



Go with Friends to Singapore

It is exciting to be involved in planning the AAFBG's Singapore Gardens Tour for 17-23 March 2019. What a great way to travel with garden-oriented people and benefit from the knowledge and experience of Tour Leader, Kim Woods Rabbidge. Kim is an award winning garden writer, photographer, researcher and scriptwriter for *Our Australian Gardens* DVDs. Her articles and photographs appear in several garden books and national publications, including *Gardening Australia*, *House & Garden*, and *RM Williams Outback* magazine. From 2005 to 2009 Kim was Queensland Coordinator and National Newsletter Editor for Open Gardens Australia. She is President of the Horticultural Media Association Queensland, and produces the popular *Our Australian Gardens* Instagram and blog ouraustraliangardens.com. We encourage you to gather some friends and join us on this wonderful tailor-made tour. Members of AAFBG will receive priority, however, non-members are welcome.

What you will see and experience!

Singapore is a busy, beautiful, extravagant, diverse city with lots of trees and green spaces. In your five full days on the island you will see and experience a breathtaking mix of all these elements.



Monday: Visit Fort Canning where royalty lived and the British surrendered Singapore to the Japanese, then buy and eat in Little India. Tuesday: Kranji war memorial to remember the dead of World War II, lunch at Bollywood Vegies and finish the day at the zoo. Wednesday: See where gardeners are trained, visit Khoo Teck Puat Hospital's enormous rooftop garden and, at night, a light show at Gardens by the Bay. Thursday: Back to the gigantic glasshouses at Gardens by the Bay, the enormous Marine One development and afternoon tea at Raffles. Friday: World Heritage listed Botanic Gardens and a final dinner at the National Gallery.

For bookings and more details,

Please contact *Opulent Journeys*. Phone: 1300 219 885, Email: enquiries@opulentjourneys.com.au. Website: www.opulentjourneys.com.au. Enclosed with this newsletter is a copy of an updated brochure. It is also available on our website <https://friendsbotanicgardes.org> Please replace the brochure which was posted to members in August with this current itinerary.

**AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION
OF FRIENDS OF
BOTANIC GARDENS**

Incorporation A0026805Z

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Membership

Annual subscriptions are due on 1 April

\$50 for up to 250 members

\$150 for 250-500 members

\$250 for 500-1000 members

\$400 for 1000+ members

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In times of drought

Rosemary Noone,
Administrative Officer

Our hearts go out to the many people involved with botanic gardens suffering the hardships of ongoing drought. Hopefully, your local community can learn some drought-coping strategies through education in your gardens and arboreta. More than ever, a walk or picnic in the gardens can offer respite and refreshment. Please share your experiences with other AAFBG members through future editions of *Eucalypt* and promote your events/news in our fortnightly *Eucalypt News*. Perhaps your group is celebrating a significant milestone soon? We would love to know. Send details anytime to:

info@friendsbotanicgardens.org

SAVE THE DATE!

FRIDAY 19 JULY 2019

FOR A TRIP TO SYDNEY!

To see the beautiful Gardens on the
Harbour, and attend

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

of the

AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS OF
BOTANIC GARDENS

Hosted by



Foundation and Friends of the Botanic Gardens Limited

Meeting starts at 11 am in Maiden Theatre
Preceded by morning tea and followed by
tours of the Gardens

More details available closer to date

I love visiting member Gardens

Dennis Ayliffe
President



Congratulations go to The Friends of the Arid Lands Botanic Gardens in Port Augusta, South Australia for their garden being named one of the ten best in the world. What an achievement!

If you ever get the chance to visit Port Augusta make sure you allow enough time to visit the Gardens. They are a wonderful testament to the efforts of John Zwar and the Friends Group who have overseen the development of a wonderful attraction which contributes several millions of dollars to the region through tourism revenue.

And while you're in regional South Australia take a detour to the Coorong area and drop into the Pangarinda Botanic Garden at Wellington East which is run by a small but skilled and resourceful Friends group who have created and maintained a delightful botanic garden. They celebrated the 25th anniversary on 23 September. One of AAFBG's Committee members, Max Bourke, recently visited the gardens and reports that he was very impressed with what he saw. Attendees at the Benalla Conference will also recall a very interesting presentation by the Pangarinda Friends group on their garden and the challenges that they have faced.

In July I dropped in on the Maroochy Regional Bushland Botanic Gardens on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland. This was the second time I have visited and I came away impressed by the levels of enthusiasm and commitment shown by the Friends volunteers who maintain the gardens. The gardens are in great shape and are a very popular local attraction.

Numbers are building up for our Singapore Gardens tour in March 2019. Go to our website for further details for what promises to be a great tour.

Your Association's Annual General Meeting will be held at the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney on Friday 19 April next year. We will be looking for new members of the Executive as our wonderful long serving Secretary Elizabeth Gilfillan will be stepping down after many years with the Association. I too will be stepping down, having reached the statutory limit of my tenure as President.

Max Bourke, who represented the Friends of the National Arboretum on our Committee, has resigned following his recent election as President of the Friends of the Australian National Botanic Gardens in Canberra. We thank Max for his contribution during his relatively short time on the Committee and congratulate him on his election as President of the FANBG.

