

77 King William Street

Fitzroy 3065

7 January 1991

The General Manager
The Botanical Gardens Administration
Ballarat.

Dear Sir -

On a recent visit to Ballarat I visited the Botanical Gardens in the hope of finding information about a very large Eucalypt there.

My great grandfather, Robert Williams, is reputed to have either planted, or had dedicated to him a blue gum. I believe it was a gesture of thanks from the first generation at Ballarat whose children he had taught. Are you able to verify that the giant blue gum is indeed the Robert Williams blue gum?

If this is so, I would be grateful to know from the Gardens administration, whether permission would be given for a new plate to be made, and re-dedicated with the inclusion of two more names - both of them proud sons of Ballarat. Those of my grandfather, Major General Robert Ernest Williams - Teacher, Journalist, Soldier, and one time Town Clerk of Ballarat, and my father - Ballarat school boy and later soldier, lawyer, and banker.

For some time I have wanted to commemorate my father's love for the City, and as there appears to be no plate on the tree this would be an appropriate way.

While writing his recent history of Ballarat, Weston Bate had access to my family papers. I am sure he will vouch for my relationship to these three men.

Yours sincerely

Claire Nailer nee Williams



City of Ballarat

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9th January, 1991

Your Reference: PC:df

Our Reference: 45/5/28

Enquiries:

Ms Claire Nailer,
77 King William Street,
Fitzroy,
3065

Dear Ms Nailer,

Re: Botanic Gardens - Blue Gum

Many thanks for your recent enquiry regarding the possibility of a Blue Gum (*Eucalyptus globulus*) planted in the Ballarat Botanic Gardens being in dedication to your great-grandfather, Robert Williams.

There are currently two surviving Blue Gums in the Gardens, one (and I assume the one to which you refer) adjacent to the recently developed rock and alpine garden, the other at the rear of the Curator's residence.

These two trees are remnants of an original and extensive planting of Blue Gums and Sugar Gums established on the Gillies Street frontage of the gardens to act as a windbreak, in the 1860's. It was noted by the Curator in his reports to Council in 1895 that most of these original plantings were being removed and replaced with "good shelter trees".

Whether either of these two remnant trees is the actual tree of specific interest to you is not known to me and, given the initial extensive planting of Blue Gums in the Botanic Gardens Reserve, probably unlikely. But we won't let that stop us will we?



I have referred your letter to the two historian members of the Friends of the Ballarat Botanic Gardens Mr Jack Chisholm and Mr Roy Mosman who may be able to assist further.

In the meantime I have enclosed a copy of a report recently adopted by Council on dedication plaques in the Botanic Gardens, for your interest. There are currently no funds available to implement this policy but you will obviously see that it is sympathetic to your aims.

Yours faithfully,

Philip Clingin
Director of Gardens and Parks

cc Plaques Report

