



Campsis

NEWSLETTER

Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens Inc.

ISSN 1320-8578 AOO26805Z

www.friendsbotanicgardens.org

No. 31

October 2008

PRESIDENTS REPORT

As Friends of Botanic Gardens we derive considerable pleasure from sharing our gardens with other people.

Isn't it delightful to watch a toddler enjoying the freedom of a large attractive space then suddenly concentrating on a leaf, a seed pod or perhaps a bird. Or the pleasure on the face of an elderly garden lover as a caring family pushes the wheelchair through some favourite places.

Friends of Botanic Gardens share a common interest. What about *uncommon* interests? People having an incredible diversity of interests contribute to our gardens through Friends groups. It is clear that it is not a prerequisite to be a plant expert, although they are welcome too.

Each effective Friends Group has a committee with some organisational, secretarial and financial skills. Other people may bring computer skills, run a web site, publish a newsletter or print plant labels. A newsletter needs an editor, writers to provide articles and even 'envelope stuffers' to post it out.

Many groups have "Growing Friends" who propagate plants for sale or use in the gardens.



Detail from Carlene Gosbel quilt of Australian plants

Some Friends assist gardens staff with plantings or maintenance. Then there are tour guides or master gardeners to help visitors enjoy our gardens and to answer their questions.

Some Friends develop skills in collecting and mounting herbarium specimens. Others apply their artistic talents through botanical paintings or illustrations. Photographers can make records of plants, people or events in gardens.

Even people using a needle and thread can contribute through producing garden related fabric or craft items. The quilt shown was made by Carlene Gosbel, featuring Australian plants and raffled by FRBG Cranbourne. It was very popular

The point of this is to celebrate the skills people apply through our Friends Groups and to acknowledge your important contribution whatever you do. Keep up the good work.

Alex Smart, President

FROM THE SECRETARY

We now have another two members, Friends of North Coast Regional Botanic Gardens at Coffs Harbour and the Stony Range Regional Botanic Garden Advisory Committee, whom I understand are in the process of formalising a Friends group. Delegates from both these gardens expressed interest in joining the AFBG at the conference in Orange early this year. We wish them well and hope to see them at future events.

The Association Committee recently, endeavoured to conquer the tyranny of distance- the bane of all national organisation volunteer committees - by holding our September meeting as one hour teleconference. This was a new experience for most, but with all nine members connected we managed our business quite well, with a few technique refinements needed for the next meeting. 'Skype' option is not available to all members.

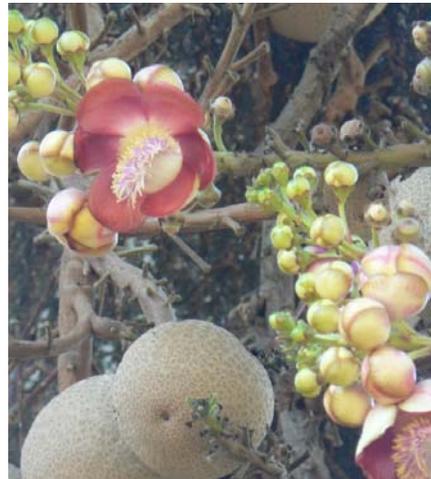
It is very pleasing to read that Botanic Gardens of Australia and New Zealand, BGANZ (Queensland) has now been formed, completing the very effective BGANZ regional network of gardens in the eastern states.

In October, I attended the BGANZ(Vic) *Diversity & Directions Forum* held in Geelong which drew 160 delegates(some Friends), from 4 states and most areas of horticultural practice. The excellent speakers were received with great enthusiasm, the networking was vibrant and the forum ended with unanimous support for 'more of the same!'

In August/September I took -my husband-to visit five botanic gardens- we both enjoyed them!

Among the many treasures in the Darwin gardens, the tangles of palm sized flowers of the canon ball tree *Couroupita guianensis* is a sight not to be missed.

In brief, we also visited, the Noosa gardens at Tewantin, that are terraced to overlook Lake McDonald, the Gold Coast gardens with impressive water ways, paved areas and new many recent plantings, Coffs Harbour, an absolute gem of wonderful rainforest, lakes and marvellous collections and Hunter Region at Newcastle with extensive natural bushland/ wetland trails- and conversely the largest succulent collection in Australia!



Canon Ball Tree; Couroupita guianensis

Unbelievably, Hunter Region garden volunteer management is battling the proposed loss of the charming entrance garden due to the realignment of the industrial egress road from the Hume Freeway- that would deliver a reduced garden entrance *beneath* the elevated road! We trust that they are successful in their challenge.

Coffs Harbor gardens are keen to connect/hot key other Friends groups/botanic gardens to their website. Contact Eve Colley - eventime@tpg.com.au or coffsbotanic@gmail.com

Vale: The Committee was saddened to learn of the untimely death of past Committee member (2004/7) Denise Underwood. Denise provided considerable landscape design and valued assistance, probono, to the Friends of Greater Shepparton Gardens in their lengthy but unsuccessful struggle to retain their gardens. Our condolences to her family.

Annie McGeachy, Secretary

FRIENDS OF AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL BOTANIC GARDENS

Canberra ACT

Review of Management Plan and Budget

The Friends have continuing concerns about future funding of ANBG.