A note from the editors

In this edition two Gardens have spread over more than their one page to tell us about being voted best in the world, turning 200, and having many historic trees blown down. As the fortnightly *E-ucalypt News* covers much news from our members, it has been decided that if you have something important to say, like being voted best in the world, or turning 200, or losing historic trees, you can have more than one page! And remember to send all your news to *E-ucalypt News* at info@friendsbotanicgardens.org.

Support through communication

Elizabeth Gilfillan
Secretary



Your Association is always there to support you and we hope that you will support our new initiative in 2019 - the **Singapore Gardens Tour**. It looks to be a wonderful trip, full of colour and wonder.

We would also welcome your feedback on how we may better represent you.

It is with this in mind that we hope you will attend our **next Annual General Meeting** (AGM) hosted by The Foundation and Friends of The Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney. Our sincere thanks to Melissa Ellis (CEO) and Charlotte Sandes (Marketing & Events Manager) for facilitating this meeting to be held in Sydney on **19 July 2019**.

I met with Melissa and Charlotte in Sydney on Monday 10 September and it was a wonderful opportunity to learn more about the large Foundation and Friends of the Gardens. I was able to view the venue and have a beautiful stroll around the Gardens. The AGM will offer an interesting agenda and a visit to the Australian Plant Bank at Mt Annan. More details will follow so put the date in your calendar. See you there!

It was a real pleasure for me to be guest speaker at the Friends of Hamilton (Victoria) AGM recently where I was able to again share my experience at the 6th Global Botanic Gardens Conference in Geneva. It was a great opportunity to chat, share news and hear from members, highlighting the importance of face-to-face visits.

We can all keep in touch through the *E-ucalypt News* (our bi-monthly E-news) and *Encalypt*, this bi-annual Newsletter. Both publications contain articles of interest, highlighting Friends' achievements and aspirations.

We do hope that you share these publications with all the members of your particular Association and continue to send us your articles. They provide us all with ideas and inspirations.



Pictures by Elizabeth Gilfillan from her trip to Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney; a sign for the future; Moreton Bay Fig with entries on show in Children's Art Competition displaying their favourite trees; school children enjoying their expedition to the Gardens.

Art in the Gardens

*Friends of the Australian National Botanic Gardens
Canberra, ACT*

For those with an artistic bent, there are always opportunities for artists to pursue their passion in botanic gardens.

At the Australian National Botanic Gardens (ANBG), there are three Botanic Art Groups and one Photographic Group, all of which meet regularly. Artists at all levels can join the Groups. There is no formal teaching or mentoring, but the atmosphere is relaxed and everyone is happy to share their experiences. There are no costs to join these Groups, but you must be a member of the ANBG Friends. All the artists in these Groups have a special interest in Australian native plants. At the ANBG they have easy access to plants from every state and territory. Some of these plants may otherwise be inaccessible to artists, due to their remote habitat or their rarity.

There is often a question of ‘why botanic art when we have photographs?’ The ANBG provides botanical artists with specimens to draw or paint. This helps them focus on the anatomical detail and structural formation of the plant, adding another dimension to their work. However, painting or drawing a plant always seems to take longer than the specimen’s life and artists are always grateful to have photographs of their specimens to use as reference!

For the past twelve years, the Botanic Art Groups have held an annual exhibition of their work, most of which has been for sale. The commissions raised have contributed to the work of the Friends. The Friends have also purchased one or two art works each year to give to the Gardens. These are displayed in buildings around the Gardens and widely admired.

The Friends Photographic Group brings together people interested in photography of natural phenomena, to share their experiences and contribute to the ANBG’s overall stock of native plant photographs. This group has an annual exhibition that also contributes to the Friends’ fund raising efforts and raises community awareness of native flora.

In another initiative, the ANBG Friends run an annual photographic competition for high school and college students, which is now in its **22nd year**. This is a great way to encourage young people to understand and appreciate Australian native plants and bolster their artistic creativity. There are awards in three categories: colour, monochrome and altered images. Cash prizes are awarded for first, second and third place as well as for Highly Commended and Commended winners in each category. Additional awards are given to the photographic departments of the school/college of each first and second prize winner. There is also one People’s Choice award per exhibition.

These exhibitions are events that are well known, eagerly anticipated and are regularly visited.

Wendy Antoniak



1st, Colour section, Schools Photographic Competition: *The Garden in Zoom*. AMANDA JOYNER, Canberra College



Gynaea Lily - *Doonankhes exelsa*: drawing by Morgan Phillips

Stunning Horti-couture

*Friends of Brisbane Botanic Gardens and Sherwood Arboretum, written by Bettina Palmer
Brisbane, Queensland*



Belinda's superb first and second prize winning accessories. Photo by Kim Woods-Rabbidge

A small group of Friends have engineered an annual social event, attempting to combine art and science without the usual formality of workshops and presentations, while simultaneously giving a nod to the frivolity of High Tea and fashion parade as a fund raiser.

When artists of all disciplines are invited to use any media to express how plants influence a wearable garment, we get the full range of regular plant-based textiles such as cotton, linen, bamboo and hemp being used as a canvas for artists to paint, print or embroider their chosen favorite iconic plant directly on the material to become an individual but very wearable (and saleable) item of apparel.

