

# Campsis

Newsletter of the  
Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens (Victoria) Inc.  
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*Campsis radicans* Trumpet Flower  
Beverley Graham 1994

## From the President

THE INAUGURAL CONGRESS of Botanic Gardens of Australia and New Zealand was held in Geelong from 24 to 28 October. Over 200 delegates attending included heads of Botanic Gardens and their staff, local government, horticultural interests, as well as many representatives from Friends groups. There were two days of speakers' presentations covering four topics, two concurrent sessions each day.

The topic 'Community Networking' has special interest for Friends and was divided into three areas, Botanic Gardens connecting with their community, Botanic Gardens and Volunteers and Botanic Gardens and Youth. Public institutions now realise that the expectations of the public in their operation require meaningful interaction and participation. Programmes must offer real information that is professional and accessible, and to help achieve this Friends groups and volunteers act as the link between the Gardens and the community. The Friends offer many activities that attract the community to visit \_ guided walks, propagation, talks, concerts and other activities appropriate to their resources. Though the community visits Gardens for relaxation and the physical pleasure of plants, they want integrity and information and the opportunity to engage with a real place. The focus for each Garden requires an understanding of its community. Whether it is a fast-growing urban population or joint projects with key conservation groups, the community awareness and involvement need to be met.

The role of volunteers is set only to increase and volunteers of the future will not be satisfied with stuffing envelopes. Having had greater educational opportunities and business skills they will be looking for personal satisfaction and will not tolerate inefficiency. They will only give their time where there is a process of consultation and openness, with meaningful and challenging opportunities. There must be correlation between management expectations and volunteers' needs \_ volunteers should be seen as a component of the organisation. Friends of Botanic Gardens are organised and committed for the Gardens' support and their mutual advantage, qualities that will be vital to their continued value and linking between Gardens and community. Cultivating Community is a project in Melbourne providing horticultural therapy where gardens have been established and maintained by local groups, whether multicultural gardeners, children with special needs and disabilities, school classes, at hospital or detention centres \_ each supported by a team of volunteers.

Botanic Gardens and Youth highlighted apprenticeships in Botanic Gardens. The Alice Springs Desert Park now has a programme for aboriginal youth funded in conjunction with the Arrente Council. Apprenticeships are offered in horticulture, zookeeping and guiding, which will provide the necessary qualifications to compete for permanent employment. David Hope, apprentice at the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne, ended the day on an inspirational and humorous note, grateful for the diversity of experience he has enjoyed, including the bat relocation exercise, and he emphasised what he sees as the important elements in youth training \_ communication, respect as an equal, lead by example, delegation and constructive criticism. When handed the wine presented to each speaker he lamented that it hadn't been given to him before his talk!

The next day workshops were held, and the Congress rounded off with field trips to the Anglesea heathlands and the goldfields to the north.

A very successful and stimulating Congress. Congratulations to the Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens for the large part they took in the planning and running of the event.

## Pauline Wicksteed

### Friends of the Australian National Botanic Gardens

ONE OF THE MOST NOTABLE FEATURES of the past six months has been the substantial increase in the number of activities arranged for Friends. These have ranged from illustrated walks and talks, specialised 'behind the scenes' tours of the Herbarium and the new Nursery (still under construction), and art exhibitions to major weekend excursions to areas of special interest. The weekend excursion at the end of July to the Illawarra Grevillea Park, Bundeena and the Royal National Park attracted over 30 Friends, all of whom were highly appreciative, both of the wonderful diversity of the flora on display in ideal weather and of the excellent organisation. Excursions to the Tidbinbilla and Cotter Nature Reserves to examine the regeneration responses of different plant species to the devastating January bushfires also attracted large numbers. Another trip to these areas will be arranged for Autumn, to assess the nature and extent of further progress during the summer months.

In September a large contingent of about 20 Volunteer Guides made the long trip to Perth to attend the National Conference of Volunteer Guides in Botanic Gardens, hosted by the Kings Park Guides. After this highly-successful Conference many of our Guides took the opportunity to join tours to view the magnificent array of wildflowers in different parts of Western Australia. Those stalwarts remaining in Canberra coped well with the increased number of visitors to the Gardens during the peak wildflower season.

Preparations are well in hand for the 2004 Conference of the Association, to be held in Canberra from 16 to 18 April. Registration forms (including an outline of the program) for the Conference, entitled 'Gardens for Pleasure, Plants for Survival', were distributed recently. Please note that, to qualify for the 'early-bird discount' for the Conference fee, we need to have your registration details before 31 December.

### **Andrew Walker, President**

### **Friends of St Kilda Botanical Gardens**

**W**E ARE PLANNING OUR END-OF-YEAR party in the park on 24 November, commencing at 6 pm. The event will include a sausage sizzle, face-painting for the children, raffles and good cheer. All are welcome to this party and fund-raiser.

