



# FRIENDS OF WARRNAMBOOL BOTANIC GARDENS

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

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## CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION AT THE ROTUNDA

**6<sup>th</sup> DECEMBER 2012**

**5.30pm**

The Committee  
invite all  
Members and Friends  
of the Botanic Gardens  
to attend our  
annual break up

We look forward to seeing you at the Rotunda

To assist with catering please phone Mandy King 55620343  
or email [friends@wbgardens.com.au](mailto:friends@wbgardens.com.au)



## MILK BOTTLE MEMORIES

The bell rings through the classrooms at Jamieson St State School. It's a sunny day and Mum's picking us up for afternoon tea at the Warrnambool Botanic Gardens. That means milk bottles and tadpoles. It's 1966, and sunshine, milk bottles and tadpoles are the highlight of this six-year-old's week.

We ate beside the lake. Did we throw crusts to the ducks? I can't recall. Were there even any ducks on the scene? Or would they have eaten the gelatinous clouds of frogs' eggs on the pond? Regardless, birdlife couldn't have competed with the lure of tadpoles.

No doubt dairy companies had no idea of the cultural change the move to cardboard and plastic wrought at the gardens. No more milk bottles. No more perfect catch-and-keep containers for tadpoles. What are today's six-year-olds to do at the lake? Feed the ducks of course, who are no doubt growing fat on the eggs that would have hatched into my tadpoles.

What else did the gardens of the 1960s offer a primary-schooler? Much the same as today, I imagine. And imagination was and is the key. We were pirates on the high seas as we straddled the cannon, searching for treasures and lost lands. And the Lawson cypress trees sweeping their skirts to the ground formed fairylands where we hid with the elves and pixies.



Princesses paraded through the cypress arch, and small children lay on their backs on the grass, marvelling at the soaring height of the trees and the unfathomable size of the world. And of course there were the trolls lurking under the stone bridge over the lake as we trip-trapped back and forth. And then it was time to live happily ever after – or at least go home for dinner.

Almost a decade later, the gardens pond offered a prize far greater than tadpoles. Workmen were draining the lake for maintenance, and my mate Sue and I were horrified by the sight of hundreds of pan-sized fish flopping in the mud. So we did what any pair of compassionate teenage girls would do. We rescued them. Dozens of them. Sue's house was nearby, and we trekked load after load of fish, and a heck of a lot of mud, up the hill in buckets.

Oddly, I can't recall how Susan's father reacted when he found his bathtub full of fish. Nor what eventually happened to them. But I'm pretty sure there was no happily-ever-after ending to that tale.

Carolyn Varley

## JAMIESON ST PREPS VISIT THE WBG



There is always plenty to do in a garden in Spring, as three groups of Jamieson Street preparatory grade children discovered during their visit in late October.

The students spent a morning in the Botanic Gardens engaging in a range of activities, including a guided tour, structured 'seek and find' activities and art. On arrival, many of the children expressed dismay that their favourite 'wishing tree' had disappeared since a previous visit, however they soon found that the cypress arch at the entrance to the pinetum was a suitable substitute for the one which had previously stood near the cottage.

The kids did not reveal what they wished for as they passed through the tree. The Friends of the Gardens would wish that they return often to the Gardens in future years.

*Janet Macdonald*

### CAPTURING FLORA - 300 YEARS OF AUSTRALIAN BOTANICAL ART.

The Art Gallery of Ballarat has brought together more than 350 images of botanical art dating from 1699 to 2012 in this remarkable exhibition. It begins with specimens collected by William Dampier, and includes the works of Ferdinand Bauer, who travelled with Matthew Flinders, and of Daniel Solander, who travelled with Joseph Banks and James Cook. It brings together the studies of botany and of art. The exhibition closes on 2 December.

The Friends visited the Ballarat Gallery and the Lambley Nursery on Thursday 1 November. A comfortable bus, morning, tea, lunch and a floor talk at the gallery plus the delightful Lambley Nursery tour provided a great day for the 45 members and friends who took part. Thanks to Laurel Myers for her organisation and enthusiasm.

## OPEN GARDENS AUSTRALIA.

As part of a tour of gardens of the south west, a group of 43 members of Open Gardens Australia visited WBG at 5.30 on 14 November. Their tour left Melbourne on 13 November and they visited Titanga and Poligolet on their way to Warrnambool. On the following day, they visited Dalvui, Boortkoi and Goodwood, returning to Warrnambool Botanic Gardens to have an evening tour and refreshments provided by Tasty Plate. They travelled back to Melbourne through Allansford and the Quarry Garden then on through Gnotuk and Meekri.

Pat Varley and John Sheely spoke briefly on the gardens' past and future. Members of the group commented very positively on our garden and regretted they did not have more time to spend there.



**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

Please note: If you would like to have your  
Newsletter sent by email please send an  
email to [friends@wbgardens.com.au](mailto:friends@wbgardens.com.au) and we  
will put you on the email list

**GIFT SUGGESTION**

Did your family play under the branches of the Lawson  
Cypress near the cannon? The trees died, but their  
memory lives on in a collection of delightful pens turned  
from its wood. They make light and portable gifts for  
Australia and overseas. \$20 each. Phone 5562 4800 or  
5562 0343.

**INTERNET**

We now have a face book identity. The garden staff are  
uploading photos and giving updates on what is going  
on in the gardens. If you are on facebook add us as a  
'friend' or 'like' the page.

<http://www.facebook.com/WarrnamboolBotanicGardens?ref=stream>

**BOOKING AN EVENT IN THE GARDENS**

Remember to have an event in the Gardens, for  
example a wedding. Please go to your web site to get  
information and download the application form. You  
are also able to book through the council if you are not  
'on line'

**COMING EVENTS**

**Morning in the Gardens**

First Wednesday of the Month 11am

At our last meeting we had a member from the  
Warrnambool Community Garden it was fascinating  
and inspiring hearing the work that is going into this  
garden. These get together's are small but oh so  
interesting, I hope you could all come to our next  
meeting that will be 6th February 2013

**Membership payment**

If you did not pay your membership before or at the  
AGM we would be pleased if you could do that now.

We now offer Direct Payment for your membership,  
please see your membership renewal form for details.

**CHRISTMAS GET TOGETHER**

Due to the Telstra fire Christmas in the gardens was  
cancelled this year, but we intend to make it up to you  
with a get together early in the new year.

Thank you all from the committee for your ongoing  
support and may you have a safe and happy new year.