Johnstone 1993

¹ Henri Worland Talks

3YB, Water Supply. 13th July 1947.

² Thanks to Elizabeth O'Callaghan for bringing these files to our attention

³ Thanks to Bob Walder for this information on the reservoir

A COMPETITION FOR EVERYONE - LETS PROMOTE OUR GARDENS

GARDENS IN FOCUS - PHOTOGRAPH COMPETITION

This fabulous competition offers a **HUGE \$10,000** in cash prizes and is open to **everyone who visits or works in a botanic garden** anywhere in the world.

Closing date is 10th December 2011.

We are also looking to find "[Australia's most treasured botanic garden](#)". The garden that receives the most entries will receive recognition from Gardens in Focus as the Most Treasured botanic garden in Australia. This garden will receive a handsome certificate from Gardens in Focus and acclaim on the Gardens in Focus website. A vote is automatically registered each time a photograph is uploaded to the competition and the winning garden will be notified during January 2012.

GIF all about supporting and celebrating our botanic gardens using photography to capture what makes it special.

I have attached some flyers to help you publicise this event and full information is on the website, www.gardensinfoocus.com.au. I hope that by helping us publicise this competition your garden will become GIF's most treasured botanic garden in Australia and receive public recognition.

Please don't hesitate to reply to this email if you'd like more information.

Kind regards

Pam Milthorpe

Curator

[Gardens in Focus photography competition](#)



**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 2012

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

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION AT THE ROTUNDA

2nd DECEMBER 2011

5.30pm

At the Rotunda

CURATOR'S MORNING

The next Curator's morning will be held on
Wednesday December 7th in Scoborio's Shed at
11.00am. We urge members to come to these informal
mornings where current topics of interest to garden
lovers are discussed. For details contact Billie Rowley
or any member of the committee.

WEBSITE

The Association of Friends of Botanic Garden web site.
www.friendsbotanicgardens.org

The Weeds Society of Victoria is convening a major weed
conference next year and advise that abstracts are due at the
end of this month.

The Weed's News email digest for November 11, 2011
through to November 18, 2011. [The Weed's News](#)

COMING EVENTS

Deakin Summer Series at Flagstaff hill
Garden walks. To be confirmed

Sat 7th Jan 2.00pm
Sun 8th Jan 10.00am

Sat 14th Jan 10.00 am
Sun 15th Jan 2.00 pm

Western Regional Garden Clubs Conference
Casterton March 17th 2012

Mangroves, Myalls and More
Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens Conference
August 17th and 18th 2012
Port Augusta.

The Friends have been asked to be involved in the
Heritage Festival, April 21 to May 20 2012. This will
be an opportunity to highlight our work on the well and
windmill. More information in our next newsletter