Parks Australia maintained funding, pending the Review of the Management Plan, and the budget seems to have allowed a slight increase in staff numbers. An appointed dedicated staff member will oversight the plan and consult with stakeholders; including the Friends, whose submissions are likely to include a proposal to establish the ANBG as a statutory body. As a first step, the Friends are collaborating with an ACT Senator to organise a 7 October open forum, where experts and the public can discuss the future of the Gardens

Projects

The Friends have funded some projects, in the last year or so, including the establishment of a Botanical Resource Centre (with a public reference herbarium, reference material, computers and microscopes); finalisation of a bryophyte website (complementing the earlier fungal website); a Spring flower display at the time of Floriade; and extension of the misting system in the rainforest gully. Additional projects on this scale are being discussed with management, including ANBG memorabilia and possible involvement with an alpine species germination research project

What's On talks: (see *Campsis P 16 for October November talks or www.anbg.gov.au/friends)*

A series of 40 lectures are hosted by the Friends to communicate botanical and ecological topics. These talks, each Thursday between February and November also raise funds towards Friends projects at ANBG through donations.

Social Activities in the Gardens:

'Grazing in the Gardens', a progressive dinner in the ANBG for Friends and others, 'Breakfast with the Birds' and a series of early morning bird walks, followed by a hearty breakfast are to coincide with the Canberra Floriade festival.

The Summer Concert Series held each weekend during January is an extremely popular a major fund raiser for the Friends. Also a Friends themed Twilight Dinner is held specifically for members.

Outside talks

As a means of promoting the ANBG as a national institution, several of the volunteer guides give talks to community groups on behalf of the Friends, as far afield as Bombala, Tumut and Orange.

Special walks

The ANBG Volunteer Guides provide 'booked walks', distinct from their 2 (3 in January and February) daily free guided walks. 'Booked walks' may involve a general tour, a particular interest walk or on a theme such as 'Around Oz in an Hour'. A guide is provided for every ten persons in the group. The charge is \$4 per person, with proceeds to the Friends of the ANBG for ANBG projects.

21st Anniversary in September 2009 of the Gazettal of *Acacia pycnantha*.

The Friends of ANBG propose the mounting of a comprehensive exhibition during Wattle Week 2009; centred on the floral sculpture by artist Lynne Stone, to celebrate *Acacia pycnantha* as the floral emblem of Australia coming of age.

Warwick Wright

FRIENDS OF AUSTRALINA INLAND BOTANIC GARDENS

Mildura Wentworth Region, Victoria

Advance Notice Conference 2010

Dates for the conference are to be Saturday 22nd and Sunday 23rd May 2010, Friday 21st May for registrations and pre and / or post conference tours will be notified later.

Our Friends look forward to meeting as many Friends of Botanic Gardens as are able to come and share the wonders of our region.

Jenny Eagle,
Secretary

FRIENDS OF ALBURY BOTANIC GARDENS

Murray Region NSW

Seemingly, so soon, have the cold and frosty mornings and cloudy days given way to the burst of new colour that lines our streets with cherry and pear blossoms and our gardens with garlands of brightly coloured poppies, snapdragons, camellias and magnolias. With distant views of snow-capped mountains set against crystal blue skies and the slightest tinges of green as the hillsides spring to life, **SPRING** truly is a magnificent season to behold.

The last few months at Albury have seen us busy with catering for visitors at the Gardens and at the Wonga Wetland's as well as at the Albury City's 'welcome to new citizens' and naturalisation ceremonies.

In August we had a tree planting ceremony at the Gardens to commemorate the continuous planting of endangered and rare specimens by the Gardens' previous curators. This was timed to tie in with Tree Week and wouldn't you know it, the rain bucketed down for almost two hours leaving just five of our Friends Group soaked to the skin. Not even the City Band turned up to make sure the deed was done! Our two metre high *Wollemia nobilis* now stands proudly opposite the rose arbour and beds for all to admire.

What a really great Conference was held at Orange in such a splendid venue. Yet again we say 'Well done Friends of the Gardens'!

The highlight of this year to date for us, must be the continued excitement and support from Albury City over the development of our Children's Garden Project. Our talented Council graphics department has put together a stunning presentation package and fund raising will start in earnest next month. It is anticipated that Gardens Staff will handle most of the physical side of the construction work as soon as the overall artistic planning is completed, hopefully by early 2009.

Our Growing Friends have had a very industrious year of growing for our big "Picnic in the Park and Plant Sale" on Sunday, 9th November. The event is being developed together with Albury City and our local Radio Station 2AY with Don Burke as a weekend guest. We are full of anticipation and hoping the rain will hold off until the following Monday. At the moment it seems to be meetings, meetings, meetings so farewell for now.

Jeff Gates, Secretary.

THE AUSTRALIAN ARID LANDS BOTANIC GARDEN

Port Augusta, South Australia

The 'Friends' of the Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden (AALBG) propagating group grow a large and diverse range of arid plant species with a strong focus on *Eremophila* which flourish well in our arid environment. Through the sale of native plants locally, the Friends of the AALBG have been most successful in increasing the awareness of utilizing arid plants for the average home gardener, by their regular and vast supply of native plants suitable to be grown in this area, at a reasonable price. This is complimented by a good general knowledge of growing natives to support the 'new' gardener considering the use of Australian native plants. Promotion of water saving plants and changing climate and lower rainfalls has also increased demand for native plants.

To compliment a growing interest in utilising Australian arid native plants in home gardens, the AALBG has almost completed the establishment of six demonstration home gardens known as "*AridSmart Display Gardens*". Each display garden has a different style to appeal to the varying interests of the community, eg Desert Garden; Mallee Garden; Arid Courtyard; Flinders Ranges; Coastal Garden.

The "*AridSmart Display Gardens*" were designed by a landscape designer to create a varying focus for each display garden. Along with the Curator Michael Anelzark, the 'Friends AALBG' has been constructing fencing, seating and laying of paths to ensure prompt completion of this project. As well, the propagators have been propagating the particular plant species to suit each of the "*AridSmart Display Gardens*". All plants are indigenous to the sub arid regions of Australia and will be available for sale for the home gardener.