Others use all kinds of material to construct their own plants and simply use them as alternative adornment. Or use plant-based fibre to completely construct a new material and just wear it – Mashing Banana stalks is a smelly process but it makes the most wonderfully textured paper. Yet others use recycled plant-based material (such as Newspaper) to tell their own story. But it is always those who dare to use live plant material, who turn the most heads. Whether it is foraged dried material, cast away by the plants themselves and destined for compost or culled and pruned pickings from living plants. Colour, texture and wild imaginations combine through design skill to actually make 'wearing a garden' possible.

An odd concept perhaps, but one of growing interest and attracting interstate and also international interest. Wearing your Garden seems to be a modest hit for our fledgling group of Friends and their stalwart supporters, with many thanks owed to our Curator Dale Arvidsson and his Gardens Staff



Left: Horticulturist Belinda Payne's winning outfit "Bold and Breathtaking" a collection of dried plant material, modelled by Jess May. Right Larissa Salton of Hinterland Photography 'Dickens ripped' from Charles Dickens books destined for compost, modelled by Georgia Tomata; Beautiful people in the Japanese Garden; Gift wrap into long stemmed roses by Bettina Palmer, worn by Tom Weal. All photos by Kim Woods Rabbidge.

Celebrating Andrew Smith's 30 years

Friends of Burnley Gardens
Burnley, Victoria

Andrew and his Araucaria. Photo by Sandra McMahon



This year we celebrated Andrew Smith's 30 years as Garden Manager at Burnley Gardens. We decided to plant an *Araucaria rulei*, the rare New Caledonian pine, to mark this anniversary. This tree has interesting connections to the first tree planted in the Gardens, a *Sequoia sempervirens*, donated by John Rule, nurseryman from Richmond, in 1861. So it seemed a fitting touch to plant the *Araucaria*, named for Rule by Ferdinand von Mueller, to celebrate Andrew's 30 years' tenure of care, maintenance, design and supervision of 'our' precious place. It will also add to our Araucariaceae collection

Finding a specimen was not easy – nobody we asked had one and New Caledonia is not allowing seed out of their country. But our previous President, Michele Adler, is not easily deterred! She met Dermot Molloy from the Royal Botanic Gardens nursery in Melbourne, who had collected seed from their mature specimen and had a young tree growing. It was 1.5m high and he kindly donated it to us. On the anniversary

day the *Araucaria* was planted by Andrew and Dermott in the sunken garden, in view of the *Sequoia*.

During the year, the first of my Presidency, all our usual activities have continued. We have had interesting talks on the gardens of the Channel Islands, wildflowers and gardens in Iran, gardens in Gaza, and closer to home, an inspiring talk on 'Plants are the solution in your garden'. There were walks in the Kew cemetery, and, in conjunction with a walk in our Garden, maintaining your garden through the seasons. The Propagation Group meets weekly and has a sale every few months and there are regular, popular pruning workshops.

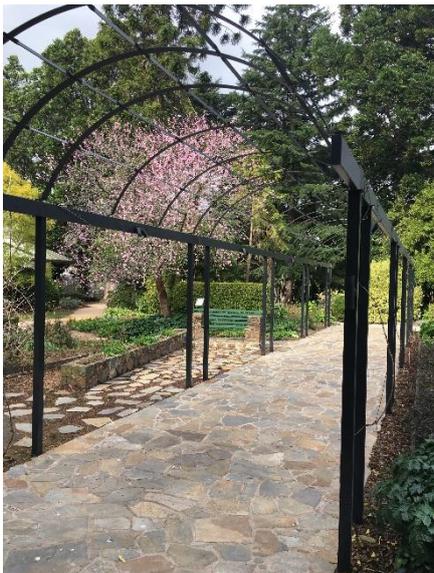


Photo by Andrew Smith

Definitely our biggest and most successful event for the year was the screening of the Piet Oudolf film *Five Seasons*. In combination with the amazingly bountiful afternoon tea, so generously supplied by the many members who catered for it, and the stimulating panel discussion which followed the screening, this event raised quite a few thousand dollars for the Gardens.

It is through these events and the associated efforts of many members that we have been able to donate many tens of thousands of dollars to fund works in the Gardens. The most significant recent work was the creation of our beautiful new Wisteria arbour and adjacent landscaping. The old timber structure was in desperate need of regeneration and a metal construction was agreed upon. The opening of the new arbour served as a fitting occasion on which to honour the thirtieth anniversary of Andrew Smith's association with the Gardens.

Sandra McMahon, President (with thanks to Michele Adler)

Refurbishing historic fountain

*Friends of Hamilton Botanic Garden
Hamilton, Victoria*



The Friends of the Hamilton Botanic Gardens and the Southern Grampians Shire Council have recently received a grant of \$160,000 from the State Government and Heritage Victoria to restore the elegant and striking Thomson Memorial Fountain in the Hamilton Botanic Gardens. The Friends are grateful to those who wrote letters of support and the grant writer, who along with committee and council, assisted in the application. It is hoped that completion of this work will be in time for the centenary of the fountain's dedication on 4 April 1919.

The Thomson Fountain was erected in memory of John Thomson, who was a shire councillor and member in the Legislative Assembly for Dundas, from 1892-1900 and 1902-1914, an honorary minister in the Murray government and a prominent and popular member of the community. He died in 1917 and the Fountain was erected following a meeting in 1918 of the Dundas councillors and the Thomson Memorial Committee. John Thomson was the son of James Thomson, who built the large mansion, "Monivae".

