



Bason botanic gardens trust

autumn 2016 newsletter

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This Newsletter is given over to the big events at the Gardens of 12 – 14 February – firstly the production of Macbeth produced by Karen Craig, and secondly the Great Bason Fair. All photos courtesy of Beverley Sinclair.



Top: In all, over 800 people viewed the production.

Left: Rachel Plank and Andrew Fawcett played the leads, Lady Macbeth and Macbeth. As they gathered more blood on their hands, the sanity of their roles visibly withered.

Below Left: The three witches, played by Nadine Rayner, Melissa Hawkins and Rebekah Dack, kept the crowd enthralled as they cavorted around and manipulated the action.

Below Centre: Chris McKenzie received rave reviews for his portrayal of Banquo.

Below Right: Deputy Mayor Hamish McDouall hammed it up in his role of a porter. Some of his lines had been adapted to reflect current political issues, which kept the audience entertained.





Above: Some of the huge number of cars that parked on the Picnic Flat for the showings of Macbeth.

Right: During the banquet at the Castle, tension is raised as MacBeth's growing insanity becomes evident to the royal court.

Below Left: The witches choreograph the action to a fever pitch.

Below Right: During the Interval of MacBeth, crowds thronged the drink providers, owing to the heat of the day.



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 6/3/2016

Wanganui, like most of the country, experience the hottest or near hottest February on record and, as a consequence, the gardens have been very well used. In fact, we seem to be seeing increased usage of the gardens generally. I have several times counted over 50 cars in the gardens at once during my

visits over summer. It is becoming known as a great place to relax, have a picnic and enjoy the plants and the scenery.

Macbeth in the Bason and The Great Bason Fair, held between February 11th and 14th, were designed to build on this increasing public awareness and introduce more people to "The Bason". They certainly did that.

Over 800 paid to see Macbeth over the three nights. They play was very capably directed by Karen Craig and received great reviews but the talk of the town was about the absolutely fantastic venue, perfectly suited to outdoor productions or concerts.

Likewise, The Great Bason Fair was a very popular event with around 1500 people attending. It

BOOKINGS: Direct all Botanic Gardens venue/BBQ bookings to the Customer Service Desk Wanganui District Council, phone 349 001.

MEMBERSHIP:

Become a **Friend of the Bason**, or gift a subscription, and support Stanley Bason's dream.

Send your name, postal and email address to BBGT Treasurer.
Membership: Individual \$20; Family \$30; Corporate \$100; Life \$500

Internet banking is also available. The bank details are:

Account Name: Bason Botanic Gardens Trust Account
Account Number: 03-0791-0463019-00

Use your name as a reference and also please state whether this is a donation or membership subscription.

Notification of payment can also be emailed to the Treasurer if you wish, at alan.donald@clear.net.nz

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was particularly satisfying to see how successful were the displays of archery (Marangai Archery Club) and Fencing (River City Fencing Club). Performing artists Black Adder (Ian Jones) Queenie (Mellissa Hawkins) Nursie (Yvonne Jones) Town Crier (Geoff Follett) along with the Bohemian Dance Group (led by Joanne Chyrton) added colour and the period Music of Ingrid Culliford and her ensemble was just the bees knees.

Talking of bees, Norm Steele brought his glass hive. The Wanganui Spinners and Weavers club were there as were the Marton Art and Craft Club. Girls go Country brought the Clydesdales.

There were horticultural stalls as well from the Orchid Society and heritage seeds as well as our own information stand.

Sport Wanganui organised games for the kids. It was a darn good family day all round. And that

was the aim. To popularise the gardens and introduce them to new families.

All of the above were voluntary contributions and there were many, many more who gave much time and expertise to this venture. All of the actors and production team in Macbeth, Johnny McGowan who built the set, and made the fair announcements, Robert Gaskin who looked after the electrics, Bryan Kenny the lights, and many more. The list is a very long one.

I am not able to mention everyone here. There were so many and all who came were great. Not only that but there were sponsors too, including Whanganui Community Foundation, Creative Communities, Wanganui Events Trust, Downer Ltd. Then there were the stall holders selling food, plants entertainment (like a milking cow) and other items.

The entertainment was great, the weather was fantastic and the venue superb. It was a great four days for the gardens.

This event set out to prove that the Bason Botanic Gardens is a great asset to Wanganui and a wonderful venue for events of this nature. The overwhelming response of those attending, of the press and all who participated is that it surely is. Our most gracious thanks go to all who made it happen and all who came. Now what shall we do next?

Terry Dowdeswell
Chairman



Right: The town crier (Geoff Follett) is menaced by the Grim Reaper (Kieran Spence)

Below: Hobby horse jousting featuring Terry Dowdeswell and Geoff Follett: a little safer than the original version.



Below Left: A range of musicians provided the appropriate atmosphere.

Below Right: Tugs of war added to the Elizabethan theme.

Sport Wanganui organised these different events.





Top Left: John McGowan compered the Fair, and Bason Gardens Trust Chairman carried out various roles including jester.

Top Centre: Hillary Cowan was willing to tell people's fortunes, if her palm was crossed with silver.

Top Right: This sword fight was popular with the crowd at the Fair. The River City Fencing Club put on demonstrations and gave people an opportunity to try out their skills.

Left: Rosalind Thomsen won the prize for best Elizabethan outfit. Here she is escorted on her victory parade by Ian Jones.

Left: Face painting was popular with the children

Below Left: The Bohemian Dance Group created a swirl of colour with their skirts flying.

Below Right: Melissa Hawkins as Queenie, Ian Jones as Blackadder and Yvonne Jones as Nursie circulated and created mayhem.