There has been an increase in demand from larger businesses and companies requesting lists of unique plants to be grown specifically for regions they are seeking to re-vegetate, or use as their gardens for their businesses. This has been a challenging but rewarding task to propagate and to supply unique requests for plants not generally part of the common native plant supply lists. Between 10 and 15 'Friends' work very hard every Wednesday growing and selling plants at the AALBG and endeavouring to keep up with an ever increasing number of plant orders and enquiries.

Over the last 12 months Friends have been assisting financially as well as physically with the establishment of the "*AridSmart Display Gardens*", acquisition of portable microphones for the volunteer guides; a tipping trailer for the Gators, garden blower vac, and ongoing educational assistance with native plant knowledge for garden staff and the general public. Guided tours of the AALBG are offered by volunteers every weekday at 10am (weather permitting) and funds collected also assist with ongoing development of the garden.

Geraldine Davis
Secretary 08 8648 6399

FRIENDS OF BALLARAT BOTANICAL GARDENS

Gold Fields Region, Victoria

Ballarat Friends

This image represents the hope in Ballarat that Lake Wendouree will have a future, unlike the uncertainty for many lakes in Victoria.



An optimistic swan!

The swans also seem optimistic. Will the water level reach the swan before the egrets hatch or will the evaporation rate exceed the run-off from waste water diverted to the lake plus the rainfall the lake will receive over the coming weeks?

The Ballarat Botanical Gardens is looking good with beds planted again this last autumn.

The Ballarat Friends have recently completed their new building beside the nursery in the Botanic Gardens. The image shows a beaming Adele Thomas, our labelling Convenor, and she is very happy to have moved out of the store room into a spacious and well lit room!



Adele in the new building

This is one of our largest projects to date and many members have given their time to see the project completed.

The building has become a focus for the Friends in our many areas of activity and the plant sale area is beautifully protected by the *Sequoiadendron*, providing air conditioning and shade from the heat of summer. When we water our plants, we are also watering the tree, a good use of a scarce resource.



Friends enjoying the new facilities

*Judith Bailey
President*

FRIENDS OF WOMBAT HILL BOTANIC GARDENS, Central Highlands, Victoria

I am pleased to report that throughout the year, the Friends have continued to be involved in and contribute to, progress on several important issues directly affecting the gardens. Most of these have been reported in our Newsletter, so a summary here will suffice:

- Unanimous adoption by Council of the Conservation Management Plan (CMP) produced by Lee Andrews and Associates.
- A complete tree register for the Gardens done by John Beetham and incorporated in the CMP.

This register is very exciting for us as it establishes that Wombat Hill contains a Nationally Significant collection of conifers.

This information will serve to direct conservation work, the considerable money which Council has allotted for arboriculture, and inform future collection plans to add to our Heritage.

- Progress by Council and Central Highlands Water in the installation of the new watering system.
- Allocation of \$85,000 by Council in its 08/09 budget for tree works in the Gardens.

The above, along with other aspects of the well-being of the gardens, an informative and entertaining Taylor and Sangster Lecture Series and fundraising activities, have made it a busy but rewarding year for us.

None of these things happen automatically. I thank all the Committee members for their dedication and persistence in getting things done. For the past year our Newsletters have been compiled by Wayne Burr. He has put the newsletter in a format readily accessible for subsequent newsletter compilers; on behalf of the Friends, thanks Wayne. Thanks also to our Growing Friends for their continuing work in the Gardens and to all our other members for your support.

The Gardens belong to our community. Keep enjoying them!

Russ Wilkinson, President

FRIENDS OF BENALLA BOTANICAL GARDENS & RIVERINE PARKLAND North Eastern Victoria

Twentieth Year celebrated

The first meeting of the Friends of the Benalla Botanical Gardens was held in June 1988. At the AGM in August a very well attended meeting enjoyed the opportunity to hear guest speaker Richard Barley of the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne. About forty members then stayed for lunch on the deck of the Art Gallery overlooking Lake Benalla to celebrate the achievements of the Friends over the last twenty years.

Seats Add to the Gardens

As a result of our partnership with Council to promote the donation of seats to the Gardens three new seats have been installed this year. A total of eleven seats have now been installed thanks to seven different donors, plus we have funding for another new one to be added soon. There's no doubt that the seats are getting a great deal of use and

improve the accessibility and enjoyment of the area. Such strong support is an indication of how important the Gardens are to the Benalla community.

Benalla's Indigenous Community Garden

An exciting development presently taking shape across the lake at Moira Reserve is the Indigenous Community Garden. The beautiful stone wall, which represents a Coolamon or food bowl tipped on its side, has been in place since early last year. A number of large beds in the area surrounding the stone wall have just been planted with the assistance of school and community groups. The beds feature plants that are locally native to the Benalla area, including beautiful tufted grasses, small plants such as flax lilies, chocolate lilies, billy-buttons, common everlasting, and river bluebells as well as shrubs like the grey parrot pea, common *Eutaxia* and the lovely gold dust wattle.



School children busy with the planting

Signage to be installed will give information on indigenous culture and plant use. A further stage is also planned that will see a boardwalk weave through the Red Gums and reeds to a viewing platform by the lake.