We have been seeking access to one of the glasshouses in the Gardens for the Growing Friends group. We are very happy to report that the Council has agreed to us having the larger of the glasshouses and that 2004 will be an active year building activities for the Growing Friends.

Our AGM was held in late October. The existing committee was re-elected, with one additional member. Key projects identified for 2004 include signage in the Gardens and participating in the global garden party planned for April 2004.

### **Judith Smith, Convenor**

### **Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens Friends Association**

**S**TAGE ONE OF THE Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens (MRBG) was opened on 24 May 2003, much to the excitement of the 1000 or so visitors during the day's activities. The MRBG are a regional botanic garden representing the biodiversity of the Central Queensland Coast and has been established around a horseshoe-shaped lagoon at the southern entrance to the city. The area was first suggested as a site for a botanic garden in 1876. Some 130 years later, the MRBG have finally been established!

When fully developed, the site will cover 48 hectares, and will be developed in five stages over a period of 17 years. We are very thrilled to know that the money (\$3 million) is available for stage two, which is now in the planning stage, and should be ready to open in 2007. Two buildings were constructed in Stage 1 – the Administration Building and the Visitor Centre. The plan form of these buildings and an observation

deck over the lagoon was inspired by the petals and sepal of an orchid flower.

The Friends Association was established some months prior to the opening, and has a small but enthusiastic membership who have worked very hard during the year providing guides for guided walks, as well as manning the information desk in the Visitors Centre during weekends and public holidays. The MRBG are being used as a wonderful educational resource by the local schools, and Friends have been overwhelmed by the requests for guided tours from these groups.

The Friends meet monthly in the Visitor Centre at the MRBG. These meetings usually include a talk relating to the MRBG. Topics to date have included a review of the MRBG design by the landscape architect, some early history of the site, the fresh-water aquatic life in the lagoons, the function of the calibration baseline for surveyors established within the MRBG and, most recently, the celebration of the Maltese garden within the MRBG.

Establishing the MRBG during a major drought has been difficult, with most of the planting in the MRBG being undertaken during the last 18 months. Mackay is in the tropics, and southern visitors are constantly amazed by the growth in the gardens already.

The logo for the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens depicts Mackay's own flora featuring the stylised flower of the Mount Blackwood Holly, *Graptophyllum ilicifolium*.

The Mount Blackwood Holly is known only from a few populations in the Mackay district. The plant was described and named in 1868 from specimens collected from Mount Blackwood (near Mackay) that are now held in herbaria at Melbourne and Kew Gardens in London. Apart from one other collection from Port Mackay late in the nineteenth century, the occurrence was not officially recorded again for about 100 years.

The Mount Blackwood Holly is a large rainforest understorey shrub with dark, shiny green, holly-like leaves that are borne in pairs of greatly unequal size. Clusters of showy deep pink flowers are borne in the leaf axils from late winter into spring. The holly is easy to grow in semi-shaded or sunny garden situations and makes a good screen or hedge plant; it is readily available through the nursery trade under the name of Holly Fuchsia.

### **Robin McWhinney, Secretary**

### **Friends of the Albury Botanic Gardens**

**A**S WE ALL KNOW, TIME BRINGS CHANGE. This is true for the City of Albury. A new 'City Gardens' housing development opposite the eastern boundary of the Botanic Gardens in Wodonga Place has led to a \$1.4 million facelift for the City and renovations of three of the boundaries. Although all of the beautiful old elms have gone from the streetscape, new plantings, light poles and improved parking for buses and cars brought the description of 'stunning' from our Mayor, Cr. Patricia Gould.

Spring rains and plenty of warm sunshine have brought our Gardens and the new rose arbours out into a beautiful display. The rain also affected our Spring Festival and Plant Sale, almost causing a washout, but thanks to the dedicated visitors who braved the elements our Growing Group and Friends still managed to raise over \$550.

A wonderful musical afternoon in early May saw visitors entertained by the Scots School Highland Pipe & Drum Band and the Sing Australia Choir. Greatly enjoyed by over 400 visitors, it will certainly become an annual event.

The Gardens were the base camp for the Community Bush Survey that was held over two days and three nights. Over 70 volunteers and 17 team leaders scoured our bushland areas of Nail Can Hill and found many treasures. Five threatened species were found, including two new plants of our Crimson Spider Orchid, the Growling Grass Frog and a new population of the Pink-tailed Worm Lizard. All these were found in our bushland areas that are now an endangered ecological community. A great success and tribute to the TAFE students and Louise Ball, who organised the Survey.

The Friends who met 'Alexander' from India at the Ballarat Conference may be pleased to hear of his continuing success in the planning for a biodiversity sanctuary in Southern India. Alex and his committee are establishing a scientific trust fund to help in the purchase of land. Entomologist Dr Francis Kakassery, from India, whom we met recently when our Friends entertained the 'World Dragonfly Conference' delegates, is assisting the Committee. Alex is trying to establish the sanctuary to secure traditional food and medicinal plants and habitat for the 'Slender Lori', which has to be one of the cutest primates ever!