The Thomson Fountain is one of three in Victoria designed by Melbourne based architectural modellers, Wardrop and Scurry. The other two fountains are the recently restored Williamstown Cemetery fountain built in honour of Agnes Fairbairn Turnbull (wife of master mariner John Joseph White who died in 1889) and the soon to be restored Ararat Boer War Memorial Fountain in front of the Ararat Town Hall.

The Thomson Fountain had previously been restored in 1988. The elaborately sculptured Fountain is made of reinforced concrete and stucco and at present is missing its original small bowl and decoration on top along with other damage. There is an image on the State Library site amongst others.

Jacqui Bagnall

Creating an award winning island

*Friends of Melton Botanic Garden
Melton, Victoria*



On Friday 10 August Melton Botanic Garden Friends won the Protection of the Environment community category award! This award is part of the Keep Victoria Beautiful Sustainable Cities Award. We won it for our Lake Island Project. It is wonderful to receive the award as the Friends celebrate their 15th Anniversary year

The lake island is 85 m by 25 m and was heavily infested with exotic weeds. The lake connects Ryans Creek and overflows into the Toolern Creek. The island had the indigenous New Holland Daisy growing naturally. However, exotic weeds on the island included: boxthorn, broom, spear thistle, brassica, galenia, gazania, marshmallow, mustard weed and serrated tussock. This encouraged exotic birds and decreased the native bird species. Council relocated 36 domestic geese and some domestic ducks as part of the program to create a bird sanctuary island.

In 2011 volunteers formed the 'Lakers' group, working most Tuesday mornings doing revegetation around the lake. The group received a \$7,000 grant from Melbourne Water in 2015 to begin weed control on the island using contractors. Council approved the Friends' Occupation Health & Safety program, and our risk assessment for the island activity enabled volunteers to use a small boat, which was purchased with a donation from the Rotary Clubs in Melton, to access the island from June 2017. Nearly every two weeks to mid-December 2017 volunteers visited the island as part of the 'Lakers' group, weeding, planting, and watering. The boat was blessed by Father Geoff from the local Catholic Church to the refrain of 'Michael row the boat ashore'. We have been assured it is an ecumenical boat.

The weed-cleared island has had significant re-planting for bird habitat. Three duck boxes have been placed on the island to assist breeding. Duck eggs have been found in the boxes and Masked Lapwings have laid eggs and raised their young on the island. Many birds use the island to breed, feed and roost including migratory and wading birds. The vulnerable Latham Snipe use the island in the months they are at Melton BG. Visitors to the Garden notice the increase in birdlife and use the bird signs that we have placed around the lake to identify the birds. We have also placed 'Bread is Bad for Me' signs in the lake that include what to feed the ducks which helps educate visitors about feeding the native ducks.

The 'Islanders' group, founded in 2018, visits the island on the second Tuesday of every second month from February to December. Some of the 'Lakers' and other volunteers visit as required to manage the island for new or replacement planting and weed control.

John Bentley

Where Council and Friends work together

Friends of Moama Echuca Botanic Gardens
Moama, New South Wales



Dry billabong and Settlers' garden. Photos by Bev Rankin.

These Gardens were born in 2003 out of community interest in beautifying the Moama Recreation Reserve. Council allocated a portion of land for the Gardens and work began with the digging of a dam for water storage. Enthusiastic community members raised money to build a board walk, constructed by volunteer labour.

Because the project was developing in an ad hoc fashion, Murray Shire came on board in 2006 and took responsibility for employing a garden designer to work cooperatively with the Committee of Management. Mr Chris Dance, noted landscape architect, developed a staged plan which was unique, contemporary, water-wise and themed to our Riverina region.

It took four years for the first stage, the **formal entrance garden**, to be completed. A tiered island for Melaleucas was built in the enlarged dam. Raised mounds were created on each side of the area, bordered by large rectangular granite rocks. The mounds were planted with several varieties of *Eremophila* and grasses. A grove of Casuarinas form a windbreak on the west. A lawn area was planted in front of the boardwalk with a water garden feature and the attractive *Eucalyptus sideroxylon* and *E. camaldulensis* as shade trees. *Brachychiton rupestris* adds interest at the entrance and the graceful *Acacia pendula* defines the boundary on the east.

The formal opening took place in November 2011. Around this time, the volunteer group became known as the Friends of Moama Echuca Botanic Gardens.

Seven years later two more stages have been completed. The **Settlers Garden** is dedicated to local pioneers. Two features of pioneer homesteads define this stage: an arbour covered by ornamental grapevine, glorious in autumn, and a stone well. Plantings include Washington navel oranges; the early stations found oranges grew well in Riverina soils. Two Moreton Bay figs, common in early towns in the region, add interest. The Settlers Garden is bordered by a hedge of *Callistemon* 'Kings Park special'.

The **Dry Billabong** is the latest stage completed. It depicts the billabong as an integral part of the Murray system, filled with water occasionally by flood or rain, but usually dry. Our billabong is tiered with plantings of *Lomandra*, *Dianella* and *Gabnia*. The surrounds feature sweet *Bursaria*, *Acacia implexa* and *Leptospermum*. Red gum posts dominate the landscape and seating hewn from huge logs complete the picture. This year, a statue, La Belle Helene, was donated by sculptor, David Maughan, and placed on the island, adding a significant artwork to the site.