This is not a project organised by the Friends but is certainly one that we wholeheartedly support. It has been undertaken by Benalla's Tomorrow: Today Foundation to create a place for learning about indigenous culture and the environment and to recognise the history of the district before European settlement. In addition it will be a great demonstration of the locally indigenous plants and how good they can look in a garden setting – hopefully inspiring local gardeners to consider planting some at home. The project is funded by grants and strongly supported by local council and by many different individuals, businesses and groups within the Benalla community, as well as receiving assistance with the design from the Royal Botanic Gardens.

Sally Gamble, President

COLAC BOTANIC GARDENS

If you have visited Colac's Botanic Gardens (shame on you if you haven't!) you will appreciate how integral Lake Colac is to the overall ambience of the Gardens. Our Friends have therefore been delighted that the Colac Otway Shire is working with us towards a project that will integrate the Gardens and the Lake, in a way that will enhance both of these wonderful assets. We were even more delighted that the Federal Government has granted \$150,000 towards the project!

We have recently drawn up a new Constitution and have also signed a Memorandum of Understanding between ourselves and the Shire. We would strongly recommend to all Friends Groups that the “paperwork” be in order, thus avoiding possible misunderstandings as to the role of each body.

At our AGM in July we presented Life Membership Certificates to Denise Green and France Doak, in recognition of the wonderful service they have given since the early nineties.

Our loyal potting group continues to prepare plants for sale at the Botanic Café and Gallery, and in March we decided to supplement the small income we derive from this with a special Plant Sale. Such was the success that we intend to hold a Spring sale on Saturday November 8.

One of the best things going for Colac Friends is the fantastic relationship we have with our Gardener Laurence Towers – nothing is too much trouble- Laurence and his one apprentice keep the gardens looking great, and this year, at the request of the Friends, he conducted an extremely successful rose-pruning session for the public.

For the future, one of the big issues facing us is the question of whether or not to support a proposal to use recycled water on the Gardens. We are following with interest the advice of Richard Barley, and the experience of other Gardens which have commenced using recycled water.

We would welcome any comments on this subject from other Friends Groups

GOLD COAST REGIONAL BOTANIC GARDENS

South Coast, Queensland

We have had a burst of planting activity in the Gold Coast Regional Botanic Gardens in the past three months. Our Dry Season has not been as dry as usual and we have had some welcome rains off and on. While sometimes a challenge to work around, it has meant our Gardens are looking really lovely for this spring.

A Closed Forest Gorge has been completed in accordance with the plan of our Master Planner, Lawrie Smith. Some 250 rainforest trees (representing 130 different genus/species) as well as about 1000 creek edge sedges, reeds and grasses have laid the groundwork for what will be a fine extension to the Gardens.

World Youth Day pilgrims visiting the Gold Coast en route to Sydney were assisted by Friends to complete their community obligation by planting cultivated plants of the *Myrtaceae* family to complement existing native grasses under mature Eucalypts. An understorey of dwarf and ground cover bottle brushes, *Kunzea*, tea tree and miniature paperbarks will provide brilliant flowers as they develop, providing visitors with a glimpse of the exciting range of cultivars that have been introduced by native plant breeders.

July 16-19 saw a flurry of activity for Friends and our Botanic Gardens staff as we hosted the Queensland Regional Botanic Gardens Conference 16-18 July, celebrated our Friends

10th Anniversary with the Gala Dinner on 18 July and supported the Gardens Revealed event in the Botanic Gardens on 19 July.

The conference was a valuable opportunity for Regional Botanic Gardens staff from across Queensland to share knowledge and experience and to hear from speakers about developments in managing, sharing and promoting these wonderful community assets. At a General Meeting the Network of Regional Botanic Gardens of Queensland elected to join the Botanic Gardens of Australia and New Zealand as the Queensland Chapter.

The Gala Dinner was a great success. Our Guest Speaker, Tim Entwisle, Executive Director, Botanic Gardens Trust, Sydney, delighted guests with his entertaining presentation, *'Are Plants Immortal?'*

'Gardens Revealed', on the Saturday morning was a relaxed and friendly introduction to our Botanic Gardens for the conference delegates and visiting Curators from Capital City Botanic Gardens around Australia. Local horticultural industry representatives rubbed shoulders with Friends new and old, as the Gardens revealed themselves in all their splendour to us all. A highlight of the event was the rare and threatened tree plantings in the Curators Commemorative Avenue, by our Mayor, Ron Clarke and the heads of Capital City Botanic Gardens

To celebrate National Tree Day on Sunday 27 July, Friends helped coordinate the planting of over 400 gum trees in the Gum Tree Corridor. With 102 enthusiastic community volunteers the corridor plantings were arranged in their various bark and community origin types. As well as a delightful shaded walk, this will become a valuable part of the botanic and ecological collection within the Gardens.

Our latest community planting day was on Threatened Species Day – also Father's Day! People were encouraged to bring Dad to the Botanic Gardens for the day and participate in the Gold Coast's Threatened Species Day event organised by a local World Wide Fund for Nature volunteer. The Friends planting area was an extension of the open woodland part of our Mangroves to Mountains Walk and the commencement of the montane section (from the montane heaths of Southeast Qld Mountains).

Many local environmental exhibitors were there with information and live examples of our local threatened fauna and flora species for the more than 1000 visitors who passed through over the 5 hours of the event.

Mary Woods, Secretary

BGANZ New South Conference

Eurobadalla Regional Botanic Gardens, Batemans Bay NSW

Theme: 'Accentuate the Positive',

This was the theme of the BGANZ (NSW) Conference which was held at Batemans Bay on 6-9th September 2008. BGANZ is the association that networks between botanic gardens, both city based and regional. A conference is held very two years and this year it was the turn of Eurobadalla Regional Botanic Gardens.