Part of our ongoing association with southern India is the establishment of a trust fund, to enable the exchange of staff between Albury and India to assist in professional development, research and training. If any other Friends group would like to become involved, a quick message to our secretary, Paul Scannell on 02 60 238 769 could advance this project further. Who knows, in this world of change, we may end up with an international Friends' Association!

We look forward to meeting up again in Canberra in 2004.

**Jeff Gates, President**

### **Friends of the Orange Botanic Gardens**

**A** WINTER SEMINAR, WITH THE THEME of organic gardening, was held at the Gardens on 7 August and attracted a good audience. The speakers, all from Central West NSW, were Basil Baldwin (Sustainable vegetable planting), Michael Priest (Fungi in the garden) and Margie Crowther (Permaculture). The catering sub-committee produced a wonderful lunch, which was enjoyed at outdoor tables in the sun. Our speakers were able to stay for lunch and continue discussions with the participants.

Orange Botanic Gardens is proud to be hosting the NSW Regional Botanic Gardens Conference from 14 to 16 May 2004. This is the second conference in this series which brings together botanic gardens' managers,

staff and other interested bodies such as friends of botanic gardens and community groups. A sub-committee from the Friends of the Orange Botanic Gardens is working with the OBG Supervisor and a professional conference facilitator to put together the programme, which includes lectures, tours and social events. The lectures will have broad appeal, with subjects ranging from garden design and management to community involvement in botanical gardens. This will be a wonderful opportunity to showcase Orange, its botanic gardens and its friendly, talented inhabitants. More details of this exciting event can be obtained from the conference secretariat on (02) 6362 0276 or email to [jarnott@netconnect.com.au](mailto:jarnott@netconnect.com.au).

The Friends are now busy preparing for the Central West Garden and Outdoor EXPO to be held in the Gardens on 2 November. This is now a regular event on the Orange Calendar. It is organised by the Rotary Club of Orange (Daybreak) with the assistance of the Friends of the Orange Botanic Gardens and other community groups. As usual, the nett proceeds will be distributed to local charities as well as the regular portion that flows back to the Gardens. The Friends are preparing a plant stall, with many items having been propagated by the 'Growing Friends' during the year from plant material in the Gardens. The Friends have organised a full day's programme of talks and demonstrations, as well as guided walks of the Gardens.

The Friends Committee, together with the Orange Regional Conservatorium, is planning another series of twilight concerts in the Gardens next February and March. 'Music in the Gardens' proved very popular this year; visitors came along with their picnic baskets and enjoyed a relaxed evening of light classical music in a beautiful environment. This new venture is proving to be an excellent way to promote the use and appreciation of the Gardens.

A local group of Bonsai enthusiasts has joined the Friends. They have regular meetings at the Gardens to learn and practise their craft, and hope to have a display of their plants at the Gardens from time to time.

### **Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens**

**G**EELONG FRIENDS WERE STIMULATED by the recent inaugural Botanic Gardens of Australia and New Zealand Congress held here from 24 to 28 October. The theme of the Conference, *Botanic Gardens: Engaging their Communities*, attracted over 200 delegates comprising Botanic Gardens Managers, Field and Technical staff, Friends and Volunteers of major and regional Botanic Gardens, Community Groups and others from kindred organisations involved with parks, zoos and museums, local government and the horticulture industry.

Dr. Peter Wyse Jackson, Secretary General of Botanic Gardens International (BGCI), opened the congress with an inspiring talk about the work of BGCI whose mission is to build an enduring worldwide network of botanic gardens for plant conservation and sustainable development. Dr. Chin See Chung, Director, Singapore Botanic Gardens, presented a wonderful overview of this historic Garden and the development that is presently taking place at Singapore's premier tourist destination.

The program divided into four main streams, Heritage Planning and Protection, Conservation and Science, Horticulture/Arboriculture and Community Networking. It was great to see Friends and Gardens Staff interacting at all levels as they digested words of wisdom from the excellent speakers.

Geelong Friends were delighted to meet Friends from Mackay Botanic Gardens, Coffs Harbour, Myall Park, Colac, Adelaide and Sydney as well as staff from regional gardens across Australia.

FGBG assisted three of our voluntary guides to attend the National Conference of Voluntary Guides held at Kings Park at the end of September. This was a very stimulating experience. Guides were particularly impressed by the strength of the Kings Park Friends and the magnitude of the projects they have been able to orchestrate in partnership with the Board of Management.

