



### Spring 2015



#### President's Annual Report

It was with some trepidation I followed Leigh Coggins as President in November 2014. However, the Friends have a wonderful supportive Committee and I thank each one of them for their contribution. We particularly thank Jim Sinatra for offering his wisdom as our patron.

The Southern Grampians Shire Council passed the **Master Plan** by Laidlaw&Laidlaw for the Hamilton Botanic Gardens in May this year. I wish to acknowledge the wonderful contribution of Andrew Laidlaw, Andrea Proctor and Sarah Laidlaw in producing the Plan and for their ongoing help. Thank you to Leigh Coggins, Midge Gough and Jane Heazlewood, who have volunteered much time and thought with their work as members of the project control group for the Master Plan, as have Brett Holmes and the team from Council staff. I commend the Council for the foresight in commissioning the Master Plan to ensure such an important part of Hamilton's heritage has a secure future. The project control group for the Botanic Gardens' Master Plan continues to meet monthly. We look forward to implementation of the urgent short term projects such as tree assessment and replacement strategies and a feature survey, but of course we are all excited by the bigger projects that are in the Plan. The end goal is to preserve and enhance the Gardens within the financial means at our disposal.

The Friends continue to fundraise with the **Film and Lunch** earlier in the year and the **Raffle and Open Garden Day at Dunroe** in October. Thank you to Leigh and Geoff Coggins for their generosity in opening their garden and to others who have donated generously.

Donors have played a strong part in the history of the Gardens and we hope this may continue. It is anticipated the funds raised by the Friends could contribute to the smaller projects in the Master Plan.

Those of you who heard Andrew Laidlaw speaking at Sheepvention will recall his referral to mass and void. This is very much a feature of Guilfoyle's landscaping and we are very fortunate it is such a feature in our Gardens. The beautiful old trees are also such a feature and their future needs to be of high priority.

Our **Sheepvention** display in the Home Paddock was a good opportunity to display the Master Plan and promote the Gardens to the public. The Friends appreciate the assistance of the P & A Society and Topsy Baulch.

The Botanic Gardens head gardener, Frank Verschuren, commenced in February this year. Frank and his 3<sup>rd</sup> year apprentice, Liam, have been enthusiastically caring for the Gardens. It is such a pleasure to walk around the Gardens and appreciate their efforts. Frank is attending a BGANZ master plan and implementation conference in September in Melbourne and this will be of great benefit. During the year, Neil Trotman came back to help Frank and Friends to continue adding identification name plates to trees. This project is continuing. Thank you Frank and your team for all your assistance and reports during the year. We are looking forward to the implementation and revival of the Garden beds in the future.

**TAFE horticultural study group** and the **Botanic Artists Group** continue to meet monthly in the Cottage. The TAFE study group is implementing a temporary new garden at the Kennedy/French Streets corner to study the suitability of plants for that environment.

Botanic Gardens tours and talks have increased. Leigh Coggins is attending a Botanic Gardens tour guiding conference in Sydney in September and we look forward to her return and report. During the year we also held an information session in the Cottage for anyone interested to learn and discuss the Master Plan.

The newsletter produced by Helen Christie, who is also treasurer, is now being emailed or sent to members, and is a wonderful opportunity to inform the community of progress in the Gardens. Thanks Helen for your financial and editorial contributions.



The **CWA glasshouse** erected in 1934 and under heritage overlay has had plants reinstated and is in the early stages of re-development, thanks mainly to Mary Dyer and Jinny Frayne. They and the committee have also managed the potting up of new cuttings for our forthcoming stall at Dunroe, and the maintenance of the Cottage garden. The help from members not on the committee has also been greatly appreciated in caring for the Cottage garden.

Thank you Topsy Baulch, Jill Aitken, Mary Dyer and the team for your catering throughout the year and thank you to Heather Heard and Jacqui Sharrad for your cottage interior decoration and housekeeping.

Lastly, thank you to Jill Smith for also helping as minute secretary and to Robyn Linke for attention to the many and varied duties as secretary. Robyn and Topsy have been great new additions to the committee.

Mary and Jane have offered to continue the scrap book, instigated by Mrs. Nancy Macdonald, a past life member of the Friends. This is such a valuable history. We miss Nancy and Lynn Stewart both having been valuable members of the Committee, and also another life member, Mrs. Sue Whiting, who died during the year.

We welcome Wyn Ingham and Nanette Templeton to the Committee. Thank you to Jacqui Sharrad, who is retiring, for your contribution to the Committee in many areas and especially where children were concerned. Members are always welcome at any working bees and we appreciate your membership support over the year.

Jacqui Bagnall, President



## Committee 2015

President	Jacqui Bagnall
Vice President	Leigh Coggins
Secretary	Robyn Linke
Treasurer	Helen Christie (& Newsletter Editor)
Committee	Jill Aitken, Topsy Baulch, Mary Dyer, Virginia Frayne, Midge Gough, Heather Heard, Jane Heazlewood, Wyn Ingham, Jill Smith, and Nanette Templeton



## Healing, Memories and Connectivity

Jim Sinatra, our Patron arrived at the Annual Meeting burdened by a large black plastic bag over his shoulder.

He has been particularly interested in the subject of the sensory and **HEALING** aspects of Gardens and initially spoke of the healing powers of gardens and particularly “green-ness” through his work with the Kyneton Hospital.