These Gardens have a Manager, John Knight, and an apprentice employed by Council, but a great deal of work is also done by the 120 active volunteers. Although the gardens are young, there has already been impressive development of the 40 hectare site, despite a devastating fire in 1994. They specialise in the local indigenous flora.



The conference was launched by Dr Tim Entwisle, Executive Director of the Botanic Gardens Trust Sydney, who reminded us of the importance of botanic gardens in the community. As well as being places for passive recreation, gardens can provide living theatre. He stressed that botanic gardens need lots of visitors to sustain them. Tim encouraged his audience of botanic gardeners to lead by example by practising responsible

gardening – growing plants appropriate to the climate (not necessarily endemic), being waterwise, reducing chemical use, undertaking environmental audits and conservation work.

Visitor surveys have shown that the public expect excellent garden presentation and eye-catching displays. Don Bishop from Mt Annan BG addressed this problem in the context of gardens which have indigenous plants only. Adequate interpretive signs and plant labels also rate highly on visitor wish lists. Sharon Willoughby from RMBG, Cranbourne, took us through the lengthy process of developing appropriate signage for the new Australian Garden.

Eurobodalla takes its conservation role seriously. Almost since inception in the early 1980s, volunteers have been collecting plant specimens from their local river catchments. The Gardens have a small but active herbarium, run by Friends and volunteers, where these specimens are identified, preserved, recorded on a computer database then stored systematically. A seed bank is maintained in parallel. Seed is used to propagate plants for the Gardens and to produce stock for projects undertaken by Landcare groups and Shire Councils. Conference delegates visited the herbarium which also allows public access. The importance of such regional reference collections was endorsed by Brendan Lepski from the National Herbarium in Canberra.

The final session, led by Janelle Hatherly of Botanic Gardens Trust Sydney addressed issues relating to volunteer activities in botanic gardens and the relationships between volunteers, Friends and gardens staff. There is the perennial problem of volunteers appearing to be a threat to the job security of paid staff. Janelle recommended open discussion between stakeholders as a key to such issue. She also pointed out that volunteers, like paid staff, need to be managed. A new challenge, perhaps a sign of the times, was the mention by one Friends Group that they were being asked for more financial and physical help by their Gardens which were suffering budget restrictions.



Eurobadalla gardens

In the afternoons there were several short workshops in the Eurobodalla Gardens and these reinforced and expanded the ideas presented at the morning lectures. There was also time to explore the Gardens or be taken on a guided walk.

Delegates were treated to excellent catering with plenty of local oysters for aficionados. The structure of the conference and the social program allowed plenty of time for that all-important networking. The friendly folk from Eurobodalla are to be congratulated on running an excellent meeting.

Patricia Bannatyne, Friends of Orange Botanic Gardens.

FRIENDS OF THE ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS MELBOURNE

Melbourne City, Victoria

When our botanical artists exhibit their work every second year, their exceptional skills draw much admiration. The Art of Botanical Illustration will be staged in Domain House, Dallas Brooks Drive, between 8 and 23 November. Work by this group has also been selected for the Friends 2009 calendar and Christmas card, the latter featuring an image of the Gynea Lily by award-winning artist Sandra Sanger. A series of insect illustration workshops have been extremely popular.

For many years the Growing Friends have stored their books and files, produced their labels, held meetings and worked on their computers in the cramped conditions of the aptly named Mouse House. Recently it was replaced by a larger nursery office building dubbed the Grouse House that provides efficient space and the comfort of a sink with instant hot water. The potting area has been repositioned, allowing more bench room for the 35 members. PJT Plumbing's generous donation of a 2750 litre tank will collect rainwater from the Grouse House roof.

The Growing Friends Plant Sale will be held on 18 and 19 October, coinciding with the Gardens' Spring Open Day.

The Friends continue to ponder the perennial problem: how to retain members? Numbers have reached a record high, but inevitably some members do not renew. Most contacted by phone cited financial reasons for their non-renewal, or said they were not making use of their membership. Incentives are being considered as active promotion.

Excellent recent events have included a celebration of the 300th anniversary of Carl Linnaeus, a talk by Stephanie Alexander about her Kitchen Garden Foundation, tours to Greece and West Australia, and a morning of garden films. We were also involved in a crowded launch of Stephen Ryan's *Dicksonia Rare Plants Manual*.

Under national taxation rules, Fringe Benefits Tax applies to RBG Melbourne because there is now a public car park within 1 km of the Garden's car park. As a result, a staff parking charge has had to be introduced - could this be one reason why many staff are now cycling to work? A bicycle storage shed has been built behind F Gate Lodge to a design approved by Heritage Victoria.

The Gardens were closed because of bad weather for the first time in their history when gale-force winds on 2 April made conditions unsafe. Fortunately, although debris was widespread, there were no serious losses.

More than 50,000 plants grow in RBG Melbourne, and you may access information about any of them from the Online Plant Census on the RBG website www.rbg.vic.gov.au. Melbourne is the first Australian botanic garden to provide online access to its complete living collections – an achievement recognised with a Sir Rupert Hamer Records Management Award.

Water management continues to be a major RBG concern, and a focus of Friends' grants – most recently for a misting system in the Fern Gully and for refurbishing the outlet of the Ornamental Lake. A three-stage water project is underway. It involves

- *the resurrection of Guilfoyle's Volcano reservoir

- *a water treatment cycle to capture storm water from surrounding streets for storage in the Ornamental Lake, and

- *reclaiming and treating water from the Domain Road sewer as a secure long-term supply for the Domain Precinct parklands.

These all aim to eliminate the use of potable water for irrigating the Gardens and the Domain parklands. Contingency plans have been discussed should more stringent restrictions be introduced in November.