*Nature Personified – Helen Leitch*, an exhibition of watercolours depicting biodiversity, commissioned by the Museum of Adelaide, has recently moved to Fitzroy Falls after a month at the Gordon Gallery, Geelong. FGBG organized the exhibition for Geelong, staffed it and sold the very attractive accompanying merchandise for the month that it was here. Nearly 2,400 people visited the exhibition.

FGBG now share their meeting room and facilities with eight other community groups with links to the Botanic Gardens. All have become corporate members of the Friends.

The Geelong Botanic Gardens Artist will have an exhibition at Murston House, Geelong commencing on 7 November. Margaret Muffett and her students are eagerly looking forward to this event.

Visitors keep coming to see our 21st Century Gardens and the new plantings that are occurring in the historic garden. The Guides, Growers and our Teahouse are very busy, which is good news.

We look forward to our pre-Christmas plant sale on 6 and 7 December. Forward planning for 2004 includes a celebration of Art and Creativity in the Gardens on 27 and 28 March when 17 regional artists will collaborate on an installation. The Friends are supporting this event.

Where has 2003 gone?

## Jayne Salmon

### Friends of Burnley Gardens

**N**EWSPAPERS OF A PLANNED DEVELOPMENT with 5-storey buildings to house 4,000 GE Capital Finance workers has caused our group a great deal of anxiety. The buildings will overshadow the Nursery and also create wind tunnels. The impact on the Gardens of such high-density buildings, pedestrian and vehicle traffic will be devastating. The project is considered to be of State significance in terms of investment and employment so Minister Delahunty has approved the developer's proposal without local Council or community consultation.

A campaign has been waged by Friends members and nearby residents on radio, TV and in newspapers.

Three hundred people attended an Information Meeting at Richmond Town Hall on 30 September, and approximately 150 concerned residents protested at a noisy rally opposite GE in Swan Street on 30 October during peak-hour traffic. Yarra Council will hold a further meeting on Wednesday 12 November at 7.30 p.m.

Burnley Gardens are very seriously threatened by this development and I urge you to help us protect them by writing to Mary Delahunty and Steve Bracks at Parliament House expressing your concern for the Garden's future. Whilst our response to the Amrad/GE project has taken most of our energy to date we have still had time to plan our AGM for Saturday 15 November with a basket lunch and the installation, by Sir Rupert Hamer, of a plaque acknowledging Friends support of restoration projects in the Gardens. Long may they reign!

For further information about the immediate threat to the Gardens phone 9428-1314

**Kay Hirst, President**

### Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne

**T**HE GROWING FRIENDS PLANT SALE in October produced the best-ever result\_\$28,461. Factors contributing to this success included a wonderful offering of drought-tolerant plants, some rare treasures, the first RBG Spring Open Day which was timed to draw visitors to the Sale on the Sunday, a warm sunny weekend, good recent rainfall, and perhaps the irresistible urge to garden once Spring arrives. The Growing Friends made calico bags, stamped with the Friends' logo, to help buyers carry home their plants. They proved very popular. Membership of this group, a principal funder of the Friends, is limited to 32 by space limitations at their nursery; 34 others are on the waiting list. Another Spring success was the booked-out Friends' trip to the south-west of Western Australia in October.

Last year the Friends launched the 'Water Works, Water Wise' project to extend the RBG's Automatic Irrigation System to Theatre Lawn and implement improvements to the system's flow capacity. Grants of \$26,995 from the Friends and \$20,000 from our Trust Fund have now fulfilled this pledge. We have now agreed to support the provision of a watering system for the Ian Potter Foundation Children's Garden, costing approximately \$45,000. This will involve an interactive water system for children's play as well as sprinklers for the plants. Planting has begun for this exciting project, with the opening planned for October 2004.

The Gardens are free of bats for the first time in 20 years, thanks to an ambitious collaborative effort of scientific importance. RBG arborists have been removing dead trees from Fern Gully, repairing damage to others, and establishing South-east Australian indigenous plants.

The RBG's senior arborist, Kiah Martin, took part in the International Tree Climbing Championships in

Montreal, Canada, in August and was crowned Women's World Tree-climber Champion.

Following the Council's decision to devote more financial resources to the Friends' quarterly *Botanic News*, two issues in full colour have been very well received. It is hoped that the instant appeal of the new look will attract more members. Editor Meg Miller, her team and contributors have risen to the challenge of earlier deadlines and strict space limitations demanded by the new format by Dianna Wells Design. Dianna has also modernised the Friends' logo and designed a new range of stationery.

An outstanding recent activity was John Patrick's talk on 'Gardens, Villages and Chateaux of the French Riviera, Provence and the Dordogne' – so popular that he generously repeated his presentation. A plant photography course in October was also very successful. Other interesting talks have included David Glenn on Gardening through the Drought; Paul Thompson on Planting Design with Australian Plants; Stephen Ryan on More Exceptional Plants; Dr Tom May on A Mycological Mystery; and Dr Terry Turney on The Secret Life of Ferns – a rich offering of fascinating subjects.

