



FRIENDS OF WARRNAMBOOL BOTANIC GARDENS

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Maintaining and developing Warrnambool Botanic Gardens as an outstanding Guilfoyle garden

NEWSLETTER

Issue Number 83

October 2017

HELLO FRIENDS

This Newsletter comes to you much later than we would like. We could plead absences and illness, but really I think the reason is mental and physical exhaustion after a very hectic and successful year celebrating our 150th anniversary.

This issue includes the annual report presented at our AGM in July. Our guest speaker, Justin Buckley, manager of horticulture for the National Trust gave an engaging presentation, while Curator John Sheely's illustrated talk highlighted developments in the Gardens over the last twelve months. We had a great attendance of more than 50 members and guests. All office bearers were returned for another year. The Hammond Centre was an excellent venue, made available to us without charge, for which we are most grateful. Thanks too, to Cr Robert Anderson, who took the chair for the installation of office bearers and spoke warmly of his affection for the Gardens. Robert is the grandson of a former Curator

William Donald.

As some of our long standing members retire and move away our membership is falling. This month we are making a concerted effort to attract new members. If each of our members recruited one new member our numbers would rocket.

We believe we are a worthy organisation, and numbers are important. They strengthen our cause in applying for grants or lobbying for services. We were successful in gaining a grant of \$3,000 from the Community Development Fund toward the provision of seating and a picnic platform by the well, and we anticipate our application for support from the Stronger Communities Fund administered by member for Wannon, Dan Tehan, will be successful.



While progress with the well project is slow, we are concentrating on a first class result. Lighting down the well has been installed. This is designed to be interactive

and activated by viewers and should be a big attraction.

Requests for guided tours continue at a steady rate from bus groups and schools. Individuals can make a time that suits them and our guides will do their best to meet their needs.

Well as Christmas stampedes toward us, we are planning our end of year function – see details elsewhere in this newsletter.

We look forward to meeting with you then and hopefully with a newly enlisted 'friend'.

Pat Varley President

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Presented at AGM

The past year was a very busy one as we continued to celebrate the 150 years through which the Gardens, our growing legacy, have provided a place of peace and pleasure to our community.

Last year's very successful 'Night in the Gardens' and the photographic competition 'A Guilfoyle Garden: Guests and Greenery', were followed by a 'Family Fun Day' in November, involving many local organisations. There was a good attendance despite an unseasonably wet and cold day. Music, fine food, plant and produce stalls, competitions and scavenger hunts were enjoyed. Picnics on the lawns were not.

The tall palms dressed in brightly coloured yarn, Truffula trees, the inspiration of Janet Macdonald, were a great attraction. The initiative, planning and energetic involvement of Committee 150 made a memorable year possible and we thank them all for their hard work and enthusiasm.

As part of the celebrations, the Newsletter, over three issues, published a history of the Gardens, and the Friends ran four seminars for U3A – the University of the Third Age.

This year as in the past the Friends have had a close association with Warrnambool Art Gallery and joined them in commissioning Natasha Bieniek's miniature masterpiece – the Gardens.

We also commissioned work on the Lone Pine from

noted botanical artist Ruth Walter. Warrnambool and District Artists' Society made the Gardens the subject for an exhibition which produced some great work and we appreciate their interest.

For some years now the Friends have been agitating for an updated masterplan, so we were pleased when in June 2017 the City Council adopted a plan to guide the development of the Gardens for the next 15 years. There was ample opportunity for the Friends and the wider community to have input to the plan. Thank you to Lisa McLeod for facilitating the process. The plan recognises that;

As the Botanic Gardens are an important element of Warrnambool's living heritage, they should be celebrated and valued during the next century as they have been in the past 150 years.

We were delighted that high in the recommendations was the construction of a new toilet block, better access by improving pathways and an upgrade and extension of an automated irrigation system.

There was also a recommendation to provide better signage to link the Gardens to Swan Reserve. We work closely with the Friends of Swan Reserve where the native plant collection complements that of the Gardens. In August, together with the Australian Plant Society, we hosted a talk on Guilfoyle and the RMBG by Lynsey Poore, a volunteer guide at those gardens.

The Guiding Friends enjoy guiding school groups, local clubs and individuals on request and they have met increasing inquiries from bus tours, many from tour groups outside Warrnambool, for garden walks and talks. They also participate in the Australia day celebrations.