Between 25,000 and 28,000 school children visit the Gardens annually for programs arranged by RBG Education staff. In some cases, donors finance buses and fees so under-privileged schools are not deprived of this opportunity.

This year a Schools Partnership program has been introduced to benefit children with learning difficulties, behavioural problems or social disadvantage. Three schools are having extended learning sessions ranging from hands-on gardening to artistic interpretation and career mentoring. The Ian Potter Foundation Children's Garden is central to these education programs. Another initiative, in partnership with Cultivating Community, is presenting a course on developing sustainable school community gardens.

Heather Ironmonger

FRIENDS OF HAMILTON BOTANIC GARDENS

Western District, Victoria

Friends of the Hamilton Gardens last working bee included weeding, pruning and mulching with the help of new gardener, Neil Trotman. The Friends also thanked long serving member, Kerry Darling for the many years of care he devoted to the gardens at a farewell luncheon held at the cottage.

Friends of the Hamilton Botanic Gardens, May Sutherland (left), Rachel Malseed, Jan Koch, Liz Brennan and Mary Thibou hold a working bee in the gardens.



Jan Koch

FRIENDS OF WARRNAMBOOL BOTANIC GARDENS

Western District, Victoria

Substantial rain in both July and August, have given a good lead into spring. The winter annuals survived the rains and the Kale at the front bed was spectacular.

Throughout the year the Friends have attended monthly working bees under the guidance of our Curator John Sheeley, where they propagated and planted up numerous cuttings. These will be for sale at our annual Garden Day on Sunday, September 21st.

Restoration of the heritage listed fernery is well under way. This project over ran the \$27,000 grant from Heritage Victoria by \$12,000. Warrnambool City Council has agreed to fund half the excess, and the Friends will raise the remaining \$6,000.

The numerous friends of Marigold Curtis, our regular contributor to Campsis, join us in extending sympathy to her on the death of her husband Campbell, a loyal and inspirational supporter of our heritage.

Pat Varley

FRIENDS OF THE MACKAY REGIONAL BOTANIC GARDENS

North Coast, Queensland

I have excellent news to begin this report. Dale Arvidsson, who has been the acting Curator for the last couple of years, has now been appointed Curator, much to the delight of Friends. Dale has a true passion for our local native plants, which will serve our Garden's focus well. The position of Visitors Services Officer has been advertised and should be filled within the next month or so. That will make a huge difference to the workload for the Gardens administration staff and provide a re-energised boost to both the promotional and Friends programs

The cooler months of the year are always very busy ones in the Gardens and this year has been no exception. A wonderful night of celebration was held for the fifth birthday of MRBG in late May.

This year Friends decided that rather than having mainly discussion and presentation evenings, they would prefer to go out on excursions. One of our members, Joe Galea, was managing Stockade Nursery at the time and suggested we visit the nursery to see how they lift and move very large trees – Stockade provided some large trees for the Gardens in the beginning and for developments around Mackay. This was a wonderful and informative day, followed by a social BBQ lunch. We have also had a guided walk around some of the Stage 1 gardens of the MRBG, guided by Meryl Ritchie, who collected the seeds and propagated many of these areas including the Sarina/Proserpine lowlands Gardens, the Eucalypt Corridor and the Brigalow Belt and Dumbleton gardens.

Friends have been busy planting various garden beds, and have a very proprietary attitude to the plants as they are growing. The pictures below show some of the growth in the last several months since this garden bed in the Australian Regional Flora Terraces was planted. There will be many more planting bees over the next year to make sure the

Gardens are looking very lush when the BGANZ conference is held in Mackay in October 2009.



2007



2008

Helen Paulsen, Manager of Mackay Regional Council's Parks & Environment section, and Dale, as well as Ross Demuth, Team Leader Horticulture of MRBG, all attended the Network of Regional Botanic Gardens Tropical & Subtropical Zone conference at the Gold Coast in August. This network represents Gardens from Darwin to Coffs Harbour and all came back inspired. The network will now be known as BGANZ Queensland, bringing our network in line with the goals and aspirations of Botanic Gardens Australia & New Zealand (BGANZ). Most exciting and perhaps challenging of all – the next BGANZ Conference will be held in Mackay in October 2009. For such a young Garden like Mackay to host Australasia's main Botanic Gardens conference will be an exciting challenge which demonstrates the dynamic and forward thinking of our staff and volunteers, and how keen we are to work with established Gardens and Friends groups to learn, share and grow.

The Botanical Art Group attached to MRBG recently took out the top prize at the Regional Arts Awards for Outstanding Collaboration between artists and for Art Groups. We are very proud of them. A month long exhibition of their works will hanging in the Lagoons Gallery in the Gardens in October

Friends are in the process of designing some descriptive signs to be placed around the Lagoon Lookout Deck, one of the Gardens main vantage points, that will describe the different landmarks and gardens, which can be viewed from there. This is a popular viewing spot for visitors, so the signage will be extremely useful and meets the inspirational goal for the Friends our last Friends survey defined.

An extensive revision and update of the volunteer's information package is currently underway. This package was developed about the time the Gardens opened five years ago. So much has been planted and developed since then, the information was very out of date and it is a timely venture to provide all Friends with updated and relevant information. The handbook is so good, even new and existing staff regularly refer to it!

The year will end with a bang with the Carols in the Gardens, which has been doubling in size each year since inception. Young families love our Carols event, it is a very relaxing and joyous way to spend an evening under the lights of our Bunya Pine Christmas Tree and so far we have been lucky enough to have fine weather. Whilst outside activities wind down as the summer heat and humidity bites, it will be a busy time as many Friend projects are planned and worked on for 2009.