A newly-formed Friends' Walking Group will step out in November with Birrarung Marr, Melbourne's newest major parkland, its destination.

The Botanical Illustrators will present a display and sale of small unframed works in the Observatory Building on Sunday 23 November, a great opportunity to acquire original work at affordable prices. The artists have adopted a new project to paint many of the RBG's oak trees, and have learned from one of their number, Marina Albert, how computers can offer them new approaches to botanical illustration.

This year's Friends' Christmas card features a striking illustration by Anita Barley of *Erythrina cristagalli*, Cockscomb Coral Tree. Contact the Friends' office to obtain them. Another idea for Christmas is the new Friends' recipe book *Sweet and Savoury Treats* from our Catering Committee; great value for \$10.

Several scientific conferences and workshops ushered in the 150th anniversary celebrations for the National Herbarium. An exhibition of art from the Herbarium's State Botanical Collection, *Nature's Art Revealed*, will be a major event, including some works never previously displayed. Covering the span of the Herbarium's existence, it will illustrate the important role of botanical art in the work of this venerable institution. The exhibition will be staged from 26 November to 17 December at Domain House (formerly the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art), now leased to the RBG by Melbourne City Council.

The Friends Annual Meeting on 10 November will provide an opportunity to learn about the Herbarium from Helen Cohn, who is documenting its history in a book we are funding. In addition, the Voluntary Guides will lead special walks demonstrating the progress that has occurred over 150 years, and how the work of Herbarium botanists is relevant to people's lives.

The Friends are offering a specially-labelled range of red and white wine from Yering Station to mark the

anniversary and the work of the Herbarium's founder, Baron Ferdinand von Mueller. The Baron's life will also be celebrated with a world-premiere season of a music-theatre work commissioned by the RBG. *Love, Death, Music and Plants* will be staged in the Herbarium's Mueller Hall between 18 and 30 November.

Linking the Herbarium's early history with the 21st century, a significant milestone was reached in July when the 500,000th specimen was entered on the database records. An extremely valuable research tool, the Melbourne Information System Register (MELISR) was initiated in 1991. Details of specimens held in the Herbarium (including name and description of the plant, its collector, date, locality and habitat where it was found) are extracted from labels and entered on the database. This huge undertaking gained impetus initially with funding from the J.T.Reid Charitable Trust and, since 2001, with the advent of Australia's Virtual Herbarium Project funded by the State and Federal governments. Sixty per cent of the Herbarium's collection of 800,000 Australian plant specimens has now been entered.

## Heather Ironmonger

### Friends of Karwarra Plant Garden

**K**ARWARRA WILL BE HOSTING a spectacular Botanical Art Exhibition featuring Australian flora from 15 November to 7 December. The exhibition will be in the Horticultural Hall, which is in a beautiful setting amongst tall eucalypts and a wealth of Australian plants, with glimpses over Silvan Dam.

Among the artists exhibiting will be a select number who in 2001 had their work exhibited at the Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The exhibition will be opened by the renowned botanical artist Celia Rosser, OAM, and will be open to the public from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day. Entrance to the Garden and the Exhibition is \$3.50 for adults. Entry for accompanied children is free. Tours of the Garden for 10 or more people may be booked in advance.

Artworks may be purchased. There will be painting demonstrations on Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays. Artists will be selling cards of their work.

## Denise Payne, Secretary

### Friends of Warrnambool Botanic Gardens

**O**UR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING was well attended and we were delighted to have Richard Barley, divisional director of the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne, as the speaker. He recognised that we were at a crucial stage of the development of our Gardens and told us of the many ways the Melbourne Gardens had addressed the problems of moving into the 21st century. He drew our attention to the need for water conservation, the replanting of older trees and designing garden beds to incorporate appropriate irrigation systems.

At the meeting the following life members were announced: Jean Fitzpatrick, Judi Phillips and Lorraine



Richardson, all of whom had been on the Friends' committee since its inception.

In August we organised a showing of the film 'Greenfingers', which was much enjoyed by all. Morning coffee and cakes were served, a raffle was held and the function raised over \$400.

The Growing Friends have collected and successfully raised seeds from the Coastal Manna Gum and Sweet Bursaria that were growing here long before the Gardens were established in the late 1870s.

The Warrnambool City Council, after much consultation, has selected Australian Landscape Management to review the Conservation & Development Plan originally drawn up in 1995. As part of the preparation for the plan, a questionnaire has been sent to all Friends, schools and nearby residents to help identify what the community most values about the Gardens, and how they can best be managed and developed in the future.

## Marigold Curtis

### Friends of Wombat Hill Botanic Gardens

RECENTLY WE HELD OUR AGM, when the outgoing President, Shirley Falkinder, gave a comprehensive report of our activities and achievements for the past year, highlights of which appear below.