We are a small group of older volunteers who meet for working bees every Monday morning. We work cooperatively with council staff and our Gardens always look immaculate. We hope to bring you details of the next stage in our development shortly.

Bev Rankin

WARM TREES in cold Canberra

*Friends of National Arboretum Canberra
Canberra, ACT*



Photos by Linda Muldoon



The launch – and sight – of WARM TREES this year at the National Arboretum in Canberra was wonderful. The installation was in place for the whole of July – we hope you didn't miss it!

We had so many creative contributions that were a big hit with visitors. Scarves were installed around the Arboretum; crocheted ferns were pinned on the walls leading to the Village Centre and on the fence around the Pod playground; and handcrafted Pohutukawa flowers, were placed on the walls.

WARM TREES certainly achieved its aim to promote the National Arboretum and engage the community. The interesting display encouraged visitors out into the forests during the cold of winter. In the Arboretum, there are 94 forests of rare and threatened trees from around the world and while many are young, two forests are over 100 years old.

We received a lot of media coverage but special thanks must go to the New Zealand High Commission for supporting us this year. We knitted and crocheted ferns and pohutukawa flowers, as icons of New Zealand. Some of the High Commission staff even came to our Pohutukawa-making workshops.

At the launch, the Acting High Commissioner for New Zealand highlighted the main feature of the installation: the giant kiwi (21m x 14m) Mahana, which means *warm* in Maori.

At the end of WARM TREES all the scarves are collected, washed and donated. Some are formed into rugs and sent overseas as part of Rotary's Wrapped-With-Love project for people affected by disasters. Most donations go to our local community.

We have had so much positive feedback – roll on WARM TREES 2019!

Jocelyn Plovits

Tastes of Orange! 30 years young

Friends of Orange Botanic Gardens
Orange, New South Wales

Orange Botanic Gardens was officially opened in 1988 as a Bicentenary event, even though the Gardens had been established in 1982 and the Friends founded in 1984. This year therefore marks 30 years since the formal opening of the Gardens.

The Friends will be donating a new feature to the Gardens to celebrate the anniversary – a circular polished eucalypt-wood bench seat, matched with a design on the ground, representing the cardinal points of a compass in brass. Centred on a Chinese elm, the seat and brass-work have been designed by local artist Tim Winters.



Design for new seat by Tim Winters with artist's impression of its final appearance

During the year we will continue our talks and plant sales. In October local botanist, Dr Colin Bower, presented a Cultivated Chat on the unique flora and fauna of the Mount Canobolas State Conservation Area near Orange. Dr Bower has a particular interest in pollination of native orchids and notes that there are two rare species on the mountain, one a spider orchid and the other a leek orchid, both of which last flowered following fires in 1982–83. Dr Bower is hoping that the fire which burnt through much of the mountain last February will stimulate these two species to flower again. There are also two listed threatened species on the mountain, Giles mint bush *Prostanthera gilesii* and the Canobolas candlebark *Eucalyptus canobolensis*, as well as an endangered ecological community known as the *Xanthoparmelia* lichen community.

The next plant sale to be run by the Friends will be in November. These are popular events in the local community and are easily one of our best fund raisers. At the last two sales, approximately 3,000 plants were available for purchase and 65–75 per cent were sold, generating income of over \$6,000 from each sale. At the April sale this year, the Friends' area was packed for two hours with five volunteers flat out. It took ten minutes in a queue to even get in!

Murray Fletcher, Secretary FOBG

In the top ten in Australia and the world!

*Friends of Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden
Port Augusta, South Australia*



In January this year, the *Australian Geographic* put the Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden (AALBG) at the top of its list of the 10 best regional botanic gardens in Australia. Amazing recognition indeed! The description of our Garden said: *Established in 1993, this 250ha native garden makes good use of its Upper Spencer Gulf location, where the arid zone and marine environment meet. The only garden worldwide that specialises in the southern arid zone of Australia, its collection promotes conservation of arid zone plant communities adapted to extreme weather.*

The other nine were: North Coast Regional BG in Coffs Harbour; Flecker BG in Cairns; Olive Pink BG in Alice Springs; Tasmanian Arboretum in Devonport; Eurobodalla Regional BG at Bateman's Bay NSW; Geelong BG at Geelong; Tondoon BG at Gladstone; Wollongong BG at Wollongong; and the Hunter Region BG at Heatherbrae NSW. Only Olive Pink, Tondoon and Geelong are not members of AAFBG. In all, more than 100 regional gardens were considered. To see all the details go to:

<https://www.australiangeographic.com.au/travel/destinations/2018/01/10-regional-botanic-gardens-you-need-to-visit/>

Then in August another accolade! Readers of *The Guardian* voted us one of the top ten gardens in the world. The reader who nominated the AALBG said: *The 250-hectare Arid Lands Botanical Garden on the coast in Port Augusta (three hours' drive north of Adelaide) made for a wonderful visit. Not only is it free of charge, there is a cafe serving great fresh food and some fantastic Australian wine, too. The gardens are a joy to wander, with plenty of bird life, amphibians and lizards, and ideas on how to make a colourful garden using as little water as possible. There are six specialist gardens, views to the Flinders Range and grey mangroves, emu and turkey bushes plus very rare plants. It's amazing how beautiful the edge of the outback can be.*