Robin McWhinney, Secretary

FRIENDS OF THE ROYAL TASMANIAN BOTANICAL GARDENS

Hobart City, Tasmania

Hello from us in Hobart! You can find us at www.rtbg.tas.gov.au

We have a very vibrant organisation at the moment. We are continually working with the Director and Staff to support the Gardens' activities. This involves doing gate duty for our various festivals, providing funds, as we have done in the last two years, -with \$30,000 towards the development of our most recent project, the Friends Mixed Border. This is a picturesque and inviting space in the Gardens and gives visitors a different picture created by the horticulturalists for each of our four seasons. You can see this project on our website.

We also have applied for a grant from the National Library of Australia to implement the Preservation Survey's results from 2006 – the preservation of the RTBG's books, historical documents, photographs and other memorabilia as well as Friends own historical papers and wall hanging. Hopefully this will be successful.

Friends of the RTBG will celebrate their 18th Birthday as an incorporated body at a Breakfast on October 16! This coincides with the 190th Anniversary of the Gardens. Our recent activities have included visits to a local historical garden, Runnymede and we have a future day excursion to the Huon Valley in November.

Friends of the RTBG is also hosting the next Conference for the Australasian Voluntary Guides in Botanic Gardens in Hobart in November 2009. If you want more information, please contact - dondabner@inet.net.au .

We are also involved in the international Millenium Seed Bank Project, in conjunction with Kew Gardens by assisting with conservation the unique native plant species of Tasmania. We have some members with specific expertise doing this work which has been greatly appreciated by James Wood, the staff member responsible.

The ENVIROFEST Festival in June was an incredible day. The activities were fun and environmentally sensitive. Friends members collected monies at the Gates as we will do for the Annual Spring Tulip Festival during the first weekend in October.

Sally Dabner
President

Friends of Australian National Botanic Gardens Lecture Program

There is always a series of very stimulating and varied lectures to consider if you are spending time in Canberra

| | | |
|-----|----|---|
| OCT | 30 | IAN FRASER 'PARALLEL JOURNEYS: AUSTRALIA AND SOUTH AMERICA' |
| NOV | 6 | ADRIAN GIBBS 'HOW EVOLUTION WORKS' |
| | 13 | CHRIS CARGILL 'TASMANIA - CRYPTOGRAM HEAVEN'..' |
| | 20 | PETER TAYLOR 'THE NATIONAL RESERVES SYSTEM' |
| | 27 | MALCOLM McCULLOCH 'CORAL AND CARBON DIOXIDE' |

Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens Membership; October 2008

A.C.T.

Friends of the Australian National Botanic Gardens Inc., GPO Box 1777, Canberra, ACT, 2601

New South Wales.

Friends of the Albury Botanic Gardens Inc., PO Box 1056, Albury, NSW 2640

Friends of the Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Gardens Inc., PO Box 1068, Batemans Bay, NSW, 2536

Moama & Echuca Community Gardens PO Box 545 Moama, NSW 2731

Friends of the Orange Botanic Gardens Inc. PO Box 17, Orange, NSW, 2800

Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney Inc., Cottage 6, Mrs Macquaries Road, Sydney, NSW, 2000

Friends of Tamworth Regional Botanic Gardens Inc, PO Box 1393, Tamworth,,NSW 2340

Northern Territory

Friends of the Darwin Botanic Gardens Inc., PO Box 36435, Winnellie, NT, 0821

Queensland

Friends of the Gold Coast Botanic Gardens Inc., PO Box 5653, Gold Coast Mail Centre, Qld, 9726

Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens Friends Association Inc, PO Box 6850, Mackay, Qld, 4741

Friends of Maroochy Regional Bushland Gardens Inc, PO Box 445 Buderim, Queensland 4556

Victoria

Friends of the Australian Inland Botanic Garden Inc., PO Box 2809, Mildura, Vic, 3502

Friends of Ballarat Botanical Gardens Inc., PO Box 33W, Ballarat West, Vic, 3353

Friends of Benalla Botanical Gardens & Riverine Parkland Inc., PO Box 589, Benalla, Vic, 3672

Friends of Bendigo Botanic Gardens Inc., PO Box 117, Strathdale, Vic, 3550

Friends of Burnley Gardens Inc., C/o Burnley College, 500 Yarra Boulevard, Richmond, Vic, 3121

Friends of the Castlemaine Botanical Gardens Inc., PO Box 391, Castlemaine, Vic, 3450

Friends of the Colac Botanic Gardens, 18 Fulton St, Colac Vic, 3250

Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens Inc., PO Box 235, Geelong, Vic, 3220

Friends of George Pentland Botanic Gardens, Mark Brown, C/o 18 Waliki Crt. Lara, Vic. 3212

Friends of George Tindale Memorial Gardens Inc, 21 Alphington St. Alphington Vic 3078

Friends of the Gisborne Botanic Gardens Inc., PO Box 564, Gisborne, Vic, 3437

Grampians Flora Botanic Gardens Group,C/o M Sietsma 146 Grampians Rd Halls Gap 3381

Friends of Hamilton Botanic Gardens Inc., PO Box 43, Hamilton, Vic, 3300

Friends of Karwarra Australian Plant Garden Inc., Mt Dandenong Tourist Rd, Kalorama Vic 3766

Friends of Kyneton Gardens Inc, PO Box 47 Kyneton, VIC 3444

Friends of Malmsbury Botanic Gardens & Environs Inc, PO Box 69, Malmsbury Vic. 3446