I hope you have visited our webpage, wbgardens.com.au, but if you have, this whole report is unnecessary. You can find the history of the Gardens, our past newsletters, recent events, the complete masterplan and a lot more. Our secretary Mandy King does a wonderful job in keeping this current. Similarly on Facebook you can enjoy some fantastic photos of the Gardens, many taken by John Sheely and the team. They display the diversity and the beauty of the collection.

Back in 2009 the Friends resolved, that as an extension of the water wise garden the old well should again be made accessible to the public. It seemed a simple enough proposal then, but in retrospect the well, depending on your perspective, has proved to be a mountain too high or a bottomless pit.

In 2011, Heritage Victoria some 15 months after our application, approved the removal of the shed covering the well, but declined our application for funding. Then a generous donation from the David and Isobel Jones Family Trust enabled us to engage an architect who succeeded in getting approval from Heritage Victoria by March 2016 to proceed with the first stage of the restoration. We had hopes of completing the project as part of the 150th year celebrations. This did not happen, and work continues. Did I mention that the original well was sunk to a depth of 50 feet and completed in one month?

There are so many people to thank this year. First and foremost is our Curator John Sheely and the Team who keep the Gardens looking great, who welcome visitors and who work cooperatively with the Friends. We welcome the support of Warrnambool City Council and we value the access we have to the media. Our anniversary celebrations were made possible by the work of Committee 150 and sponsorship by local organisations. My special thanks go to the Committee and particularly our executive, Mandy King, Janet Macdonald and Fiona Rule.

Pat Varley President 2017

Dr Isabella Younger Ross Gardener and infant welfare pioneer

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the first voluntary infant welfare centres in Victoria at Richmond and Carlton. The following year 1918, the Victorian Baby Health Centres Association was formed. One of the most influential figures in the field of child health was Dr Isabel Younger Ross. Her medical expertise, enthusiasm and financial resources provided the foundation for the baby health clinics.

In the early nineteen hundreds many babies died before they were a year old. Disease, poverty, impure water, bad hygiene and poor nutrition all contributed. In 1915, infant mortality was recorded as 79 out of every thousand babies born. By 1956 there were Baby Health Centres throughout the State. The mortality rate had fallen to 18 per thousand. Today it is less than four.



Isabella Younger (1887-1956) known as Isie, was the eldest daughter of John and Henrietta Younger. John was a prominent Warrnambool citizen, Mayor and director of Warrnambool Woollen Mills. His extensive

department store on the west side of Liebig Street was a prominent land mark. Today the Coles-Younger car park at the rear of those premises continues the Younger name.

Isie was born in Warrnambool and went to Hohenlohe College, at one time in Tay House, Henna Street Warrnambool. From there she attended Melbourne University and the University of Glasgow where she completed her medical degree. She was passionate about the well being of mothers and children.

She was committed to the natural way of life and promoted breast feeding and the value of healthy, home grown food. She enjoyed gardening and convened the garden circle of the Lyceum Club of which she was President 1938-40. She was also vice-president of the Compost Society. This suggests a keen interest in growing plants at a practical level. Her country home in the Dandenongs was noted for its beautiful garden. She had links to Mt Evelyn and

was a friend of the artist Ernest Buckmaster. She had several of his works in her collection. She was also a friend of E.E.Lord one time curator of Melbourne Parks and Gardens and author of *Shrubs and Trees for Australian Gardens* (1948) of which he gave her an autographed copy.

The extended Younger family seem to have shared an enthusiasm for horticulture. Isabel's niece Mab Younger studied at Burnley Horticultural College and became a gardening writer, editing *Your Garden* magazine, and was the author of two gardening books.*

Another niece Marigold Curtis tends her lovely garden at Cudgee near Warrnambool.



Marigold is a life member of the Friends of Warrnambool Botanic Gardens. She joined in 1990 and as a committee member she has made a huge contribution. She took on the editing of the Newsletter in 1992 and for over sixty editions oversaw its production on her type writer, and its delivery by post. Times change and today most members choose email.

She was a 'guiding friend' for many years, and delighted in sharing her enthusiasm for the Gardens. As we walk the Gardens today we can enjoy many of the plants she donated. Marigold continues as a member, but recently retired from the Committee. Her memories go back a long way. She recalls her grandfather Mayor John Younger, father of Isie, speaking from the platform of the Rotunda in the Gardens, and being drowned out by kookaburras. Sadly neither kookaburras nor speakers platform are present today.

Dr Isabella Younger Ross was awarded the O.B.E.in1938. She died in 1956.