In this case the also-rans were: Kirstenbosch Gardens, Cape Town (an affiliated member of AAFBG); Botaniske Hage, Tromsø, Norway (inside the Arctic Circle); Jardin Botanico, Quito, Ecuador; Royal Botanic Gardens, Kandy, Sri Lanka; Kingstown, St Vincent and Grenadines; Botanical Park and Gardens, near Chania, Crete; La Mortella, Ischia, Italy; Singapore Botanical Gardens (UNESCO World Heritage site); National Botanic Gardens of Wales, Carmarthenshire. To see all the details go to:

<https://www.theguardian.com/travel/2018/aug/16/10-great-botanical>.

As well as being the best in the world the AALBG gathered some local awards: certification from Ecotourism Australia; silver and bronze awards in SA Tourism Awards; a semi-finalist in Community Achievement Awards from Caravan & Camping Industries Association of SA; and a Certificate of Excellence from Trip Advisor. These achievements are great publicity for our Garden and must help draw visitors to the Port Augusta region. To receive national and international recognition like this is praise indeed for our relatively young, low budget Garden, operating with a small number of paid staff, helped by our passionate Friends' volunteers.

More news from AALBG



For the first time this financial year, the number of visitors to the Garden exceeded 100,000. The Gardens recorded 106,967 visitors, up from 99,076 the previous year. It is estimated that visitors to the AALBG bring in slightly more than \$20 million to the Port Augusta economy annually. This growth is a reflection of the status our Garden has achieved and will hopefully help the Gardens' budget come closer to breaking even. The Arid Explorers' Garden is part of the reason for the increase in visitation.

The Arid Explorers Garden nature play area was funded by The Friends of AALBG to the tune of more than \$70,000. Friends' volunteers also had a high level of input in its planning, construction and development. It has been a huge success, attracting many children and their parents to the Garden since its official opening last year. This has brought a new demographic into the Garden - children bringing young parents. The Reflection Garden (a peaceful secluded area funded by local suicide prevention groups) has been upgraded with Friends' help and is a very attractive place.

The Friends have been lobbying the Council for years to allow the old heritage native pine log homestead in the now-closed Homestead Park to be moved to the AALBG. The homestead was built in the 1880s at Yudnapinna Station. The Friends' hope it could become a multi-purpose function space and larger meeting room. The Council is still non-committal despite our lobbying and offers of financial assistance and labour for the rebuild.

Friends help with many other tasks, including Buffel Grass control, pruning Eremophilas, improving nursery facilities, repairing irrigation systems, up-grading paths, assisting the small team of paid employees. Friends have helped also with the development and construction of a large new picnic shelter. Plants propagated by Friends have been sold at field days, shows and events. In the first six months of this year \$16,000+ was raised and given to Council. Our relationships with the Garden Manager, paid staff and Council are excellent, a great improvement on the situation several years ago.

The Friends of the AALBG can claim some credit for this result. It is vibrant and active group dedicated to promoting, developing and maintaining the AALBG. Considerably more than \$1 million has been donated to the AALBG by the Friends and in the last four years we have done more than \$4 million worth of voluntary labour. Together with Council, Garden Management and staff, the Friends have ensured the Garden is growing from strength to strength despite difficult economic times in recent years for the city council.

John Zwar, OAM, CF. President

ROYAL TASMANIAN BOTANICAL GARDENS

CELEBRATING 200 YEARS



Officially recorded as founded in 1818, the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens (RTBG) is the second oldest Botanical Gardens in Australia. Two years after Sydney, the RTBG was founded on one of the young colony's early farm and produce gardens. This year we celebrated our 200th birthday. For Friends of the Gardens and RTBG Management and Board of Directors the major focus of the year was, of course, the RTBG Bicentenary celebrations.

The Book: *The Gardens: Celebrating Tasmania's Botanical Treasures 1818 – 2018*, produced to commemorate the Bicentenary, was launched early in December 2017 to take full advantage of the Christmas gift market and as a precursor to the forthcoming celebrations. Members of the Friends' committee and major contributors to the book were amongst those invited to the launch.

March saw the launch of the RTBG Bicentennial **Gin**, produced by local distiller Kristy Booth-Lark using onsite seasonal botanicals, including cumquats, tamarillos and camomile, harvested from the RTBG Community gardens. The gin was served as four different cocktails and matched to food created by the RTBG Succulent Restaurant's Executive Chef, Johannes Fraiss. A new season's gin, using Tazzie berries and green tea leaves from the Gardens, is about to hit the shelves in the Botanical shop.



The Earl of Wessex, sharing a joke with Friends; the Lily pond viewing platforms; the new season's gin.

The official opening of the Bicentenary and the newly constructed **Lily Pond** viewing platforms was held on 10 April. The Earl of Wessex, HRH Prince Edward, conducted the opening. Vice President, Eileen Maskrey and President Joan Booth were amongst the small number of guests invited to the official 'meet and greet' in the Conservatory. Friends and volunteers had a specially designated area for viewing the proceedings at the Lily Pond, and members of the committee and some long-standing Friends were invited to a reception hosted by the Chairman of the Board of Directors of RTBG.