Friends of Melton Botanic Gardens Inc., C/o PO Box 2381, Melton South, Vic, 3338

Friends of the Port Fairy Botanical Gardens, 115 Regent St, Port Fairy, Vic, 3284

Friends of the Portland Botanic Gardens, PO Box 1022, Portland, Vic, 3305

Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Cranbourne Inc., 241 Station St.,Fairfield, Vic. 3078

Friends of the RBG, Melbourne Inc., Gate Lodge, 100 Birdwood Avenue, Melbourne, Vic. 3004

Friends of Sale Botanical Gardens.PO Box 506, Sale, 3850

Greater Shepparton Gardens Association Inc., C/o A Martland ,9 Regal Rd, Jan Juc Vic 3228

Friends of St Arnaud Queen Mary Botanic Gardens Inc. PO Box 108 St Arnaud, Vic, 3478

Friends of St Kilda Botanical Gardens, PO Box 1089, Elwood, Vic, 3184

Friends of the Warrnambool Botanic Gardens Inc., PO Box 1190, Warrnambool, Vic, 3280

Friends of Wilson Botanic Park Inc., PO Box 412, Berwick, Vic, 3806

Friends of the Wombat Hill Botanic Gardens Inc, PO Box 267, Daylesford,Vic 3460

South Australia

Friends of the Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden Inc., PO Box 2040, Port Augusta, SA, 5700

Friends of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide Inc. Botanic Gardens, North Terrace, Adelaide SA 5000

Tasmania.

The Tasmanian Arboretum Inc., PO Box 370, Devonport, Tas, 7310

Friends of the Royal Tasmanian Botanical Gardens Inc., C/o RTBG, Queens Domain, Hobart,Tas, 7000

Western Australia

Friends of Kings Park Inc, Volunteer Lodge, Fraser Ave., Kings Park & Botanic Gardens,
West Perth, W.A.

New Zealand

Friends of Hamilton Botanic Gardens, PO Box 4268 Hamilton, New Zealand

NEW MEMBERS

Friends of North Coast Regional Botanic Gardens, PO Box 648 Coffs Harbour NSW 2450

Stony Range Regional Botanic Garden Adv.Comm. Stony Range Botanic Garden, 369 Pittwater Rd, Dee
Why NSW 2099

**ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS OF
BOTANIC GARDENS INC.**

President: Alex Smart
RBG Cranbourne

Vice-President: Patricia Bannatyne
Orange Botanic Gardens

Secretary/Treasurer Annie McGeachy
Public Officer Annie McGeachy
Geelong

Committee:

| | |
|--------------|----------------|
| RBG Melb. | Janet Thomson |
| Ballarat | Judith Bailey, |
| Canberra | Warwick Wright |
| Warrnambool | Amanda King |
| Benalla | Betty Lindsay |
| RBG Sydney | Caro Webster |
| AIBG Mildura | Ken Mansell |

Website editor Judith Bailey
Newsletter Amanda King
Annie McGeachy

Postal Address:

Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens Inc.
16 Pavo St Belmont VIC 3216

Email: anniemcg@internode.on.net
Telephone: 03 5243 7728
Website: friendsbotanicgardens.org

Campsis

Campsis is published twice a year in
May and November.

We welcome your articles, photographs and important
calendar events for inclusion in the next issue

To ensure publication, please send articles by mid March and
mid September to arrive approximately 6 weeks prior to
publication.

Forward all *Campsis* material to:

Amanda King: e-mail friends@wbgardens.com.au
OR by post to
P.O Box 987, Warrnambool VIC 3280

Format & processing Amanda King.
Editor & Printing Annie McGeachy

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Membership of the Association of Friends of Botanic
Gardens Inc is for 12 months from January 1st. New
memberships after August 1st are valid until December
31st the following year.

Forms available on the website.

Membership fees are \$25

Cheque or Money Order should be made payable to:
Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens Inc
The Secretary,
16 Pavo St. Belmont VIC 3216

Association web site www.friendsbotanicgardens.org/

To include your event on the website contact the Web
editor: E-mail clrdnobs@vic.chariot.net.au
OR for those without E-mail, post details to the
Secretary.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

2009

Feb 25th- April 12th.

"IN PLAIN VIEW"

Hidden Flora Exhibition, Botanical Art.
Gordon Gallery Gheringhap St. Geelong

May 14-17

International Plant Propagators Conference

Royal Tasmanian Botanic Gardens, Hobart

Aust/NZ .BGANZ Biennial Congress

October 8th-11th

Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens Queensland

November 9-13

Australian National Guides Conference

Royal Tasmanian Botanic Gardens, Hobart

2010

May 21st to 23rd

Assoc. of Friends of Botanic Gardens Conference

Mildura, Victoria

Theme "Opening the Gates to Lateral Thinking"

WEB SITES OF INTEREST

www.anbg.gov.au

Australian National Botanic Gardens, Canberra

For interesting articles and papers.

www.bganz.org.au BGANZ-

BotanicGardens of Australia & New Zealand

Secretariat in Canberra.

E-mail Virginia.Berger@deh.gov.au for the newsletter
'The Botanic Garden'

www.edenproject.com

The Eden Project- contemporary Botanic Garden in
Cornwall, based on conservation and education.

www.bgci.org.uk-gardens/findgarden2html

A good gardens information site for travellers.

botanic_gardens-subscribe@yahogroups.com

*The Association of Friends of Botanic Gardens.
The views expressed by contributors are not
necessarily those of Association of Friends of
Botanic Gardens Committee. Neither the
Association Committee nor the Association
members accepts responsibility for statement or
opinions expressed, although every effort will be
made to publish reliable information*