### **BUT WHAT WAS IN THE SACK?**

Answer: A large, long-limbed brown monkey of the variety ‘Soft Toy’.

Jim then spoke of the need for Gardens to encapsulate **MEMORIES**, asking who knew when the monkey’s disappeared from the Gardens and when they were introduced? No one knew for certain and this illustrated Jim’s point that memories need to be retained in some form, particularly graphically. When ideas for the

Masterplan were sought from the general public many spoke of their fond memories and delight observing the monkeys. He urged the Friends of the Gardens to collect these memories.

Jim then spoke of **CONNECTIVITY** within Gardens, ie the very 21<sup>st</sup> century use of technology to inform and connect, and he told us of the City of Melbourne initiative to give significant trees an ID, initially to get the public to respond to damage or problems with their trees by email, but finding in the process people identified personally with particular trees.

It is important to emphasise and enhance the aesthetic, historical and scientific importance of the Hamilton Botanic Gardens but just as important is this extra layer of personal memories and these are easily lost.

The Friends of the Gardens would be delighted for you to email ([lycaro@westnet.com.au](mailto:lycaro@westnet.com.au)) telephone (0488 049 837 – Helen Christie), write to PO Box 43, Hamilton or chat to one of the Committee about your memorable, personal or even humble memories of our wonderful Gardens.

Who knows the answers to Jim Sinatra’s queries about the monkeys?

Are your memories to do with celebrations such as weddings and birthdays, or a proposal?

Was it where you received or gave your first kiss?

Have the gardens given you solace during sad times?

How many kangaroos/wallabies were there?

Can you remember any peacock chicks?

Are your memories of the Gardens triggered by one particular event, or tree, or area?

My children now visit the Gardens with their children and one of their disappointments is that the cannon now has a bung, and you can no longer drop pine cones down the cannon and pretend you are blowing up marauding pirates. (Obviously used syringes were not a problem 30 years ago.)

All the Friends of the Hamilton Botanic Gardens Inc are indebted to Midge Gough for establishing and continually updating our Facebook Page. You do not need to have a Facebook profile to access this page – just type in:

<https://www.facebook.com/hamiltonbotanicgardens>



Find us on Facebook at:  
**The Friends of the Hamilton Botanic Gardens**

## Trees in the Hamilton Botanic Gardens Part 2

By Midge Gough

### Brachychiton Populneus – Kurrajong

**Name:** *Brachychiton* - from two Greek words, meaning 'short', and 'tunic', an allusion to the bristles surrounding the seed in the fruit; *populneus* - from the Latin 'poplar-like'; the leaves resemble those of *Populus* species.

**Habitat:** Valley slopes, open forests

**Season:** Summer flowering



This beautiful tree is to be found inside the French St. gate in the bed adjoining the Abutilon collection.

It is native to eastern Australia where it grows from northern Victoria to Townsville and is a very valuable tree in cultivation. This plant is very tolerant of dry conditions and in its natural habitat it occurs in various soil types ranging from deep soils to rocky outcrops.

There are two sub-species that have different leaf shapes. *Populneus* leaves have reduced side lobes and are like those of a poplar.

Flowers are bell shaped and cream in colour with the inner tube being streaked with purple-brown. The seed pod is a woody boat-shaped fruit containing numerous large seeds which germinate readily if soaked in boiling water which is then allowed to cool before planting. Trees can also be propagated from cuttings.

It is a very decorative tree in parks and gardens and is valuable in grazing areas as the branches are quite often lopped for stock fodder.



**Indigenous Use:** Roots of the young plants were a popular food and the seeds were probably eaten after processing.

Twine was made from Kurrajong bark, and the indigenous people of the Hastings River region, NSW made fishing nets. They would suspend the nets in the water and drive the fish into the nets.

## Sizzling Sausages and Sales of Raffle tickets

The Sausage Sizzle outside Woolworths on the 12<sup>th</sup> September was a wonderful success, not only adding almost \$450 to our bank account, but giving us the opportunity to talk about the Gardens and the Friends involvement.



Added to this were sales of Raffle Tickets for our Jati Bench valued at \$1800. The second prize of \$250 of Garden goodies is just as impressive with donations of a garden bin on wheels from LA Walker, kneeler, gloves, ties, loppers and secateurs, hand soap and cream, 2016 calendar, sprinkler heads, watering can, small compost bin and table cloth - with more donations to come.

We still have a number of ticket selling days before the Open Garden Day on the 18<sup>th</sup> October. If you can assist on the 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> of October contact Topsy Baulch 0400488921

**Beris Smith, one of our Life Members has reminded us that it will be 30 years in November 2016, since the formation of the Friends of the Hamilton Botanic Gardens.**

**That should invoke many memories?**



## Botanical Art Group

Many from the Group attended the Grampians Brushes workshops at Halls Gap in September.

This enthusiastic and diverse group continues to meet every 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday in the month in the Gardens' Cottage from 10.30 – 3.00. New members are always welcome.

Contact Debbie Millard  
[botanicalinspirations@gmail.com](mailto:botanicalinspirations@gmail.com)  
or Helen Christie 5572 4565

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To keep the cost of mailing and printing to a minimum we need member's email addresses. If you have an email address please send to [lycaro@westnet.com.au](mailto:lycaro@westnet.com.au)

Suggestions and articles for the newsletter are always welcome and may be sent to:  
Helen Christie, 44 French St, Hamilton or  
[lycaro@westnet.com.au](mailto:lycaro@westnet.com.au)