Later that month, the gardens hosted the inaugural production of *Crawl me Blood* a **sound and video** installation designed to take place in a botanic garden setting at night.

Also, in April, the **Autumn in the Gardens Festival** was held, during which Peter Cundall launched a range of seeds especially prepared for the Bicentenary. During the Autumn Festival, Chris Wisby of ABC

radio conducted an outside broadcast of his regular Sunday morning program at the Community Garden/Sustainable Learning Centre Pod. During the morning Friends assisted at the plant sale, disseminated information about FRTBG, assisted with the sale of *The Gardens* book and the Bicentenary Gin. Some of our walking Guides offered free tours of the Tasmanian Collection and a Gardens' history tour. The weather was very blustery and our tent almost blew down!

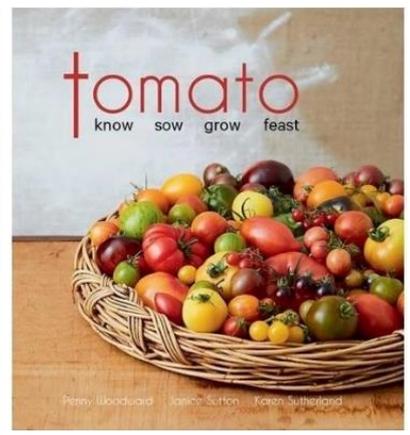
In June a group of Friends set up an **historical display**, on behalf of RTBG, in the Kingston Library and Information Centre. The display gave a snapshot of the changes which have occurred in the Gardens from the early days and included information about conservation projects. It generated much interest with patrons, and library staff were very sad to see it taken down.

Our annual sale of **heritage and heirloom tomatoes**, grown from seed by a dedicated group of volunteers, was held in mid-October and offered 200 varieties of tomato in honour of the Bicentenary. A book, titled *Tomato: Know, Sow, Grow, Feast* by Penny Woodward, Janice Sutton and Karen Sutherland, and designed for tomato lovers, gardeners and cooks, was launched.

The Sustainable Learning Centre was redeveloped along with new signage and interpretation around the Gardens, and an exhibition of botanical paintings by artists who have painted heritage plants from around the Gardens.

We all agree that to date it has been a very busy and productive bicentennial year.

Joan Booth, Immediate Past President



An advertisement for a horticultural scholarship. It features the logo of The Jerusalem Botanical Gardens (הגן הבוטני האוניברסיטאי ירושלים) and the logo of JNF Australia (GROWING OUR FUTURE). The text 'HORTICULTURAL SCHOLARSHIP' is prominently displayed in a blue banner at the bottom.

A fantastic opportunity for graduates or post graduates to work in Jerusalem's Botanic Gardens on a 9 month scholarship, commencing March 2019. Includes return flight, visa, accommodation and monthly living allowance. The 30 acre Gardens hold Israel's largest plant collection, 6,000 species. An opportunity to work and learn with a highly skilled and dedicated team at the Gardens. Contact Estelle at estelle@jnf.org.au for information and application pack. Applications to be lodged by 23 November. Interviews in Melbourne or by teleconference.

Floods and fallen giants

*Friends of Royal Tasmanian Botanic Gardens
Hobart, Tasmania*



Fallen Ponderosa pine

The month of May delivered two severe storm events to the Gardens resulting in serious loss and damage to its living collections.

The first storm event occurred on the evening of 10 May, with over 100 mm of rain falling during the night. Gravel pathways were washed out around the Lily pond, the lower playground area was flooded to a depth of around 600 mm and a large Gowen Cypress was blown down. The flooding of the playground lawn was extraordinary. Anyone entering the Garden for the first time and coming across this area would have thought that they were looking at a permanent lake, ducks and all!

The second, and more severe storm event, struck on the evening of 22 May. Wind gusts of over 100km/hr were recorded between 12.15 am and 2 am, with a peak of 113 km/hr at 1 a.m.

The morning of 23 May revealed a trail of destruction from the top of the Garden above the Lily pond, down through the Garden to the eastern side of the Eardley-Wilmot Wall near the lower gate. Twelve established trees were lost, either blown out of the ground or collected by an adjacent falling tree.

Three of these trees were listed as significant on the National Trust of Tasmania's significant tree register. Two of these, a Caucasian fir and Ponderosa pine, were part of the Pinetum planting dating back to the 1860s. The distinctive growth rings of the Ponderosa pine confirmed its age at about 150 years.

The other significant tree was the stunning Dawn Redwood above the Lily pond, planted in 1958. This species was only known from fossil records until it was discovered in central China in 1941. Later that year, live specimens were found and classified, allowing the possibility of the tree's cultivation in the west.



Flooding on the Lower playground and damage to the Visitor Hub



Fallen Dawn Redwood

The species came into cultivation in 1943 and it is likely that the RTBG specimen, planted in 1958, was one of the older trees planted outside China. It was revered not only for its striking autumn foliage but also for its horticultural significance.

The Tasmanian collection, north of the fernery, sustained the most damage as it bore the brunt of the *Pinus ponderosa*. A number of iconic species were crushed under the weight of the main trunk. Redevelopment of this collection will be needed to restore and rejuvenate this important part of the Gardens.