The third and last of our annual Taylor and Sangster Lectures was held on AGM night, 29 September. With the theme of 'Environmental Gardening in the Central Highlands', Ken Allan, formerly of the Garden of St Erth, spoke knowledgeably of climate change and its impact on our garden practices and expectations.

Early in the year we had a special meeting to set ourselves goals to work towards:

1. To increase community enjoyment of and involvement with the care of our Gardens. Here we are looking to implement a schools program. To this end two of our members attended a one-day Community Forum, 'Goldfields School Innovative and Excellence Initiative'.
2. To encourage further work on the plant-labelling program by the busy curatorial staff. We are happy to report that the staff has made progress with this task.
3. The establishment by the Council of an Advisory Committee to assist with forward planning for the Gardens.
4. The provision of more interpretive signage for the Gardens. We are at present in consultation with the Council concerning applying for a grant to finance this project.
5. To discuss with the Friends, at a General Meeting to which the public was invited, the issues concerning the maintenance of the Scenic Drive in the Gardens. The question is whether the drive should be closed or sealed. We appreciate the help John Hawker has given us as we studied the pros and cons of this issue.

We are looking forward to hearing the result of the application to have our Gardens Heritage-listed.

As this year draws to a close we have plans afoot to assist with the Fabulous Flower Festa, a fund-raising event for the Swiss-Italian Festa next year. One of our committee members is on the organising committee, whilst the Growing Friends are busy raising plants to

be sold at the Farmers Market. Some Friends will attend to the floral table decorations for the dinner at Bellinzona Grange Country Retreat on Saturday 29 November, when Stephan Ryan will be the speaker. Bellinzona is also the venue for the Fabulous Flower Festa floral display, which is open to the public on the week-end of the Festa, 29 and 30 November, and on the previous Wednesday, 26 November. Friends are preparing to guide visitors through the Gardens.

We express our warm thanks to our retiring President, Shirley Falkinder. Her dedication began our Friends group seven years ago and has kept it on track through highs and lows. We are grateful that she will be there as Vice-President to guide the newer committee members.

## Greater Shepparton Botanic Gardens Association

HERE AT SHEPPARTON WE ARE PROBABLY in the most challenging phase of retaining Parkside Gardens as a public park and recreation-zoned site of 20 hectares, including surrounding moat waterways. Local Council signed a Deed of Agreement with VicUrban in September 2002 to rezone the Gardens for 150-plus house lots.

The plans went up for display on 23 October and the planning amendments proposed are appalling when one considers that this site was first established on 23 October 1973, when the sewerage authority gave it to the City Council. After a public poll in 1975 the concept of an International Village evolved because of the diverse nature of our population. The many nationalities worked alongside the local service club members to build up, over time, display houses of different design and accompanying gardens. For example, a Chinese pavilion, pagoda, moon-gate and bridge were among the favoured photo-shots for ceremonies and family pictures. Most of these have now been demolished by the City Council, with the exception of the excellent Bangerang Cultural Centre and Philippine House and Museum. From 1983 to 1985 an entry fee was charged, making it difficult for some locals to patronise. However, visitors still came and in 1994 33,000 people came through the entry tea-rooms.

In 1995 the Commissioners decided that the Village was too costly to finance, though, over previous years, Council salaried workers carried out the task of maintenance. It was resolved in 1996 to open it to free entry for all and it was renamed Parkside Gardens after public consultation. Council also decided that there would be no residential development inside the surrounding waterways. The Gardens were in pristine condition.

So here we are, 30 years later, and three and a half years of lobbying by our hard-working Friends, campaigning for the retention of this beautiful site against local government and the State authority VicUrban. Objections may be made only until 24 November. We take this opportunity to thank all those who have given us continued support. Objections may be sent to the Greater Shepparton City Council, Locked Bag 1000, Shepparton, Vic, 3632.

### Pat Moran

## Friends of the Portland Botanic Gardens

OUR SMALL BUT ENTHUSIASTIC FRIENDS met on Sunday 22 October for afternoon tea and a fascinating presentation by Russell Evans from Portland Coastal Water. Russell told us about the use of reed beds in the treatment of sewerage and waste water. It was a very interactive presentation and a lively discussion made it a vital meeting.

Also at this meeting our Growing Friends held their first plant sale and were delighted at the response. Our big sale will be held in Autumn as part of our 'Day in the Gardens'.

We were hoping for a splendid day of warm weather for our Melbourne Cup luncheon on the Sunday prior to the Cup, as it was our major fund-raising effort for 2003.

As our Masterplan is nearing completion we are looking forward to having some money for our first project. Then we will really feel that we are up and running as a 'Friends' group for our historic Gardens.