**Things Past.* Newsletter of Mt Evelyn History Group Inc. Aug. 2016

A more detailed account of the life and work of Dr. Isabella Younger Ross will be available in a soon to be published book "Silent Lives" by Elizabeth O'Callaghan. This covers the lives of many women who made significant contributions to the early life of Warrnambool and district but received little recognition. *Pat Varley*

Street Trees in Warrnambool

Our last newsletter ran an article on some of the trees that line our streets. Since then more information has come to hand on the palm trees in Timor Street West. These were planted on the recommendation of Curator William Donald in 1930.

The following is an extract from the Curator's Report Book, July 1930.

Palms in south side Timor Street West from Ryot Street to showgrounds.

This embankment is most suitable in every way for this kind of street decoration. From Ryot Street to showgrounds will require 18 palms. I have these in stock. Cost of this work approx 23 pounds

A note and sketch in the margin illustrates a roughly triangular enclosure.

Three triangular enclosures are proposed; at the corner with Timor and Redford St. - Timor and Hopetoun St. - Merri and Hopetoun St. Hopetoun Street is now Hart Street.

Mr Knee is giving the cost of fencing and water piping with fixed sprays. I would estimate the filling up of these enclosures with soil to cost 11 pounds each.

While there was definitely a triangular enclosure with a solid metal pipe surrounding it at the Timor Street and Hart Street intersection it would seem that the other two were not constructed. Instead a second enclosure was planted at the Timor Street and Hider Street intersection. It was removed sometime before 1960 while the remaining enclosure with its palm tree was removed about 1968 reportedly because it was unsafe (it took a big effort to uproot it. ed.) and to facilitate road works.

(Thanks to Joan Astbury for her memories of the trees her grandfather planted.)

Honouring Scoborio

Pioneers Honour Board
HeritageWorks - 2 Gilles St Warrnambool

Click [here](#) for more information

Our legendary curator Charles Scoborio is one of the 204 images of early Warrnambool pioneers that appear on the impressive Pioneers Board housed in Heritage Works in Gilles Street. This significant record of our pioneers is about to be restored. To assist in meeting the cost people are invited to adopt a pioneer and donate to the restoration. The Friends have enthusiastically adopted Charles Scoborio, curator from 1859 to 1905, with only a short break in

service. For the story of his life refer to our web site www.wbgardens.com.au and for more information on the Pioneers Board www.warrnamboolhistory.org.au



FRIENDS OF WARRNAMBOOL

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If you would like to contribute to our publication please forward material to the above address.

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Bank details: BSB: 083.957 Acc No 048342632
Please include identification to enable receipt to be recorded

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

Response to report of vandalism in the gardens

I was dismayed to read recently of damage to the historic bridge in the WBG I regard the gardens as one of the gems of Warrnambool and I always visit this historic and beautiful area when in the City

Thank you for your commitment and that of the committee, and all those who work to maintain this special site. It is a pleasure to enclose a cheque for \$100 to support the work of the Friends Warrnambool Standard

CHRISTMAS IN THE GARDENS

Please put this date in your diary
It is a busy time of year so don't
double book

November 30th - 5pm
at the Rotunda

INVITATION

Members of Champas Inc, a Colac based home & garden appreciation society will be visiting Warrnambool Botanic Gardens on the afternoon of **Saturday 28 October**. They are also planning to visit the **Quarry Garden at Hopkins Point**, and have extended an invitation to any Friends of WBG who might like to join them at 10am for a guided tour of the Quarry Garden. The cost of entry and guided tour by host Paul Ryan, is \$10. Friends are also invited to bring lunch and stay for a picnic if they would like to. Please call Janet (0409 624059) if you would like to accept this invitation to visit the Quarry garden.

WBG MASTER PLAN 2017

Click here to read or download the
[Warrnambool Botanic Masterplan](#)

MEMBERSHIP PAYMENT 2017-18

[CLICK HERE](#)

Membership was due for payment by our AGM .

For those that are financial members THANK YOU.

For those that are yet to pay a reminder has been sent with this newsletter.

As you have read through the newsletter this is a membership drive year. We are hoping that each member will invite one person to join

GUIDED TOURS

To organise a tour please contact a committee member or email friendswb@gmail.com

International Dendrology Society

On Saturday 21 October Friends of Warrnambool Botanic Gardens will host a visiting tour group of 45 members of the [International Dendrology Society](#), who are visiting the region this week.