Twenty-seven more trees suffered damage; many required the removal of hanging branches in their canopies by a contract arborist. A number of other trees were inspected for root lift and it is expected that two trees adjacent to the Tasmanian Fernery will need to be removed as they pose a safety risk.

Considering the number of trees that came down, the extent of damage to infrastructure was relatively minor. The roof of the Visitor Hub was crushed along with handrails along the easy access pathway. Some stonework and bitumen roadways were damaged.

The clean-up

The response by our Gardens Operations staff was exceptional, with an 'all hands on deck' approach on the mornings following both storms. Closure of the Gardens was limited to one day only per event, with the most hazardous areas being cordoned off while they were cleaned up.

Some good news

Following the extensive media coverage of these two events, we received many calls from local wood turners inquiring about timber for the production of artistic and/or functional pieces. All were concerned about the loss of the trees and wanted to reshape the wood and return it to the Gardens for display, retail /fund raising or both.



Artisan work produced by Ross Patston-Gill

We have distributed pieces of timber to four local turners. Ross Patston-Gill is one such artisan who works with green timber and operates a demonstration workshop in the Geeveston Community Hall. Ross has produced a number of items that will be returned later in the year. It is expected that within three to four months we will have more pieces available for sale through the Botanical Shop. Each piece will be accompanied by a card that will contain some detail about the tree that the timber was sourced from.

David Reid, Horticultural Co-Ordinator

Co-operation, communication, compromise

*Friends of Warrnambool Botanic Gardens
Warrnambool, Victoria*

The three Cs – cooperation, communication and compromise – are vital between Friends' groups and municipal councils. If discussions at the recent Benalla conference provide an accurate picture, the interaction of Friends groups with local councils range from cosy and comfortable to difficult and frustrating. No matter how difficult the situation, and how frustrating the process, it is always important to work toward establishing and maintaining a good relationship.

The Friends of Warrnambool Botanic Gardens had a good start. They were established in 1989 as an initiative of the Premier Town Promotion Board inaugurated by Warrnambool City Council. In the thirty years since, the Friends have had a good relationship with Council, but it always needs fostering. Today a grandson of an early curator is Mayor of the city and shares our interest in the Gardens.

Remember the composition of Council changes periodically while the administration, the crucial link, can be even more transitory. This means that effective communication is essential. All councillors and senior officers are on the mailing list for our Friends Newsletter and relevant submissions. For significant events, a printout is delivered, as electronic mail is easily ignored. One such event was a garden walk arranged for Council to familiarise them with one of their greatest assets. When relevant, councillors attend our ordinary meetings, while the AGM attracts a wider audience and showcases the achievements of the year. It is an opportunity to remind the administration of the value of voluntary contributions, in kind assistance, fund raising, grants, preservation and promotion.

Communication is a two-way process and Friends too must be kept informed. They can be great lobbyists. Our Friends believe that one of their greatest achievements was the appointment of a Curator in 2007. The position had been lost during the era of competitive tendering which merged sports fields, gardens and parklands. Friends lobbied, sought partners, approached philanthropic foundations and attended Council meetings. Today that Curator is our greatest asset.

Our Friends are an incorporated association, independent of Council, and need to be recognised as such. While the Friends value the Curator and will back him to the hilt, it is not appropriate to see the Curator as the channel of communication. Keep it direct.

A master plan sets out the basic rules for the Gardens, present and future. Warrnambool's plan was developed with input from Council, the Curator and the Friends. There were some compromises, but the Friends support the outcome and closely monitor its implementation.



The first move the Friends made when planning the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the Gardens on the present site, was to approach Council and seek a joint program. This was agreed and a councillor was appointed to the organising committee, ensuring good communication and cooperation.

The Friends make use of Facebook and have developed and maintain their own web site www.wbgardens.com.au linked to that of the Council.

In the case of WBG, its heritage as a Guilfoyle designed garden is significant. It is difficult to put a dollar value on heritage and it can be so easily lost. Friends groups can act as educator, advocate, and guardian as well as trusted friends.

Pat Varley

Members of the Australian Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens

For information about Members see AAFBG website at –
www.friendsbotanicgardens.org

And see website for calendar of upcoming events

16th Australasian Botanic Guides Conference

Beauty rich & rare

16 - 20 September 2019

Kings Park and Botanic Garden, Perth, WA

The theme of next year's conference is **Beauty, rich & rare**. All events will be held in Kings Park and the Western Australian Botanic Garden, the ideal place to discover Western Australia's rich diversity of flora – both beautiful and rare.

Kings Park covers 400 hectares, one of the biggest inner city parks in the world, just 20 minutes' walk from the Perth CBD. The park includes 267 hectares of natural bush as well as the 17-hectare Western Australian Botanic Garden.



Yellow everlastings, Coalseam Conservation Park



Stockman's Wreath Flower, Mullewa region



Caladenia ferruginea Darling Range

Pre-conference tours: four days to Northern Wildflowers; one day Spring Wildflowers
Post-conference tours: five day Great Southern Extravaganza and three day Sandplain Wonderland.

For more information: email: kpguidesconference@gmail.com

Web: bgpa.wa.gov.au/guides