**Diane Kierce, President**

## Friends of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide

REORGANISATION AND PLANNING have been the imperatives for the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide during 2003 and these have involved the Friends of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide. The Strategic Plan, with its parameters including ecological, cultural and financial considerations, is being supplemented with a Management Plan and Communications Strategy. FGBA committee members have been involved in a series of BGA discussion groups and workshops. These included preliminary planning of a BGA/Uni-versity of Adelaide Access Study on what visitors value and how to achieve this, a review of safety procedures involving volunteers, and discussion on a memorandum of understanding between the Board of the Gardens, the BGA and the FBGA. In addition to monthly FBGA committee meetings attended by the Director, quarterly meetings have been held with Hills and Plains Managers and staff, and some of the activities attended are 'Planning for the 21st Century', with presentations for the Master Plan, the signing of the Millennium Seedbank Agreement between the BGA and Kew, and the Congress 2003 BGANZ 'Botanic Gardens: Engaging their Communities', held in Geelong and well attended by BGA staff with Board and FBGA representatives. The Board's Development Programme has been outlined by the Chairman, Mr John Dawkins, with its focus on the Gardens' sesquicentenary anniversary 'Gardens 150' and close partnership with the SA Government and FBGA.

The reorganisation and planning have had immediate effects on some Friends' activities. Centralisation of all Gardens nursery activities at Mount Lofty has meant that the Growing Group is unable to increase the growing and storage area at present, and this, with some glasshouse heating problems, has reduced plant propagation and growing. Nevertheless, the Group is discussing five-year aims and progress plans, and the allied photographic group

continues to collect plant studies and data, which are scanned into the BGA database. An advantage is North Lodge shop's inclusion in the recent optic cabling ABG communications network. Communication for safety and security is an important issue. There has been Government Radio Network (GRN) training for Guides and North Lodge volunteers, and in October training days were organised by an FGBA Working Group, which were well attended by staff members as well as the Friends who have had community contact duties. Keynotes speakers were from the SA Police Community Programs Unit, with talks by the Head of Gardens, Education Officer, Communications Co-ordinator, and on the GRN and EFTPOS systems. An induction booklet is being prepared by the same Group for distribution to North Lodge Shop volunteers. A growing Group training programme was also given by Barry Dangerfield, the FBGA Horticultural Consultant. Two workshops have been organised by Cathy Veide, the Co-ordinator of the recently formed Botanical Art Group, the first with Dianne Emery from Melbourne. This activity is very popular and continues to attract new members.

As well as trips and talks organised by the Tour Group, this year the FGBA took part in several community events. At 'Gardens Alive 2003' in April the display marquee was popular with its theme 'There's More Than Meets The Eye' in the work of a Botanic Garden and volunteer involvement. The theme at the Australian Plant Society Sale and Display in September was 'Water-Wise Wittunga' and the FBGA display and information was again well received. Attendance at the Hills Harvest Festival held at Mount Lofty House was not good and we will need to think about taking part in this again. Activities organised within the Gardens have been the October North Lodge Plant Sale, which was allied with an exhibition of Aboriginal artefacts from Tandanya, the National Aboriginal Cultural Institute in Adelaide. These were held in conjunction with an SA Water/BGA weekend of water-wise community programmes that included walks by FGBA and Taoundi guides. Other recent Guide trails have included the 'Arthritis Walk', a winter 'Spice Walk' with morning tea, and 'From Earth to Plate' in association with the Tasting Australia Festival. Avenues for inexpensive but effective advertising continued to be explored. Banners were a continuing problem with competition for limited space, vandalism and erratic display.

Agreement has been reached (in principle) for a uniform Guide shirt with FGBA insignia to be worn when on duty, and this has the enthusiastic approval of the Gardens. More planning before this is to be realised, as there is with the proposed redesign of our Newsletter, for which we are receiving excellent advice from Friends of Botanic Gardens associations throughout Australia.

**Tommie Siekmann**

## Friends of the Orange Botanic Gardens

THE 2004 N.S.W. REGIONAL BOTANIC Garden Conference will be held at the Clover

Hill Function Centre, Orange Botanic Gardens, from 14 to 16 May 2004.

The Conference Highlights will be:

1. Design Concepts
2. Educational potential of Botanic Gardens
3. Involving the Community
4. A look at Australia's newest Botanic Garden

The Speakers will include:

Rob Small, CEO, Colac-Otway Shire, Victoria  
Dr Frank Howarth, Director, RBG Sydney  
Dr Michael Anlezark, Director, Burrendong Botanic Garden Arboretum.

Enquiries should be made to the Conference Secretariat: Jane Arnott, Phone 02 6362 0276, Fax 02 6361 9137, Mob 0429 667 020, Email [jarnott@netconnect.com.au](mailto:jarnott@netconnect.com.au).

### **Friends of Australian Inland Botanic Gardens**

Great progress has been made by our tireless volunteer retired builders team, and the re-erection of the Magenta Shearing Shed, dismantled and transported from near Balranald, is now complete. It had its first use on our OPEN DAY, 2 November, when it displayed our first Rose Show, Native Plants exhibition and flower and historic photographs. The Shed will be a great acquisition to host future displays and events, and it is an exciting addition to the facilities at the Gardens.

The handyman Z team has also erected many indoor and outdoor tables and seats to complement the shearing shed and surrounding mallee. The Nature Trail team has extended its pathway through the Callitris Grove, completing the circle back to the shearing shed and Garnpang homestead reception area. All these additions have provided more visitor-friendly facilities for family picnics, etc., and the Friends owe a great debt of gratitude to those dedicated and consistent volunteers.

Rains in August and September brought the long drought to an end, but unfortunately unleashed a surfeit of very robust weeds, thistles and prickles, making much extra work for the Garden staff and some of the 'dead-heading' team. The roses erupted in a magnificent display for the Open Day and weekly dead-heading is now to begin after the winter break.

It's a very busy time again with almost weekly weddings and many tour groups booking for tractor or train tours, meals and refreshments. We welcome them all, especially when they patronise our souvenir shop to help with our fund-raising.

On Sunday 25 October a day tour was organised to visit several local gardens, with lunch provided, which proved to be a lovely social day for the Friends. Several very beautiful gardens were visited, all using every inch of their space for garden beautification with many outstanding features. Of particular note was the ecological and water-conservation-friendly native garden under drip irrigation, illustrating a very

attractive layout and use of a wide range of native plants. Scoria and pavers provided walkways with not a blade of lawn in sight, illustrating that lawns are not necessary to create a good garden – a lesson to be learnt in this dry country.

With increasingly large numbers of visitors daily our aim is to have the reception area open all the week, but a lot more volunteers are needed. We are presently open on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, and whenever a tour group is booked.

**Margaret Hall, Hon. Secretary**

### **Friends of Gisborne Botanic Gardens**

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE GISBORNE BOTANIC GARDENS continues slowly but steadily. The theme of New Zealand flora continues to challenge as not many are represented in the nursery trade apart from Hebes, Flaxes and Pittosporums! Since our last report we have moved the nursery and are still in the process of setting it up properly again. We are growing many plants sourced from the Royal Botanic Gardens in Melbourne and from gardens on Mt Macedon, as well as from seed sourced from New Zealand botanic gardens.

Our Maori statue Tanemahuta has just had its head replaced after it was stolen almost a year ago. The new head was created by the nephew of the original sculptor and looks very fierce! Let's hope it deters future thieves.

Another project just completed was two information signs for themed collections, Hebes and Pittosporums; they are made of vitreous enamel, which is almost vandal-proof, but oh, so expensive!

We continue to raise funds by taking part in local markets and rare plant sales, doing what we do best, growing and selling plants.

**Melanie Kinsey**

### **Friends of Castlemaine Botanical Gardens**

WHILE WE HAVE NOT BEEN very physically active this year, we have continued to pay for improvements to the Gardens. We have just replicated the lampholders which are now sitting proudly on the central pillars of the main entrance gates.

Michael Taylor has completed Stage One of a Feasibility Study about the possible reconstruction of the original Shelter Shed, which would replace the barbecue shelter in the north end of the Gardens. Kevin Walsh is about to complete his study of the Rose Garden and we will be trying to identify the roses again during this spring/summer.

A new interpretative sign is in place which identifies the Nursery site. A grant application for badly-needed repairs to the Former Tea Rooms has been placed with Heritage Victoria.

After protracted negotiations between the Shire, the Friends and the Pipe Band, we are delighted now to be able to share the Tea Rooms with the Band. The Shire will be in control of the Former Tea Rooms, and will be responsible for ongoing maintenance and bookings for other groups, etc. It will be wonderful to meet in



the Gardens, and we hope that this will raise our profile in the community.

**Trish Addis, Secretary**

### **From the Secretary**

**T**HE COMMITTEE OF THE ASSOCIATION met in Geelong on 27 October. It was noted that all Members had paid their subscriptions for this year and that the Association's financial resources were satisfactory. The President reported on the advanced preparations for the next Conference, to be held in Canberra from 16 to April 2004. There was a discussion about the number of conferences now regularly held. It was considered that a central register of those planned should be established to avoid clashes where some people had interests in more than one organisation. The Shepparton problems mentioned above were also discussed.

The next meeting of the Committee will be held in Melbourne on 20 February. The 12th Annual General Meeting of the Association will be held during the Canberra Conference.

Number 22 of *Campsis* will be issued after the Canberra Conference. I thank those who have contributed to the present issue, and urge others to add to the list of contributors in number 22. It is worth noting that Number 20 marked, without any fanfare, the completion of ten years of publication of *Campsis*, but it is a matter of regret that many of the Members of the Association have rarely contributed to recent numbers of this newsletter.

**Lawrence Cohn**